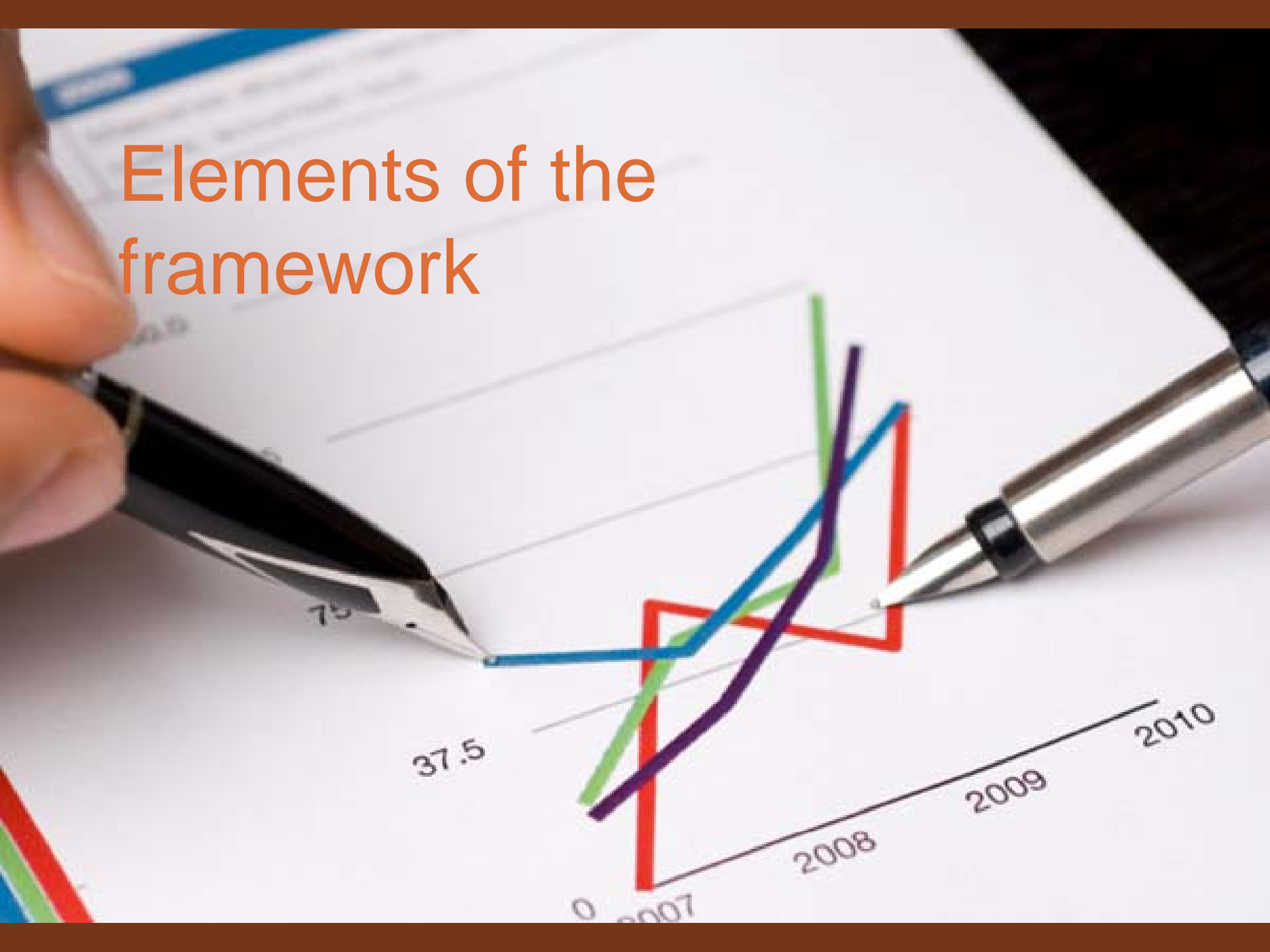


Elements of the framework

Judy Simon
July 7, 2009



Elements of the framework



Framework elements

- Eligibility and screening
- Roles and responsibilities
- Intake and application administration
- Promotion and outreach
- Tracking and reporting
- Funding
- Long-term coordination and administration

Eligibility and screening

- Characteristics of the participant that make the participant qualified or entitled to emergency financial assistance

Roles and responsibilities

- The major partners in the emergency financial assistance program (e.g. utilities/retailers, social service agencies, OEB, other) and their roles and responsibilities (e.g. qualification of social service agencies, training, intake, promotion)

Intake & application administration

- The process through which low-income energy consumers are enrolled in the program and receive the emergency financial assistance (e.g. enrollment through to receipt of funds)

Promotion and outreach

- The methods/avenues used to make low-income energy consumers aware of the emergency financial assistance program

Tracking and reporting

- The program metrics that need to be tracked; and the tracking and reporting requirements of each program partner

Funding

- The process through which monies for financial assistance is dispersed (e.g. utility/retailer to social service agencies to recipient)

Long-term coordination & admin

- Emergency financial assistance
 - The roles, responsibilities and structure for the long-term coordination and administration
- Low-Income Energy Assistance Program
 - The roles, responsibilities and structure for the long-term coordination and administration

Eligibility criteria



Guiding principle

- The eligibility criteria for emergency financial assistance should be applied at the discretion of the social service agency administering the program

Agreed eligibility criteria

- The household applicant must be a customer of the utility, as either primary or secondary name on the account
- The household applicant must reside at the address for which there are energy bill arrears
- The applicant must have a pre-tax income at or below the pre-tax Low Income Cut Off (LICO) level for urban area over 500,000 plus 15% (agreed for time being -need to revisit)

Partial agreement (1)

- There is a limit on the number of times a low-income energy consumer can receive funding:
 - Available once per year; even if it less than the maximum allowable amount
 - Available once every twelve months per commodity (gas and electric)
 - Available twice per year within a financial cap
 - Additional hardship criteria can be considered to access funding more than once every 12 months (e.g. health issues, etc.)

Partial agreement (2)

- There is a cap on the amount of funding an applicant can receive:
 - \$450 per commodity
- The applicant must demonstrate a prior attempt to pay the energy bill:
 - Within the last four months, either partial payment or proof of payment history
 - Within the last six months, either partial payment or payment arrangements made, or call centre called

For agreement

- Must be in threat of disconnection or disconnected; can be a reminder notice, not necessarily a disconnection notice
- Assistance must result in reconnection of the energy service
- Historical income levels should be examined, not just those in the last month
- The applicant must demonstrate sustainability/future ability to pay the energy bill based on an income budget review
- An appeal process should be put in place

Template

