OL 341 Assignment Three Homework
Online Learning: OL 341: Climate Change Adaptation: Design, Fund & Manage Projects
Center for Sustainable Development
https://csd-i.org/climate-change-adaptation-online-course/

This week's resources:
Assignment Three Discussion
Magee Example Project Assignment Three

Assignment Three. Will your theory of a solution work?
Investigating if there is a scientific basis that our proposed theory and activities have worked on other projects.
In this assignment, you will be researching three intervention/activities. Pick an activity you plan to use in your project that is a simple one and can be easily described.

Look for potential information in these places:
Google
Google Scholar
Links to Dev Sites and Documents in the menu on the left

In Google you can ask questions just as if you are asking them of another person.
For example, in my project, I am looking for information on improving children's health. So in Google, I can type in "What works in reducing diarrhea in developing nations?" Put your question in quotation marks.

Google also has Google Scholar which focuses strictly on scientific documents.
http://scholar.google.com/schhp?hl=en&tab=ws

With this approach I can get excellent results. If you happen to hit a gold mine of results, save those key words. They may come in handy in the future, and the way you phrased the question may be a template for future searches on different subjects.

Google also has a wonderful feature called 'Search within results'. If I type in a question, and I get 10 million results, but I'm really interested in children's health in Zimbabwe, at the bottom of the results page I can click on 'Search within results' and enter Zimbabwe, and Google will refine my results to those which relate to both children's health and Zimbabwe.

I find using keywords like 'international development' and 'developing nations', gets me out of mainstream news and into real development information. You can also type in things like 'abstracts' and 'executive summaries' to point you towards scientific documents. Play around.

We are looking for peer-reviewed, scientific documents. If you find one with the magic symbol PDF next to it, this means that there is a document to download.

We are not looking for informational documents found on websites that have not gone through evaluation by a team of scientists. These are called 'Grey Literature' and are not acceptable for gathering evidence.

This is what a peer-reviewed scientific document looks like online; note the list of authors' names, the abstract and the reference to a university:
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2127738/pdf/9374884.pdf/?tool=pmcentrez

I have also posted a scientific document as an example on the Download Course Documents page: "What Works in Fighting Diarrheal Diseases in Developing Countries? Alix Peterson Zwane and Michael Kremer."

Sometimes you'll go to a link which is simply an abstract (a paragraph describing a document). Frequently these abstracts are at publishing houses, and they will want to charge you to download the full document. However, make a note of the exact name of the study and the authors, and do a Google search on those, and sometimes you can find the original document online as a PDF.

If you work at a university and have access to peer-reviewed search engines, your life will be much simpler. They are geared to finding the kinds of scientific documents are looking for.

When you find a document, hopefully it will be a "synthetic study", or a "literature review", which has analyzed a large number of primary research documents. These will give you the most useful results for your project. In the executive summary and in the conclusion they will tell you if the activity has **worked** to solve the challenge that you've identified, and under what circumstances.

Once you've found one or several of these documents I want you to act like a scientist and without putting your own desires and feelings into the interpretation of the document, write a one paragraph summary that will indicate whether or not the activity that you have selected for your project appears to work, or not.

Do this for three of your project activities; one short, summary paragraph for each.

If a document indicates that the activity you chose to solve your project challenge does not work-- that's good news too; because it means that you won't waste a lot of time and money on an activity which is not going to perform.

If one of the documents indicates the activity doesn't work, just write your paragraph on that one: the fact that it doesn't work is good information for all of us.

If during your searches you see any practical information on one of your activities like a field guide or manual, bookmark it for next week's assignment.

Adaptation. Adaptation Homework Component:
1. Find one scientific resource (Google, University Search Engine, Google Scholar) for the adaptation program and activities that you have included in your project outline that shows that one of your proposed activities has shown evidence of having worked in an adaptation project—or in a traditional development project. Provide and link and write a 2 or three sentence summary summarizing that scientific resource's position for using that activity in an adaptation project.

The homework to turn in will be:
1. A list of links to one or two scientific papers about three of your proposed project activities.
2. A short paragraph summarizing the findings of one scientific paper for each of your three activities.
3. Adaptation element: Provide and link and write a 2 or three sentence summary summarizing that scientific resource's position for using that activity.

Go to Magee's Example Project Assignment Three to see what this could look like.

See you next week.