The Darwin Initiative



Developing a Theory of Change







Introduction



- Purpose of this session
- What is a Theory of Change?
- Why use a Theory of Change?
- Developing a Theory of Change?
- What is the outcome of using a Theory of Change?
- Group Exercise (30 mins)

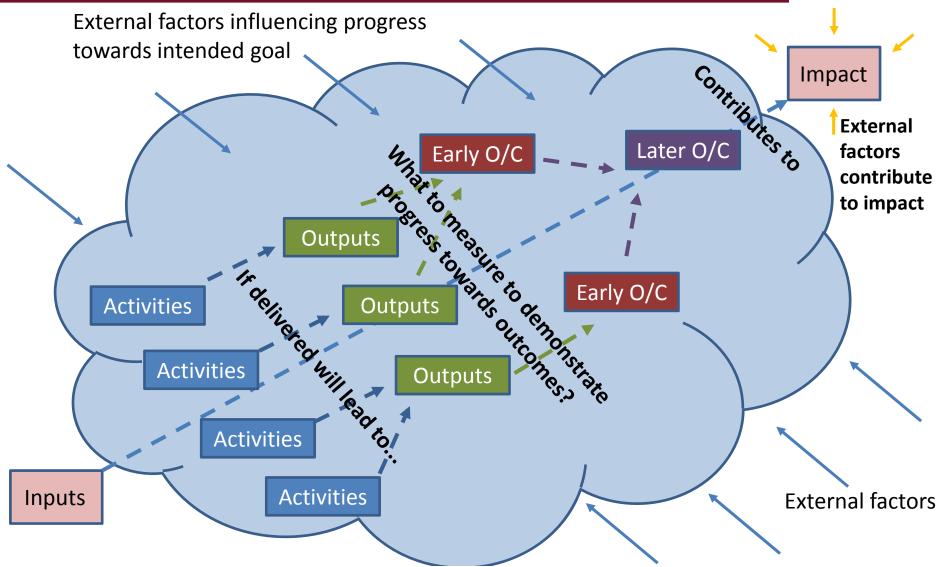
What is a Theory of Change?



- An impact focused causal model used to highlight and articulate key assumptions
- A backwards mapping exercise that identifies the conditions necessary to achieve a defined impact
- It about identifying the change you expect to happen and the process through which you believe it will come about
- ToC is increasingly regarded as an essential tool in designing and appreciating the complex network of factors which influence project outcomes

What is a Theory of Change?





What isn't a Theory of Change?



Project Summary A meaningful, easily understood summary of what the project is about	Indicator A specific and measurable characteristic that can be used to gauge project progress towards the impact/outcome/output	Means of Verification The expected source(s) of information that can help answer the performance question or indicators.	Assumptions External factors that the project believes will positively or negatively influence the events of the project
Impact Higher level objective that the project will contribute towards achieving		then the now.	
Outcome Changes expected from the project and who is expected to benefit	If the outcome is achieve	then the project should co	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Output Specific, direct deliverables of the project	If the outputs are achiev	then the project shoul ved and the assumptions hold	
Activities The main, planned tasks that the project will carry out.	If the activities are comp	then the output s	hould be achieved

What isn't a Theory of Change?



Management control diminishes

Internal perspective

External perspective

External factors become more important

Activities/ Inputs Outputs Impact Process Physical & financial Processes which Operational changes Behavioural or Progress towards thematic priorities turn Inputs into (new skills or institutional/ resources Outputs abilities, the changes in availability of new response to the products and outputs services).

Why use a Theory of Change?



- To identify the conditions necessary to achieve the defined project impact
- To articulate the theory and assumptions underpinning a project's design
- To encourage critical thinking, and helps to draw out the complexity of the relationships between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.
- To design a project that considers the complex network of factors which influence project outcomes
- To identify and review the assumptions and risks upon which project achievement is dependent
- It helps project staff to understand and convey the way their project works (good for comms)

When to use a Theory of Change?



- During project design
 - Useful when designing complex initiatives
 - Helps to develop a clear and rigorous plan for success
 - During project implementation
 - Enables you to evaluate appropriate outcomes at the right time and the right sequence
 - Enables you to identify why an initiative is or isn't working
 - Evaluation of a project
 - Enables you to identify why an initiative worked or not, and what exactly went wrong

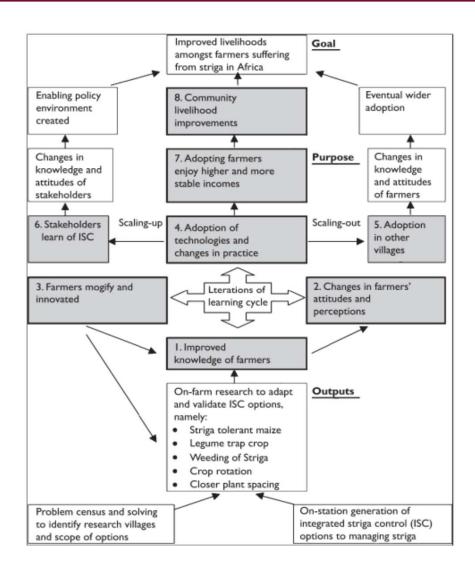
Developing a Theory of Change



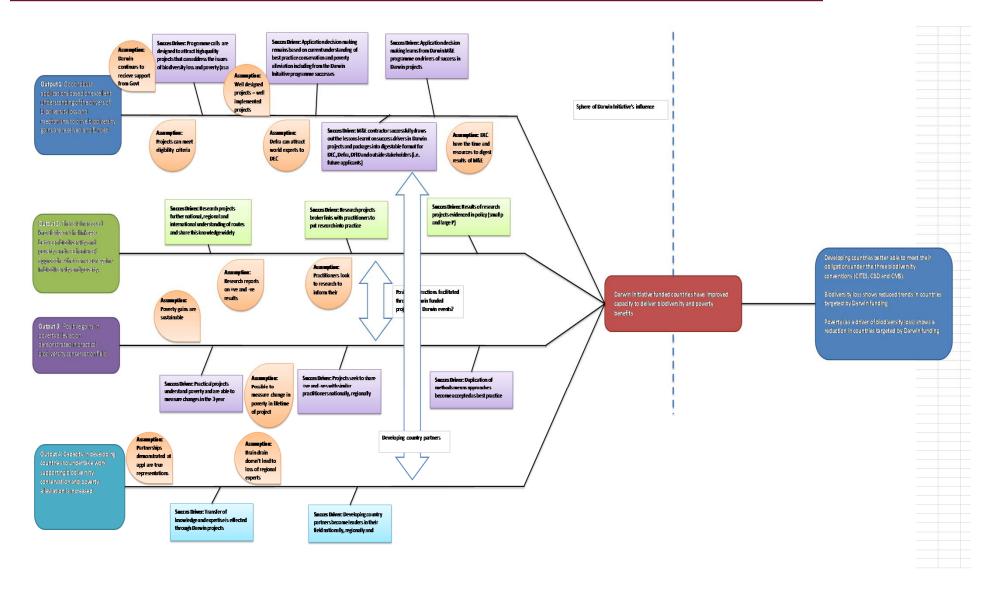
TOC maps out your initiative through 6 stages:

- 1. Identifying long-term goals
- Backwards mapping and connecting the preconditions or requirements necessary to achieve that goal and explaining why these preconditions are necessary and sufficient
- 3. Identifying your basic assumptions about the context
- Identifying the interventions that your initiative will perform to create your desired change
- 5. Developing indicators to measure your outcomes to assess the performance of your initiative
- 6. Writing a narrative to explain the logic of your initiative











Unpredictable conflict & political situation

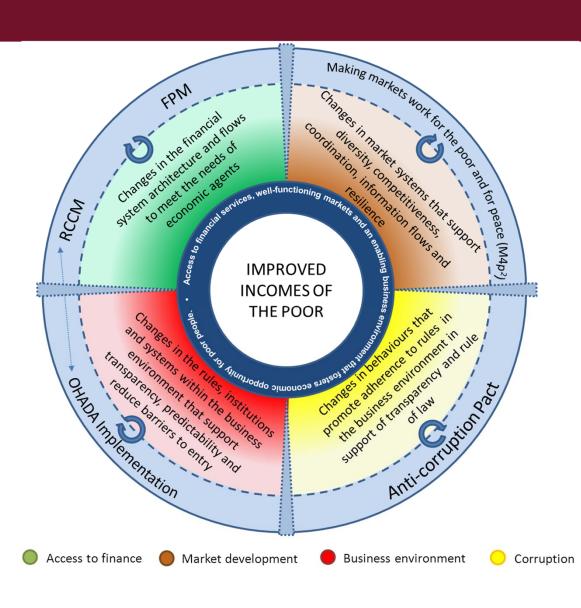
Diagram 02: Theory of Change

Adapted from Vogel, E. (2012)

LONG-TERM, LASTING CHANGE Improved policies & programmes Better stakeholder engagement Conditions influence change: Improved food security Commitment & ownership EDIUM TERM CHANGES Climate change mitigation enhanced Institutional capacity and policy Indirect benefits of programme: Nutrition & health. Gender issues addressed. Climate Smart Agriculture status. Context varies between SADC MS: **Multiple impact pathways** Real environment: - weather, Climate change resilience improved CSA Farming systems & soils, farming systems Generally weak market function Market development Political & socio-economic Platforms for collaborative action SHORT-TERM CHANGES Gender & AIDS epidemic Regional & international partnerships Focus on MS with VAA absent or weakly NGO involvement developed Value for Money: Sound finance Community engaged Communicate outcomes of good/best practice management Inclusive/accessible Better data: IT, internet & mobile functionality Proactive project management Policy/programme with practical impact on **EXIT STRATEGY** Close cost control chronic food security (whilst delivering Audit & report to SADC/DFID On-going commitment of SADC, RVAC, NVAC to VAA response to crises) Targeted & focussed intervention VAA in urban & peri-urban operational Secure future support, donors, regional & national Public/private initiatives leveraging tech innovation SADC RVAA & VAA outcome accessible & NVAC communicated ASSUMPTIONS: Effective participation of SADC MS, particularly Technical oversight VAA in policy & where VAA absent or poorly developed programmes Ability to engage with stakeholders to get Technical training in participation & ownership Appropriateness of policies & programmes to Data systems VAA Operational SADC MS support change for resource poor and women Consistent policy environment during lifetime of

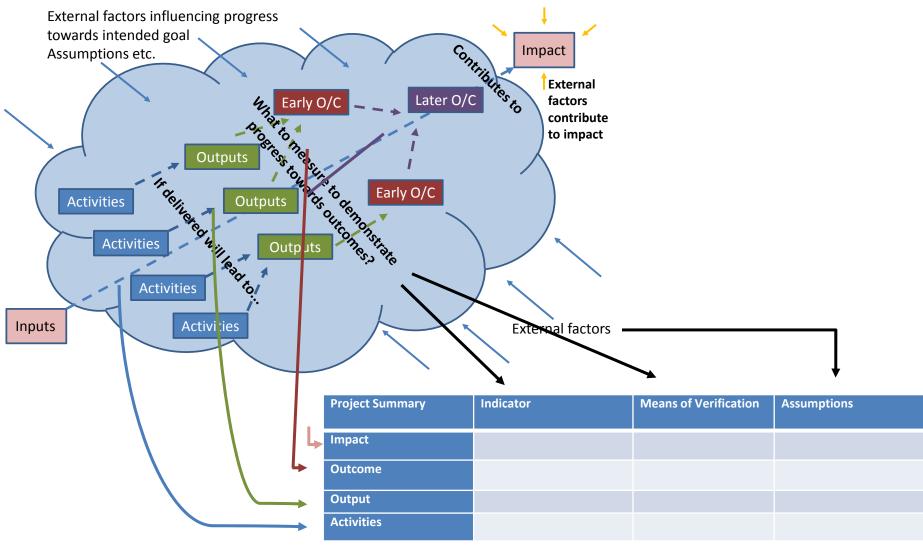
SADC support Initiate & implement





You have a ToC, what next?

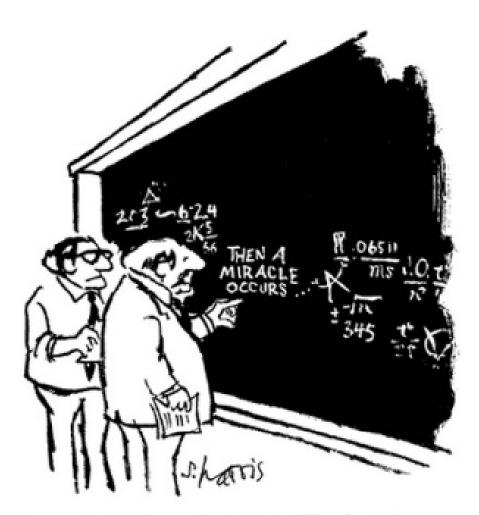




Group Exercise



- Divide into groups
- You will be given a list of activities, outputs and outcome taken from an existing Darwin project
- It will be up to you to decide which is which
- In whatever format you wish map out the theory of change
- Consider, and identify critical assumptions and key areas of risk and uncertainty



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."