

Theory of Change and Logical Framework Templates

Theory of change: This is used to capture strategic thinking and planning, like the big picture, why you believe thought process is correct, and a general course of action.

Logical framework: Think of this as a more refined, detailed, operations-oriented document to guide implementation of your program/project.

You can use these templates as-is or re-create the tables in word, excel or a similar tool to organize your and your stakeholders thoughts and inputs.

Theory of Change Development Template	Problem Statement	Proposed Solutions	Assumed Causal Mechanism(s)
	Briefly describe the problem you seek to fix and the surrounding context.	What solutions to the problem are you proposing?	Why/how do you think your solution will solve the problem, or at least contribute to solving it?
Evidence (This can be from literature, from community stakeholders, and anywhere in between. It can also be none. Just be clear what kind of evidence it is.)	What evidence is there to illustrate the problem?	What evidence exists to support your proposed solutions?	What evidence exists to show a causal link between the problem and solution?
Assumptions	What assumptions underly the problem? (Why is it a problem? Who has agency? Where does power lie in and around the problem? What/who made this a problem?)	What assumptions do you have about these proposed solutions?	What assumptions do you have about any of the causal links above? Why do you think these are correct for your context?
External factors (These could be social, economic, environmental, political, or something else)	What external factors could inhibit or promote the problem for the community and context you wish to serve?	What could negatively or positively impact your ability to implement these solutions?	What could negatively or positively impact these presumed causal mechanisms in your context?

After you've completed the inputs in the table, feel free to diagram it as you like (or keep it in table form). Either way, you will use parts of this in developing the logical framework below.

Before moving on, I do recommend either writing out a summary or illustrating your ToC in some way (a cleaner table, diagrams or maps). This will be useful for stakeholders across the spectrum when doing a final review and finding agreement on a final product. It will also be helpful when talking about your program outside of your stakeholder group that helped develop it.

Next, use the template below to develop a logical framework for your program/project. You can use this in word, excel or another program. Note where inputs for the logical framework should come from or be informed by the Theory of Change exercise.

Goal 1. (From your proposed solutions, craft program goals. This can be almost identical to your proposed solution, one component of it, or heavily edited from the original. But it should generally align.)				
Activities (these can be informed by the evidence in your ToC exercise)	Optional: Responsible person or group	Optional: Timeline for rollout	Outputs (what tangibly results from the activities)	Outcomes (can be informed by your causal mechanisms, but won't be exact. These are what happens, not the why.)
Activity 1	Person 1		Outputs from your activities; can be collective and not linked to a single activity	Outcome(s) for Goal 1, these do not need to be linked to specific activities
Activity 2	Person 2			
Activity 3	Person 1			
Impact. (What is/are the long-term impact(s) you believe will occur from the work done on this goal?				

Repeat this for all goals you've chosen. Note the optional columns; they truly are optional! Combine all fields for each goal, and that's going to be your final logical framework.

You will want to make sure you're employing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) guidelines where possible for your goals and outcomes, but also note that for some work (especially things that require lots of testing or are very new) a SMART construct might pin you in more than you and your stakeholders are comfortable with. So although this structure is preferable, you can be a little flexible. Don't feel compelled to use it everywhere or use every component if it seems like it's holding you back or making your work something it wasn't meant to be--just be sure to have a good reason *not* to use it.