

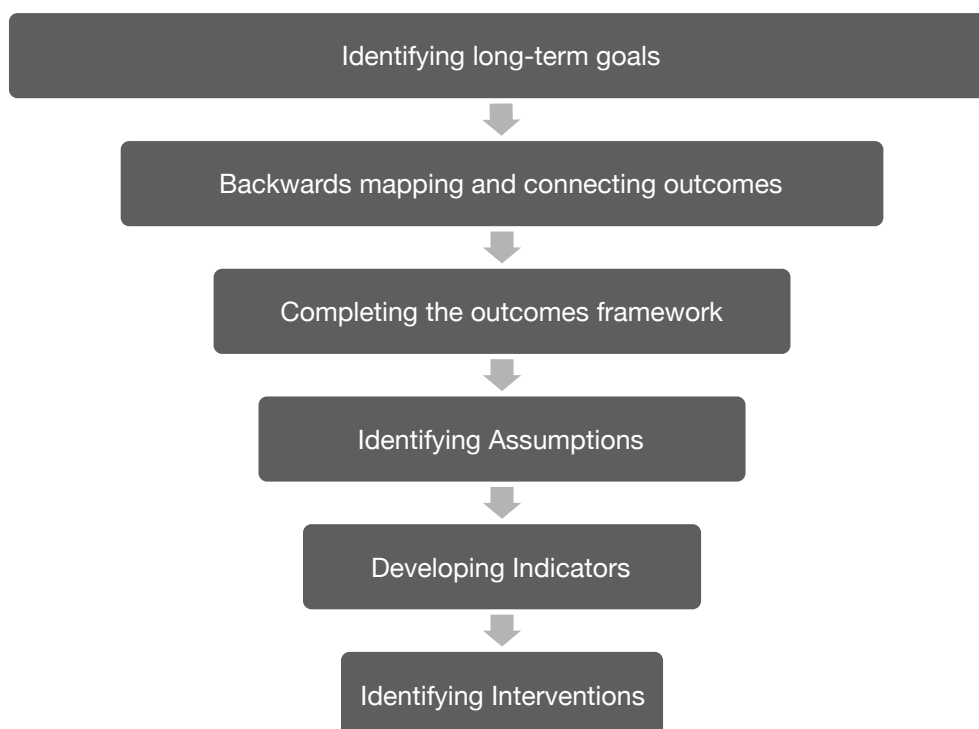
Workshop 5 Theory of Change (ToC)

What is Theory of Change?

Theory of Change^[1] is essentially a complete description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It focusses on mapping out the space between the intended outcome and the activities or interventions. This is where things can go wrong resulting in either unintended or failed outcomes.

The Theory of Change approach begins **with identifying the desired long-term goals** and then works back from these to **identify all the conditions (outcomes)** that must be in place and each identifies goal and outcome relate to one another for the intended goal to occur. Then the 'outcomes framework' is created. The Outcomes Framework helps us to **identify what type of** activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes identified as preconditions for achieving the long-term goal.

How does Theory of Change work?



Think about:

- What is the overall change you want to see, the bigger picture?
- What are the pre-conditions required to achieving that bigger picture change?
- What obstacles need to be overcome?
- What conditions are needed to help achieve the bigger picture?
- What is your organisation's (or depts/group's etc) role in helping overcome these pre-conditions?
E.g. knowledge, expertise, relationships etc.
- What resources are required?
- How do you know you've made the changes you want to see?
- Map out short, medium and long-term activities, goals and indicators towards reaching your goal(s).

References

1. Centre for Theory of Change [available at <http://www.theoryofchange.org/>]