
Theory of Change for Planning and Impact Assessment

Face to Face Training



Interest in developing and using Theories of Change both for planning and assessing impact has grown rapidly over the last few years. Theories of Change can be set at different levels and are being used in a number of ways. At one end of the scale, they are pulled together by one person to support a programme proposal or a specific donor demand. At the other end, they are facilitated over a period of several months and include wide consultation with staff, partners and beneficiaries, and are used to inform strategy at all levels. As Theories of Change focus specifically on sequences of change for different target groups, they provide a clear and robust framework for monitoring and assessing the impact of our development efforts.

So what are they exactly? How do they complement other planning and evaluation processes? How can they be applied at different levels and in different contexts? How can they be used to assess impact?

This course provides in-depth answers to all of these questions and more. It introduces the elements of Theory of Change and offers the opportunity for participants to apply and experiment with the key ideas and processes using their own case studies as well as illustrative case studies presented by the course facilitator.

Conceptually clear and very practical, this course will equip staff with the knowledge and skills to consider which elements of Theory of Change they can apply in their own organisational setting and how best to go about it. Follow-up coaching after the course will support any specific issues or problems that participants face as they implement their learning in their work setting.

1 Objectives of the course

By the end of the training participants will:

- Be able to describe what Theories of Change involve and the rationale for using them.
- Be able to identify how and when they should be developed and how they inform and complement other approaches to planning, evaluation and impact assessment.
- Have increased confidence in working through the steps and processes involved in developing and using Theories of Change, both for planning and impact assessment.
- Have worked through pre-selected case studies and reflected on their own work in order to explore and apply elements of Theories of Change to specific planning or impact assessment tasks.
- Considered how and when to apply learning from impact monitoring and assessment to reviewing Theories of Change, reporting to donors and to beneficiaries.
- Have explored ways to facilitate and promote Theory of Change approaches within their own organisation.

2 Intended audience

The course is designed for programme managers and those who are actively involved in planning, evaluating, and assessing the impact of programmes who have some experience of project cycle management and M&E. Those who are about to undertake a Theory of Change process or an impact assessment are welcome to bring their own case study to work on during the course.

Additionally, those who are hoping to use Theory of Change approaches in the future will also find the content relevant. Some familiarity with Theory of Change approaches is beneficial though not essential as pre-course reading will be given to participants in preparation for the course. Where possible, we recommend that two or more individuals attend from one organisation.

3 Core content areas

- Understanding how change happens within given contexts
- Identifying your role in contributing to these changes
- Developing a causal pathway illustrating how your efforts will contribute to identified changes
- Identifying the assumptions that will need to be tested throughout the life of a programme
- Continuously monitoring change, your change pathway, and testing your assumptions
- Critically reflecting on your change pathway and your role in light of emerging changes (expected and unexpected) and adapting to these
- Exploring how to facilitate elements of ToC in your own organisations both for planning and assessing impact

4 Course format and costs

This course has two parts: a 5 day face to face course which will take place in Oxford, UK; and a 50 minute one-to-one coaching session after the course (via Skype) with the course trainer, focusing specifically on your needs.

This individual, tailored coaching will support the individual to apply the learning from the course to their work, and offer the opportunity to work through current challenges, difficulties and opportunities with a highly experienced practitioner. The available dates and times for coaching will be provided by the trainers in advance of the course. Coaching terms and conditions will be provided upon application.

The cost of this course is £1165 non-residential (includes training materials, 50-minute individual coaching session, lunch and refreshments) or £1425 residential (includes training materials, 50-minute individual coaching session, meals and accommodation for duration of course).

5 More information

Please contact the INTRAC Training Team:

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INTRAC is accredited as a non-collegiate provider by the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education.

