Logic Models v. Theories of Change

What's the Difference?

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# Learning objectives / presentation layout

- Cover some FAQs

- Review the definition of a Logic Model (LM)

- Define a Theory of Change (ToC)

- Highlight the differences/similarities between the LM and ToC

Disclaimer

- No industry standard **definition** of a Theory of Change
- However, there **are** industry standard beliefs about contents, components, purpose, etc.

Common questions

- **Why** distinguish between a LM and a ToC?
  - Because they are different and each carry their own power – and we want you to harness that power!
- **When/why** do you use a LM v. a ToC?
  - LM = illustrate your program at-a-glance, evaluation of a program, monitor progress towards a goal
  - ToC = create a program, illustrate the **research** behind your program (why you think/know it will work)
- Do we **need** both?
  - Depends on the situation…
  - Good to have both…
- Which comes **first**?
  - Logic Models are a more approachable first step
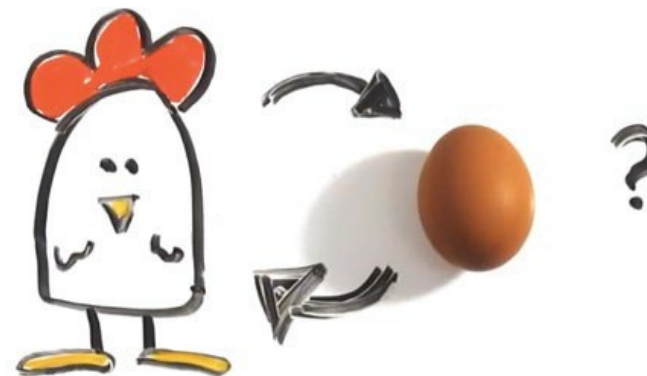
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What is a Logic Model?

- a one-page description of your program that shows the connection between day-to-day activities/resources and your outcomes.

- can be a chart, illustration or table.

We plan to do X, which will give Y result

What is a Theory of Change?

- shows **all** the different pathways that might lead to change, even if those pathways are not related to your program.

- describes **how** and **why** you think change happens.

- can be a chart, illustration, table, cycle, narrative, etc.

If we do X, then Y will change *BECAUSE*

Components of …

Logic Model

- Outcomes,
- Outputs,
- Activities,
- Resources,
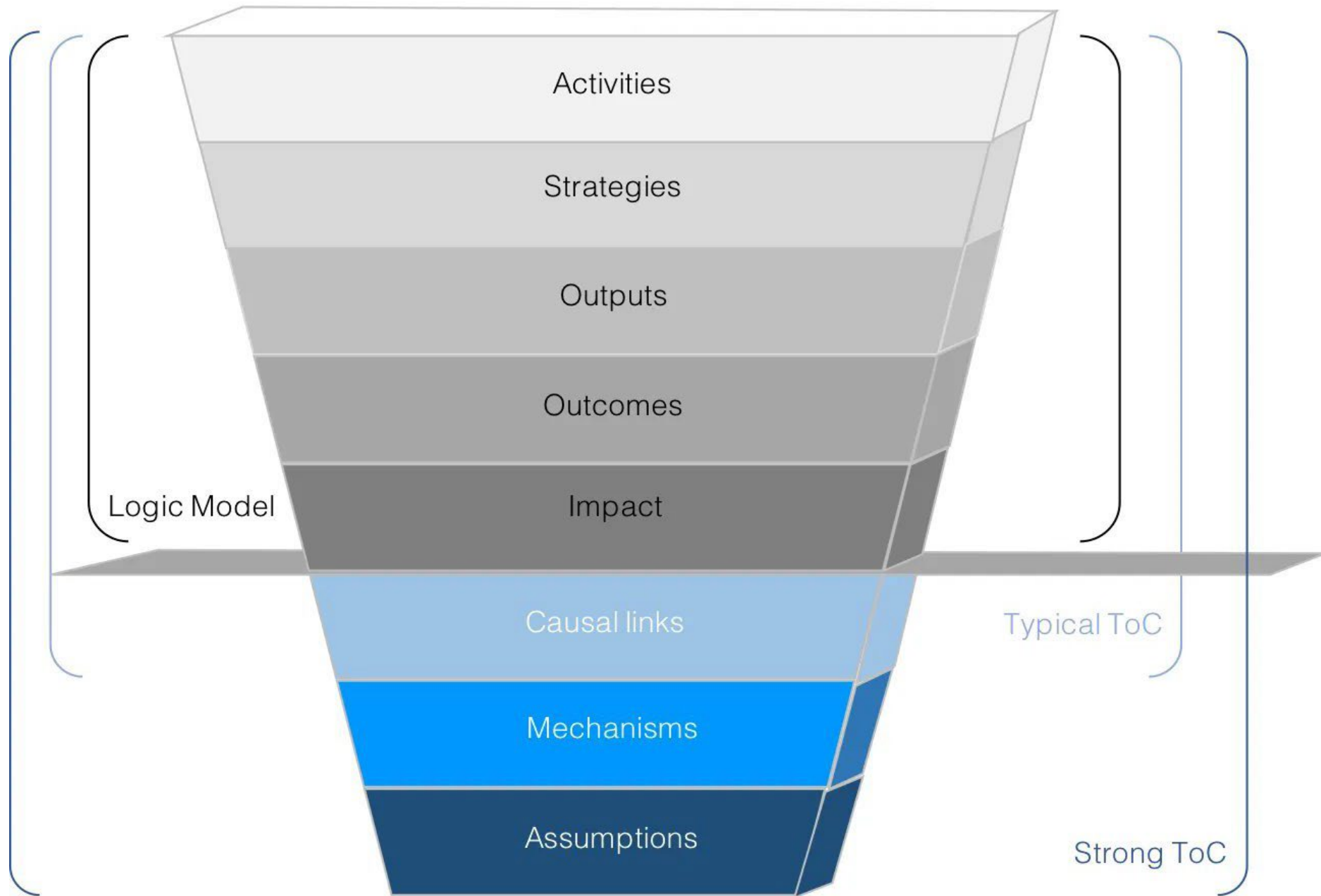- Assumptions,
- External Factors

Theory of Change (can vary)

- Impact / Outcomes,
- Outputs,
- Strategies / Activities
- Generic Causal Links,
- Specific Causal Links,
- Mechanisms, and
- Assumptions
- Often inclusive of a narrative and contain an If → Then structure

Do the components sound similar?
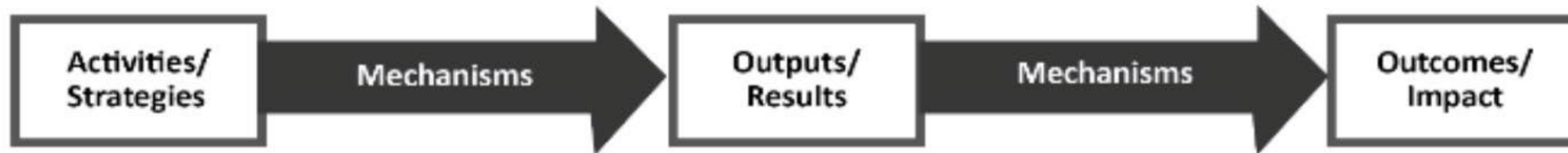
That's because they are!

Activities

Strategies

Outputs

Outcomes

Impact

Logic Model

Causal links

Typical ToC

Mechanisms

Assumptions

Strong ToC

Dhillon, L., Vaca, S. (2018)
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Logic Model…

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes

Theory of Change…

Activities/Strategies → Mechanisms → Outputs/Results → Mechanisms → Outcomes/Impact
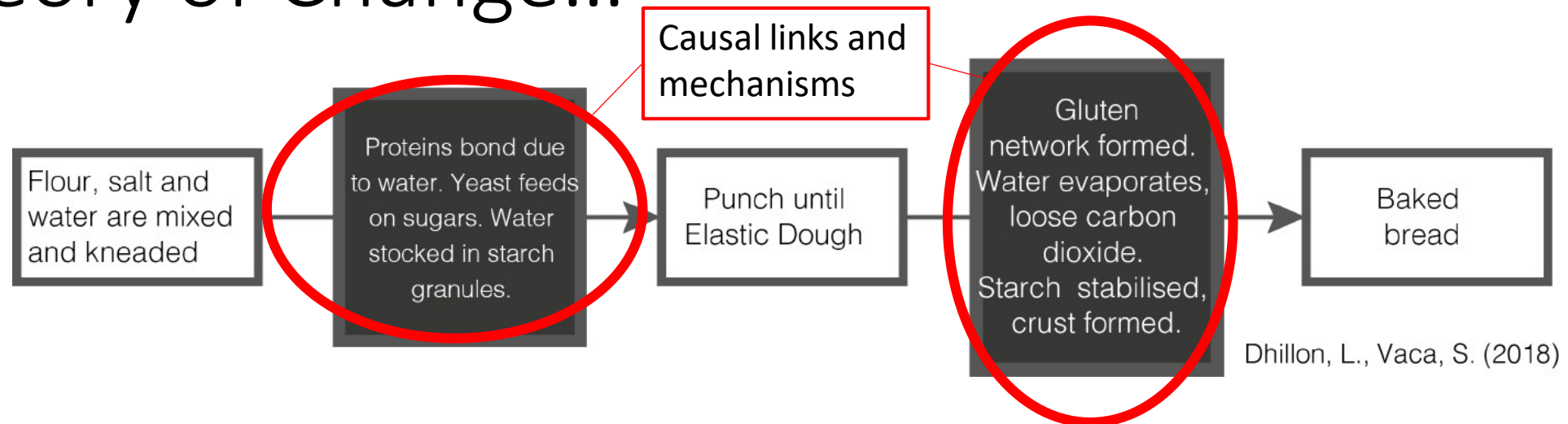
But I have arrows in my logic model…

- may be showing superficial or relational link
  - a resource leads to an activity because having resources leads to using resources
  - but does not show the underlying research/hypothesis as to **why** the activity will create the desired output/outcome
  - in other words – it's a link but not necessarily *causal*

- Arrows in the theory of change are meant to be **intentionally causal** with a mechanism (explanation of how having resources leads to doing an activity)
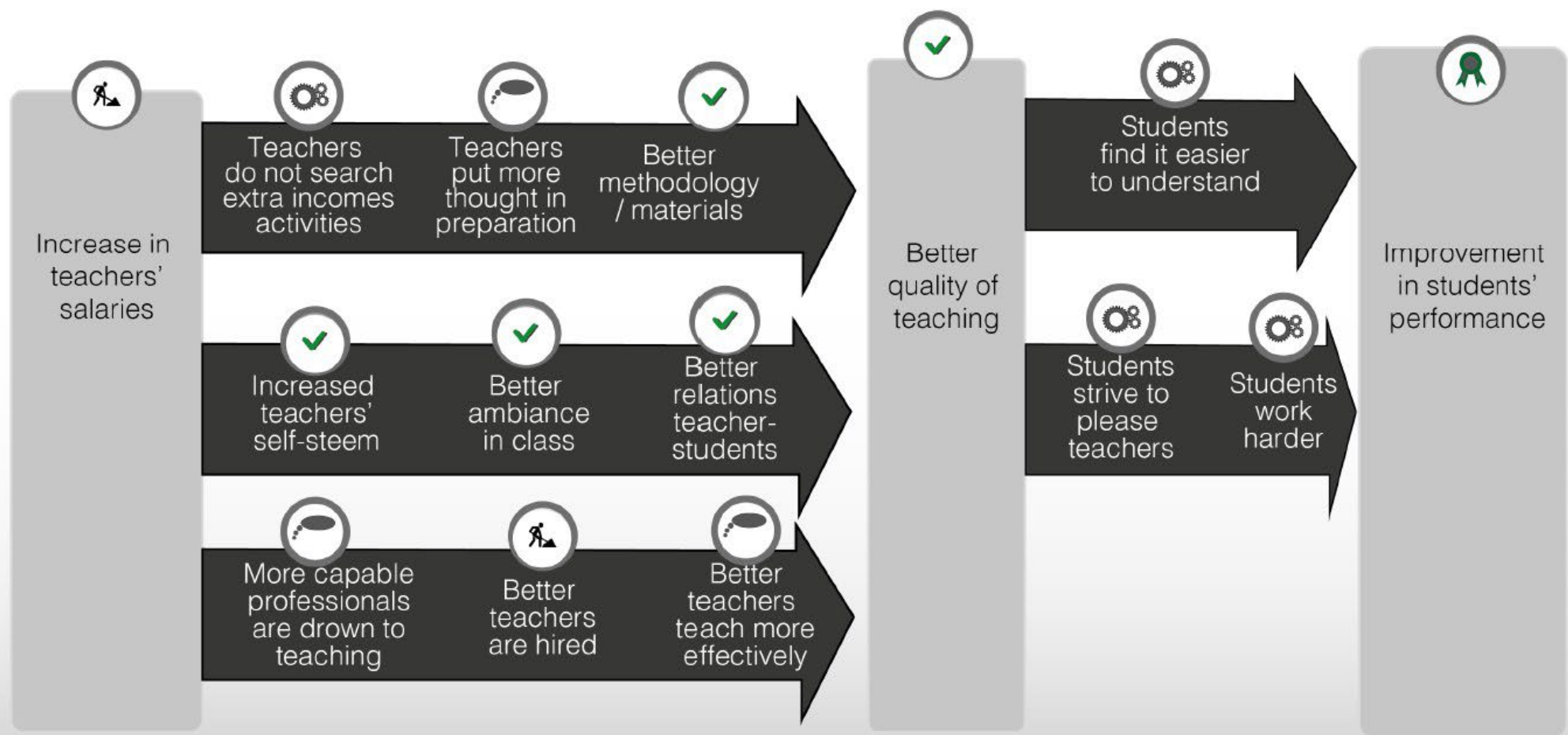
Logic Model…

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Flour Salt Water Yeast	Mix Knead Let rise Bake	Elastic-y dough	Delicious Bread

Theory of Change…

Causal links and mechanisms

Flour, salt and water are mixed and kneaded

Proteins bond due to water. Yeast feeds on sugars. Water stocked in starch granules.

Punch until Elastic Dough

Gluten network formed. Water evaporates, loose carbon dioxide. Starch stabilised, crust formed.

Baked bread

Dhillon, L., Vaca, S. (2018)

THEORY OF CHANGE OF AN EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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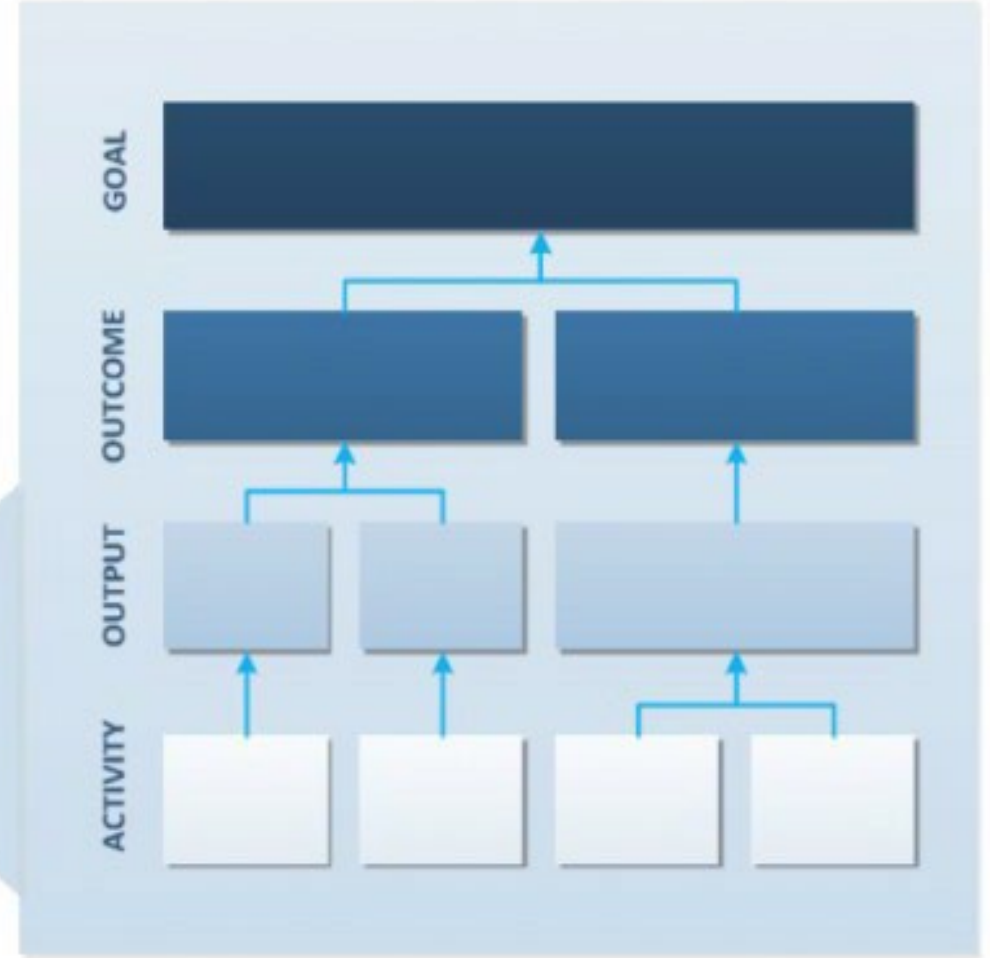
Dhillon, L., Vaca, S. (2018)

Theory of Change
Shows the big picture with all possible pathways – messy and complex
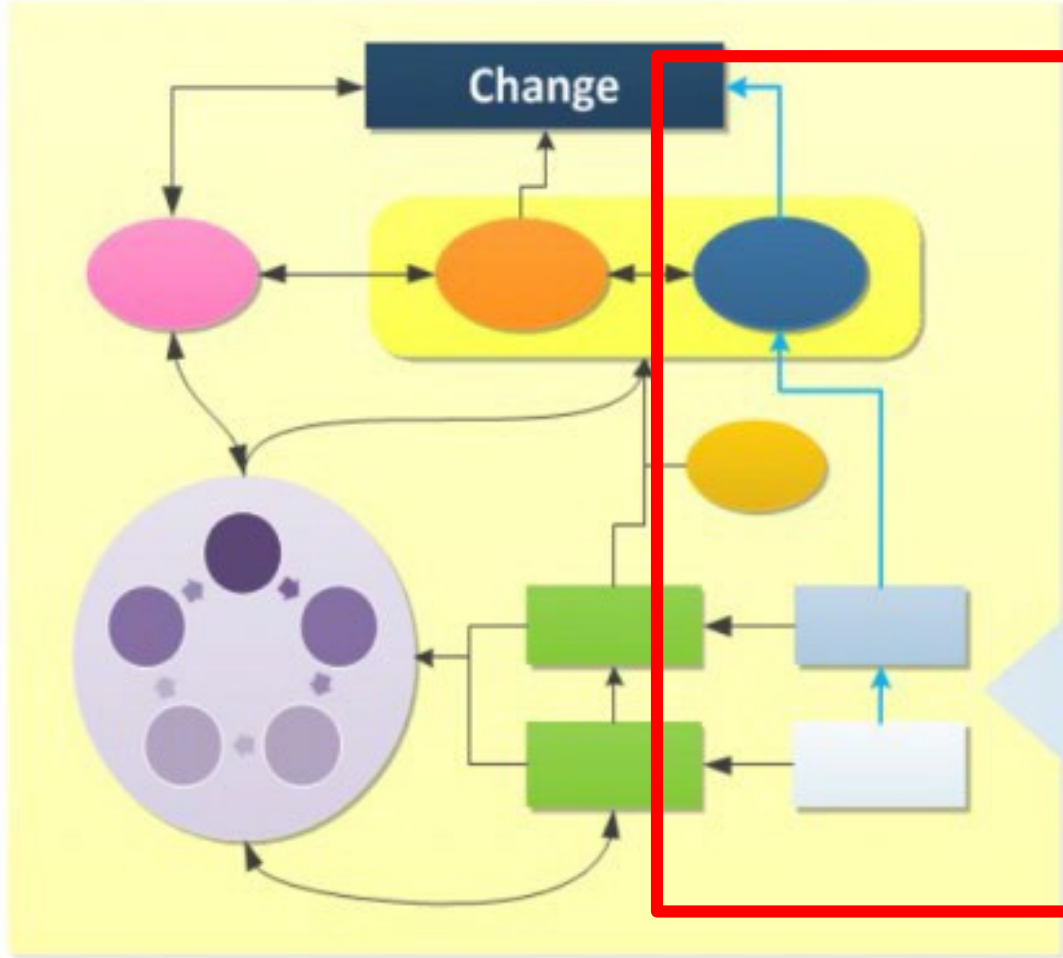
Logical Framework
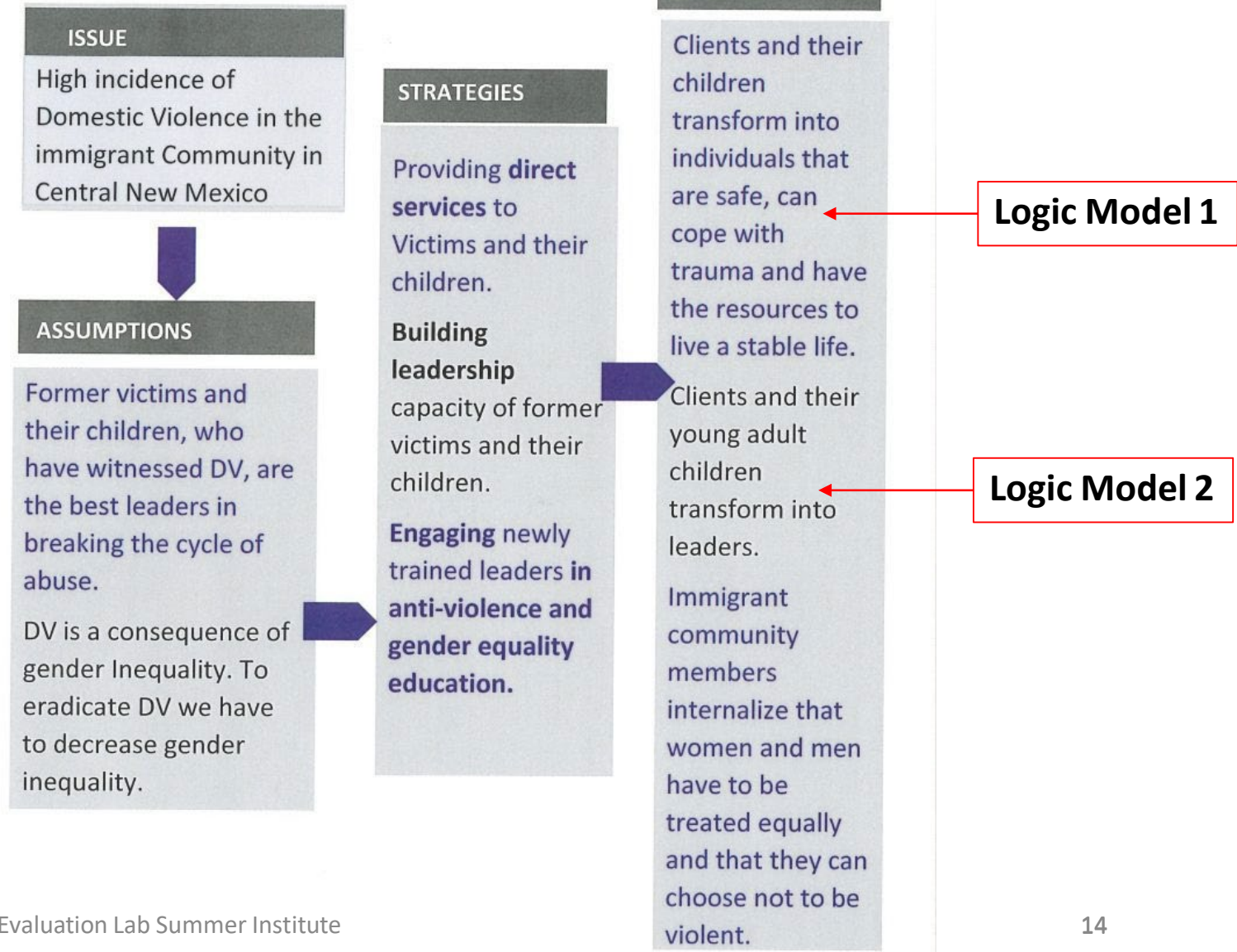Shows just the pathway that your program deals with – neat and tidy

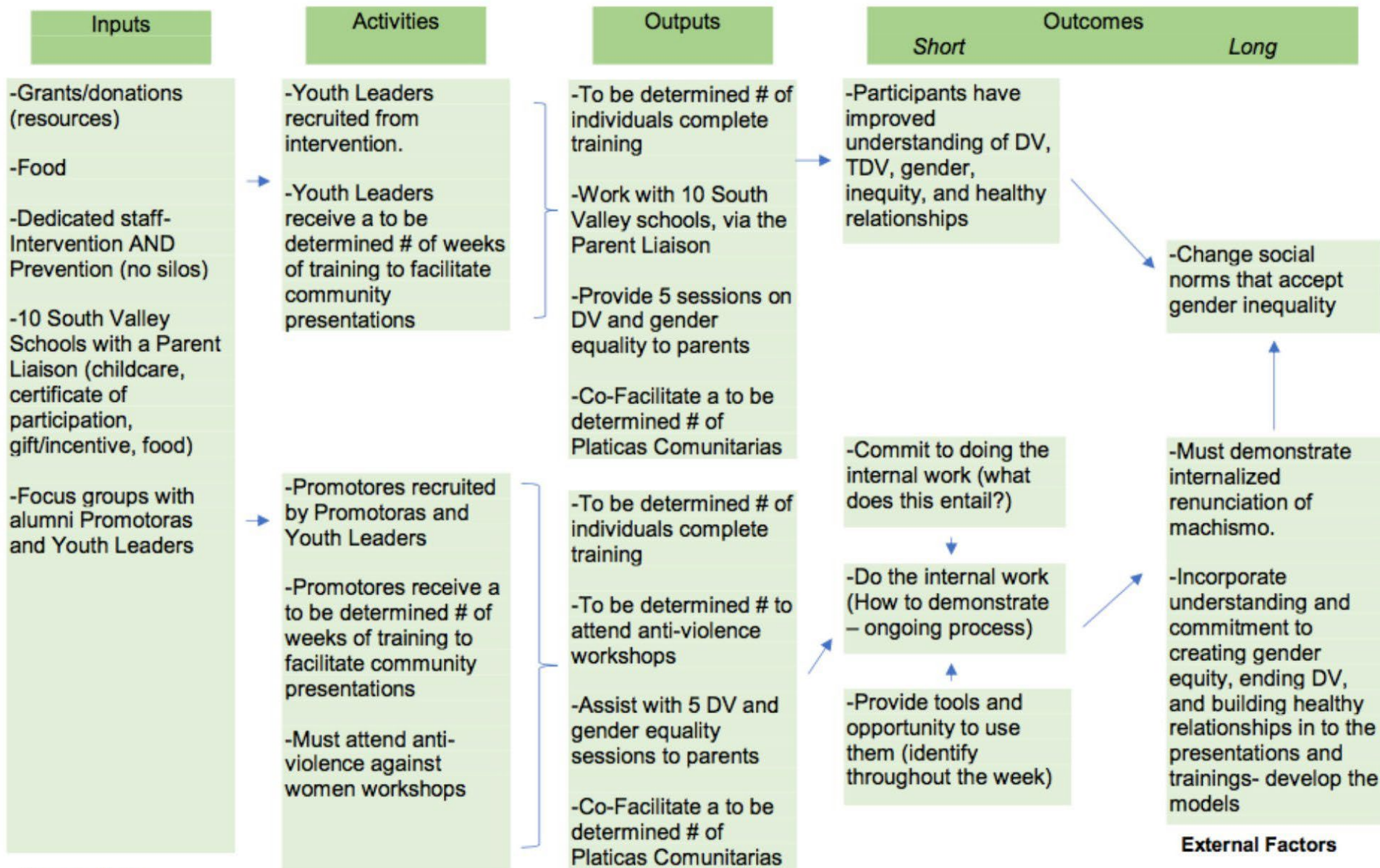# Enlace Comunitario Theory of Change

Enlace Comunitario Logic Model 1 (2018) – Evaluating the Family Program (one of the intervention services)

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Stepping Stones	Outcomes	

-Circle of Security & Nurture Heart Training
-Staff support
-Reflective Supervision
-Clients commitment to grow & build resiliency
-physical building, rooms
-Grants & other funding
-Art & crafts supplies
-Sensory items/tables
-Community support and engagement
-Volunteers
-Knowledge & experience both
	-Events-fall festival
	-Groups
	• Life skills
	• Jovencit@s
	Parenting
	• Crianza 1 & 2
	Women's support
	• group
	Music class
	Individual services
	(Adults & kids)
	-Nurtured Heart Approach
	-Individual & family therapy Case management
	• Legal resources
	• Child Advocacy
	• Immigration Services
	• Educational Services
	• Housing
	Financial Resources
		- Number of adults and children attending program
		- Number of sessions offered
		- Number of participants in attendance
		- Number of participants completing program
		- Number completing assessments
			-Number of stress events reduced
			-Increased positive language used in children
			-Reports of less violence in home
			-Child reports doing better in school, behavior and/or grades
			-Broader vocabulary of positive qualities and knowing how it applies to themselves
			-Can make eye contact
			-Straighter posture
			    -Assertive communication
			    -More expressions
			-Using relaxation techniques
				Short
				-Better coping skills
				• Emotionally healthy responses to child's stress/ hardship
				-Taking care of themselves (parents)
				Self-esteem (children)
				-Able to identify one positive thing about themselves (P-C)
				-Recognize responsibility as a parent
				-Children know they are not at all at fault for difficult situations.
				-Time-out for parents
				• How parents react with children Increase self-awareness (reason why they are doing certain things like raising their voices)
				-Children can recognize tools & people to enhance their safety
					Long
					-Improved parent-child relationship
					-Parent is emotionally supportive
					-More attentive
					-Able to handle difficult emotions better (parents and children)
					-Able to recognize child's emotional state easier
					-Improved emotional Q.O.L
					• More positive feelings Connection with
					• parent & child Feeling of safety/ security

Enlace Comunitario Logic Model 2 (2018) – Prevention Programs

Figure 1. Logic Model for Prevention Programs

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes Short	Outcomes Long

Inputs
- Grants/donations (resources)
- Food
- Dedicated staff- Intervention AND Prevention (no silos)
- 10 South Valley Schools with a Parent Liaison (childcare, certificate of participation, gift/incentive, food)
- Focus groups with alumni Promotoras and Youth Leaders

Activities
- Youth Leaders recruited from intervention.
- Youth Leaders receive a to be determined # of weeks of training to facilitate community presentations

- Promotores recruited by Promotoras and Youth Leaders
- Promotores receive a to be determined # of weeks of training to facilitate community presentations
- Must attend anti-violence against women workshops

Outputs
- To be determined # of individuals complete training
- Work with 10 South Valley schools, via the Parent Liaison
- Provide 5 sessions on DV and gender equality to parents
- Co-Facilitate a to be determined # of Platicas Comunitarias

- To be determined # of individuals complete training
- To be determined # to attend anti-violence workshops
- Assist with 5 DV and gender equality sessions to parents
- Co-Facilitate a to be determined # of Platicas Comunitarias

Outcomes - Short
- Participants have improved understanding of DV, TDV, gender, inequity, and healthy relationships
- Commit to doing the internal work (what does this entail?)
- Do the internal work (How to demonstrate – ongoing process)
- Provide tools and opportunity to use them (identify throughout the week)

Outcomes - Long
- Change social norms that accept gender inequality
- Must demonstrate internalized renunciation of machismo.
- Incorporate understanding and commitment to creating gender equity, ending DV, and building healthy relationships in to the presentations and trainings- develop the models

External Factors

Political landscape

Assumptions
DV survivors are the best change agents to prevent future DV.
Survivors of Childhood Domestic Violence (CDV) ARE survivors.
One cannot unlearn a behavior in just one "touch"/session. Must have multiple touches/sessions (amount TBD).

Side-by-Side Comparison

Logic Model

- Answers "What" – descriptive/representative

- Completes the sentence "we plan to do X, which will give Y result"

- List of components

- Is normally shown as a **matrix**, independently

- Is linear: all activities lead to outputs which lead to outcomes and the goal – **there are no cyclical processes or feedback loops.**

- Includes space for risks/external factors and assumptions, although these are usually only basic. Doesn't include **evidence** for **why** you think one thing will lead to another.

- Is mainly used as a tool for monitoring and program evaluation.

- Can be *part* of the Theory of Change!

Theory of Change

- Answers "How" – explanatory, critical thinking

- Completes the sentence "if we do X then Y will change *because*…"

- Pathway(s) to change

- Is normally presented as a diagram **accompanied by narrative text**

- The diagram is flexible and doesn't have a particular format – it **could include cyclical processes, feedback loops, one box could lead to multiple other boxes**, etc.

- Describes *why* you think one box will lead to another box (e.g., if you think increased knowledge will lead to behavior change, is that an assumption or do you have evidence to show it is the case?).

- Is mainly used as a tool for program design.

- Can contain **several** Logic Models

Bottomline

- Logic models are a snapshot of what you do in your program, without much detail about WHY

- Theories of change provide that context – the WHY, the research and experience behind the logic model
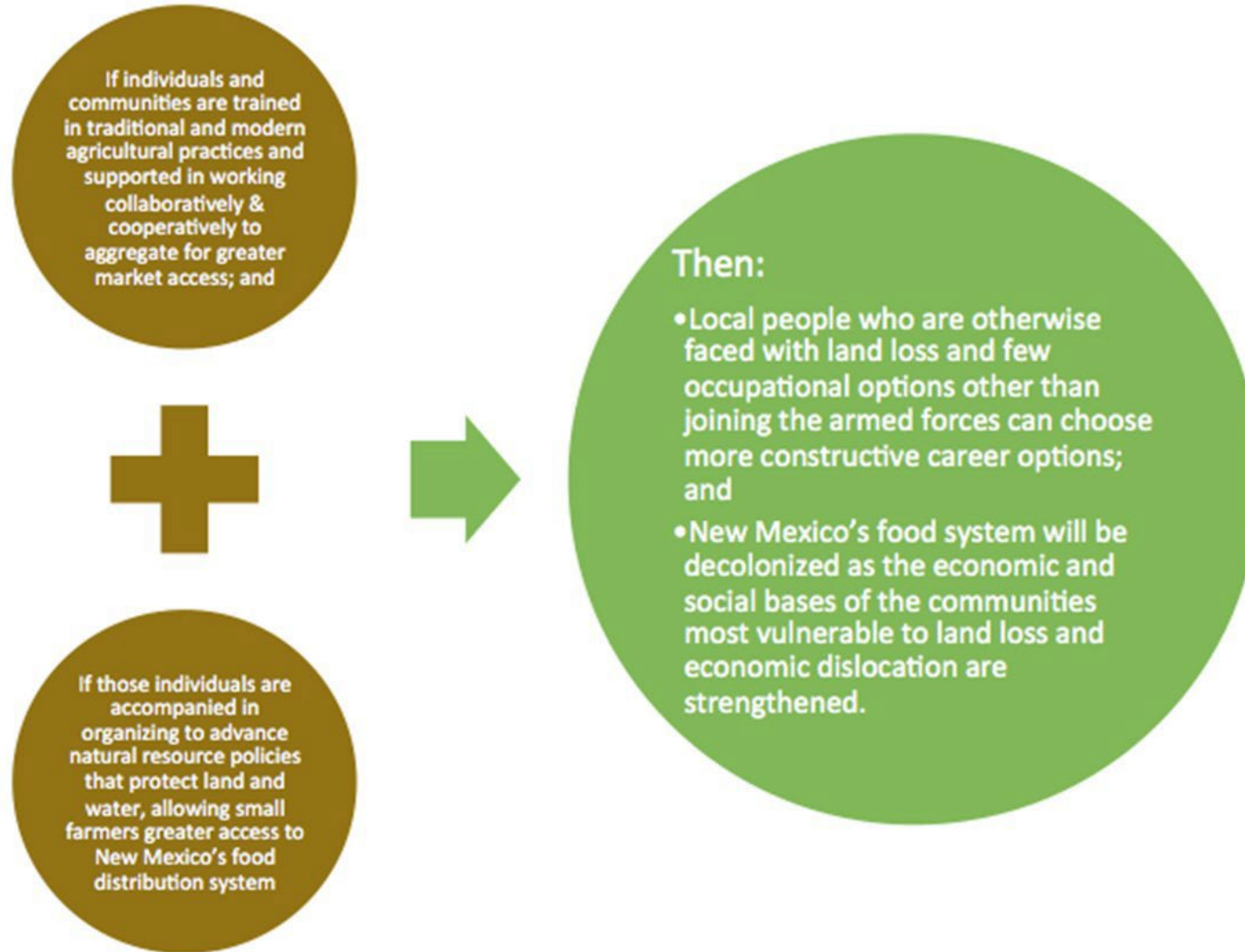
Getting started – Your turn!

1. To get started with your Theory of Change, articulate why you think your program will work

2. Note **WHY** you believe your program will work -

   - This can be organizational knowledge, examples from other organizations who have done similar work, articles, books, theory, etc.
   - Consider how your organization might be a part of a larger picture

Other examples of ToC

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Theory of Change visual for AFSC-NM

Because the security of Indo-Hispano and Indigenous NM communities depends upon self-determination and the preservation of land, water, and culture:

If individuals and communities are trained in traditional and modern agricultural practices and supported in working collaboratively & cooperatively to aggregate for greater market access; and

+

If those individuals are accompanied in organizing to advance natural resource policies that protect land and water, allowing small farmers greater access to New Mexico's food distribution system

→

Then:

- Local people who are otherwise faced with land loss and few occupational options other than joining the armed forces can choose more constructive career options; and
- New Mexico's food system will be decolonized as the economic and social bases of the communities most vulnerable to land loss and economic dislocation are strengthened.

Example of a Completely Text Based Theory of Change

With these INPUTS

If civil society organisations are carefully selected and respond to individual support tailored to their programming and internal systems, they will be able to utilise grants

Assumptions from inputs to process:

- the AcT teams selection process is successful in identifying organisations that are committed to bringing about change (as opposed to just administering aid money with a governance spin on it)
- the AcT team has the skills and judgement to provide appropriate support, manage risk, and pro-actively manage the portfolio
- the CSOs have the relevant sectoral and district-specific knowledge and understanding
- The CSOs can develop familiarity with, and confidence in, working with the changing dynamics of political economy and/or develop organisationally to facilitate working with this understanding

and the following PROCESSES

to develop better targeted strategic interventions which are sensitive to changes over time and in the broader political economy, as well as their geographic location, their sector, institutional mandate and values; and if these organisations also commit to systematic learning individually and collectively the work they do will be more the effective.

Assumptions from process to outputs:

- Systematic learning enables CSOs to grow and move beyond:
- 'business as usual' – rolling out the same approaches and methodologies
- 'copy cat approaches' e.g. the spate of PETS training and studies that were carried out
- 'chasing the money' i.e. following donor priorities rather than their own analysis
- CSOs become aware of the positive and negative lessons learned by others working in similar fields
- CSOs monitor their own effectiveness and make changes as appropriate
- The learning strategy, to which CSOs contribute and derive benefit, enables them to document 'lessons learned' in a way which will be useful to themselves and others.
- CSOs maintain ethics and integrity

We can expect the PROCESS OUTPUTS

CSOs implementing programmes will engage in a range of knowledge generating and information dissemination activities as well as developing the capacity of other stakeholders to articulate their roles and responsibilities.

Assumptions from process output to programme output:

- Citizens are stimulated to respond to the knowledge and information made available either by being directly engaged in the process, or in planning action on the basis of findings.
- Citizens see the value of taking action based on knowledge, information and capacity built.
- Participatory approaches are empowering and can stimulate action
- Citizens overcome fear and apathy and encourage others to join action
- Decision makers recognise that they will not retain power unless they respond to the increasingly assertive citizen
- Decision makers are open to citizen and civil society action.

That will result in the PROGRAMME OUTPUTS

Some participatory activities build directly into citizen action and civil society strengthening, whereas others focus on influencing the behaviour of elected and appointed officials and of the judiciary – at local and national levels.

Influencing activities can be formal or informal, inside track or outside track, and CSOs become more adept at selecting which is going to be most effective under what circumstances.

Assumptions from outcome to purpose:

- Individual elected representatives, appointed officials and members of the judiciary are able to influence the politics and systems that frame their actions.
- Legislation, state systems and official processes are open to change.

That will ensure the PURPOSE WILL BE ACHIEVED

The result of the behaviour changes on the part of key stakeholders is the purpose level of the programme: 'Increased responsiveness and accountability of government through a strengthened civil society

Want to learn more?

- Sara Vaca's journal article: https://journals.sfu.ca/jmde/index.php/jmde_1/article/view/496/444

- Piroska Bivists Bullens article: http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/theory-of-change-vs-logical-framework-whats-the-difference-in-practice/

- Helene Clark & Andrea Anderson presentation from AEA in 2004: https://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco_library/pdf/TOCs_and_Logic_Models_forAEA.pdf

- Sara Vaca's blog post: https://aea365.org/blog/the-difference-between-magic-i-mean-logic-models-and-theories-of-change-by-sara-vaca/

- Another take on similarities and differences: https://www.acacamps.org/news-publications/blogs/research-360/curious-friendship-between-logic-models-theory-change

- Examples of Theories of Change, with checklist for components: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08a66ed915d622c000703/Appendix_3_ToC_Examples.pdf