

Presented by
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Director,
ActKnowledge



Community of Practice on Results Based Management

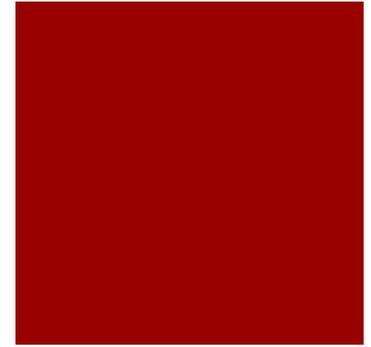
2014 and beyond: how to ensure
delivery of better and more results
by the European Social Fund?

EU conference
5-6 November 2012

Intervention Logic and Theories of Change:

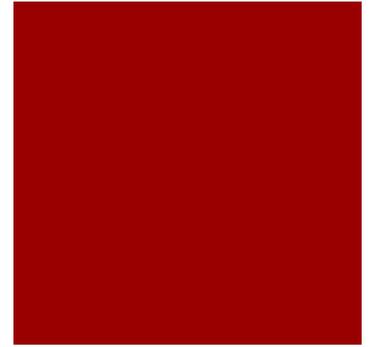
What are they, how to build them, how to use
them

Objectives of the Maastricht conference



- ◆ Provide a broader understanding of what it means to “manage for results” and to be “accountable”
- ◆ Reflect on a variety of approaches that are available to ensure a more comprehensive accountability of our programmes and the organisations that have a responsibility for deploying them
- ◆ Support decision-making on what approaches require further development / strengthening for our programmes and organisations

Efficiency vs. Creativity

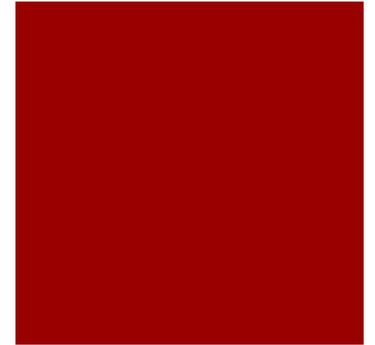


How to not sacrifice one for the other, or let one drive the other.

Need co-existence

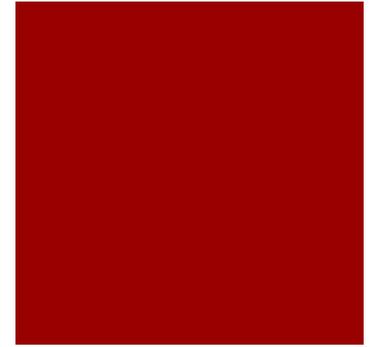
HOW TO DO?

Commission objectives:



- ◆ a more results-oriented programming process
- ◆ to ensure that cohesion policy programmes have a clear intervention logic
- ◆ are oriented towards results
- ◆ and include the appropriate provisions for an integrated approach to development and the effective implementation of the Funds.

Statement: RBM has multiple approaches



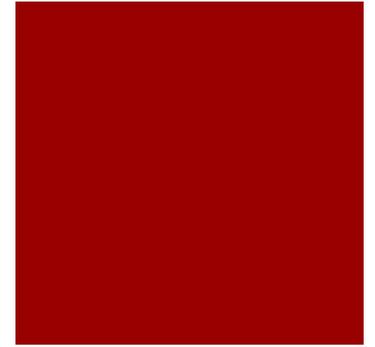
Any approach needs CORE standards.

Theory of Change is the approach we recommend to provide basic standards of needed components and structure because it is the most thorough, and can be graphically organized to be readable and actionable.

The jargon can change

The scope can change

The basic approach should not.

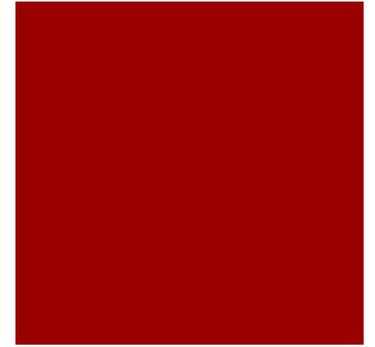


This talk:

How Theory of Change, as an approach, resolves these needs and parameters

IF DONE WITH INTENTIONALITY
TO USE PROPERLY!

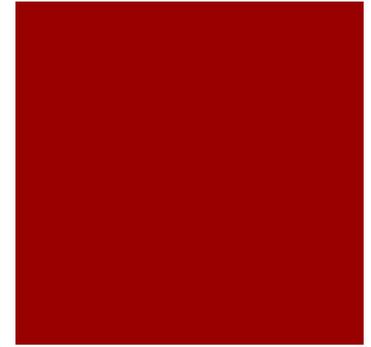
Audience Question #1



Do you think Theory of Change is:

1. Better than logframes and results chains?
2. Not as good
3. The same
4. Don't know yet

What are the basics that any approach must have to be useful to programs and initiatives?



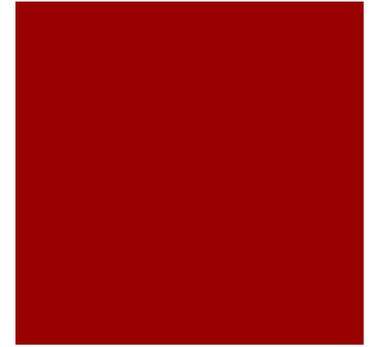
- ◆ Need critical thinking
- ◆ Need contextual reality
- ◆ Need range of perspectives, local knowledge and research
- ◆ Need specific outcomes
- ◆ Need to be explicit about underlying assumptions
- ◆ Need improvement on frameworks, such as logframes to make the conceptual model clearer



What is Theory of Change?

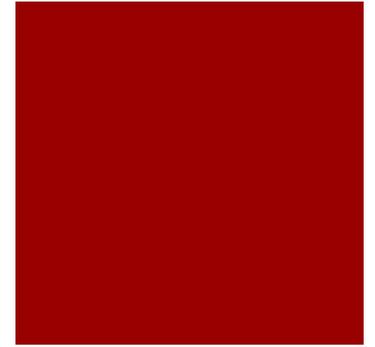
A representation of how and why a complex change process will succeed under specific circumstances

What is Theory of Change?



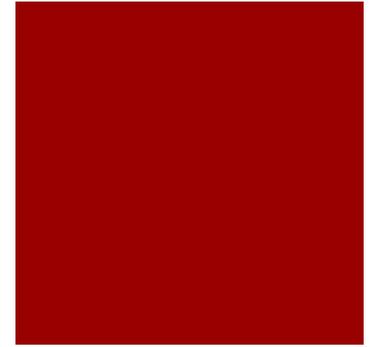
Both a “process”
and a “product”

In COP RBM Language



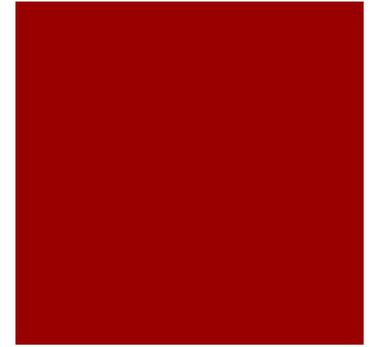
- A Theory of Change is a “Results Chain”, with context, explanations & hypotheses added, and taking into account historical perspectives
- A good theory should be reflecting “complexity”, albeit in a more linear way (more on that later)

How ToC is used



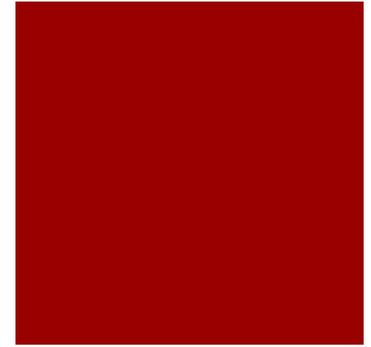
- ◆ As a roadmap of your Outcomes– how you get where you want to go
- ◆ The basis of an agreement (buy-in) of all partners about what needs to happen and who does it
- ◆ Your framework for implementation (required interventions/actions)
- ◆ On-going check-ins to see if you are on track
- ◆ Your basis for evaluation

What's Different About ToC?

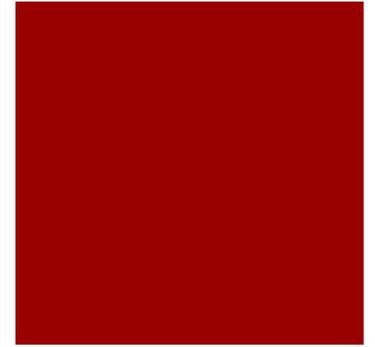


- You work backwards (start with the vision)
- It maximizes the value of participation
- It is a “living” and changing framework that improves as you learn
- Your “theory” explains why what you do will work

ToC is a unique combination of collaboration, logic, and visual mapping

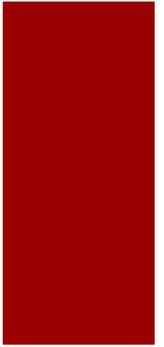


Advantages of Theory of Change



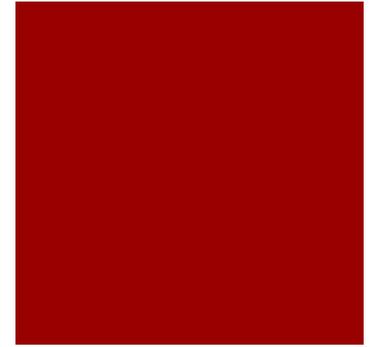
- ◆ Participatory & Collaborative
- ◆ Requires surfacing contextual assumptions
- ◆ Requires explanations of why each outcome is needed and why intervention logic is sound and compelling
- ◆ Logical, Practical & Specific
- ◆ Aligned with Your Goals
- ◆ Measures Success in Ways to Advance Your Own Learning

Theory of Change Components



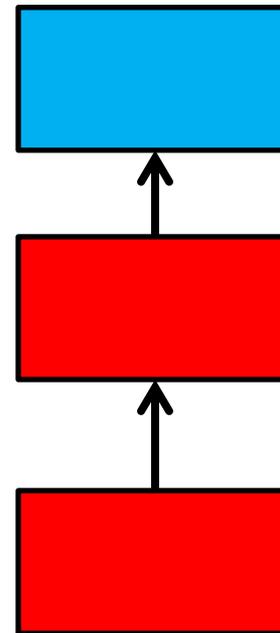
1. Outcomes, modeled in causal pathways
2. Interventions (activities), leading to the relevant Outcome(s)
3. Assumptions
4. Rationales
5. Indicators
6. Narrative

Map Your PATHWAY to Change



The process begins with
OUTCOMES and
PRECONDITIONS, similar to
Results Chain

Yes, this looks
terribly linear and
simple and
restrictive. I know!
It is just a "Building
Block"



Are outcomes and impacts
different?

Goal

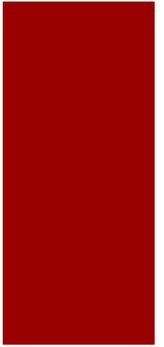
Impact

Outcome

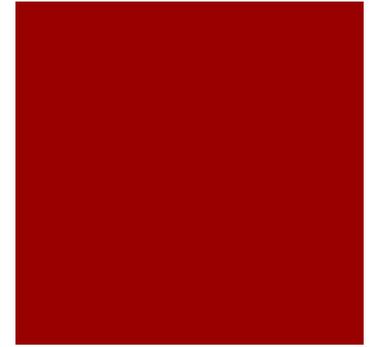
Aims

Result

Jargon Doesn't Matter, but
make sure you use consistently
in your own work



Turn your long-term vision into a well-defined outcome



Examples:

- Mercury levels in water is reduced by 2/3 in Atlantic
- 95% of students graduate from high school
- Tobacco use among 16 to 21 year olds in region is cut in half.
- 95% of the population in southern countries are included in the financial and credit system

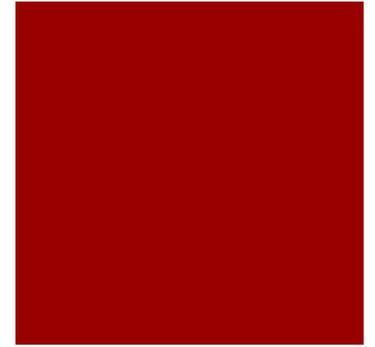
A good pathway (and a good theory of change) identifies:



- Where you want to go
- The route you will take to get there
- Why certain milestones are **necessary** steps in the path you will travel

And that is the kind of pathway you need to build to get to where you want to be

Assumptions



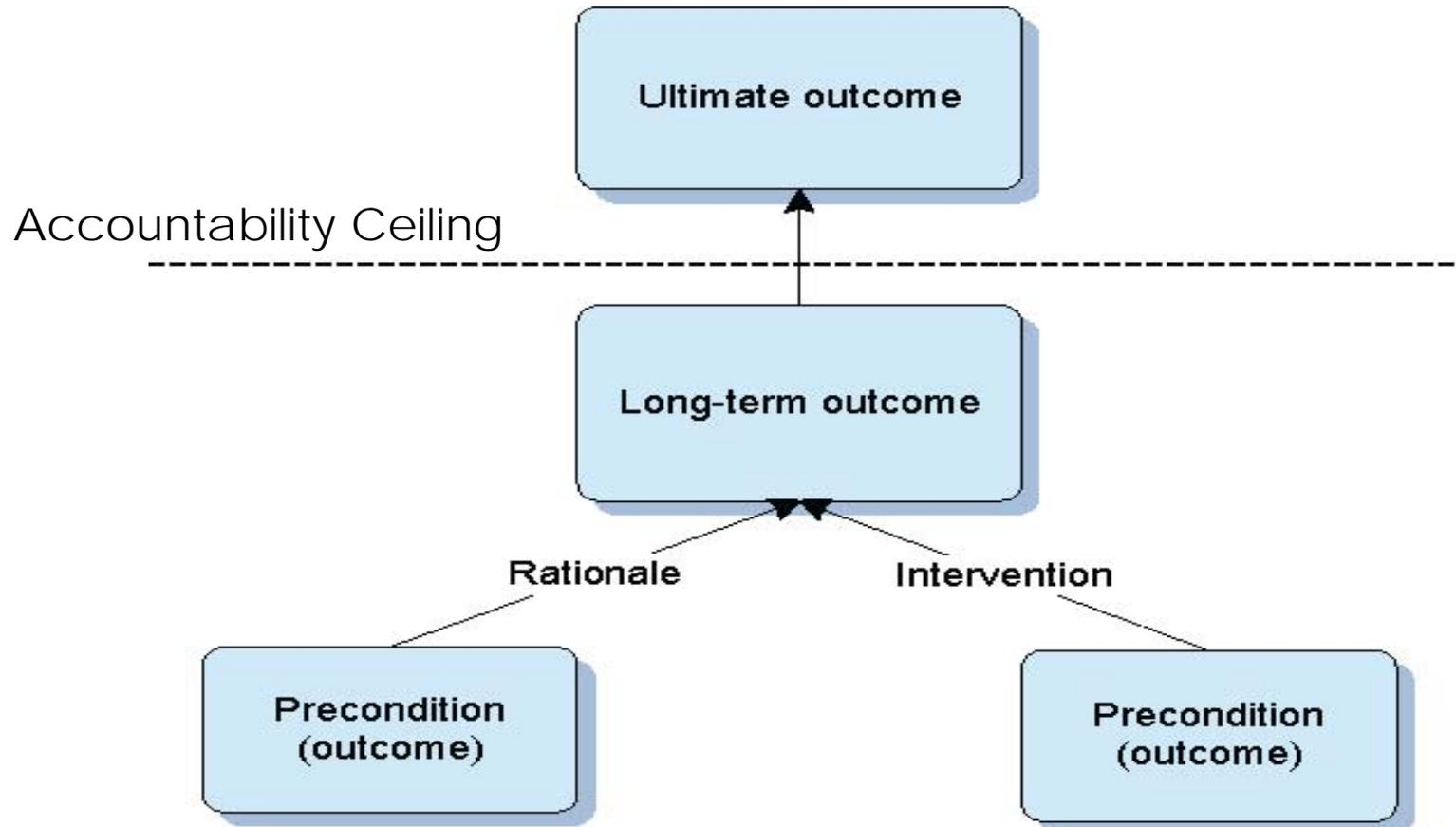
**THAT IS HOW THEY DIFFER FROM
PRECONDITIONS**

Are beliefs about conditions that you think already exist and are not problematic.

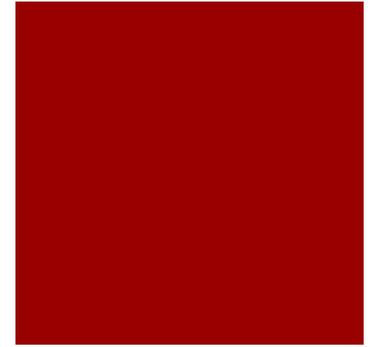
And

Are critical to the validity of the Theory.

Theory of Change - Visual Language



Rationales



Making a Results Chain meaningful, and being able to test its plausibility and veracity to complex situations requires:

- ◆ Explaining very step of the way WHY outcomes are needed, and why they would lead to future outcomes
- ◆ Why, in given contexts, interventions done in certain ways are most likely to bring about the change.

Indicators



Measurable Indicators of Success or EVIDENCE

◆ What does it look like if the outcome is met?

Example:

Outcome: Students will graduate from grade school academically ready for middle school.

An Indicator might be: 6th grade reading scores

1 Needs Attention

2 What Will Change?:

3 Students language skills in French and English.

Who?:

Students currently attending an English educational institutions.

How Many?:

students in all 23 CLC's show improvement

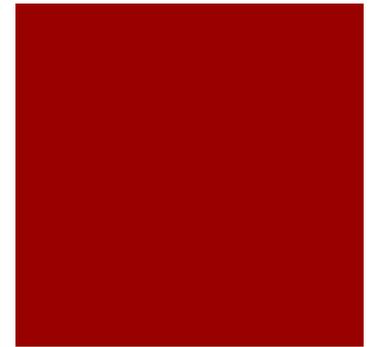
How Much?:

improved by ?
Will have to consult with SB Rep

By When?:

2015

For Every Indicator:



What?

For Whom?

How Many?

How Good?

By When?

Narrative



The plain language summary - short and compelling story that explains the map.

Can have different versions to emphasize different points, level of detail, etc. Can be as little as their "elevator" speech, or a one-page handout.

ESD uses DT process

All of ESD understands + is comfortable to use DT process
ESD is trained on DT process

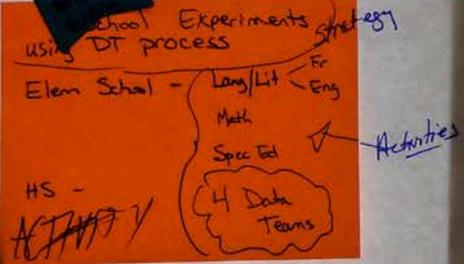
making the needs on the outcome
→ quantitative
→ qualitative
WHO?
How MANY?
WHAT LEVEL?
BY WHEN?
→ source of data
→ does it exist & is it available

Quality level of use data
High ment b/n tough/complex
can be achieved
(PRE) for each & spec
dnds.

QUALITY Explains of results as explained in A. Report (590)
evidence to guide decision-making
no of schools that developed their degree of use

Data team in place to support school success

- Overview of DT Process
- Backward mapping
- Simulations
- Coaching models
- Assessment Literacy
Skills knowledge Tools (knowledge of)
Training of ESD



SB ~~to use evidence based models~~ supports methods to use evidence based models
Sustaining (EB)

Data to use is available + accessible to data teams

Data Teams @ the SB to build Capacity
Directorate / SR

EXISTENCE of an Interdisciplinary team @ board
Quality degree of participation sharing
- (1.05) directors

Principal + Teacher buy-in to DT Process

Train DT Facilitator G. Hope

COMMUNICATION TOOLS
- web site
- docs
Existence of...
Postings
MELS
3 SAGES
Partnership support group

Provincial Data Team build capacity
Leaders
Share their practices of using evidence

Establish small ESD Data Team core group
Dir
Asst Dir
Cons. (Prov. Evidence-based mem)
Evaluation Consultant
Evidence-based Dir

Existence of 1 DT consisting of 4-5 ppl.

Use the process (data as an end) vs (data as a means)

Lead Teams
- discuss tools & comments in support (feedback & log)
- participatory action in training
- members apply some principles of DT in their boards... releases the pressure

Participant develops use

OUTCOMES

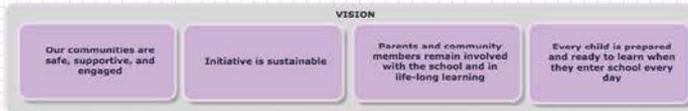




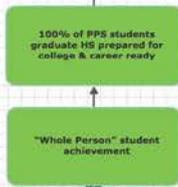




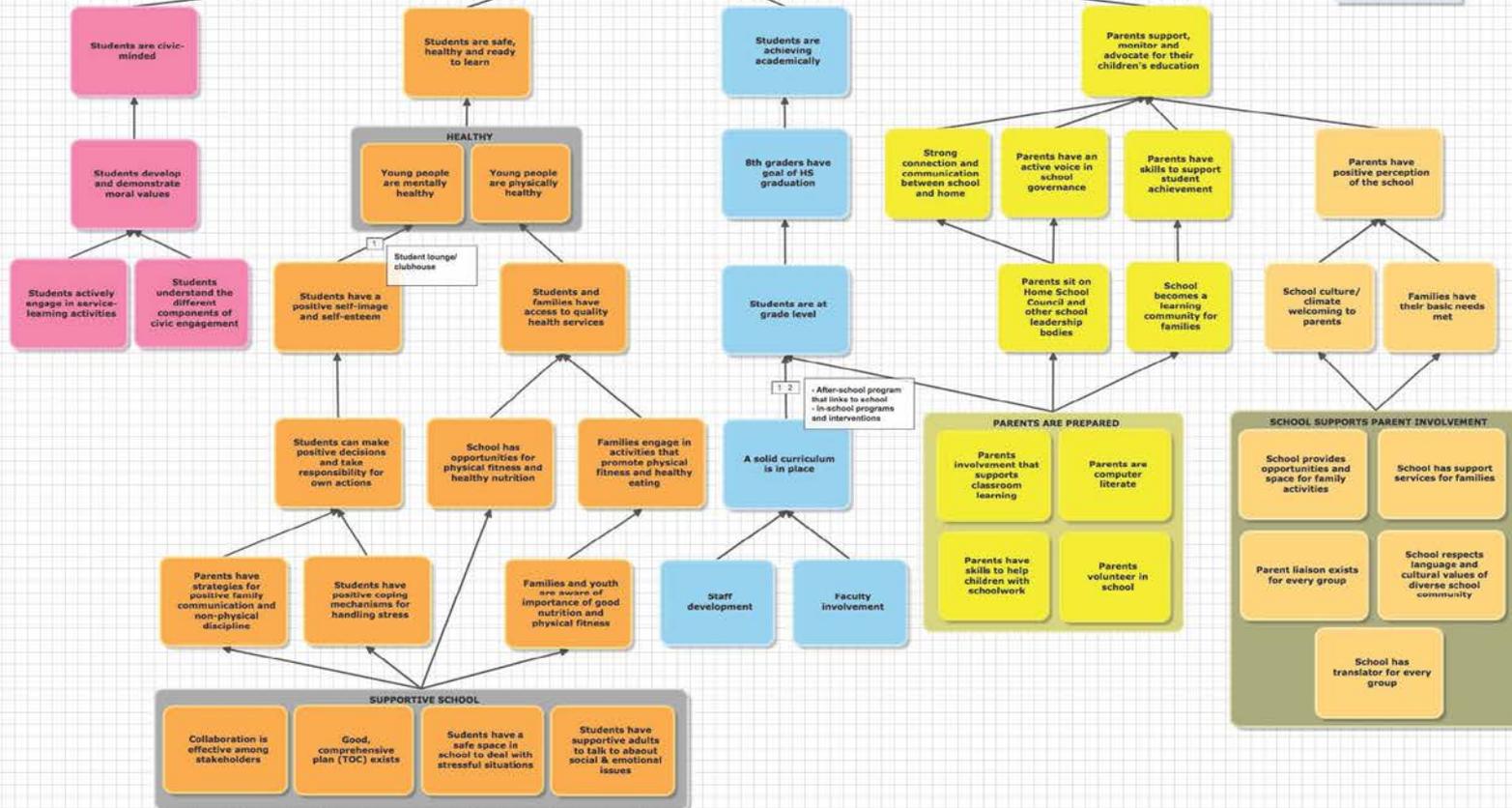
After a lot of discussion, complex initiatives
start to look manageable



Full Service Community Schools Initiative
 Paterson, New Jersey
 School Five Theory of Change
 4 Aug 2011



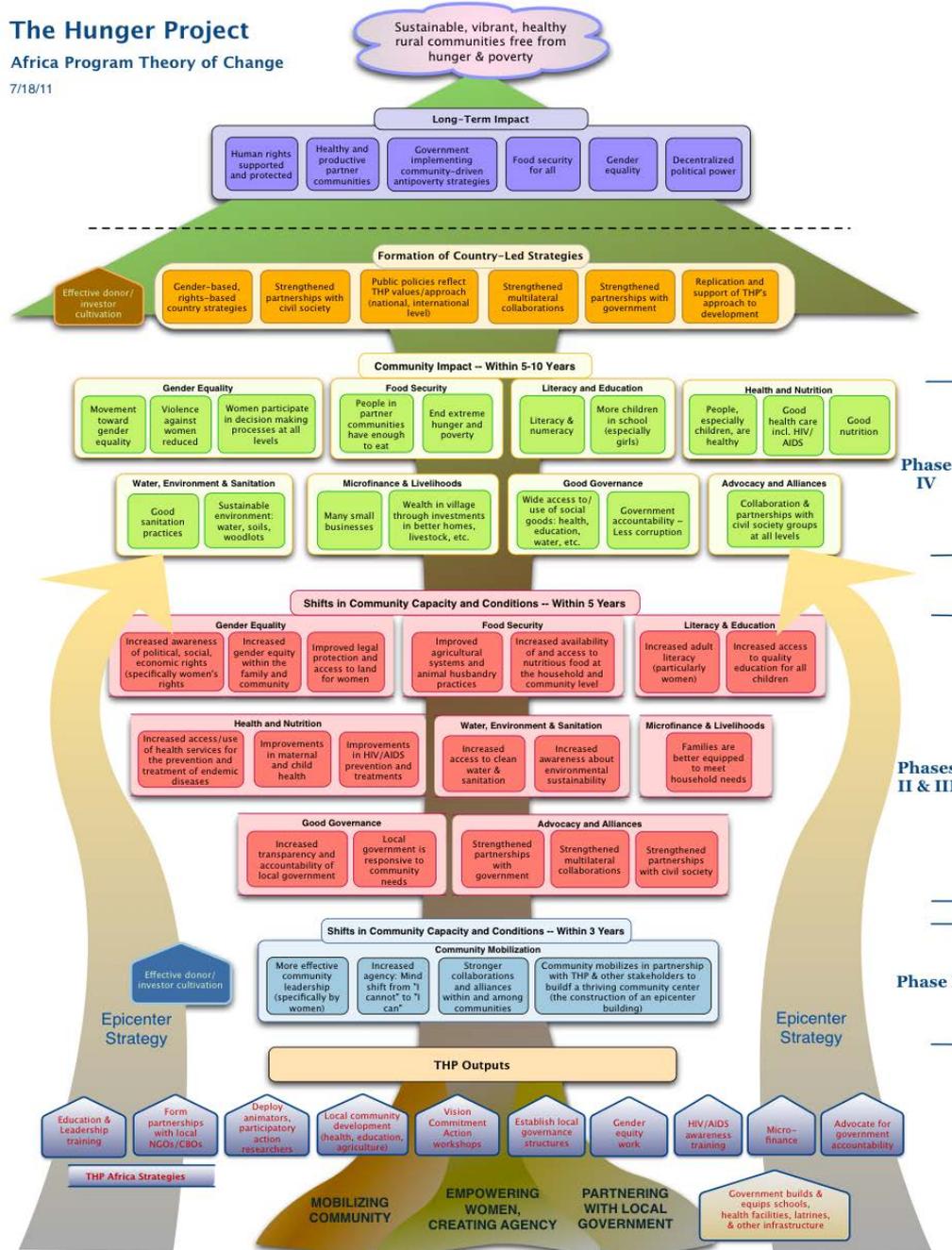
Color Legend	
	School Support of Parents
	Parent Support of Students
	Academic achievement
	Vision
	Civic Engagement
	Physical & Mental Health
	Physical & Mental Health
	School Support of Parents
	Vision
	Long-term Outcomes
	Parents are Prepared



The Hunger Project

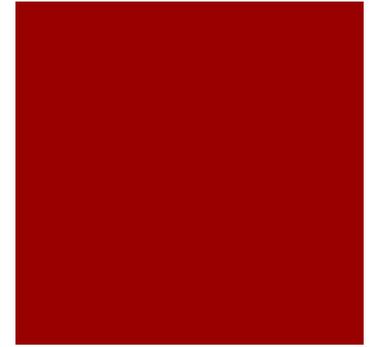
Africa Program Theory of Change

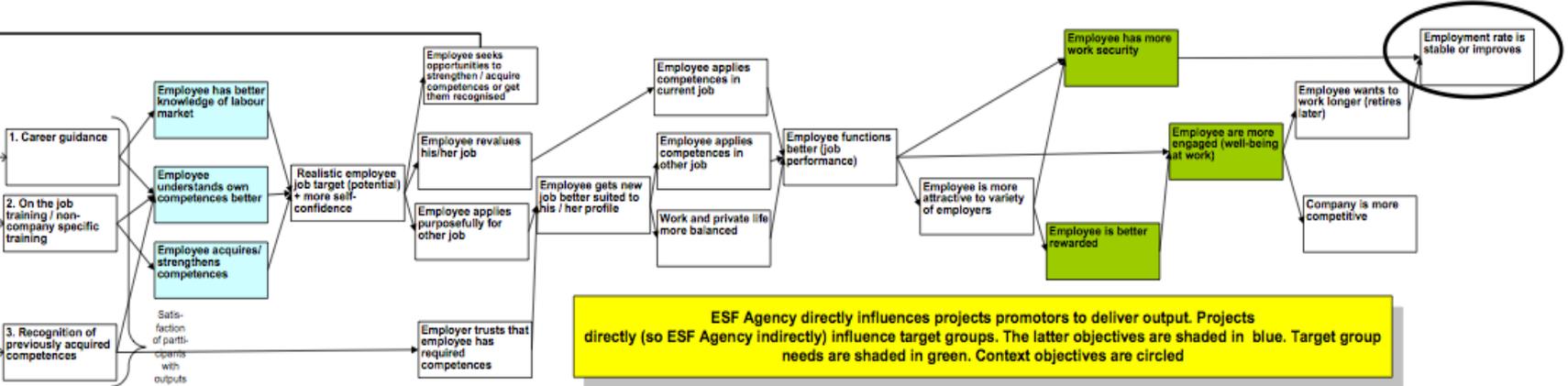
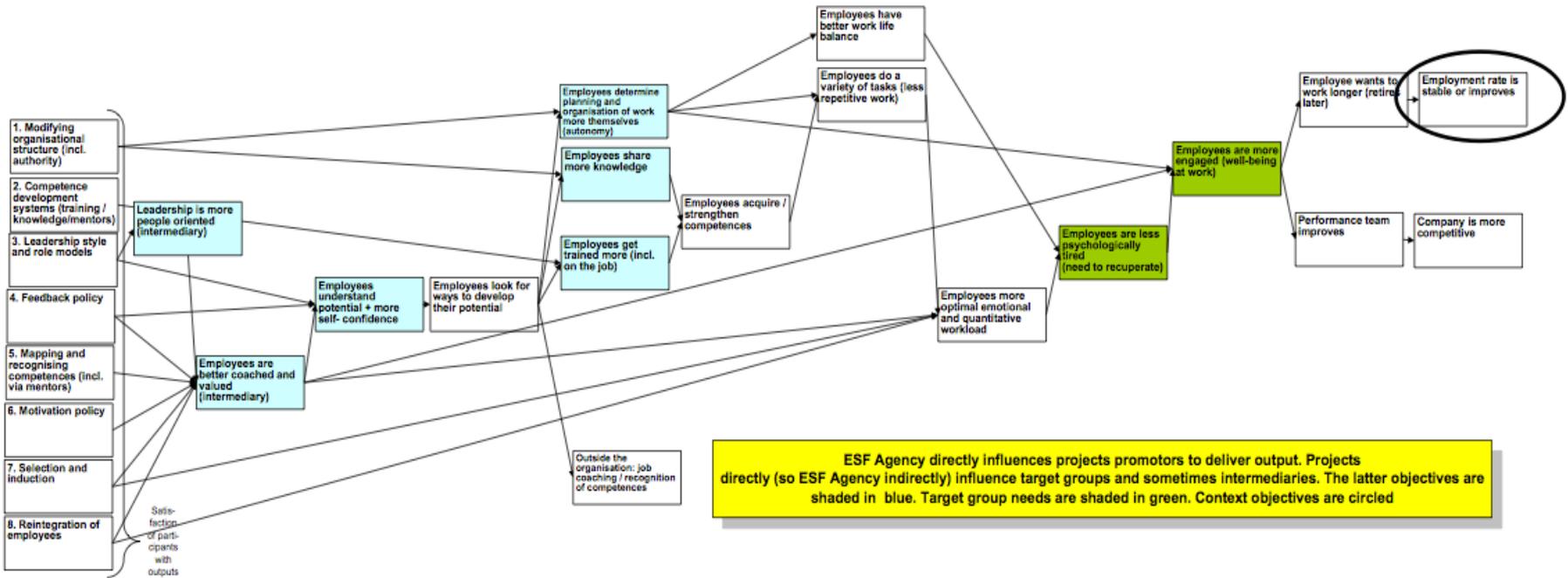
7/18/11

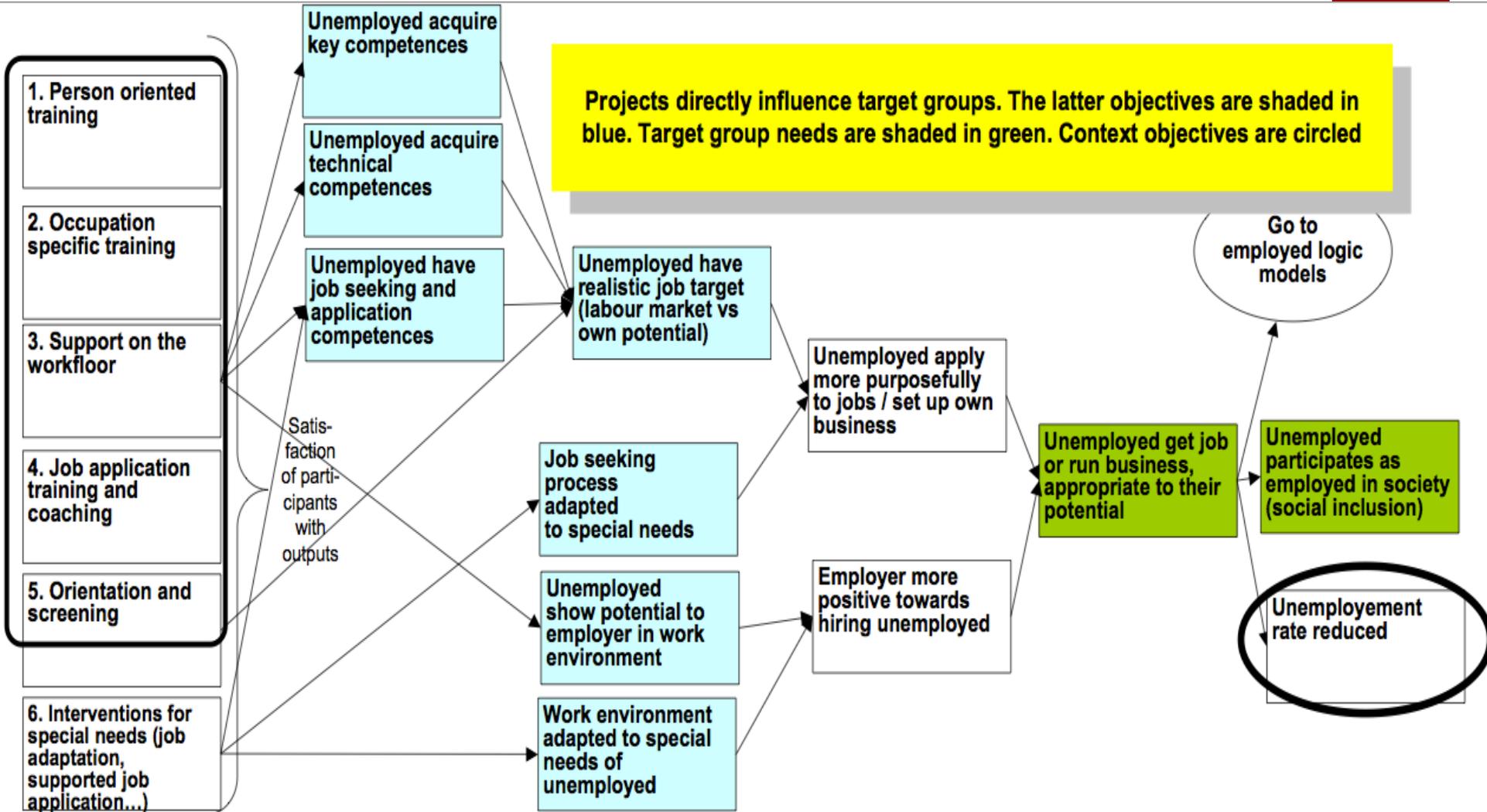


Brief Comment on ESF Examples

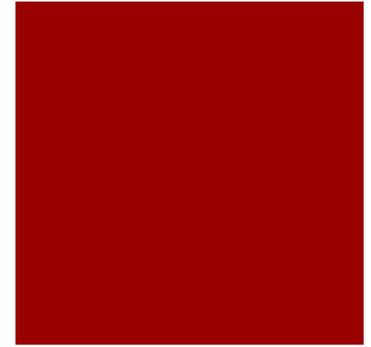
from COP partners in
Flanders and the Czech
Republic







These are not full Theories of Change – some comments

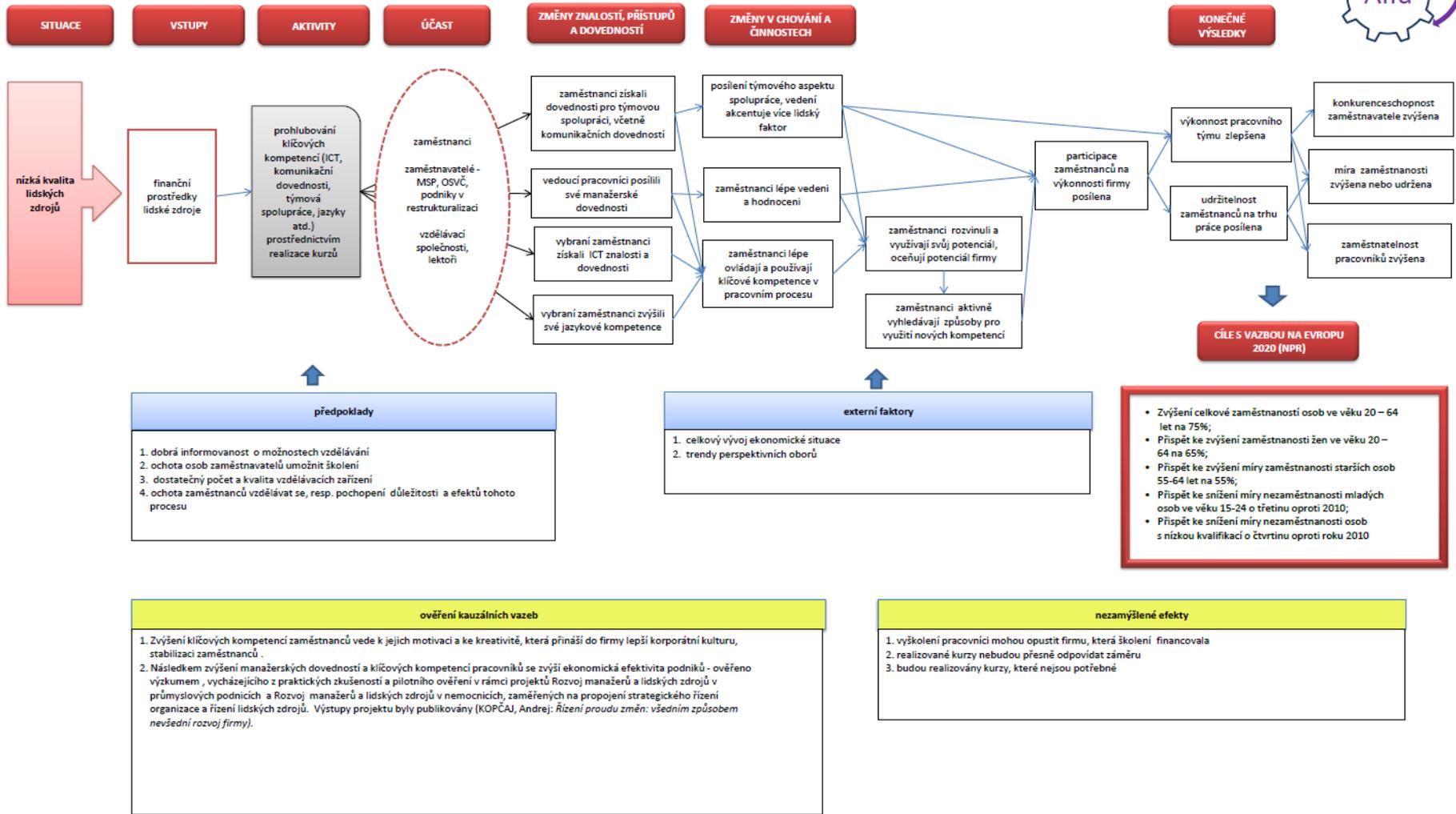


- ◆ They are pathways of outcomes
- ◆ They are a bit confusing; not optimal illustrations
- ◆ They do not include explanations (hypotheses) about why the outcomes presented are “necessary” and “sufficient” or the explanation of where an intervention is needed, why and how it works.

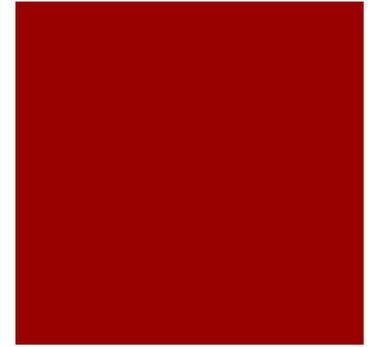
Another example, including more elements:

TEORIE ZMĚNY

IIa. Další vzdělávání v podnicích a podpora udržení zaměstnání



The previous example is including more “ToC” elements, by adding external factors, assumptions, previous evidence



Random (and perhaps erroneous observations:

- The “assumptions” are not the same as rationales explaining each connection in the theory, but really good to have brought to the surface.
- I do not see interventions in any of the models anywhere except at the start, but this is easily added.

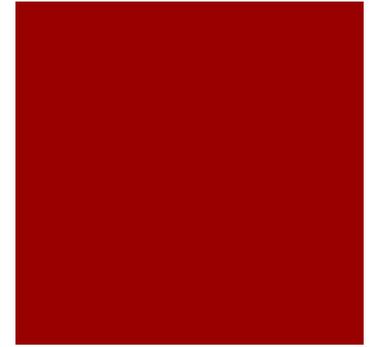
IN ANY EVENT, EACH OF THE COP
PARTNER'S MODELS HAVE CORE IDEA OF
"RESULTS CHAIN"



THEY MAY LACK:

- Consistent, readable format
- Rationales, assumptions and context
- Interventions connected to each outcome

Deciding on Scope and Specificity



Narrow and Shallow	Narrow and Deep
Broad and Shallow	Broad and Deep

Scope Options In Detail

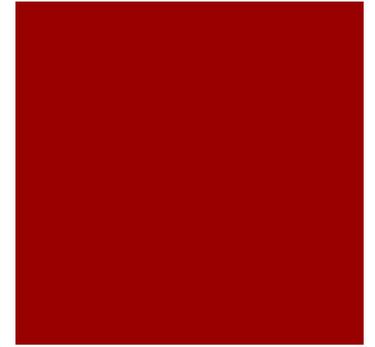
Narrow and Shallow: Show the least amount of information. This scope identifies relevant preconditions to the long-term goal, but not all necessary preconditions. Usually it focuses “narrowly” only on those preconditions that the initiative may address. For example if a long-term goal is employment, a narrow scope may only identify the skill-related preconditions to employment and not identify things like available child care, stable lives, or attitudes that may be necessary for people to get and retain jobs, but that are outside the purview of the initiative. Similarly, the framework is “shallow” in that only the pathways are not worked all the way back to the beginning (where the initiative would start) or multiple outcomes are summarized for simplicity. **Useless, don’t bother!**

Narrow and Deep: As with “narrow and shallow”, in this case all of the preconditions for the long-term goal are not identified, but for those that are, detailed pathways are developed, so that every intermediate outcome is identified. This scope provides enough detail for the initiative to make decisions within the narrow framework it identified. This scope may be **most practical for very small- scale initiatives who just want to map out what they need to do**. Strength: Allows small initiatives to benefit from rigorous theory of change thinking and provide a blueprint for decision-making and evaluation. Caution: since some preconditions to reaching the long-term goal have not been accounted for, the initiative needs to be realistic about what level of success it can expect, given that it will only change what it has identified.

Broad and Shallow: In this case, all of the preconditions for the long-term goal are identified. However, in this framework, the pathways may not go back much further. This type of framework is **sometimes used by funders, or intermediaries**, to identify a set of outcomes at a high level, and then ask individual grantees to develop the pathways to reach one or more of those higher-level outcomes. Strength: Can demonstrate a basic theory about what is needed, while providing a lot of flexibility for development of how to get to the higher-level outcomes. This type of framework can provide a unifying principle for multi-site, or multi-topic initiatives. Caution: This type of framework does not provide much guidance on how to reach long-term goals.

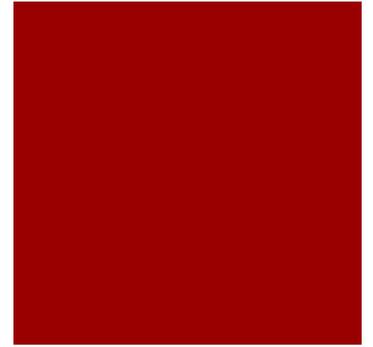
Broad and Deep: The version I wish everyone could do. It identifies all of the preconditions to change, and has a pathway of outcomes needed to bring all the outcomes about. This scope provides a level of detail that allows for the most internal learning, provides a blueprint to make decisions, and a finely honed evaluation that can sort out what is really happening. Strength: a project that has worked out a broad and deep theory is more likely to produce the desired changes and be able to be flexible as they learn by doing. Caution: You can work on this forever!

What are ToC Benefits?



- ◆ Participatory
- ◆ Safe Place to Reflect
- ◆ Roles of Partners Clear
- ◆ User-friendly
- ◆ Dynamic, flexible
- ◆ Gap analysis easier with visual
- ◆ Transparency
- ◆ Realistic Expectations
- ◆ Improved Evaluation

Remember, there are three ways to know if a Theory of Change is any good...

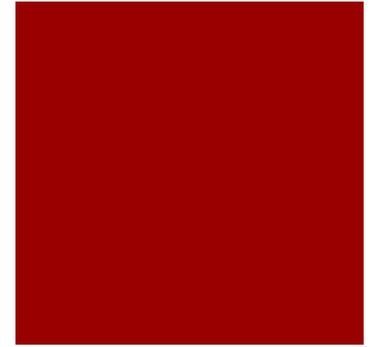


◆ Plausibility

◆ Doability

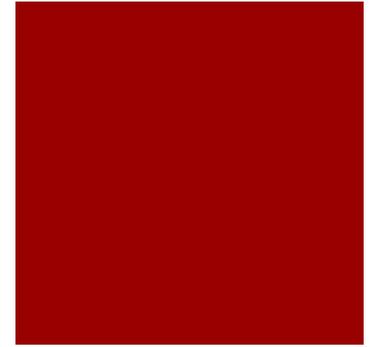
◆ Testability

Caveats



- ◆ Don't take a short cut and call it a Theory of Change
- ◆ Don't put it on a shelf and think it's done
- ◆ Be creative about how and when to communicate the details

Differences from Other Approaches?



- ◆ Logframes – ToC is easier to read, do gap analysis, communicate. Most logframes lack explanatory power, though they can if done well.
- ◆ Logic Models – descriptive only of program components. No “theory”, though some sophisticated frameworks called “logic models” do show Results Chain (rarely). Almost out of use now.
- ◆ Results-Based Accountability – Early attempt to focus on results and process but lacks pathways – the “missing middle” remains.
- ◆ Results Chains – Can be hard to read, generally also lack surfacing of contextual assumptions
- ◆ Scorecards – Strong on reporting targets, but not on “how” or “why” and don’t demonstrate connections.

This does not due the many variations within each justice, and some good papers have recently been written on differences in more depth.

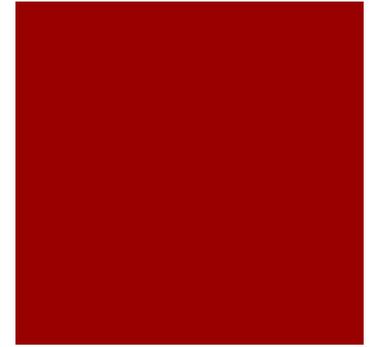
Audience Question #2



Is Theory of Change different than you thought before this morning:

1. Yes, it is more powerful
2. Yes, but no better than anything else
3. Exactly as I understood it
4. Don't know yet

Questions and Misconceptions



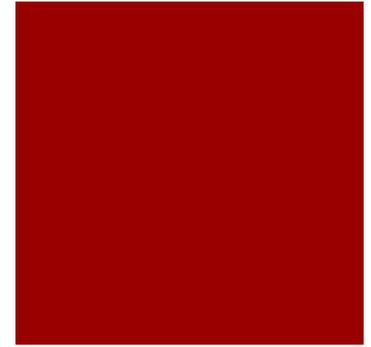
- ◆ **Complexity theory posits that theories can serve to show how something has worked in the past, but cannot be used for planning.**

WHAT?? And...FALSE: How could we do anything in life if we did not have assumptions about how the world works, about how people behave in certain situations, and what it would take us to succeed?

Everything we do, not just in international development, is based on implicit beliefs – many, layered, contradictory, complex and changing beliefs. The idea of ToC is to make that all EXPLICIT. It is future-oriented – your assumptions about how you will get where you want to go.

Basing a future goal on lessons from the past is great.

Questions and Misconceptions

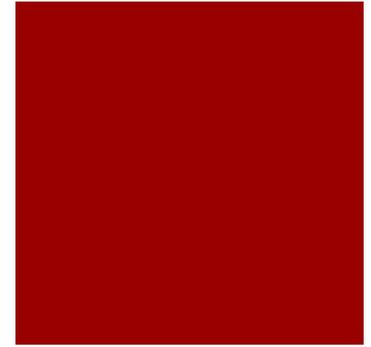


- ◆ **Results Statements are all about benefits that are too generic to make decisions about actions; e.g. “socio-economic and environmental improvements”**

TRUE: All results (or outcomes) are a stated benefit, be it a change in a condition (health, income, equality) or a change in a behavior (non-discrimination, recycling)

FALSE: That a ToC can be constructed with vague results statements. Every “benefit” has to be specified as to exactly what change, to whom, in what way. Some results need to occur before others, hence the “pathway” is the core construct in a ToC.

Questions and Misconceptions



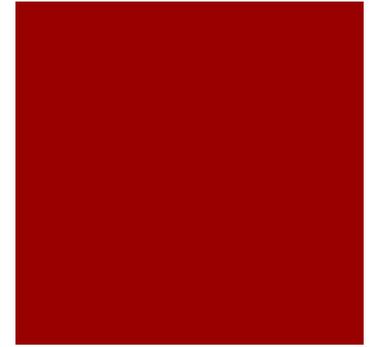
- ◆ TOCs can be "cut and paste" from some other project

FALSE: A theory must be contextually based and include perspectives of key stakeholders and expose underlying assumptions of the situation. Existing theory and literature in well-researched topics can help an initiative not start from scratch, but you can NEVER just copy a theory!

- ◆ All theory can be reduced to action leads to change in behaviour leads to benefit.

FALSE, and OVERLY SIMPLISTIC: A good theory explains what conditions in attitude, knowledge, systems, environments, policies, etc. need to be in place before another condition can change. How action leads to changes in behaviors is only one piece of a good theory.

Questions and Misconceptions



- ◆ TOC is an extension of the traditional “plan the work –in excruciating detail-, work the plan” and it’s linearity impedes flexibility/capacity to adapt

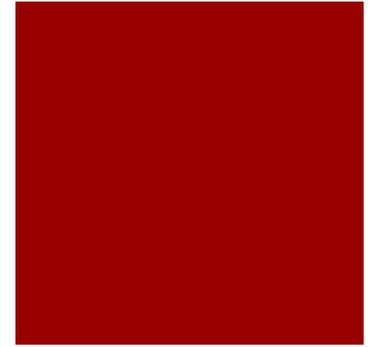
FALSE: Completely false! ToC is not about engaging in an endless planning process – it is a critical thinking technique to structure complicated concepts in representations that allow all aspects of a context and situational factors to be accounted for.

TRUE: A ToC is a linear presentation.

FALSE: The linear presentation is assumed to reflect complex reality. Rather, the linear presentation is a form of deconstruction of the experience of the initiative. By exposing implicit assumptions and having a structure, there is MORE freedom for creative ideas to emerge not less.

TRUE: Some people are put off by the linear “look” of ToC, but we believe strongly that when cooking you have to add the ingredients in the right order before you taste the full flavors of the finished meal.

Questions and Misconceptions



◆ The linear “look” of ToC is at odds with complexity theory

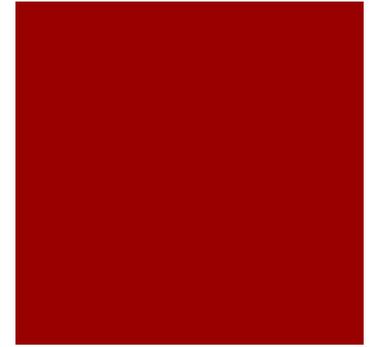
YES AND NO: A ToC does not attempt to represent “lived” experiential reality, and is an abstracted version of reality to make action possible: what steps lead to what? What to do next.

TRUE: A ToC is a linear presentation.

FALSE: The linear presentation is assumed to reflect complex reality. Rather, the linear presentation is a form of deconstruction of the experience of the initiative. By exposing implicit assumptions and having a structure, there is MORE freedom for creative ideas to emerge not less.

TRUE: Some people are put off by the linear “look” of ToC, but we believe strongly that when cooking you have to add the ingredients in the right order before you taste the full flavors of the finished meal.

Questions and Misconceptions



- ◆ **The linear “look” of ToC is at odds with complexity theory (CONT).**

FALSE: A Theory of Change neglects to account for the complexities of the real world. A good ToC must be informed by history, evidence, local context, power relations, understanding of complex relationships amongst players, and macro and micro level forces.

THE CHALLENGE: to structure complex systems in a way that enables action, accountability (to yourselves), lesson, and sorting through how change happens.

How Can Donors and Funders Promote Doing ToC Right?

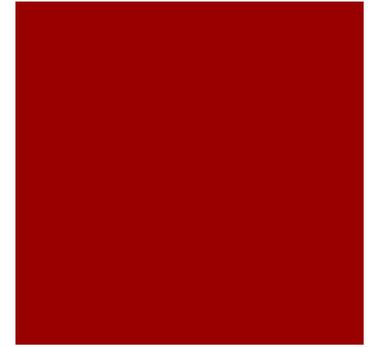


First – Promote and disseminate ACCURATE information on what ToC is (and what it is not)

Second – Provide funds (not much) for good facilitation by someone who can get an initiative started. Donors who expect do-it-yourself ToCs usually get what they pay for

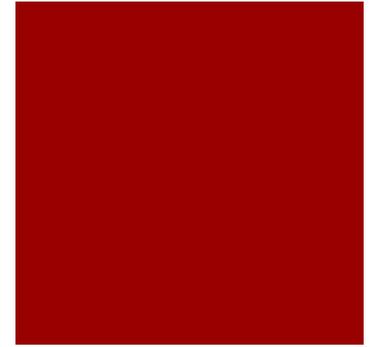
Third – Give programs and organizations the parameters of their OWN theory – let people know what they are expected to work towards and include

Who is Using ToC Today?



- ◆ Most NGOs
- ◆ Most foundations require them of grantees (but may not do their own)
- ◆ Collaborative initiatives with multiple players
- ◆ International scope projects with sites in many countries
- ◆ Everyone else....but not well

Who is Using ToC Today?



The GOOD NEWS is that more organizations are disseminating accurate information:

- ◆ ActKnowledge
- ◆ Center for Theory of Change
- ◆ Comic Relief
- ◆ CARE Guide to Using ToC in PeaceBuilding

When to Use ToC?

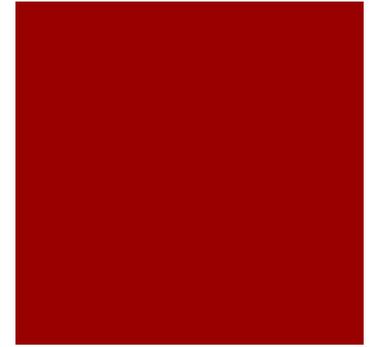


Always, for everything

Seriously.....

What differs is scope, purpose, audience and process for creating

Audience Question #3



Are you more or less likely to use Theory of Change for RBM in the future:

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure