Theory of change

A theory of change lays out the series of cause-and-effect changes that follow intervention activity. This represents the programme’s vision of how market systems will be functioning in the future, the pro-poor outcomes it will result in, and the impacts it will have on poverty.

Strategic framework and theory of change

Theories of change are often represented in diagrams, illustrating the types of interventions that bring about the outcomes depicted in the pathway of a change map.

Each outcome is tied to an intervention, revealing the often-complex web of activity that is required to bring about change. This template can be used to develop individual results chains for each of your intervention areas.
What is theory of change?
Best practice for the development and implementation of theory of change.

A theory of change should capture the team's current thinking and assumptions on how change will happen so that they can be explored and rebutted if and where necessary. It is different to a logical framework as it:

➢ Requires you to articulate underlying assumptions, which can be tested and measured
➢ Changes the way of thinking about initiatives from 'what you are doing', to 'what you want to achieve'.

Review of the use of theory of change in international development
How theory of change is used within DFID.

Go to Management next or return to Guidance.