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Theories of Change for Anti-Corruption Reforms

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WHAT IS A THEORY OF CHANGE?

The ideas and hypotheses ('theories') people and organisations have about how change happens. These theories can be conscious or unconscious and are based on personal beliefs, assumptions and a personal perception of reality.

DISTINCT FEATURES OF A TOC

- It defines all *building blocks* required to bring about a given long-term goal.
- The building blocks are depicted on a map known as a *pathway of change* (graphic representation of the change process)
- It describes the *types of interventions* that bring about the outcomes depicted in the pathway of change map.
- Each outcome in the pathway of change is tied to an intervention, revealing the *web of activities* required to bring about change.
- It articulates the *assumptions* that underpin the change process.

THEORY OF CHANGE COMPONENTS

ToC components often include:

- A big picture analysis of how change happens in relation to a specific thematic area
- An articulation of an organisation or programme *pathway* in relation to that big picture analysis
- A monitoring and evaluation framework that is designed to test both the pathway and the *assumptions* made about how change happens

PURPOSES

- *Strategic planning*: to map the change processes and its expected outcomes and thus facilitates project implementation
- *Monitoring and evaluation*: to articulate expected processes and outcomes that can be reviewed over time. This allows organisations to assess their contribution to change
- *Communication*: to communicate their chosen change process to internal and external partners
- *Learning*: to clarify, develop and improve the theory behind their organisation or programme

STEPS

Step 1
Clarify
Purpose of ToC
Process

Step 2
Describe Desired
Change/Objective

Step 3
Analyse Current
Situation
*--opportunities
constraints*

Step 4
Identify Domains
of Change
*What needs to change
in order to overcome
or plan around
constraints?*

Step 5
Identify Strategic
Priorities

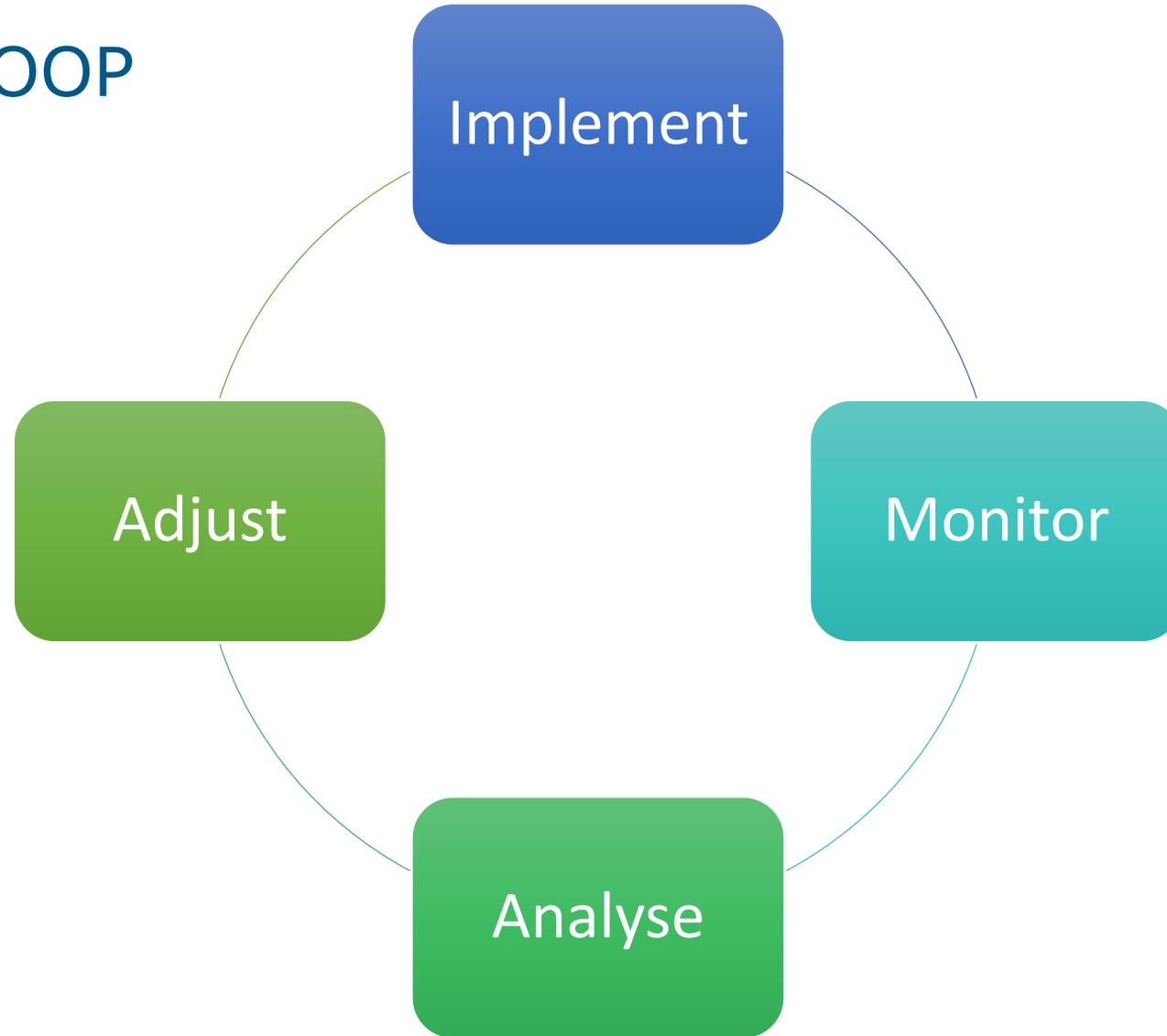
*What critical assumptions underlie your planned
course of action? (How can you test them over
time?)*

Step 6
Map Change
Pathways
*What steps will be
necessary?
Who needs to act to
complete these steps?
What would be needed for
them to overcome barriers
to action?*

Step 7
Define MEL
Priorities and
Process



FEEDBACK LOOP



1. THE DESIRED CHANGE

What is the desired change/objective, why and for whom?

-Challenge: People-oriented statement of change, not abstract concept. Be ambitious but not impossible to achieve. Identify assumptions.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

What is the current situation in relation to the wanted change/objective?

-Generate a broad and shared understanding of the system in which the desired change is needed.

3. DOMAINS OF CHANGE

Identify the domains where important changes have to take place in order to achieve the desired change/objective.

-Core question: Who and what needs to change, where and in which way, for the desired change to become possible. Who needs to do what differently?

-Challenge: Be selective and choose three to five domains.

4. IDENTIFY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Within the domains what areas, actors or stakeholders are possible to influence?

-Core question: What changes can best be influenced, why and how, in the next 2-3 years?

5. MAPPING PATHWAYS OF CHANGE

By starting from the desired change/objective and the identified domains of change, map the pathway of change backwards to today.

Core question: What needs to happen before the next positive step in the process can take place?

6. MONITORING EVALUATION AND LEARNING PRIORITIES

What information do we need to track and analyse the change process as it evolves, and to learn about assumptions for continuous improvement?

Define: MEL priorities and process, with clear actions for regular monitoring and learning –updating the first ToC