

Theory of Change

An approach to assessing the impact of co-production



Guidance template

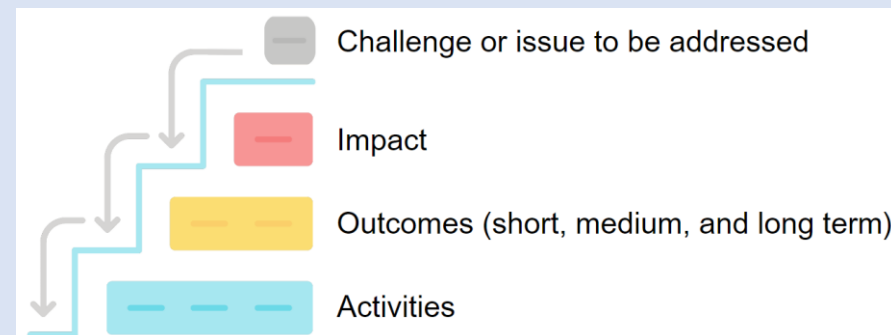
How to use this template?

This template provides more detailed guidance on the above topics. It can be used as standalone guidance, or together with the information from the [webpage](#). In the webpage you can find links to external resources for further information as well as an outline of relevant parts of this guidance template.

The Theory of Change guidance and template is designed to help:

- Define a theory of change structure for your co-produced project including defining the targeted impact, outcomes, and activities.
- Provide insights on how to define impact, outcomes, and activities.
- Give insights on principles to collect information to assess outcomes.

Backwards mapping



Section 1

Why is the project necessary?

What is the challenge to be addressed or what is the improvement needed? Who is affected and should be involved in the process?

- Start by defining what is the key issue or challenge the project is going to address.
- It is important that everyone is on the same page and sees the issue or challenge as a priority to be addressed by this project.
- Co-producing and facilitating the understanding of the context and the reason for proposing this project is important to make sure that the issue or challenge to be addressed is relevant to people who will benefit from the project.

Targeted impact

Project's impact

Co-production impact

- Note that from this point we start to break down each element into project and co-production elements. This is to help differentiate what the project is aiming to achieve and the value co-production will add.
 - Project's impact – this is the solution to the challenge, the key objective of the project, or the ultimate change or improvement the project is trying to achieve.
 - Create a project impact statement (one short sentence).
- This is the overall difference that co-production will make to the project. Consider:
- What co-production will change/add to the project?
 - Why is this project being co-produced and what is expected from it?
 - What is the value co-production will add to the project?
 - Finally, how is all of the above reflected in the targeted co-production impact? How different will the project's impact be if co-produced?
 - Create a co-production impact statement (one short sentence).

Section 2

Activities and outcomes

Project		Co-production	
A	B	C	D
Project's activities	Project's outcomes	Co-production element or 'I' and 'We' statements	Co-production outcomes
Guidance notes			
Suggested sequence: start with columns B and then A. Then work on column D and finish with column C.			
<p>The project's activities are all actions and interactions that will lead to the planned outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start by defining the project's outcomes (B) and then co-production outcomes (D) before thinking about activities. Think about and list all activities needed to achieve each outcome. Some outcomes might need more than one / continuous activities to be achieved. 	<p>Think of this as a breakdown of the project's impact that will form a pathway towards impact. Each outcome will work as a stepping stone to form the pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think about the length of the pathway, and how many outcomes are needed to make the journey towards impact. The outcomes can be divided into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term – usually involves more complex changes such as systemic changes, and cultural changes. Medium-term – usually involves changes in attitudes, behaviours, and practice. Short-term – usually involves changes in 	<p>Describe here how co-production will be embedded into each project's activity to generate the expected co-production outcome (column D).</p> <p>If using 'I' and 'We' statements: 'I' statements will define the co-production outcome for each activity (column D) outlining what is expected to be achieved. 'We' statements will define the co-production element for each project's activity (column C). See section 2b for more details.</p>	<p>This is a breakdown of co-production outcomes that will form the pathway towards impact. Most co-production outcomes will also be related to a project's outcomes and activities (columns A and B). If necessary, you might create standalone co-production outcomes (see explanation below).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start reviewing the project's outcomes (column B) and activities (column A) and think about what value co-production should add to each outcome. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What co-production will change/add to the outcome? Why is this activity being co-produced and what is expected from co-production?

	<p>awareness, knowledge, and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help identify the outcomes, think about what are the small changes that need to be achieved to make the impact possible. Start with some general questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the small changes that need to be created, changed, or improved? ○ Do people need to learn new skills, gain awareness, or change behaviour or practice? • See further ideas below. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is the value co-production will add to the outcome? ○ Finally, how is that reflected in the co-production outcome (column D)? How different will the project's outcome (column A) be if co-produced?
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2.a) Differentiating the project's outcomes and co-production outcomes

It is important to acknowledge that co-production is a process that should always be embedded in projects and an organisation's activities. However, for the purposes of understanding impact, it is helpful to differentiate co-production impact and outcomes from a project's impact and outcomes.

Why: to define a co-production pathway to impact and better understand the difference co-production is making.

How: this should be aligned first with the co-production impact (vertically) and then with project's outcomes (horizontally). In some cases, standalone co-production outcomes may be created. If that is the case, the outcome will not be aligned with project's outcomes (horizontally) but should be aligned with the co-production impact (vertically).

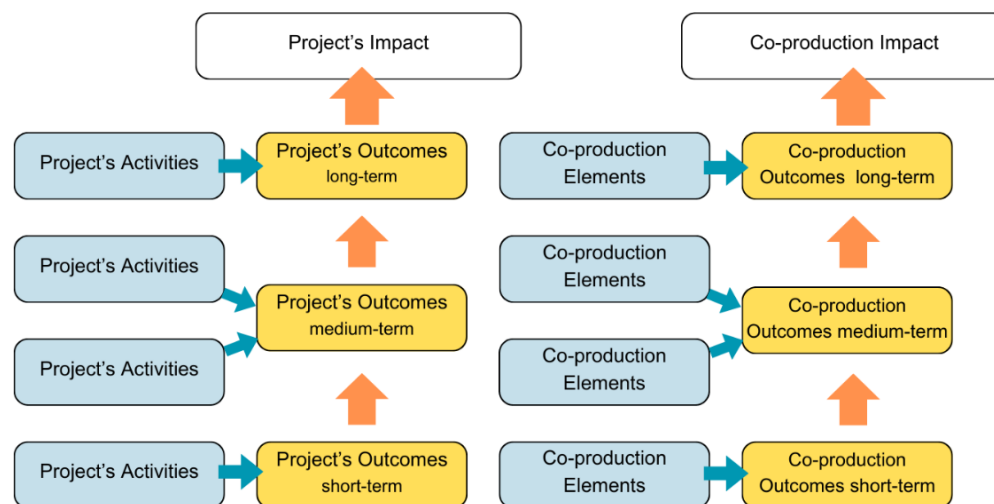
2.b) Ideas for creating pathways to impact and define outcomes

In some cases, utilising a framework for defining outcomes can help to better understand how all outcomes should connect to form the pathway to impact.

Logic model – is a methodology designed to assist the evaluation of projects including the progress towards achieving outcomes and impact. This methodology is widely used and well established across health and social care and can be very helpful in identifying outcomes, understanding the connection between outcomes, and creating a pathway to impact and it can be helpful to co-production.

How can the logic model be useful for co-production?

It can be helpful to understand how co-production outcomes are connected to form the pathway to impact. This will result in much clearer outcomes and will give you the possibility to understand how far you have come and how much is left to achieve impact. We created a simple version of the logic model to support the creation of pathways that can be used along with the Theory of Change guidance template above.



- First focus on the pathway to impact (yellow and orange)

- Think about the outcomes. What are the smaller changes needed to form the pathway towards impact (see columns B and D in section 2 for insights)

- Now focus on the relationship and logic between outcomes.
 - Is there a clear sequence?
 - Will earlier outcomes serve as a basis for and support later outcomes?
 - Do outcomes build up and accumulate changes that will lead to the targeted impact?

- Lastly, think about the activities and co-production elements (see columns A and C in section 2 for insights)
 - Which activities are needed to achieve each outcome?
 - Think about how each activity will generate the small changes needed.
 - Think about ways you can check if outcomes are being reached (see section 3 for insights on this).

Make it Real Framework

Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) has developed the Make it Real Framework to support personalisation of care based on co-production. The framework sets out principles for personalisation of care outlining “what good looks like” and it is structured through the creation of co-produced ‘I’ and ‘We’ statements. The ‘I’ statements outline what good care looks like from the perspective of people accessing the services, and the ‘We’ statements outline what staff and professionals should be doing to enable personalised care. Although the framework is not specifically designed for impact and outcomes assessments, the statements can serve as a basis to define outcomes and create a pathway to impact.

	Description	Examples
‘I’ statements	These will represent the views of people with lived experiences. Statements should outline the expected outcomes that will align with individuals’ needs and preferences.	1) I help to make decisions on the service plan and ensure it is relevant to our needs and preferences. 2) I help to make decisions on recruitment criteria and take part in the interview panels.
‘We’ statements	These should outline actions and outcomes to be delivered by staff members, stakeholders, and facilitators to enable co-production.	1) We make information and meetings accessible and include individuals in the decision-making and development of the service plan. 2) We make the process accessible and include individuals in planning the recruitment and interview panels.

Please see the [Making it Real Framework](#) and [guidance document](#) for more information.

Section 3: Ideas for assessing outcomes

Co-production outcomes can be complex and diverse and having rigid ways of assessing it can be restrictive. Criteria for assessing outcomes should be tailored to the specific project needs and type of impact. To help you to think about ways to assess outcomes we are dividing these into three broad categories, as below:

Section 3

Type of outcome	What is it?	Examples	Tips on how to assess
Quantifiable outcomes	Outcomes that can be counted and that can be measured in numbers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have 30 people using the service each day. • Having a proportion of 60% of positive feedback from people attending a workshop • Number of organisations with co-production policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a structured way to record the numbers needed, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance books ○ Feedback forms ○ Reports • Record contextual information along with numbers such as date, event, and any relevant information that could affect numbers. • Reduce the risk of collecting inaccurate information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make a clear system for recording the information. ○ Communicate and make sure everyone involved is aware of what/how/where/when/who to record. ○ Centralise the information, inputting numbers into a form, sheet, or software to keep it safe and manageable.
Comparable outcomes	Outcomes that will require a comparison between two or more aspects to establish if the outcome has been achieved. For example, it can be a comparison across two or more time points to understand change in people's views and perceptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants have increased knowledge of self-care. Comparison between how they rated their knowledge before and after a workshop. • Individuals have more confidence to do their weekly shopping independently. Comparison between individuals' reports on how they feel across weeks while receiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define how the outcome can be assessed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individuals telling you what has changed. ○ Observations. ○ Forms and other structured ways to answer questions. • Define your approach for recording the information. Who will record the data, when, and how. Make sure the information is recorded in the same way regardless of who is the person doing it. • Record the baseline – how things are before any intervention has happened. E.g., if assessing individuals' knowledge increases, ask them to rate their knowledge before the workshop. This will be your baseline.

		<p>support. The number of times individuals did their weekly shopping independently before and after receiving support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most cases it is helpful to use grading scales so individuals can rate the outcome. E.g. rate your knowledge on a scale of 1 to 5, or rate your confidence picking one of the following options: not confident, somewhat confident, confident, very confident, expert. • Record the next comparison point. E.g. ask participants to rate their knowledge after the workshop.
Qualitative outcomes	<p>Outcomes that are based on a narrative, on a story, or experience. It includes people's views, and it values the specific ways in which individuals experience and describe something.</p> <p>This type of outcome involves a more complex analysis, but it offers a narrative and a story that can help to better understand the whole picture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing people's perceptions of learning disabilities and address stigma. • Assessing this would involve individuals describing their perceptions and talking about any changes in their perceptions. • Improving individuals' experience of the service. • Assessing this would involve individuals describing and rating their experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define an approach for engaging with individuals. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One-to-one conversations (interviews), group activities and workshops, and forms and questionnaires with open-ended questions. ○ Think about questions that will encourage individuals to give you the answers you need. Use open-ended questions to encourage a conversation rather than questions that can be answered with one word or sentence. The questions should be focused on themes that encourage individuals to describe and reflect on the outcome. See examples on the left. • Define an approach for recording the information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Note-taking and voice recording are common methods of recording individuals' responses in one-to-one and group conversations. ○ Visual methods are a great alternative and can make the process more accessible. For example, during the conversation, you can use a whiteboard (or paper sheet) to take notes of the key ideas and make a diagram that represents individuals' views. Individuals can also draw, make notes, and express their views creatively. • Organise the information collected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are several ways to do this and a common principle across many approaches is

			<p>to group responses under wider themes. For example, if the outcome is “improving individuals’ experience of the service” you can start by grouping responses into positive and negative and improved and un-improved experiences. If relevant, you can go further and break these groups down into specific themes that could, for example, include the reasons for a negative experience such as accessibility and quality of the service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summarise the key messages from each theme with a description of the overall views from people. It is a good idea to select quotes from individuals that represent each theme and illustrate the key messages in your report. ○ The summaries and quotes can be tailored to most types of reports and will be useful to help you present outcomes concisely and logically. Using quotes also makes the report more engaging and easier to understand.
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