

# Guide to planning your services and the changes they will deliver towards the overall difference you want to make:

There are two basic ways that organisations choose to show how their services will lead to changes and therefore make the overall difference that they are seeking. The first starts with the *projects* and shows how they achieve change. The second starts with the *changes you want to achieve* and identifies the right projects to deliver that change.

## 1. Simple Logical Statements – an example of the first approach

The first approach is to start with the services you have in mind and show the effect you think these services will have, leading to the overall difference you want to make.

The questions you ask will be:

- what sort of services are you thinking about delivering to achieve the overall difference you want to make ?
- What initial change (outcomes) would you expect to see once these services have begun and the project is on its way?
- What *medium-term changes* do you expect to see as a result of the project? Will these lead directly from the initial changes, or will other interventions be required as well?
- What *long-term* changes do you expect to see as a result of the project? Will these lead directly from the initial changes, or will other interventions be required as well?
- What might prevent the positive changes from coming about and is there anything you can do about that?

This thinking can be captured in a series of simple statements:

We do

\_\_\_\_\_ [service]

**So That**

\_\_\_\_\_ [Change] results.

**So That**

\_\_\_\_\_ [Further Change] results

**So That**

\_\_\_\_\_ [overall difference is achieved].

**You can build in additional services where it will help one change to lead more directly to another**

## Simple Logical Statements: An example

We provide guidance to child abuse prevention/family support programmes

### *So That*

Providers increase their knowledge about best practices [*Change*]

### *So That*

Providers provide higher quality programmes [*Further Change*]

Additional service: We provide a support service for implementing programme change

### *So That*

Programmes are more likely to result in positive outcomes for parents and families served [*Further Change*]

### *So That*

Children are less likely to experience abuse and neglect [*Further Change*]

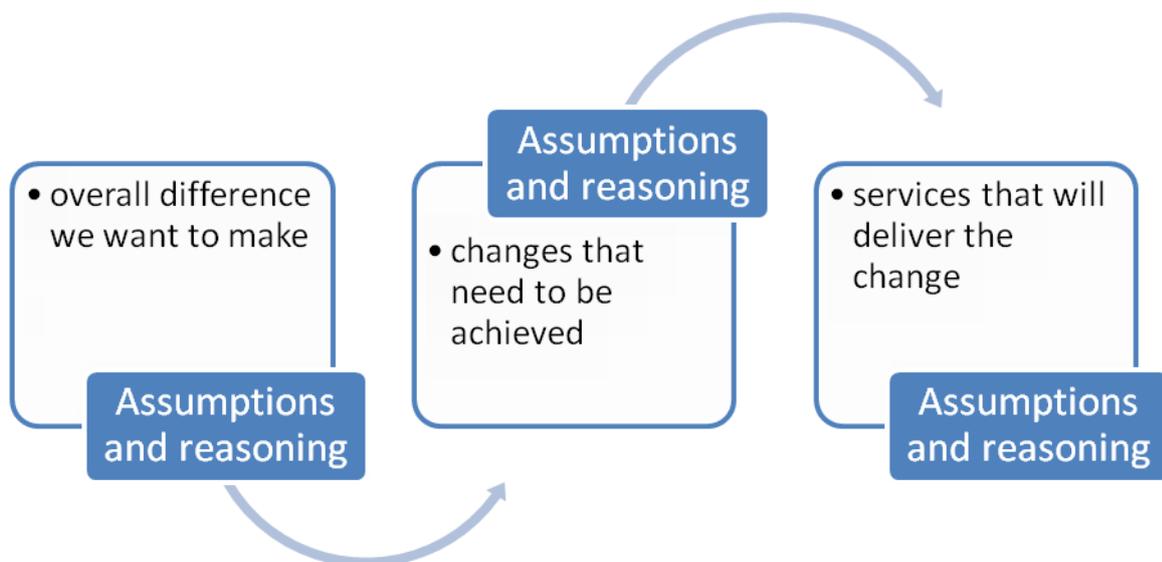
### *So That*

All children are healthy and safe [*Overall difference we want to make*]

## 2. Theory of Change – an example of the second approach

The second approach is a more recent development in the sector and is becoming more widely adopted as a valuable way of thinking. Instead of starting with what organisations plan to *do*, it starts with the changes that need to be delivered and then encourages organisations to think of the most effective services they could *provide* to achieve that change. In effect it works backwards through the logical statements.

A very simple version of the Theory of Change might flow like this:



You will be asking questions such as:

What is holding beneficiaries back from achieving the overall difference in their lives? What are the issues and difficulties that need to be overcome first?

And in order to overcome these issues, what else needs to change?

And to create this initial change what sort of services are needed?

As you work through the questions you will be making assumptions about what is needed to deliver change and the effects that services will have. When you review your work you can test out whether your assumptions are correct or whether other factors are affecting your ability to create change and what other services may be needed.

**Theory of Change Example:**

**THE PROBLEM:** Teenage mums without family support are not coping well with their new babies

The **OVERALL DIFFERENCE** we want to make:  
Young mums without family support are coping well with their new babies

Assumption: This problem exists because young mums have never learnt parenting skills and don't have anyone to ask. As a result they are anxious and getting overwhelmed.

Assumption: In order for mums to cope well, they need feel confident that they can be a good enough mum

Assumption: Mums will only feel confident when they know they have the skills they need and someone to call on when they need advice.

Note: At this stage in your planning you will need to clarify what your **OBJECTIVES** are: What will your area of activity be to deliver the changes?  
Example: **We will provide parenting skills training and facilitate support networks**

What **CHANGES** are needed if we are to succeed in making our overall difference? *(These are the outcomes we will design services to achieve)*

Young Mums feel confident that they can look after their baby.

*But in order for them to feel confident*  
Young mums know how to feed and care for their baby

Young mums are receiving peer support when they are unsure what to do

WHAT specific **SERVICES** can we offer within our objectives, that will deliver these outcomes?

**"Young Mums" skills programme:**  
A six week programme of weekly sessions where mums learn basic skills within a peer group

Assumption: Six sessions will provide mums with the basic parenting skills they need. Learning with a peer group will mean that mums can contact each other outside of sessions for extra support.