

Impact Ladder

Impact is a very loosely used term universally, and can be used to describe an influence or effect on virtually anything. Taking time to explore and align on your impact goals will ensure that your team and stakeholders are all working towards the same vision of success. In the process you'll uncover expectations for the longer-term change that ultimately matters as well or more immediate outcomes that we believe will contribute to that change. It is often these more immediate outcomes, or smaller shifts in behaviours, that will become the focus of your design challenge.

How to Use It

Use this worksheet to agree on and capture two statements.

The first should reflect the lasting social change of the project—something that your design will contribute to over time. This will be your long-term Impact. You'll draw from post-its closer to the top of your ladder to identify this.

The second statement should reflect a more near-term goal, an observable change or behavior that you want the people you're designing for to achieve. This will be your Key Outcome.

What Next?

At this very early stage of the project, you only need to define the Impact and Key Outcome. You'll come back to fill in the other worksheet steps later, when you are prototyping ideas and defining exactly how your solution will have impact through a Theory of Change exercise.

Your Impact and Key Outcome statements should serve as a north star for your design challenge, helping to ensure you stay focused on your goals. Make sure any other key stakeholders are aligned with your team on these goals too.

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During your project kickoff:

The lasting social change we would like to contribute to is:

This is **impact**. It is usually long-term and something our work will contribute to over time. Think of this as a future vision.

Example: Adolescent girls live healthy lives and fulfill their educational potential, by delaying the age of first pregnancy.

The more near-term outcome that tells us our solution is working is:

Identify 1-2 behaviors as goals for near-term success. They should be observable and measurable. In a Theory of Change these are called **primary outcomes**.

Example: Increase uptake of contraceptive methods amongst teens

As you explore your theory of change:

The key shifts that need to happen in order to get there are:

..... This shift For this audience
..... This shift For this audience
..... This shift For this audience

These will usually be changes in knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and motivations. Maybe some small actions too. You might start with many of these, but refine and prioritize as you learn more. In a theory of change these will be called **intermediate outcomes**.

Example: Teen girls have increased knowledge about contraceptive options.

Parents are more supportive of girls accessing services.

The activities or solutions we'll create:

As you progress further in your design process you will identify the products, services or experiences that can have a positive influence on these audiences and the stepping stones they need to achieve. Check out the guidance in the Theory of Change method card if you're ready to continue to this stage now.

In a theory of change you will call these **outputs**.

Example: A school-based information campaign for teen girls