

**ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
EVALUATION READINESS TOOLKIT**



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...monitoring and evaluating the performance and outcomes of these services is an essential component to the growth and strengthening of our children, families and communities...



INTRODUCTION

All children deserve to thrive and fulfil their potential. SNAICC's purpose is to see that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up healthy, happy and safe. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled child and family services play a vital role in addressing the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Monitoring and evaluating the performance and outcomes of these services is an essential component to the growth and strengthening of our children, families and communities.

The organisations that SNAICC represents have identified a need and high interest in support to better monitor, evaluate and articulate their outcomes. This need has been informed by the lack of available evaluation and evidence relating to programs designed with and delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations. The lack of documented evidence often leads to the under-valuing of locally designed and driven approaches. Programs are then implemented with an international evidence-base that are ineffective in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Evaluation Readiness Toolkit has been prepared with the objective of addressing the abovementioned issues to enable organisations working in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family services sector to articulate the unique ways in which they work in creating wellbeing outcomes for families, children and the communities they work in. It aspires to empower them to highlight the value of locally designed and driven approaches and build their own evidence base to prove and improve the effectiveness of their programs.

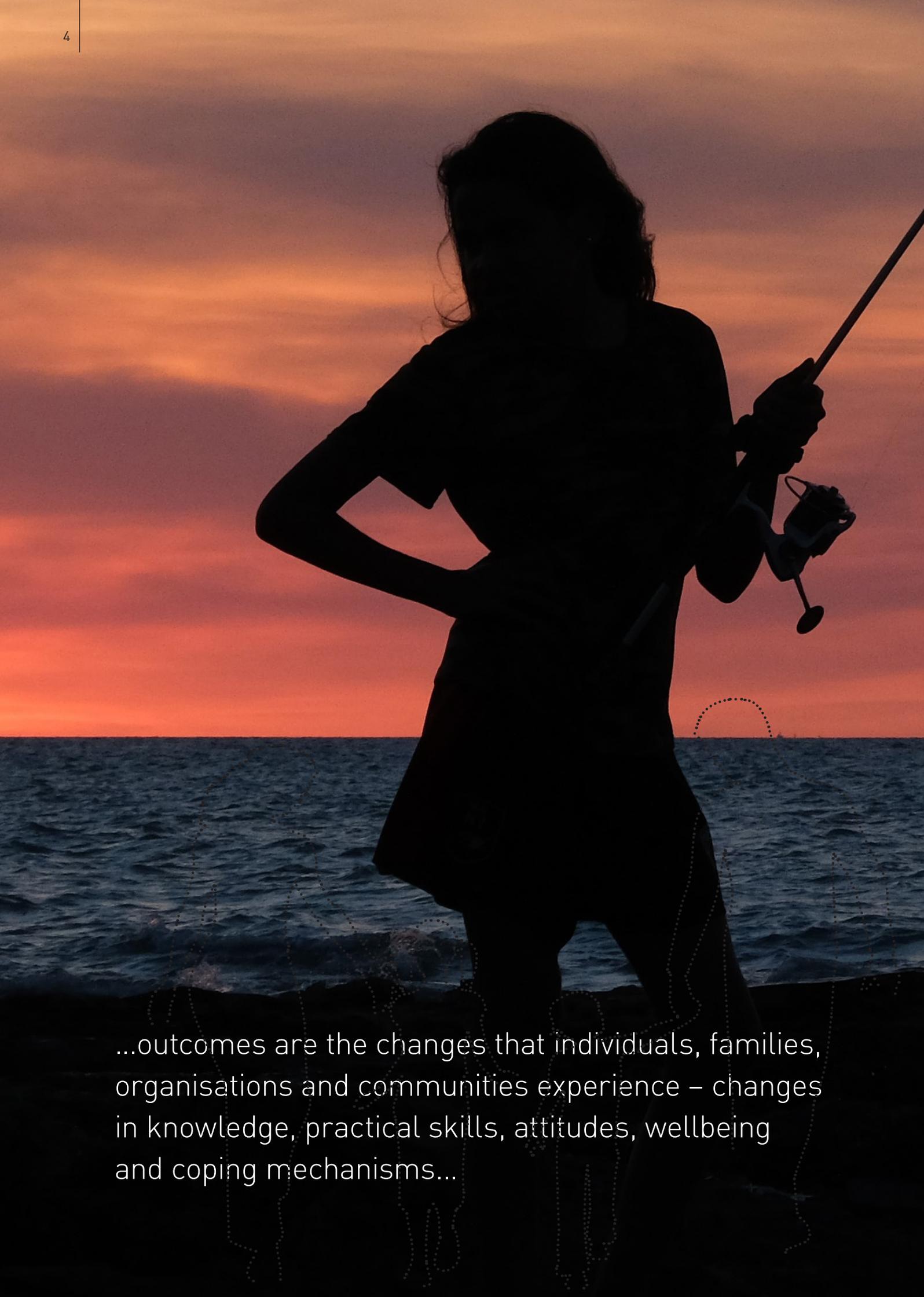
THE EVALUATION READINESS TOOLKIT COMPRISES:

- **The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Framework**
 - Provides a consistent set of outcome statements relevant to all organisations working in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family services sector.
- **Theory of Change Development Guide and Activities**
 - Guides your organisation through a step-by-step process to develop your theory of change.
- **Theory of Change Development Excel Tool**
 - Present your theory of change in a concise manner to monitor and update over time.

THE EVALUATION READINESS TOOLKIT WILL ENABLE ORGANISATIONS TO:

- **articulate** the outcomes they achieve for children, families and community and their social impact
- **communicate** these outcomes and their social impact succinctly and precisely
- **identify** indicators to collect data on, in order to build an evidence base to demonstrate the impact of their programs.

It is anticipated that most organisations will use the Evaluation Readiness Toolkit to develop their internal capacity, competency and confidence in measuring outcomes.



...outcomes are the changes that individuals, families, organisations and communities experience – changes in knowledge, practical skills, attitudes, wellbeing and coping mechanisms...

MEASURING OUTCOMES

WHAT IS AN OUTCOME?

An outcome is a positive, or negative, change that occurs as a result of a program or activity.

Outcomes are the changes that individuals, families, organisations and communities experience – changes in knowledge, practical skills, attitudes, wellbeing and coping mechanisms. Although outcomes are measured for a variety of different reasons and agendas, for the purpose of this toolkit, they are utilised to measure the effectiveness of a program at an individual, family and community level. The key question to ask in determining effectiveness is to understand the question, “What difference does our program make for the people we deliver services for?”

WHAT DOES AN OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK MEASURE?

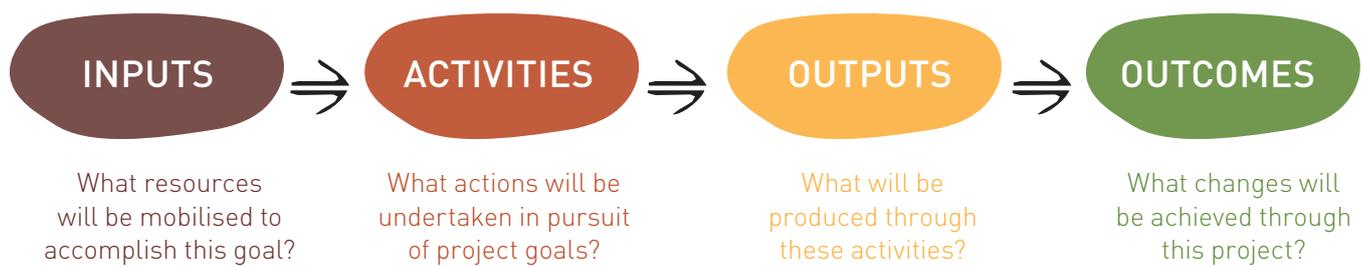
An outcomes framework is created to specify the desired outcomes for a particular group in the population or a service sector – the focus being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children and the services that support them. Using an outcomes framework helps monitor and track the outcomes of programs in a consistent manner across the sector, while allowing each organisation to tailor this to their own programs.

An outcomes framework will consist of different areas of interest, also known as domains. Under each domain (e.g. health) may be specific outcomes that are more relevant to some organisations and programs than others. Together the outcomes and domains provide a consistent foundation for program planning, monitoring and evaluation.

WHAT IS A THEORY OF CHANGE?

An outcomes framework should be underpinned, or work alongside a theory of change. A theory of change refers to the description of how your program is intended to achieve meaningful, positive changes for individuals, communities and organisations. A theory of change is not just a description of what the intended changes are. Rather, it is a depiction of how your program is supposed to work and what it is intended to achieve. In short, it outlines the cause-and-effect relationship between the program’s activities and the long-term outcomes it creates for its targeted stakeholders.

A theory of change is useful for your organisation to develop, as it provides a basis to both design and evaluate programs. It will also enable your organisation to tell the story of the unique change you create as a result of your activities – it therefore goes to the heart of what your organisation does. It can be helpful to represent the theory of change as a flowchart. This illustrates the chain of events leading up to the achievement of an outcome, as shown below.



The key terms involved in understanding and building a theory of change are described below:

- **Input:** An input is a resource – whether labour hours, financial or physical resources – that is used to pursue an activity or operate a project or program. Inputs are often already accounted for in the existing reporting structure of an organisation, as they are relatively easy to track and quantify.
- **Activity:** An activity is what the organisation does with the inputs used.
- **Output:** An output tells you an activity has taken place and is also usually quantitative (e.g. number of people trained, number of food boxes distributed).
- **Outcome:** An outcome is a positive, or negative, change that occurs as a result of a program or activity. Outcomes are the changes that individuals, families, organisations and communities experience. These changes are not always immediate and can exist on a spectrum from creating awareness to creating behaviour change. It is therefore helpful to think of outcomes as operating on different time scales so they can be:
 - + **Intermediate outcomes:** For example, improved awareness of healthy eating habits or increased confidence
 - + **Long-term outcomes:** For example, improved quality of health or obtaining employment.

HOW DOES A THEORY OF CHANGE HELP US WITH EVALUATION?

A theory of change helps to generate the clarity and specificity required for success and often demanded by funders and other stakeholders. It offers an organised way of defining your program goals, activities and measurable outcomes by producing:

- a list of what you have and what you need to operate your program
- an explanation of how and why your program will produce desired results
- a blueprint for future program management, evaluation and improvement.

The process of developing the theory of change is an opportunity to chart the course of your program and should be part of an ongoing process of discussion, commitment, and reflection as part of an organisation's dedication to program improvement and accountability. The theory of change is a key component of any evaluation and the benefits of having one is that they:

- can enhance a program manager's ability to plan, design, implement, analyse, and generate knowledge
- serve as the starting point for this conversation and can later be considered the *report card* that you might use to understand whether you are meeting your program goals and objectives.
- can be developed to meet large or small-scale program outcomes
- help to focus on the big picture (long-term outcomes) as well as more short-term effects (intermediate outcomes).

A theory of change should be revisited on a regular basis and should closely reflect the outcomes of your program and evaluation plan.

HOW DOES AN OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK AND THEORY OF CHANGE FIT TOGETHER?

The outcomes framework provides the basis for identifying the outcome domains and relevant long-term outcomes to begin to map and articulate how your individual programs and activities achieve change for your beneficiaries through your theory of change.

THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILD AND FAMILY WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Services Wellbeing Framework (the Framework) forms the basis of the Evaluation Readiness Toolkit.

Through the national Family Matters campaign and SNAICC's policy and project work with our members, SNAICC has consulted on and developed a valuable program logic that describes the interaction between high-level inputs, system and service change process outcomes, and improved wellbeing and safety outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. It draws significantly on the Family Matters Roadmap, Queensland's Our Way strategy and the Victorian Wungurilwil Gagapduir: Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement as leading strategies that have been developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to improve outcomes for our children. The Framework is about self-determination: empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to exercise opportunities to live well, according to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and beliefs. It is also about ensuring children can thrive and reach their full potential; and protecting rights recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It reflects the views and voices of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members and non-government organisations.

The Framework is organised into two layers:

- **Eight wellbeing domains:** These proposed wellbeing domains derive from a range of sources, including the ARACY Common Approach Wellbeing Wheel, and the OECD's Better Life Index, the Family Matters Roadmap, the Queensland Our Way Strategy and the Victorian Wungurilwil Gagapduir: Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement.
- **21 long-term outcome statements that map to the domains:** These are derived from the consolidated stakeholder engagement and literature review conducted to develop the Family Matters Roadmap and draw on the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The mapping of long-term outcome statements and wellbeing domains are shown in the table and diagram below.

TABLE 1 - WELLBEING DOMAINS AND OUTCOME STATEMENTS	
Wellbeing	Long-term outcome statements
Safety	Children can grow up safe in their families, cultures and communities
	Families are free from violence and abuse
Health	Children are born healthy
	Children and families have good nutrition, healthy lifestyles and access to quality healthcare
	Children meet developmental milestones
Culture and connections	Children and families have strong kin and community networks
	Children develop and maintain their personal and cultural identity
Mental and emotional wellbeing	Children live in a society that values their identity and is free from racism and discrimination
	Children and families are well supported to address the impacts of individual and intergenerational trauma through therapeutic healing
Home and environment	Families have a stable, safe and suitable place to live and raise their children
	Children who need to be in out-of-home care are placed with kin, and enabled to reconnect or reunify with their families
	Parents are ready and able to nurture and care for children
Learning and skills	Children have the opportunity to learn, develop their skills, maximise their capabilities and pursue their interests
	Children and families engage in lifelong learning by participating in education and training opportunities
Empowerment	Children can grow as citizens and leaders, taking their place and strengthening their cultures in contemporary society
	Families act as first teachers, and engage fully with the education and development of their children
	Children and families can exercise greater choice, control and cultural authority over decisions that affect them
Economic wellbeing	Families experience financial resilience and independence
	Young people are supported to engage with training and education opportunities that prepare them for employment



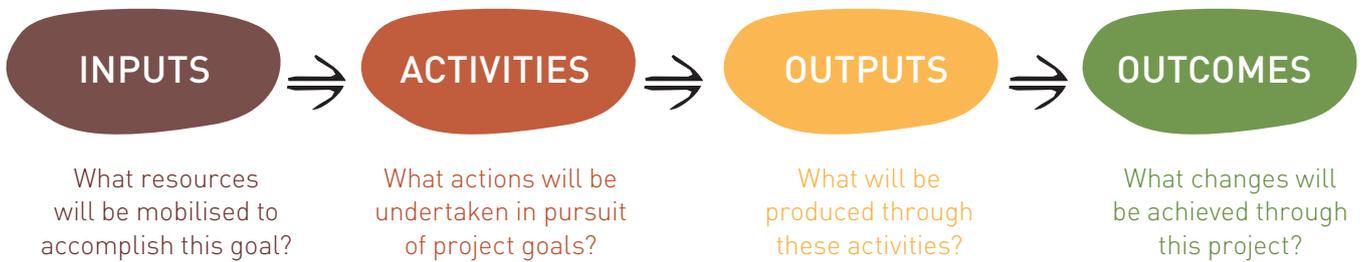


The Framework is about self-determination: empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to exercise opportunities to live well.

THEORY OF CHANGE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

A theory of change is a description of how your program intends to achieve meaningful, positive changes for children, families and communities.

It is not just a description of what the intended changes are. Rather, it is a depiction of how your program is supposed to work and what changes it will achieve.



WHAT STEPS DO WE NEED TO TAKE AND WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

This toolkit provides a seven-step process for developing your theory of change which is collaborative and flexible.

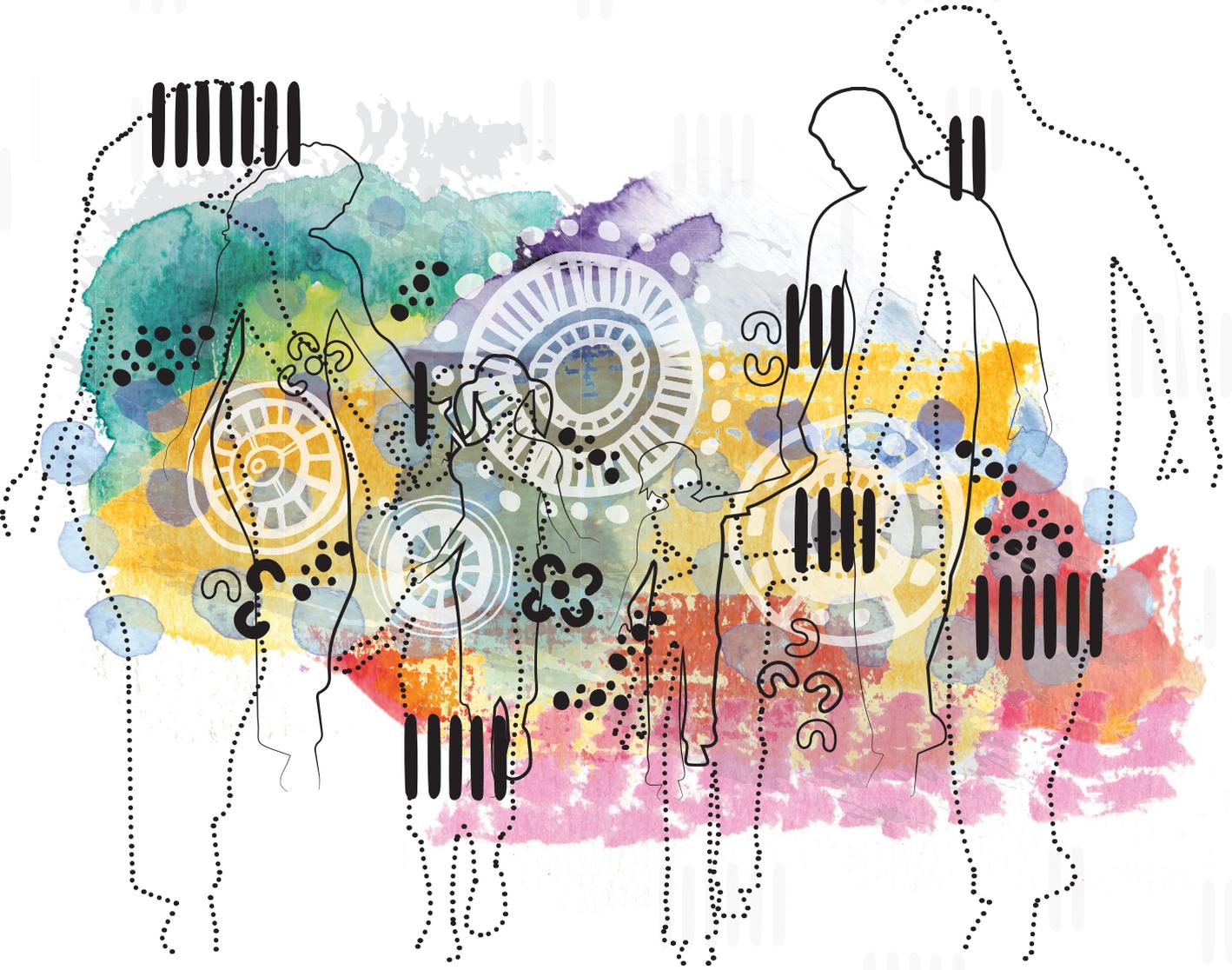
Theory of change development phase	Topic	Who to involve?
Step 1	Program background and stakeholder mapping	Organisational staff
Step 2	Inputs	Organisational staff
Step 3	Activities and outputs	Organisational staff
Step 4	Long-term outcomes	Organisational staff
Step 5	Articulating the change you create	Organisational staff and program beneficiaries
Step 6	Populating your theory of change	Organisational staff
Step 7	Thinking about indicators	Organisational staff

The following section will guide you through a series of worksheets and activities to be able to articulate the unique way through which your program creates outcomes in your community.

It is recommended that most of the steps be completed by a small group of organisational staff involved in

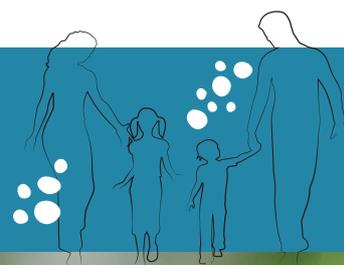
designing and implementing the program. Where possible, it is also highly beneficial to involve some of the families accessing your services in the drafting or testing of your intermediate outcomes (Step 5).





7 STEPS

**EVALUATION READINESS
TOOLKIT**



STEP 2 PROGRAM INPUTS

This section guides you through identifying the inputs of your program. It is important to consider Inputs holistically and as more than just monetary funding required to deliver services.

Here are some important inputs to consider, which are often overlooked:

- Many programs are dependent on in-kind donations and volunteer participation that is usually not taken into account while preparing and forecasting budgets. It is therefore important to consider and put into place measures to retain volunteers and secure in-kind contributions for future sustainability of your program.
- Specific staff expertise in running programs, and their relationships with community stakeholders and program participants are very often intangible traits that cannot be captured in position descriptions while recruiting for positions. It is therefore vital that these are identified and taken into account to ensure staff retention and recruitment.
- It is likely that families that attend your program may access related community organisations that offer complementary services to ones that you offer. Knowing which ones your families access most frequently and creating strong relationships and links with them will allow you to offer a better service to families through more referrals and potential partnerships while delivering services.

Your understanding of these inputs will enable you to better understand what contributes to the outcomes you achieve, and will help to create budgets and funding requests that better reflect the operational needs of your programs.

CATEGORISING YOUR PROGRAM INPUTS

Your program inputs are the financial, human and other resources available to undertake your program activities.



TOC development and progress	Step 1	▼	STEP 2	▼
	Program background and stakeholder mapping		Program Inputs	

Activity 2.1

Fill out the following table about your program inputs using the guidance provided

Inputs	Description
Staff	What competencies do your staff require to run this program?
Money	How much does it cost to run this program? Think about how much it costs to: design, recruit and maintain staff and participants, purchase any resources, fund trips, etc.
Resources	What do you require to run this program? Think about materials, space, IT, volunteers, vehicles, promotional material, etc.
Relationships	Do you work with any other organisations, departments or people to run your program?

Step 3

Activities and outputs

Step 4

Long-term outcomes

Step 5

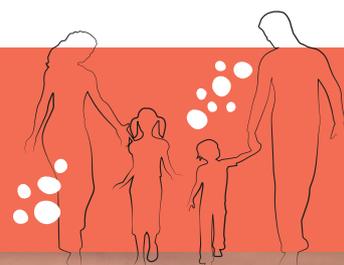
Articulating the change you create

Step 6

Populating your theory of change

Step 7

Thinking about indicators

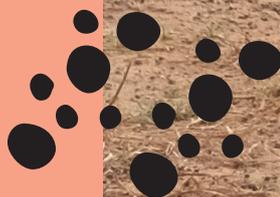


STEP 3

ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

This section will guide you through categorising your program activities and listing your outputs. While it is likely that you may offer a wide range of activities at different times, it is important to keep track of how often you provide these, and the number of people that are impacted. The description of your activities and the amount of them that you provide are known as outputs. They are the most basic form of reporting required to quantify the impact and reach of your activities.

- Categorising and describing the distinct activities you offer through your program allows you to differentiate yourself and demonstrate the unique ways that your program is tailored to meet the needs of the families you serve.
- Keeping track of the frequency of these activities and monitoring the number of attendees over a period of time also allows you to demonstrate the:
 - consistency with which families access your services
 - reach and influence you have within your community.
- Monitoring your outputs will also give you valuable information regarding program attendance that may allow you to make important changes to enable wider access and community impact.



TOC development
and progress

Step 1



Step 2

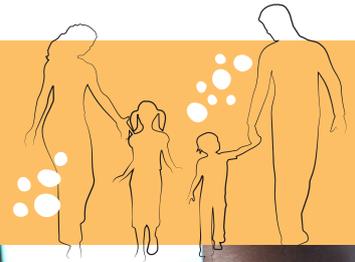


Program background
and stakeholder mapping

Program Inputs



STEP 4 LONG-TERM OUTCOMES



LINKING YOUR LONG-TERM OUTCOMES TO THE WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Framework provides a comprehensive list of domains and long-term outcome statements that are applicable to a wide range of programs delivered by organisations.

This step guides you to think about the connection between the activities you listed in Step 3 and the achievement of long-term outcomes you enable for the program stakeholders you identified in Step 1.

Activity 4.1

Identifying program long-term outcomes

Use the program long-term outcomes checklist worksheet below to do this activity. Each long-term outcome statement in the Framework includes some examples to put the outcome into context. Think about the intentions of your activities for your children and families and decide which of the 21 outcome statements across the eight wellbeing domains are relevant to achieve the goal of your program.

Remember, it is unlikely that all the long-term outcome statements listed will be applicable to your program.

Program long-term outcomes checklist

Which of the outcomes in the Framework does your program contribute to? Remember, while your programs may enable families and children to attain a large number of outcomes in the framework, only select the ones that the activities you offer directly contribute to. This is important as it enables you to provide more specific evidence and justification to prove how your program creates these outcomes.



TOC development and progress

Step 1



Step 2



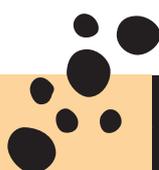
Program background and stakeholder mapping

Program Inputs

Activity 4.1 Identifying program long-term outcomes		
Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes	Activities that support this outcome (These are examples only. There may be many other things that you do to support these outcomes.) Examples below:
Safety	1. Children can grow up safe in their families and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting families to address challenges and issues that create safety risks for children - Working with families and communities to find safe care arrangements for children where there are concerns for their safety - Providing supports for children to safely reunify with their family when they are in out-of-home care
	2. Families are free from violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting victims/survivors of family violence through refuge, therapeutic and practical support, and referrals - Promoting awareness and prevention of family violence in the community - Working with perpetrators of violence to change behaviours and end abuse - Ensuring children who witness and experience violence are safe, cared for and supported
Health	3. Children are born healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing expectant mothers and fathers with health and parenting education and supports during their pregnancy and child birth - Providing education about sexual health, parenting and family planning to young people
	4. Children and families have good nutrition, healthy lifestyles and access to quality healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing nutrition and healthy lifestyle education and support programs - Providing health and allied health supports and assessments - Providing referrals and assistance to families to access healthcare
	5. Children meet developmental milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing children with early education and developmental supports, such as child care, playgroups and early learning activities - Assisting families to access early diagnosis, treatment and management supports for health and development concerns - Supporting parents to develop skills and capacity to nurture their children's development
Culture and connections	6. Children and families have strong kin and community networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting or facilitating cultural and community events that provide opportunities to celebrate, share and pass on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and practices to children - Supporting children in out-of-home care to maintain cultural connections through contact with their kin and participation in the cultural life of their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community - Providing a safe and welcoming space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to come to where their culture and strengths are valued



Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes	Activities that support this outcome (These are examples only. There may be many other things that you do to support these outcomes.) Examples below:
Culture and connections	7. Children develop and maintain their personal and cultural identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing educational environments that support positive identity development and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures - Supporting children in out-of-home care to learn about their cultures and participate in the cultural life of their community
Mental and emotional wellbeing	8. Children live in a society that values their identity and is free from racism and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting awareness amongst the broader public, community and government regarding the strengths and value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures - Promoting awareness and understanding of the impacts of colonisation and discriminatory policies and the need for healing
	9. Children and families are well supported to address the impacts of individual and intergenerational trauma through therapeutic healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying culturally safe, and trauma and healing informed approaches to support children and families - Providing therapeutic supports to children who have experienced neglect, abuse and instability in their home environments - Creating opportunities for communities to acknowledge collective trauma and identify pathways to healing
Home and environment	10. Families have a stable, safe and suitable place to live and raise their children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisting families to access a housing support service - Supporting families to acquire household items and goods - Advocating for families to access maintenance and repair services when required
	11. Children are placed with kin, and enabled to reconnect or reunify with families, if in out-of-home care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with families to map and identify potential family and kin carers - Convening Aboriginal Family-led Decision making meetings - Undertaking family and kin carer assessments - Providing support services to family and kin carers
	12. Parents are ready and able to nurture and care for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing intensive and non-intensive family support services - Referring families to services within the community - Providing maternal and child health services
Learning and skills	13. Children have the opportunity to learn, develop their skills, maximise their capabilities and pursue their interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing children with access to primary and allied health services, including immunisations, speech and hearing screenings - Embedding cultural knowledge and teachings within services and activities
	14. Children and families engage in lifelong learning by participating in education and training opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing a Transition to School program to prepare children for participation in school - Providing education and homework programs - Supporting families to access adult education opportunities - Providing early years services



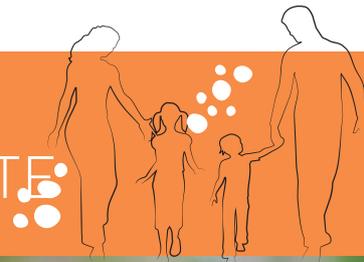
Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes	Activities that support this outcome (These are examples only. There may be many other things that you do to support these outcomes.) Examples below:
Empowerment	15. Children can grow as citizens and leaders, taking their place and strengthening their cultures in contemporary society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging Elders in designing and delivering programs to children - Supporting children to share their cultures with the broader community
	16. Families act as first teachers, and engage fully with the schooling of their children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing supported playgroups - Teaching parents how to engage with schools
	17. Families can exercise greater choice, control and cultural authority over decisions that affect them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-led decision making programs - Undertaking culturally safe assessment that recognise the strengths and successes of families - Ensuring that the family's perspectives, rights and wishes are represented in engagement with other services
Economic wellbeing	18. Families experience financial resilience and independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching parents and caregivers financial literacy and management - Advocating for families in their engagement with Centrelink
	19. Young people are supported to engage with training and education opportunities that prepare them for employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing education and homework support programs - Creating opportunities for young people to participate in mentoring programs and hear from individuals who have attend post-secondary education





STEP 5

ARTICULATING THE CHANGE YOU CREATE



This section is for you to describe the various ways in which the activities you offer through your program contribute to short and medium term changes that allow the families you serve to achieve the long-term outcomes selected from the Framework.

This will allow you to:

- create a realistic and comprehensive narrative of the story of change that your stakeholders experience (See Step 6)
- identify unique program specific indicators (See Step 7) that you can develop to build an evidence base to demonstrate the impact of your programs
- succinctly communicate the goal and impact of your program to internal and external stakeholders and strengthen funding applications.

WHAT ARE OUTCOMES?

- Remember, outcomes are the changes enabled for children, families and communities. They are the difference that your program makes for your stakeholders.
- Outcomes are not static and usually occur over the short-term (during or immediately after your program) and medium-term (a few months after individuals or communities have interacted with your program) – these are considered intermediate outcomes and programs will need to create these intermediate outcomes so that stakeholders can achieve the long-term outcomes identified in Step 4.
- Intermediate outcomes typically relate to:
 - access to resources and opportunities
 - knowledge, awareness, information and insight
 - skills
 - attitudes, values and behaviour
 - individual or organisational
 - relationships.



TOC development
and progress

Step 1



Step 2



Program background
and stakeholder mapping

Program Inputs

Activity 5.1

Fill out the following table listing the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community

The following activity guides you through thinking about what the intermediate outcomes of your program are, using the list of typical categories above. While filling out the tables, try to articulate the unique and specific changes that your stakeholders experience on their pathway to achieving the long-term outcomes that you have identified in Step 4. Please be as specific as you can and list one per row.

CHANGES IN ACCESS

In the table below, list out the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community (i.e. Access to individualised support, specialist health services, appropriate educational classes, health resources etc).

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Activity 5.2

Fill out the following table listing the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community

CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS

In the table below, list out the changes in knowledge and awareness that your program enables for families, children and community (i.e. awareness of the impacts of FASD, increased nutritional knowledge, awareness of cultural stories, etc).

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Activity 5.3

Fill out the following table listing the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community

CHANGES IN SKILLS

In the table below, list out the skills that your program aims to build for families, children and community (i.e. improved cooking skills, interpersonal skills, improved strategies to avoid AOD misuse etc).

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Step 3



Step 4


**STEP
5**


Step 6

Step 7

Activities and outputs

Long-term outcomes

Articulating the change you create

Populating your theory of change

Thinking about indicators

Activity 5.4

Fill out the following table listing the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community

CHANGES IN ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

In the table below, list out the types of sustained attitude and behaviour changes that your program aims to instil in families, children and community (i.e. improved attitudes towards seeking employment, increased help seeking behaviour, healthier eating habits, increased interest in child's education etc).

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.



Activity 5.5

Fill out the following table listing the ways in which your program increases access to services and/or for families, children and community

CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIPS

In the table below, list out any substantial changes in relationships between children, families, community and organisations that your program aims to create (i.e. Positive relationships between partners, increased interaction with community elders, etc).

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Step 3



Step 4


**STEP
5**


Step 6

Step 7

Activities and outputs

Long-term outcomes

Articulating the change you create

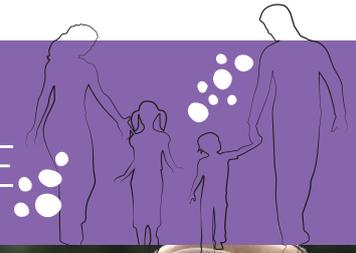
Populating your theory of change

Thinking about indicators



STEP 6

POPULATING YOUR THEORY OF CHANGE



By completing Steps 1-5, you now have all the required information to populate your program's theory of change.

Activity 6.1

Populate the theory of change template for your program

There is a blank chart below to capture all the elements of a theory of change. Using this chart, please complete the following based on the previous steps:

- Program name: The name of your program.
- Program goal: The goal statement you drafted in Activity 1.1.
- Who we impact: List the stakeholders you have in Activity 1.2.
- What we do: List the activities you have in activity category column in Activity 3.1.
- Long-term outcomes: List out the long-term outcome statements you chose from the program long-term outcomes checklist worksheet (Activity 4.1) in the appropriate outcome domain boxes (if you run out of space, simply write the corresponding statement number from the Framework).
- How do we create change: Summarise the changes you listed in Section 5 in the corresponding boxes.

Once you have completed the template below, you have completed Step 6 and you will have your theory of change documented on a single page – congratulations!



TOC development and progress

Step 1



Step 2



Program background and stakeholder mapping

Program Inputs

Program Name: _____

Program Goal: _____

What we do  **How do we create change?** 

Short Term Outcomes

Changes in knowledge and awareness

Changes in access

Who we impact

Medium Term Outcomes

Changes in skills

Changes in behaviour and attitudes

Changes in relationships

Long Term Outcomes

Safety

Health

Culture and Connections

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Home and Environment

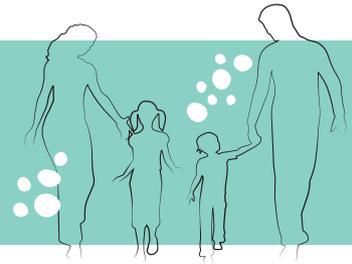
Learning and Skills

Empowerment

Economic Wellbeing



STEP 7 THINKING ABOUT INDICATORS



Through a theory of change approach, you have now been able to articulate how your program uniquely creates pathways to outcomes for the families, children and communities that you work with.

The next step towards measuring the impact of your program is to be able to collect evidence on how much of the change in each outcome that you have identified is actually occurring for your stakeholders. This is where we need indicators.

WHAT ARE INDICATORS?

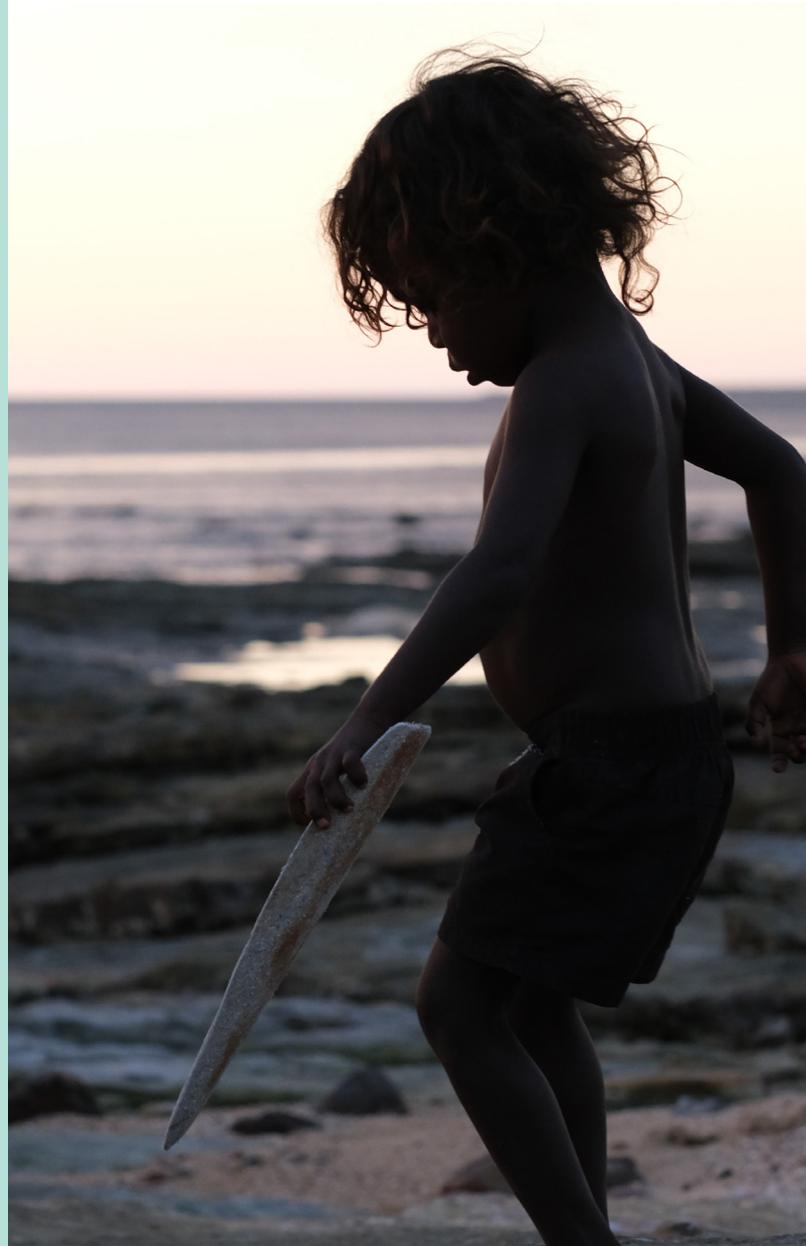
Indicators are a key component of measuring outcomes. They are ways of knowing a change has taken place.

They can be:

- **objective** or **tangible** and easily counted (e.g. number of health clinic visits or number of job placements)
- **subjective** or **intangible**, based on personal feelings (e.g. self-reporting on physical health or aspirations).

Contrary to popular belief, objective indicators are not necessarily more rigorous or better than subjective ones. Most changes that are realistically achievable during a funding period of a program are usually intangible and relate to awareness, behaviour change and an increase in skills. It is thus likely that high level and readily accepted outcome indicators such as birth weight, employment rates, school results are not always the most appropriate indicators to use to evaluate your programs and will not capture the unique ways through which your activities create outcomes.

Remember, to effectively evaluate your programs you should be interested in measuring material outcomes for stakeholders, not just those outcomes that are easy to measure.



TOC development
and progress

Step 1



Step 2



Program background
and stakeholder mapping

Program Inputs

Activity 7.1

Developing your own indicators

This activity will guide you to start thinking about what potential indicators you could use to capture evidence regarding the outcomes you create for the stakeholders of your program.

Where you don't have readily available appropriate indicators for your outcomes, the **intermediate outcomes achieved can be indicators to measure the longer-term outcome**. For example, *better knowledge of nutrition*, and *decrease in eating junk food* could both be intermediate outcomes for the *families live healthier* outcome. This is also a way of knowing that Improved healthy living might be taking place.

You could use this intermediate indicator to collect evidence in the following way.

Type of indicator	Description
Subjective	<p>You can ask families pre and post program survey questions to gauge the extent to which their awareness of food nutrition has changed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey statement: "I am aware of the nutritional value of the food that I eat" • Response options: Strongly disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly agree <p>By asking this question before and after your program, you can not only gauge if the participant has experienced a change in awareness in this outcome, but you can also understand to what extent it has occurred based on how different the answers are.</p>
Objective	<p>You could also interview program participants and collect information on what they now do as a result of having better nutritional awareness. This can be presented as quotes or case studies.</p> <p>If you have identified, <i>decrease in eating junk food</i> as an indicator of the <i>healthy living</i> outcomes, you can ask your participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how many times they eat junk food per week before and after the program; or • how many fewer times per week they eat junk food after the program. <p>The difference reported by individuals/families would then give you an objective indicator to evidence your outcome.</p>

It is recommended that you use more than one indicator for every outcome you are trying to measure.

This way you have a balanced evidence base that informs you if an outcome has occurred or not and to what extent it has been achieved. Multiple indicators also allow you to provide customised evidence on the unique ways that your program creates outcomes.

In the table below, list out at least one subjective and one objective indicator for each Long-Term outcome that you have identified in your Theory of Change and how you would go about collecting it (i.e. Surveys of participants, interviews, observations of participants, etc.)

Step 3	✓	Step 4	✓	Step 5	✓	Step 6	✓	STEP 7	✓
Activities and outputs		Long-term outcomes		Articulating the change you create		Populating your theory of change		Thinking about indicators	

Activity 7.1 Formulating your own Indicators		
Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes	Describe the indicators that you could use to evidence this outcome for your program
Safety	1. Children can grow up safe in their families and communities	Subjective:
		Objective:
	2. Families are free from violence and abuse	Subjective:
		Objective:
Health	3. Children are born healthy	Subjective:
		Objective:
	4. Children and families have good nutrition, healthy lifestyles and access to quality healthcare	Subjective:
		Objective:
	5. Children meet developmental milestones	Subjective:
	Objective:	
Culture and connections	6. Children and families have strong kin and community networks	Subjective:
		Objective:
	7. Children develop and maintain their personal and cultural identity	Subjective:
		Objective:

How would you get this information?

Activity 7.1 Formulating your own Indicators			
Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes	Describe the indicators that you could use to evidence this outcome for your program	
		How would you get this information?	
Mental and emotional wellbeing	8. Children live in a society that values their identity and is free from racism and discrimination	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	9. Children and families are well supported to address the impacts of individual and intergenerational trauma through therapeutic healing	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
Home and environment	10. Families have a stable, safe and suitable place to live and raise their children	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	11. Children are placed with kin, and enabled to reconnect or reunify with families, if in out-of-home care	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
12. Parents are ready and able to nurture and care for children	<i>Subjective:</i>		
	<i>Objective:</i>		
Learning and skills	13. Children have the opportunity to learn, develop their skills, maximise their capabilities and pursue their interests	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	14. Children and families engage in lifelong learning by participating in education and training opportunities	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	

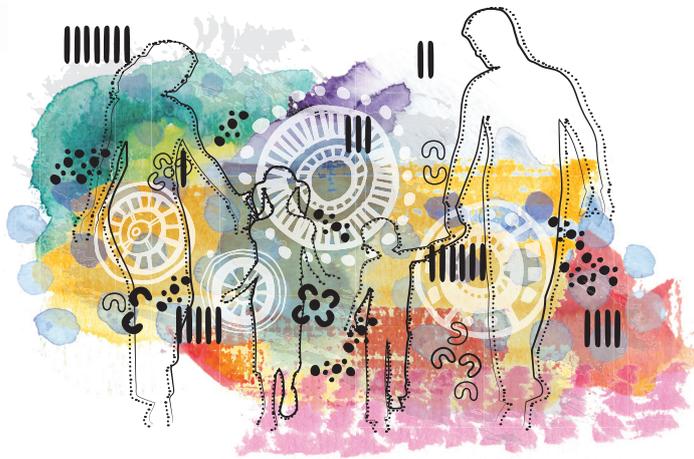
Activity 7.1 Formulating your own Indicators		Describe the indicators that you could use to evidence this outcome for your program	How would you get this information?
Wellbeing domains	Long-term outcomes		
Empowerment	15. Children can grow as citizens and leaders, taking their place and strengthening their cultures in contemporary society	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	16. Families act as first teachers, and engage fully with the schooling of their children	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	17. Families can exercise greater choice, control and cultural authority over decisions that affect them	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
Economic	18. Families experience financial resilience and independence	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	
	19. Young people are supported to engage with training and education opportunities that prepare them for employment	<i>Subjective:</i>	
		<i>Objective:</i>	

Congratulations – you have now completed the final step in this theory of change development guide!

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Now that you have developed a theory of change for your program and identified potential indicators, you are well on your way to being evaluation-ready and able to measure and demonstrate the impact of your work. Once you are happy with your theory of change and indicators, the next steps are to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop appropriate data collection tools that will allow you to collect data based on your indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate and analyse the data you collect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect, celebrate and improve your work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For example, you may want to develop interview scripts or surveys for clients asking them to self-report their wellbeing or have community partners complete surveys about the impact of your work. - For a high-level snapshot of the impact your program has on children and families, we have suggested some survey questions you could use to collect data from the families that you work with. See Appendix A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You should collate and analyse data in two different ways: a mix of ongoing data for monitoring (e.g. feedback forms or intake sheets that are completed regularly) and less frequent, more intensive data for evaluation purposes (e.g. surveys and reflection interviews that are completed annually). - Depending on how much data you have, you may want to use software for analysis (e.g. NViVo for interview notes, Excel for survey data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the data to understand how your program is faring, share and communicate the successes and identify areas for improvement. For example, you may want to schedule a regular meeting with staff to discuss what the data is showing and how you can best respond and change what you are doing. You may also want to produce an impact report for your organisation or for a particular program or service to share with your community, stakeholders, and current or potential funders.
<p>TIP: pilot any data collection tool you develop by having a colleague or small group of clients try it out to ensure it makes sense, is easy to complete and gives you the data you require.</p>	<p>TIP: it is important to look at your overall data to see if you are creating the change you desire, but you should also break down the data by particular demographics (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity) or vulnerabilities (e.g. clients with high need) to see if there are particular groups of your children and families who are experiencing more or less change.</p>	<p>TIP: your theory of change should be a living document. Once you have collected and analysed data on outcomes from your stakeholders, look at what it is saying and review your theory of change to make sure it still reflects actual, rather than intended, outcomes.</p>



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