

Theory of Change

Overview of Theory of Change

The first step in program design is to articulate a “theory of change” that describes what social condition(s) the program wants to change and a theory for how interventions - targeted at the individual, community, and systems levels - can bring about the change. A TOC can serve as a map for articulating a process of planned social change which links the problems/issues to outcomes and validated by assumptions related to community/system assets and plausible interventions. Unlike a logic model (which will be discussed in Step 2), a TOC takes a wide view of a desired change, carefully probing the assumptions behind each step. The benefits of starting with a TOC is to be vision and not activity driven:

- A TOC helps articulate social change efforts through clarifying:
 - Intentions – why are you doing what you are doing
 - Expected outcomes – what do you expect will happen as a result of your actions
- Can be reflective or prospective
 - For planning: lays the foundation for future activity and expected outcomes
 - For evaluation: articulates outcomes that will guide evaluation
- Demonstrates a **program’s** reasoning and approach to its work
- Brings discipline and alignment to practice; provides the framework for developing **the program’s** logic model to ensure logical coherence to a **program’s work and** expected results

There are various approaches to a TOC that may describe anything from a detailed map to a general storyline. Whichever method is used, the goal is to be clear about the **program’s** theory, **to see what’s possible and what’s not possible to achieve with the** chosen intervention. A TOC helps to think about what other inputs might be needed and whether the input might fit in a catalytic place. At the formal end of the TOC spectrum, a TOC starts with the assumptions about the

DHTI Theory of Change: DHTI believes that one of the ways we can address the healthcare workforce shortage and create healthier communities is to tap into the workforce potential of immigrants who have the linguistic skills and cultural background of the new patient population in the US. those who are interested in pursuing a healthcare career.

environment in which the program is doing its work, create a diagram for each. More informally, it is articulating what is needed to bring about a social change. Figures 3 and 4 on the next pages are **HCPI’s Theory of Change template followed by HCPI’s Theory of Change Schematic.**

Figure 4 - Theory of Change Template

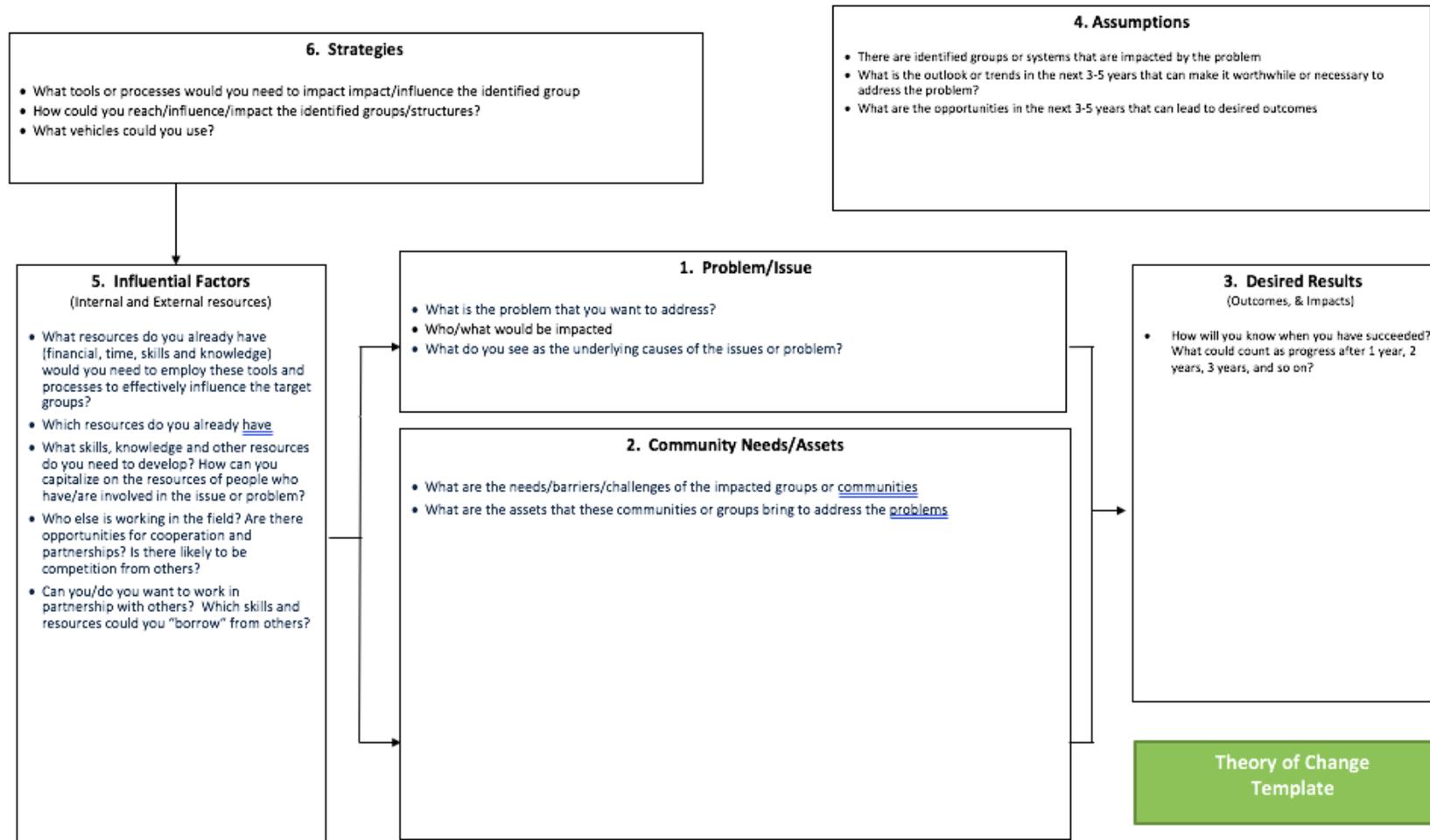


Figure 5 - HCPI

