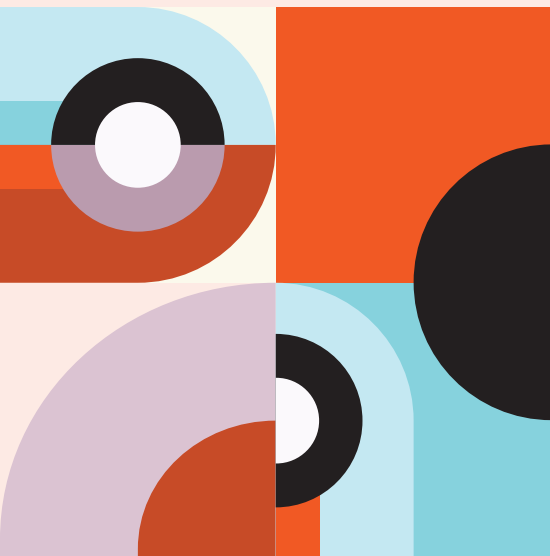


# Program logic and theory of change:

a quick introduction for  
health justice partnerships



Checking that you and your partnering organisation have shared expectations is important for many aspects of managing a health justice partnership, including evaluation.

Theory of change and program logic are useful tools from evaluation that can also support communication and planning. But the terms ‘theory of change’ and ‘program logic’ can be used in different ways by different people, which can create confusion. If you’re planning to design a program logic or theory of change for your health justice partnership, take a moment to check in with the people you’re working with to make sure you’re working towards the same thing. This includes people within your own organisation, in your partnering organisation, and any external evaluators or researchers.

This quick introduction provides some examples of some of the diagrams that people might be thinking about when they say ‘theory of change’ or ‘program logic’, and why they are useful. It also includes links to material from Health Justice Australia that can provide a useful starting point when developing such diagrams.

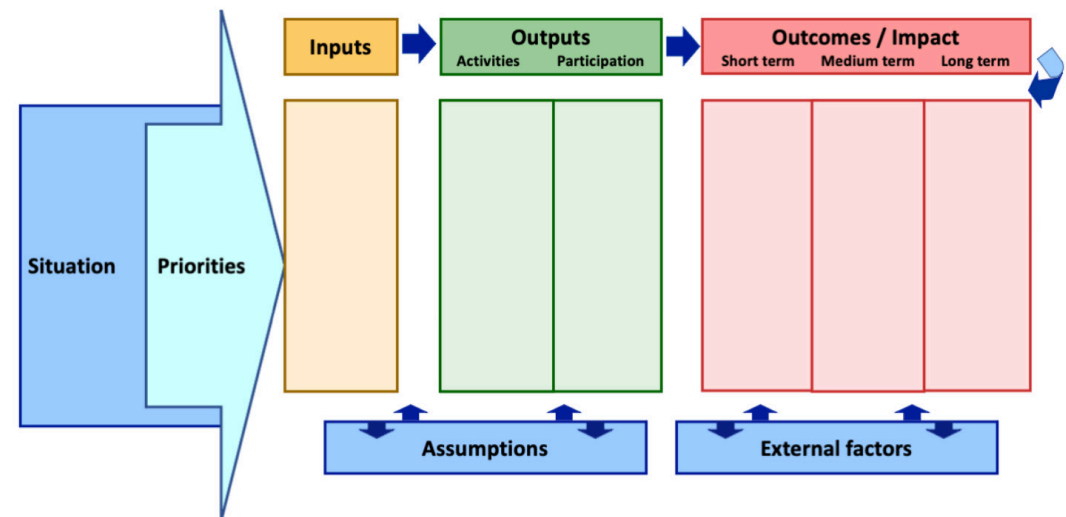
# Program logic

Program logic (sometimes also called a logic model) usually refers to a diagram that shows, from left to right, how inputs (things like funding, staff) lead to outputs (what you do, who you reach, the products you are responsible for) that in turn lead to outcomes (your results, the change you are trying to create).

Program logics are useful tools to build a shared understanding of the outcomes you're trying to achieve together, and to make sure you're delivering the right activities to reach your intended outcomes.

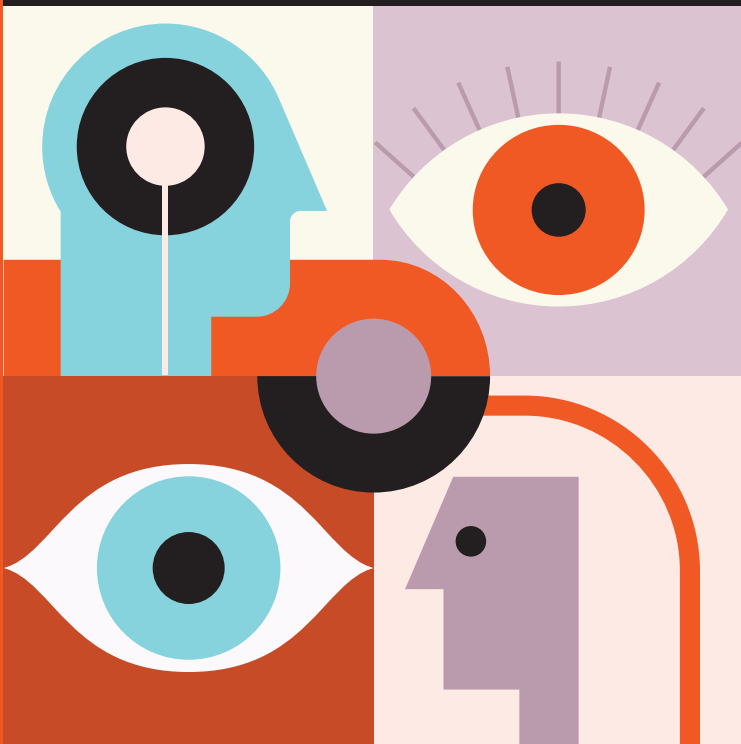
Program logics are less useful for activities where change is complex (like systems change initiatives) and more useful for activities where change is more linear (like delivering a training course).

Health Justice Australia has program logic templates to provide a starting point for common health justice partnership activities.



Source: <https://logicmodel.extension.wisc.edu/>

# If you'd like to learn more about program logics...



1. You can find some useful materials to learn more at [Logic Models - Evaluation for Leaders](#) or [The Community Toolbox](#).
2. Try using HJA's program logic templates as a starting point to create program logics for your HJP's activities. You might want to get out some sticky notes or use an online tool like Miro. Remember: the point is not to have a perfect diagram, but to use program logic as a thinking tool and an opportunity for good conversations with your team and your partnering organisation.

# Theory of change

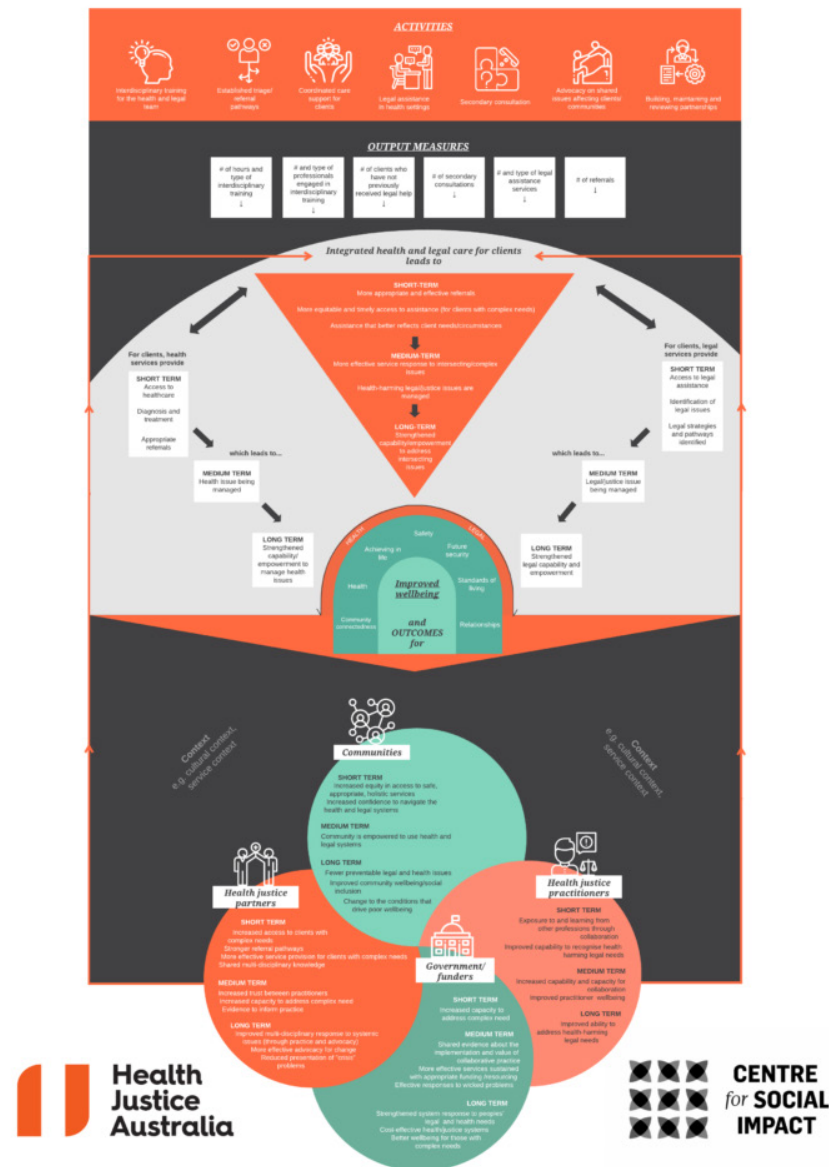
Evaluators will often use the term ‘theory of change’ to talk about the underlying mechanism of change that underpins a program logic. For example, a training program might be based on the idea that providing information will change behaviour.

Sometimes people say ‘theory of change’ when they’re referring to a diagram that has similar components to a program logic, but is presented in a more conceptual way, with a less linear, more ‘infographic’ presentation.

These kinds of diagrams can be useful communication tools, providing a visual snapshot of a program.

You can download Health Justice Australia’s theory of change for health justice partnership from our website:

<https://healthjustice.org.au/resource/toolkit/health-justice-partnership-theory-of-change>

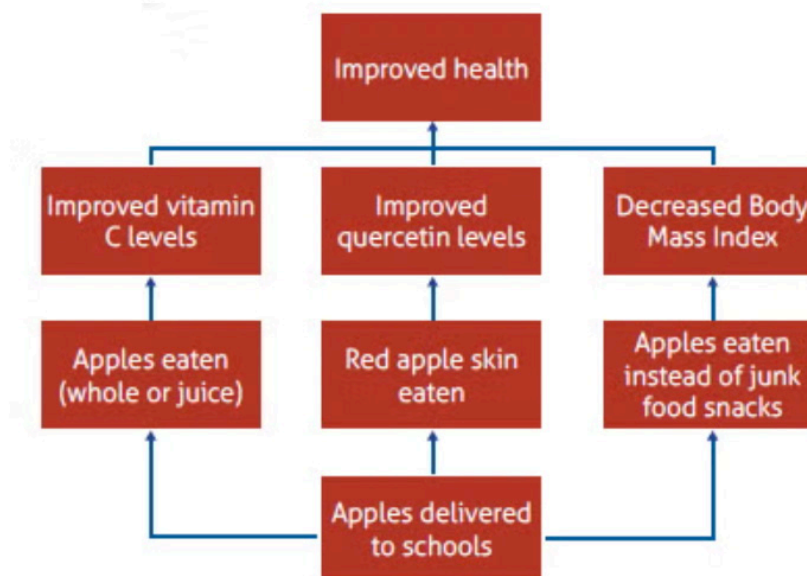


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# Outcomes hierarchy

Sometimes people use the term ‘theory of change’ to refer to a detailed documentation of the chain of outcomes, or **outcome hierarchy**, showing progress from immediate to intermediate to final outcomes. This kind of diagram is often presented along with research and practice evidence that change is likely to occur.

This kind of diagram is useful if you are undergoing a detailed design process for a new program, or in preparation for an evaluation.



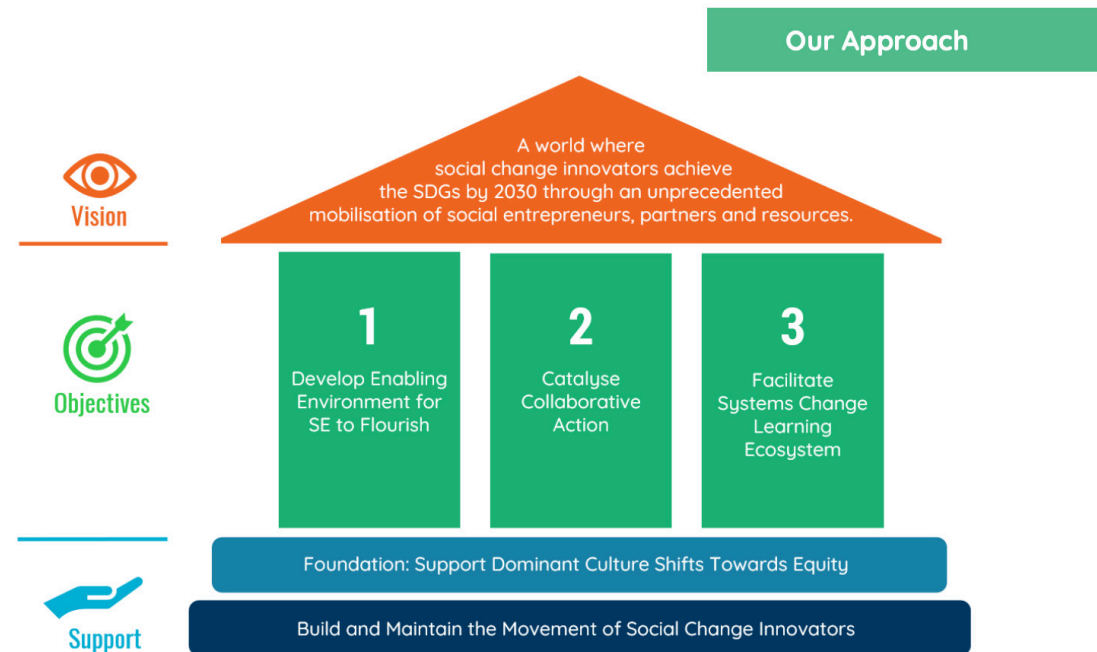
*An outcomes hierarchy for 'an apple a day' program showing possible different causal paths*

Source: [Better Evaluation](#)

# High-level strategy diagram

Sometimes people use the term ‘theory of change’ to refer to a high-level strategy diagram, which is like an infographic version of a strategic plan. This kind of diagram shows things like the mission, vision, and intended change. They help teams to get on the same page about why they do what they do.

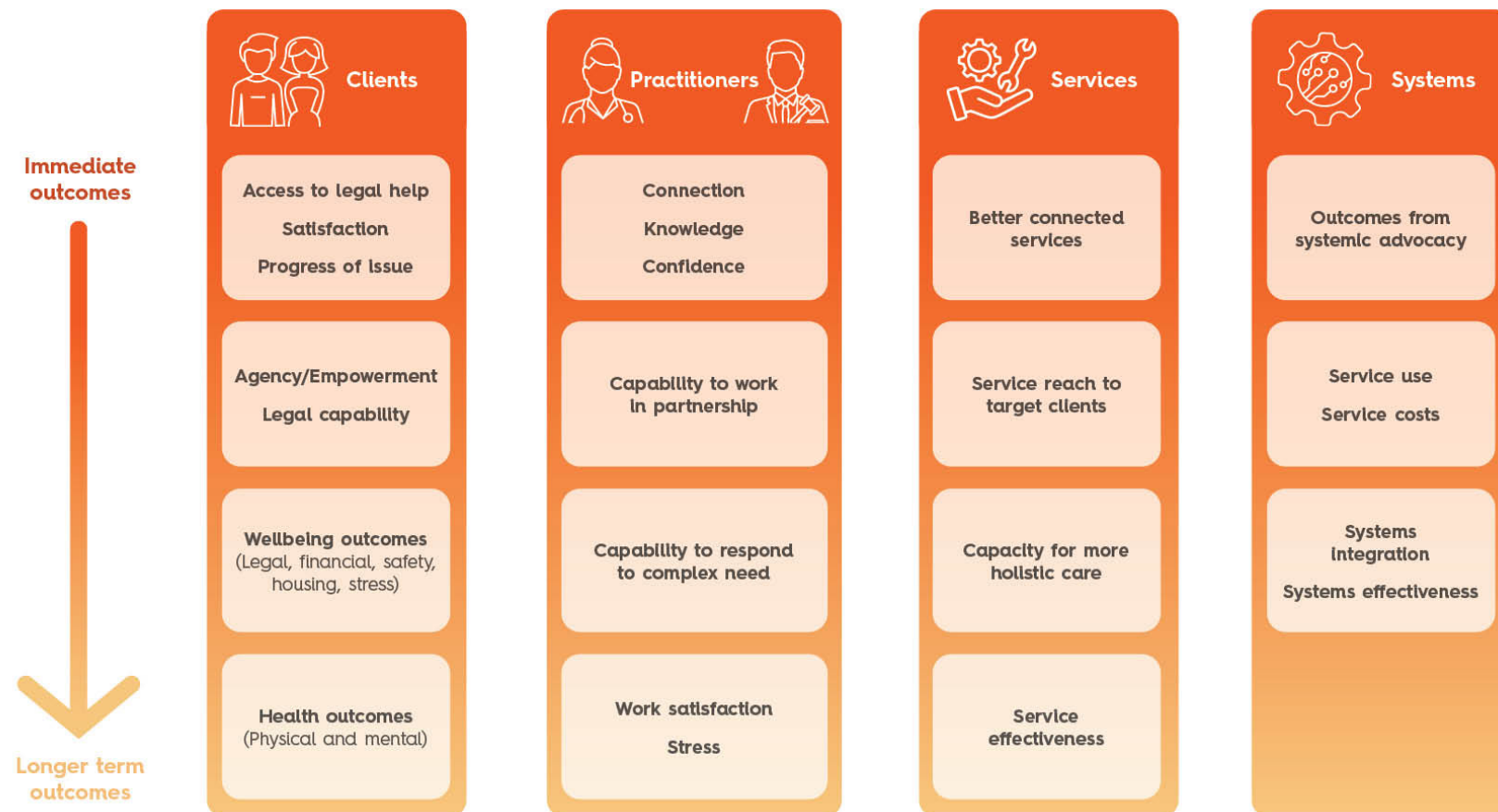
Most evaluators wouldn’t call this a ‘theory of change’ but lots of people do – this is why it’s important to check you have shared expectations!



Source: [catalyst2030.net](https://catalyst2030.net)

# Reflecting on the why...

Whatever kind of diagram you decide to develop for your health justice partnership, you don't have to start from scratch. Here are some types of outcomes to think about, for clients, practitioners, services and systems.





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