# From Theory of Change Development to Facilitation

Become a Theory of Change Expert!
Blended course: 3 October – 4 November 2022

**MDF**
EMPOWERING PEOPLE,
CREATING IMPACT

Theory of Change
*Online course*

Business For
Development

# Summary

Start by learning all the basics about Theory of Change with the help of our one-of-a-kind e-learning. Then apply what you learn and develop your own Theory of Change, on which you will receive feedback during a coaching session. But why stop there? A Theory of Change ought to be a co-creation process with stakeholders. During four facilitated live sessions (16 hours total) you will learn how to facilitate these processes and become a Theory of Change facilitator.

# Organisations

This Theory of Change training is a joined initiative by MDF Training & Consultancy and TheoryofChangeCourse.com

## MDF Training & Consultancy

has over 35 years of experience in providing management training, advisory and evaluation services worldwide. We are an acknowledged agency with a relevant track record on local, regional and international levels. We have supported many organisations across the world, training people and organisations on ToC development and implementation, and are experienced hands on ToC workshop facilitators.
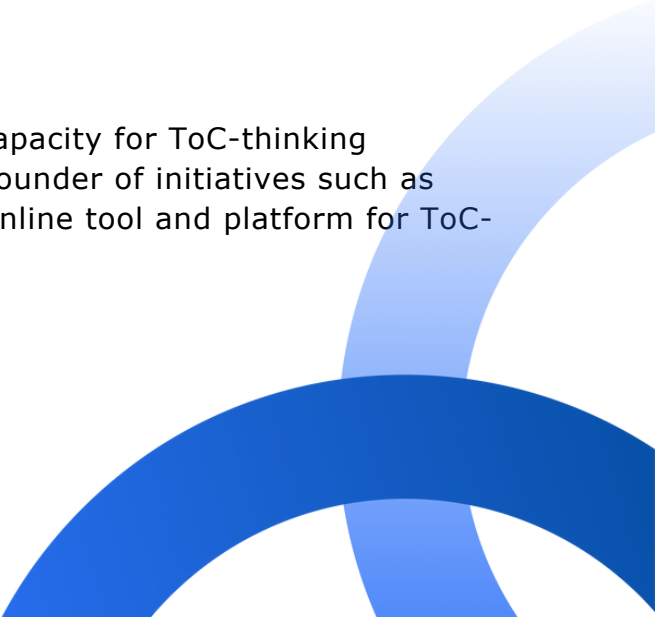
## TheoryofChangeCourse.com

is the premier e-learning in the market of ToC training. The online training:
- Provides high-quality content that covers the full spectrum of ToC topics. It starts at the level of a beginner and continues at an intermediate level.
- Is completely animated, builds upon a storyline, and includes gamification elements. It makes learning fun and engaging.
- Is practical; step-by-step assignments help you develop your own ToC.

## Business for Development

is a social enterprise that seeks to advance the capacity for ToC-thinking amongst purpose-driven organisations. It is the founder of initiatives such as TheoryofChangeCourse.com and Changeroo, an online tool and platform for ToC-thinking.

# Instructors



**Sam Boering**
**(MDF Training & Consultancy)**

Sam Boering is a development practitioner with over 34 years of work experience (of which 20 with MDF), working across the globe with a wide variety of organisations in various contexts. For about 10 years now, he has been working with ToC, providing hands-on training as well as providing support in ToC processes, e.g. by conducting ToC workshops (of course now mostly online).

During the training, Sam will be responsible for the live, facilitated sessions on ToC facilitation as well as the individual coaching sessions during which you'll receive individual feedback on the ToC you've developed during the training course.

Martin Klein is the founder of Business for Development, which is the social enterprise behind the e-learning on ToC-thinking and the Changeroo ToC platform. He holds a PhD in strategic management on Bottom of the Pyramid strategies (how to combine an entrepreneurial approach and poverty alleviation), and conducted the first global survey among pro-poor for-profit businesses by successfully sourcing the support for such a survey from various international development organisations.

Martin will be the training coordinator and responsible for the online ToC e-learning.



**Martin H. Klein**
**(Business for Development)**

# Curriculum

| Training component | Short description |
|---|---|
| **E-Learning** | The self-paced, modular and engaging online course *"Theory of Change: From novice to master changemaker"* (theoryofchangecourse.com) lays the foundation for the other training components. |
| **Development of your own Theory of Change** | As part of the course, you will develop your own Theory of Change. Starting with level 6 of the e-learning, you will receive assignments to talk you through the development of your ToC. |
| | In addition, each student is expected to provide two fellow students with detailed feedback on their ToC. Likewise, you will receive feedback from two of your fellow students. |
| **ToC Facilitation: Facilitated, live sessions (4 half-day sessions)** | During facilitated online sessions (16 hours total), we will zoom in on the role of the facilitator of the ToC development process. You will learn about the methodologies and exercises to give shape to the different facilitation elements: from setting the agenda and building a supportive setting, to developing buy-in, conducting preparatory research, and building consensus. We will look at examples how to successfully tap into the collective knowledge and challenge such. |
| **Individual coaching session: ToC feedback** | The last part of the training course consists of an half-hour individual coaching session with feedback on the Theory of Change that you will have developed and perfected throughout the different training components. |
| **Online discussion forum** | A lot of the coordination and communication will take place on our online forum. Here you can discuss progress and ask questions to your fellow students. Teachers will also drop in from time to time. |
| | Expected work load: 40 hours |

# Certification

You will receive a certificate upon the successful completion of the course. To receive the course certificate requires your full participation in all activities.

# Registration

You can register at:
https://theoryofchangecourse.com/blended-learning-courses/

**REGISTRATION**

Your training spot will be reserved once payment has been received.

# Date and price

| | |
|---|---|
| **When*** | **3 October – 4 November 2022** |
| **Where** | Online |
| **Course fee**** | €975 |
| **Registration deadline** | 7 September |

\* The live sessions are scheduled for 6, 11, 18, and 26 October.
The sessions start at 9 AM and run till 1 PM, Central European Time (CET).

\*\* VAT may be added depending on your location.

The organizers preserve the right to cancel the training if less than 8 participants sign up.

# Group discount

If you register with multiple people from the same organisation, the second person receives a 10% discount and the third person from the same organisation receives a 50% discount.

# Training program

## 1. E-learning

The online course "Theory of Change: From novice to master change maker", available at theoryofchangecourse.com, makes up for the first part of the training course. It is fully animated and builds on a storyline that takes place on the island of Chanoo. It provides a unique self-paced course that is practical, visual and engaging through gamification elements.

The course assumes little prior knowledge and goes into more depth as the course progresses, making the course suitable for learners with and without ToC experience.

The full online course consists of 18 learning modules. In Annex A, you can find the topics and more detailed learning goals of each module. Also the website theoryofchangecourse.com provides more information and free access to two of the introduction modules. The modules cover topics such as the situation analysis, assumptions, causal pathways and results chains, and adaptive management and learning.

As you progress through the online course, you carry out assignments that build up to a draft of your own ToC. We will build further on this draft ToC in the other training components.

## 2. Working on your own ToC

A requisite to an effective ToC training are students developing a ToC as part of the course. This is something you will engage in asynchronous from the live sessions.

Critical thinking, co-creation, discussion and feedback are essential elements to the ToC development process. It is also important for your learning experience that you work on a ToC that is relevant to your own practice. Therefore, you will yourselves select a project or program for which you will develop a ToC, which should ensure the development of a ToC that is relevant to your own practice.

Each student is linked up with two other students to critically reflect upon each other's ToC. This should stimulate discussion and reflection, important processes within ToC-thinking and therefore to your learning experience. Hence, you will receive feedback from fellow-students as well as give feedback to ToCs of your fellow-students.

During the facilitated sessions you will have the opportunity to ask questions about the ToC you are developing and at the end of the training program you will receive feedback on the ToC you have developed during a coaching session.

## 3. ToC Facilitation: Facilitated, live sessions

During four facilitated online sessions, we will zoom in on the role of the facilitator within the ToC development process.

Session 1: ToC as a group process.
The development of a ToC is a co-creation process to which the input from stakeholders is indispensible. During the first session we zoom in on the organisation of a great co-creation session: who to invite, develop the agenda, setting the stage, ensuring productive group dynamics, and more.

Session 2: Personal facilitation skills.
What are the skills that make for a great facilitator? During the second session we explore these skills and apply them to the development of a Vision of Success.

Session 3: Facilitation of the development of pathways.
Thinking in terms of causal pathways is a core component of ToC thinking and ToC visualisation. Yet, many ToCs fail to develop a sound rationale. Logical, analytical thinking is challenging and many cognitive biases loom in the background. We will zoom in on how a facilitator can optimally leverage participants their expertise and help participants remain critical of the logic in their own thinking.

Session 4: Facilitation in bringing assumptions to the surface.
Perhaps the biggest challenge to ToC facilitation is bringing the assumptions underneath a ToC to the surface. We will explore how a facilitator can help participants to bring to the surface assumptions they often are unaware of.


## 4. Individual coaching session: ToC feedback

At the end of the training, you will submit the ToC you have developed and receive one-on-one feedback from the instructor during an half-hour coaching session.

# Annex A:
# Learning goals of each of the 18 modules of the e-learning

*After the module you will...*

## Module 1: Introduction and background
- Understand the underlying issues that have led to the development of the ToC concept;
- Know a ToC is a compass to help navigate a change process;
- Understand a ToC changes over time (e.g. as a result of new insights, learned lessons, impact measurement or contextual changes);
- Understand an example of a simplified ToC.

## Module 2: What is a Theory of Change?
- Know what a ToC is;
- Understand the most important characteristics of a ToC;
- Understand the value of a ToC in management of social and environmental change;
- Can explain why development of a ToC is practically valuable and relevant for you;
- Understand why clarifying assumptions and testing them are important in the process of creating a ToC;
- Understand how the process of creating a ToC may be even more valuable than the actual document.

## Module 3: ToC practice: application and critique
- Understand who are using a ToC;
- Understand for what purposes a ToC can be used;
- Have discovered the ways you can use a ToC in your own organisation and practice;
- Are aware of the critique ToC sometimes receives.

## Module 4: Assumptions
- Know what an assumption is;
- Are aware of the fact we all make assumptions;
- Understand we are often unaware of our assumptions;
- Understand that recognizing assumptions and testing them is a core element of ToC development;
- Are able to distinguish between different types of assumptions;
- Understand the behavioural-based pathway by Mayne and the types of assumptions in it;
- Are able to bring assumptions to the surface in an example by using different strategies (involve stakeholders, be aware of different types of assumptions and ask deepening questions);
- Are able to formulate an assumption in positive terms;
- Are able to create a learning agenda based on the formulated assumptions.

## Module 5: Theory of Change thinking
- Understand what ToC-thinking is;
- Understand how you can apply ToC-thinking in an example;
- Have discovered the value of ToC-thinking;
- Can explain why stakeholder engagement and co-creation are important in ToC-thinking;
- Understand when a causal relationship is (un)necessary, (in)sufficient or meets the INUS conditions;
- Can apply the INUS framework to a simple example;
- Understand the three levels of probing (causation, warrant and causal assumption);
- Have practiced with the three levels of probing by asking the questions: how, why, for whom and under what circumstances in examples.

## Module 6: The theory in Theory of Change
- Understand the importance of using existing theories while developing a ToC;
- Can explain different types of mechanisms (situational mechanism, action-formation mechanism and transformational mechanism);
- Understand the difference between theory and assumptions;
- Can find theories that help substantiate or challenge impact pathways.
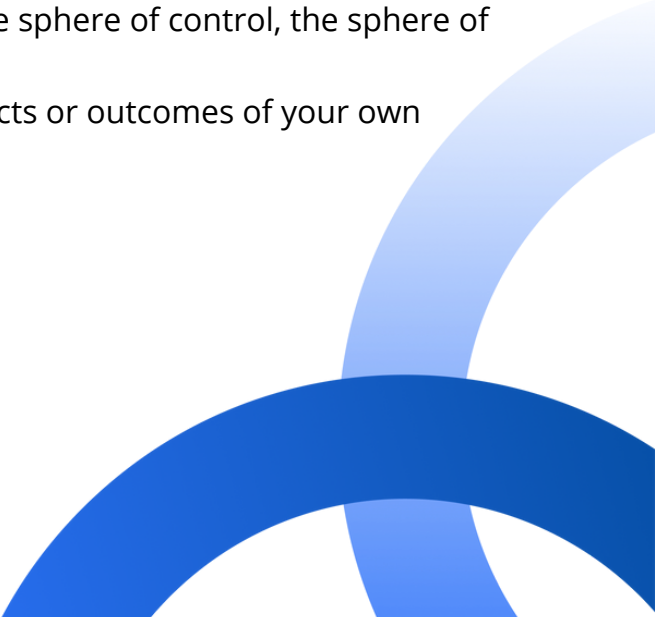
## Module 7: The process of developing a ToC
- Understand creating a ToC is an iterative process;
- Know which steps need to be taken to develop a ToC;
- Have an overview of the kinds of actions each step in the process contains;
- Know there are three complementary approaches to the ToC development process: backward mapping, start with what you do, and an actor-based approach;
- Can explain what backward-mapping is;
- Understand what an actor-based approach is;
- Understand how an actor-based approach is related to the ToC development process.

## Module 8: General narrative
- Understand what the general narrative is;
- Understand the purpose of the general narrative;
- Know the general narrative consists of four components: 1. situation analysis, 2. vision of success, 3. purpose, scope and development process, 4. change story;
- Understand what a situational analysis is;
- Can perform a situational analysis;
- Understand what a vision of success is;
- Can formulate a vision of success;
- Understand three choices with a large bearing on a ToC's development: its purpose, scope and development process;
- Can define a ToC its purpose, scope and development process;
- Understand the basic principles of writing a change story.

## Module 9: Causal chain
- Understand the ToC is a chain of causality and not a process diagram;
- Know causal chains represent the mechanisms (discussed in sublevel 6) in a ToC;
- Know that a causal chain consists of different elements (context, inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact);
- Can distinguish between these elements and know which represent the Theory of Action and which represent the change process;
- Understand when something is in- or outside the sphere of control, the sphere of influence, and the sphere of interest;
- Are able to turn your vision of success into impacts or outcomes of your own organisation.
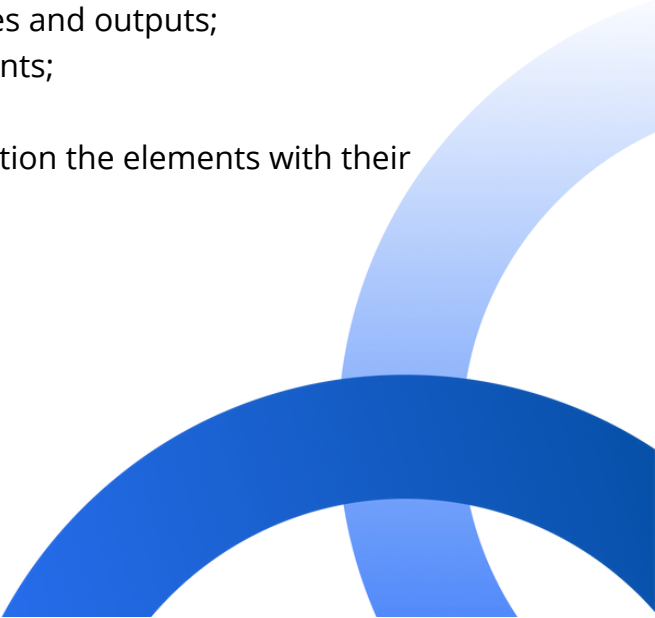
## Module 10: Impact and outcomes
- Can explain what an outcome and what an impact is, as well as distinguish between the two;
- Understand what preconditions are;
- Can distinguish between outcomes that are early, intermediate or late preconditions to the vision of success;
- Understand what a side-effect and an unintended effect are;
- Understand side-effects and unintended effects can be positive as well as negative;
- Are aware of the importance of preventing or minimising negative side-effects;
- Know there are different types of impacts and outcomes;
- Can formulate an outcome in the correct structure;
- Can define the desired attributes of an outcome;
- Have defined the outcomes and impact of your own ToC.

## Module 11: Pathways
- Understand what a ToC pathway is;
- Have discovered there are two metaphors for a ToC pathway, reflecting two different perspectives (ToC as a roadmap versus ToC as a compass);
- Understand particularly arrows (causal relationships) reflect the rationale and reasoning behind how change comes about;
- Are able to translate mechanisms into pathways;
- Are familiar with the different features of a causal relationship;
- Understand there are different pathway structures;
- Have defined the individual relationships in your own ToC;
- Have identified the different strands of change in your own ToC and formulated coherent pathways (of the same strand) to organise your own ToC.

## Module 12: Theory of Action
- Know what a Theory of Action is;
- Know the Theory of Action consists out of three different elements (inputs, activities and outputs);
- Know there are different types of inputs, activities and outputs;
- Can define the desired attributes of these elements;
- Are able to construct pathways to outcomes;
- Have specified for your own ToC its Theory of Action the elements with their descriptive attributes.

## Module 13: Making your ToC context-specific
- Are aware of the fact the ToC needs to be aligned to its context;
- Can apply the three levels of probing (causation, warrant and causal assumption) to identify context elements;
- Are aware of the importance to look at the local context in terms of challenges as well as opportunities;
- Identified challenges and opportunities within your own context;
- Understand how contextualisation matters for the scalability of a ToC;
- Are able to align your ToC to the local context on different dimensions (intervention strategy, change process, terminology, ToC development process);
- Discovered different approaches to include the context in the ToC representation;
- Incorporated the context in your own ToC.

## Module 14a: Strategy narratives - Part 1
- Understand what strategy narratives are;
- Are aware strategy narratives offer additional details about a ToC — written from a societal perspective — that are relevant to the ToC its success;
- Understand how strategy narratives encourage stakeholder engagement;
- Understand the kind of input and feedback stakeholders may provide on the strategy narratives;
- Know there are six categories of strategy narratives;
- Understand validation takes three forms (arguments, assumptions and evidence);
- Are aware of how a ToC is related to building a measurement framework;
- Used the three forms of validation to make your own ToC credible and persuasive;
- Added the assumptions to your own ToC;
- Thought about a measurement framework for your own ToC.

## Module 14b: Strategy narratives - Part 2
- Understand how opportunities and threats to a ToC inform about where there is room to improve the ToC;
- Understand what critical junctures are;
- Understand how innovations within a ToC say something about the uniqueness, creativity and competitive advantage within a ToC;
- Are able to use the articulation of needs within a ToC to encourage stakeholder engagement;

- Can formulate the relevant information for four strategy narrative categories, from the perspective of an organisation's capacity to create societal value (opportunities & threats, trade-offs, innovations, needs);
- Applied these four strategy narrative categories on your own ToC.

## Module 15: Level of specification
- Understand the pros and cons of and high and low level of detail of a ToC;
- Are able to assess whether you need a more or less detailed ToC;
- Know four different frameworks to assess the completeness of a ToC;
- Understand what a nested ToC is;
- Understand how grouping, nesting and creating different ToC versions for different purposes, can help make a ToC easier to read;
- Tested your own ToC on its completeness and eliminated unnecessary elements;
- Applied grouping, nesting and/or creating different ToC versions, to your own ToC.

## Module 16: Common ToC pitfalls
- Are familiar with some of the most important features of a great ToC;
- Understand 16 of the most common pitfalls within the ToC practice;
- Assessed your own ToC on the 16 pitfalls;
- Are able to conduct a ToC quality audit.

## Module 17: Learning & adaptive management
- Are permeated of the necessity of a learning culture and that a ToC should be a living, breathing document that you continue to adapt over time;
- Consider the ToC as the cornerstone of impact management;
- Understand the consequences for ToC of an adaptive approach;
- Understand the value of a flexible and emergent Theory of Action;
- Are able to apply scoping and focusing on your own ToC;
- Are familiar with a wide spectrum of concepts important to an organisational culture for learning;
- Created an action plan on how to grow a learning culture in your own organisation based on ToC-thinking.