

## **Exercise: An Organizational Conversation on Your Theory of Change**

**Rationale:** Without a good theory of change analysis, great organizations can miss the mark never achieving the social impact they seek. A clear and cogent theory of change tests assumptions and helps organizations to sharpen their social change strategies in order to achieve their long-term change goals.

**Begin by describing the long-term social change you are trying to achieve here:**

**The long-term social change our organization is trying to achieve is...**

**Now Answer the Following Questions:**

### **1. Articulating the Root Cause**

- What is the root cause or problem you are seeking to address?

### **2. Your Constituency**

- Who is your primary constituency?
- How is the problem impacting your constituency specifically?

### **3. Your Core Strategies for Social Change**

- What are the core strategies or strategic actions that your organization has decided will address the problem? Be specific.
- Why do you think these are the best strategies?

### **4. Operating Assumptions and Evidence**

- What assumptions are you making about why your core strategies will work?
- What evidence/data/information do you have to both support and challenge your assumptions?

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### 4. Operating Assumptions and Evidence – continued

- What additional information/knowledge might you need?
- Now that you have examined your assumptions, do you need to refine or change your core strategies in any way?

### 5. Preconditions for Success

- What else will need to happen or be in place in order for you to be successful at achieving your social change goal? (e.g., development of leaders, state of movement building, key shifts in public opinion, major policy change, etc.)

### 6. Success Indicators

- How will you know that you are making progress towards achieving your social change goal?
- Identify intermediate success indicators that best demonstrate you are on your way to achieving your social change goal.

### 7. Long Term Social Change

- Building on the prior steps, articulate with specificity, the social change goal you will have achieved.
- How will the lives of your constituents be changed as a result of your work? Make sure to paint a picture and be specific about how the change will transform the lives of your constituents.