# A Guide to Making Results Chains

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A results chain/impact logic is a tool to show how programme activities will influence particular systems, how changes in these systems will affect enterprises, and how those changes in enterprises will ultimately reduce poverty and/or contribute to other development goals.

The Basics

Results chains are drawn by programmes to mainly **articulate how their activities will trigger different levels of changes leading ultimately to development impact** (e.g. increased trade, increased income, job creation etc.). For instance, the diagram to the right shows a basic skeleton for a results chain. Activities are listed at the bottom, and goal put at the top. The results chain would show how the activities at the bottom would lead to different changes (box in the green), ultimately leading to 'income increase for poor farmers.'
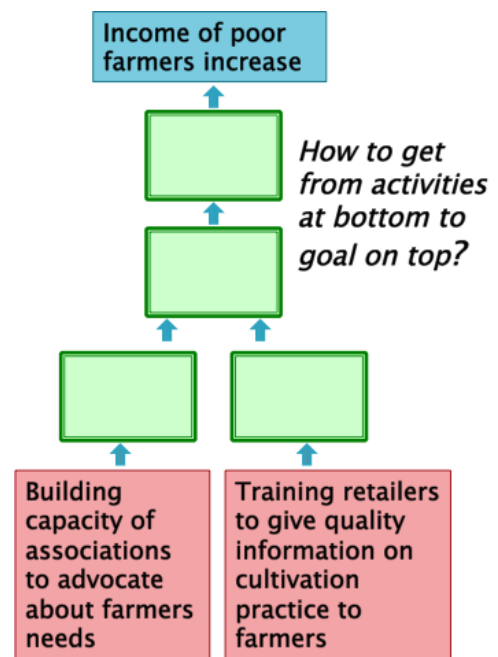
Most programmes starting with results chains for the first time, find it most effective to start with a blank sheet of paper, listing their main activities to think about why they are doing such activities. This leads to identifying desired changes that the activities will plausibly trigger. Through the process, programmes also end up identifying certain assumptions which should hold. For instance if a programme helps government ministries to improve their capacity to remove non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to trade; the desired change of removal of NTBs will only happen assuming that the political climate is favourable.

Ultimately results chains through a simple diagram helps programmes realistically **illustrate why they are doing what they are doing; how their individual work would help in achieving development impact; and provide the basis for assessing if and to what extent changes are taking place.**

10 Easy tips for developing effective results chains[1]

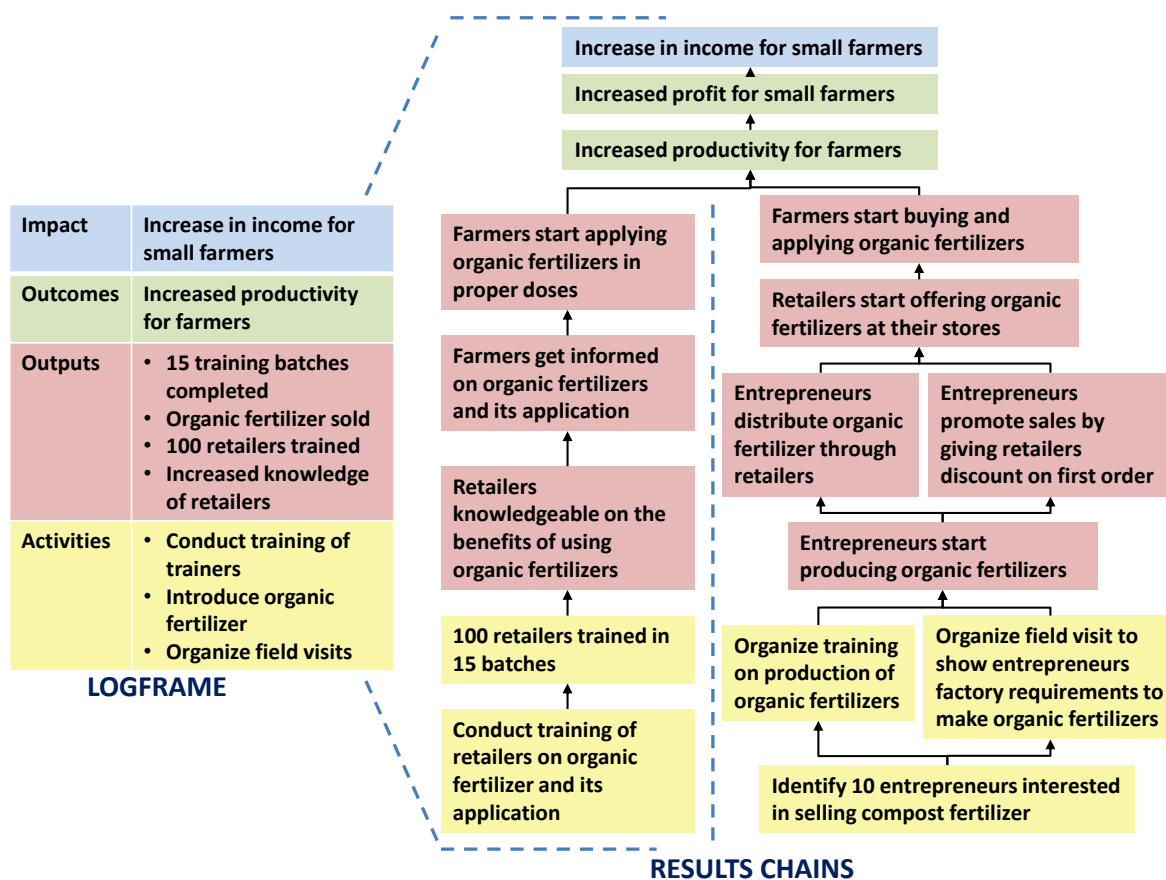| |
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| **PRODUCE A COHERENT CAUSAL MODEL** |
| 1.   Explain how the intervention contributes to the results |
| 2.   Avoid dead ends |
| **BE LOGICAL** |
| 3.   Make every arrow meaningful |
| 4.   Indicate the direction of expected change |
| 5.   Clearly show sequential and consequential progression |
| **COMMUNICATE CLEARLY** |
| 6.   Focus on the key elements. |
| 7.   Avoid too many arrows and feedback loops |
| 8.   Remove anything that does not add meaning |
| 9.   Ensure readability |
| 10.   Avoid trigger words or mysterious acronyms |

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[1] Taken from Purposeful Program Theory, (Sue C Funnell and Patricia J Rogers)

What is the difference between a logframe and a results chain?

A Logframe is a summarized matrix for a programme which allows it to put together different outputs, outcomes, purpose and impact for its key interventions together in a single table. It is essentially an overall programme summary represented through a single diagram. While it is very useful for an overall outlook, it does not explain different activities/interventions and the changes that they will trigger. **Results chains on the other hand lay out the pathway to change** and activities in detail; highlighting who does what. Thus for day to day management, results chains are more handy to track progress.

The figure below illustrates an example, where the logframe to the left summarizes the main strategic elements (activities, outputs, outcomes and impact) for a programme. Moving along from left to right (results chains) in the diagram, the logic of the programme remains the same. However the activities (over here to increase demand and to increase supply of organic fertilizer) and the pathway of change (what is expected to happen) becomes clearer.

Impact	Increase in income for small farmers
Outcomes	Increased productivity for farmers
Outputs	• 15 training batches completed • Organic fertilizer sold • 100 retailers trained • Increased knowledge of retailers
Activities	• Conduct training of trainers • Introduce organic fertilizer • Organize field visits

LOGFRAME

Increase in income for small farmers

Increased profit for small farmers

Increased productivity for farmers

Farmers start applying organic fertilizers in proper doses

Farmers get informed on organic fertilizers and its application

Retailers knowledgeable on the benefits of using organic fertilizers

100 retailers trained in 15 batches

Conduct training of retailers on organic fertilizer and its application

Farmers start buying and applying organic fertilizers

Retailers start offering organic fertilizers at their stores

Entrepreneurs distribute organic fertilizer through retailers

Entrepreneurs promote sales by giving retailers discount on first order

Entrepreneurs start producing organic fertilizers

Organize training on production of organic fertilizers

Organize field visit to show entrepreneurs factory requirements to make organic fertilizers

Identify 10 entrepreneurs interested in selling compost fertilizer

RESULTS CHAINS

Getting started: How to draw results chains

The following section provides detailed guidelines on drawing results chains. The idea of a results chain is to show how different activities lead to impact. Yet each activity leads to impact in a different way. To allow for these differences, we recommend that you are flexible in how you define each level (or category) of change in the results chain. In other words, while classifying boxes as 'activities', 'outputs', 'outcomes' and 'impact' can help you to think about what order you expect changes to occur in, basing your results chains on actual programme realities is more important.

> *Tip for Programmes:*
> *Start by drawing few results chains in free form (i.e. without levels). Then look for the similarities and determine the levels pertinent for the programme.*

1. As a precondition to doing good results chains, proper analysis of the market/sector/intervention is required. Often people find that the strategy/intervention is not clear enough, which is why it is difficult to draw up a logical results chain. Thus start with a thorough analysis of the sector to understand key questions:

   I. Constraints in the sector, opportunities
   II. Why are potential beneficiaries facing problems
   III. Who are the different market actors present in the sector
   IV. Why are the different market players not already solving the problems
   V. What are their incentives
   VI. What can the project do to assist market players to solve problems
   VII. Why would the solution work (based on incentives)
   VIII. The feasibility of programme activities
   IX. What would be the result of activities

   Sector analysis is the starting point for designing interventions or for the matter drawing up results chains. Often in reality when it comes to drawing results chains, it is revealed that all knowledge might not be there. It is important in such a case to collect the missing information or verify the facts when drawing up the results chains.

2. Write down the main project activity/ies. If there is more than one activity, you will need to show the relationship between them. Typically, this means asking:

   ➤ Does one activity lead to another? Or will they be undertaken at the same time?
   ➤ Do they all target the same service providers? Or do they target different service providers?
   ➤ Do they all aim to produce one specific change in service providers' capacities? Or are they aimed at different changes?

   Answering these questions gives more clarity on the logical sequencing timeframe for conducting of activities: what happens when; whether to club two or more activities under one intervention or more; and how to show the link between different activities.

   Alternatively some find it also useful to work the other way, i.e. by listing the change that the intervention is trying to trigger first and then adding activities that need to be undertaken to trigger change. This also allows the programme to determine which activities can be 'clustered' together under one intervention area or more. Particularly when programmes use results chain in their 'design phase' to figure out min intervention areas, set targets, etc. they find it useful to work downwards to determine activities that would help trigger desired change.

   Programmes also find it useful to put dates for the activities and subsequently estimate dates for when different levels of change will take place. This makes it easier to place activities in the order they will need to occur, and have dates for when change can be monitored.

   N.B. The results chain does *not* need to show every detail of the activities e.g. preparatory meetings. The art is in making sure that you list what is needed (key activities) for change to take place.

3. Describe the main change(s) in systems, service markets, intermediaries, enabling environment etc. expected to result from project activities. Add a different box for each major type of change.

Some programmes find it useful to map the different stakeholders involved in an intervention and diagram the business model (i.e. transaction relationships) that the programme is promoting before laying out the main changes out in the results chain. The results chain can then be drawn which essentially shows how programme activities will trigger changes for the stakeholders to achieve development goals in the end.

For instance consider the following example. VIP programme[2] works in the tofu sector (where a large number of poor people are involved) to improve product quality, production efficiency and market linkages. One of the interventions is to increase the adoption of Cleaner Production (CP) techniques and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) by tofu producers and vendors. Better production techniques through the introduction of improved equipment and technology will enable producers to reduce production costs, improve product quality, increase sales and therefore increase profitability.[3]

VIP initially planned to work along with the Ministry of Environment (MoE) to train up consultants who can help tofu producers to the use improved equipment and technology. A business model was to be tested where equipment suppliers would give embedded information to tofu producers on the benefits of using this new technology to boost their sales. In addition as an after sales service they would pay consultants to provide information to tofu producers on how to use improved technology to execute CP and GHP. The following diagram lays out the business model for the intervention.
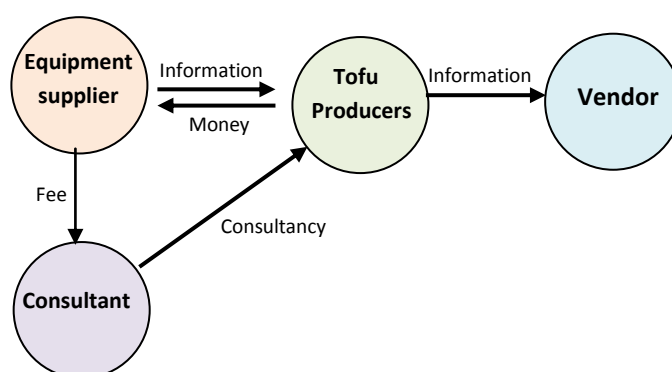
4. Describe the expected medium term changes at the beneficiary level that will result from these outputs (i.e. changes in systems, service markets, intermediaries, enabling environment etc.) *E.g. Specific changes in SME behaviour expected to result from increased use of a service, specific ministries improving administrative functions (processing complaints, record keeping) expected to result from introduction of IT software at work .*

    Add boxes to also show the beneficiaries improved performance. In some cases, there might be two layers of improved performance (increased productivity leading to increased profits).

5. If appropriate, draw a box for each poverty reducing impact that results from beneficiaries' improved performance (e.g. additional income for enterprises' owners and workers; additional jobs created).

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[2] The Value Initiative Programme (VIP) in Indonesia is funded by the SEEP Network and implemented by a consortium of Mercy Corps, Swisscontact, MICRA and PUPUK. For information on the Value Initiative Program, visit the Mercy Corps Indonesia website at http://indonesia.mercycorps.org/?show=work&type=sub_work&id=8
[3] This example has been considerably simplified from the original intervention.

6. Consider, after drafting the results chain which influences target 'direct' beneficiaries, consider at what levels and how wider market changes (e.g. "crowding in," "copying," etc.) might take place and contribute to goals. Add these changes in a separate line of change flow to the original results chain. It is also useful to keep the direct and indirect impact channel separate from each other all the way up to the goal level impacts as it helps programme add up impact separately if desired (e.g. reporting separately on direct and indirect beneficiary number). Moreover since often there is a time lag between when direct beneficiaries get their impact and indirect beneficiaries copy their performance, it is helpful to keep their changes in separate channels as illustrated in the diagram below.

> *Tip for Programme:* *Pilot interventions often do not cause wider market change without some further supporting activities. In such a case it might be useful to draw two separate results chains, one showing just the pilot intervention, and one which also shows the additional activities needed to trigger wider market change (crowding in and copying).*

Looking at Sustainability at different levels in the results chains:

Most development interventions are designed ensuring sustainability of benefits, i.e. the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The diagram below shows how to look at sustainability at different levels in a results chain.
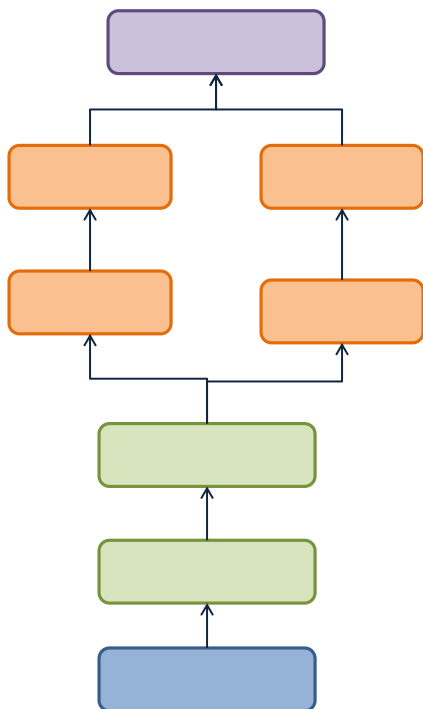
At **goal** level: The extent to which target beneficiaries continue to benefit after programme ends.

At **outcome** level: The extent to which product and/or services supported by a programme continue to be delivered to target beneficiaries after programme ends.

At **output** level: The people/institutions that are supported through activities continue getting support from local actors/programme partners.

At **activity** level: Working with local actors/partners to build their ownership, capacity and incentive.

Result Chain for Intervention : Improve Production for Tofu - Pilot

IMPACT

Producers more secure

Community experience less odor
Indicator: Environmental condition of 400 tofu enterprises in the Greater Jakarta area improve within the project period

Workers experience improve working condition
Indicator: Working condition for 4,000 tofu enterprises and employees in the Greater Jakarta area improve within the project period

Tofu enterprises increased income
Indicator: Increased 15% of income for 8,000 tofu enterprises in the Greater Jakarta area within the project period as a result of applying CP and GHP.

Tofu enterprises increase profit
Indicator: Profits of tofu enterprises who applied CP and GHP in the Greater Jakarta targeting the informal market increase 15% within the project period

Tofu enterprises increase sales
Indicator: Sales of tofu in informal market increases 15% for tofu enterprises who applied CP and/or GHP in the Greater Jakarta area within the project period

OUTCOMES

Tofu producers provide information on better product quality of tofu to vendors
Indicator: 8,000 vendors provide information on better product quality of tofu to their customers

Tofu producers improve product quality
Indicator: Renters and vendors' comments on better product quality of tofu

Tofu producers reduce cost
Indicator: Production cost reduces 15% for tofu producers who applied CP in the Greater Jakarta area within the project period

Tofu producers improve productivity and hygiene and produce less pollution

Tofu enterprises applied Cleaner Production and GHP and use new equipment
Indicator: 1000 tofu enterprise applied Cleaner Production and GHP in their enterprise within the project period

Tofu producers purchase IP Package/new equipments from IP Experts
Indicators: 400 tofu producers purchase IP package/new equipments within the project period

Tofu enterprises are aware of the CP, GHP, and access to finance for producers in terms of improving their productivity and quality of tofu
Indicator: 1000 tofu enterprises are aware of the CP, GHP, and access to finance for producers within the project period

PILOT BUSINESS MODEL

Equipment suppliers provide information on CP and GHP to tofu enterprises
Indicator: 5 business service i.e equipment supplier related to CP and GHP developed, introduced, and rolled out within the project period

Lead producers provide information on CP and GHP to tofu enterprises
Indicator: 12 business service i.e lead producers related to CP and GHP developed, introduced, and rolled out within the project period

Financial institutions provide information on CP and GHP and financial support to tofu enterprises
3 financial services related to CP and GHP developed, introduced, and rolled out

MoE and NADFC conduct the pilot training to IP Experts in CP and GHP with supports from VIP
Indicator: Participants' comments/interest to enter tofu sector after attending CP and GHP training

VIP troubleshoots implementation by building a tofu factory model in Jakarta. While for Bekasi, the factory model is built through MOE program.
Indicator: Tofu enterprise's satisfaction towards the IP Package/new equipments in pilot

1. VIP talks to National Agency for Drug and Food Control (NADFC) on IP Expert training.
2. VIP have a deal with NADFC, which will have the following:
- VIP helps NADFC to produce training materials on Good Health Practice (GHP), if necessary.
- NADFC will conduct the GHP pilot training with support from VIP
Indicator: NADFC's comments/interest to participate in this program

1. VIP talks to Ministry of Environment (MoE) on IP Expert training.
2. VIP have a deal with MoE, which will have the following:
- VIP helps MoE to identify the participants which will be the IP Experts that consist of equipment supplier, lead producers, and financial institution.
- VIP helps MoE to produce training materials, if necessary.
- MoE will conduct the Cleaner Production (CP) pilot training with support from VIP
- VIP will help MoE to help the trainees in providing the services (IP Package) to the producers, if necessary. This support package must be developed.
Indicator: MoE's comments/interest to participate in this program

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES