Use of **Theory of Change** to guide the design and monitoring of an intervention intended to reduce partner violence and increase protected sex among sex workers

Karnataka Health Promotion Trust
STRIVE Annual Meeting 2013
Theory of Change

- Causal approach (cause-effect relationship) like LFA or RBM

- The Theory of Change approach highlights pathways to change by mapping the underlying assumptions and the implementation steps required to reach desired outcomes

- The Theory of Change framework has been adapted for the development sector, but the notion stems largely from decades of evaluation work by Dr. Carol Weiss
Theory of Change

First emerged in the mid-1990s in response to the challenge of assessing the impact of complex social development programmes

Carol Weiss popularised the term as a way to describe the set of assumptions that explain both the steps that lead to the long-term goal and the connections between programme activities and outcomes that occur at each step of the way
Why did KHPT adopt TOC?

- LHSTM was using it and we were curious!
- Opportunity to learn a new tool
- Our funders were referring to it
- Looking for an alternative to RBM and LFA
Developing our Theory of Change was a process involving various stakeholders. It is an evolving process.

- Introduction to the concept at STRIVE annual meeting
- Discussions with the field team to understand practicality of strategies
- Analysis of emerging evidence from the region
- Workshops with Annie and Lori with “real projects”
- Participatory workshops with community
- Took 7–9 months to put everything on paper for an initial draft.
Understanding the problem and the context with the community, project team and the CBOs

Understanding relationships

Understanding condom non use
This analysis helped us define our problem statement and desired change

Despite success in reducing HIV transmission by increasing condom use with clients and decreasing violence perpetrated by clients and police, condom use between sex workers and their intimate partners remains low, and violence in these intimate relationships remains high, leaving these women vulnerable to STI and HIV.
We defined what **success** looks like in our project

Reducing risk and vulnerability of sex workers to partner violence and STI/HIV transmission in intimate partnerships
What social changes we desire as the long term and medium term outcomes?
Based on evidence and experience, we made the assumptions – or theories – about these changes that may happen in the project:

1. **Reduction in violence needs involvement of the victims, perpetrators and other stakeholders.**
2. **Access to immediate support (physical, psychological, social and legal) will help protect FSWs from future violence.**
3. **With better skills (negotiation, communication) and greater access to female condoms FSWs will be able to negotiate safe sex with IP.**
4. **Individual and collective action against violence and/or STI/HIV transmission requires challenging social norms and a supporting enabling environment.**
5. **Building capacities of CBOs and linking them with women’s organization will strengthen the fight against violence.**
Stating how we aim to achieve our vision, identifying who will help us achieve specific outcomes as well as outlining what is needed in order to maintain desired changes

- Sex workers and their Intimate Partners
  - Reflection groups to raise critical awareness
  - Development of safety plans and violence management system
  - Counselling – individual and couple
  - Participation in collective action

- Larger community
  - Awareness creation
  - Development of male champions

- Institutions
  - Linkages with organisations working on IPV
  - Strengthening CBOs to take leadership
Intervention with FSWs with NPIPs - program – Theory of change

**Impact**
Reducing risk and vulnerability of sex workers to partner violence and STI/HIV transmission in intimate partnerships

**Long-term Outcomes**
- Increased individual and collective processes and action to reduce intimate partner violence and HIV risk
- Increased sense of self-worth and individual & collective efficacy
- Enhanced critical thinking on gender, violence, social norms & HIV risk among sex workers and IP
- Improved sense of safety and well-being among FSWs

**Output**
- Access to individual and couple counselling for FSWs and intimate Partners
- Creation of FSW reflection groups
- Creation of IP reflection groups

**Activities**
- Increased individual and collective processes and action to reduce IPV and STI/HIV risk
  - Public services: train facilitators for group reflection process on IPV and HIV risk
  - Facilitate FSW reflection groups
  - Provide leadership training to natural leaders who emerge from FSW reflection groups
  - Enable FSWs to develop and use safety plans
  - Identify and follow-up with allies on IPV, joint safety planning and implementation
  - Recruit and train female and male counselors in counseling skills on IPV and HIV risk
  - Provide individual and group counseling for FSWs to facilitate change in their IPV situation and reduce HIV risk
  - Train existing CBGs, CHVs, peer educators on IPV and partners for it
  - Conduct review and support meetings with CHVs
  - Facilitate intimate partner reflection group to facilitate discussion against IPV
  - Provide individual and group counseling for intimate partners who are perpetrators of IPV to facilitate behavior change
  - Establish linkages with women's organizations – link IPV against FSWs as domestic violence
  - Work with women's organizations
  - Encourage FSWs to rally to support women's rights
  - Provide care cases to FSWs and their organizations

**FSWs and IP and the other stake holders**

**Assumptions**
Given more immediate support services, clients will contact FSWs from future violence

**Risks**
Despite success in reducing HIV transmission among FSWs and their clients and decreasing violence against sex workers by clients and partners, women continue to be a victim of violence and risk of violence in these intimate relationships remains high, leaving these women vulnerable to STI and HIV

**Organizational**
- Increased supportive environment for diagnosis and action on IPV
  - Facilitate family courts to conduct street plays against IPV
  - Train facilitators to initiate dialogue in the community against IPV and HIV risk
  - Mobilize community against IPV
  - Mobilize community against IPV

- Individual and collective actions against violence
- Strengthening the support infrastructure

- Building capacities of CBGs and training them with women's organization will strengthen the support structure
TOC used for visioning, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the change process

- Disseminated to the project staff. Common understanding of what change is desired and how it will be achieved. Used as a project vision and planning tool.
- Brought greater clarity and robustness to the concepts of outputs to track change and analyse linkages.
- Evaluation design developed to assess what change has happened and how changes happened (focus on process) and test the assumptions.
- Annual reflection process will be a time to revisit the TOC and make changes.
Strengths

- The fundamental assumptions underlying why a program should work are made explicit.
- Provides a framework to check progress towards change (to complement project logic) and to stay on course
- Test the weak links in the change pathway (right people? right strategies? right outcomes?)
- Document lessons learnt about what really changes in relation to our efforts
- Keep the process of implementation, and impact assessment transparent, so everyone knows what changing and how
- Includes mapping of logical sequence and contextual critical reflection
- Provides opportunities for wider engagement
Challenges

Some NGOs and activists believe that even with attention to context and stakeholders’ input, the Theory of Change is still overly focused on causal and logical testing of program assumptions and paths to outcomes. As such, the approach is not always able to adequately account for the complexity and unexpected nature of social change.

Some suggest the need to complement this tool with contribution focused frameworks like outcome mapping and other participatory approaches which attempt to track the multiple and variable forces involved in producing change and highlight the contribution of change agents to the social change process and intended outcomes.

Ref: Srilatha Batliwala and Alexandra Pittman, Capturing Change in Women’s Realities- A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring & Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches, December 2010
Summary

- ToC showed us a causal pathway by specifying what is needed for goals and outcomes to be achieved
- Helped us articulate underlying assumptions which can be tested and measured
- Encouraged us to focus not so much on what is being done, but on what needs to be changed
- Facilitated engagement of different partners in the process
Thank You!