



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION & FOOD SECURITY

Report from the SIANI - SLU Global Workshop Introduction to Theory of Change (ToC) thinking in agricultural development

Workshop focus

The workshop will give an overview of ToC and how it can be applied within agricultural research and development initiatives to strengthen the focus on social change and development. The workshop will involve presentation and interactive group exercises.

By the end of the workshop, we hope that participants will have a basic understanding of the benefits of ToC thinking, see the relevance of ToC to their work, and feel enthusiastic to learn more about ToC.



Picture 1. Working with ToC. M.Cuadra

This report will present the aim, focus and participants in the workshop, as well as a summary of the workshop evaluation.

The workshop took place on Tuesday 26th April 2016 at 9.00 – 16.00 at the VHC building, Ulls väg 26, Uppsala

Aim:

The aim of the workshop was to provide an introduction to ‘ToC thinking’ for scientists and development professionals working on agriculture and development issues.

‘ToC’ is an iterative approach to programme design, planning, monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation. It has been used extensively since the 1990s to guide programmes focusing on complex social change.

At the heart of ToC is the understanding, expressed by an organisation, project or group of stakeholders, about how political, social, economic, and/or cultural change happens, and its contribution to that change process.

‘ToC thinking’ is the process of developing this critical understanding, using it continuously to strengthen the programme’s contribution to positive change for people, and adapting implementation accordingly.

ToC as an approach has three aspects:

- A way of thinking (overall approach);
- A process (doing a ToC analysis); and,
- A set of products (the result of a ToC process, for example narratives and change pathway diagrams).

Participants:

The workshop was designed for researchers focusing on agriculture in low-income countries, with limited knowledge of ToC (or planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning -PMEL), but interest in learning more. There were 17 participants in the workshop (list at the end of report).

Workshop program

Time	Session
9.00 – 9.45 (45 mins)	Introduction To introduce the participants to each other
9.45 – 10.45 (60 mins)	Overview of ToC
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00- 12.30 (90 mins)	ToC Taster Exercise 1: Understanding the desired change To practice Steps 2 and 4 of the ToC cycle
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 15.30 (120 mins)	ToC Taster Exercise 2: Mapping change pathways To practice Steps 5 and 6 (in shortened form)
15.30-15.45	Coffee break
15.45 – 16.30 (45 mins)	ToC Taster Exercise 3: Using the ToC process and products for critical learning and adaptation throughout implementation
16.30-17.00	Close Thanks and close

Summary of the workshop evaluation

This is the summary of the evaluation of the workshop by the participants.

When asked “What did you like about the workshop?” the participants responded that this was an excellent introduction and overview to ToC, including a clear and concise presentation of what is ToC and differences with other methods. Even if they felt sometimes out of their comfort zone, the participants appreciated the pedagogy

of the event, considered as very inclusive, practical, with out of the box ideas, and of learning by doing. The instructions were easy to follow, with valuable outcomes and insightful reflections. It was a good practice to work with a real life case. The interaction between people with different perspectives opened up to new ways of thinking, as well as the use of tools like rich picturing for the project design.

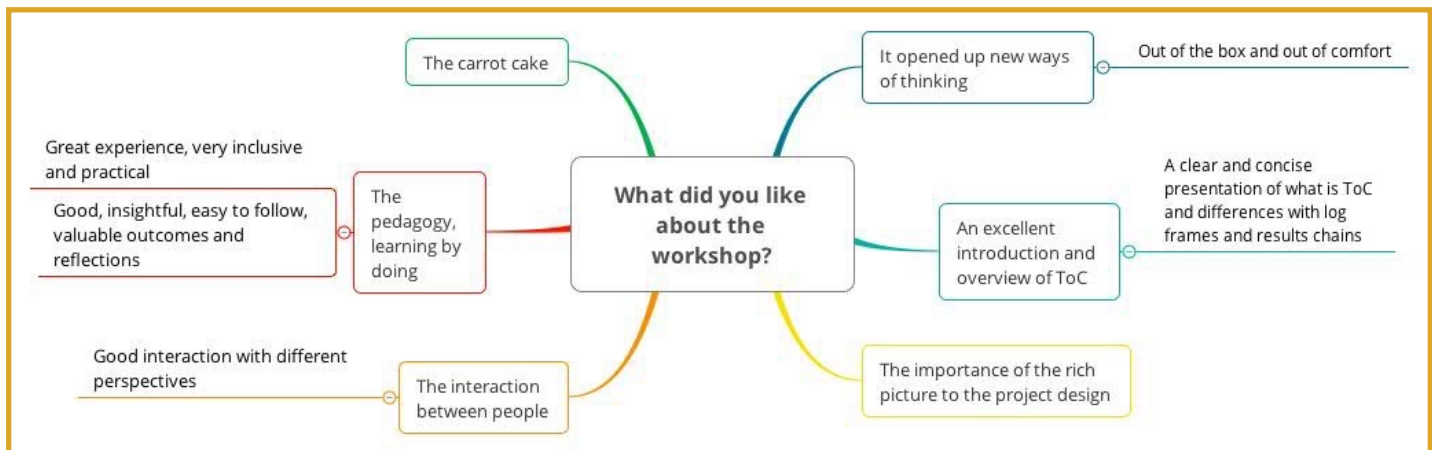


Figure 1. Summary mind map of answers on What did you like about the workshop?

When asked “What worked less well for you and why?”, the participants answered that they struggled with the limitations of the short time for this introductory workshop (one full day only). Most of the participants were completely new to the concept of ToC and wished for a longer introduction. Due to the lack of time, at some moments, it was difficult for participants to

understand what the task was, or what was the aim of the task, and on which step they were on. There was no time to complete all steps in a ToC. For some, working in a group of people with diverse background was also a challenge, when some wanted to have more specific details on the case.

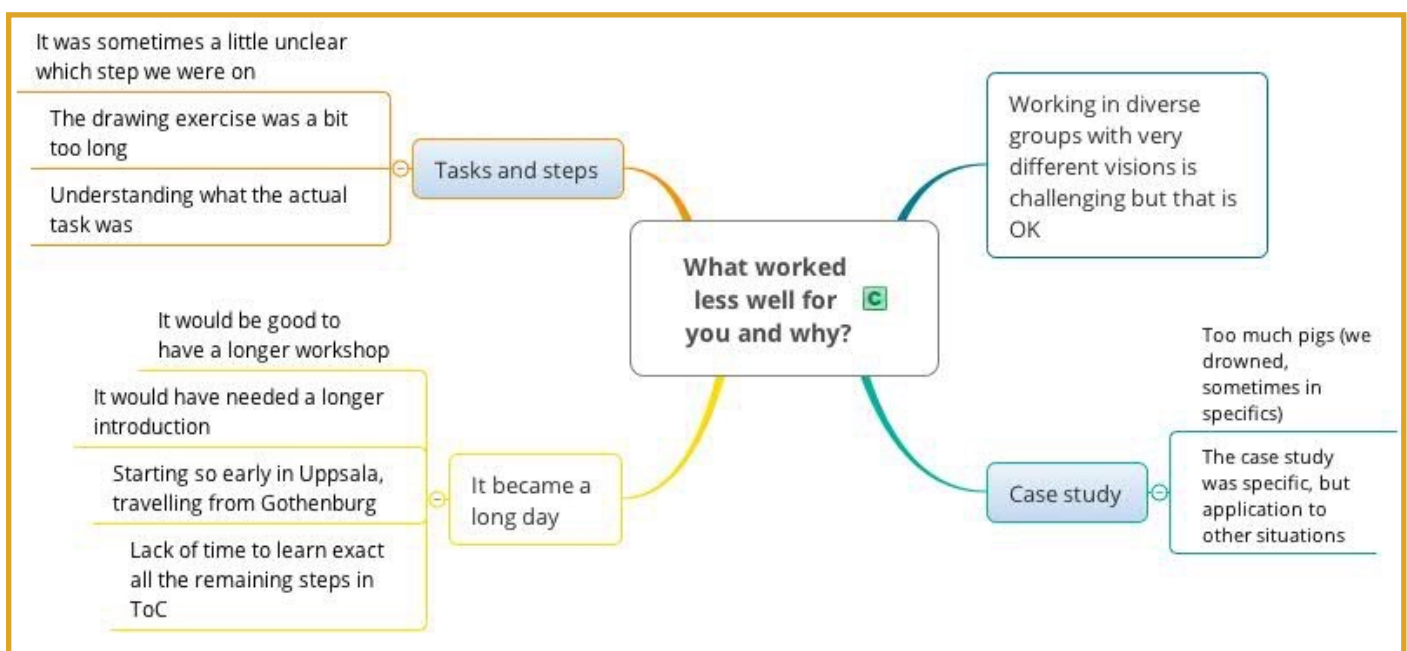


Figure 2. Summary mind map of answers on What worked less well for you and why?

When asked What will you do with the information from today? the participants responded they are planning to use the information from the workshop for their future work. The thinking and reflection from the ToC process could be valuable for drafting and planning research proposals and projects. The ToC could help

participants in broadening their research perspectives and identify important partners in their work area. The participants intend to apply the ToC to make change and for example involve fellow colleagues in future ToC training.

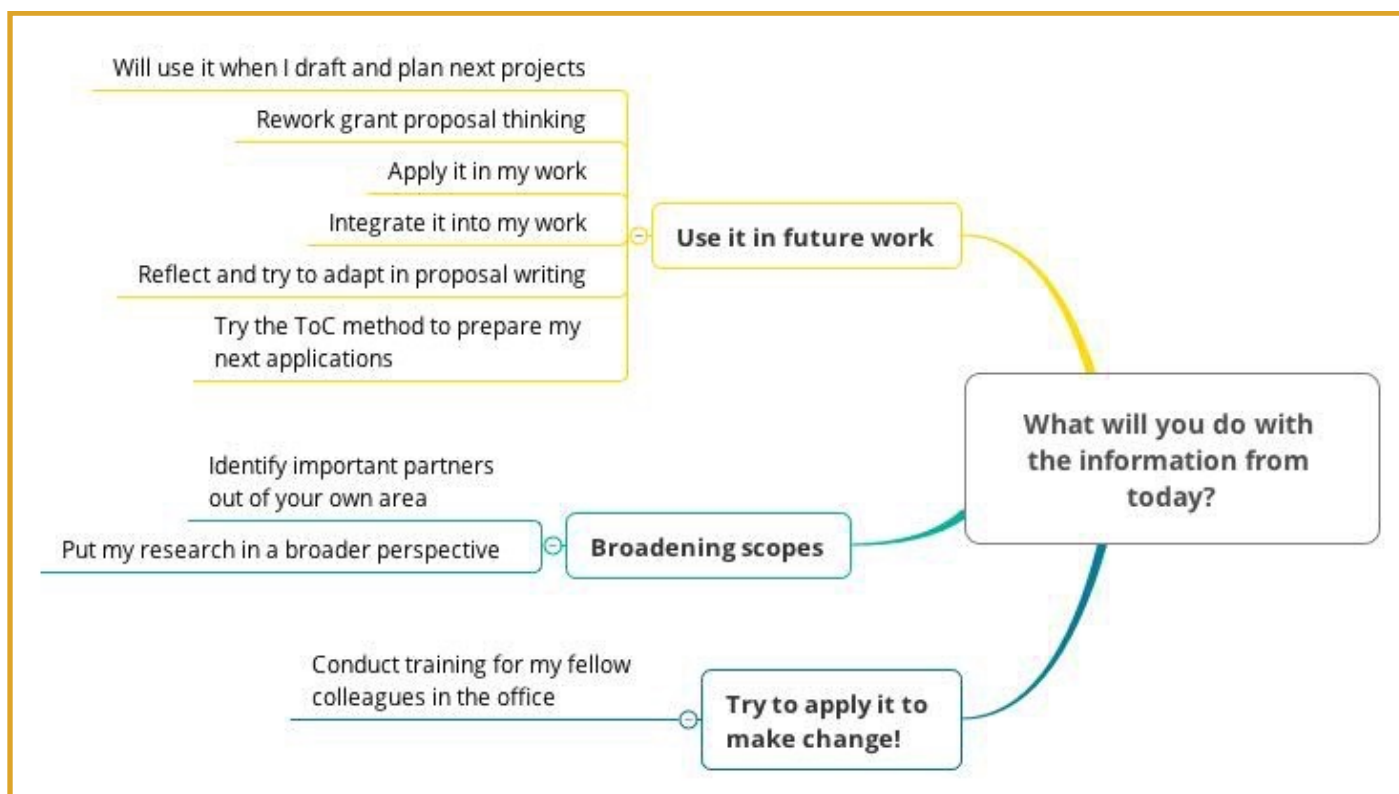


Figure 3. Summary mind map of answers on What will you do with the information from today?

When asked for further suggestions, the participants strongly suggested a follow up with more time and

more details on the steps and examples. The wish to stay in contact with this group was also expressed.

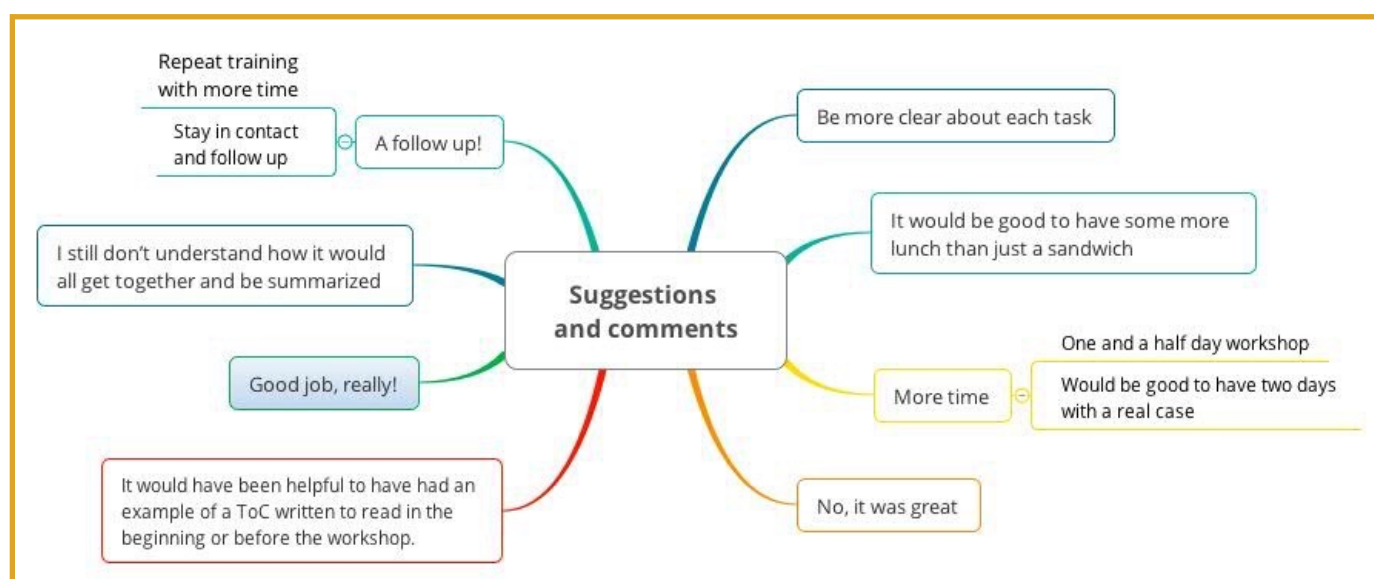


Figure 4. Summary mind map of answers about suggestions and comments

Case study used in the workshop: Pig production in Cambodia

Task

To use ToC thinking to develop a research project in the Cambodian domestic pig production sector.

Cambodia Overview

Cambodia is a country emerging from conflict. It continues to struggle and faces numerous challenges and sociopolitical issues, including widespread poverty, pervasive corruption, lack of political freedoms, low human development, and a high rate of hunger.

Cambodia has a population of 16 M, and GDP/PPP is around 3 500 USD. While per capita income remains low compared to most neighbouring countries, Cambodia has one of the fastest growing economies in Asia, with strong annual growth in GDP the last decades of 7-8% annually.

Agriculture remains the dominant economic sector, with strong growth in textiles, construction, garments, and tourism leading to increased foreign investment and international trade.

However, 30% of Government budget still comes from donor assistance, as Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries in Asia. Forty per cent of children under five are stunted (below median height for age). The labour force is overwhelmingly rural, with ninety percent of Cambodia's poor people living in the countryside.

Government and politics

National politics in Cambodia take place within the framework of the nation's constitution of 1993. The government is a constitutional monarchy operated as a bicameral parliamentary representative democracy.

Cambodia is consistently listed as one of the most corrupt governments in the world. Cambodia scored low in the 2015 annual index ranking the rule of law in 102 countries, where it was placed 99th overall and the worst in the region. In addition to political oppression, the Cambodian government has been accused of corruption in the sale of vast areas of land to foreign investors, resulting in the eviction of thousands of villagers as well as taking bribes in exchange for grants to exploit Cambodia's oil wealth and mineral resources.

Social relationships, gender and social inclusion

Cambodia is a hierarchically ordered society, with notions of power and status conditioning social relations. Socio-economic change in Cambodia is bringing new opportunities and influences. In rural Cambodia, there are close family and community ties, including economic cooperation in labour, sharing of produce and income, and contribution as a unit to ceremonial obligations.

But perceptions of gender identity, especially relating to women, are closely linked to perceived traditional values and ideals of "culture" and "tradition," and resistance to changes in gender relations is often strong.

In the social order, women are considered to be of lower status relative to men. In general, attitudes towards gender roles place great importance on women's role as household managers and men's role as provider for the family. What is considered appropriate behaviour for a woman may vary considerably according to her age and a range of factors. Although women are nominally guaranteed equal rights with men in the Cambodian Constitution, the ability to claim these rights is constrained.

Natural resources and agriculture

Cambodia is blessed with an abundance of natural resources including land and water, favourable climatic conditions and geographic position, which represent potential comparative advantages for increased agricultural production and livelihood improvements. Agriculture contributes to 29% of the GDP (15% of this from livestock). The poultry sector is booming, as is aquaculture and fisheries are also performing strongly. There are about 3.5 M cattle, and about 2M pigs. Animal source food is a good mitigator of stunting.

Pig production

With an increasing demand for pork, pig farming is increasing. The average Cambodian consumes 9.3 kg of pork a year and local farmers have long supplemented their incomes by selling an average of two pigs per year. In 2008, Cambodian farmers sent 2 million pigs to market, accommodating more than 90% of domestic demand.

Pig production contributes to families' income. But small-scale local farmers in the domestic market are being pushed out by large-scale producers and cheaper imports from Thailand and Vietnam. Cambodian pig prices are down by 5% but feed costs are up 25%, all of which are contributing to small farmers leaving pig farming and large corporations and cheaper imports to take over the market.

Critical challenges for domestic pig farming production include:

- Low levels of technology
- Lack of knowledge of pig management and low disease control
- Lack of, or limited infrastructure, in particular irrigation
- Weak commercialization networks
- Limited access to extension services and rural credit
- Unsustainable management of natural resources
- Vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters
- Poor social conditions linked to nutrition, health, safe drinking water and sanitation in rural areas. Majority of pigs are farmed in extensive (low density) farms, compared to Thailand and Vietnam, which feature more semi-intensive and intensive farms. Women tend to be involved in backyard pig farming, while men tend to be involved in bigger farms.

Individuals, organisations and networks that have a role to play in pig production include:

- Rural families
- Community-based organizations
- A "village vet" or "village animal health worker, who has basic training to enable them to deworm, castrate and vaccinate animals in the village. Every month the village animal health worker reports about the village situation to the district veterinarian, who reports to the province veterinarian, who finally reports to department veterinary.
- Local research institutes and NGOs, such as the Centre for Livestock and Agriculture Development (CeLAgrid) is a Cambodian, non-governmental organization who collaborates with several universities and institutes CeLAgrid gets support from several donors for its research projects.
- Government of Cambodia's Department of Animal Production and Health, responsible for policies and programmes relating to animal welfare, vaccinations, severe disease outbreaks and illegal actions concerning animals. For Department of Animal Production and Health, lack of equipment and money are an obstacle. They need support from donating organizations to manage.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- ASEAN Regional economic association.

Sources:

- Small scale pig production in Takeo province in a rural area of Cambodia, Emilia Wallberg, 2011
- Wikipedia: Cambodia
- "Gender and Development in Cambodia: An Overview"
- Working Paper 10 CIDRI, Siobhan Gorman with Pon Dorina & Sok Kheng 1999
- <http://www.cdri.org.kh/webdata/download/wp/wp10e.pdf>



Picture 2. Overview of ToC by Isabel Vogel. Photo by M.Cuadra



Picture 3. Workshop session. Photo by M.Cuadra

About Isabel Vogel:

Isabel Vogel is an independent consultant with 16 years experience in impact evaluation and learning, evidence-informed policy/practice, organisational development and knowledge management. Isabel has worked with research and development organisations in sectors ranging from climate change, agriculture, governance and accountability, gender and empowerment,

humanitarian relief, private sector development, innovation and health, among others. Before starting her consultancy in 2011, Isabel worked at the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), and the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. Isabel has a PhD in gender and development in Chile (University of Liverpool).

List of workshop participants

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Report prepared by Margarita Cuadra and Ulf Magnusson. It has been produced through a collaboration between SLU Global and SIANI around the theme “Sustainable Agricultural Production and Food Security”. October 2016.

