4.1 THEORY OF CHANGE: DRAW.IO FOR EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

WHAT is Draw.io?

Draw.io is an open-source diagram editor purposefully built to create flowcharts and diagrams. This free software provides a user friendly platform to create evaluation frameworks such as: theories of change (TOC)[1], program logic[2] (PL), outcomes chains[3] (or results chains) as well as other models.

Basic elements of Draw.io that are useful for TOC and PL building include STEPS (boxes of text) and LINKS (arrows leading from one box to another box). Using these basic elements teams can build evaluation frameworks from simple outcomes chains to more complex theories of change (TOC).

Draw.io can be used within a group to collaboratively develop and plan evaluation frameworks, increasing group ownership over model development. It can be employed in-front of groups using a computer and projector. Draw.io can also be used in online group collaboration in either real-time, using any screen sharing system, or by sharing the document through Google Drive for group members to collaborate on over a period of time.

STEP 1	→ Link →	STEP 2	→ Link →	STEP 3

WHY use Draw.io?

Evaluation models such as TOCs, PLS and outcomes chains can be initially developed as a group activity using a whiteboard or sticky wall[4]. Draw.io enables translation of these draft models into a computer drawn model for easy reading, sharing and further building of the model with the team developing it. Some teams find going straight to developing the model together in Draw.io projected to a screen or on a webpage, the best approach.

Draw.io has been specifically designed for creating diagrams and flow-charts so the BOXES (STEPS) and LINKS are the key elements. The BOXES and LINKS are able to be moved around with ease (unlike on paper or in conventional computer drawing programs). The program enables you to easily visualise how one STEP might be the result of several preceding BOXES and may LINK to a number of resulting BOXES.

Once the evaluation model is developed in Draw.io it can easily be shared for continued building and shaping by the team by Google Drive or printed in PDF format.

Footnotes

1. Theory of change explains how program activities are understood to contribute to a chain of results that produce intended changes or outcomes of the program. See INFORMATION SHEET- EVALUATION THEORY: Theory of Change.

2. A program logic is a diagrammatic representation of how a program is intended to work by linking program inputs to activities, outputs and outcomes.

3. An outcomes chain shows how the program outcomes connect to each other in a logical chain from short-term through intermediate to long-term outcomes.

4. A sticky wall is a wall-mounted tablecloth or shower curtain sprayed with repositionable adhesive enabling positioning and moving around of elements written on paper.

# HOW to use Draw.io to build an evaluation model

There are several ways Draw.io can be used depending on what type of model you are building and what you want to achieve. Here we present a set of steps on how to use Draw.io to develop a TOC for program outcomes evaluation.

**A step by step process for using Draw.io to build a Theory of Change (TOC) Model**

1 Open Draw.io online - https://app.diagrams.net/ or on the downloaded desktop version. Choose create new diagram.

Name your Draw.io file, choose blank diagram and click create.
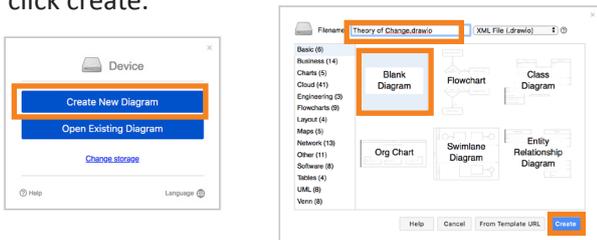
2 Use the 'Paper Size' panel to the right of the model to adjust the paper size and layout. Set the paper size to A3 or A4. Set the paper layout landscape.
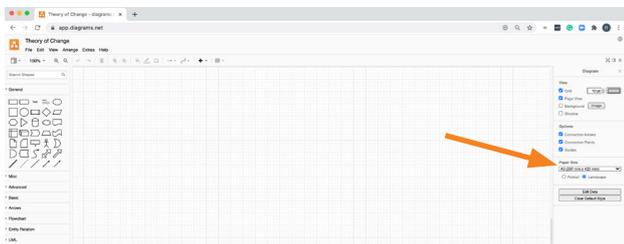
3 To add a STEP or BOX drag a shape onto the diagram from the general shapes panel on the left.
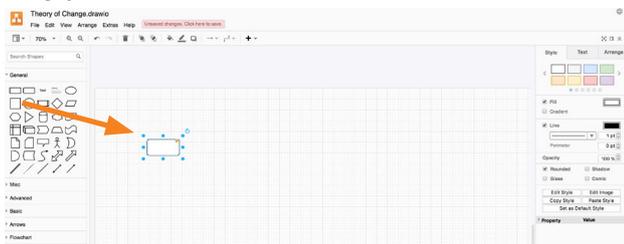
4 Repeat step 2 to draw as many BOXES as you need to start your model.
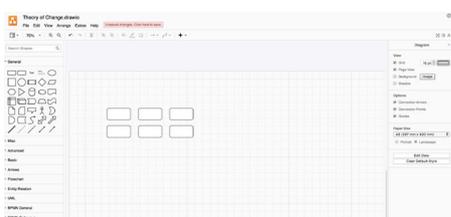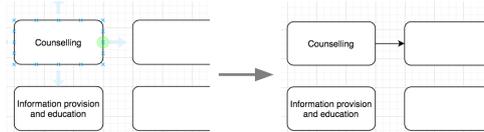

5 Add text by clicking on the box you want to add text to. Begin typing and the text will appear.
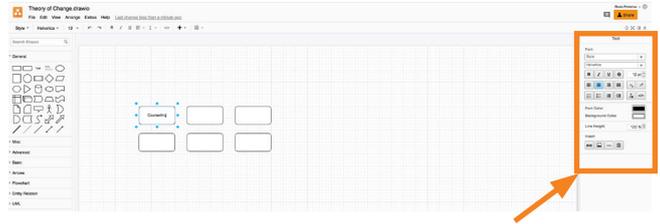

You can edit the text font, colour, size, etc. in the text panel on the right.
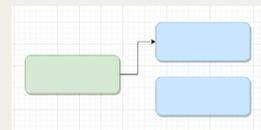
6 To add a LINK, hover your mouse on the edge of the BOX, where you would like to add the LINK. A green highlight will appear. Click and drag, creating a LINK. Drag the LINK to attach it to another BOX.
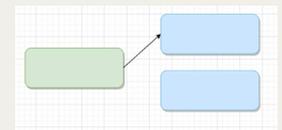

You can also add a new LINK by dragging the LINK element from the general shapes panel on the left and connecting the start and end of the LINK to two BOXES.
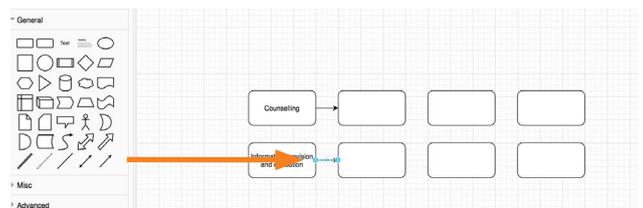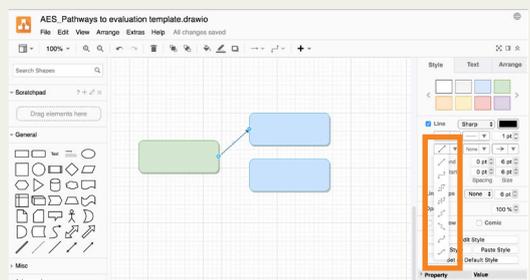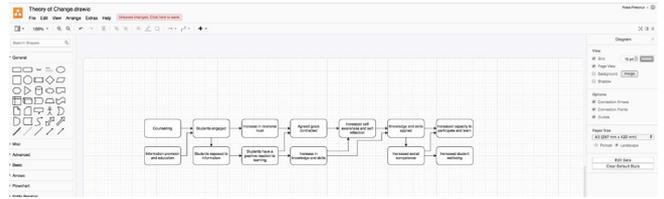

TIP - style the LINK
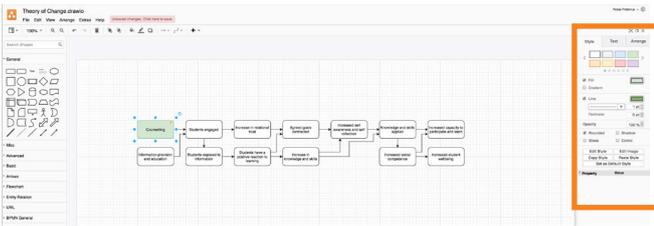

STAGGERED LINK   **STRAIGHT LINK**

To adjust the LINK' pathway, select the LINK by clicking on it. Go to the style panel and select the pathway design you would like.
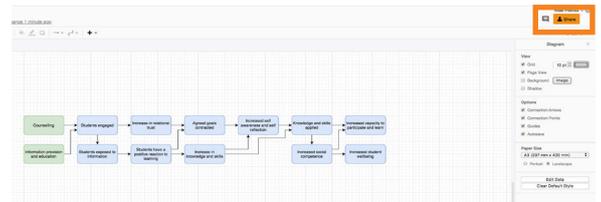
VISUAL INSIGHTS

7 Repeat steps 3 -6 until you have completed your model. Note: You can add multiple LINKS from a BOX by following step 7.

8 Next, add color to better communicate your model. We generally use **green** for program **activity** BOXES and **blue** for BOXES of the **outcome** chains. To change colour click on the BOX. Select a colour from the style panel to the right.
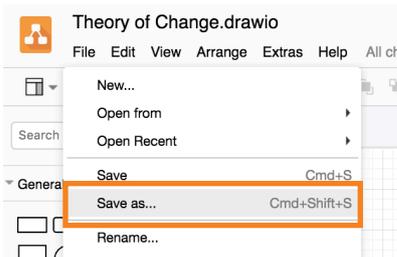
9 To save your document go to File > Save as.

Choose the location you would like to save the Draw.io file to.
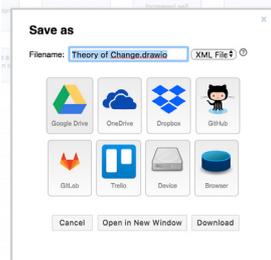
If you choose 'Device', the Draw.io file will download to your desktop. You will need the Draw.io desktop application to edit this again.

TIP: If saving to 'Device', test that you can open the downloaded file before closing Draw.io webbroswer.

You can also save the Draw.io file to your Google Drive. Storing the file on your Google Drive makes accessing the Draw.io online editer easier and is convinent for sharing with others.

**10** This sharing option is availabe if your file is saved on Google Drive. Click the share button.

Enter the email address of the people you wish to share it with. You can select if you would like them to be able to edit or view only.

11 To export your Theory of Change from Draw.io go to File > Export as and select an export file -e.g. PDF, PNG, etc. You can select advanced settings for a high resolution image.
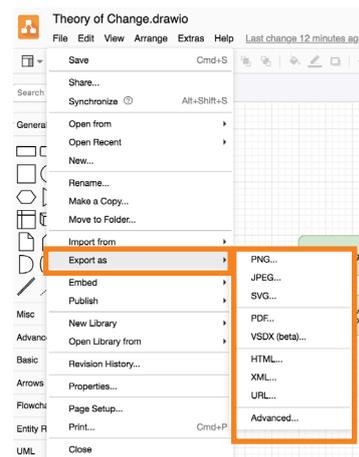
DRAW.IO DESKTOP APPLICATION

Draw.io also has a free desktop application. You can download it from - https://www.diagrams.net/