

Theory of Change

Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative

This document aims to outline, in narrative and visual form, the theory of change for the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition initiative (GODAN).

It contains:

1. Narrative of GODAN's theory of change
2. Visual representation of GODAN's theory of change
3. Suggestions of next steps for a GODAN theory of change working group
4. Note, including previous iteration of the theory of change

For more information on GODAN see www.GODAN.info. For more information on theory of change as a tool see [DFID's report](#). Prepared for the GODAN secretariat by Liz Carolan of the [Open Data Institute](#) April 2015, (contact at Liz.Carolan@theODI.org) and edited and supplemented by the Secretariat in June and again in August 2015.

Theory of change: Narrative

Our vision for the world

(Impact - what the broader GODAN network collectively working towards)

High-level Impacts

We are a group of actors working towards a world where the value chain for agriculture and nutrition is more efficient, innovative, equitable (e.g., by gender, socioeconomic status) and accountable; from, for example, greater yields and access to markets for farmers, through to more nutritious and safe food on plates.

We believe that improving the open availability, use and enrichment of data will enable this vision.

We observe that the agriculture and food sector currently suffers from information asymmetries and closed data practices that limit progress, value generation and the fair distribution of resources. Open data has already been shown in some parts of the value chain, and in other sectors, to enable impacts through:

Intermediate-level impacts

- Data-driven decision making, innovation and business creation
- Improved service delivery

- New, improved and more accessible information products, empowering individuals, businesses and communities
- Increased transparency of decision making and accountability

Making this vision a reality (*Logic - the problem GODAN is set up to solve*):

Realising this vision requires an immensely complex system of actors from diverse fields, specialisations, jurisdictions and sectors of the economy acting individually and, importantly, in concert. They need to feel and function as parts of a network/ movement/ “ecosystem”. We will proactively seek to address gender balance in our engagement. We recognise that the programme is complex and will require close monitoring within the Secretariat, good relations with the steering group, and sensitivities to understand that partners will not always agree on everything including the value of open approaches in different circumstances.

Creating an ecosystem of these actors requires (*Secretariat Outcomes*)

1. A common vision, agenda & set of objectives held by the community/ network members
2. An overarching enabling policy, political and technical environment at the national, and international level (eg, commitments to publishing data, commitments to funding for innovation and projects on open data for agri projects etc.)
3. Network effects (strong connections and alliances) from having time to meet, speak and build relationships that cross sectoral, geographic and thematic boundaries
4. Shared tools and evidence base for activities - assets, policy and advocacy messages, activity/ data maps, case studies

What GODAN therefore exists to do...

(Secretariat Outputs - what the GODAN secretariat can do)

GODAN exists to **convene, empower, and equip** the network of actors , and **manage** the outputs to **report** on progress

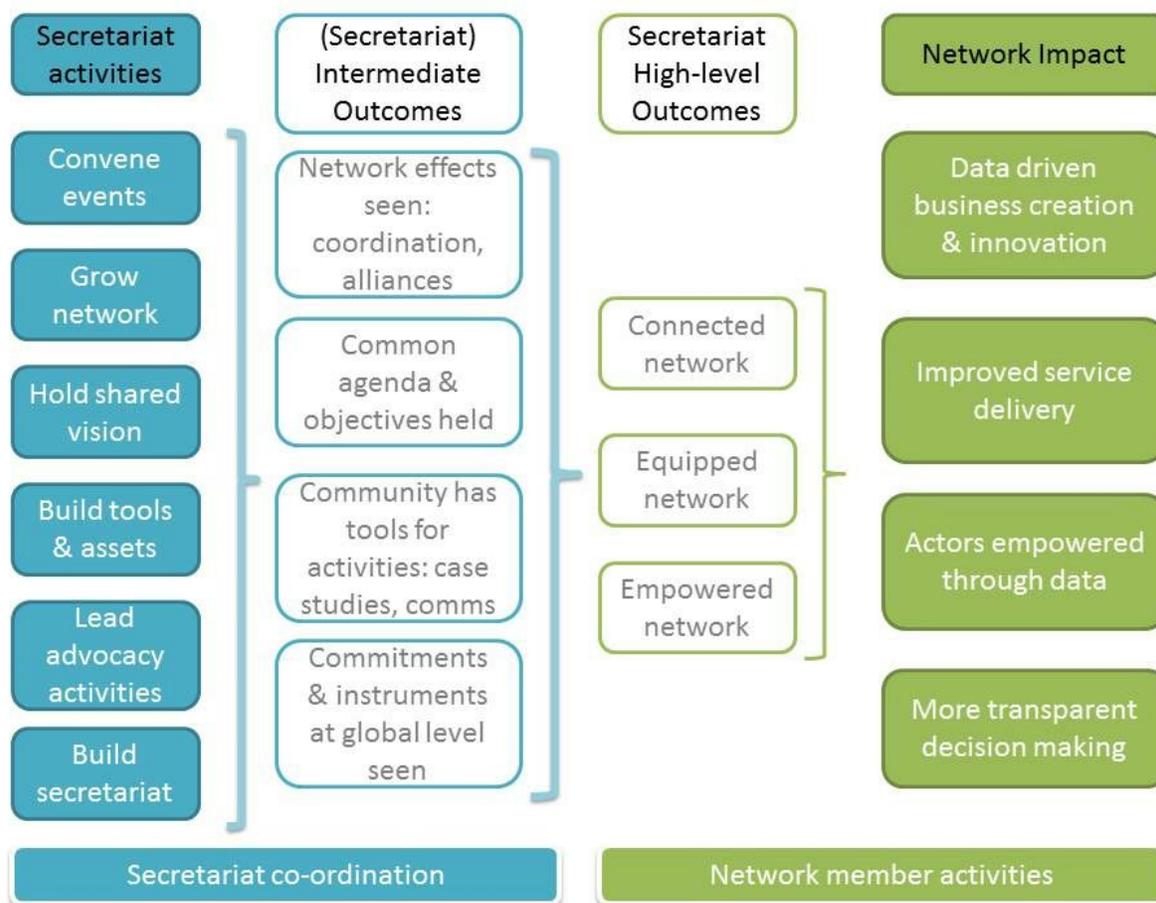
1. **Convening** the ecosystem: **bring key actors together** as members of the GODAN network, providing space for conversations, priority setting collaboration and ideas **at events, showcases and data hacks.**
2. **Empowering** the ecosystem: **advocating for high level political and policy actions** that enable action on the ground; that unlock greater data availability, that create public commitments from key actors, and that create space/funds for innovation/ activities for men and women.
3. **Equipping** the ecosystem: **collect & compile tools, stories, case studies, and papers**
4. **Managing** these outputs, sharing information and **reporting** on progress made.

To do this the secretariat will (*Secretariat activities against which indicators will be developed*):

- Organise events - convene member events, showcases, hackathons etc, with at least one large partner event per year and several smaller events (including side-events) organised by partners with some secretariat input.

- Create tools and intellectual assets - collect and publish discussion papers, case studies, narratives, mapping exercises.
- Own the vision for GODAN (and its Statement of Purpose), and promote and grow the network, broadening the partner base and stimulating participation in partner organisations.
- High level advocacy / lobbying for an enabling data, policy and political environment through direct policy engagement, exploitation of event and working group opportunities, use of champions and network contacts, and media engagement.
- Create a professional, resourced secretariat, capable of delivering the above, liaising with steering mechanisms, and monitoring the results of own activity through use of surveys and records of partner engagement and activity of partners, and media tracking.

Theory of change: Visual representation¹



Next steps: Consultation & a new GODAN theory of change working group?

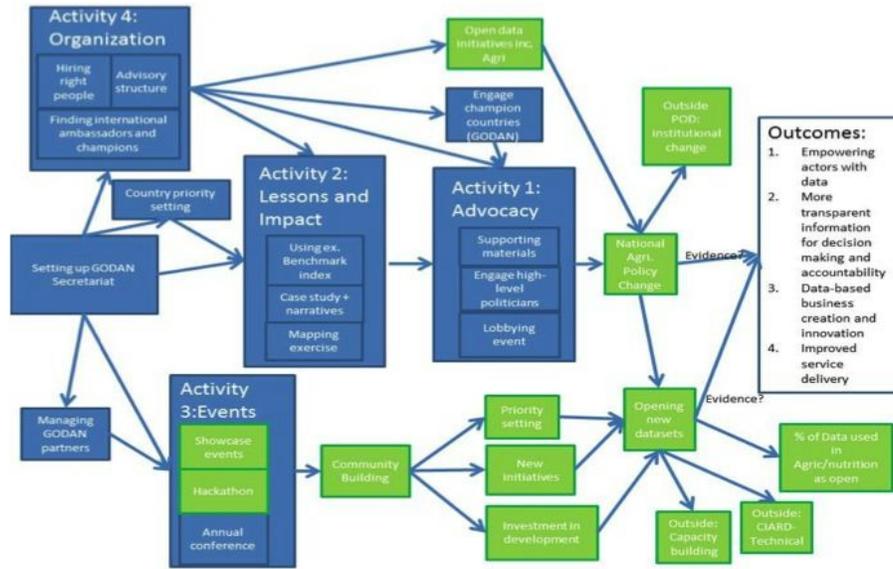
Proposed agenda/ questions for the working group:

¹ Created in Powerpoint - original is downloadable [here](#).

1. What do we chose to measure?
 1. We aim to measure the activities and results, and set a baseline now for the secretariat outcomes so that we can come back to them at a later date. We should have gender, sector and geographically relevant targets in our logframe (and integrate risks and assumptions there too).
 2. These core elements should have the full acceptance and buy in of the new GODAN director so that will have to be addressed post-appointment.
 3. Funds are available post director review for M&E consultants to give further advice in the second half of 2015 (Y1)
2. How do we add evidence/ test our assumptions about the connection between our activities and intended? (see [DFID report](#) pp. 40 - 48)
 1. The priority here is to examine the connection between the overall / network outcomes and the secretariat outcomes, as this is the crux of where we examine if what we can measure is at least theoretically connected to what we want to see happen as a community.
3. Work through what more specific network outcomes could be for the network.
 1. At the moment we have "improved service delivery" etc. as the outcome that we want to see - taking this a step further to, for example, "improved nutrition" etc is tricky in two ways and therefore we believe probably a longer term piece of work for GODAN leadership and/ or a working group - 1) there will be disagreement among members or we will end up with a long list, as organisations have a diversity of objectives/ visions and 2) adding the evidence becomes more tricky and complex.
4. Improving the ToC presentation.
 1. Once we agree on the content this would be something that would be effective as a visualisation or motion graphic - we could use noun project images & work through the graphic - for example see the [short piece](#) the Open Data Challenge Series has developed.

NOTES

Previous iteration of ToC (from July GODAN funders' [meeting](#))



DRAFT NEW CONTENT OUTLINE

Activities		Outcomes		High-level outcomes		Impacts
Organise events	=	Network benefits, new projects, coordination	?	Connected ecosystem (relationships, projects)	?	Data-driven business creation and innovation
Create resources (case studies, messages, maps)	=	Community has tools to build programmes & advocate				
Own the vision	=	Coordinated community with same agenda		Equipped ecosystem	Improved service delivery	
Promote and grow network	=	Greater coordination		Empowered ecosystem	Actors empowered with data	
Advocacy / lobbying	=	Commitments & instruments that enable unlocking & use of data			More transparent infor for decision making and accountability	
Create secretariat	=	Functional secretariat				