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Roadmap to Impact Toolkit

Learning in Practice Toolkit
[Reference: Module 1 Strategy & Design]



How to use the Roadmap to Impact Tool

Purpose: The Roadmap to Impact (sometimes called a Theory of Change) is a practical tool that helps you map out how your investment is expected to create change. It sets out the impact you want to achieve, the outcomes needed to get there, and how your activities are expected to contribute to those outcomes.

By making your thinking explicit, the Roadmap to Impact helps teams clarify priorities, test assumptions, and build a shared understanding of how change is expected to happen. It also provides the foundation for measuring progress (see Impact Framework toolkit) and helps guide investment decisions by identifying opportunities that align with your strategy.

Remember that a Roadmap to Impact is not a static document. It should evolve as you learn more about the issue, test your assumptions, and adapt to changes in context.

When to develop & review: Develop the Roadmap to Impact during strategy development and investment design. Review and update it regularly during implementation, at key decision points, and when significant changes occur in the operating environment.

Who develops it: The people responsible for designing and delivering the investment, drawing on evidence, stakeholder perspectives, and insights from those closest to the issue.

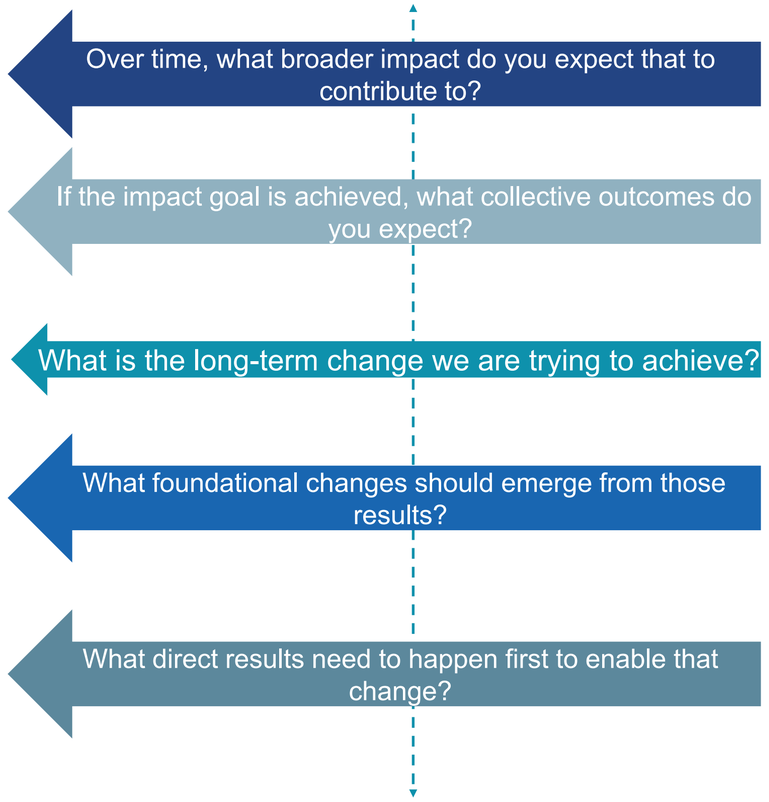
Who should use it: Investment teams, delivery partners, funders and decision-makers to guide implementation, learning, adaptation and investment decisions.

Key inputs: Impact goals, evidence and insights from landscape analysis, expected outcomes, assumptions about how change will happen, emerging learning and working hypotheses.

ROADMAP TO IMPACT – TEMPLATE GUIDANCE

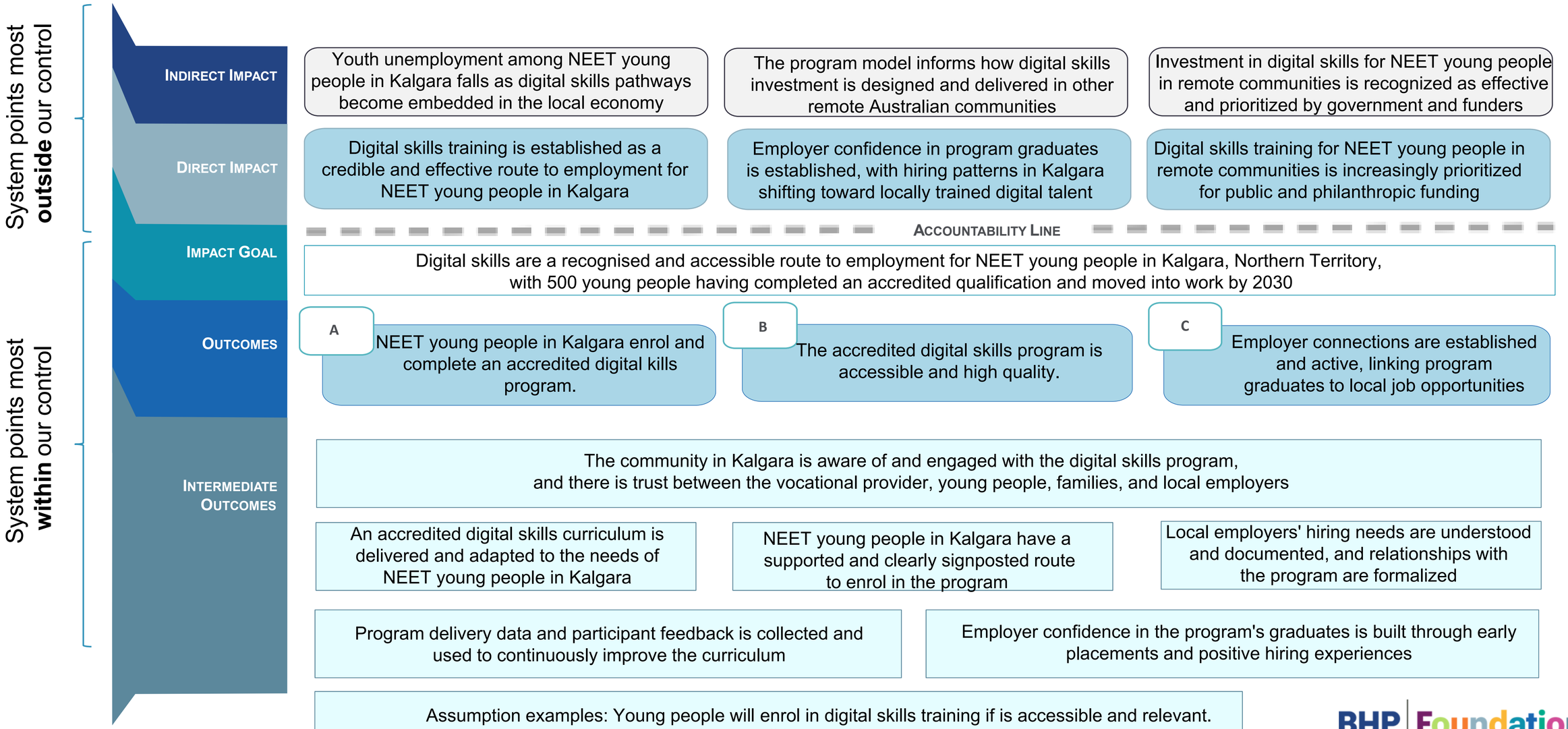
There is no set number of boxes. Add or remove boxes as needed to reflect the scale, complexity and context of the investment.





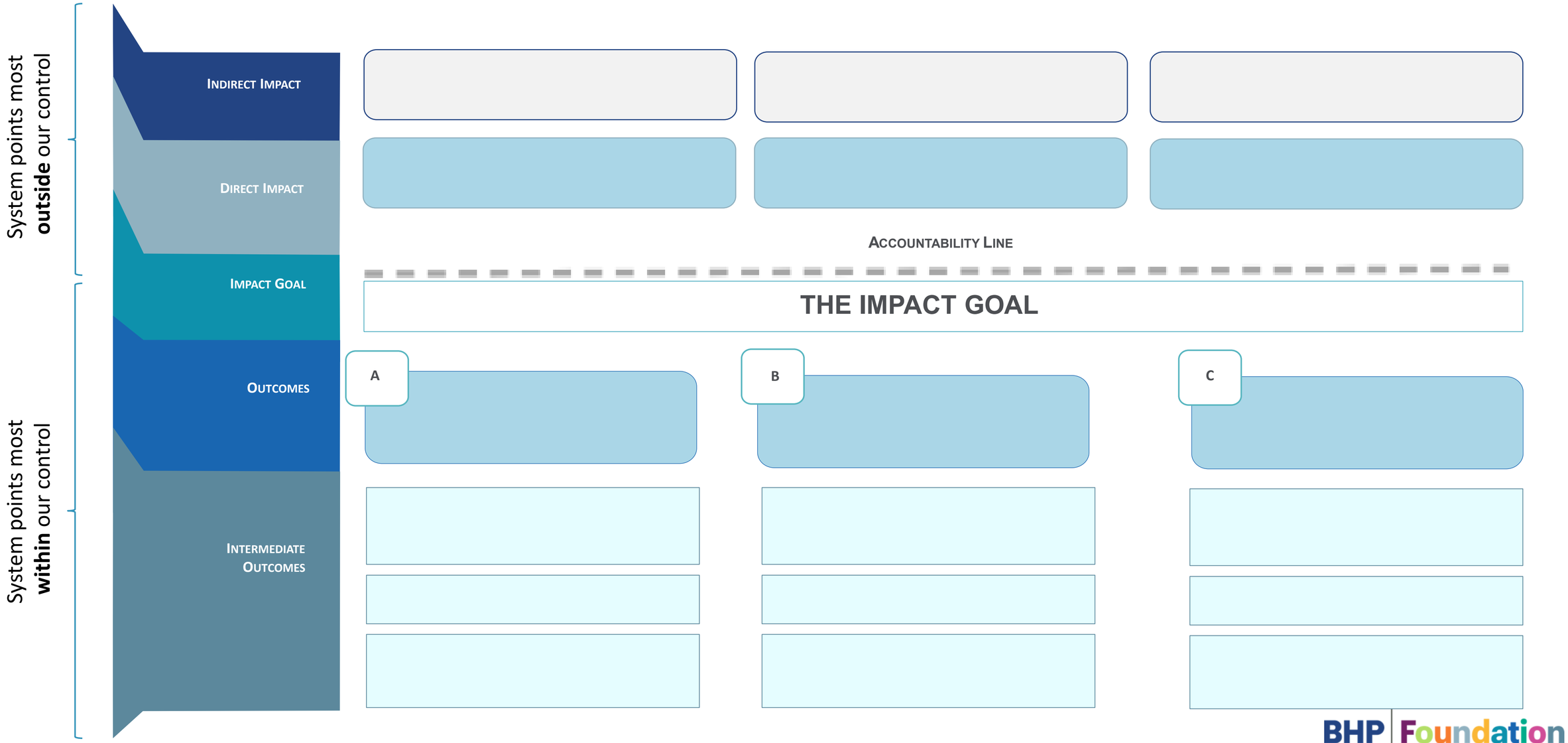
Each layer should connect clearly to the next, showing how the activities and investments you support are expected to contribute to change impact. Assumptions capture the conditions and circumstances that need to hold true for one level of change to lead to the next. Making these explicit helps teams test and refine their thinking as they learn.

ROADMAP TO IMPACT – EDUCATION PROJECT EXAMPLE



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ROADMAP TO IMPACT – TEMPLATE FOR DOWNLOAD



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Tips for using this tool

- **Broaden your perspectives early**, so a wider range of voices can challenge and strengthen your logic before decisions are locked in.
- **Make your assumptions explicit,** ensure the rationale is clear, then keep testing and retesting them, and the causal links between layers, as you learn more.
- **Build in regular checkpoints to revisit and test your assumptions.** Once funding and partnerships are in place, it can be tempting to focus only on delivery rather than asking whether the approach is still the right one.
- **Keep the roadmap practical and usable**, not just detailed. Try a simple test: would someone unfamiliar with the project understand the logic just by looking at it? If it's too complicated to use, it won't actually shape decisions.
- **Focus on the connections between layers.** Each layer should link clearly to the next, showing how activities contribute to outcomes and how outcomes contribute to impact. Explicit assumptions should explain why you expect one level of change to lead to the next.

Thank you