

MODULE

4

Dead Aid & Theory of Change

"The problem with the aid-dependency model is, of course, that Africa is fundamentally kept in its perpetual child-like state."

- Dambisa Moyo

Introduction

The theory of change method is designed to bridge the gap between the initiation of an effort and the solution. Using the Theory of Change model, students will be able to find a long-term goal for their macro-problem and work backward to find an entry-point where an intervention is required. Groups will ultimately finalize their pain-point, target audience, and a more specific area of research. In addition, understanding dead aid is necessary for creating a successful product. A solution falls under dead aid when it doesn't consider its target audience enough or dives deep enough into a pain point, resulting in something that could possibly help in the short-term, yet definitely not in the long-term. Finally, students will relate both topics back to how social entrepreneurial ventures fail either by not finding the correct avenue of change, not understanding the connection between optimal conditions, not validating assumptions, or providing unneeded or ineffective aid.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to understand and apply the six aspects of the Theory of Change model.
2. Students will be able to define dead aid and identify examples.
3. Students will be able to identify where/why dead aid fails in the TOC map.
4. Students will be able to see the difference between a sustainable and not sustainable SEV solution.

Agenda

1. Dead Aid
 - a. Sustainability
2. Theory of Change
3. Guided work time (group-on-ones)

SEV Progress

1. Students should have identified a pain point and target audience, or at least be in a position to have these identified by the end of the module.
 - a. Tell your students that they should have these identified before they leave the classroom (as an exit slip).
2. **Facilitators will have group-on-one time** with the groups at the end of this module during a 20-30 minute work time.
3. Students should be working on the slide deck for their MID presentations, which will be two weeks from now.

Module Resources

Dead Aid (30 minutes)

If you are using a video, please watch it completely before.

Lecture Notes

1. Optional lecture introduction: [Plastic Bags](#)
2. [Dead Aid Videos](#)
 - a. Watch videos
 - b. Explain Dead Aid
 - i. Dead aid, in simplest terms, is what happens when one tries to create a solution based off their own *notion* of the issue, and only targeting the shallowest part of the problem, not the real pain point.
 - ii. Think of the problem tree analogy; dead aid is when you are only trying to clip off the “leaves” of the tree to get rid of surface problems, but not realizing that the root of the problem is still there.
 - iii. Trillions of dollars have been spent on dead aid (mainly through NGOs and international charity efforts), but problems have not been solved and are even exacerbated as dead aid also has the ability to stump economic and social growth and development as societies end up over-relying on aid alone, creating a dangerous dependance that would cause the entire collapse once the aid halts.
 - c. Relation to SEV
 - i. SEVs are in no way exempt from failure by dead aid! Just like these charities, a product or service offered through an SEV could just as easily be useless, impractical, or only valid in the short-term. Critically thinking about an SEV and its purpose from the perspective of the target audience is essential to creating an impactful SEV.

Plastic Bags! (15 min)

Purpose:

Introduce the concept of Dead Aid and how SocEnt is important to combat it. The students should have a clear understanding of how SocEnt is a new type of solution to the problems

Dead Aid targets.

Materials:

Plastic Bags

Directions:

- Say that you notice that students aren't eating too much and say that you believe that the reason is that they cannot carry their groceries from Woodmans to their dorm and give them plastic bags (or some other far-fetched problem)
- Distribute all the plastic bags and act super excited and overjoyed.
- When the students don't react with much gratitude introduce the topic of Dead Aid.

Dead Aid Videos

Resources:

- [Africa for Norway](#) video
- [Satirical "Save Africa" video](#)

Directions:

1. Watch one or more of the above videos with the class (first two links).
2. Gather initial reactions to the video; what does your class think about what the video's message is?
3. Use these videos to funnel into a discussion about dead aid. Discuss the hallmarks of a dead aid project and why it's not useful.

Discussion:

- How can you stop Dead Aid?
- How can you make sure you're not leading a Dead Aid project?

Theory of Change

MUST READ

Lecture Notes

1. Explain TOC

The Theory of Change is a comprehensive description and mind map of how and why a desired change/impact is expected to happen in a specific context. Its main purpose is to bridge the gap between the initiation of an idea (pain-point, target audience), and the achievement of its goals (making a MVP, BMC). The 2 sections of TOC (further split into 6 steps) is as follows:

- I. Outcomes Framework
 1. Identifying a long term goal
 2. Working backward from that long term goal and identifying all the conditions that must be in place for change to occur

3. Further working backward from #2 and connecting it all the way to the current initiative
- II. Measurement of Problem (using the OF-outcomes framework)
 4. Addressing (justifying or countering) assumptions through research
 5. Developing indicators to measure if conditions are met
 6. Identifying possible areas of intervention
 - a. Drawing on the OF, mark out which outcomes will occur/connect naturally, and which ones require intervention (which should be considered as possible initiatives)
- 2. Relation to SEV**
- a. The path to a successful SEV depends on the correct execution of each step of the TOC. Failure of the Outcomes Framework is the most severe because it shows inadequate understanding of the topic and any entry point one tries to make from there will end up either as dead aid or ineffective. The second half of the TOC model dictates how an SEV will approach ideating a solution and focusing in on a research topic. Thus if assumptions are not justified, there will be a skewed outcome. Finally one must find an appropriate point of intervention because it is useless to make one where natural connections already exist (the product/service is not needed).

Facilitator Homework:

Facilitators should encourage students to continue to think of how they will put the information they have conjured thus far in order to have an efficient MID that is not just a checkpoint, but rather a place of feedback and development.

Student Homework:

Students should be keeping their pain point/ target audience in mind as MID approaches in order to create an effective presentation within the next two weeks.