Planning for nonprofits and philanthropy

Developing a Theory of Change

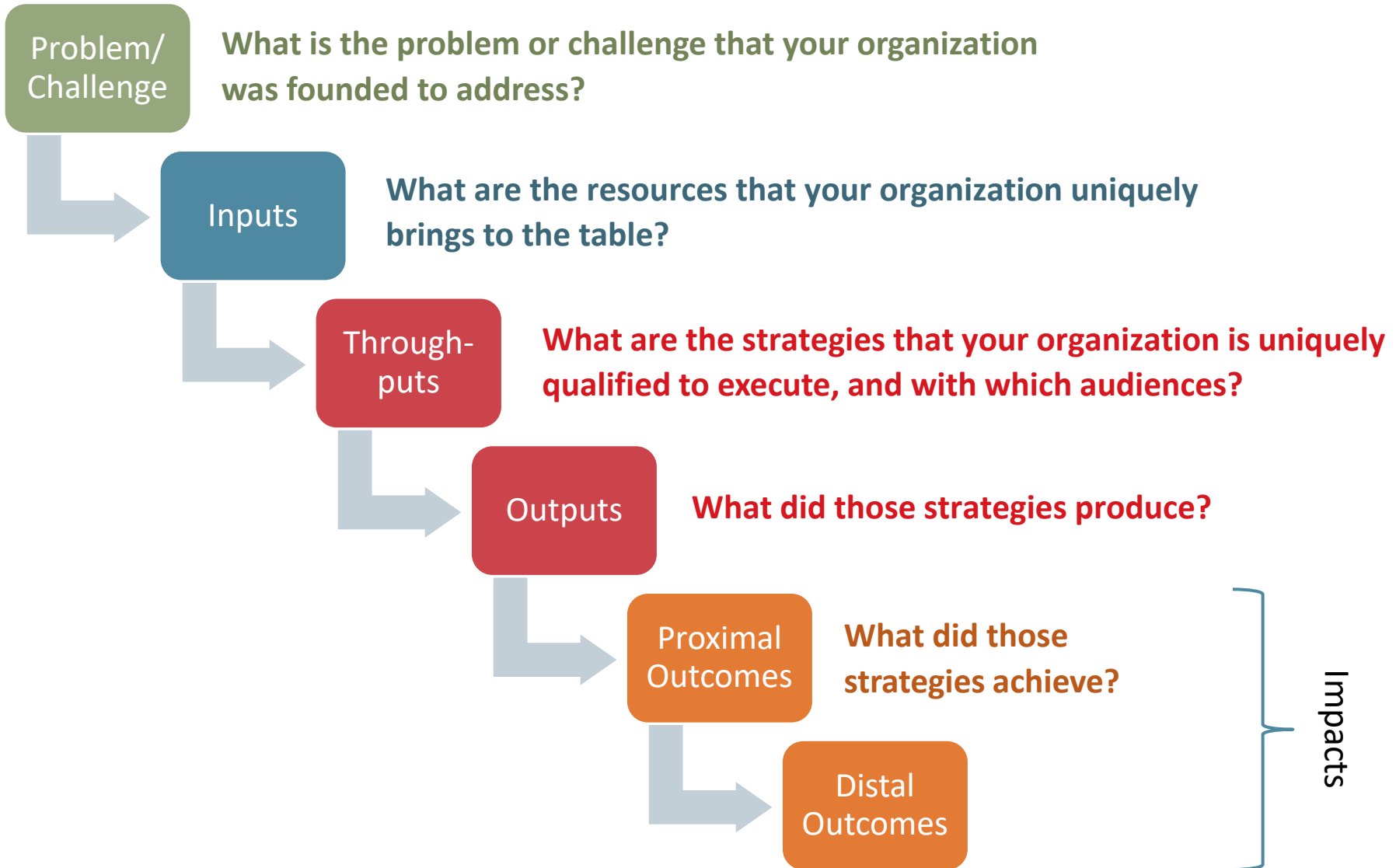# Your Basic Program Hypothesis

<u>If</u> [I do x], **<u>then</u>** [y will occur].

But what if you do <u>x</u> and <u>y</u> doesn't occur?

Or what if you can't generate enough resources to even do <u>x</u>?
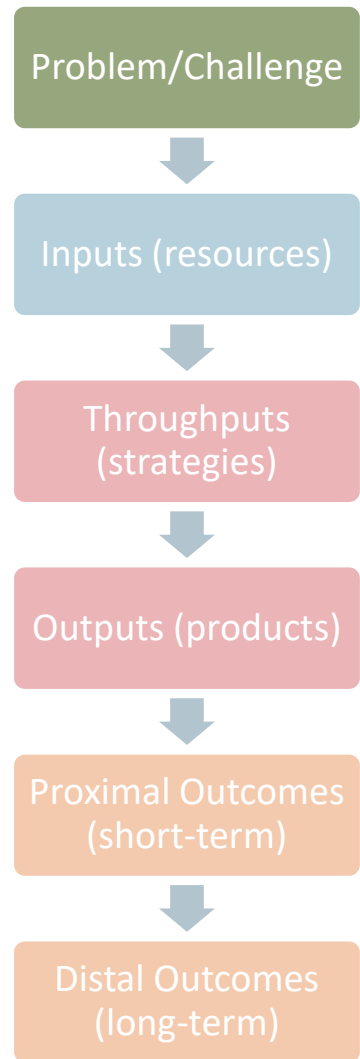
Or what if you do <u>x</u> and <u>z</u> occurs?

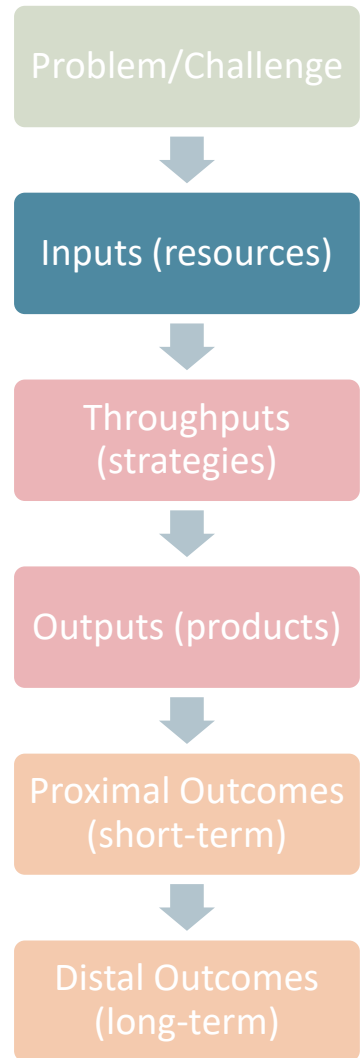# Elements of a Theory of Change

plan A.

Problem/ Challenge

What is the problem or challenge that your organization was founded to address?

Inputs

What are the resources that your organization uniquely brings to the table?

Through-puts

What are the strategies that your organization is uniquely qualified to execute, and with which audiences?

Outputs

What did those strategies produce?

Proximal Outcomes

What did those strategies achieve?

Distal Outcomes

Impacts

Problem/Challenge

What is the problem or challenge that your organization was founded to address?

Problem/Challenge

Inputs (resources)

Throughputs (strategies)

Outputs (products)

Proximal Outcomes (short-term)

Distal Outcomes (long-term)

Inputs (resources)

What are the resources that your organization uniquely brings to the table?

Problem/Challenge

↓

Inputs (resources)

↓

Throughputs (strategies)

↓

Outputs (products)

↓

Proximal Outcomes (short-term)

↓

Distal Outcomes (long-term)

Throughputs (strategies) & Outputs (products)

What are the strategies that your organization is uniquely qualified to execute, and with which audiences?:

Audiences:

What are the associated outputs?

Problem/Challenge

↓

Inputs (resources)

↓

Throughputs (strategies)

↓

Outputs (products)

↓

Proximal Outcomes (short-term)

↓

Distal Outcomes (long-term)

What are your organizations' desired outcomes?

➢ *For participants?*

➢ *For organizations or systems?*

Problem/Challenge

⬇

Inputs (resources)

⬇

Throughputs (strategies)

⬇

Outputs (products)

⬇

Proximal Outcomes (short-term)

⬇

Distal Outcomes (long-term)
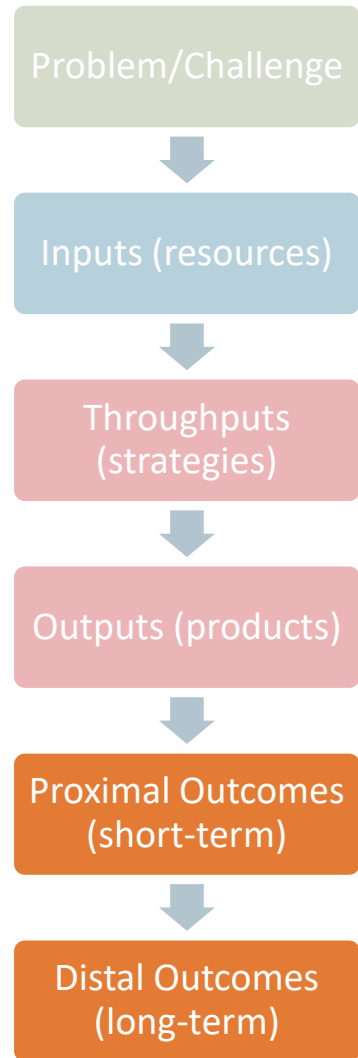
Theory of Change

PROBLEM/CHALLENGE ⟶

INPUTS ⟶

Investing in "Year-Round" Theory of Change continued

OUTPUTS ⟶

OUTCOMES ⟶

AUDIENCES