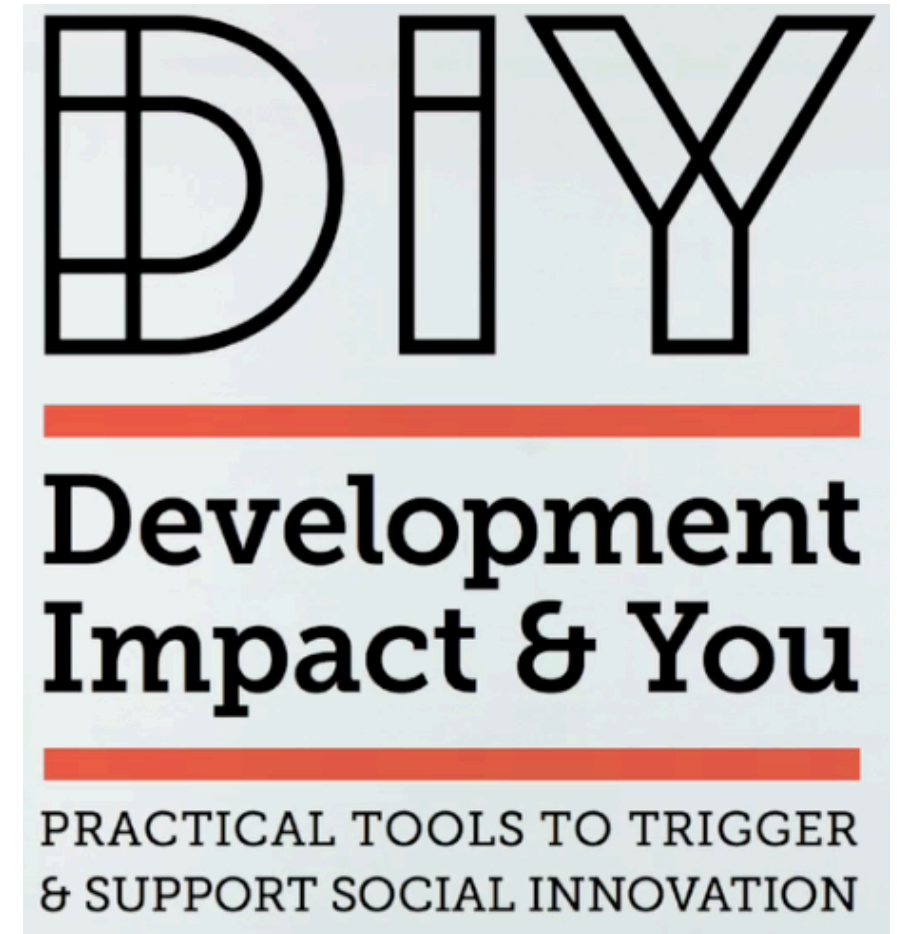This is a toolkit on how to invent, adopt or adapt ideas that can deliver better results. It's quick to use, simple to apply, and designed to help busy people working in development.

The tools are not coming out of thin air. It draws on a study of many hundreds of tools currently being used – here are included only the ones which practitioners found most useful. Many of them are well documented and have been widely used in other sectors. In that sense this toolkit is standing on the shoulders of giants, and we are happy to acknowledge that. All the tool descriptions include a key reference, so it is easy to trace back their origins and dive deeper into other publications about their application.
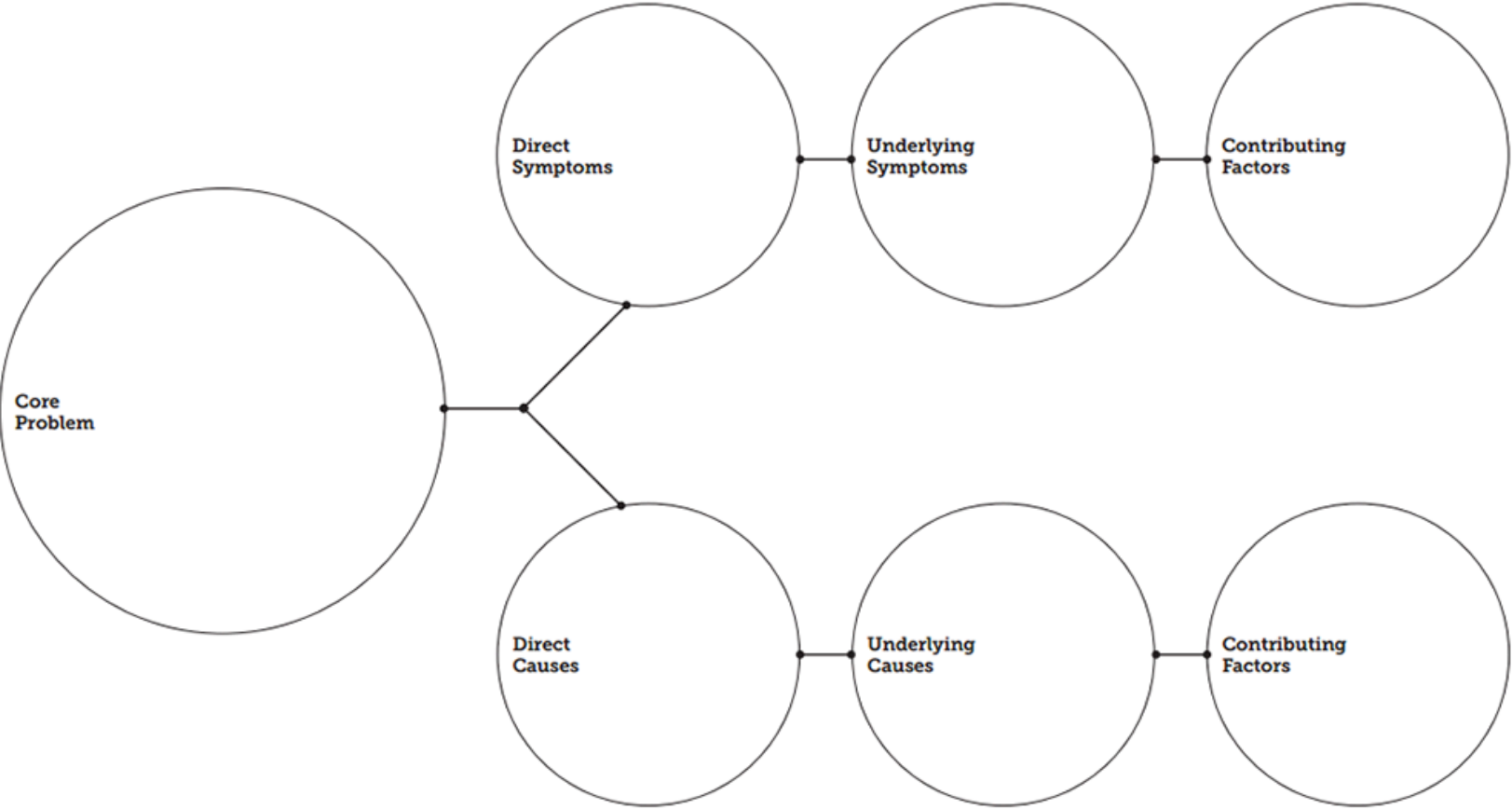
Further reading:
https://diytoolkit.org/about/
https://diytoolkit.org/tools/

DiY

Development Impact & You

PRACTICAL TOOLS TO TRIGGER & SUPPORT SOCIAL INNOVATION

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Sample

I want to look ahead
to understand what I need to do to bring my idea to life

INNOVATION FLOWCHART

STAGE	SPECIALIST SKILLS REQUIRED	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES & TOOLS	RISK LEVEL AND HANDLING	FINANCE REQUIRED	KINDS OF EVIDENCE GENERATED	GOAL
1 Exploring opportunities & challenges	Research for exploratory work	SWOT Analysis Problem Definition Causes Diagram	Low risk of failure but clear decisions should be taken about how to act on insights	Grants	Insights derived from formal research and informal knowledge gathering	A well understood and clearly defined problem or opportunity
2 Generating ideas	Ideation and facilitation of creative thinking	Thinking Hats Fast Idea Generator Creative Workshop	High failure rate should be an explicit expectation, visible senior leadership essential	Usually grants, occasionally convertible	A clear account of change or likely causation, supported- but not overly constrained by evidence	An idea or set of ideas to develop and test
3 Developing & testing	Mix of design and implementation skills	Experience Map Prototype Testing Plan Improvement Triggers	High failure rate should be an explicit expectation, visible senior leadership essential	Grants, convertible grants/loans	A stronger case with cost and benefit projections developed through practical trials and experiments, involving potential users	Demonstration that the idea works, or evidence to support a reworking of the idea
4 Making the case	Business development and evaluation	Blueprint Promises & Potential Map Business Model Canvas	Prepare to adapt approach, based on evaluation results and user feedback	Grant funding or funding out of investment	A stronger case with cost and benefit projections developed through practical trials and experiments, involving potential users	Clarity about what warrants implementation and funding
5 Delivering and implementing	Strong leadership, management, implementation skills	Critical Tasks List Learning Loop Target Group	Prepare for some adaptation to implementation	Programme funds, equity, loans, grants	A robust and detailed case developed through formal evaluation and evidence gathering - use of a control group to isolate impact	An implemented and sustainable innovation
6 Growing, scaling and spreading	Strong leadership, management, implementation skills	Scaling Plan Business Plan Marketing Mix	Fidelity assessments may be important, strong capacity needed to ensure transfer of practice	Equity loans, payment by results, social impact bonds	Evidence derived from evaluations in multiple sites, and independently run randomised control trials	Innovation or impact at scale
7 Changing systems	Strong leadership and management, Identification and training of new leaders and teams	Building Partnerships Map Evidence Planning	Map potential unintended effects	Multiple financial systems requiring potential re-wiring possible outcome-based funding	New definitions of and measures for efficiency and impact created	A transformation in the way we do things

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Sample

I want to clarify my priorities
by breaking down a complex issue

CAUSES DIAGRAM

Core
Problem

Direct
Symptoms

Underlying
Symptoms

Contributing
Factors

Direct
Causes

Underlying
Causes

Contributing
Factors

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Sample

I want to collect input from others
in a conversation that uncovers their perspective

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Show me

If you are in the interviewee's environment, ask him or her to show you the things they interact with (objects, spaces, tools, etc).
Capture pictures and notes to jog your memory later. Or, have them walk you through the process.

Draw it

Ask participants to map out their activities and experiences through sketches and diagrams. This is a good way to debunk assumptions and reveal how people perceive and order their activities.

Think aloud

As they perform a process or task, ask participants to describe aloud what they are thinking. This helps uncover their motivations, concerns, perceptions and reasoning.

Be specific

People often generalise about what's typical and leave out rich important details. Instead, ask people to talk about a specific period of time. Instead of what's your typical day like, ask them what happened yesterday.

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