

Service Area 1: Support services for the Pillar 1-DeSIRA projects to prove and improve impacts
PROVING IMPACTS > Producing and disseminating Stories of Change

PRODUCING AND DISSEMINATING STORIES OF CHANGE

What are Stories of Change, why collect and disseminate them ?



Stories of change (SoC) are a powerful tool to **demonstrate significant changes that occur as a result of a project**, in terms of behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, and practices, which are often not easily captured using quantitative metrics. SoC aim at identifying not only the changes that have occurred but also **the reasons why these changes happened** at various levels where projects intervene. Although usually SoC focus on positive results, they can also be used to investigate circumstances in which results were not achieved, and derive important lessons about the assumptions underlying the intervention. In change-oriented approaches to support research and innovation projects, SoC can be a valuable component of a project's Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy, **linking project results with the concrete elements of the project architecture**.

Many DeSIRA projects are currently achieving results that can be captured by SoC, providing **learning opportunities** for all the actors in the niches within the Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) where they operate. Examples of actions that projects are undertaking, which lead to SoC, include: (1) encompassing a diversity of research-action interventions, at different levels, with different partners and purposes; (2) building new innovation partnerships with stakeholders from outside the formal and traditional agricultural research community; (3) setting up multi-actor innovation facilities; (4) engaging in farmer-led research or using co-creation methodologies at different stages of the research process; or (5) finding innovative ways to overcome managerial challenges related to operating in unpredictable and insecure contexts.

Developing the SoC requires reflecting upon the factors that have facilitated or constrained the change. The knowledge gained through this process is captured and stored in the SoC, strengthening the institutional memory of the organisations involved in DeSIRA projects. In a compelling and accessible way, **SoC use real-life examples to contribute to better understanding of the projects overall results or the potential future results**. This provides DeSIRA project executors and funders with a tool by which to communicate the value of their work to a wider audience.

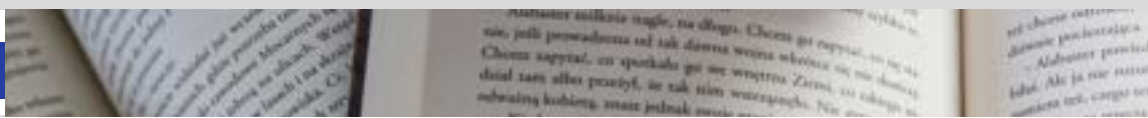
Key Readings:

Pasiecznik, N., ed. 2018. Building Competence and Confidence in Agricultural Innovation Systems.

Stories of Change. Agrinatura, Paris, France, and FAO, Rome, Italy. 196 pp. <https://cdais.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/1.CDAIS-Stories-of-Change-FULL-BOOK-2.pdf>

See the Stories of change section in Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity Building: Is it really that difficult? <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Praxis-Paper-23-Monitoring-and-Evaluating-Capacity-Building-is-it-really-that-difficult.pdf>

See chapter 8 'Communication products: stories of change' in the following ODI paper Communicating Research A beginner's guide for researchers in Vietnam <https://odi.org/en/publications/communicating-research-a-beginners-guide-for-researchers-in-vietnam/>



Three support services offered by DeSIRA-LIFT

1. Disseminating Stories of Change



DeSIRA-LIFT will publish two books featuring DeSIRA projects SoC:

- The first book will focus on how DeSIRA projects contribute to change by making various innovation actors work together (SoC for Book 1 are to be ready by the beginning of 2024).
- The second book will focus on the impact of innovations generated by DeSIRA projects (SoC for Book 2 are to be ready by the end of 2024).

If you think your DeSIRA project already has a SoC that could be shared in one of the DeSIRA SoC books answer [this call](#).

2. Training on writing Stories of Change



Writing SoC will be a topic of the third and the fourth session of the ongoing training course “Communicating research: Impactful written communication for DeSIRA projects” proposed by DeSIRA-LIFT expert Myriam Perez.

The sessions on writing SoC in English are scheduled for November 9 and 16 (2 sessions). They will be followed by writing workshops in December.

To join these sessions, **register for the course** (if you haven't already):
<https://forms.gle/3hixQqnyjFNmsL8f8>

3. Customized Support for producing Stories of Change



If you are not sure how the experiences of your DeSIRA project could translate into a SoC, or need more insights into how you can develop a SoC to be included in the DeSIRA SoC book, and you cannot follow the training course, DeSIRA LIFT cluster facilitators can assist you in identifying the topic and/or defining the content of your DeSIRA project's SoC. We still strongly suggest that you join the December writing workshops to finalize your story.

Contact your cluster facilitator:

- Pris Henriquez for East Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean: pris@desiraliftcommunity.org
- Ola Dolinska for West and Central Africa, and Asia & Pacific: ola@desiraliftcommunity.org

Need inspiration ? [Download a Story of Change from our website](#)

FAQ

- Where can I find information on the overall DeSIRA-LIFT service offering to Pillar 1 projects? Here: <https://www.desiralift.org/service-area-1/>
- Where can I send general questions, comments and suggestions about the DeSIRA-LIFT service offer? service@desiralift.org

