

## TIPS for PRODUCING PROMISING DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESES

### USAID/Uganda

#### DO'S:

Start with broader development theory but **Be as Specific as Possible**, considering both the interventions USAID controls/manages and broader operational context/influence.

Answer the question, “Why are you doing this and what will it lead to? “If USAID...., then....” statements are usually helpful.

Account for USAID’s “additionality.” (would the development result happen anyways?)

Beware of “why not something else”—your project’s reasoning/documentation should explain why your particular bet(s) is the most promising choice among different options.

Recognize that while you suspect you know the relationship between the “If and then,” there’s a fair chance you, and USAID, could be wrong.

#### DON'TS:

Make it so general it could be true in any country or any Development Objective, but customize and tailor your development hypothesis language to the local Ugandan context.

Put value statements (“efficient,” “effective”) in the “If” part of your hypothesis.

Worry about exact wording at first; worry about clarity of reasoning and ideas.

Worry about complete certainty of accomplishment.

#### Good examples:

If USAID introduces RUTF (nutrition treatment) through the GOU’s IMAM and community referral approach to severely malnourished Ugandans in 28 focus, North, and Southwest districts, then these districts will experience significant, respective reductions in current wasting rates.

If USAID promotes certain labor-saving technologies, off-farm enterprises, or other methods for increasing decision-making and access to assets among smallholder women agriculturalists, then such households’ nutritional and livelihood conditions will measurably improve.

#### Not-so-good example:

Improved market opportunities for coffee will lead to increased incomes for farmers will it automatically? What can get in the way of that happening? Even if it is true, what does AID have to do with this?