

MODULE 5: PARTICIPATE

MODULE OBJECTIVES:

- Deepen** empathy and understanding of current reality
- Articulate** the big-picture story of change
- Discern** steps of change required to move current reality to imagined future

Seed Tools: *Theory of Change Canvas*

MODULE OVERVIEW:

Moving beyond discovery, this module begins engaging with the question of alignment. Ultimately, we want to learn how to participate in God's work of redemption and renewal in the contexts where God has placed us. In order to do this, we start by understanding our contexts and current realities and identifying which parts are not in alignment with God's design. We do this by working through the top line of the *Theory of Change Canvas* (TOCC). Firstly by understanding the *Current Reality* of our contexts, before articulating a *Story of Change* about our contexts before naming some big picture *Steps of Change*. We finish by unpacking the assets and barriers of our contexts.

MODULE BREAKDOWN:

- 5.1 Introduction to Alignment
- 5.2 Current Reality
- 5.3 Story of Change
- 5.4 Populating Your *Theory of Change Canvas*
- 5.5 Understanding your Context
 - Assets and Barriers



5.1 INTRODUCTION TO ALIGNMENT



In this next phase of the Changemaker Community, we are focusing on alignment. We want to explore how we can align our lives with God's purposes in the world. This includes who we are, our vision of where we're going and what God might be calling us to as we seek to partner with God to co-create change in our contexts.

At Seed, we acknowledge that God isn't just interested in what you do, He's also interested in how you do what you do. While what we do and how we spend our time is important, God cares deeply about faithfulness. When we aren't participating in God's work in a manner that is aligned to His purposes, we can feel disheartened about the state of the world.

"Most of us feel a frustration, a disconnect, that the parts of our life don't make sense in terms of the greater meaning and purpose we want to have for our life. We should be making a difference in the world but that is not always the reality we experience."

– John Beckett, Seed Founder

Aligning our life with God's purpose is not always simple. Especially when we recognise that the contexts where we are placed and called too are not simple, our world is incredibly complex, and we aren't the only ones working towards a re-imagined future.

In this module we want to unpack some of that complexity, start to articulate a narrative of change for our contexts and find some tools that will help us bring even more nuance and clarity to the complexities of the contexts, systems, and cultures that we are called to serve.

There's a lot of work that will be needed between this module and the next design module (Module 7). We do not expect you to land a lot of answers in our time together right now, rather try and focus on understanding what questions the tools are asking you, so that you will be equipped to continue this deep-thinking work in the coming weeks and months.





NOTES / COMMENTS



5.2 CURRENT REALITY

 In this section, we are going to look closely at the current reality of your context. Here we want to identify what in the *Current Reality* of your context is contrary to what God intends while always recognising that your context is not a problem to be fixed, but a place where God is already at work.

When we talk about seeing redemptive change in the world, we're talking about the parts of our world that are not aligned with God's future. Before we can talk about aligning our participation with His plans and

purposes, we need to see clearly which parts of our context are not yet in alignment with that picture of an imagined future.

There are two steps in this process.

 **1. Identify and personify your Target Group.**

We want to start by seeing your context from the perspective of those you want to serve.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Who are you trying to serve?

What are their needs, wants, pains and concerns?



2. Identify any other key aspects of your context that are contrary to your imagined future.

the details here. Right now, we are focusing on naming the cultural, structural or systemic elements that stand in the way of the imagined future you have prayerfully imagined.

We will be unpacking our contexts in more depth later on, so don't worry too much about

Ask yourself:

What in my context can't coexist with my imagined future?

3. Summarise your Current Reality

We've just unpacked our Current Reality in terms of the people we want to serve, their felt needs and pains, and other features that stand in the way of our imagined future becoming our new reality.

Describe the current reality of your context in just 2 or 3 sentences.





NOTES / COMMENTS



5.3 STORY OF CHANGE

 Now we want to develop the beginnings of a *Story of Change*, by contrasting your *Current Reality* with what you Imagine for the Future.

To tell this story, we are going to develop a series of “From/To” statements. We’re looking for 2-4 statements that tell the story of change you want to see in your context.

For example, if you are involved in a commercial law firm that is overly focused on profit, often at the expense of people, you might say something like:

 *“FROM a culture of profit-making at all costs, TO a culture that places the needs of the client as the main priority.”*







NOTES / COMMENTS



5.4 STEPS OF CHANGE



Next, we want to take a big picture look at what would need to happen in order to move from our current reality to our imagined future. This will be our *Steps of Change* and, when combined with our *Imagined Future* and *Current Reality*, completes the first line of the *Theory of Change Canvas*.

In this section, we want to find 3-6 steps of change. Some might be wholesale mindset shifts and some might require top-down change.



For example, in a law firm that is focused on profit over people, the first thing that might need to happen is a growing awareness of the cost to clients. Other steps might include a shift in mindset to focus on justice, buy-in from leadership, changes to pricing structure, hiring of more aligned staff, and a shift in the kinds of cases that the firm focuses on.

At this stage, it is important to try and take yourself out of the picture. Try not to focus on whether these steps of change are achievable or within your own power to influence.

We are not yet asking “what do you need to do?” Rather, we want to identify what needs to happen for the people and context you serve in order to move towards your imagined future.

It can feel weighty and even nerve-wracking to name big changes that need to happen in your context, but remember that it is never on you to complete that change, God is at work all the time, in all kinds of ways!



Identify what needs to change in order for your current reality to become your imagined future.

Ask yourself:

What is something that needs to change or happen? Try and find 3-6 steps.





NOTES / COMMENTS



5.5 POPULATING YOUR THEORY OF CHANGE CANVAS



Congratulations, you've just completed the first line of your *Theory of Change Canvas*!

Take a moment now to summarise your *Imagine Future*, *Current Reality* and *Steps of Change* into the top line of the Canvas. See if you can do at least some of it from memory!



You can download your own copy of this from the relevant section of the Seed website.

Once you have finished, take a moment to prayerfully consult God about the *Steps of Change*. Are there any standing out to you? Calling to you or drawing you into deeper prayer and contemplation? Circle them!

This is the beginning of discernment.





NOTES / COMMENTS



5.6 UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONTEXT — ASSETS AND BARRIERS

Now that we have completed the top line of our *Theory of Change Canvas*, we're going to start working on the second line. This section is intended to deepen your understanding of your context's current reality.

Before we start, it is important to note that God's redemptive work is not ever fully dependent on us. This means that before we work out what God is calling us to do, we will look for where God is already at work.

It is also important to realise that our contexts and the people we serve, sit within a broader system that sometimes helps and sometimes hinders our ability to bring change.

We want to identify both the parts of our context that are assets to our Imagined Future and the parts that are barriers.

1. Assets — these are things in your context that will help your imagined future become a reality.

Consider the following:

- *What strengths already exist?*
- *Where is there already momentum for change?*
- *How can we build on these strengths?*



2. Barriers — these are things in your context that need to be overcome in order for the imagined future to become a reality.

Consider the following questions:

- *What is stopping movement toward the imagined future?*
- *How can these be addressed?*





NOTES / COMMENTS

