**Theories Informing C4D Practice**

While using the Socio-Ecological Framework as the main theory of change, C4D approaches will also draw on other specific change theories operating at each societal level and commonly applied by different disciplines and organizations. See Annex 1 for a more detailed overview of behaviour and social change theories in relation to different levels of the SEM model and C4D related concepts and outcomes).

There are numerous ***individual behaviour change theories*** available to explain and predict human behaviour. Two of the most commonly applied in the field are the Health Belief Model and the Stages of Change Theory. The***Health Belief Model*** posits and predicts that individuals change their behaviour based on awareness and perceptions of personal benefits weighed against perceived consequences and capacities to change. In comparison, the ***Stages of Change Theory*** acknowledges that likelihood of change is increased when types of communication matches and individual’s stage of readiness for change.

***Social support and social network theories*** are useful in understanding the dynamics of interpersonal communication and peer support/engagement and their influence on interactions between individuals and their significant others (family, friends, neighbours, etc.)At Community Level, ***Social Learning Theory,***may be used to guide a C4D intervention based on the recognized influence of observational learning, imitation and modelling by significant, respected or prominent others. ***Diffusion of Innovations Theory***, may provide rationale for engagement with opinion leaders and peer networks based on the understanding of how adoption of behaviours can be promoted through a social system.

In cases of deeply entrenched social roles/expectations that govern human behaviour, ***Social Norm Theories***, provide useful guidance for C4D approaches. Given the significant influence of people’s perception of socially accepted behaviours as well as perceived or actual public sanctions, rewards or penalties for certain behaviours, this theory is used as the basis for mobilizing sufficient numbers of persons to agree on changing their behaviour and facilitating displays of public commitments to openly make these changes in behaviour socially acceptable.

In contrast to those theories focussed on changing behaviours and social norms, another central component that supports the theory of change for C4D is application of ***community dynamics theories*** (e.g. Complexity Theory, Community Organising Theory). These theories concentrate on building the capacities of communities to self-reflect, self-analyse, self-organise and “learn by doing” so they can create new structures and new modes of behaviour on their own, as this is the only means for sustainable change. Similarly, gender (i.e. sexual distribution of labour) and culture (cultural relevance, community assets etc.) theories are also useful in understanding how the immediate social context can affect individual and collective human behaviour.

Finally at the policy level where structural, economic, political, legal and power systems influence human behaviour at all other levels, ***Social Movement theories*** *(collective action, coalition building etc.)* may be the basis of C4D interventions where support is provided to convene interest groups and facilitate them through collective action to analyse problems and lobby for decisions, actions or change of policies affecting their lives.