

AN INTRODUCTION TO EVALUATION: The role of Potential Use in Developing Evaluations Day 1

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Goals of the Workshop

Monday 9:10 to 9:40 AM

Goals

- To build evaluation capacity in the health sector in China;
- Build evaluation capacity for Health Systems Reform in China;
- Help inform important decisions facing the implementation of the health system reform efforts
- Help with the evaluation of the Clinical Pathways Program;
- Build evaluation as a field

How can this Workshop make a difference?

- ..this “workshop” itself is an intervention...it is part of a larger intervention
- Question for reflection: How can the workshop and the mentoring program make a difference to evaluation culture in the health sector in China?

Why is this workshop relevant for the multiple participants

- Different Stakeholders
 - Workshop Participants
 - China Health Economics Institute
 - International Development Research Centre
 - Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute
- But...all of this only matters if it IMPROVES HEALTH OUTCOMES OF INDIVIDUALS

Types of Evaluation

Formative



Developmental



MENU PLAN	
DATE/TIME	GROUP
NAME(S)	
DETAILS OF: STOVE	
BREAKFAST	L. CALORIES
TOTAL	
LUNCH/DINNER	L. CALORIES
TOTAL	

Summative



Different Models of Evaluation

- Evaluation as Learning/Evaluation as Accountability
- Evaluation as Testing/Evaluation as Navigation
- SOME INITIAL QUESTIONS
 - What are we trying to learn?
 - What are multiple types of learning?
 - How do we know if the system is being *reformed*?
 - *Whose health outcomes need to improve as a result of the health systems reform?*
Did that really happen?

What is evaluation? An incomplete definition

- Evaluation is defined both as a means of assessing performance and to identify alternative ways to deliver
- “evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of evidence on the *outcomes of programs* to *make judgments about their relevance, performance and alternative ways to deliver them or to achieve the same results.*”
- Why is this an incomplete definition?

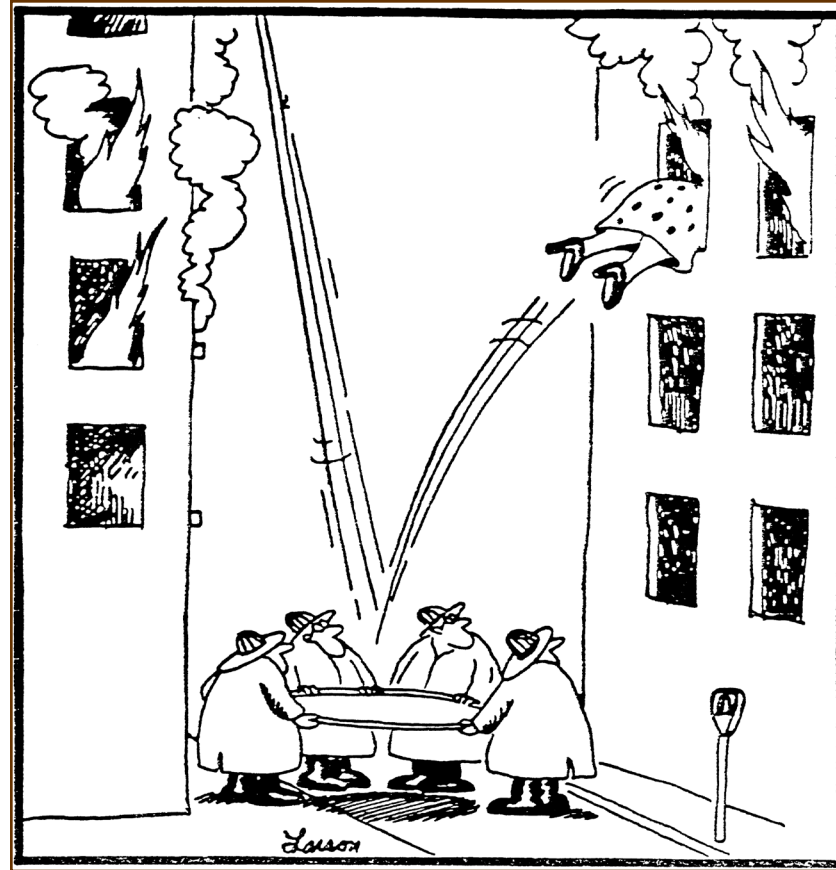
The Knowledge Translational Problem for Health Systems Evaluation

- Do we know enough about the system before we intervene?
- The more pragmatic question: **How can evaluations help understand what needs to be done to impact health outcomes?**
- The Social World as a Complex, Dynamic System
 - Understanding the System **BEFORE** we Intervene
 - Understanding the System **WHILE** we Intervene

“Solutions” Can Also Create New Problems

Policy resistance is the tendency for interventions to be delayed, diluted, or defeated by the response of the system to the intervention itself.

-- Meadows, Richardson, Bruckman

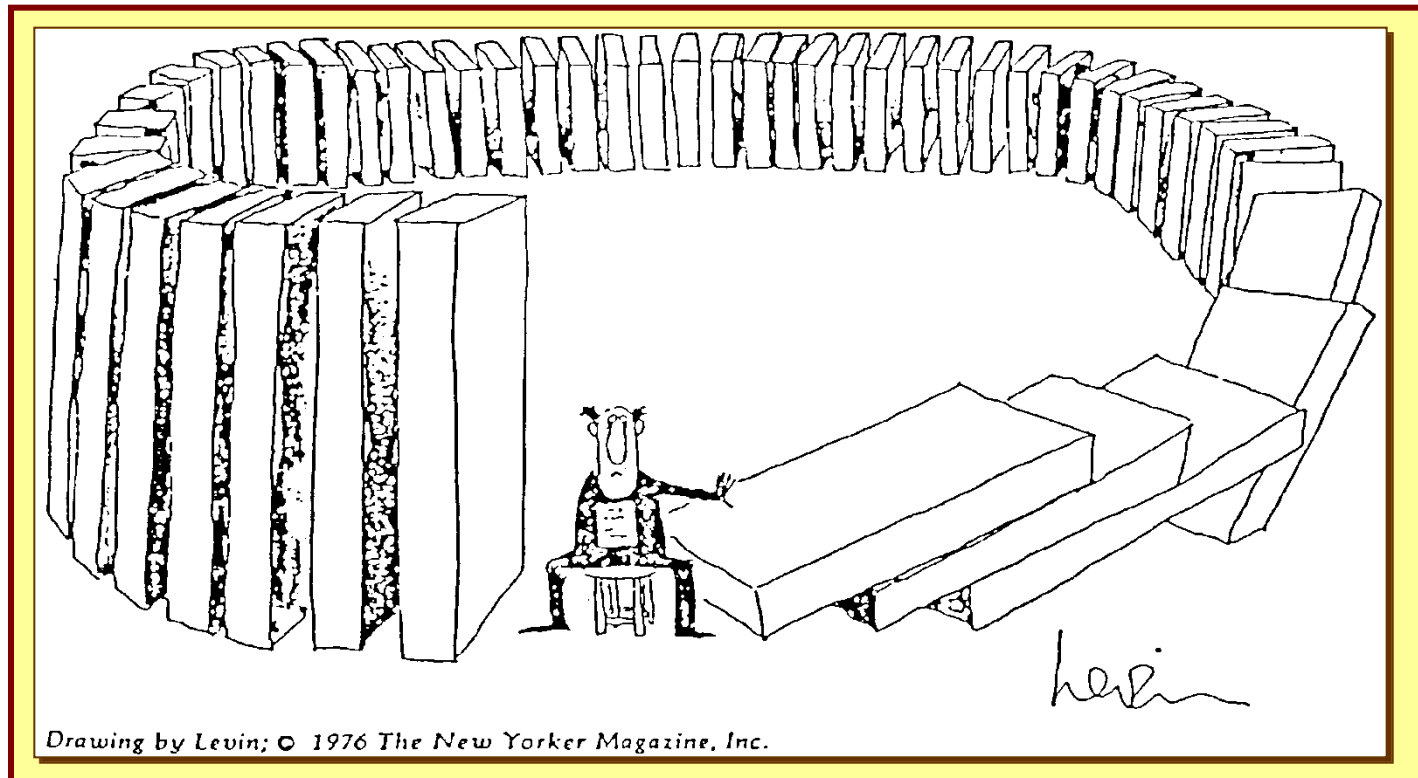


Meadows DH, Richardson J, Bruckmann G. Groping in the dark: the first decade of global modelling. New York, NY: Wiley, 1982.

Merton RK. The unanticipated consequences of purposive social action. American Sociological Review 1936;1936:894-904.

Forrester JW. Counterintuitive behavior of social systems. Technology Review 1971;73(3):53-68.

System-as-Cause



Forrester JW. Counterintuitive behavior of social systems. *Technology Review* 1971;73(3):53-68.

Meadows DH. Leverage points: places to intervene in a system. Sustainability Institute, 1999.
Available at <http://www.sustainabilityinstitute.org/pubs/Leverage_Points.pdf>.

Richardson GP. Feedback thought in social science and systems theory. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

Sterman JD. Business dynamics: systems thinking and modeling for a complex world. Boston, MA: Irwin McGraw-Hill, 2000.

The challenge for this workshop: How can we make evaluations more useful?

Possible Solutions:

1. Focus on specific user-driven questions;
2. Build knowledge utilization into the knowledge generation process;
3. Focus on evaluation capacities (not just evaluation method);
4. Build dynamic relationship between the implementation and the evaluation;
5. Build trust in the evaluation

The Purpose of Evaluation

1:30 to 2:10 pm

Purpose of evaluation

(Mark, Henry and Julnes, 2000)

- Assessing merit and worth
 - Causal questions, Experimental trials, observational studies
- Programme and organizational improvement
 - Formative evaluation
- Oversight and compliance
- *Knowledge development*
 - Neglected purpose of many evaluations

So why are evaluations so often not
very useful?

UN Office of the Internal Oversight Services, 2008

- A Critique of Results-Based Management (2008).
- “Results-based management at the United Nations has been an administrative chore of little value to accountability and decision-making.”

The UN Critique of performance management and evaluation

- **Lack of strategic direction and cross-organizational performance incentives**
- **Problems of attribution and trivializing innovation**
- **Trivializing outcomes**
- **The practice of evaluation lacks rigor**
- **A lack of purpose**

The UN Critique (2)

- Lack of clarity on the consequences of good and poor performance
- Lack of clarity on the capacity needed to build a results-based management system
- Technical solutions are not a substitute for substantive clarity

Discussion

- How can we avoid the mistakes discussed in the UN report?
- What steps do we need to take to ensure that our evaluations are useful?

The role of evaluation in Health System Reform efforts

2:10 to 2:50 pm

How is evaluations of system reform efforts
different from evaluations of narrow
programs?

On programs and systems

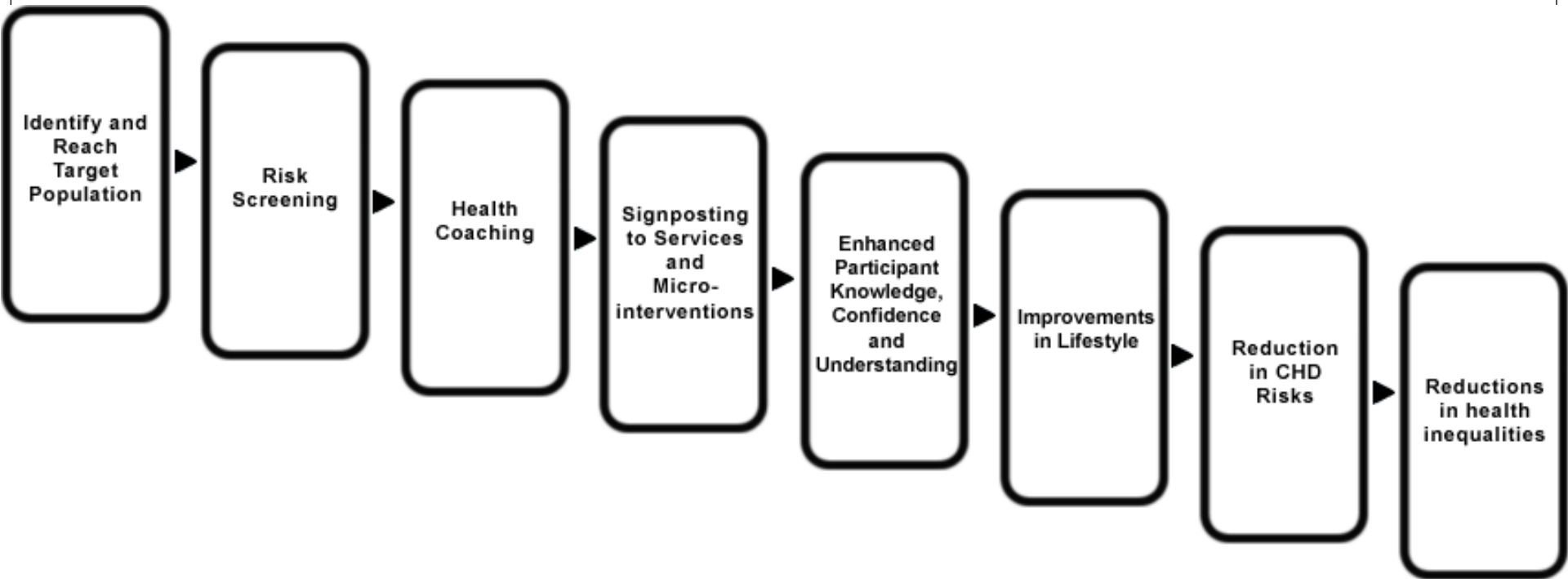
- “The problem is one of *complexity*. The health interventions in question are **not singular schemes or finite treatments** but concern the design, implementation, management and regulation of *entire services*. These services have a multiplicity of goals, many of them relating to the fulfillment of *long-term ambitions*.”

Pawson et al. (2004)

5 minutes discussion on why the Health Systems Reform in China is an example of a complex intervention

The nature of system reform (complex interventions)

A not very complex intervention: Primary Prevention Have a Heart Paisley



The Nature of Systems (Sterman, 2006)

- Constantly changing;
- Governed by feedback;
- Non-linear, History-dependent;
- Adaptive and evolving;
- Characterized by trade-offs;
- Policy resistance: “The result is *policy resistance*, the tendency for interventions to be defeated by the system’s response to the intervention itself.”
- Timeline of impact is unclear

Features of complex interventions (Pawson et al., 2004)

- The intervention is a theory or theories
- The intervention involves the actions of people.
- The intervention consists of a chain of steps
- These chains of steps or processes are often not linear, and involve negotiation and feedback at each stage.
- Interventions are embedded in social systems and how they work is shaped by this context.
- Interventions are prone to modification as they are implemented.
- Interventions are open systems and change through learning as stakeholders come to understand them.

Different models of organizing knowledge of complex systems

Repeated
Programmes

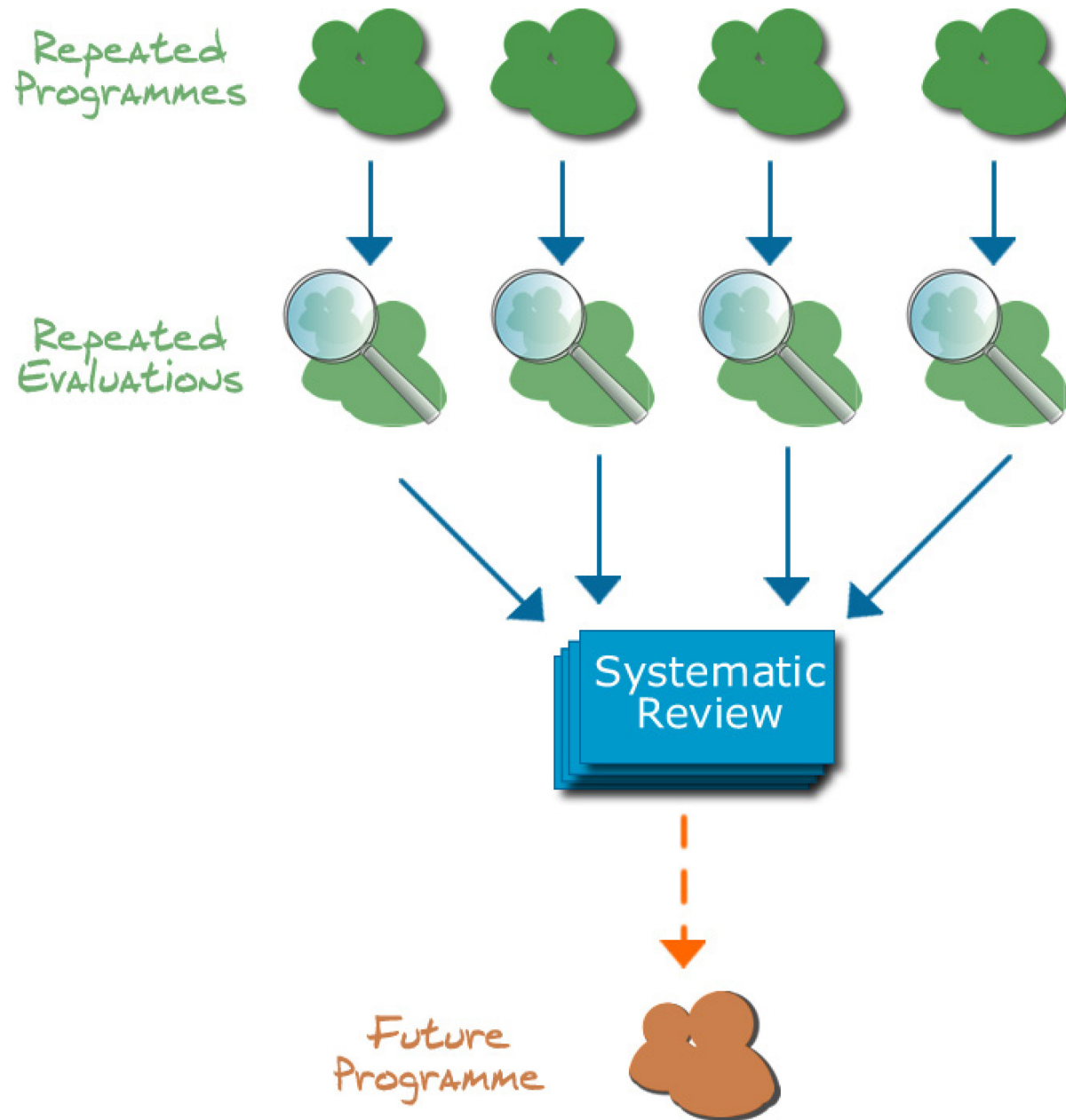
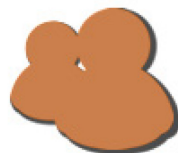


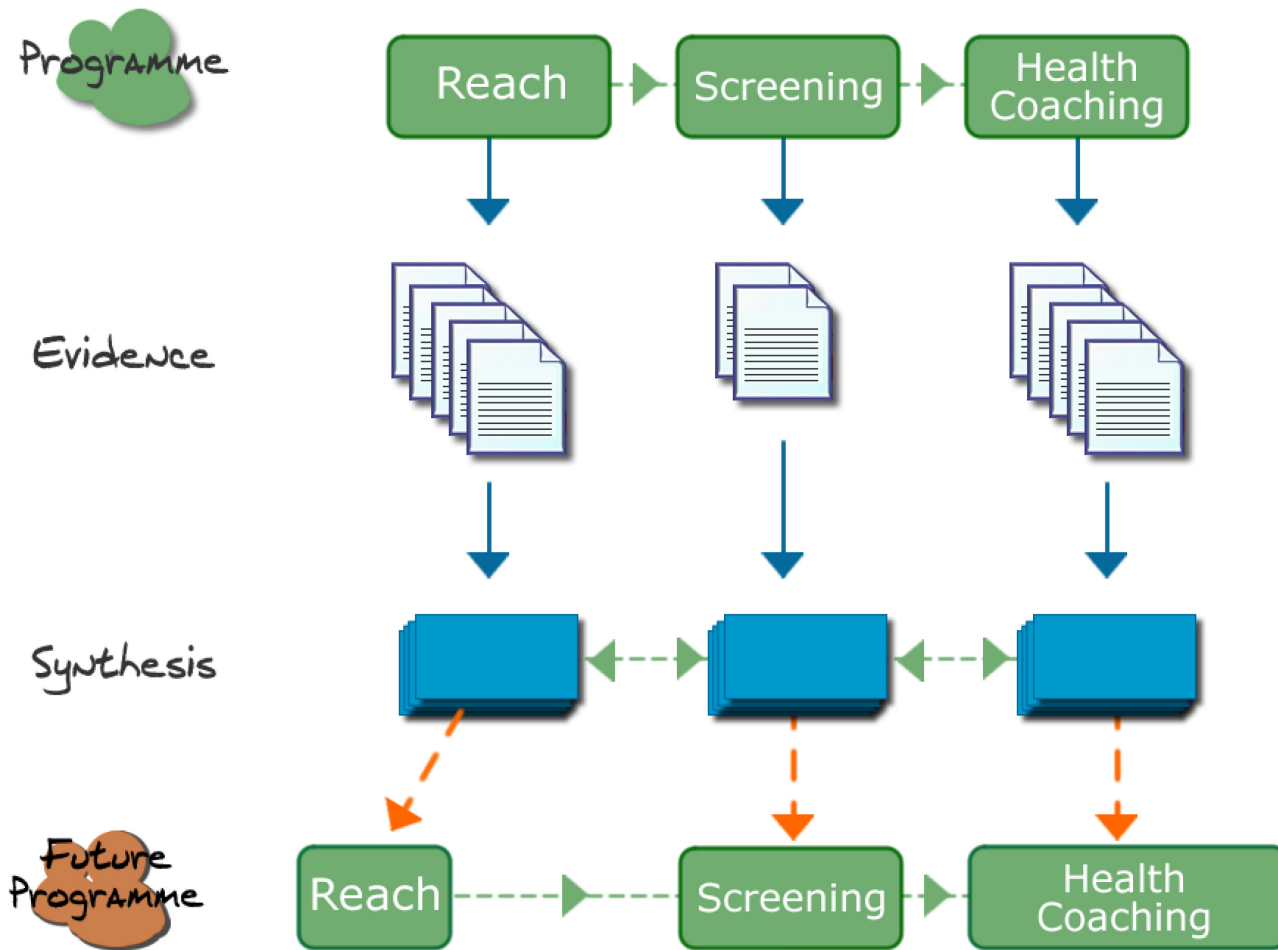
Repeated
Evaluations



Systematic
Review

Future
Programme





The Big challenge: Changing complex systems can take time.

When can we expect changes?

Experience at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control

- *“Popular conceptions about how certain phenomena change over time may often fail to account for real-world sources of inertia and delay and may suggest that things can change more rapidly than is actually possible.”*

- *“Findings from our study indicate that the Health People 2010 objective for reducing diagnosed diabetes prevalence by 38% will not be achieved — not because of ineffective or underfunded health protection efforts but because the objective itself is unattainable. Moreover, if current investments in diabetes screening and disease management continue to succeed in diagnosing a greater number of people and in enabling people to live longer with the disease, then diagnosed prevalence will move still farther away from the HP 2010 target.”*

Question for discussion

- What kinds of questions would you like the evaluation you are conducting to answer?
- How will you know what success looks like? When will you know it? What are some early markers of success of your intervention?
- What are some aspects of the implementation of the system reform implementation you most unsure about? How can evaluations help?

How can evaluations help influence policies and programs?

2:50 pm to 3:20 pm?

The Big Questions

- What are pathways of influence by which evaluations impacts policies?
- Conceptualizing evaluation as an intervention with short and long term goals. One of the intermediate goals is to influence policy. The long term goal is to improve individual lives

Evaluation as
Intervention

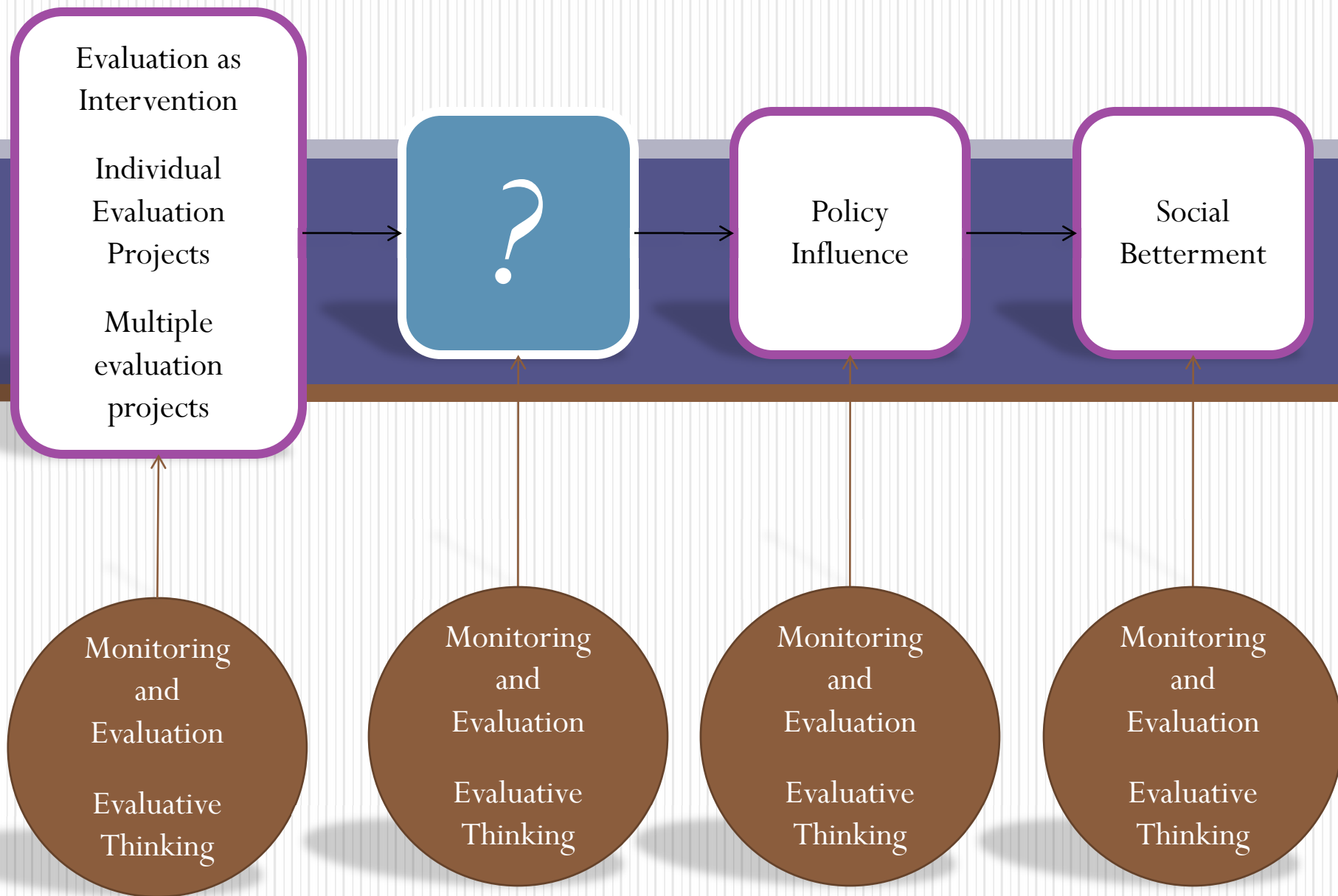
Individual
Evaluation
Project

Multiple
evaluations
projects



Policy
Influence

Social
Betterment



Evaluation Quality

**Monitoring
and
Evaluation
System**

**Pathways of
Policy
Influence**



Conceptualizing research and evaluation as complex systems

Carden (2009)

Overall Context

- Stability of Decision Making Institutions
- Policy Absorption Capacity
- Nature of Governance
- Opportunities for countries in transition
- Economic crisis and pressures on government

Government Context

- Clear Government Demand
- Government interest but leadership absent
- Interest but no capacity
- Interesting research but research uninteresting for Government
- Government disinterest or hostility

Evaluation as Intervention

- Evaluation Quality
- Evaluation Networks
- Action Research
- New tools

Mechanism: So, what can you do?

- Relationship Building
- Communication
- Networks of Influence
- Institutional Mechanisms

Process Outcomes

- Policy Capacity
- Broader Policy Horizons
- Policy Regimes

Outcomes

- Policy Influence
- “Better” Decisions
- Social Betterment

Capacity, Horizons and Regimes

- Capacity: “Research can strengthen the institutional framework supporting policymaking by enhancing the policy community’s own collective ability to assess and communicate innovative ideas, and by cultivating new talents for analytical and applying research advice”
- Horizon: “Researchers can improve the intellectual framework surrounding policymaking by introducing new ideas to the policy agenda, by ensuring that information comes to policymakers in a form and language that they can grasp and use, and by fostering helpful dialogue between researchers and decision makers”
- Decision Regimes: “The quality of a policy can be determined as much by the procedures of deliberation and decision as by its content.”

Discuss

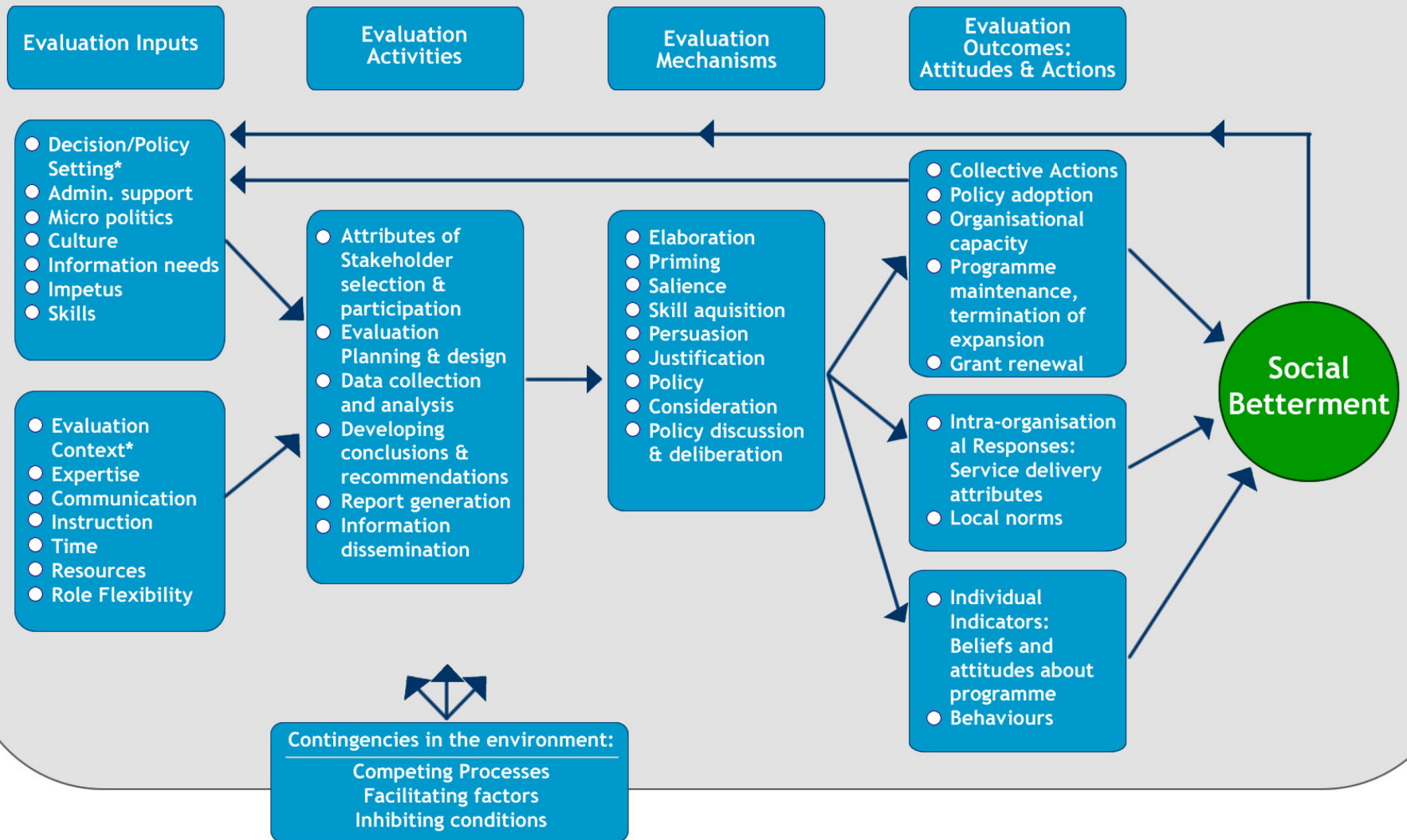
- Explore implications of the above model for the Evaluation of the Health System Reform?
- What are some ways in which the evaluations can be useful for decision making?

Model 2: Pathways of Evaluation Influence

Mel Mark and Gary Henry, Evaluation, 2003

Schematic Theory of Evaluation Influence

*(Selected elements from Cousins, 2003). Adopted from Mark & Henry 2003



A framework to understand influence.....

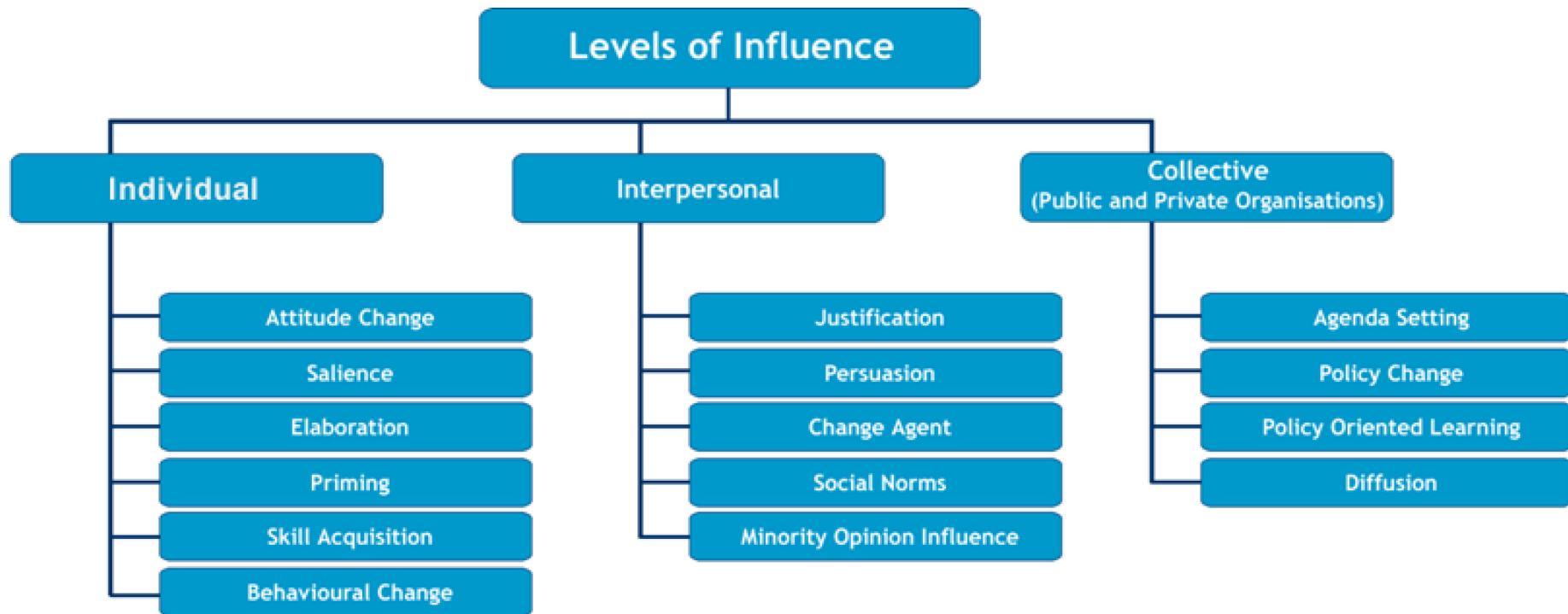


Figure 1: Mechanisms through which Evaluation Produces Influence

Examples of individual mechanisms

- *Saliience*. Saliience refers to the importance of an issue as judged by an individual.
- *Elaboration*: How much an individual actually thinks about an issue.

Examples of interpersonal mechanisms

- **Justification:** refers to the use of research findings to support a previously held position.
- **Persuasion:** Persuasion refers generally to the attempts of one party to change the attitudes of another, usually through direct communication.

Examples of collective mechanisms

- **Policy-oriented learning.** Policy-oriented learning refers to “relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioral intentions that result from experience and/or new information and that are concerned with the attainment or revision of policy objectives”
- **Policy change** refers here either to major or to minor, more incremental modifications of policies (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993) within the environment where the evaluation occurred.

Evaluation Approaches

3:35 to 4:15 pm

Some examples of evaluation approaches

- Theory based approaches (Realist Evaluation)
- Empowerment/Participatory approach
- Utilization based approaches
- Economic approaches
- Exemplars from the literature
 - Strengths and limitations of each the above evaluations

The Experimenting Society

- A brief history:
 - Donald Campbell and the Experimenting Society
- The role of 'experiments' in social decision making
- The rise of impact evaluation
- Experiments and Quasi-experiments

Challenging Evaluation: An Introduction to Outcome Mapping



www.outcomemapping.ca

www.idrc.ca/evaluation

What is outcome mapping?

- A framework or way of thinking that allows researchers to plot human behaviour and actions and assess their contribution to the aims of research projects and programs



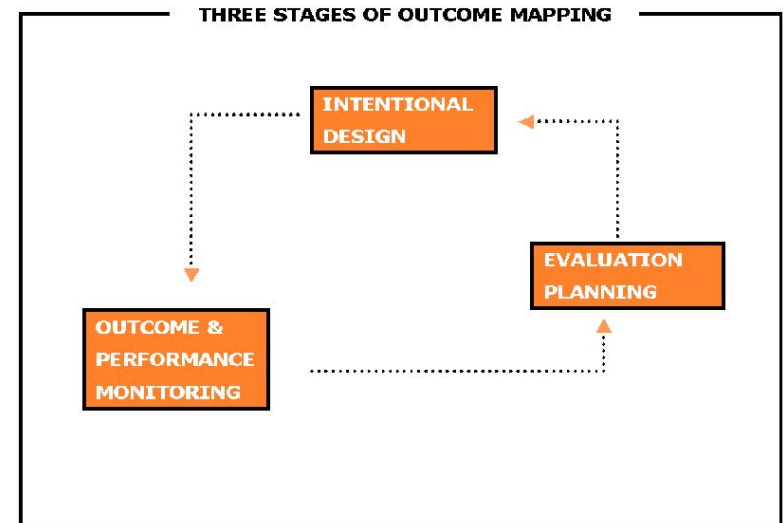
Looking at the bigger picture

- Outcome mapping allows a researcher to draw a picture that includes more than just the science



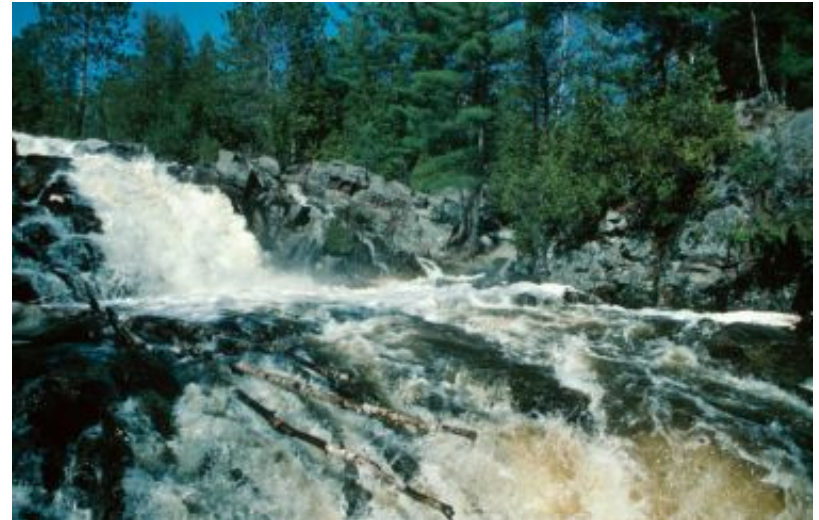
A flexible, multiple-use tool

- Outcome mapping can be used to
 - Plan changes
 - Record performance
 - Form the basis of an evaluation plan



View the map for what it is

- The map is *NOT* the territory so be prepared for surprises along the way

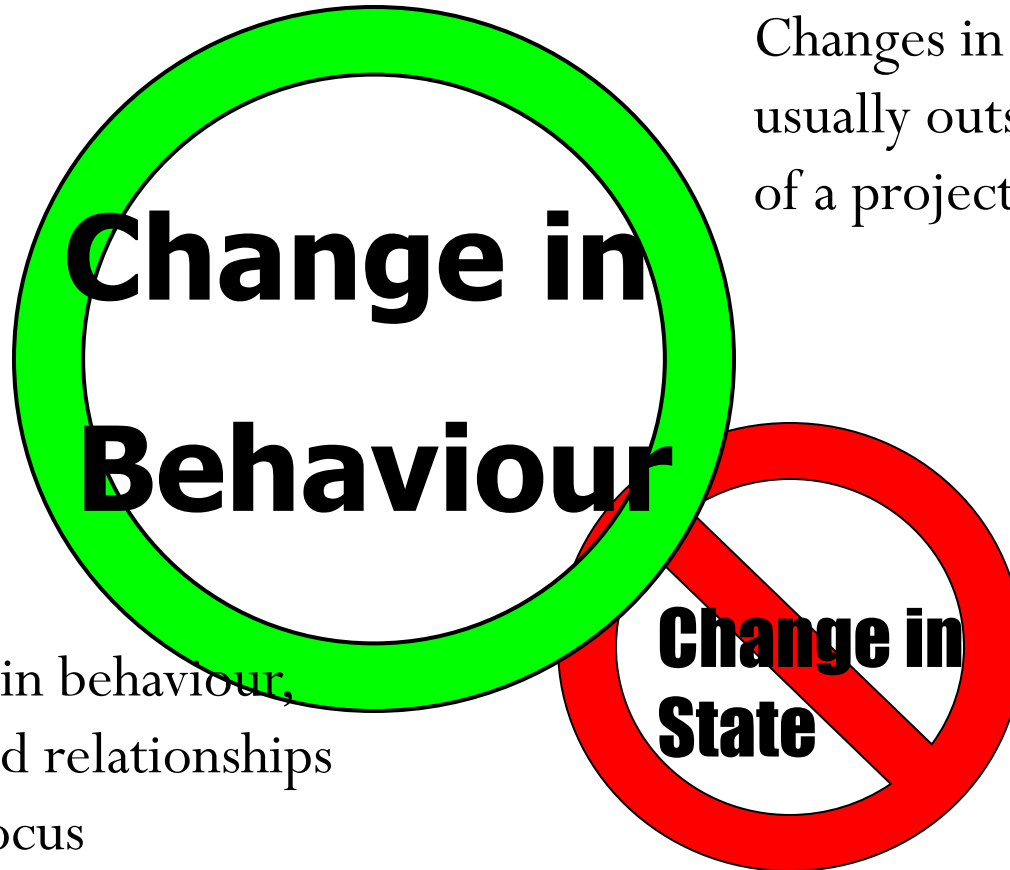


Keep your eyes wide open

- Being attentive along the journey...
- is as important as the destination

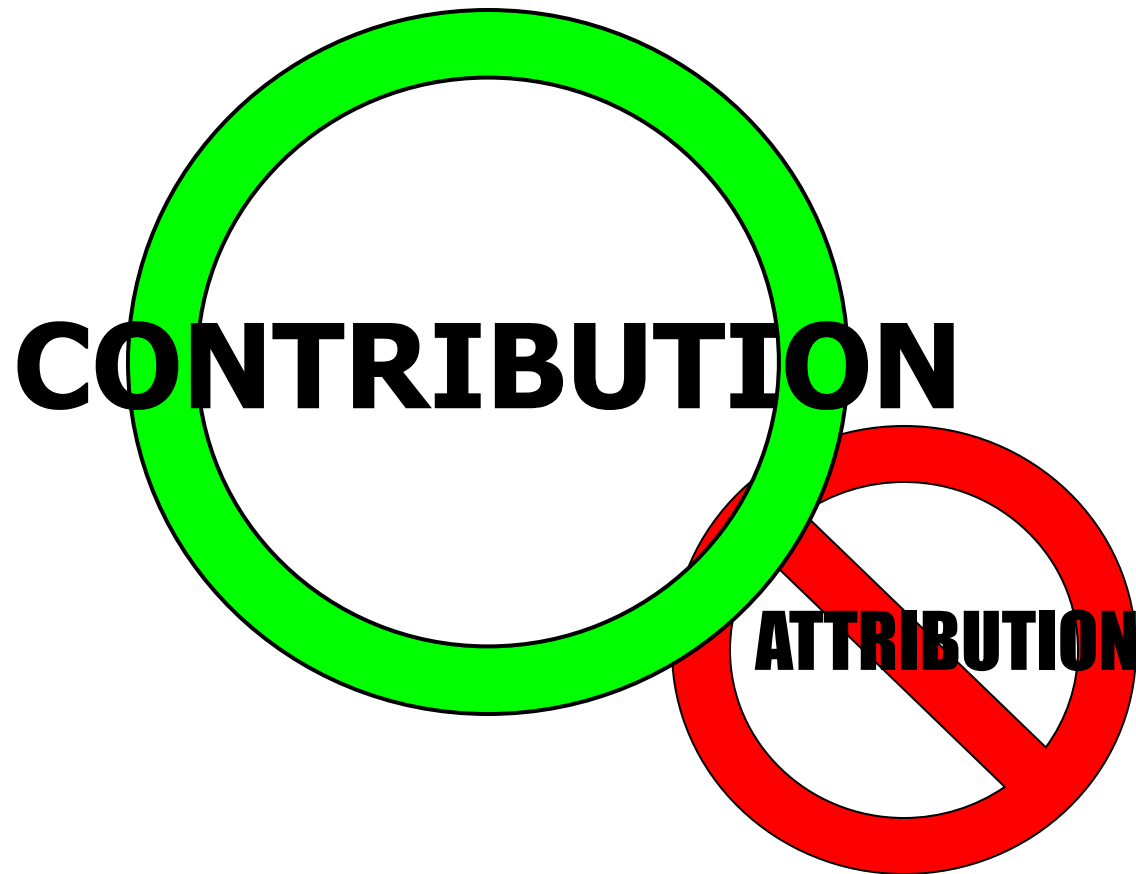


Outcomes = Behaviour Change

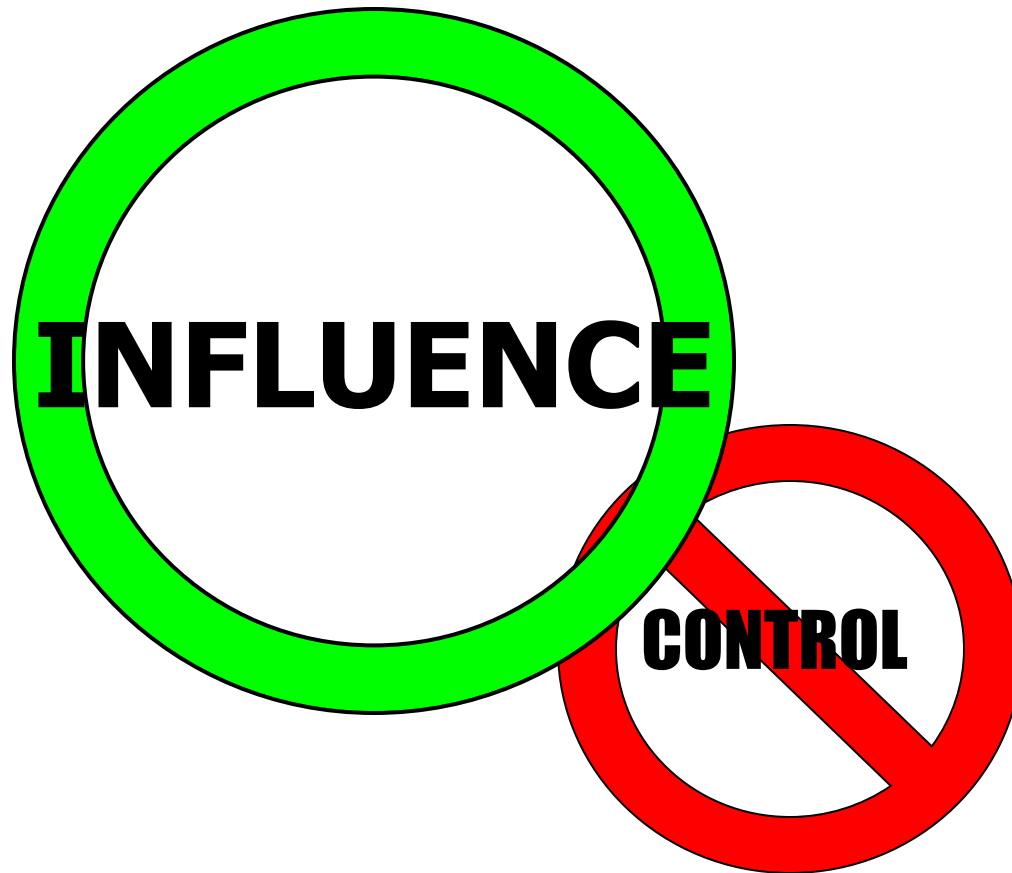


Changes in state are usually outside the scope of a project

Changes in behaviour, action and relationships are the focus



Influence not Control



« Those Who Dream Make a Difference! »

Aim high

Link dreams to
actions

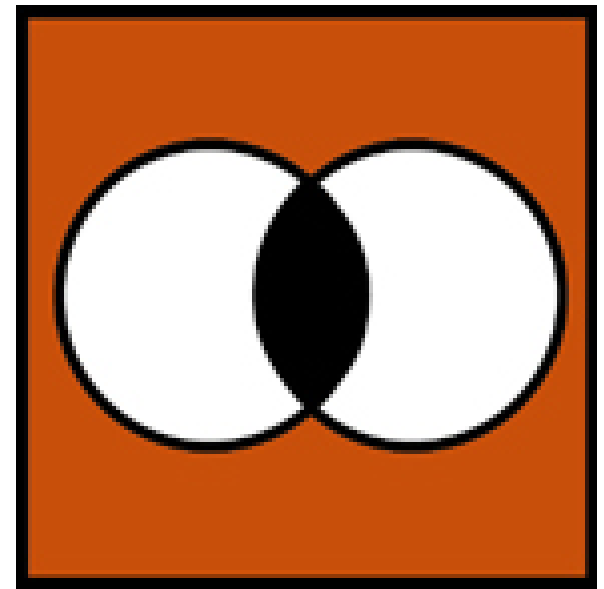


Sphere of Influence

Your responsibility
is here

Know what it is

Focus on these
relationships



Challenging Evaluation: An Introduction to Outcome Mapping



www.outcomemapping.ca

www.idrc.ca/evaluation

Discussion

- Do any of these approaches have relevance for the evaluation of clinical pathways and the health systems reform ?
- Will any of these approaches help you frame your evaluation questions differently?

Questions to consider for developing an evaluation plan

4:15 to 5:05 pm

A.

Intervention
Planning,
Implementation and
Theory

B.

Structure of
Evaluation Influence

C.

Design, Data,
Methods

D.

Spread and
Sustainability

1. Understanding the Intervention

- What are the different components of a program? Are the components stable? What are the implications of the stability of program components to evaluation design?
- Relevance of the concept for Health System Reform and the Clinical Pathways Program

2. Program Theory

- What is the program theory? Why and how is the program likely to work? Under what contexts is the program likely to work?
- Discuss relevance of ideas of program theory for Health Systems Reform and the Clinical Pathways

3. Linking evidence to the Program Theory

- Does the evidence base support the program theory linkages?
- Discussion:
- How was evidence used in developing the clinical pathways?
- Role of evidence in health systems reform

4. Understanding timelines of impact

- What is the timeline of impact? How long will it take for the intervention to impact key outcomes? What are the key outcomes?
- Discuss relevance of this concept for Clinical Pathways and Health Systems Reform

5. Learning Frameworks

- What kinds of learning will the evaluation provide?
- Discuss
 - What do we hope to learn from the evaluations of Clinical pathways and Health Systems Reform?

6. Utilization/Influence

- What are the pathways of influence of the evaluation - how will the evaluation influence the decisions involved in the present program as well as future programs and policies? How will the evaluation be utilized?

7. Measures, Methods and Design

- What does success look like? What measures are being used to measure the key outcomes?
- How will we know if the program is successful? What design is being implemented to answer this question?
- What methods will answer the key evaluation questions ?
- Discuss:
- Relevance to the evaluation of Health Systems Reform and Clinical Pathways

8. Learning about Program

- How will the evaluations be designed to learn about the program theory of the intervention?

9. Spread and 10. Sustainability

- What kinds of learning will be “spread” through the evaluation? Relationship of the evaluation to issues of generalizability and scaling-up
- How will the evaluation help with decisions to sustain the intervention? Why sustainability of the intervention is an important concept for evaluations?

Discussion

- Discussions on useful/influential evaluations
- Discuss features of evaluations that were useful. Why were the evaluations useful? How did the evaluations help with decision making?
- Discussion on structure of an evaluation plan