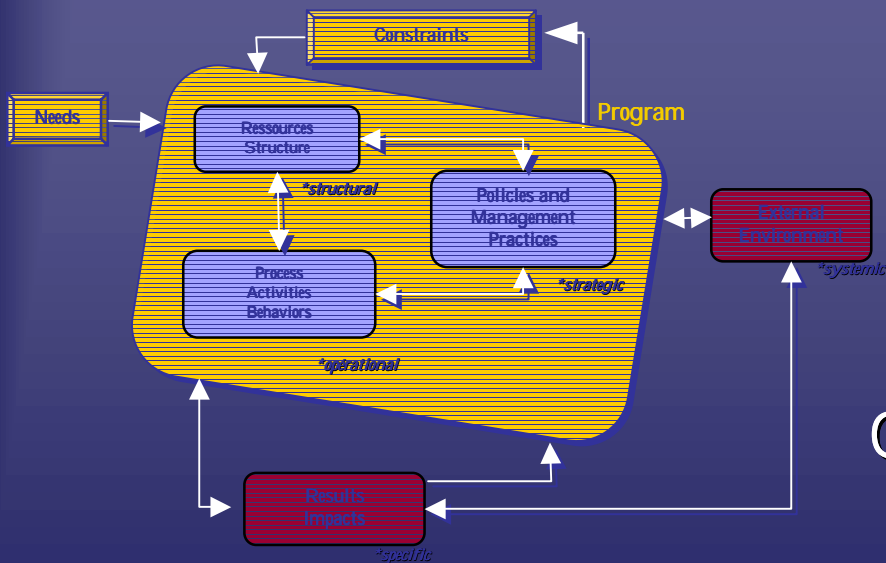# A JOURNEY THROUGH FOUR EVALUATION PROJETS WITH A SAME ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

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Quebec Automobile Insurance Board
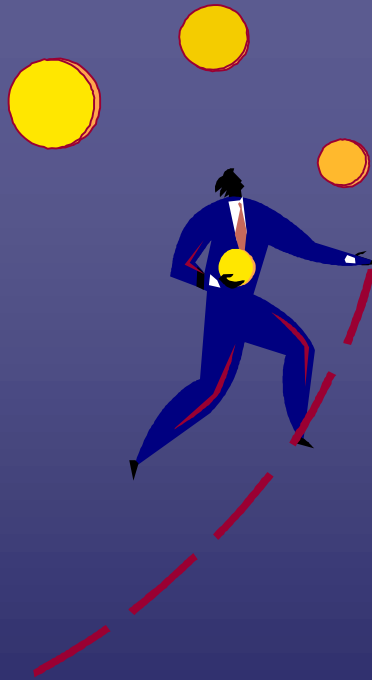
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Québec

Objectives of the presentation

- Present the foundations of the framework

- Present a critical analysis of its use in different evaluation contexts

- Present 4 applications of the framework

- Present some strengths, weaknesses and contributions of the framework

Theoretical background

Some facilitating elements

In Canada, in 1995…

◖ Political, economic and social pressures to review the organization of services and programs

◖ Promote the need for accountability

◖ Use of evaluation as diagnostic means and way to introduce change

Cornerstones of the framework

- Developed as a part of doctoral studies (1996)
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of a rehabilitation program
  - References used by different stakeholders?

  Choice of frame of reference?
- Best essay paper in Canada, 1996 (CES)
- Published in 1998 in the Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation (no. 13, vol.2, 89-112)
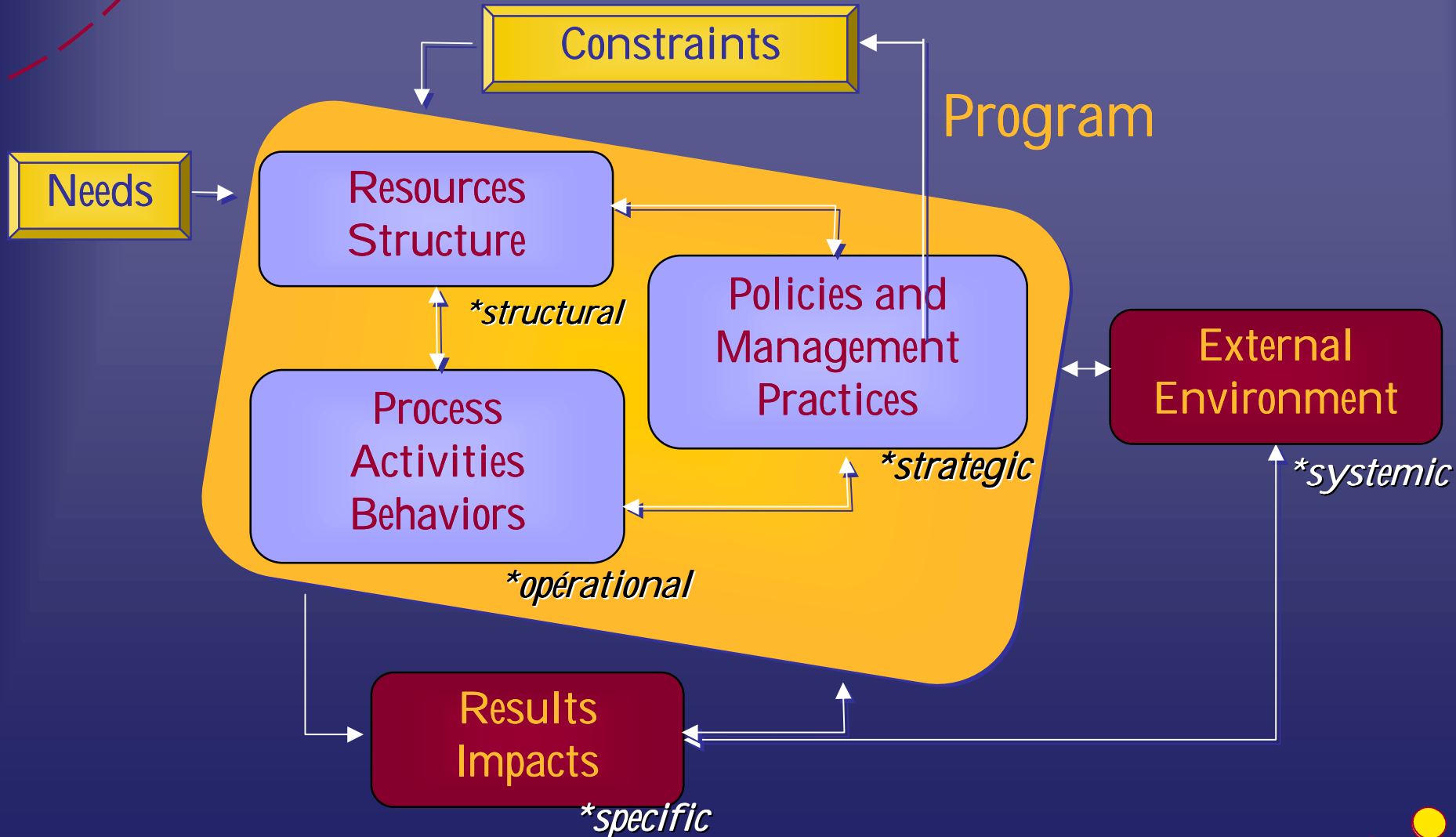- Used primarily in the health field to date

Stepwise strategy used

- Meta analysis of evaluation studies (1960 -)

    - Economics, education, evaluation, management, psychology, sciences of the organization, social sciences, sociology

- Examination of traditional approaches in evaluation

- Consideration of a program's principal areas of activity

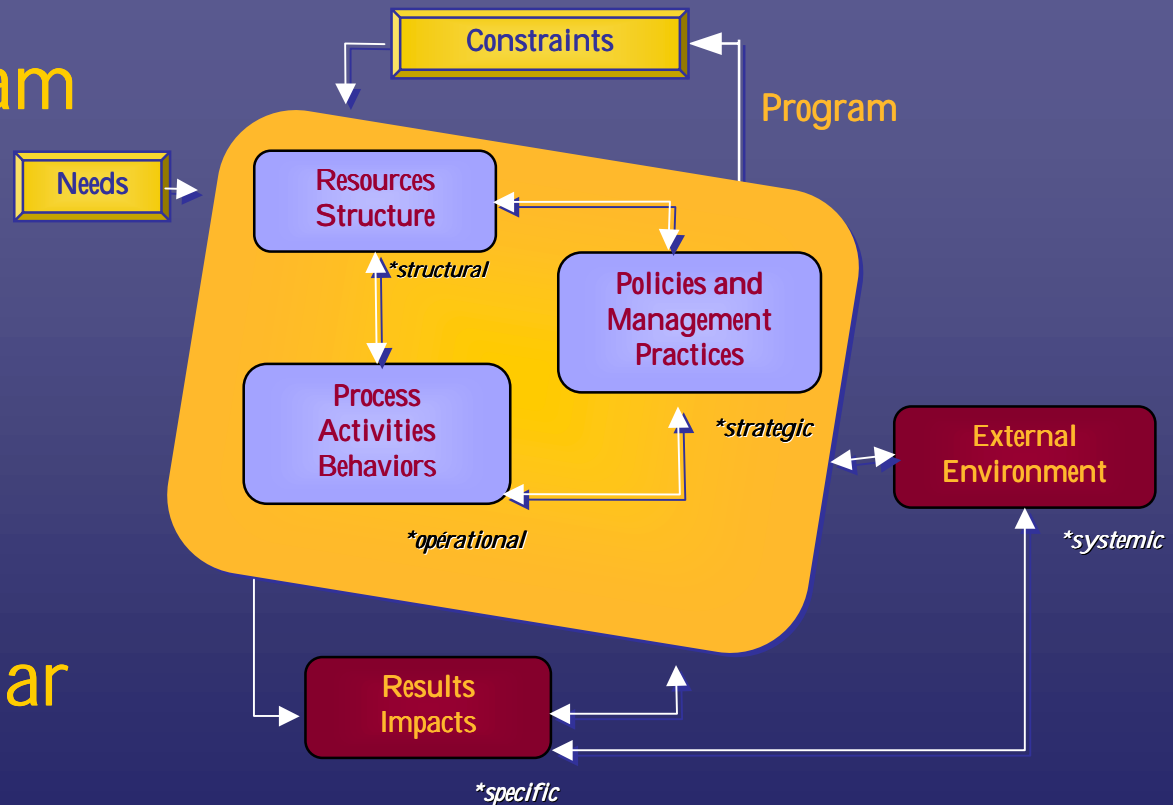# Description of the framework

The framework

Constraints

Program

Needs

Resources
Structure

*structural

Policies and
Management
Practices

Process
Activities
Behaviors

*strategic

External
Environment

*systemic

*opérational

Results
Impacts

*specific

Some characteristics of the framework

- Model the complex interaction program - environment - individuals involved
- Holistic
- Dynamic & circular
- Flexible

Constraints

Program

Needs

Resources Structure

*structural

Policies and Management Practices

Process Activities Behaviors

*strategic

External Environment

*opérational

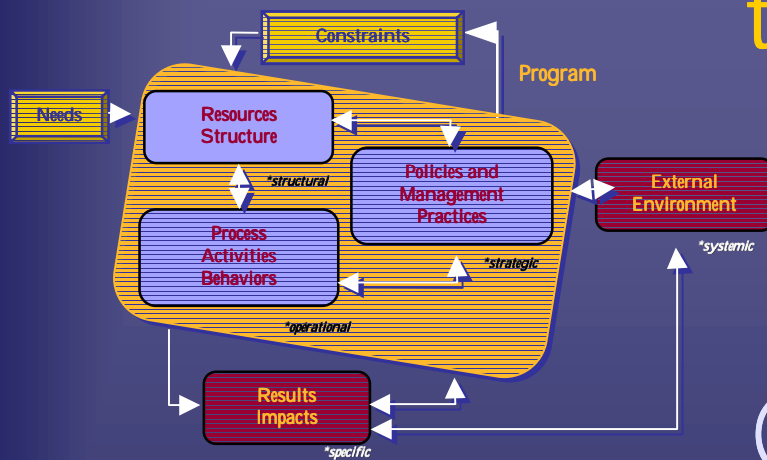*systemic

Results Impacts

*specific

Dimensions of the framework

- A total of 5 dimensions

- Are distinct and interdependent

- Operate in synergy

- Regulation   Spatial and temporal context /

  Political and social interactions

Structural dimension

Activities of the program linked to its *resources* (physical, material, financial, informational and human)

and to its *structure*

(division and organization of the tasks and of the work procedures; responsibility sharing; coordination and control procedures; relationship between individuals, groups and units; communication and information networks; ...)

Structural issues

- Quantity of resources
- Quality of resources - Competence
- Adequacy of resources (training - specialisation)
- Availability and acceptability of resources
- Clarity and complementary nature of roles and responsibilities
- Flexibility of program structure
- Adequacy of use of program resources
- Sufficiency of the structure of information (communication channels/information systems)
- Admission criteria for clientele
- Programming

Operational dimension

Activities of the program linked to its *processes*, its *activities* and to the *behaviors* of its members
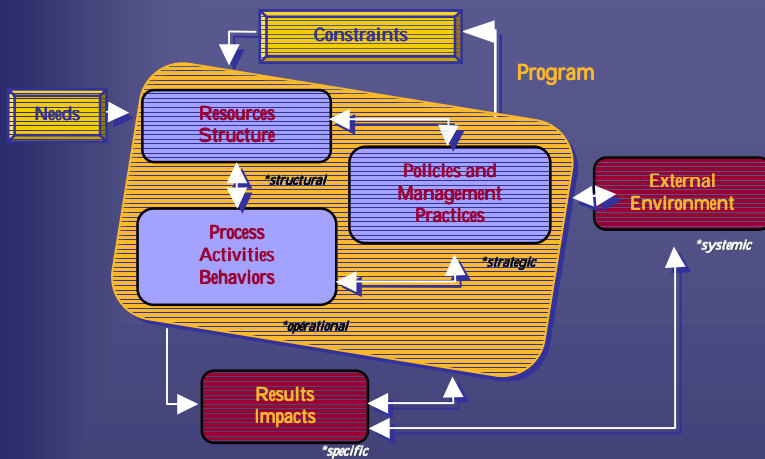
(professional practices; logistics of the activities; coordination; communication; work climate; motivation and performance of the members; commitment of the members regarding the program; ...)
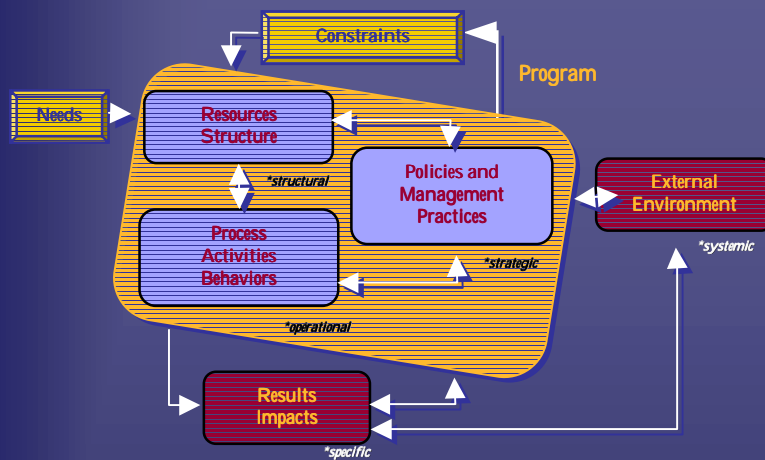
Operational issues

- Fairness of methods, activities and process
- Flexibility and quality of methods, activities and process
- Conformity to norms and standards
- Feasibility of the intervention
- Promptness of the program to produce its services
- Ease of the program
- Stability of the workforce
- Empowerment
- Personnel productivity and satisfaction

Strategic dimension

Activities of the program linked to its *policies* and *management practices*

Constraints

Program

Needs

Resources Structure

*structural

Policies and Management Practices

External Environment

*systemic

Process Activities Behaviors

*strategic

*operational

Results Impacts

*specific

(management of the program and of its constraints; mediation between the organizational authorities; strategic planning; time management perspective; decision making; supervision; leadership; evaluation; creation of a work environment favourable to performance; ethics; ..)

Strategic issues

- Stability and growth
- Optimising resources, means and methods
- Quality of management
- Protection of program's resources
- Conformity to laws and rules established
- Vision and strategic planning
- Effective and efficient management of resources
- Formal and apparent involvement on behalf of management
- Knowledge-sharing mechanism

Systemic dimension

Activities of the program linked to its *external environment*
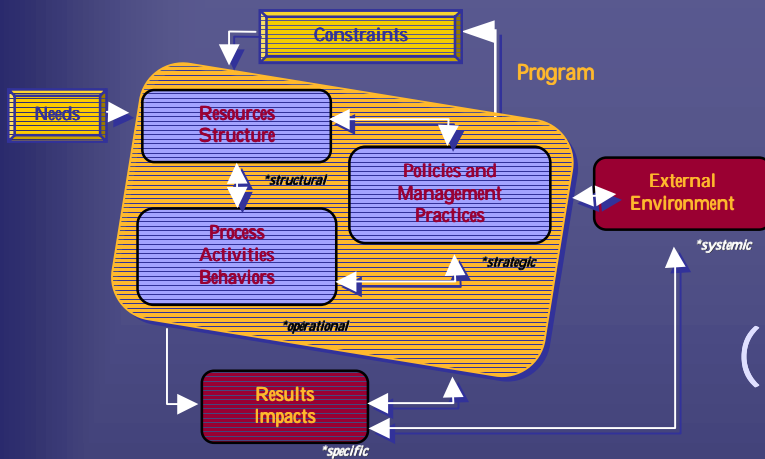
(legitimacy; role and position in relation to the resources in the region; opening towards the exterior; liaison with other programs, organizations, community; adaptation to exterior change; ...)

Systemic issues

- Pertinence of the program WRT the needs of the clientele
- Competitiveness of the program
- Ability to adapt to external changes
- Ability for the program to build up resources
- Clientele pathways – service corridors
- Accessibility of services
- Complementary nature of services
- Sharing the offer of services
- Partnership
- Collaboration between institutions

Specific dimension

Activities of the program oriented towards reaching the *results*
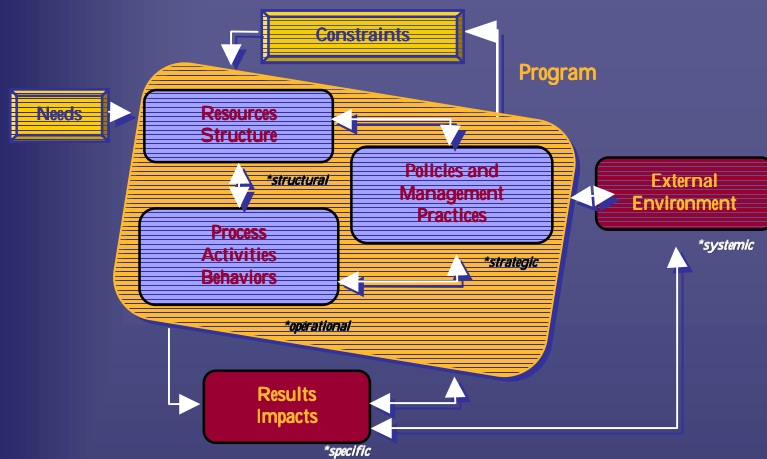
(optimization of the objectives of the program; satisfaction of expectations; production of services;...)

- Degree to which objectives were attained
- Quality and quantity of products or services generated
- Durability of product – Maintaining knowledge/results
- Clientele satisfaction
- Impacts generated by the program
- Cost-effectiveness

Key considerations in determining when to use the framework
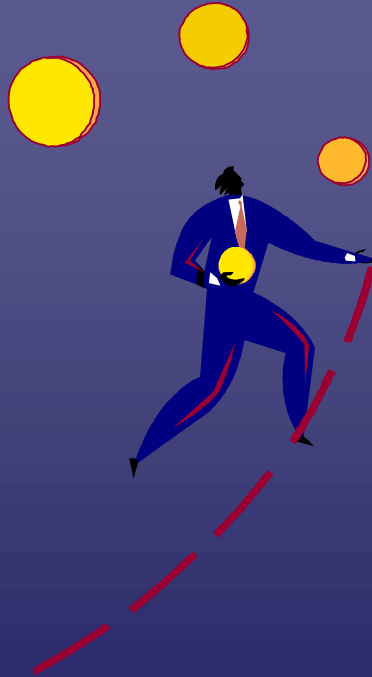
To date...

- Evaluators (internal & external)
- Researchers
- Program and policy developers
- Funders
- Decision makers
- Caregivers
- Users of the program

…Main purposes served

To date…

- To conceptualize & develop a program
- To assess a program's theoretical soundness
- To evaluate a program's implementation, processes, results
- To describe & critically appraise a program
- To determine whether program objectives were achieved
- To give direction for program improvement
- To sustain « evaluability » assessment
- To inform management decision & actions

To date…

● Employs all relevant sources & methods

● Stresses complementary of qualitative and quantitative methods

● Triangulates findings from different sources

…Methods employed (2)

- Performance measures
- Input, process and output databases
- Staff progress reports
- Site visits by experts
- Key informants
- Case study

- Interviews
- Group techniques (focus groups, TRIAGE)
- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Checklist

…Levels of evaluation targeted

Used on different scales, for the evaluation of…

- Projects
- Services
- Programs
- Organisations
- Networks of services

...Hybrid approach

Used in combination with other conceptual models...

- To deepen the analysis of a certain dimension
- To widen the extent of the analysis
- To get a global view of a specific issue
- To take in account the interests of different stakeholders

Practical applications in evaluation

Evaluating a wheelchair recycling program

Evaluation questions

- How effective is the program in its different sectors of activities?

- What sectors of the program are performing best and the poorest?   How can the program be improved?

- What are the program's most unresolved issues?

Application... to a program (2)

Evaluation approach

- Participative and qualitative approach
- 15 health professionals and 20 wheelchair users
- Questionnaires

Results

- Reorganisation of the program and adjustment of practices
- Implementation of an operation management system
- Leverage for the development of a public health policy on recycling of assistive devices.

Application... to an organisation

Evaluating a community resource

Evaluation questions

- Did the community resource meet the beneficiaries' needs?
- How do various stakeholders value the community resource program?
- Is the community resource worthy of continuation and dissemination?
- How can the community resource be improved?
- Which of the community resource's features are essential for successful replication?

Application... to an organisation (2)

Evaluation approach

- Mixed methodology: Questionnaires and interviews
- Process and effects measures
- Users, family members and ex-users (N=60), employees, network actors (N=18)

Results

- Identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the community resource
- Implementation of improvement strategies
- Reorganisation of the organisation and adjustment of practices
- Leverage to obtain financing

...Improvement areas

Constraints

1. Younger clients
2. Clients without behavior problem's
3. Be careful not to encourage dependency

1. Accessibility (area and transportation)
2. Uncertain and restricted financing
3. Human resources: amount, qualification and female staff

1. Marketing of the A-C in nearby community organisation and partners
2. Long term vision of the A-C (financial survival)

1. Difficulty to be known
2. Few partners
3. Linkage to develop with related projects
4. Lack of open-mindedness

1. Programming: amount and variety
2. Human resources: stability

1. Social integration objective to pursue
2. Little impact on social participation
3. Empowerment and assuming responsibilities are to be developed
4. Creates insecurity among the close relatives

Application... to a network of services

Evaluating the implementation of a model of services

Evaluation questions

◖ What is the model of services in concept & in practice?

◖ Is the model of services reaching all the right beneficiaries?

◖ What are the model of services' most unresolved issues?

◖ Is the model of services worth the investment?

◖ What changes in the model's design or implementation might produce better outcomes?

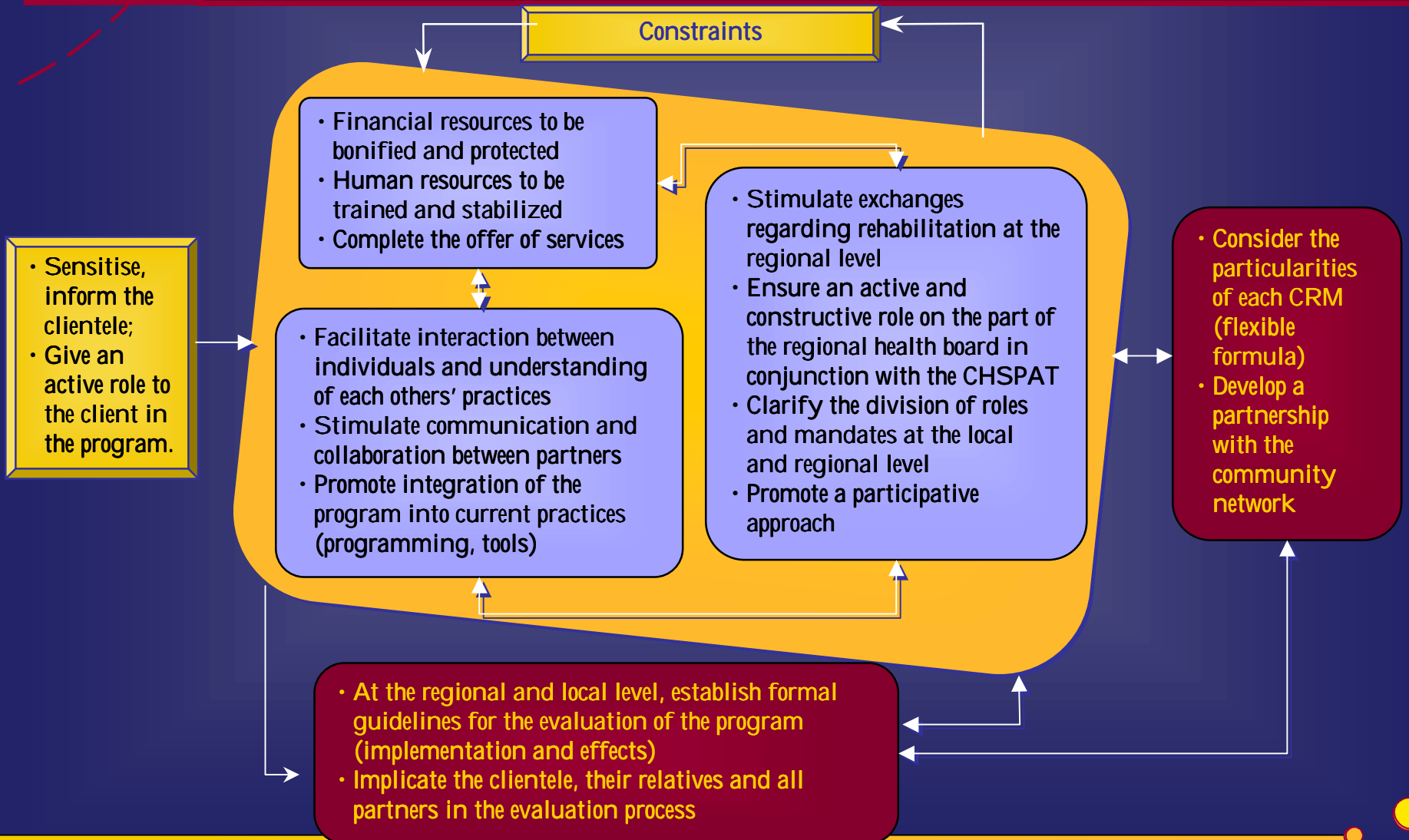# Application... to a network of services (2)

Evaluation approach

- Qualitative approach and mixed methodology (interview and questionnaire)
- Process and effects measures
- Stakeholders, caregivers (N=50)

Results

- Diagnostic analysis of the implementation of the model of care and of its effects
- Implementation of recommendations
- Final decision: dismantlement of the model of care

...Recommendations

Constraints

- Sensitise, inform the clientele;
- Give an active role to the client in the program.

- Financial resources to be bonified and protected
- Human resources to be trained and stabilized
- Complete the offer of services

- Facilitate interaction between individuals and understanding of each others' practices
- Stimulate communication and collaboration between partners
- Promote integration of the program into current practices (programming, tools)

- Stimulate exchanges regarding rehabilitation at the regional level
- Ensure an active and constructive role on the part of the regional health board in conjunction with the CHSPAT
- Clarify the division of roles and mandates at the local and regional level
- Promote a participative approach

- Consider the particularities of each CRM (flexible formula)
- Develop a partnership with the community network

- At the regional and local level, establish formal guidelines for the evaluation of the program (implementation and effects)
- Implicate the clientele, their relatives and all partners in the evaluation process

Combined Application...

Evaluation of a continuum of services in rehabilitation

Evaluation questions

- To what extent was the continuum of care 's objective achieved?

- How has the continuum of care evolved over time?

- How can the continuum of care be improved?

- What are the continuum of care's effects on outcomes?

- Is the continuum of care worth the required investment?

...In the rehabilitation field
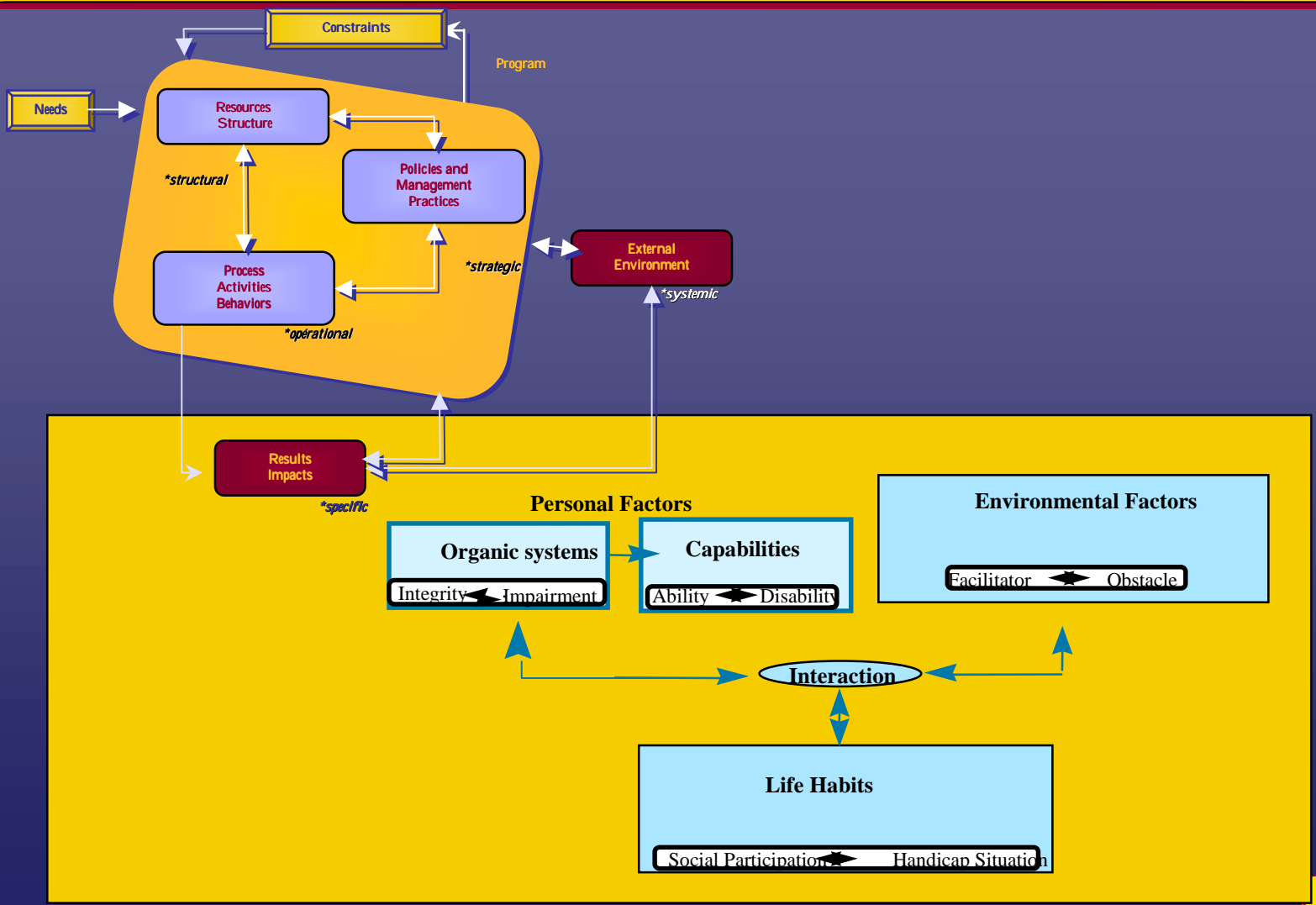
Combined Application…(2)

Evaluation approach

- Sample follow-up (7 measures), quantitative and qualitative
- Process and effects measures
- 200 persons with Spinal Cord injuries

Results

- Identify the effects of interventions on the clientele
- Identify explanatory factors at the clinical and organisational levels
- Modify clinical and administrative practices
- Objective gains: pertinence, effectiveness, efficiency

Critical analysis of the framework
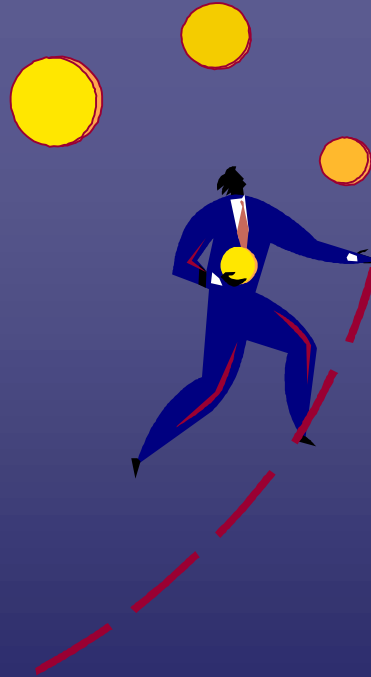
Framework's strengths

What the users have to say…

- Easy to understand and use
  - "I had no difficulty integrating the framework and seeing how it could apply to my field."
  - "It simplified what had seemed complicated or nebulous."
  - "It helped me to understand the evaluation process, to distinguish processes & outcomes."
  - "It helped us a great deal to operationalize the program's concept and goals."

Framework's strengths (2)

What the users have to say...

- **Offers a complete vision of the program Multidimensional**
  - "It seems like nothing is forgotten."
  - "As a clinician, I better understand the importance of exploring the strategic dimension."
- **Takes into account the complexity of the program**
  - "I better understand the links between the different components of the program and the influence of my actions on the other dimensions of the program."

Framework's strengths(3)

What the users have to say...

- **Allows for reality testing**
  - "It allowed us to ask the right questions and be assured that they were well founded in the reality of the field."
  - "It ensures that we have the means to satisfy our ambitions."
- **Offers flexibility to be adapted situationnally**
  - "The framework, we do what we want with it" ... I can decide to evaluate everything or just to evaluate one dimension of a program."
  - "It will now be easy for me to use it in other contexts."

Framework's strengths (4)

In addition...

- Attends closely to contextual dynamics
- Examines program holistically & in depth
- Examines program's internal workings & how it produces outcomes
- Helps take into account interests, values & needs of different stakeholders
- Stresses program improvement
- Helps keep program on track

Framework's strengths (5)

In addition…

◖ Generates & cumulates knowledge on the program

◖ Can be done retrospectively & in real time

◖ Guides program management, integrates evaluation into management operations and serves decision making to different program levels

Framework's weaknesses

What the users have to say...

- Confusion between certain dimensions
  - "For me, certain dimensions overlap, it seems to me that there are grey areas."

- Can be costly in terms of time, energy and resources
  - "It takes quite a budget and quite a level of expertise to get through it!"

Framework's weaknesses (2)

<u>What the users have to say...</u>

◖ Seen as cumbersome for the evaluation process generated

  ◖ "If we cover all the aspects, it's going to take a really long time."

◖ Feeling of insecurity in certain people

  ◖ "Where do we start? We'll never get through it!"

- Relative importance of dimensions

- Interdependence of dimensions - Causality?

- Spatial and temporal regulation

- Psycho-social interaction of actors

Items to monitor (2)...

- Reality of a program always in movement - Situational

- Open to possible bad influences on the evaluation via stakeholder's conflicts of interest

- Can be heavily dependent on a highly competent independent evaluator

- Operationalisation of the model dependent on the choice of indicators and hence the effectiveness of the selection process

- Transient nature of indicators and their relative instability over time

- Vital data may be inaccessible for the evaluator - low feasibility

- May bog down in an unproductive quest for multiple inputs & interpretations

Framework's contributions

- Focuses on improving public services
- Organisational learning tool - Reflexive practice
- Contributes to the capacity building
- Provides basis for accountability
- Provides Interpretive diagram of program events
- Supports evaluation logic
- Reinforces usefulness of evaluation

Conclusion

- Tried and tested
  - Scales / Contexts / Stakeholders
- Interrelations – holistic vision of program
- Tool in common language
  - Structuring
  - Accessible