Evaluative monitoring and complementary evaluative research – towards a new paradigm?

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Overview of the seminar

- Setting the scene

- Outlining a 'new' paradigm

- Examples

- Experience and learnings

- Open discussion

A brief orientation – why do we evaluate anyway?

- In a nutshell

  - To identify

  - gather

  - process

  - and convey

  - useful information to *make judgements and inform decision-making and learning*

- Using a range of approaches and tools to do this robustly and reliably.

Changes & Challenges

Changes

- Increasing focus on results

- Need for timely, high-quality decision making

- Ability to quickly respond, change and adapt

Challenges

- Data that is timely, accurate, fit-for-purpose, meaningful

- Need to track results as you go

- Monitor the key indicators and areas not all the possible ones

- M&E embedded as business-as-usual

So what's the challenge?
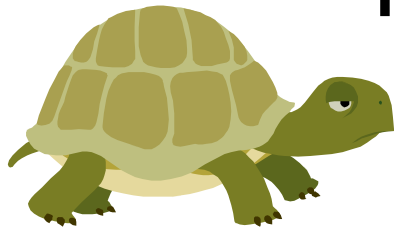
### Tortoise   vs.   Hare

- Thorough
- Systematic
- Comprehensive
- Long
- Slow
- Expensive

- Responsive
- Agile
- 'Good enough'
- Prompt
- Affordable

How to combine the tortoise and the hare

- A systematic and robust approach

- Delivering timely, 'good enough' information to track progress and achievement of results

- While also scanning for the unintended

- Represents good value for money

- And is sustainable

➢ Is this an achievable wish list?
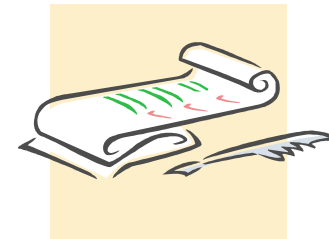
Results-focused management

A systematic approach that enables you to effectively plan, manage, monitor and evaluate results as you go
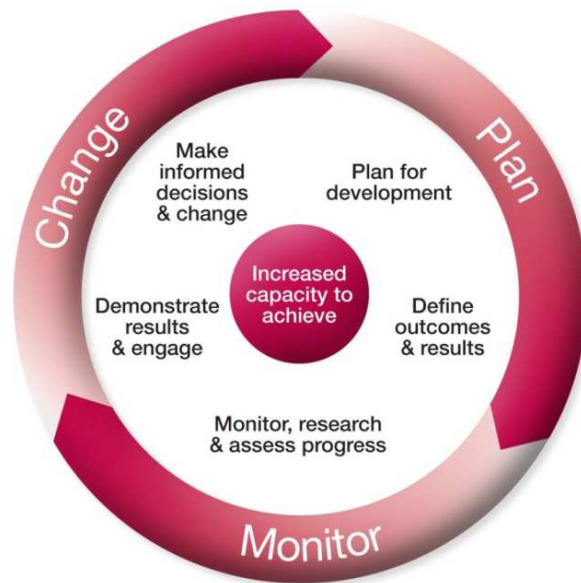
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- Links evaluative thinking and practice throughout cycle

- Collaborative 'way of working'

- **Integrated evaluative monitoring**

  - Enables informed decision-making

  - An embedded 'business-as-usual' approach

  - Emphasises learning and improvement, as well as accountability

  - Fit for purpose

Broad theoretical foundation

CHANGE:

Learning – Schon

Decision-making – Kaplan
Results – Drucker, Rist
Participatory and building capacity - Fetterman
Use – Patton
Systems – Checkland
Developmental - Patton

PLAN:

Readiness assessment – Rist

Strategy – Argis, Mintzberg

Theory-based evaluation – Chen, Weiss

Realistic evaluation – Pawson and Tilley

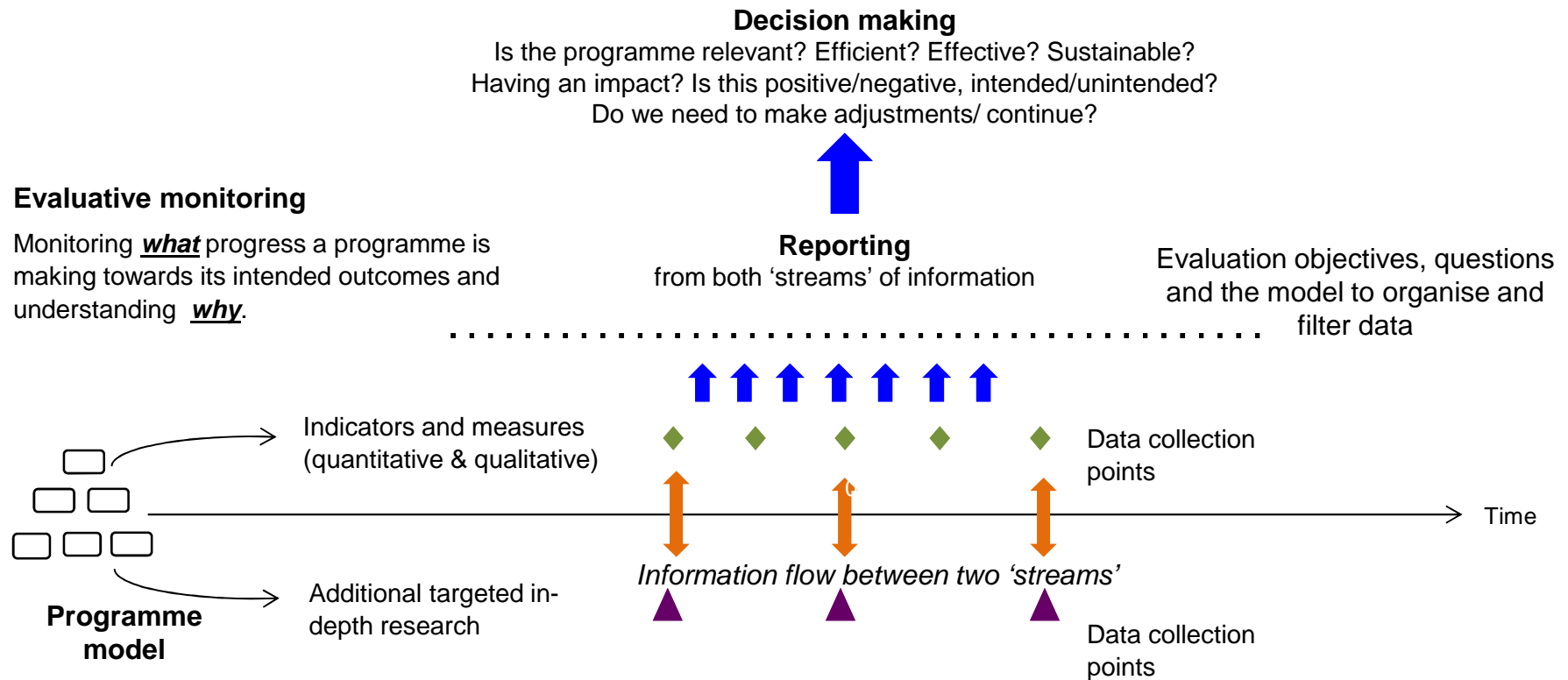**Accountability and Performance Management –** Piccotto, Wholey

MONITOR:

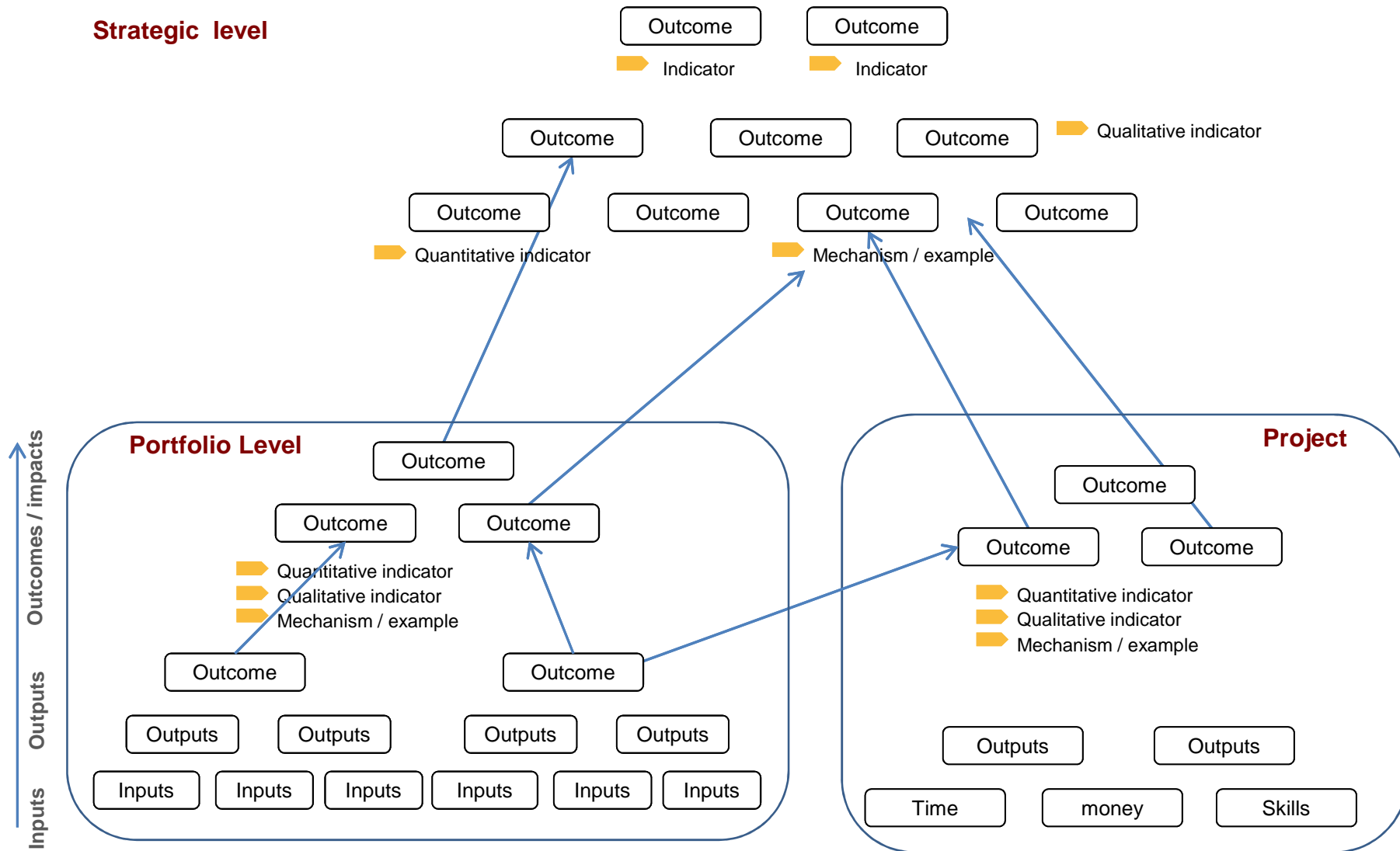**Monitoring –** Kaplan and Norton (Balanced Score Card)

Rapid Evaluation Assessment Methodology (REAM) – Bebe

Mixed methodology – qualitative and quantitative, Tashkkori &Teddlie

Integrated evaluative monitoring

Decision making
Is the programme relevant? Efficient? Effective? Sustainable?
Having an impact? Is this positive/negative, intended/unintended?
Do we need to make adjustments/ continue?

Evaluative monitoring

Monitoring **_what_** progress a programme is making towards its intended outcomes and understanding **_why_**.

Reporting
from both 'streams' of information

Evaluation objectives, questions and the model to organise and filter data

Indicators and measures (quantitative & qualitative)

Data collection points

Time

Programme model

Additional targeted in-depth research

Information flow between two 'streams'

Data collection points

Complementary evaluative research/studies

Understanding in *greater detail why* the programme is progressing the way it is, with possible focus on particular areas of interest/importance.

Aligning and linking results at different levels

Strategic level

Outcome   Outcome

➡ Indicator   ➡ Indicator

Outcome   Outcome   Outcome   ➡ Qualitative indicator

Outcome   Outcome   Outcome   Outcome

➡ Quantitative indicator   ➡ Mechanism / example

Outcomes / impacts

Portfolio Level

Outcome

Outcome   Outcome

➡ Quantitative indicator
➡ Qualitative indicator
➡ Mechanism / example

Outcome   Outcome

Project

Outcome

Outcome   Outcome

➡ Quantitative indicator
➡ Qualitative indicator
➡ Mechanism / example

Outputs

Outputs   Outputs   Outputs   Outputs

Outputs   Outputs

Inputs

Inputs   Inputs   Inputs   Inputs   Inputs   Inputs

Time   money   Skills

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DOME
Planning change
Measuring outcomes
Building futures
DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES MONITORING EVALUATION

Key components

- A model, theory of change and assumptions

- A 'working' measurement framework

  - Quantitative and qualitative indicators, baselines, targets/projections, evaluation questions

- A range of data collection tools

  - Mixed methods and triangulation

- A way to undertake more in-depth research *when necessary*

- An effective (clear and succinct) approach to reporting

- A clear process to review and revise/refresh to remain 'fit for purpose'

When can you use it?

- Structured but flexible in approach and scale

- Used in a wide range of countries and contexts
  - Established programme
  - 'Developing' programme
  - Small not-for-profit
  - Large government agencies and initiatives
  - National governments, donors
  - Organisations

➢ A 'way of working' for all projects, programmes and organisations

Example one

Decision making
Informing next year's planning
Based on assessments of progress against criteria - Relevant?
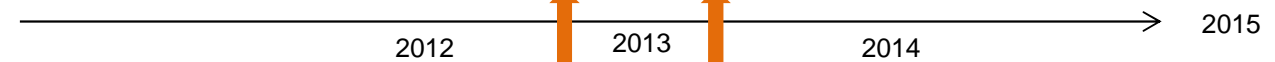Efficient? Effective? Sustainable? Impact?

Annual planning and reflection workshop

**3 components
+ high level
outcomes**

Six-monthly progress reports – against AusAID stds
and OECD-DAC standards
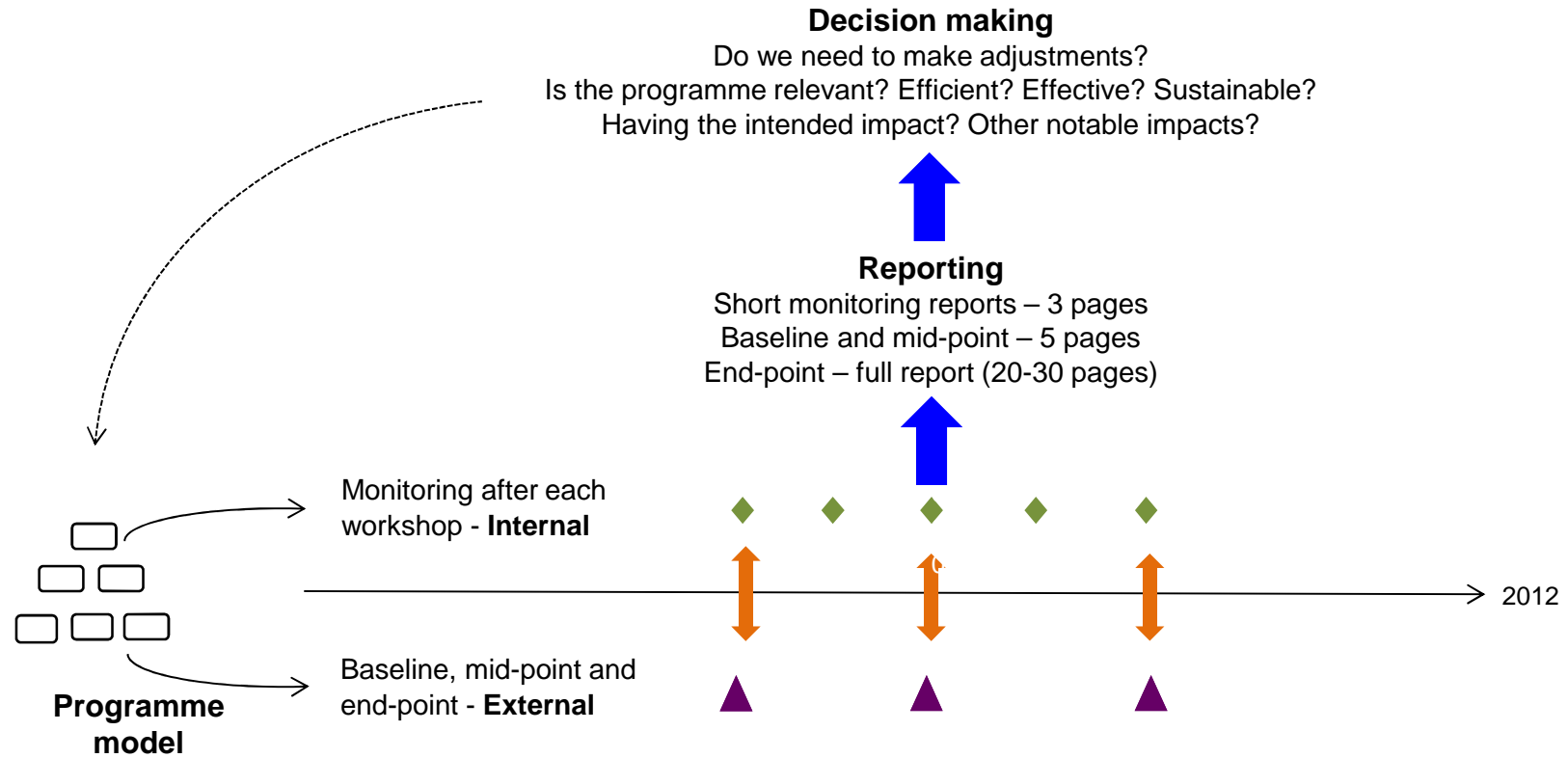
Six-monthly monitoring
– indicators and eval. qns

2012   2013   2014   2015

*Focus evaluation
studies* – identified
by stakeholders

Example two

Decision making
Do we need to make adjustments?
Is the programme relevant? Efficient? Effective? Sustainable?
Having the intended impact? Other notable impacts?

Reporting
Short monitoring reports – 3 pages
Baseline and mid-point – 5 pages
End-point – full report (20-30 pages)

Monitoring after each
workshop - **Internal**

Baseline, mid-point and
end-point - **External**

**Programme
model**

2012

Experience and key learning – for internal personnel

- Collaborative 'internal/external' mixed approach results in a more productive, higher quality and more sustainable 'way of working'

  - But good working relationship is <u>essential</u>

- Collaborative and consultative approach at the start helps to achieve shared understanding of the project/programme

  - Particularly useful for engaging stakeholders

- Value in a clear and understandable structured process

  - simplifies the complex – facilitates personnel focus on what's the key information

- Wide range of skill sets to acquire

  - Initial coaching/mentoring role of external specialist moving to a quality assurance/peer review role

Experience and key learning – for external evaluator

- Different way of working (internal/external) to develop capacity

- Can focus on design and technical elements

- Scope to work on a range of projects in an on-going basis – stimulating and satisfying

- What to do when the capacity level is low

- How to address 'independence'/'credibility' of findings

- Be clear about roles, responsibilities and accountability

- Importance of an adaptive/flexible contracting model to support this way of working

Developing capacity within the programme/team/organisation

- Assess the current and future capability and capacity needs

- Identifying what skills for what role

- Develop evaluative thinking and skills

- **Use of a capability development framework to underpin this way of working**

  – Implement systems, tools, practices and training

  – Adopting a phases approach to building capability

- There are implications internally and externally

Considerations

- To be effective and sustainable:

  - Careful design to ensure it is robust *and* fit for purpose

  - Need to be selective

  - Build in adaptability/flexibility

  - Engage wider stakeholders throughout the process

  - Have a clear and agreed practical process

  - Internal capacity and capability building is fundamental

Recap

A systematic approach that enables you to:

- Track your progress *as you go* rather than just at the end

- Provide timely, fit-for-purpose information to support decision making and engage stakeholders in an on-going manner

- Report on the achievement of the programme at multiple levels

- Identify and report on any unintended outcomes that the programme is influencing

- Embed planning, monitoring and evaluation into business-as-usual to enable results-focused management

Starter discussion points

- How 'new' is this way of working?

- Are you working like this already?

  - Sometimes? Nearly always?

- If so, how does your experience compare?

- What are the implications for both organisations and practitioners?

- Other