

CENTRE
for **SOCIAL**
IMPACT

***SOCIAL OUTCOME MEASUREMENT: WHAT
IS IT, HOW IS IT USED AND WHO IS
INVOLVED IN THE JOURNEY?***

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June 2017

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STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION

1. Context
2. What is outcomes measurement?
3. What are the benefits of outcome measurement?

Stepping back.....

4. Foundations – the 3Ps and theory of change
5. What are the ingredients for success?
6. Bringing it all together

PART I: NZ CONTEXT

Mental health

- The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists report estimates that the economic costs of serious mental illness is between \$12 and \$17 billion in 2014.
- Following the 2017 budget, total health expenditure will be approximately \$17b per annum. Includes approximately \$300 million for mental health over 4 years.

Drug use

- According to the New Zealand Drug Harm Index 2016, the social cost of (illicit) drug-related harms and intervention costs in 2014/15 as NZ\$1.8 billion.
- Estimates suggest that the Government is spending approximately \$230 million each year to address a \$1.8 billion problem

There are limited resources to address very complex social issues

<https://www.ranzcp.org/Files/Publications/RANZCP-Serious-Mental-Illness.aspx>

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/political/331608/budget-2017-what-about-mental-health>

<http://www.treasury.govt.nz/budget/2017/at-a-glance/b17-at-a-glance.pdf>

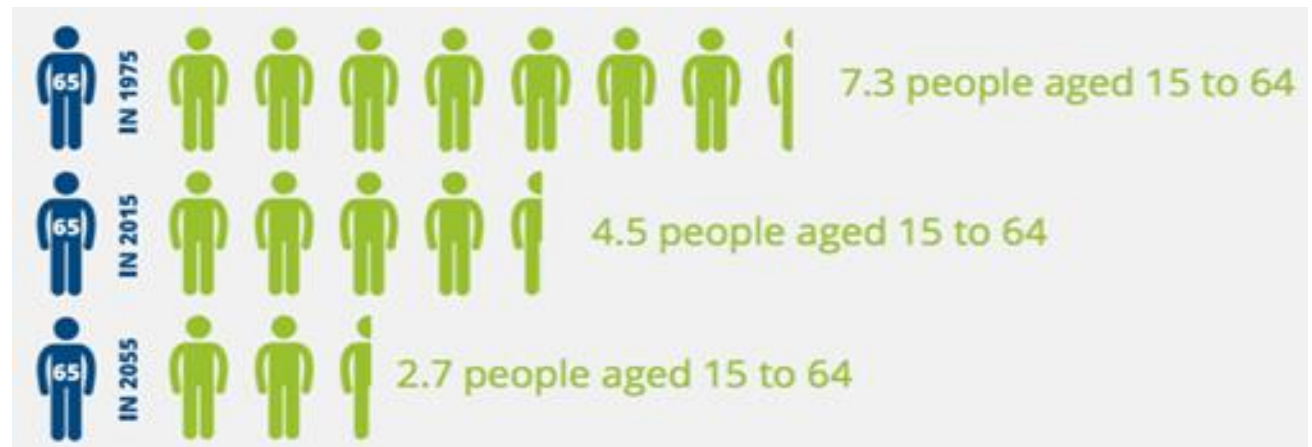
<http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/research-report-new-zealand-drug-harm-index-2016>

PART I: AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

To know where to spend and shift our limited resources for social change

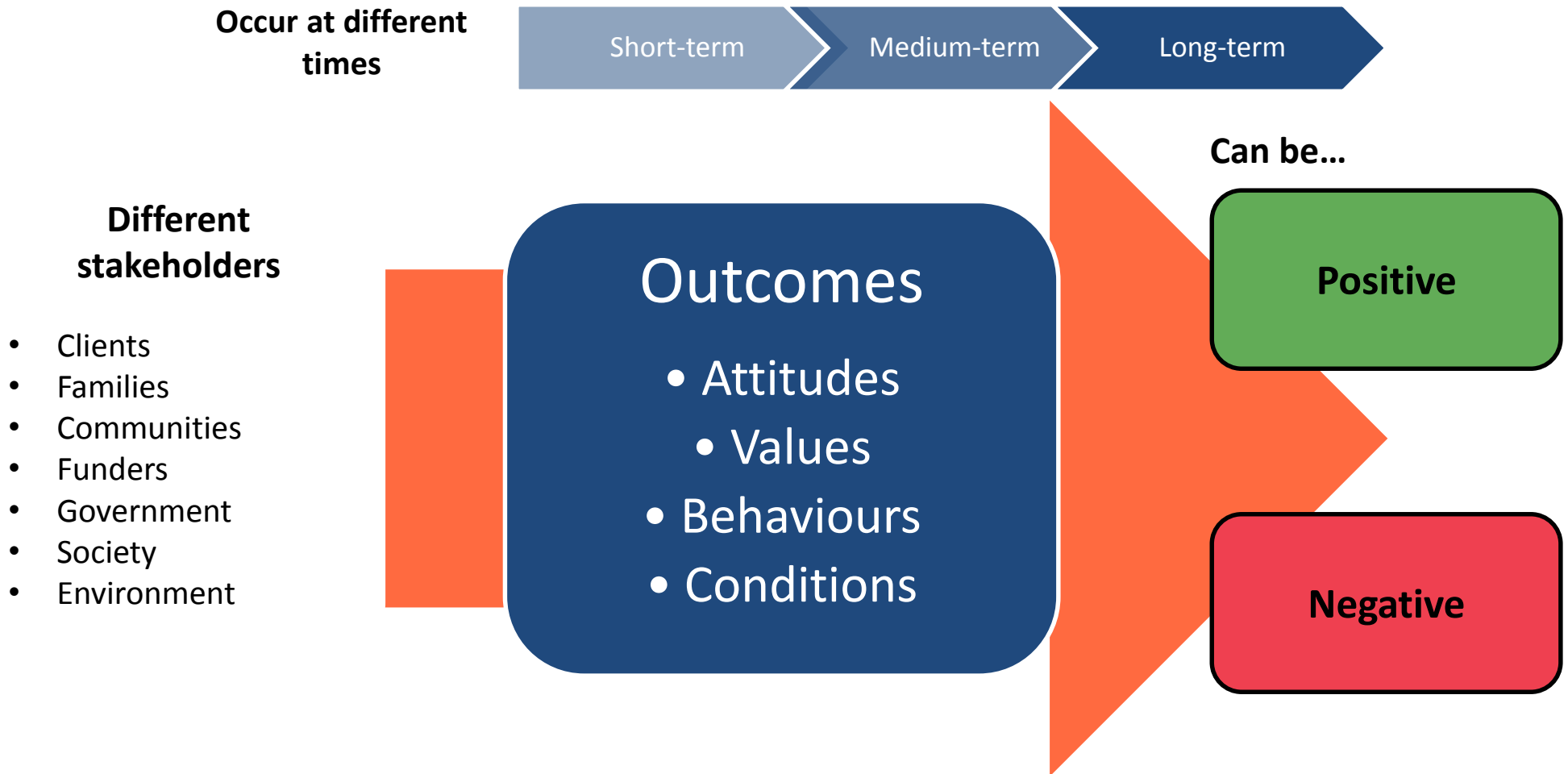
1. **We spend about \$400bn pa on the Australian social impact system** on health, welfare, education, indigenous, disability, ageing (about 20% of GDP and growing)
2. Despite this investment, we're not making sufficient progress (which, if we're frank, means out performance is poor)
3. Massive challenges as our population ages (total spend on health, age related pensions and aged care will increase substantially, while the % workers decrease)

IGR 2015, *The Mandarin*,
<http://www.themandarin.com.au/25338-intergenerational-report-demographics-income-expenditure-outcomes/>



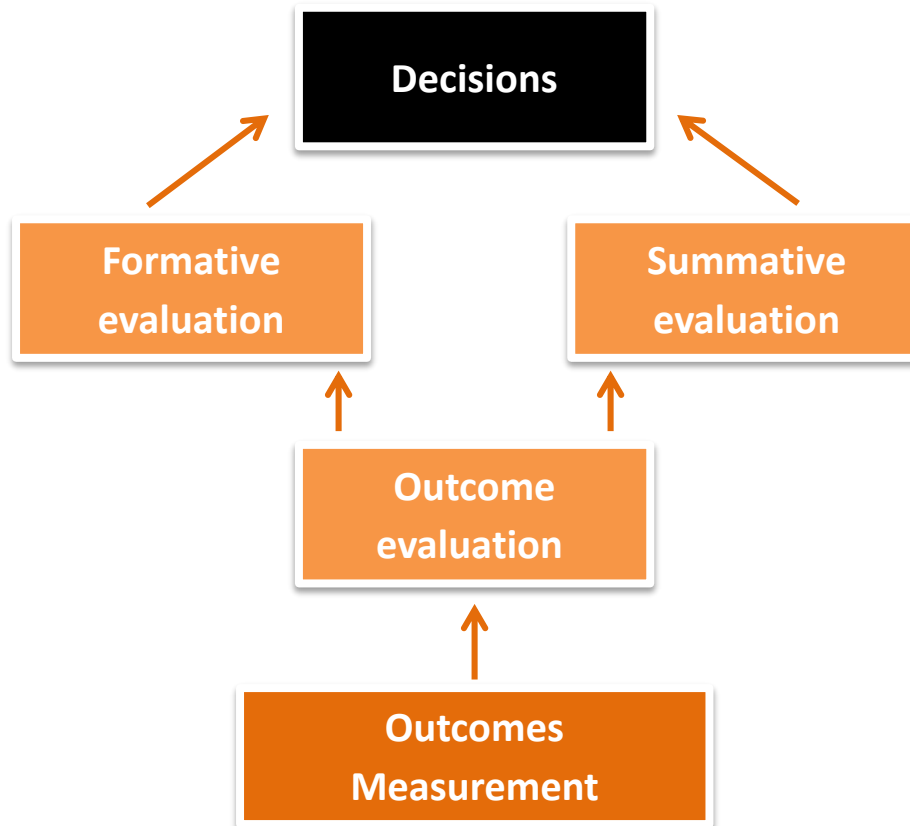
PART 2 – WHAT IS OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT

WHAT ARE OUTCOMES?



Can be both the results/effects expected from a program/initiatives/activity or the changes that occur in attitudes, values, behaviours or conditions.

OUTCOMES INFORM DECISIONS



- Outcomes measurement provides the foundation for evaluation
- Evaluation is analysis of data to inform understanding, judgement and decisions

Outcome indicators – the markers of change

- Technical and subjective elements:
 - **Technical**, what evidence or information exists to demonstrate the “quality” of the indicator
 - **Contextual**, what important and appropriate for your situation
- The review process should be informed by a background review of the **evidence** and stakeholder **consultation**
- **Specific**
- **Validated**
- **Reliable**
- **Comparable**
- **Important**
- **Accessible**
- **Acceptable**
- **Appropriate**
- **Useable**
- **Feasible**

WHAT DOES OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT INVOLVE?

Before you start, you must have a clear question and well defined outcomes.

- What indicators can you use to show outcomes have improved? Are they of a high quality?
- Is relevant data already available?
 - Statistics New Zealand, government departments, administration data etc
- If not, who will you collect data from?
 - Clients?
 - Family?
 - Community members?
- When will the data be collected?
- What are your data collection methods?
 - Face-to-face
 - Telephone interview
 - Pen and paper
 - Online

Qualitative methods

- Data is usually text or narrative
- Can unpack the 'why'
- Often richly description, flexible, relative and subjective
- E.g. Interviews, focus groups

Quantitative methods

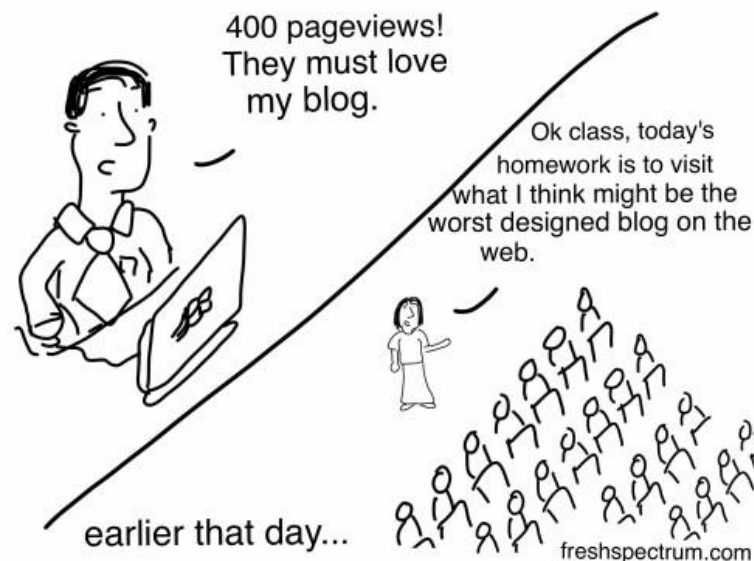
- Seek to explain something by using numerical data: how many, much, often; change etc.
- Highly structured
- Can capture objective and subjective responses (e.g. attitudes, feelings etc.)
- E.g Surveys, administrative data
- Use quality, validated /pre-existing indicators where possible

PART 3: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT?

We need to measure to understand whether we are making progress in improving outcomes.

- Are people really any better off?
- Are children, young people, adults, our aged, families any happier, healthier, have a better quality of life, are more able to participate in education, work, socially?
- Are people more resilient, included and connected?
- Do we know whether services, enterprises, innovations and supports are changing lives, communities and society?

Counting numbers of people and numbers of activity alone isn't guaranteed to produce results.



WHY MEASURE OUTCOMES? OTHER BENEFITS

- Learning, development and improved performance
- Communicating and branding
- Increased efficiency
- Organisational sustainability
- Accountability and compliance

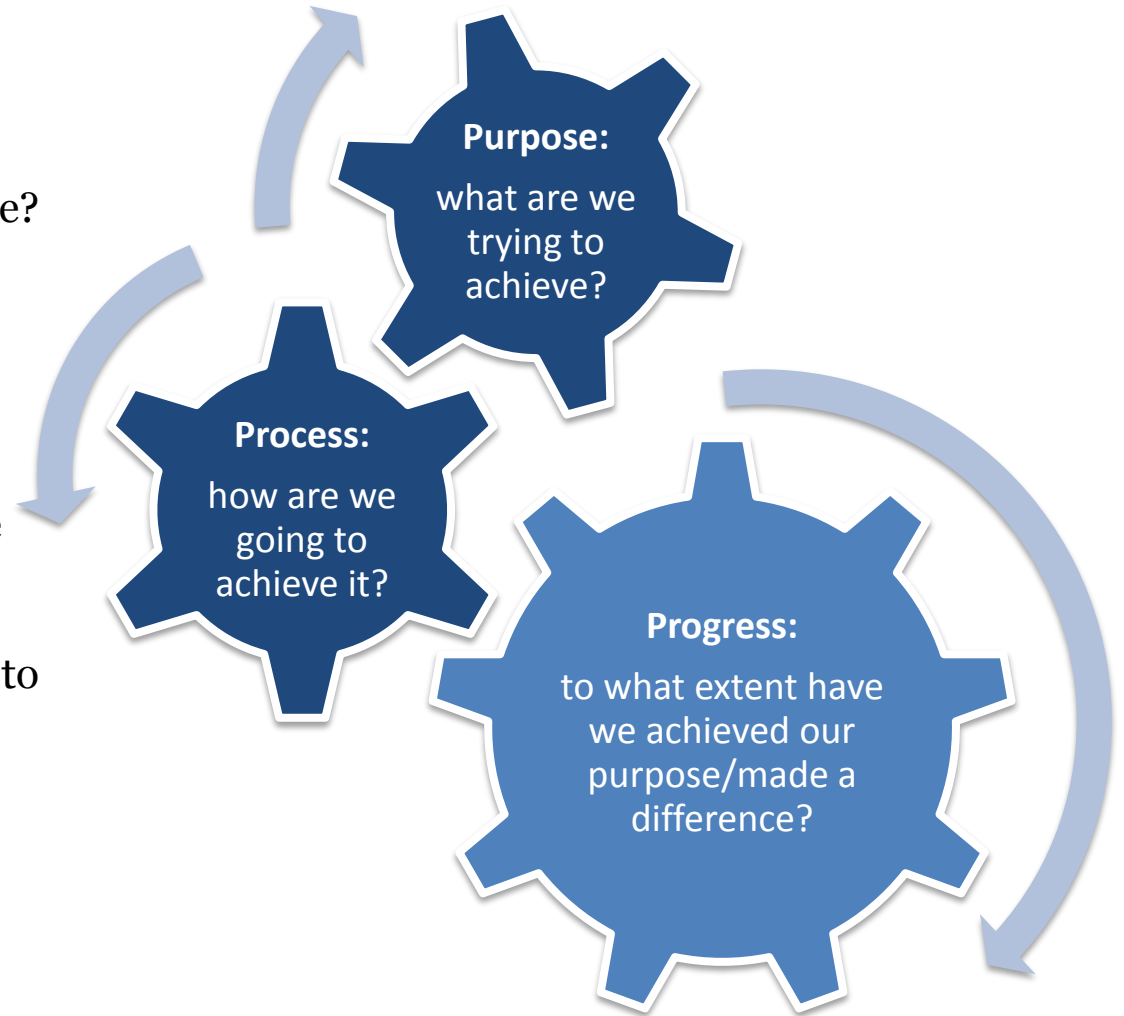
**Before we invest millions, maybe
we should test it and see if it
works**



freshspectrum.com

PART 4: THE 3Ps AND THEORY OF CHANGE

- You know your **purpose**:
 - What impact are you aiming to have?
 - Is the purpose clearly defined and articulated?
- You know your **processes**:
 - How can/ will your impact goals be achieved?
 - It is clear how these activities/processes are connected to your purpose
- You are setting out to measure your **progress**
 - What to measure
 - How to measure it



The Compass: page 12

THEORY OF CHANGE: WHAT IS IT?

“an explicit theory or model of how a program [or policy] causes the intended or observed outcomes”
(Rogers, 2008)



You're right, after thinking it through,
I'm not sure how the one leads to the other

How can you use a theory of change to determine what should be measured?



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THEORY OF CHANGE: WHY DO IT?

In good practice - evaluations and impact measurement methods/ approaches should be guided by a plausible theory of change

In principle, a theory of change should assist with:

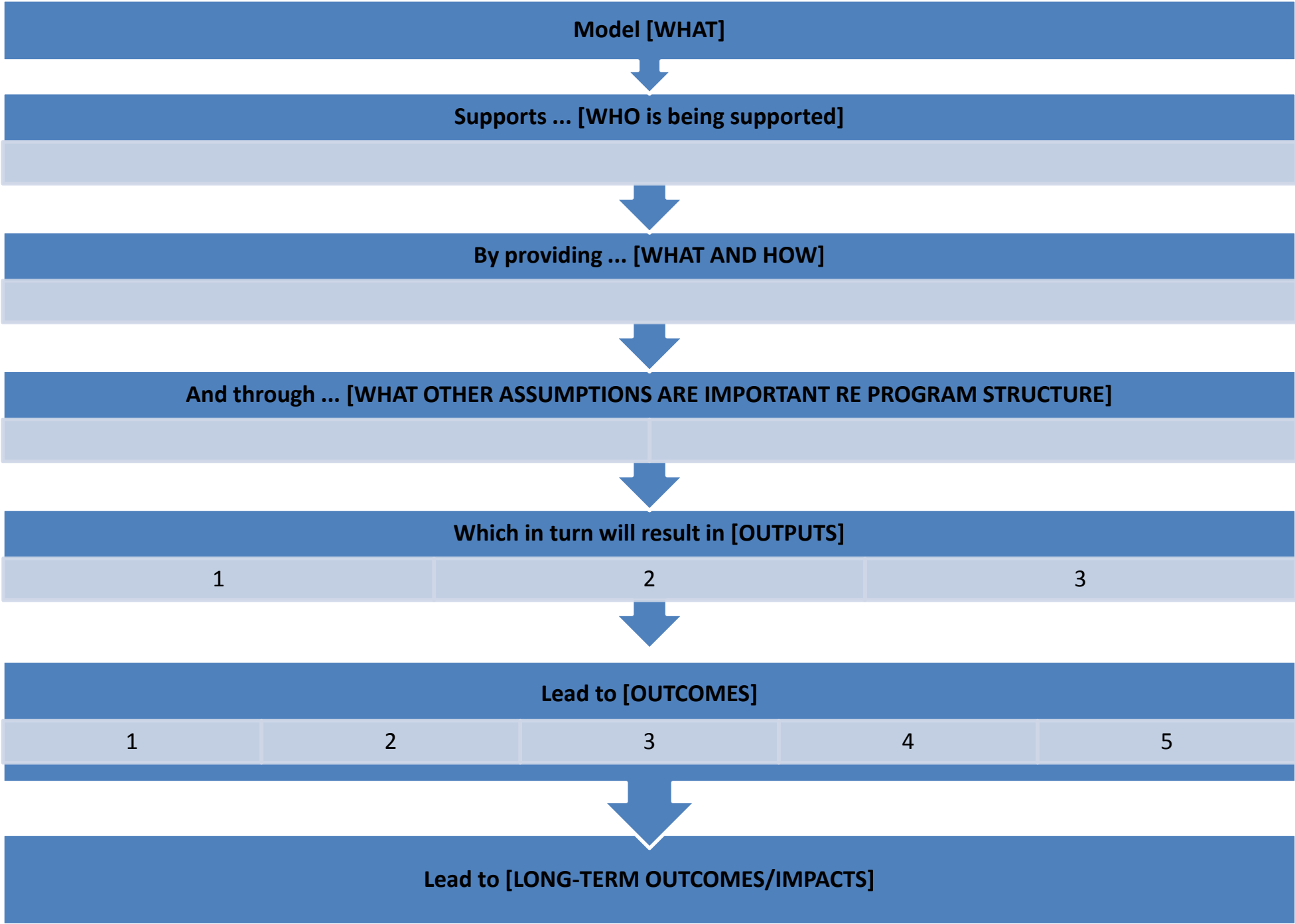
- Formulating and prioritising evaluation/impact measurement questions
- Guiding planning, design and execution of evaluations/ impact measurement
- Working out what needs to be measured
- Identifying breakdowns & side effects
- Determining program effectiveness and assist in explaining cause and effect associations (Coryn et al., 2011:205)

INTERROGATING THE TOC

Once measuring

- Is the program operating as expected?
- Are the expected inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes being achieved?
- Are inputs and processes producing the expected/hypothesised outputs and outcomes?
- What changes in the program's design or implementation might produce better outcomes?
- Is the program worthy of continuation and/or dissemination?
- What program features are essential for successful replication?

(authors & drawing on W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004; Coryn, 2011; Stufflebeam, 2001)



AN EXAMPLE

HASI model

Supports eligible adults with mental illness

Adults with diagnosed mental illness

Require support services to live independently in the community

Varying eligibility criteria for packages

By providing packages of mental health, housing and accommodation support

Ongoing clinical mental health services

Psychosocial rehabilitation services

Assistance to participate in the community

Housing

Through a strengthened, holistic service system

Client centred

Open communication

Flexible & responsive

Organisational and workforce capacity

Partnerships

To achieve improvements in mental health, housing stability and quality of life

Improved mental health

Stable housing

Improved quality of life

Incr community participation

Cost-effective services

PART 5: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE INGREDIENTS FOR EFFECTIVE OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT?

1. Know what problem you're trying to solve and work out what approaches and data/measures are most relevant
2. Measurement culture
3. Systems thinking / stakeholders
4. Collaboration / having the right people on board
5. Time and money
6. Watch out for pitfalls!

INGREDIENT 2: MEASUREMENT CULTURE

An organisation with a performance culture focuses on doing what it does as well as it can and continually seeks to do even better.

Using social outcomes measurement systems, tools, methods and having staff with the right skills and capabilities is not enough to achieve change. The tools and skills must exist within a culture of measurement, performance and learning (Marino, 2011).

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP DEVELOP A MEASUREMENT CULTURE

- People: recruiting, developing and retaining the right people – for measurement and to achieve your purpose
- Clarity and articulation of purpose, vision and principles: What is guiding your organisation or program?
- Clarity of expectations
- Transparency of data and results
- Systems for feedback and development
 - Sector, organisation and individual level
 - Sharing successes and failures

INGREDIENT 3: SYSTEMS THINKING/ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

- A systems thinking / ecological approach is about understanding how individual, household, community, organisational, and societal factors can influence an issue, both positively and negatively
- It identifies key stakeholders and informs solutions
- So, systems thinking is more about addressing issues and less about measuring outcomes, right?

Or is it?

SYSTEMS THINKING / ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

- Independent parts play different roles
- Parts “interconnected”: work together & interact in different ways
- The whole is different from the sum of the parts (Anderson, 1999)
- Feedback loops: behaviour of one affects own behaviour and the behaviour of others



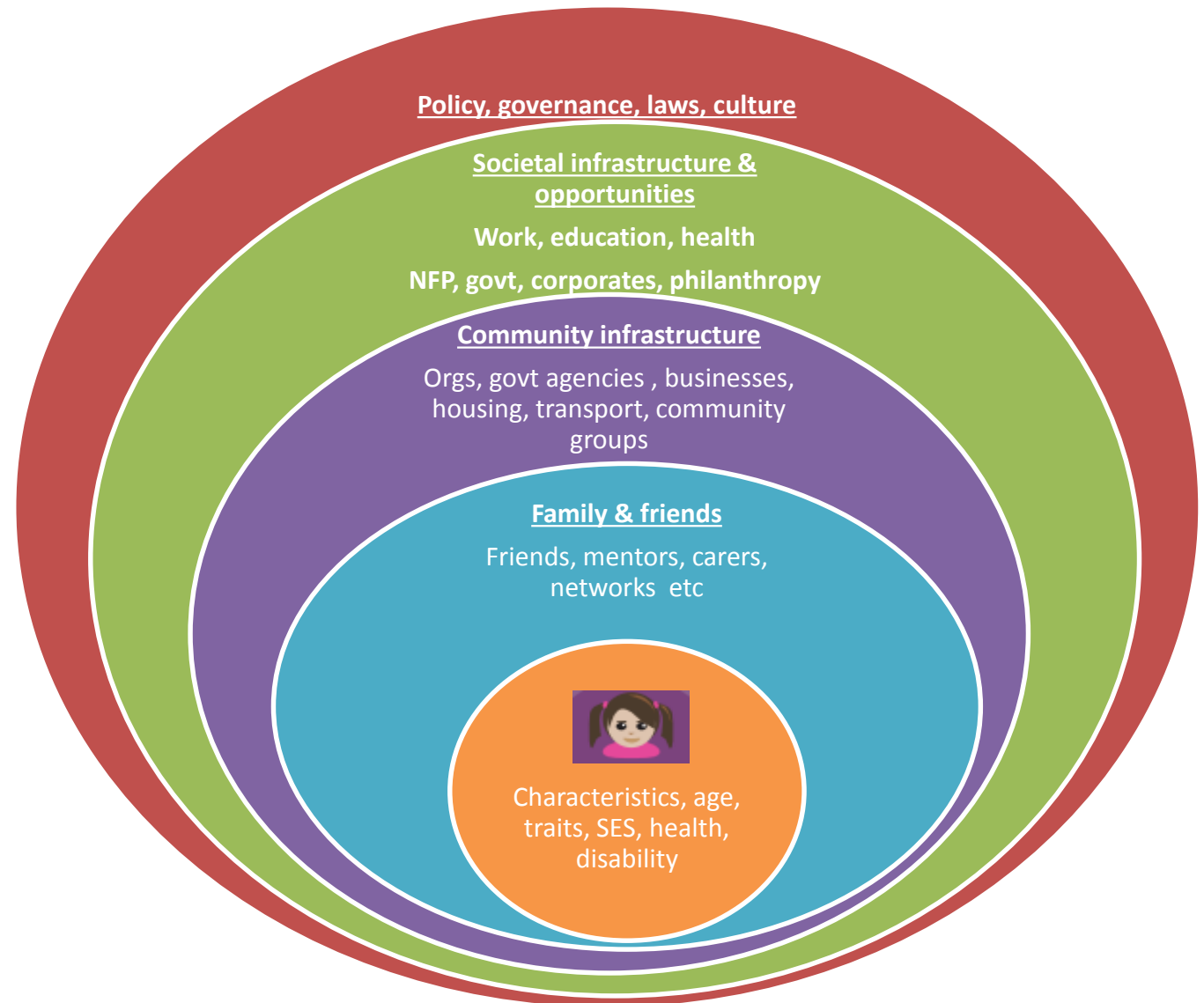
In systems, our decisions to alter our environment, lead to new decisions, can trigger side effects, delayed reactions, changes in goals and interventions by others. These feedbacks may lead to unanticipated result and ineffective responses/policies/practices

APPLYING SYSTEMS THINKING TO SOCIAL ISSUES

In *what context* is your organisation/ program/ initiative working in?

What else might be going on that could *influence* whether change occurs?

The Compass: page 14 – 15



STAKEHOLDERS' ROLE IN OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

Clients

- The givers of outcome data

Households and communities

- Consulted on how outcome data is collected, used and reported back to the community

Front-line staff

- Collectors of data
- Advisors on data collection methods

Administrative staff

- Providers of administrative data on programs and clients

Evaluators

- Design data collection & analyse the data

Program leads

- Disseminate findings
- Use findings to make decisions relating to program sustainability

Funders

- Provide the \$\$\$ and set expectations

Governments

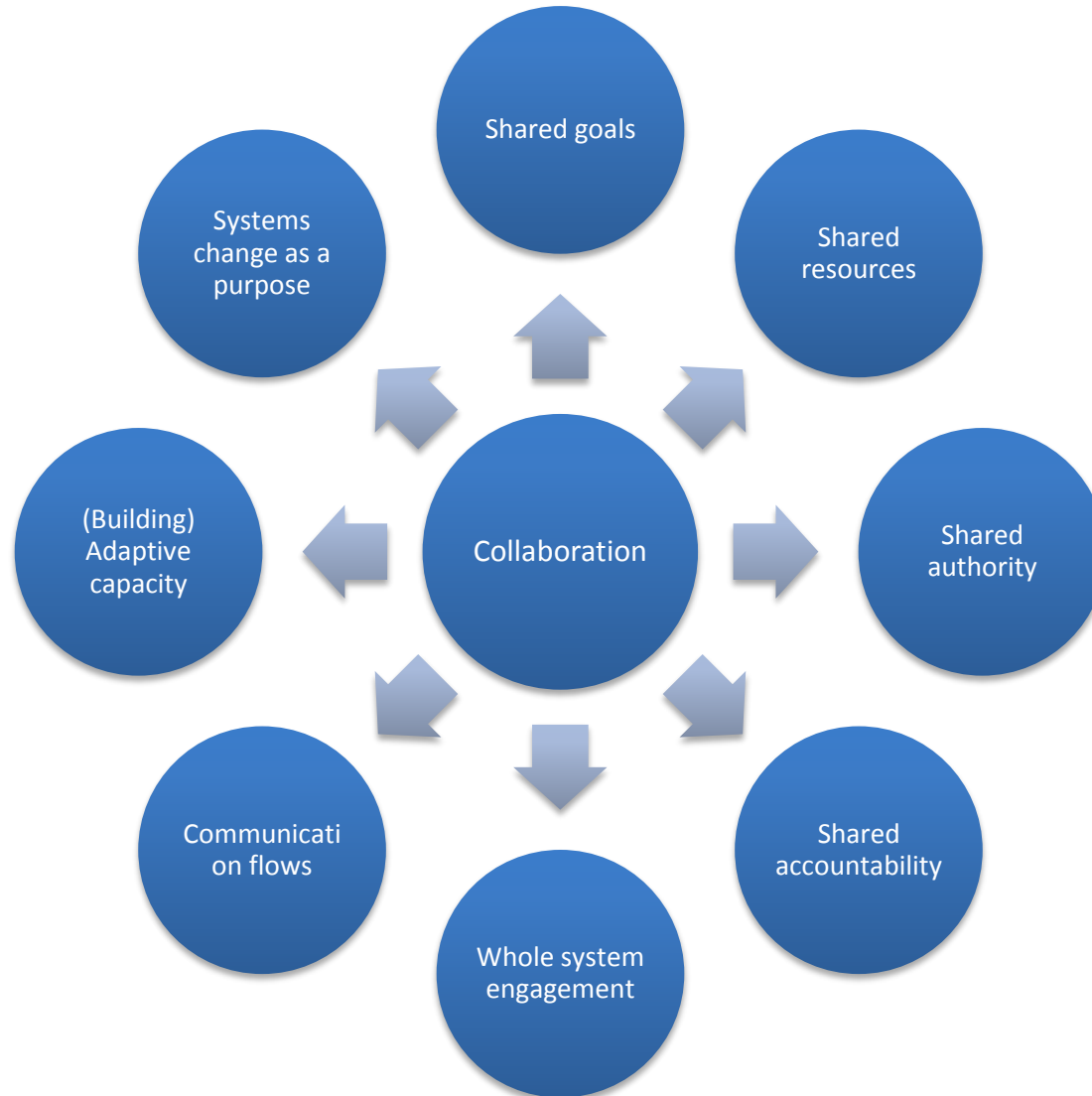
- Use data to make policy decisions

INGREDIENT 4: COLLABORATION

- Done well, collaboration allows us to achieve more than we can when working alone
- Collaboration is argued to work well for complex issues or problems
- A collaboration should include actors across the ecological model
- So, collaboration is more about addressing a social issue and less about outcomes measurement....

Or is it?

DIMENSIONS OF COLLABORATION



COLLABORATION AND OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT

- Collaborations need data in order to:
 - Understand how they're communities are faring (Whole system engagement)
 - Make decisions (Share authority)
 - Track progress towards goals (Shared accountability)
 - Communicate effectively to all stakeholders (Communication flows)
- Outcomes data indirectly feeds into the other dimensions

INGREDIENT 5: TIME, MONEY AND EXPERTISE

- Outcomes measurement takes time:
 - Planning
 - Implementing
 - Reporting and decision-making
- Money
 - Currently explicit funding for outcomes measurement is rare
- Expertise
 - Expertise needed across different levels
 - In collecting, analysing, reporting on and making decisions based on outcomes data

Should we not just be measuring what we can with the resources we have available?

INGREDIENT 6: AVOID THE PITFALLS

- Poor data (outputs misinterpreted as outcomes; poor proxies; poor quality indicators)
- Resource, capacity, capability limitations
- Attribution
- Busy work counting numbers and reporting without purpose
- Not measuring process
- Not everything needs a \$ value
- Siloed data / no shared measurement = no comparability or ability to see overall progress (program, organisational, sector, population levels)



PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

- Measuring outcomes can be beneficial, but it can also take significant resources.
 - Plan well, measure well and make appropriate decisions (as well).
 - Draw on available resources
 - Understanding the different roles in outcomes measurement and who can fill them
- By drawing on our collective expertise in collaboration, we may be able to ease some of the burden
 - Shared measurement
 - Shared successes and failures
 - Shared frameworks

CONCLUSIONS

Key barriers to outcome measurement:

- Significant resourcing
- Ambiguity around what is expected of organisations / people within organisations

Potential facilitators

- Apply systems thinking to outcome measurement
- Scaling of outcome measurement and evaluation to resources?
- Plan well!

Happy measuring!

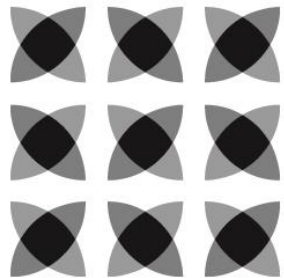
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