SUFINANCIRANO SREDSTVIMA EUROPSKE UNIJE
EUROPSKI POLJOPRIVREDNI FOND ZA RURALNI RAZVOJ –
EUROPA ULAŽE U RURALNA PODRUČJA

Program
RURALNOG RAZVOJA

EQUINOX
CONSULTING

Qualitative methods

Agenda

1. The theoretical background of evaluation
2. Qualitative techniques
3. Qualitative research methods

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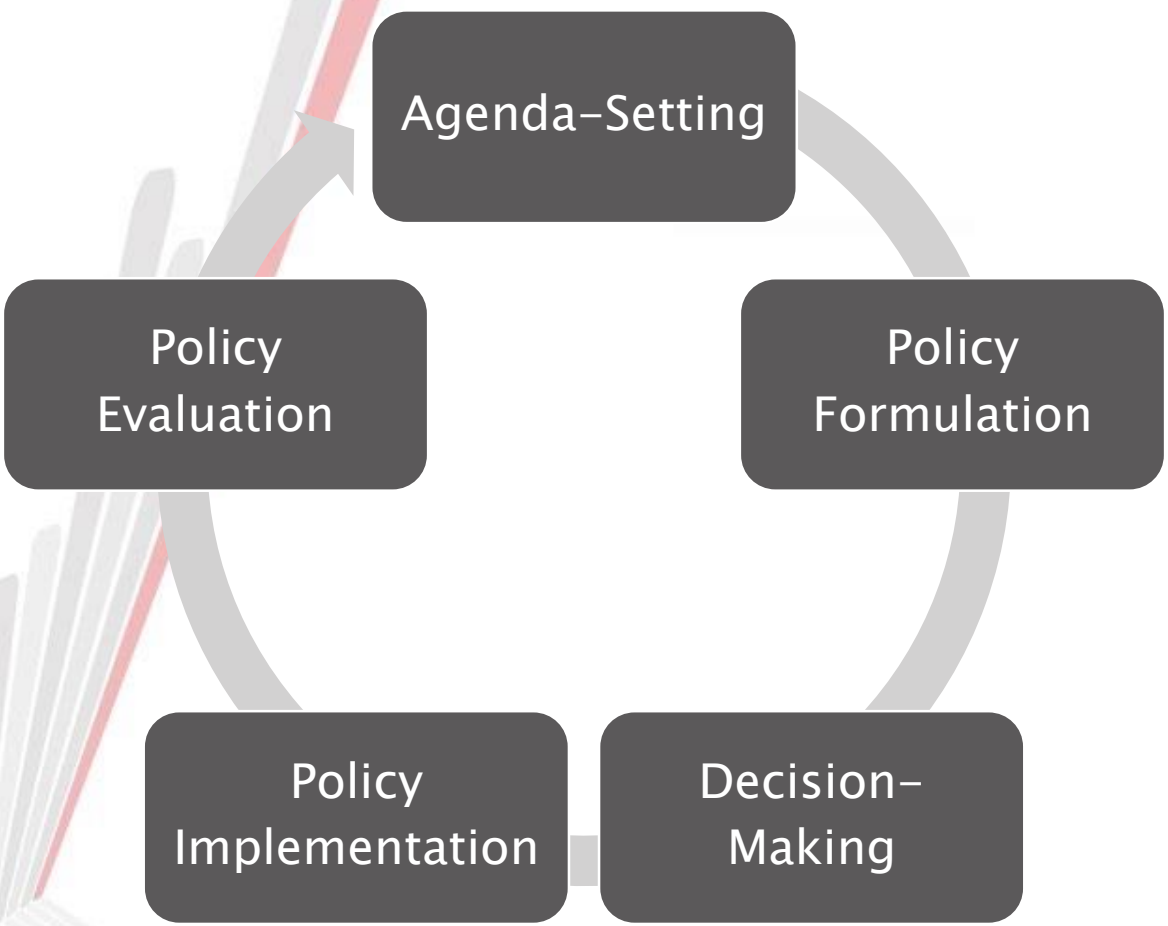
The Policy Cycle



Program evaluation

„Program evaluation is the use of social science research procedures to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs"

Goals of the evaluation:

- *To aid in decisions* concerning whether programs should be continued, improved, expanded, or curtailed;
- To *assess the utility* of new programs and initiatives;
- To *increase the effectiveness* of program management and administration;
- To satisfy the *accountability requirements* of program sponsors;
- To contribute to *policy learning*

Evaluation Process

Principles of the evaluation process (OECD)

DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance (1991):

- Impartiality;
- Independence;
- Credibility;
- Usefulness

DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation:

- Free and open evaluation process;
- Evaluation ethics;
- Partnership approach;
- Co-ordination and alignment;
- Capacity development;
- Quality control

Program evaluation

Evaluation typically involves the assessment of the followings:

- The need for the program;
- The design of the program;
- Program implementation and service delivery;
- ***Program impact or outcomes***;
- Program efficiency

Stages of program development and evaluation functions

Step in the policy cycle	Stage of program development	Evaluation questions	Evaluation function
Agenda-setting	Assessment of social problems and needs	*To what extent are community needs met?*	• Needs assesment • Problem description
Policy formulation	Determination of goals	*What must be done to meet those needs?*	• Needs assessment • Service needs
	Design of program alternatives	What service could be used to produce the desired changes?	• Assesment of program logic and theory
Decision-making	Selection of alternative	*Which of the possible approaches is the best?*	• Feasibility study • Formative evaluation
Policy implementation	Program implementation	*How should the program be put into operation?*	• Implementation assessment
	Program operation	*Is the program operating as planned?*	• Process evaluation • Program monitoring
Policy Evaluation	Program outcomes	*Is the program having the desired effects?*	• Impact evaluation
	Program efficiency	*Are the program effects attained at a reasonable cost?*	• Efficiency assesment • Cost-Benefit Analysis • Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

Type of evaluation

Ex ante evaluation

Interim/ongoing/midterm/ evaluation

Ex post evaluation

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Impact evaluation

„Impact evaluation assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular intervention, such as a project, program or policy, both the intended ones, as well as the unintended ones."

Goals of the impact evaluation:

- *Assess the socio-economic impacts* of interventions;
- *Give causal explanation* of the relationships between interventions and the outcomes of the interventions

Result-oriented impact evaluation

2014-2020 programming period → more focus of result-oriented evaluation

„The most important one is the emphasis on a clearer articulation of the policy objectives. This is key to implement ***a result-oriented policy*** *and move away from an excessive focus on the absorption of funding."*

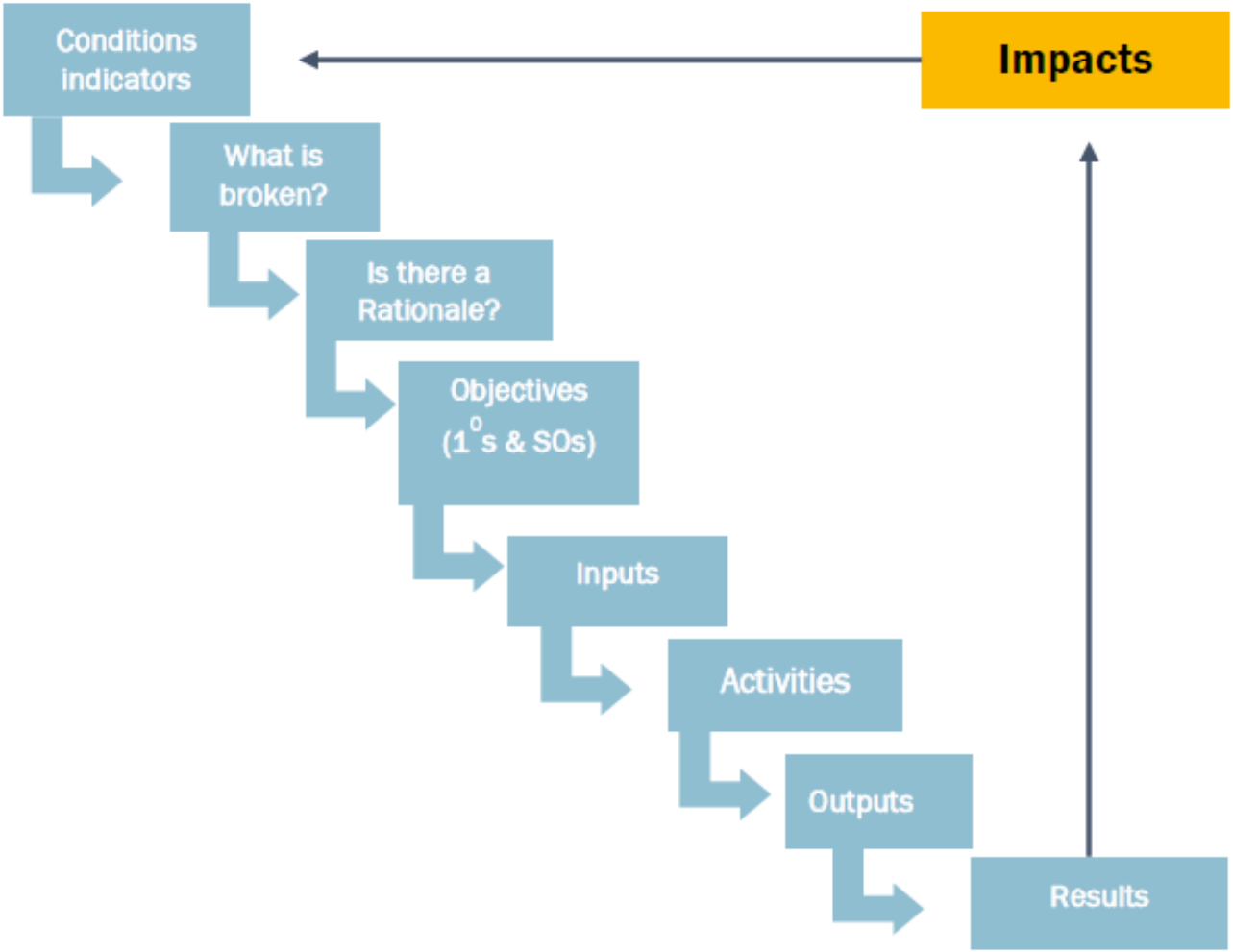
*(*The Programming Period 2014-2020. Guidance document on Monitoring and Evaluation. Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund, Concepts and Recommendations. March 2014, p.2)

Result oriented impact evaluation

Key concepts of result-oriented evaluation:

1. Logic model /logic chain:
   - Describes what we expect the intervention to be doing
   - Starting with the conditions we are facing and the problems in play, the logic chain describes factually what each component involves, set in the context of other components
2. Theory of change:
   - Provides an explanatory and predictive statement on how, and why the component will perform, deliver and interface in achieving the programme's goals
   - Takes the components of the simple logic model and then around these wraps the assumptions and hypotheses about how the programme will work. The assumptions and hypotheses that are used in constructing the theory of change are then tested and explored through evaluation

Logic model – Components



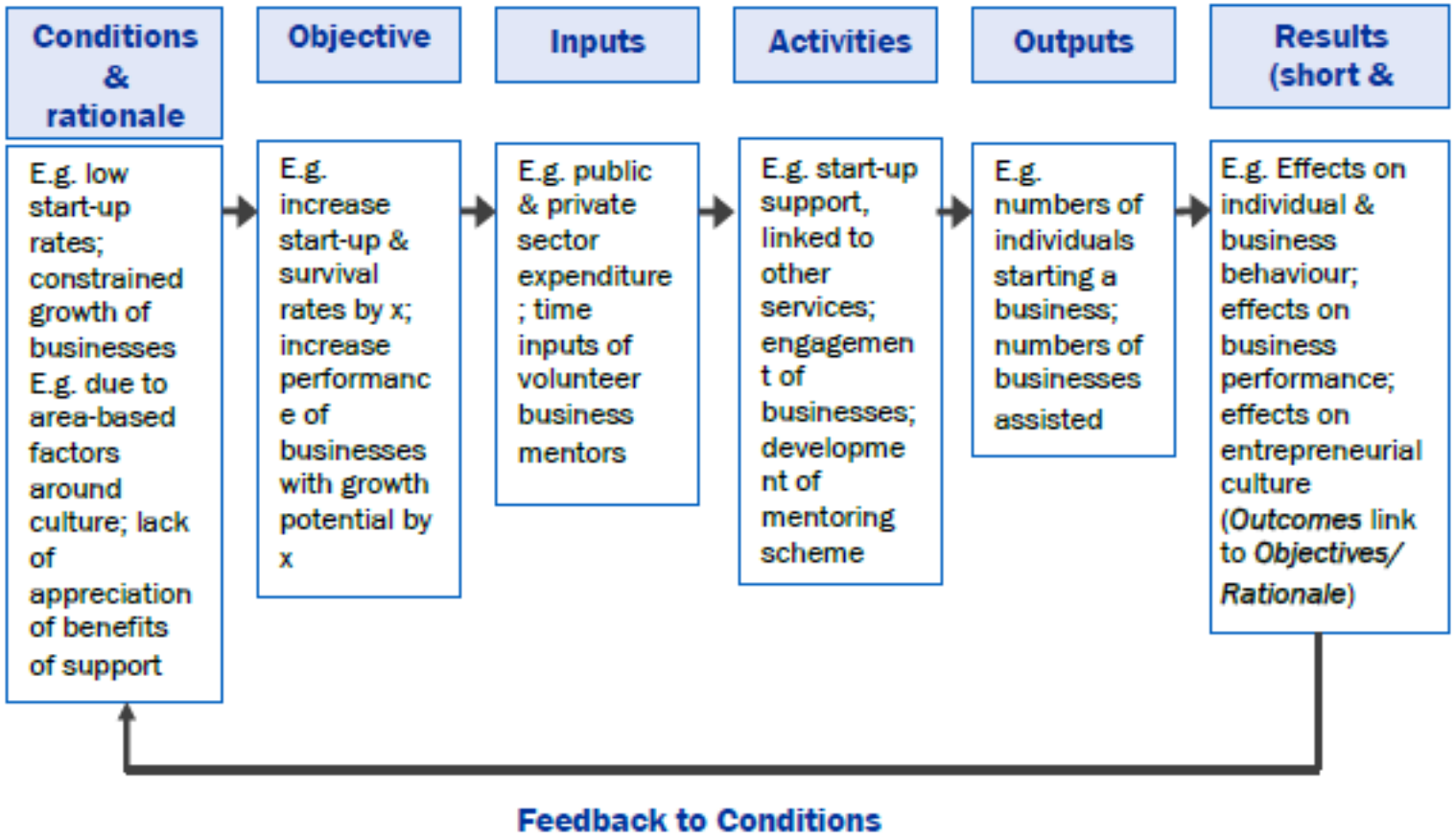
Setting objectives

It is very important to set as **precise objectives** as possible, because only that way can we assess the effectiveness of the program (we have to know what we want to achieve in order to know whether we have achieved these).

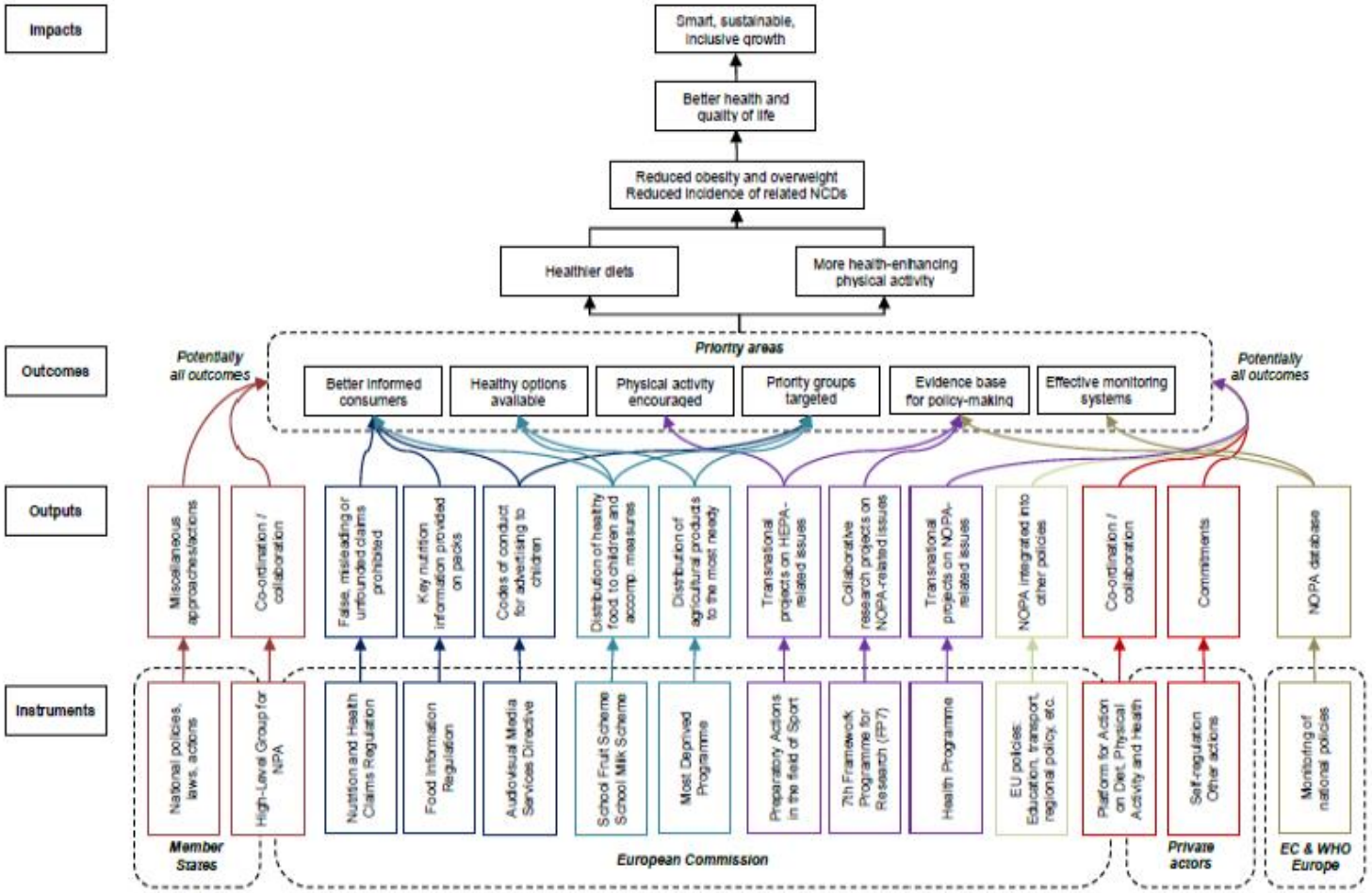
If it is possible, we should define **SMART objectives**:

- Specific: Objectives should be precise and concrete enough not to be open to varying interpretations by different people
- Measurable: Objectives should define a desired future state in measurable terms, to allow verification of their achievement (such objectives are quantified or based on a combination of description and scoring scales)
- Achievable: Policy aims should be set at a level which is ambitious but realistically achievable
- Relevant: The objectives should be directly linked to the problem and its roots
- Time-bound: Objectives should be related to a fixed date or precise time period to allow an evaluation of their achievement

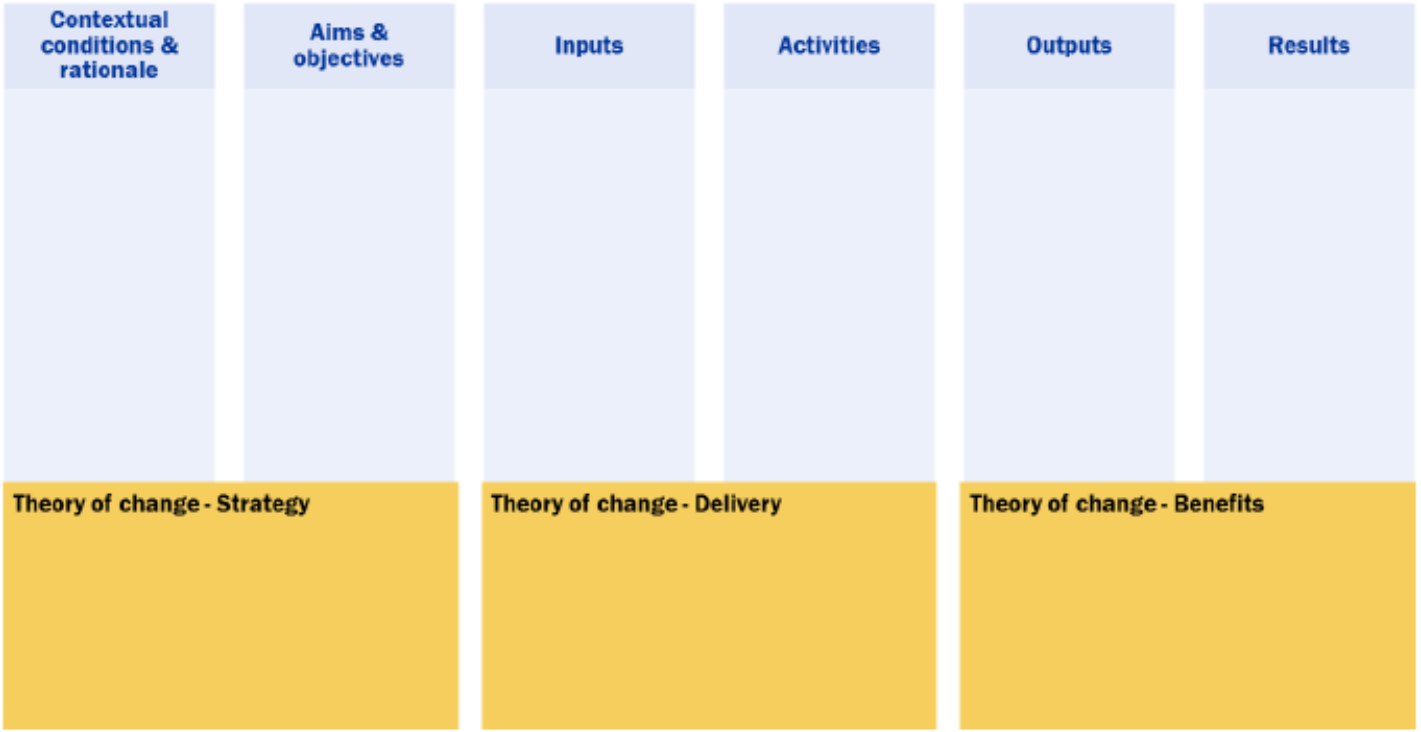
Logic chain example (simple)



Logic chain example (complex)



Theory of change example



Theory based approaches

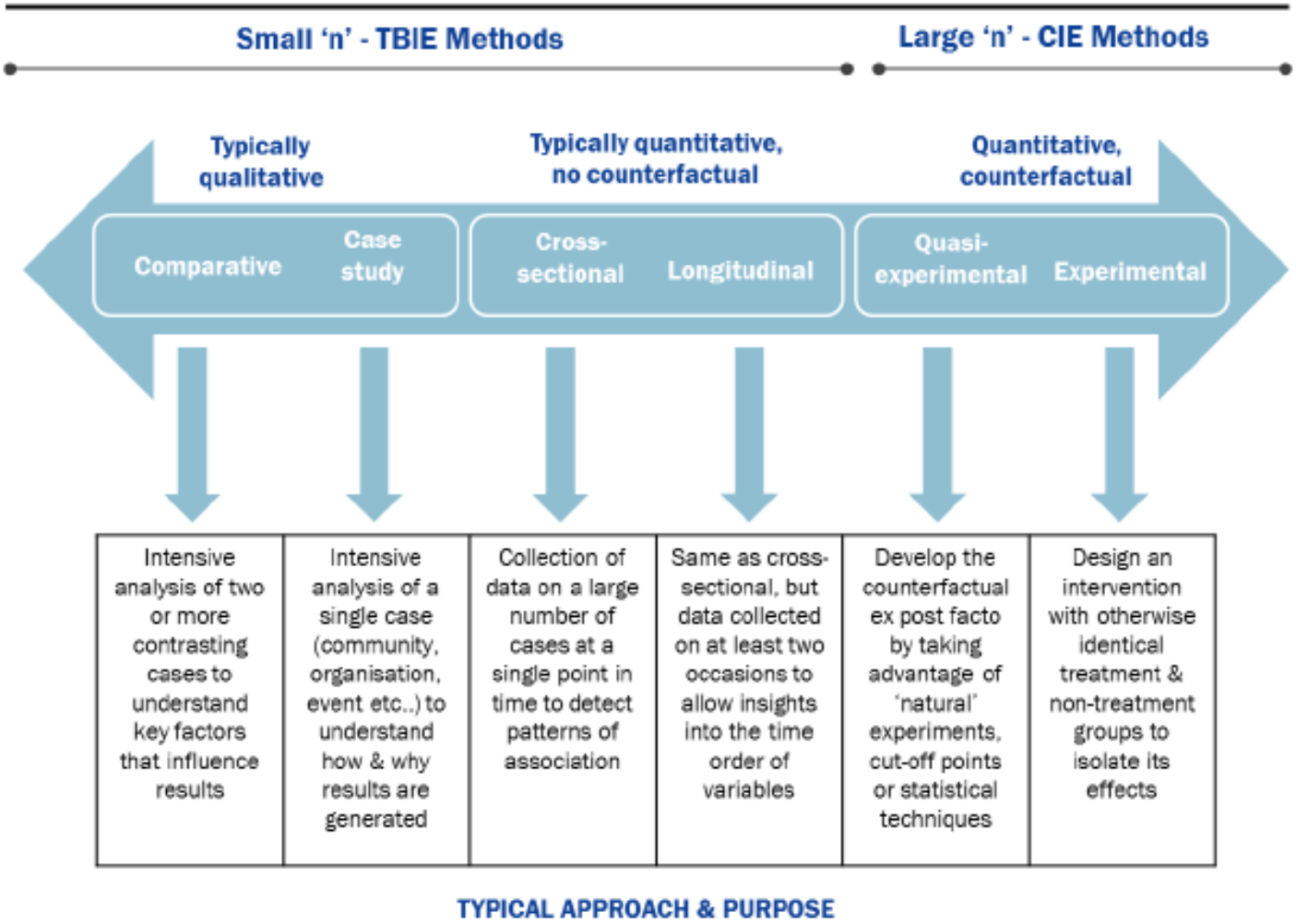
Most evaluation practice is now focused on **‚theory based' approaches**

- **Theory:** assumptions, hypotheses, and predictions that we have been assembled to explain how the intended programme will work

Theory based approaches use different methods according to the sample size

- **Large 'n' methods – Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE)**: when datasets are large and beneficiary populations are homogeneous
- **Small 'n' methods – Theory-based Impact Evaluation (TBIE)**: when datasets are small and/or beneficiary populations are heterogenous

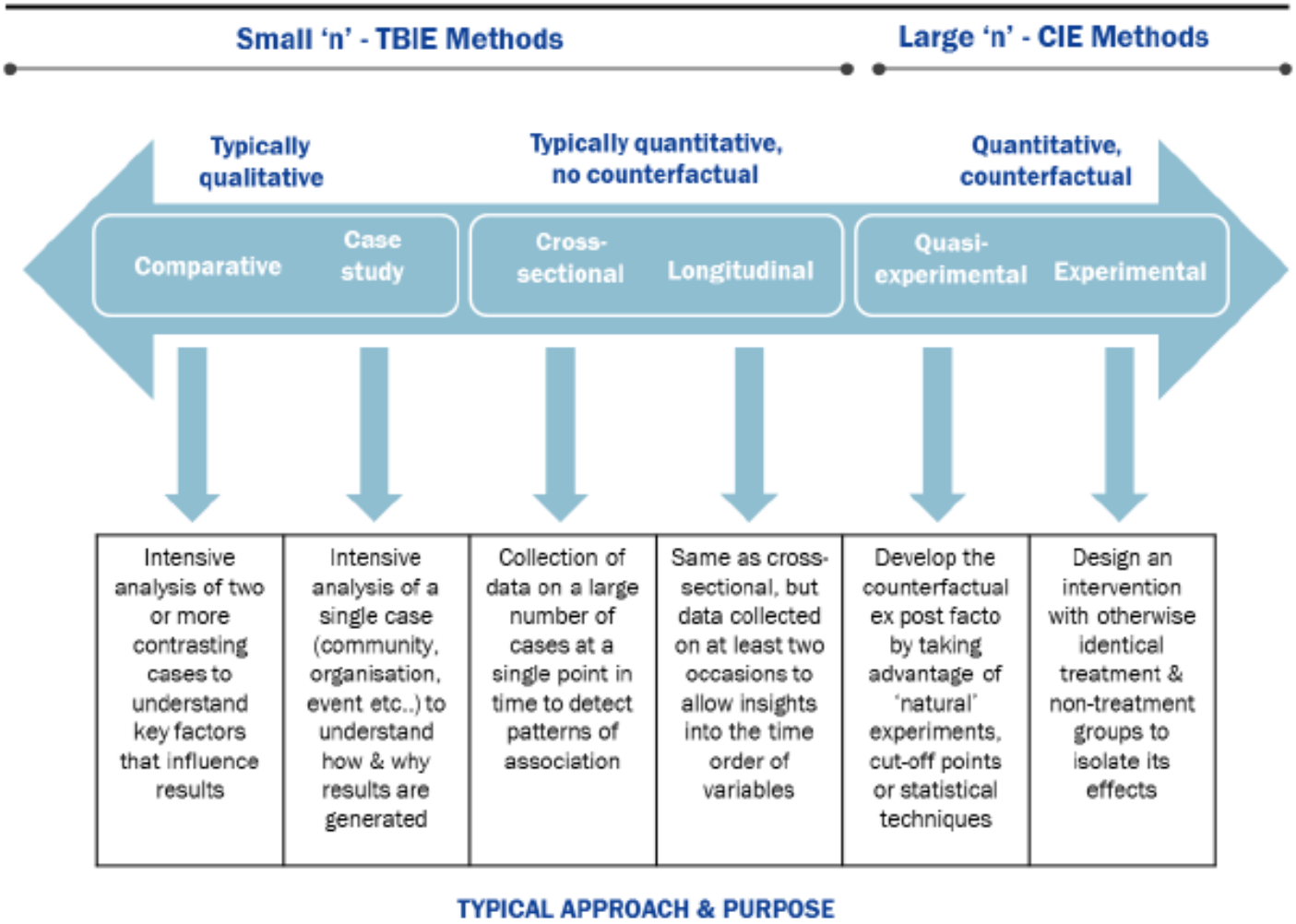
Theory based approaches



Comparison of CIE and TBIE

Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE)	Theory Based Impact Evaluation (TBIE)
PRO	**PRO**
+ Fashionable	+ Cheaper
+ Most objective approach if it works properly (homogeneous intervention with enough repetitions)	+ More pragmatic + Feasible for Interreg programmes + Produce good narratives (a good qualitative perspective)
CON	**CON**
- Expensive - Black Box - Huge number of intervention needed - Huge number of repetitions on a consistent basis needed	- More subjective than CIE - Robustness of quantitative data is low - Dependent on a solid logic chain and theory of change

Theory based approaches



Introduction of qualitative research methods

Quantitative research

- Quantifies the data and generalizes the result from sample to target population.

Qualitative research

- Provides insights and understanding of the problem at hand.

Quantitative Research Methods – Recap

Counterfactual methods:

- Experimental methods:
  - T-test (One-/Two-sample)
  - Regression analysis
- Quasi experimental methods:
  - Regression analysis
  - Instrumental variables
  - Regression discontinuity design
  - Difference-in-Differences
  - Propensity score matching
  - Advanced methods (econometric modelling etc.)

Non-counterfactual methods

Qualitative research methods

Qualitative research seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations.

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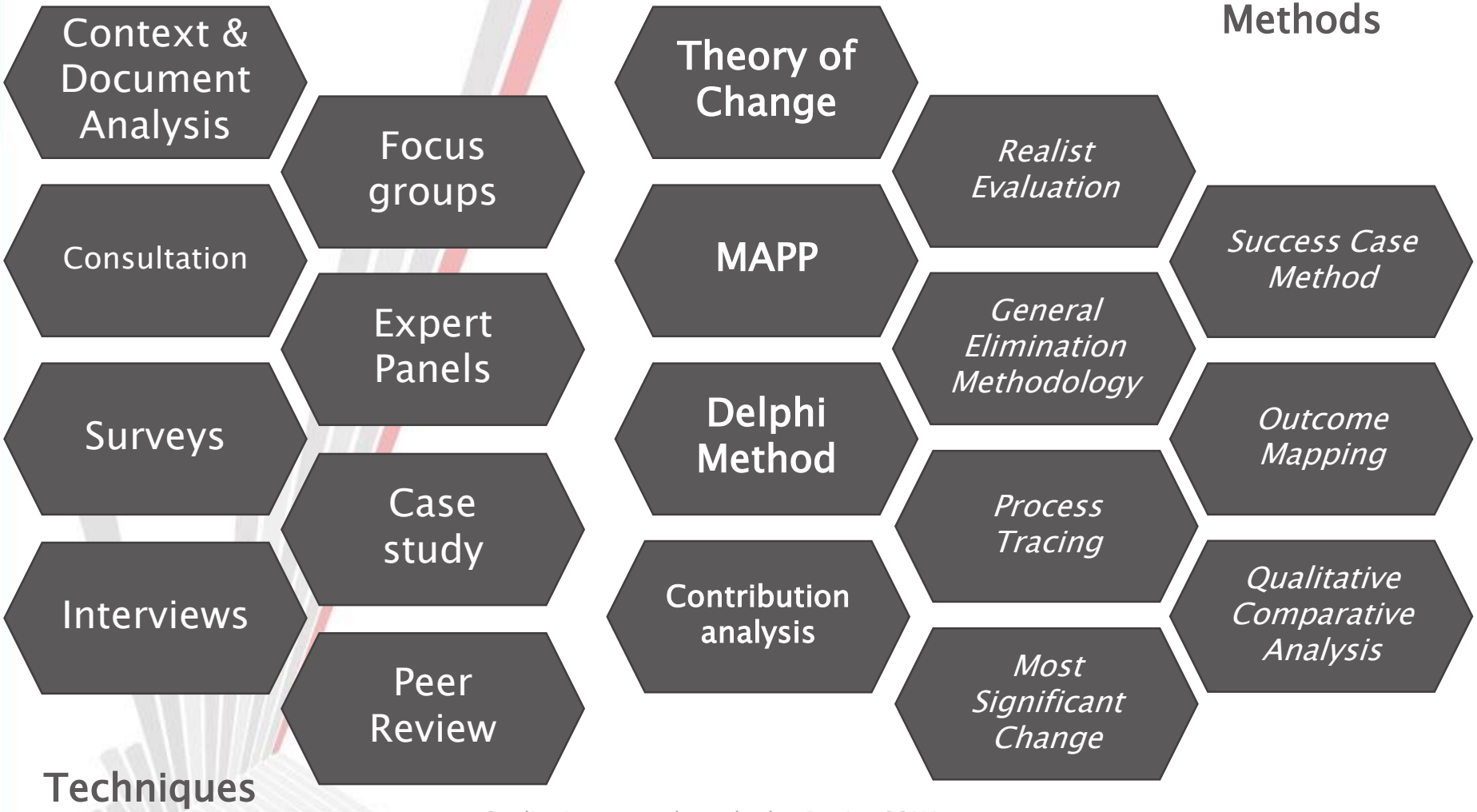
Qualitative Research – Methods and Techniques



Qualitative Techniques

Techniques:

1. Contextual and Documentary Review
2. Consultation (One-to-One, One-to-Many)
3. (Beneficiary) Surveys
4. Interviews (Structured, Semi-structured, Unstructured)
5. Focus Groups
6. Expert panels
7. Case Studies
8. Peer review

Contextual and Documentary Review

Goals:

- Understand the context in which the program is embedded
- Understanding the program (logic, operation etc.)

Sources:

- Legal background (local, national, European)
- Original programme documents
- Monitoring data and reports
- Scientific/expert studies

Consultation

Detailed consultation with key stakeholders is crucial either before, during or after implementation.

Key stakeholders:

- Policymakers/funders of the programme
- Delivery bodies
- Adjacent programmes
- Civil actors relating to the target group etc.

Type of consultations:

- One-to-One
- One-to-Many
  - Prone to:
    - Superficiality
    - Herd effects
    - Loudest voices

Surveys

Goals:

- **To understand the rationale for intervention** and to fully appreciate **the customer experience** during the delivery of the programme

Crucial features of the surveys:

- Sample size and sample selection method (representativeness)
- Response rates
- Questionnaire design
- Non-beneficiary component (control group)

Surveys

Questionnaire design and analytical ability are crucial!

Typically surveyed groups:

- Beneficiaries
- Non-beneficiaries (typically those who were ruled out)
- (Stakeholders)

Main question

- What has been your experience of this intervention (as someone who is impacted)?

Surveys

Structure and content of surveys:

- Awareness and accessibility of the programme
- Effectiveness (satisfaction with the intervention against the stated objectives of the programme)
- Outcomes and impact:
  - Self-assessment:
    - Motivation for seeking assistance
    - Behavioural effects
    - Additionality
    - Timing of effects
  - Control group (if possible)

Surveys – Bias

Sampling error: the result of observing a sample of n households (the sample size) rather than all N households in the target population

Non-sampling error: the result of errors in survey development and execution. Some examples are:

- Measurement error: when the answers written on the questionnaires are different from the actual values
- Selection bias: results from imperfections in the sample frame or deficiencies in the sample selection process
- Non-response: when we don't get an answer to some or all of our questions from certain households
- Interviewee effects: last event bias, memory decay
- Interviewer effects

Survey – Design

Steps:

1. Define survey objectives, use of results and target population
2. Draft survey questions
3. Pilot and re-adjusting the questionnaire
4. Select respondents and the data collection methods
5. Run the survey
6. Analyse the results

Survey – Design

Question types:

- Open-ended questions
  - Textual
  - Numerical
- Single-/Multiple-choice (Closed questions)
- Scales
- Rank
- Agree/Disagree

Survey – Design

Good questions:

- Adequate wording:
  - The question is clear and precise and means the same thing to every respondent
    - Terms are defined if their meaning is not obvious
- The question is not a leading question
    - E.g.: *What do you like best about this neighborhood? (We're interested in anything such as houses, the people, the parks, or whatever.)*
- The respondants have the information to answer the questions
  - E.g. *How many calories did you eat yesterday? How much is your house worth?*
- One question at a time
  - E.g. *Have you considered buying or renting a house or moving together with someone?*
- Mutually exclusive or exhaustive questions
  - E.g. *Are you currently married, separated, divorced, widowed, living with a partner, or have you never been married?*
  - *What is your current marital status? Are you married, separated, divorced, widowed, or have you never been married? Are you currently living with (a partner/your spouse)?*
- Scales:
  - People tend to choose middle/neutral values – scales should not facilitate that (by e.g. using scale of 7)
- Order of questions

Interviews

The research interview is a **purposeful conversation between two ot more people**, requiring the interviewer to establish rapport, to ask concise and unambiguous questions, to which the interviewee is willing to respond and listen attentively

Main questions:

- What has been your experience of this intervention (as someone who is impacted)?
- What are you observing about the intervention (as an informed viewer e.g. stakeholder)?

Interviews vs Surveys

Surveys

- Cheaper
- Mostly quantitative answers that can be statistically assessed and generalizations can be made from them
- Low response rate – bias
- Limited information from many people

Interviews

- More expensive and time-consuming
- Mostly quantitative answers unfit to generalizations and inferences
- More personal
- High response rate
- Detailed information from a limited number of people

Interviews

Type of interviews:

- Structured: use questionnaires based on a predetermined and standardised identical set of questions
- Semi-structured: the researcher will have a list of themes and possibly some key questions to be covered
- Unstructured: informal conversations about a particular topic

Interviews

Use of different types of interviews:

- Exploratory research:
  - Unstructured interview
  - Semi-structured interview
- Descriptive research:
  - Structured interview
- Explanatory research:
  - Semi-structured interview
  - Structured interview

Interviews

Disadvantages of interviews:

- Threat to reliability
- Interviewer and interviewee bias
- Problematic generalisability

Focus Groups

The focus group is a well-established method of social inquiry, taking the form of **structured discussion that involves the progressive sharing and refinement of participants' views and ideas.**

- First used in market research, now widely used in social sciences

Goals and advantages:

- Bring together the different stakeholders in a programme and collect large amount of qualitative information in a relatively short space of time
- The method enables the evaluator to examine participants' different perspectives as these are constructed by their participation within a social network and to explore how accounts are shaped through conversation with others in a naturalistic group setting
- The method is particularly valuable for analysing themes or fields which give rise to divergent opinions or which involve complex issues that need to be explored in depth

Focus Groups

Main steps:

1. Selection of participants
2. Choice and training of the facilitators
3. Defining the interview topics
4. Course of the discussion
5. Analysis and report on results

Focus Groups – Running a focus group

1. Preparation/set up
   - Arrangement of the room, seatings etc.
   - Refreshment
   - Materials needed (notepads, pens, flip chart etc.)
   - Visual aids and other illustrative materials
2. Welcoming the participants and introductory briefing
3. Introductory questions
4. Key questions
5. Closing remarks

Focus Groups

Possible problems with focus groups:

- Dominant personalities
- Group pressure
- Noise

Expert panels

An "expert panel" is a **specially constituted work group** that meets for evaluation. Expert panels are usually made up of **independent specialists recognised in the fields covered by the evaluated programme**, usually as a mechanism for **synthesising information from a range of sources**, **drawing on a range of viewpoints**, in order **to arrive at overall conclusions**. Expert panels are a means of arriving at a value judgement on the intervention and its effects, which incorporates the main information available on the intervention, as well as previous and external experiences.

Expert panels

When it is used?

- When sufficient expertise exists in the field and when the evaluation is complex for which other tools do not provide univocal or credible answers

Expert panels

Main steps:

1. Identification of a list of potential experts
2. Selection and mandating of the experts
3. Investigations
4. Synthesis

Case Studies

The case study method **involves in-depth study of a phenomenon in a natural setting**, drawing on a **multitude of perspectives.**

Holistic approach – special attention to context and setting – in-depth understanding of complex real-life interactions and processes

Perspectives can come from:

- Multiple data collection methods (qualitative and quantitative)
- Multiple accounts of different actors/stakeholders

Type of case studies:

- Single case
- Multiple cases

Case studies

Cased studies are used for:

- Illustration
- Exploration
- Critical analysis
- Analysis of implementation
- Analysis of impacts of programmes
  - Understanding the nature of processes producing impacts

Case studies

Main steps:

1. Selection of cases to study
2. Data collection and process
3. Case report
4. Account

Peer Reviews

Peer Reviews are methods during which one or more participants **review the evaluations of other** participants (member states for example).

The EU organises several (voluntary) Peer Review Programs.

Goals:

- Mutual learning through the reviews
- Improve quality of evaluations

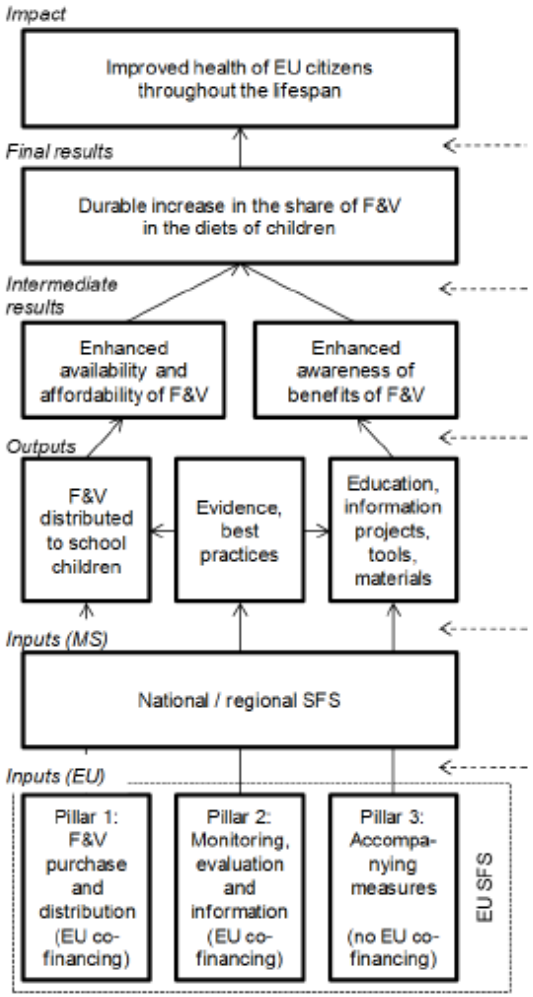
Qualitative Methods and Techniques – Summary

1. **Theory of Change (ToC)**
2. **Contribution Analysis (CA)**
3. **Method for Impact Assessment of Programs and Projects (MAPP)**
4. **Delphi Method**
5. Realist Evaluation
6. General Elimination Methodology
7. Process Tracing
8. Most Significant Change
9. Success Case Method
10. Outcome Mapping
11. Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Theory of Change

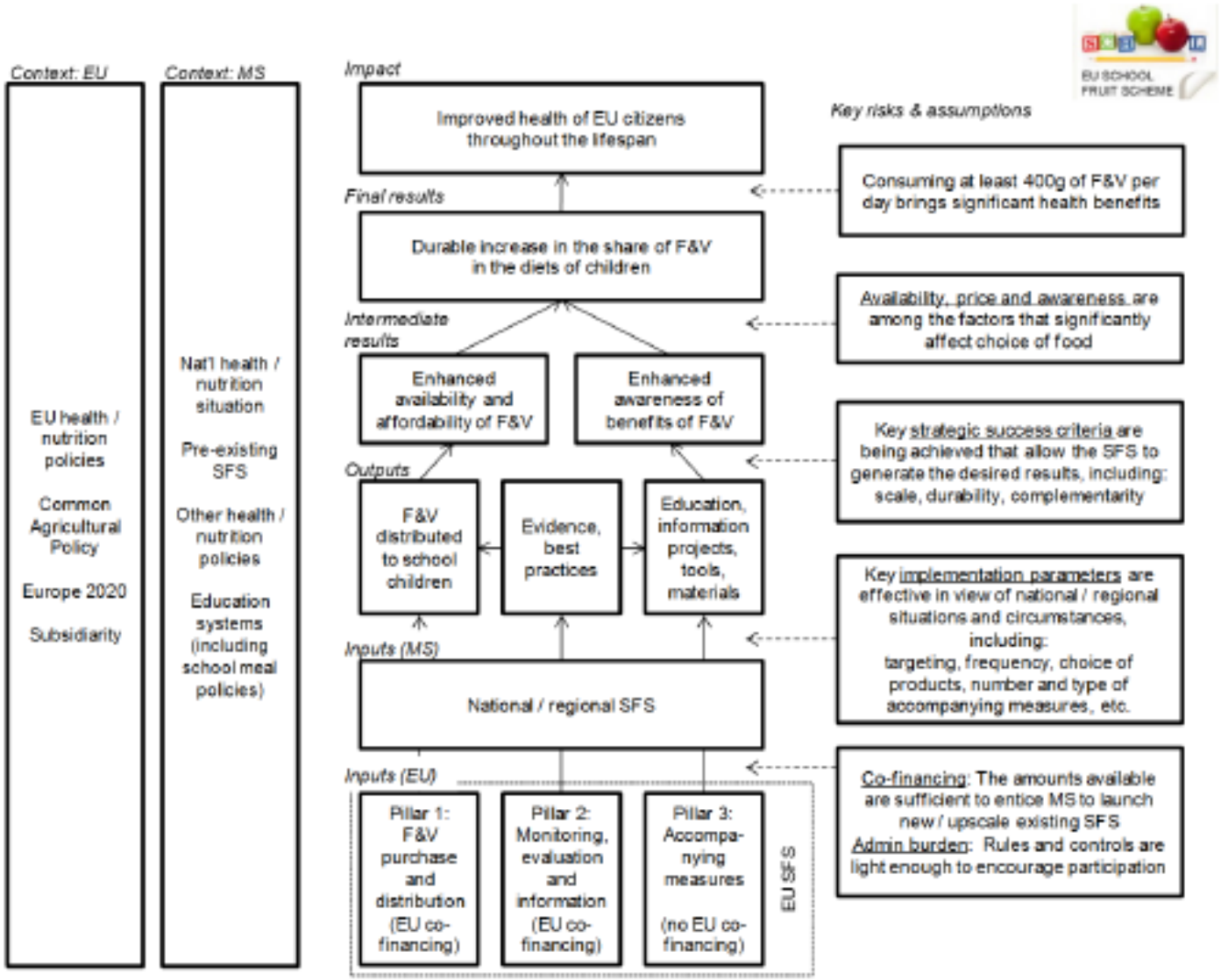
- ToC takes the logic chain for the intervention and develops this into a predictive and explanatory depiction of what should happen through the intervention
- Evaluation explores each step of the ToC to understand whether theoretically predicted changes occurred as expected, and/or as a result of other external factors

Theory of Change example



Logic chain

Theory of Change example



Contribution Analysis

Contribution Analysis is an alternative to experimental designs, when they are not feasible

- After Mayne (1999):
  - Developed to address the problem of attribution

Goals and main questions:

- Are **observed results due to programme activities** rather than **other factors**?
- CA set out to verify the theory of change, but also takes into consideration other factors

Contribution Analysis

1. The programme is based on a reasoned theory of change; the assumptions behind why the programme is expected to work are sound & plausible

↓

2. The activities of the programme were implemented

↓

3. The theory of change is verified by evidence: the chain of expected results occurred

↓

4. Other factors were assessed & were either shown not to have made a significant contribution, or if they did, their relative contribution was recognised

Contribution Analysis

Main steps:

1. Set out the cause-and-effect issue to be addressed
2. Develop the theory of change
3. Assess the resulting contribution story
4. Gather existing evidence on the theory of change
5. Re-assess the contribution story and challenges to it
6. Seek out additional empirical evidence
7. Revise and strengthen the contribution story

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects (MAPP)

MAPP is a **participatory method** for **assessing the impact** of programmes and projects

- After Susanne Neubert (1998)

Advantages of MAPP:

- Net impacts can be estimated against gross development trends
- Unplanned impacts can be identified
- Integrate target groups ideas into development programs, thus serves as a learning tool

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects (MAPP)

Main steps:

1. Analyzation of factual changes over time

2-3. Identification and attribution of reasons of changes (e.g. programme interventions)

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

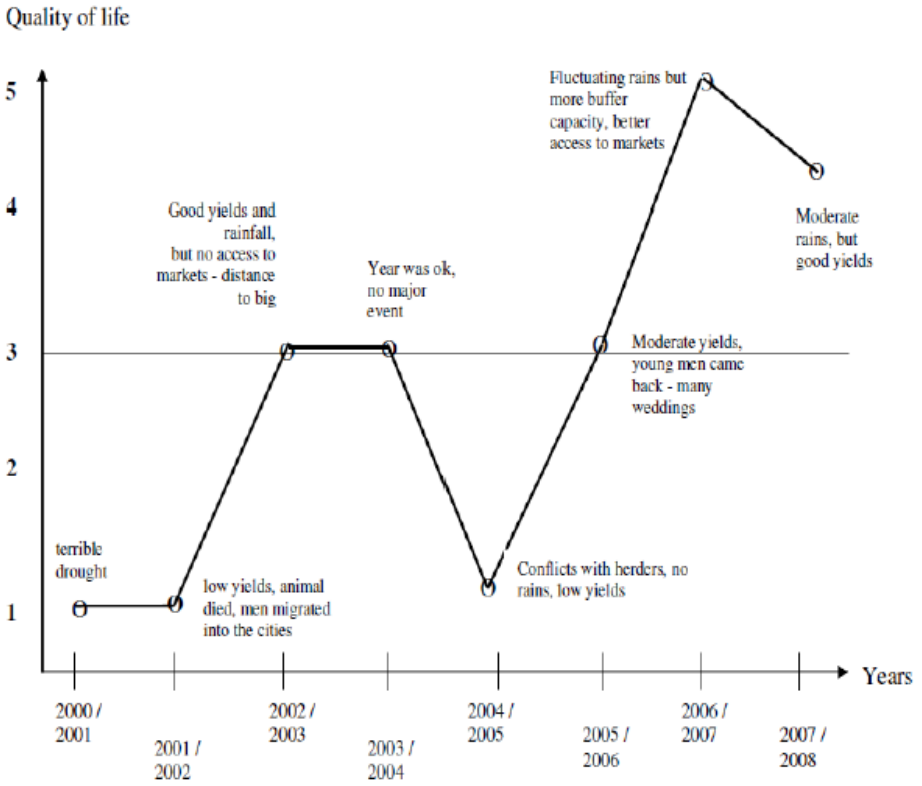
How does MAPP work?

- A specific programme is evaluated in relation to other ongoing programmes – the net impacts can be estimated against gross development trends
- Based on group discussions (beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups, + optionally stakeholders)
- Qualitative tool, but includes some quantitative elements

- Main tools
  1. Life curve
  2. Trend analysis
  3. Cross-checking
  4. List of interventions and activities
  5. Influence matrix
  6. Development and impact profile
  7. Participatory development planning

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

1. Life curve



Legend:
1 = very low quality
2 = low quality
3 = average quality
4 = high quality
5 = very high

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

2-3. Trend analysis, cross checking

Figure 2: Trend analysis

	Year		Programme starts ⇩						
	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	Trend 2001-2008
Improvement or impoverishment of Living standard									
Agricultural yields	••	••	••••	•••	•••	•••	••••	•••[1]	+
Family incomes	••	••	••	•••	••••	••••	••••	••••	++
Health of children	••••	•••	••••	••••	••••	•••	•[2]	••	--
Access to or exclusion from resources									
…to fire wood	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••••	•••••	•••••	++
…to drinking water	•	•	•	•	•	•••[3]	•••	•••	++
…to markets	•	•	•	•	•	••••	••••	••••	++
…to fertile lands	••••	•••	•••	•	••	•••[4]	•••••	•••••	++
Enlargement or diminishing of knowledge									
School enrolment	•	•	•	•	•	•••••	•••••	•••••	++
Knowledge about land use systems	••	••	••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	++
Participation on or exclusion from rights and power									
Peaceful living with herders	•••	•••	•••	•••	•	•	•	•	--
Avoided migration	•	••	•	••••	••••	••••	••••	••••	++

Legend: ••••• = very positive, •••• = positive, ••• = average, •• = negative, • = very negative

[1] The yields depend mainly on rainfall and in 2008 the rains were very bad. But because of PORO the yield impacts were less pronounced.

[2] Many meningitis cases, many children died.

[3] Through the anti-erosive measures, water could infiltrate much better and the water table rose up again.

[4] Stone walls and biological anti-erosion measures (tree planting, hedges etc) improved soil fertility remarkably.

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

4. List of interventions and activities

Figure 3: List of interventions and activities

Intervention/activity	Organisation	Relevance for day-to-day life[1]	Main contributors (men or women)	Main beneficiaries (men or women)	Beneficiaries as part of total population of the community	Own labour contribution (work burden)	Own financial contribution (financial burden)
Health Centre	Government	●●●●●	W	M + F	The whole community	●●●	●●
School	Government	●●●●●	W	M + F	all children	●●●	●●●●
Subsidies for donkey cart	PORO	●●●●●	M[4]	M	all male farmers	●●●	●
Irrigation scheme	PORO	●●●●●	M+W	M	Less than half of male farmers	●●●●●	●●
Nature reserve	PORO	●●●●	M	M	Few male farmers	●	●
Stone walls/ anti erosive measures	PORO	●●●●	M+W	M	More than half of male and female farmers	●●●●●	●●●
Lamb fattening	NGO1	●●	W	W	Less than half of women[3]	●●●●	●●●●
Grain bank	NGO2[2]	●	W+M	M	Few families	●●●●	●●
Tree nursery	Own initiative	●●●	W	M+W	Whole community	●●	●●
Micro credit group	Own initiative	●●●●●	M+W	M+W	Less than half of farmers	●●	●●

Legend

●●●●● = very relevant/very high burden
●●●● = relevant/high burden
●●● = average relevance/average burden
●● = low relevance/ low burden
● = no relevance/no burden

M = Men
W = Women
PORO = Programme evaluated

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

5. Influence matrix

Figure 4: Influence matrix

Development Indicators / How strong is the influence of intervention x on indicator y?	Interventions/ activities: Manuring	Anti-erosive measures	Nature reserve	irrigation scheme	Donkey cart	Pumps	Lamb fattening	Health centre	Grain bank	Tree nursery	Micro-credit group	School	Σ Passive
Improvement or impoverishment of Living standard													
Agricultural yields	4	4	1	3	4	2	3	0	3[c]	3	2[d]	0	+ 29
Family incomes	3	3	2[a]	3	4	0	4	0	3	0	1	-1[b]	+ 23 / -1
Health of children	0	0	0	2[e]	4	4	0	4	0	0	2	0	+ 16
Access to or exclusion from resources													
to fire wood	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	+ 8
to drinking water	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	+ 4
to markets	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+ 5
to fertile lands	4	4	4	2	4	1	2	0	0	4	0	0	+ 25
Expansion or diminishing of knowledge													
School enrolment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	+ 5
About land use systems	4	4	4	2	4	1	3	0	3	4	0	0	+ 29
Participation on or exclusion from rights and power													
Peaceful living with herders[f]	0	-4	- 4[g]	0[h]	0	0	0	0	0	- 4	0	0	- 9
Avoided Migration	3	5	- 2	4	5	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	23/ -2
Σ Active	+ 19	+ 20 - 4	+ 11 - 6	+ 17	+ 33	+ 13	+ 12	+ 6	+ 10	+16 - 4	+6	+ 4 - 1	**See comments next page**

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

4. Influence matrix

Continuous Influence matrix

Comments of the beneficiaries on influence matrix

a = The berries on wild brushes are sold with good prices on the market
b = School fees are a big burden on the household budgets
c = The irrigation scheme enables us to pay for health care for children
d = Credit allows us to invest in the productive sector
e = The influence is caused by the vitamins in vegetables, which can be grown under irrigation
f = Conflicts between farmers and herders over land use rules
g = The herders invade into the nature reserve with their animals.
h = Herders stress that irrigation is ok as long as farmers don't use too much of the water from the river.

Legend:
0 = No influence, 1 = slight influence, 2 = medium influence, 3 = strong influence, 4 = very strong influence
'–' means negative influences along the same scale.

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

6. Development and impact profile

Figure 5: Development and impact profile

	Profile -- - +/- + ++	Remarks of beneficiaries	Cross-Checking-Data, Documents/ background interviews	Mainly influenced by which actor/ factor
Improvement or impoverishment of life standard				
Agricultural yields	OOOOO	The yields depend mainly on rainfall. Because of the soil management measures supported by PORO the fluctuations can be buffered better.	No yield statistics about the project region.	External factors (Rainfall)/ PORO
Family incomes	OOOO	The income increases mainly because of the anti-erosion measures and the irrigation scheme.	Project staff agreed that income trends of people are positive.	PORO
Health of children	OOOO	Many meningitis cases, which have cost many lives of children.	Nurses from the health centre confirm the cases and complain that there is no vaccine available.	External factors/Other organisations
Access to or exclusion from to resources				
Fire wood	OOOO	Through the donkey carts we can search in greater areas for fire wood.	Evaluation team: This impact is only positive in the short run. In the longer run it aggravates degradation.	PORO / External factors
Drinking water	OOOO	Through the stone walls water tables went up again, so we can pump water again	Staff from health centre also reported that water related diseases decrease because of that.	Other Organisations
Markets	OOOO	We can use the donkey carts as transport means.	On the local markets more salesmen were seen than before.	PORO
Fertile lands	OOOO	Biological measures near the stone walls (tree planting, hedges etc) improved soil fertility.	Soil analyses from 10 plots confirm higher organic matter.	PORO
Expansion or diminishing of Knowledge				
School enrolment	OOOO	The ratio of enrolled children is 90 percent now.	This reflects also the present national statistics.	Government
Knowledge about land use systems	OOOO	PORO initiated trainings and we could immediately put that knowledge into practise (construct stone walls, and other measures).	Monitoring data from the programme can confirm that directly.	PORO
Participation on or exclusion from rights and power				
Peaceful living with herders	OOOO	Farmers: The rights of herders increased but the rights of farmers decreased because of our new government (farmers said this).	Herders: The farmers didn't consider our pathways by building the stone walls and by declaring the nature reserve etc.	External factors / PORO
Avoided migration	OOOO	Migration into cities decreased as we have new perspectives for our future again, many young men even came back into community.	An additional reason for minimized migration is that migrants are often chased back from the recipient country.	PORO

Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects

7. Participatory development planning

Figure 6: Participatory development planning

Setbacks identified	*Vision / resolved problem*	*How to get there*	*Who does the first step*	*Next meeting on this issue*
Increasing health problems in children	Children are not threatened anymore by virus diseases, all children are vaccinated	Reliable availability of vaccines in pharmacies in the community. Subsidies for vaccines are necessary. Vaccination plan for all children in the health centre.	Pharmacist asks neighbour community for advice in where all children are vaccinated.	Parents meet: After one week
Conflicts between farmers and herders over land use rules	Herders accept land use rules	Some herders should participate in land use planning. Their needs should be considered (corridors, pathways etc.). But herders should also contribute e.g. by improving their pastures.	The chief will approach the herders and tries to initiate the meeting on this issue. Some volunteers prepare a proposal for a contract with the herders	Farmers association and herders meet (envisaged): After 4 weeks
Appearing gender conflicts over donkey carts	Women can benefit from donkey carts as men can	Women can buy the subsidised carts directly from the programme. The existing condition that carts have to be used only for transport of stone should be abolished. Women should undergo a short training in how to handle donkey carts. Men promise to borrow their carts to their wives.	A delegation of women approaches the programme staff or management. The change of conditions for subsidies and the training will be proposed (and prepared)	Women delegation and all interested women meet 4 weeks from now on this issue
Increasing scarcity of fire wood	Plenty of fire wood nearby	Capacity of tree nursery must be increased New stoves, with which fire wood can be economised should be bought	Mrs. & Mr. Traore from the tree nursery approach programme PORO managers and NGO's active in this field and ask for support. It is discussed, whether and how Micro-credits for stoves could be issued	Tomorrow Mr. Mrs. Traore report on their findings. Micro-credit group meets tomorrow on this issue.

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Delphi Survey

The Delphi Survey is based on a **structured process for collecting and synthesising knowledge** from a **group of experts** by means of a series of **questionnaires** accompanied by controlled opinion feedback.

- The Delphi Survey originated as part of a post-war movement towards forecasting the possible effects of technology development in relation to economic and social re-generation. The Delphi Survey was an attempt to 'align' the sometimes conflicting positions of experts into a coherent and unified perspective.

Goals:

- Facilitate the formation of group judgement

Delphi Survey

Main steps:

1. Determination and formulation of questions
2. Selection of experts
3. Formulation of a first questionnaire that is sent to the experts
4. Analysis of the answers of the first questionnaire
5. Formulation of a second questionnaire that is sent to experts
6. Sending further questionnaires until consensus is reached
7. Summary of the process and drawing up of the final report

Delphi Survey

Advantages

- Useful when the research problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques
- It can help develop consensus among stakeholders, priorities and policies
- Can provide forecasts about the future
- It addresses 3 main problems with focus groups:
  - Dominant personalities
  - Group pressure
  - Noise

Disadvantages

- Cannot produce right or wrong answers only expert opinions
- Opinions may or may not be true
- Consensus does not always mean the right answer
- Internal validity is largely unknown
- This method is NOT a replacement of rigorous scientific methods

Delphi Survey

Other considerations:

- There is no universal agreement of the level of sufficient consensus – it must be decided beforehand
  - Recommendations vary between 51-80%
  - Stability between round may be a better indicator
- Modified Delphi:
  - The first round of open-ended questions are skipped and/or replace by focus groups and/or interviews
    - This can help engage the participants and increase compliance

Realist Evaluation

Realist Evaluation is **not a method but a way of thinking** – realist design **can be incorporated within almost any evaluation**

- After Pawson & Tilley (1997):
  - Sceptical about quasi-experimental methods
    - *„Where several evaluations of similar interventions in different contexts exist, the most usual finding is that the results vary"*
  - Realistic evaluation seeks to **find the contextual conditions that make interventions effective** therefore developing lessons about how they produce outcomes to inform policy decisions.

Goals and main questions:

- Understanding **what works, how, in which conditions and for whom**
- What **Context Mechanism Outcome Configurations** (CMOCs) appear the most successful?

Typical steps of a Realist Evaluation

1. Theory and hypothesis formulation
   - Carry out research to establish prevailing Middle Range Theory (MRT)
   - Map out a series of conjectural mini-theories or Context Mechanism Outcome Configurations (CMOCs)
2. Data collection
   - Includes quantitative and qualitative research
   - The aim is to refine, refute or demonstrate how CMCOs have operated in practice
3. Data analysis and conclusions
   - How mechanisms have operated in programme contexts to generate results – which CMO configurations were substantiated, which were invalidated and which need to be revised

Context Mechanism Outcome Configurations

Three investigative areas that need to be addressed when evaluating the impact of an intervention within any given context:

- **Mechanism**: *what is it about a measure which may lead it to have a particular outcome in a given context?*
- **Context**: *what conditions are needed for a measure to trigger mechanisms to produce particular outcomes patterns?*
- **Outcomes pattern**: *what are the practical effects produced by causal mechanisms being triggered in a given context?*

Middle Range Theory

- Middle-range theory starts with an empirical phenomenon (as opposed to a broad abstract entity like the social system) and abstracts from it to create general statements that can be verified by data

General Elimination Methodology

Steps:

1. Identify possible explanations
   - One of these possible explanations is that the program produced the outcomes and impacts that can be observed.
   - At this stage you should identify as many possible alternative explanations as you can
2. Gather and analyse data to see if the possible alternative explanations can be ruled out

Process Tracing

Process tracing is an **analytic tool** for drawing **descriptive and causal inferences** from diagnostic pieces of evidence.

It is a **case-based approach** which focuses on the use of **clues within a case** (**causal-process observations, CPOs**) to **adjudicate between** alternative possible **explanations.**

Type of tests:

- 'Straw in the wind'
- 'Hoop'
- 'Smoking gun'
- 'Doubly definitive'

Process Tracing Tests

		SUFFICIENT FOR AFFIRMING CAUSAL INFERENCE	
		No	Yes
NECESSARY FOR AFFIRMING CAUSAL INFERENCE	No	**1. Straw-in-the-Wind**	**3. Smoking-Gun**
		a. Passing: Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it.	**a. Passing:** Confirms hypothesis.
		b. Failing: Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is slightly weakened.	**b. Failing:** Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is somewhat weakened.
		c. Implications for rival hypotheses: **Passing** *slightly* weakens them. **Failing** *slightly* strengthens them.	**c. Implications for rival hypotheses:** **Passing** *substantially* weakens them. **Failing** *somewhat* strengthens them.
	Yes	**2. Hoop**	**4. Doubly Decisive**
		a. Passing: Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it.	**a. Passing:** Confirms hypothesis and eliminates others.
		b. Failing: Eliminates hypothesis.	**b. Failing:** Eliminates hypothesis.
		c. Implications for rival hypotheses: **Passing** *somewhat* weakens them. **Failing** *somewhat* strengthens them.	**c. Implications for rival hypotheses:** **Passing** *eliminates* them. **Failing** *substantially* strengthens.

Source: Adapted from Bennett (2010, 210), who builds on categories formulated by Van Evera (1997, 31–32).

Process Tracing example

Overview of "Silver Blaze"

Causal Puzzle

To explain the murder of John Straker and, secondarily, the disappearance and whereabouts of the racehorse Silver Blaze.

Main Characters

Silver Blaze, the racehorse that is the favorite for the Essex Cup, has disappeared.

John Straker, the horse's trainer, has been killed by a terrible blow that shattered his head.

Fitzroy Simpson, a prime suspect, has been lurking around the stable seeking inside information about the race.

Ned Hunter, a stable boy, has been drugged with opium concealed in curried mutton. He therefore fails to guard Silver Blaze on the night of the horse's disappearance.

Colonel Ross is the owner of King's Pyland Stables and of Silver Blaze.

Hypotheses

Independent Variables	*Intervening Variables*	*Dependent Variables*
H1. Romantic entanglement started chain of events	H3. Straker abducted horse	H6. Simpson killed Straker
H2. Chain of events started in Straker household	H4. Straker planned to harm horse	H7. Straker killed himself
	H5. Straker practiced the injury	H8. Horse killed Straker

Process Tracing example

Straw-in-the-Wind Tests

H1. Straker's romantic entanglement set chain of events into motion.

Clues. A bill from an expensive women's clothing store is found in Straker's pocket, and his wife is ignorant of the clothing in question.

Inference. The bill was owed by Straker for an expensive gift to another woman, and Straker may have been in financial difficulty. This could give him a motive for throwing the race.

Summary. This promising lead, a *straw-in-the-wind*, lends weight to H1, but is not by itself a decisive piece of evidence.

H3. Straker abducted the horse.

Clue. The dog did nothing (i.e., did not bark) in the night during which the horse disappeared.

Inference. The person who approached the stable, possibly Straker, was well-known to the dog. This raises questions about why Straker might have gone to the stable. It suggests that perhaps he came to abduct the horse, but does not strongly demonstrate this.

Summary. This *straw-in-the-wind* favors H3, but does not confirm it.

Process Tracing example

Hoop Tests

H6. Simpson killed Straker.

Clue. Simpson had a potential murder weapon.

Inference. This weapon is consistent with the hypothesis, but does not by itself demonstrate Simpson's guilt.

Summary. Simpson had a potential weapon, so H6 passes this *hoop* test.

H6. Simpson killed Straker.

Clues. Simpson's timid, non-menacing appearance, plus the fact that Straker's "head had been shattered by a savage blow from some heavy weapon."

Inference. With a stronger assumption based on his appearance, Simpson could not have inflicted the blow that shattered Straker's head.

Alternative Inference. With a weaker assumption, Simpson's appearance raises doubts that he would have committed the murder, but does not preclude it.

Summary. With a stronger assumption this is a *hoop* test which H6 fails; with a weaker assumption it is a *straw-in-the-wind* test which casts doubt on H6.

Process Tracing example

Smoking-Gun Tests

H2. The chain of events started in Straker's household.

Clues. The household maid brought the stable boy curried mutton, and he was found later to have been drugged.

Inference. The curry was served to conceal the opium, which in turn was used to drug the stable boy. When it is clear that the curry could only have been introduced in the mutton by someone in Straker's household, members of his household become inextricably linked to a key causal step.

Summary. The clues yield a *smoking-gun* test that confirms H2.

H4. Straker planned to harm the horse.

Clue. Unusual, surgical knife found with Straker.

Inference: The knife is interpreted as *exceptionally* unusual—establishing intent to harm.

Alternative Inference: The knife is interpreted as *somewhat* unusual, suggesting, but hardly confirming, intent to harm. It might possibly be a coincidence.

Summary. If the knife is exceptionally unusual, it is a *smoking gun* that confirms H4. With a weaker interpretation that the knife was somewhat unusual, it is a *straw-in-the-wind* that makes H4 more plausible, without confirming it.

Process Tracing example

Building a Doubly Decisive Test by Evaluating Alternative Hypotheses

H6. Simpson killed Straker.

Clues. The household maid brought the stable boy curried mutton, and he was found later to have been drugged.

Inference. The curry served to conceal the opium, which in turn was used to drug the stable boy. Because the curry could only have been introduced in the mutton by someone in Straker's household, Simpson is excluded from consideration.

Summary for H6. This *hoop* test rejects H6, eliminating Simpson as a suspect.

H7. Straker killed himself.

Clue. Straker's head was "shattered by a savage blow from some heavy weapon."

Inference. Straker could not have shattered his own head with such a blow.

Summary for H7. This *hoop* test rejects H7, eliminating Straker as a suspect.

H8. The horse killed Straker.

Clues. (a) Bill in Straker's pocket and wife's ignorance of dress; (b) Straker's unusual surgical knife; (c) matches and candle, and the horse disappeared at night; (d) the unusual form of death—Straker's head was "shattered by a savage blow from some heavy weapon."

Inferences. (a) Straker's romantic entanglement and resulting financial difficulty provided a motive to throw the race (*straw-in-the-wind*, table 3); (b) Straker planned to harm the horse (*smoking gun* or *straw-in-the-wind*, table 5); (c) when Straker attempted to harm the horse at night, the candle and prick of the knife frightened the horse and led to a fatal kick (*straw-in-the-wind*); (d) the unusual form of death (savage blow) points to an extreme or unusual cause, i.e., the horse's kick (*straw-in-the-wind*).

Summary for H8. The combined weight of four *straws-in-the-wind*, one of which may be a *smoking gun*, strongly favor the hypothesis that the horse killed Straker.

Summary of Doubly Decisive Test. Two of the three suspects are eliminated by *hoop* tests, leaving only the horse. A series of additional inferences strongly implicate the horse. The combined weight of evidence confirms H8, that the horse killed Straker.

Most Significant Change

The Most Significant Change (MSC) approach involves **generating and analysing personal accounts of change** and deciding which of these accounts is **the most significant.**

- After Davies & Dart (2005)

Goals and main questions:

- If done well, can generate useful information for the specification and subsequent assessment of a Theory of Change.

Most Significant Case

Steps:

1. Deciding the types of stories that should be collected
2. Collecting the stories and determining which stories are the most significant
3. Sharing the stories and discussion of values with stakeholders and contributors

Success Case Method

The Success Case Method is **a narrative technique** using **naturalistic enquiry** and **case study analysis**

- After Binkerhoff (2003):
  - *„Searches out and surfaces successes, bringing them to light in persuasive and compelling stories so that they can be weighed… provided as motivating and concrete examples to others, and learned from so that we have a better understanding of why things worked and why they did not."*

Goals and main questions:

- Focuses on the **very best and very worst results** of intervention and the role of **contextual factors in driving them**

Outcome Mapping

Outcome mapping (OM) is a **methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating development initiatives** in order to bring about sustainable social change.

OM provides a **set of tools** that can be used stand-alone or in combination with other planning, monitoring and evaluation systems to:

- identify individuals, groups or organisations with whom you will work directly to influence behavioural change;
- plan and monitor behavioural change and the strategies to support those changes;
- monitor internal practices of the project or program to remain effective;
- create an evaluation framework to examine more precisely a particular issue.

Robust methodology: 3 stages, 12 steps

Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) is a **case-based method** which **identifies different combinations of factors that are critical to a given result, in a given context.**

Logic:

- Qualitative data/evidence on potentially relevant factors is turned into a quantitative score that can be compared across cases
  - Crisp set QCA: cases coded into ”0” and ”1”
  - Multi-value QCA: allows for some intermediate values (e.g. 0.33)
  - Fuzzy set QCA: allows for coding on a continuous scale anywhere between ”0” and ”1”

Common steps in TBIE methods

1. Set out the evaluation question(s)
2. Set out the programme's theory of change
3. Develop an evaluation plan for data collection and analysis
4. Identify alternative causal hypotheses
5. Use evidence to verify the causal chain

How to choose methods?

The choice of methods and techniques depends on:

- The type of the socio-economic intervention;
- The evaluation purpose;
- The stage in the programme/policy cycle;
- The scope of the evaluation;
- The number and homogeneity of beneficiaries (sample)

Reliability and validity of data

- Primary sources
- Secondary sources

Validity of the analysis

- Internal
- External

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