Are we making a difference?

Robust approaches to planning, monitoring and achieving outcomes

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Evidence. Action. Change.

Introducing Matter of Focus

We are on a mission to help organisations improve outcomes for people and communities.

We work with organisations

- helping them understand and work meaningfully with the outcomes that matter to them
- supporting them to use data and evidence effectively
- bringing tools and techniques they can use to track change

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Certified B Corporation

This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact

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Some of our clients

unicef | for every child
Office of Research-Innocenti

EDINBURGH COMMUNITY HEALTH FORUM

NHS Education for Scotland

EAST RENFREWSHIRE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP

Technoleg Iechyd Cymru
Health Technology Wales

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

End Violence Against Children
THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative

bold Bringing Out Leaders in Dementia

Clackmannanshire & Stirling Health & Social Care Partnership

age Scotland
Love later life

NHS Lothian

TEC Technology Enabled Care

penumbra
your way to a brighter future

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In this presentation

- Understanding how we make a difference - challenges
- Potential solutions
- Learnings from work with 50+ organisations
- Discussion

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Are we making a difference?

- Public services dealing with increasingly complex problems
- Unpredictable internal and external environments
- Tenacity of fundamental problems (poverty, inequality etc)
- All sectors increasingly aligned to the mission of making a difference to people and communities (research, government, third sector, public services)
- Increasing availability of information and data

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Are we making a difference?

- Public services dealing with increasingly complex problems

Complex problems need complexity-informed solutions

- Increasing availability of information and data

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Are we making a difference - evaluation challenges

- It is difficult to measure what really matters
- Organisations have lots data, evidence and feedback but no systems to streamline or help them understand, drive and report on change
- Organisations want an evidence-based picture of what is working or not so they can improve.
- Organisations need to tell an evidence-based story of how their work changes people's lives

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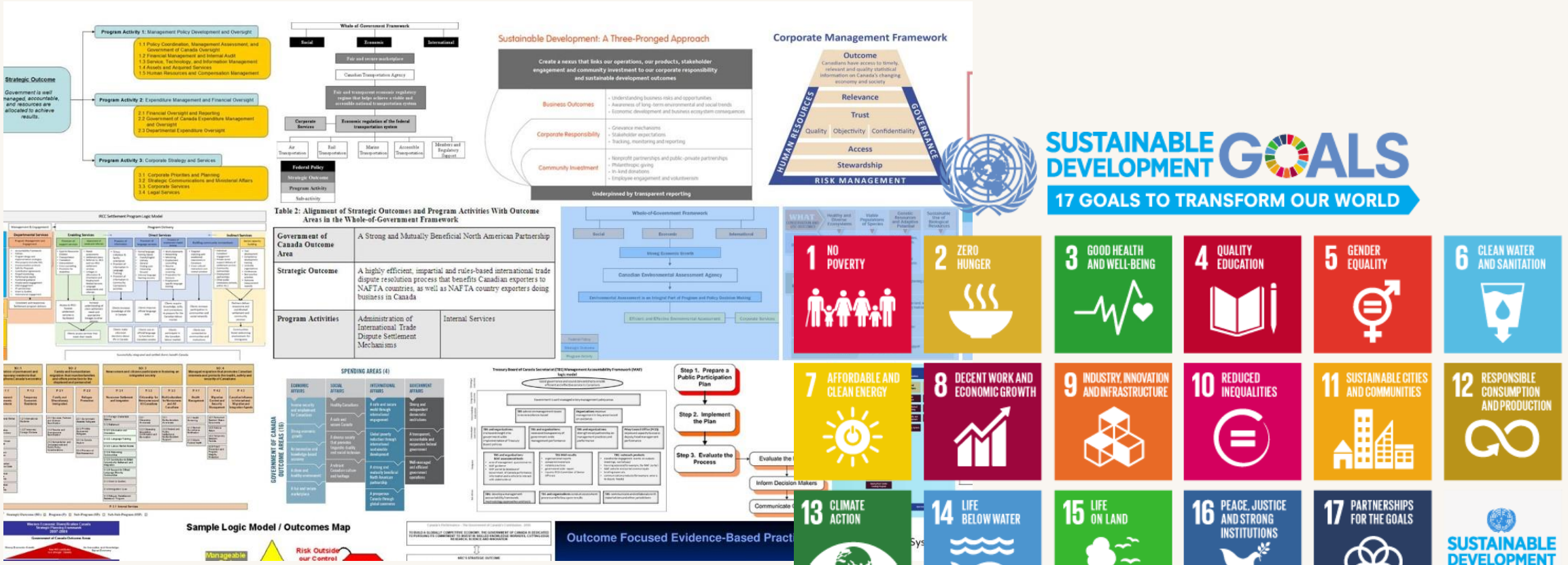
Outcomes as a vision for social change



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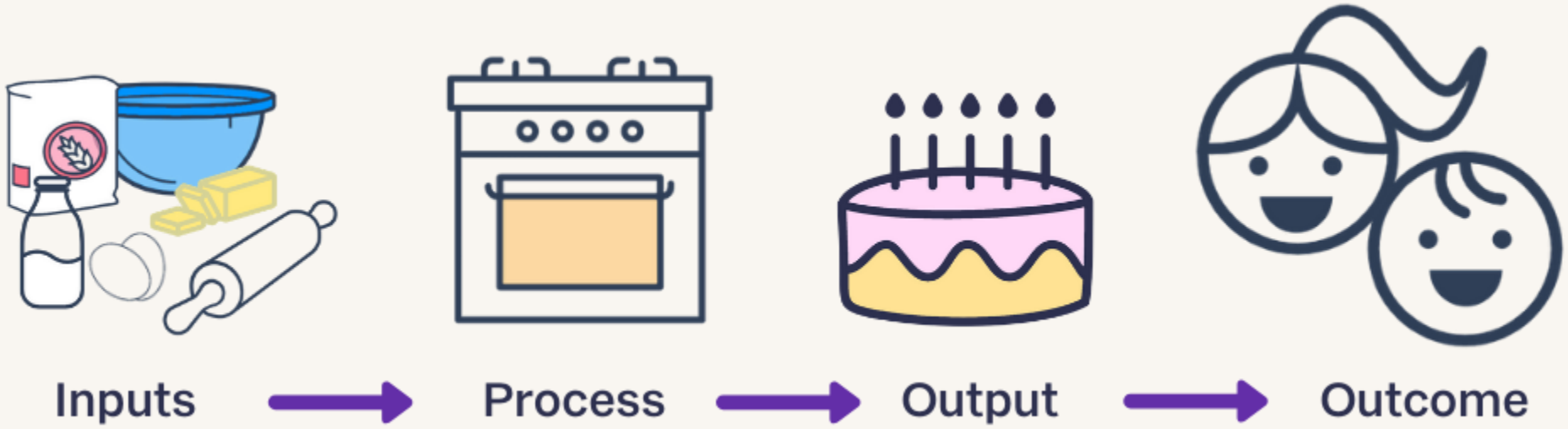
What are outcomes?

Outcomes are commonly defined as the end result of an intervention



What does success look like?

Guiding question for working with social change initiatives

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Outcomes as a framework for action

- Vision of where we want to get to
- Plan of how we can work together
- Way to check on progress - flex as required
- Reflect on the process and share and embed our learning
- Tell our story

But there are challenges

High level outcomes are hard to measure

People supporting people makes change

Just focussing on high level outcomes creates problems

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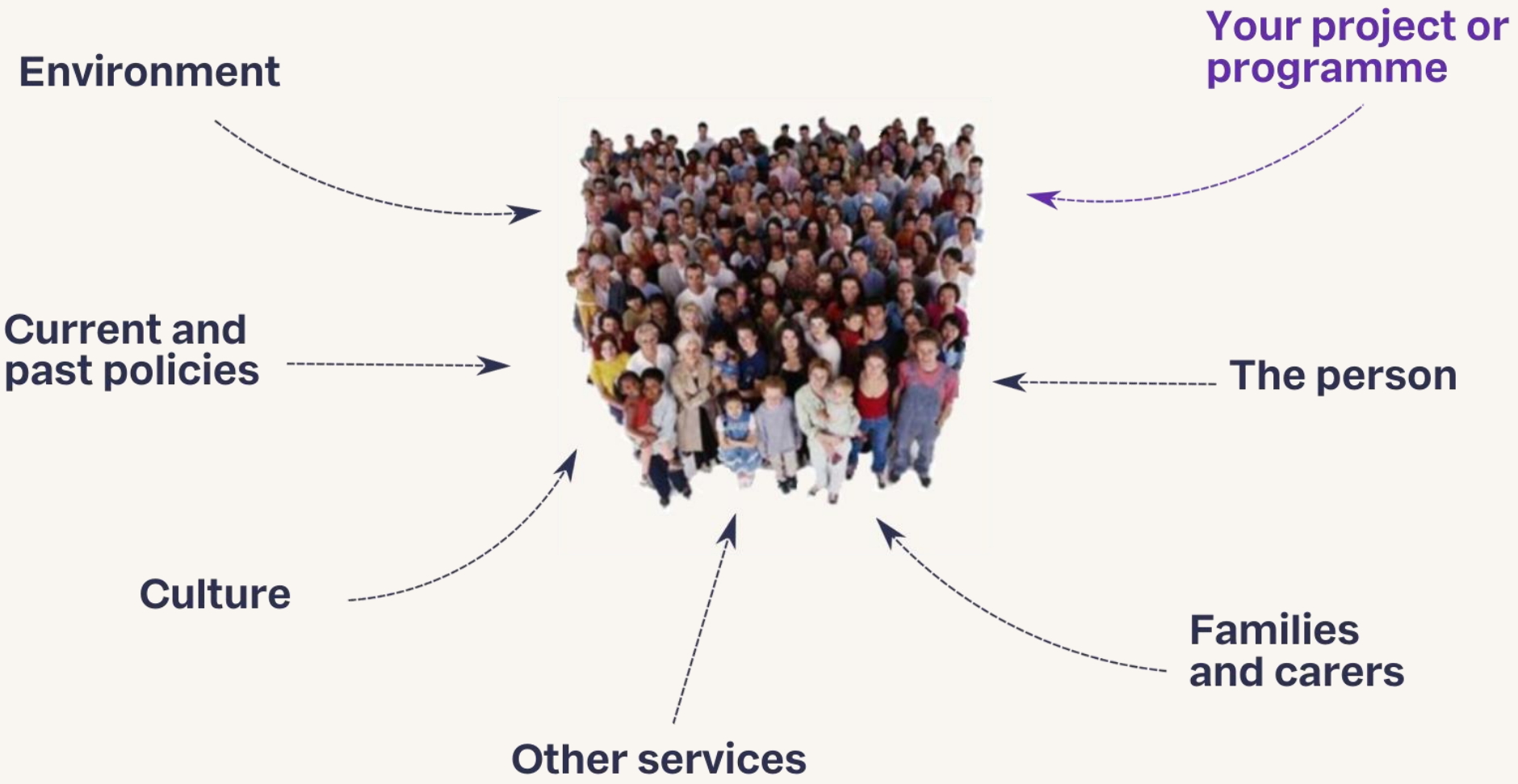
Multiple factors influence change



A focus on high-level outcomes can…

- X **Promote gaming** (e.g. waiting list time ‘work-arounds’)
- X **Work to targets not outcomes** (e.g. asking lower-achieving pupils to leave)
- X Doesn’t show **how** the initiative made a difference

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empowerment

support

wellbeing

trust

emotions

People make change- harder to quantify

Data gets worse before it gets better

For example – a programme aimed at reducing isolation

People report more isolation because

- They think someone is finally interested in their views
- They understand different forms of loneliness and isolation
- There are support programmes in place- people show up and the problem seems bigger

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Simple before and after measure problems (e.g. confidence)

- At the start of the programme
  - Don’t know you
  - Haven’t thought much about confidence
  - Want present a good front

➢Rate confidence medium/high

- After the programme
  - Trust you
  - Have a good understanding of confidence
  - Have better insight into themselves

➢Rate confidence lower

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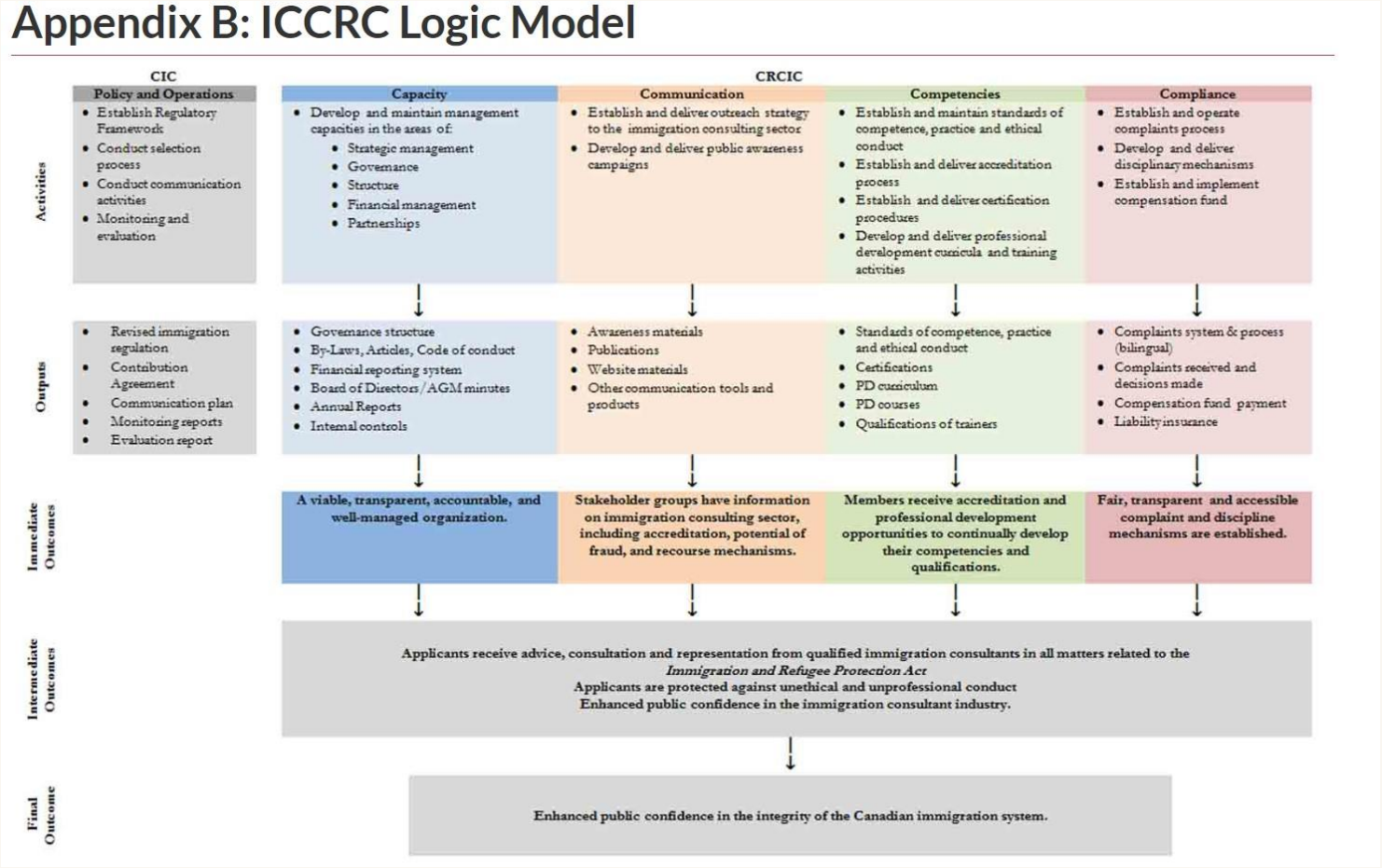
Outcome frameworks leave a lot of gaps about *how…*



Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council Logic Model

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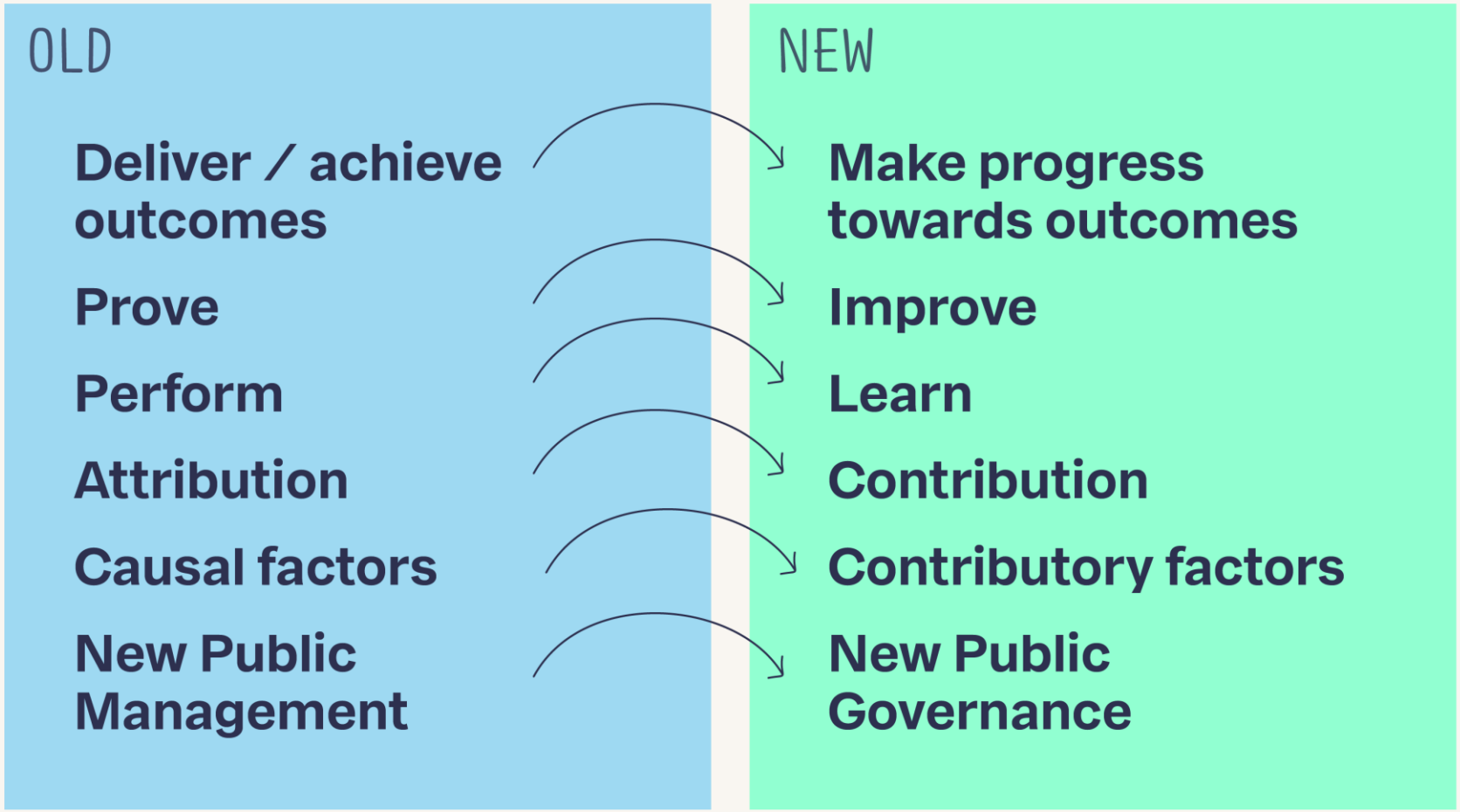
The system is not ready- paradigm shift



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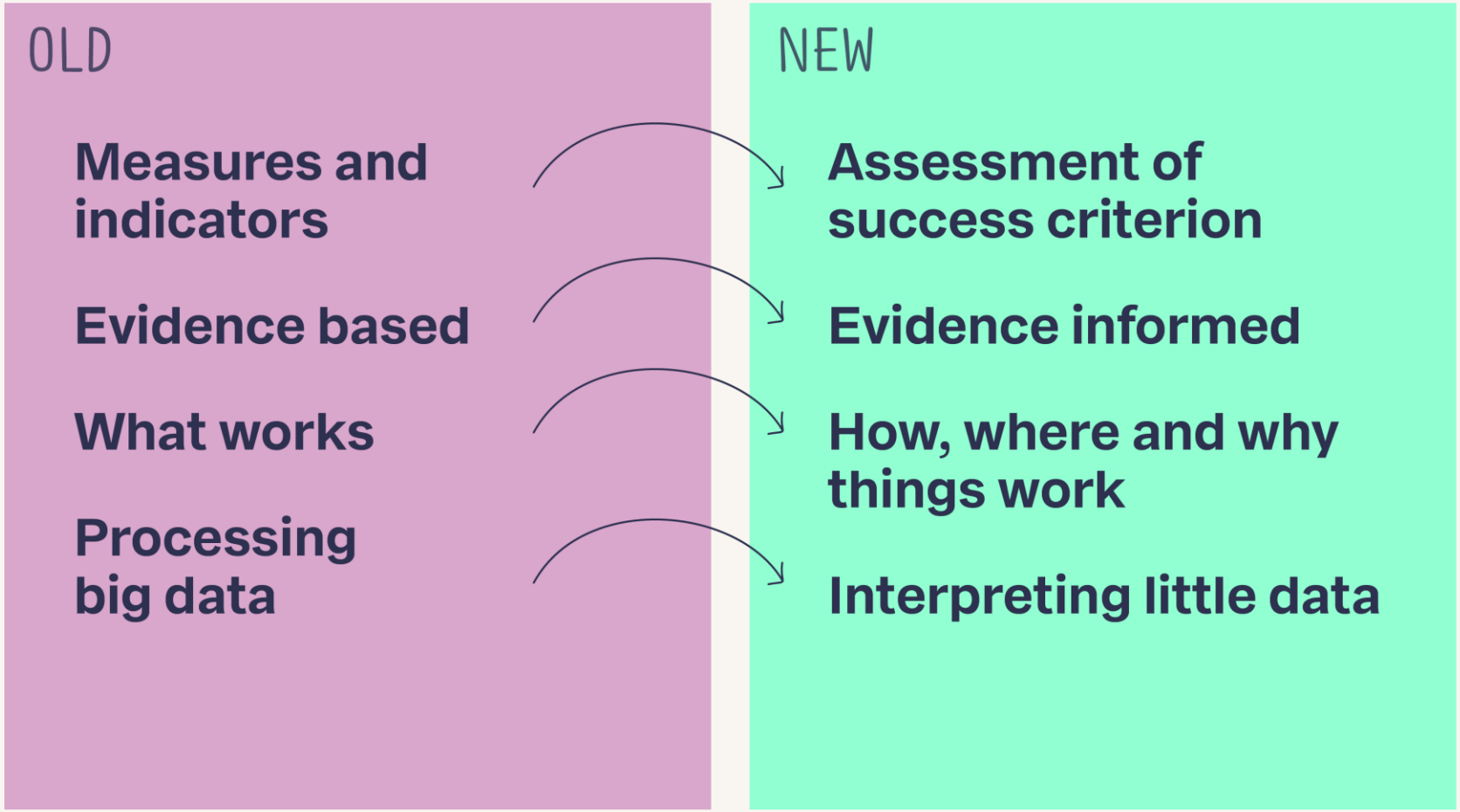
A new paradigm for evidence



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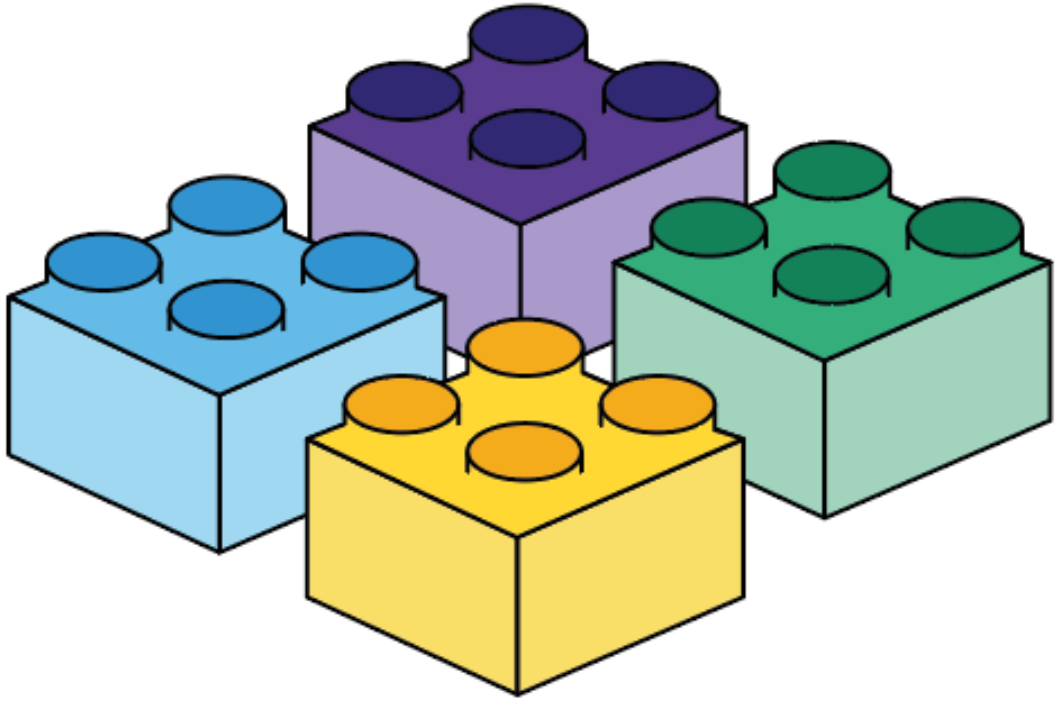
Understanding processes *AND* outcomes

- Are we making a difference?
  - ➢outcome assessment at population level- meaningful across projects/programmes
- How are we making a difference?
  - ➢process recording, reflection and assessment
- Can this approach make a difference?
  - ➢recording implementation of innovation
- Is this making a difference?
  - ➢tracking both process and outcomes
- Demonstrating how you made a difference
  - ➢telling your contribution story

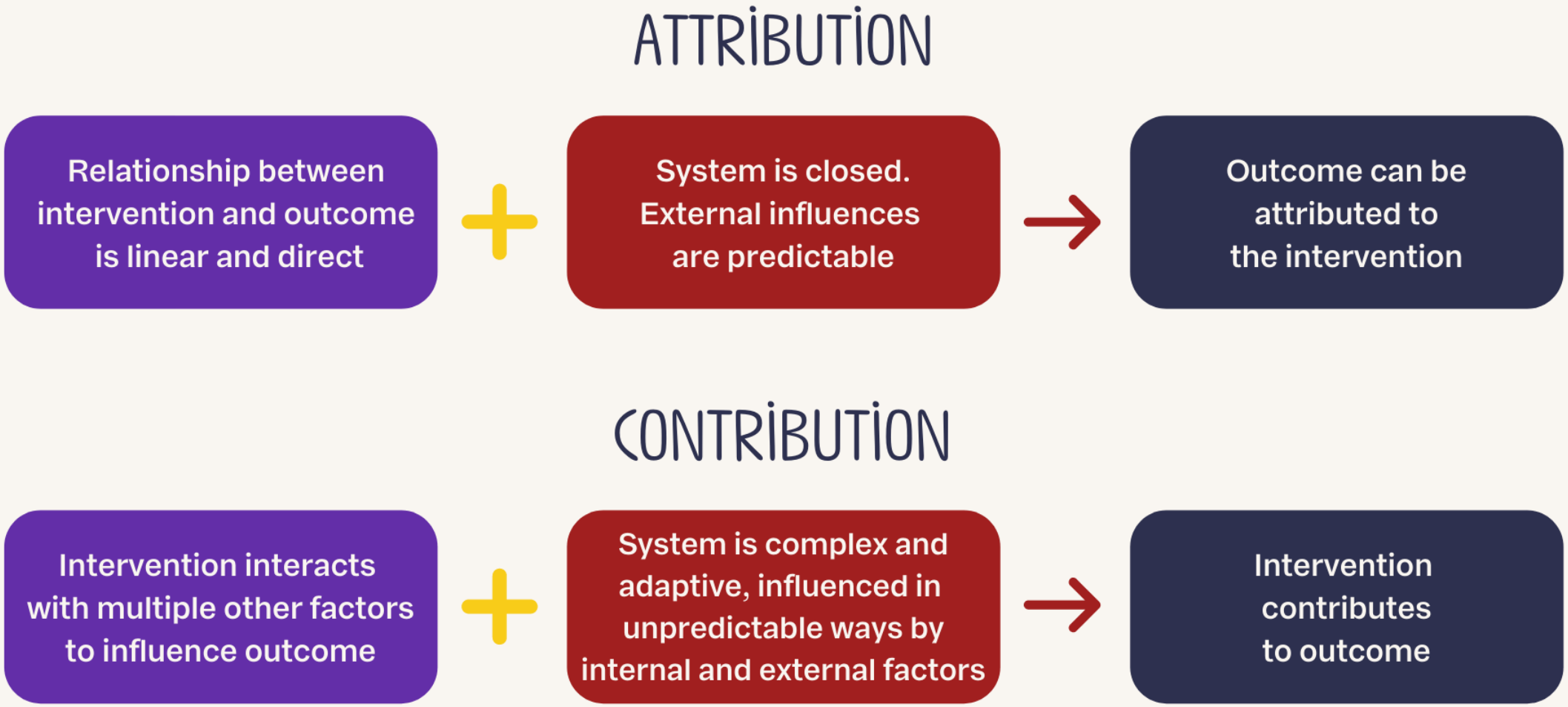
So what’s the solution?

Building blocks

Complexity informed
Evidence to action
Meaningful outcomes
Flexible software tool



Understanding cause and effect

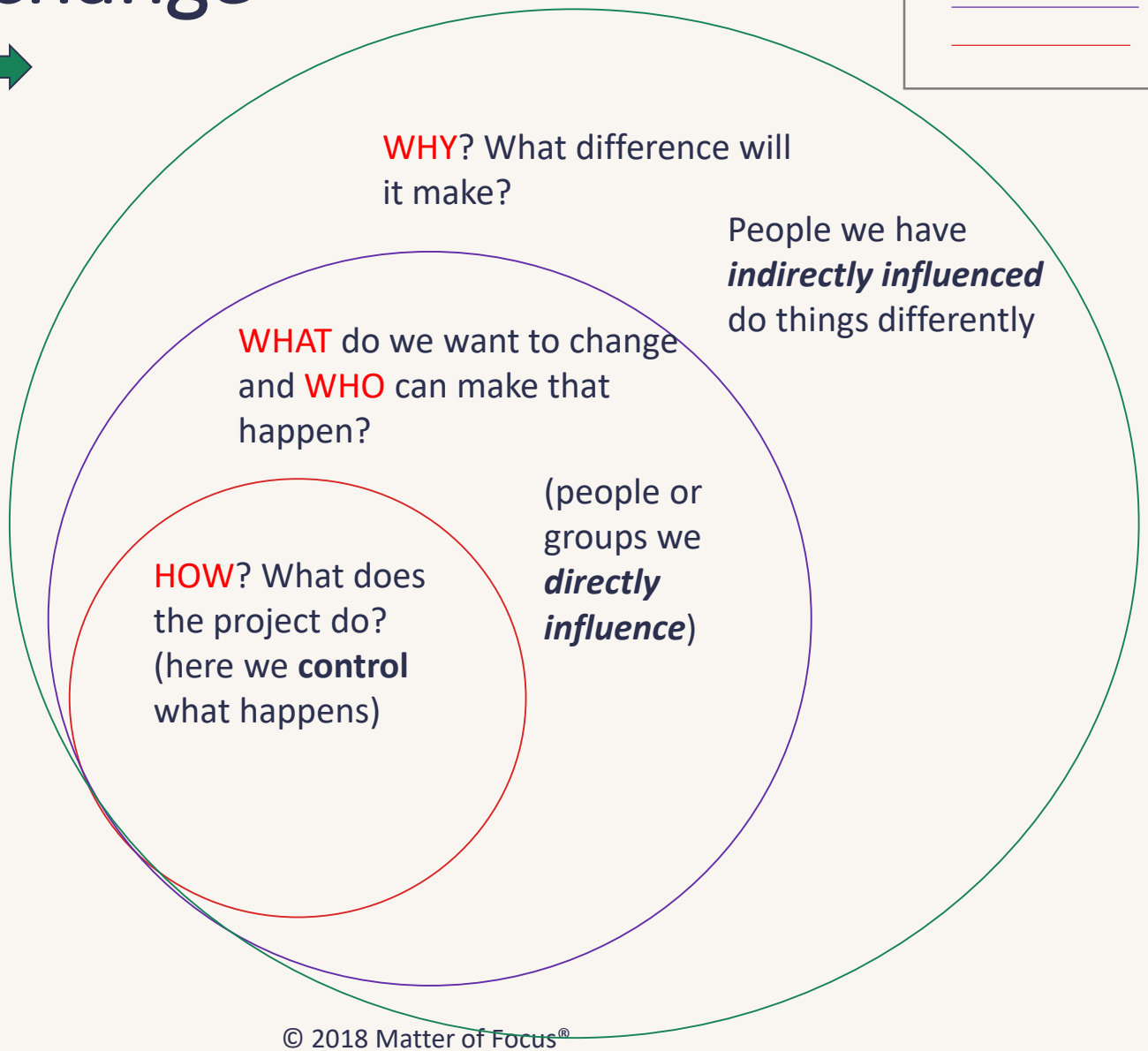


Understanding change

We need other policies and ways of doing things to be helping and things beyond our control might stop this happening

We need people to respond well and have the ability to change to make this happen

We make this happen if we have the right resources and activities



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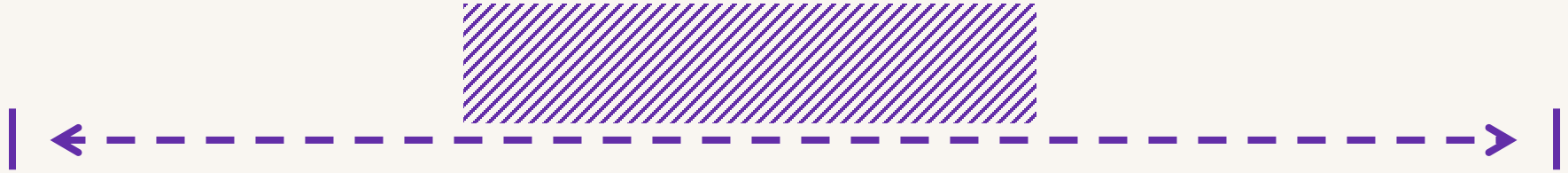
Navigating complexity

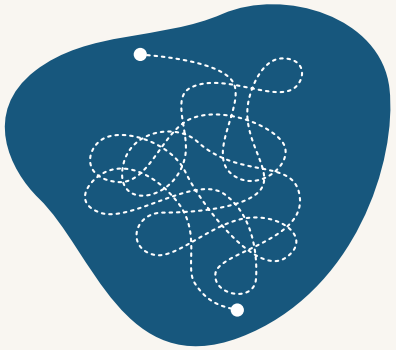
COMPLEX ENOUGH

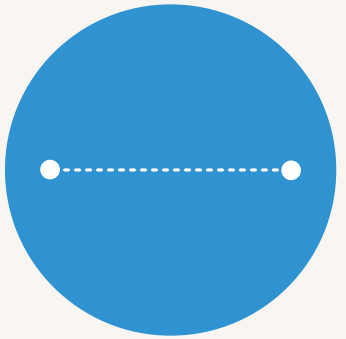
SIMPLE ENOUGH



Too complex

Too simple





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Our approach

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Matter of Focus Process

1

Map context and how activities reach outcomes

Map the outcomes that matter to the organisation or initiative and how they are influenced by context

2

Audit evidence and develop plan

How will you know this is working and how will you get this evidence?

3

Track progress

Bring together data and information to assess how well the work is progressing to outcomes- supported by software

4

Ongoing discussion, reflection, analysis and reporting

Embed learning to improve

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Map context:

understand how factors outside your project help and hinder your contribution to outcomes

ISM Behaviour Change Model
Scottish Government (2013)

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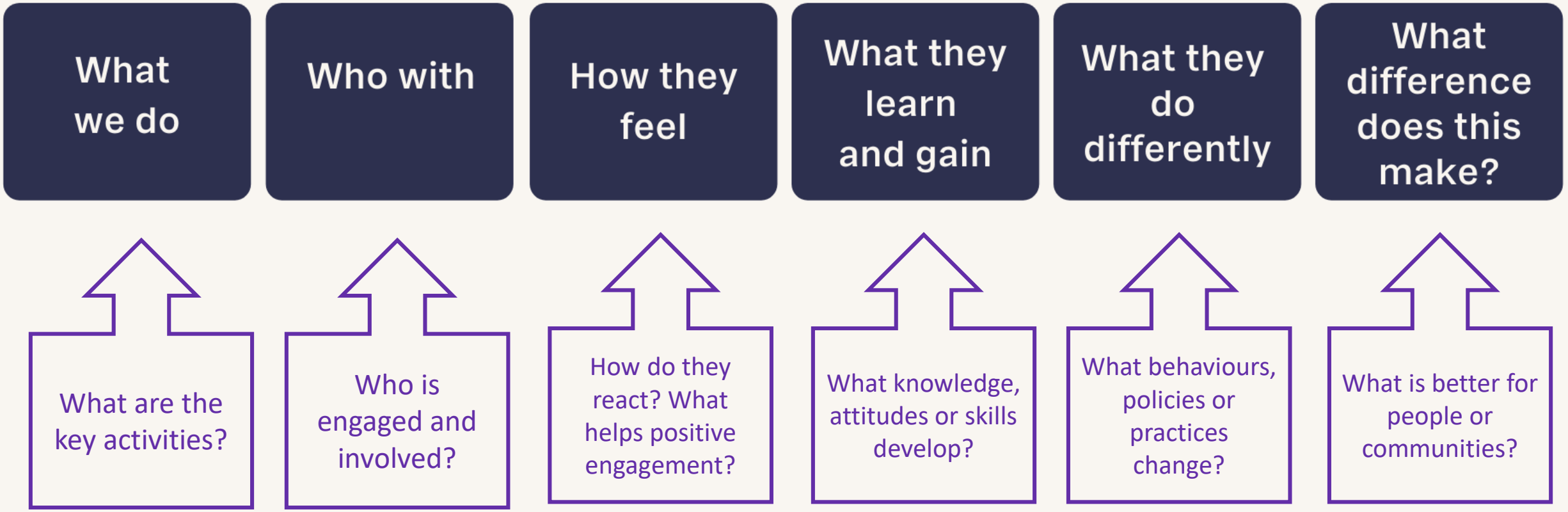
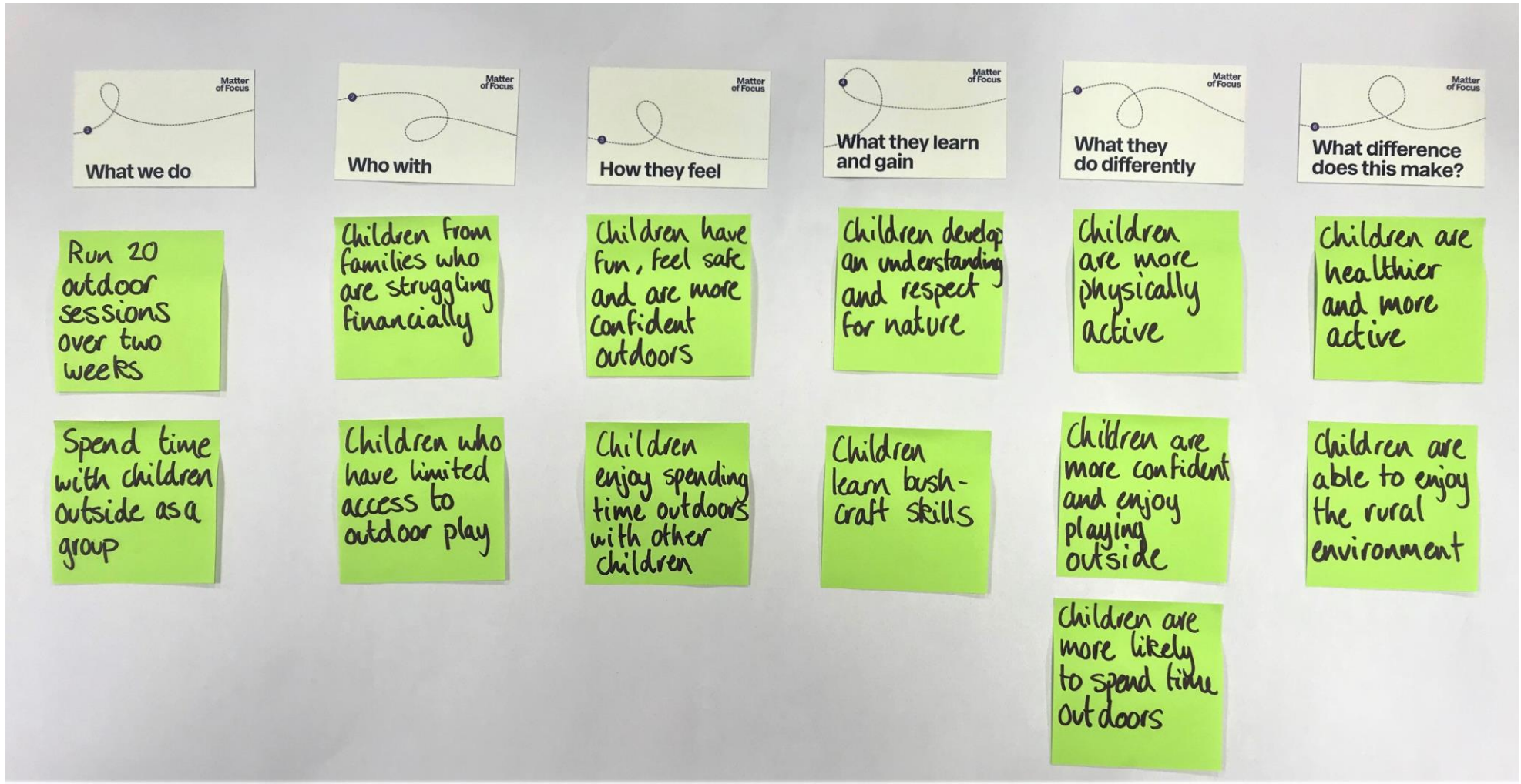
Establishing your contribution



Mapping outcomes



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Shared understanding of outcomes

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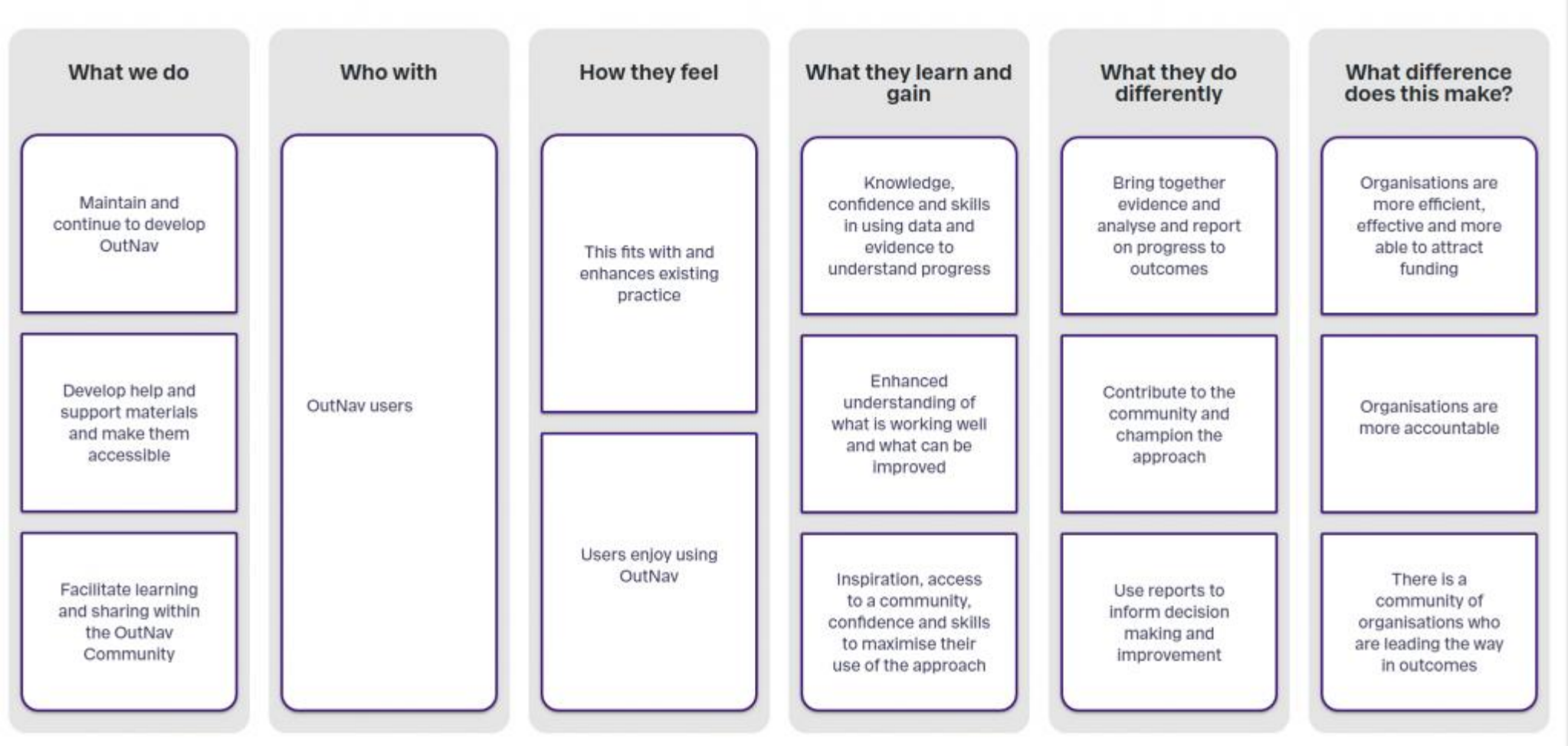
Try it for yourselves….

Outcome map as framework



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Frame your evaluation

Outcome maps form the framework for meaningful outcome evaluation

Track and reflect on change as it happens- adapt and learn

Report on changes retrospectively- evaluate and report

Tell the story of how change happened and what levels of change are appropriate to monitor

Use the logic to demonstrate where you make a contribution

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Risks and assumptions analysis essential

- Why do you think that the work will unfold like this?
- What are you assuming?
- What risks are there?
- How will things beyond the organisation or initiative affect outcomes?
- Are the steps logical and reasonable between each stage in the outcomes framework?

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Collect and collate evidence

A tailored package of evidence appropriate to the context

- What's already being collected – can it be used?
- Where are the gaps in the story – how can these be filled?
- Bring in organisational insights – structured reflections
- Share evidence across similar projects and programmes
- Use the formal evidence base

No one type of evidence fits all

Routine data	Social media	Feedback about experiences of initiative	Notes from staff meetings about key risks/assumptions
Reflective logs	Focus groups	On-line surveys	Case notes
	Creative feedback	Videos/photos	

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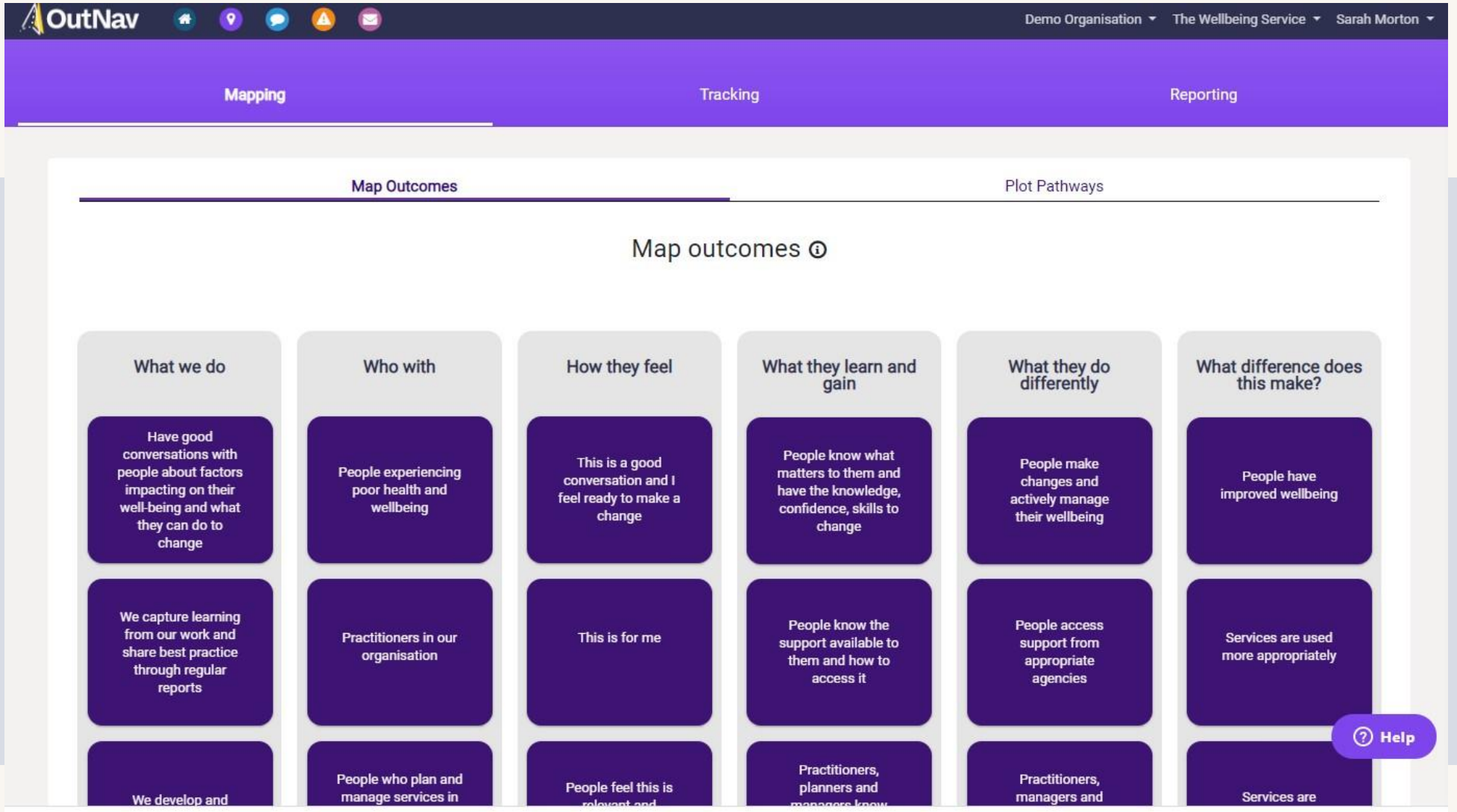
Introducing OutNav



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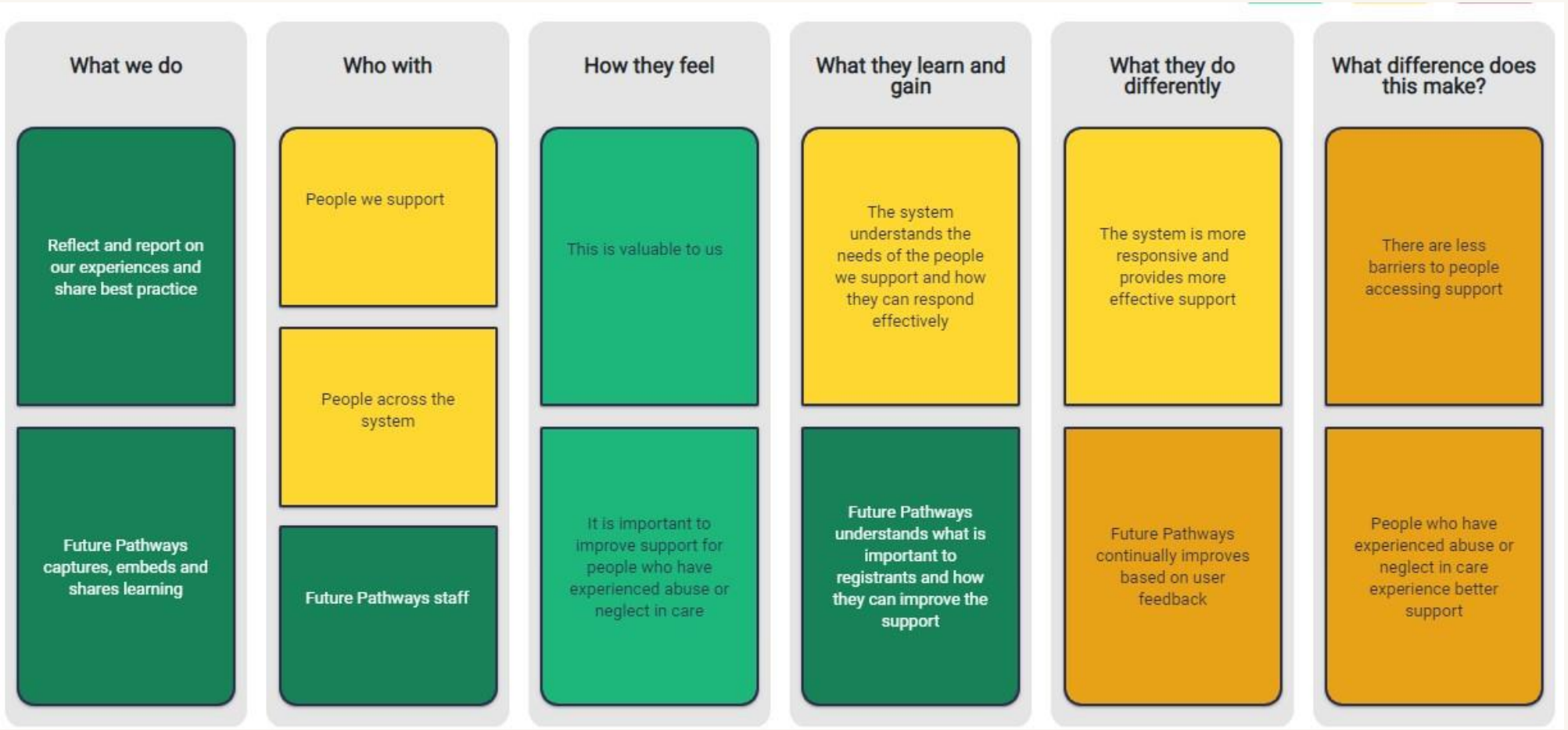
Track Progress

Example: Improve and share best practice
Future Pathways – supporting adult survivors



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Rate progress and evidence

- Progress

Traffic lights

- Confidence

Density of colour

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Benefits of this approach

1. Evidence and tell the story of the difference made
2. Plan for the change you want to see
3. Understand how change happens
4. Pay attention to what is important
5. Put relationships front and centre
6. Learn and share

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So what have we learned….

Client challenges - delivering on social change

- Understand what we do and why- despite changing environments
- Make sense of insights from different strands of work
- Develop aligned framework for multiple targets/ funders requirements
- Have everyone working well together to learn improve and evidence what we do

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From individual cases to organisational insights

CASE NOTE REVIEWS

REFLECTIVE IMPACT LOGS

CREATIVE FEEDBACK

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Client challenges – evidencing a contribution to change

- Work out what data and evidence we need
- Know where our data, feedback and evidence is and how we can use it
- Use our data to improve – even when workloads are demanding
- Do self evaluation consistently –and balance with external evaluation
- Demonstrate how we contribute to outcomes
- Report well and efficiently on what difference we make

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Let’s give up some bad habits

- Searching for the perfect outcome measure
- Creating logic models or theories of change but not using them
- Thinking big data is the answer
- Trying to do the same thing every time
- Searching for a baseline or comparator
- Leaving evaluation to the last minute
- Handing evaluation off to ‘experts’
- Gathering data but not using it

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Make data everyday

- We all need to track our impact or contribution to improving the outcomes that matter to our projects and programmes
- Embedding data, evidence and feedback into everyday work helps:
  - Learning, reflecting, improving
  - Being sure you are making a difference to the people you care about
  - Being able to tell a well-evidenced story to funders and stakeholders
- It is everyone's job, not just for evaluators or management

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Let’s keep the conversation going

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