



Overseas Development
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Measuring the impact of research: experience from ODI's RAPID Programme

John Young

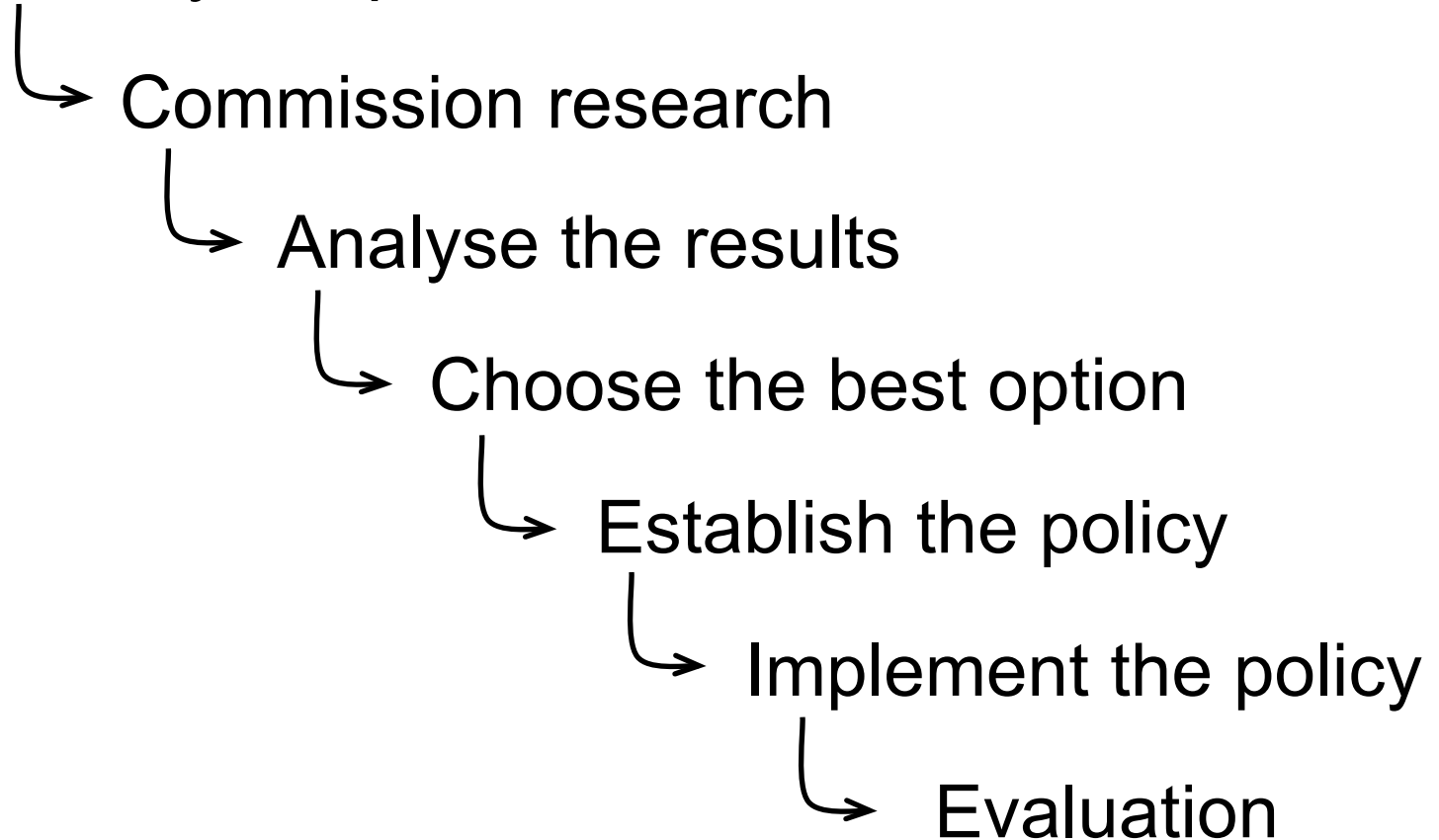
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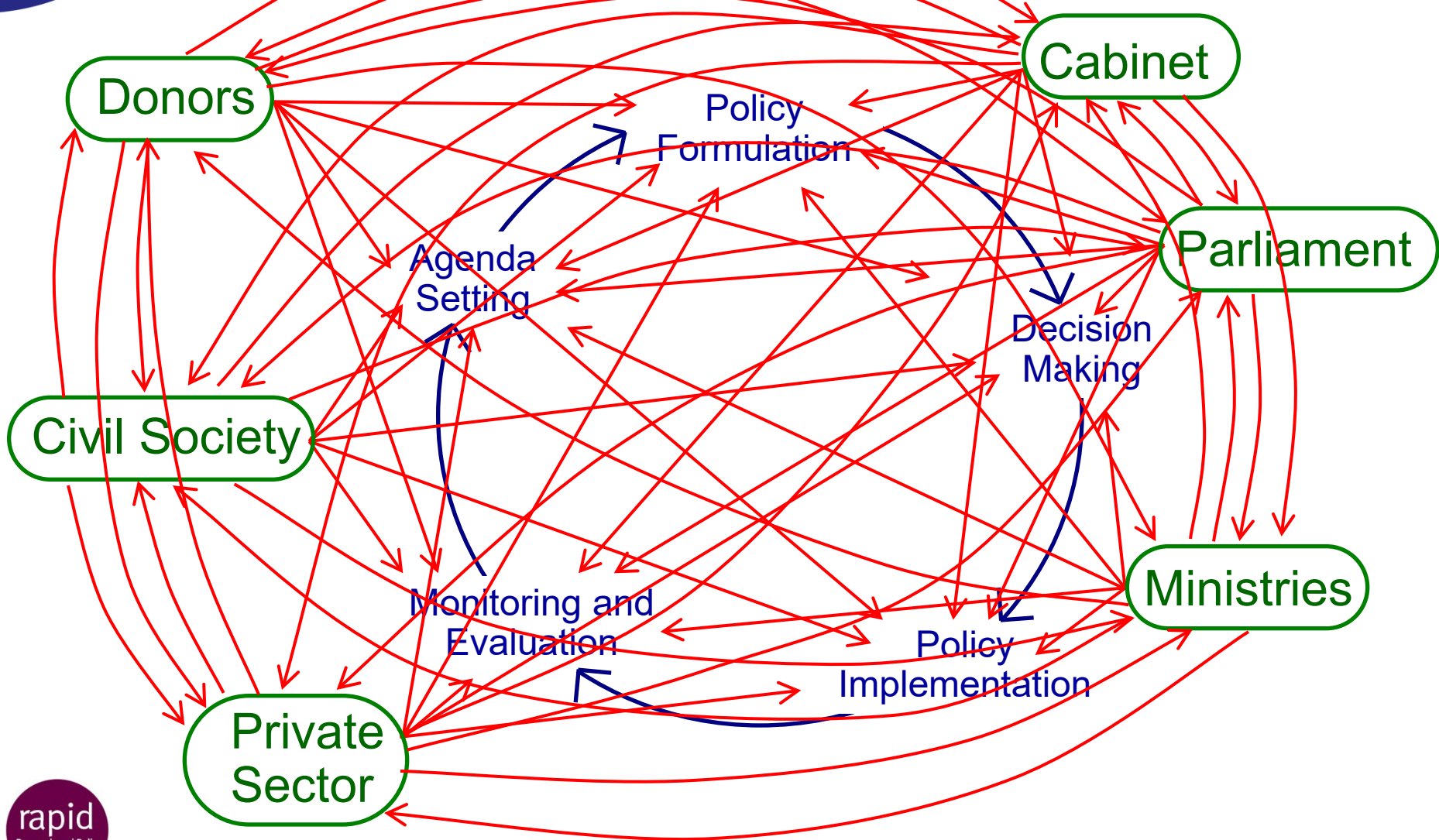


Policy processes are not...

Identify the problem



Policy processes are...



Policy is chaos

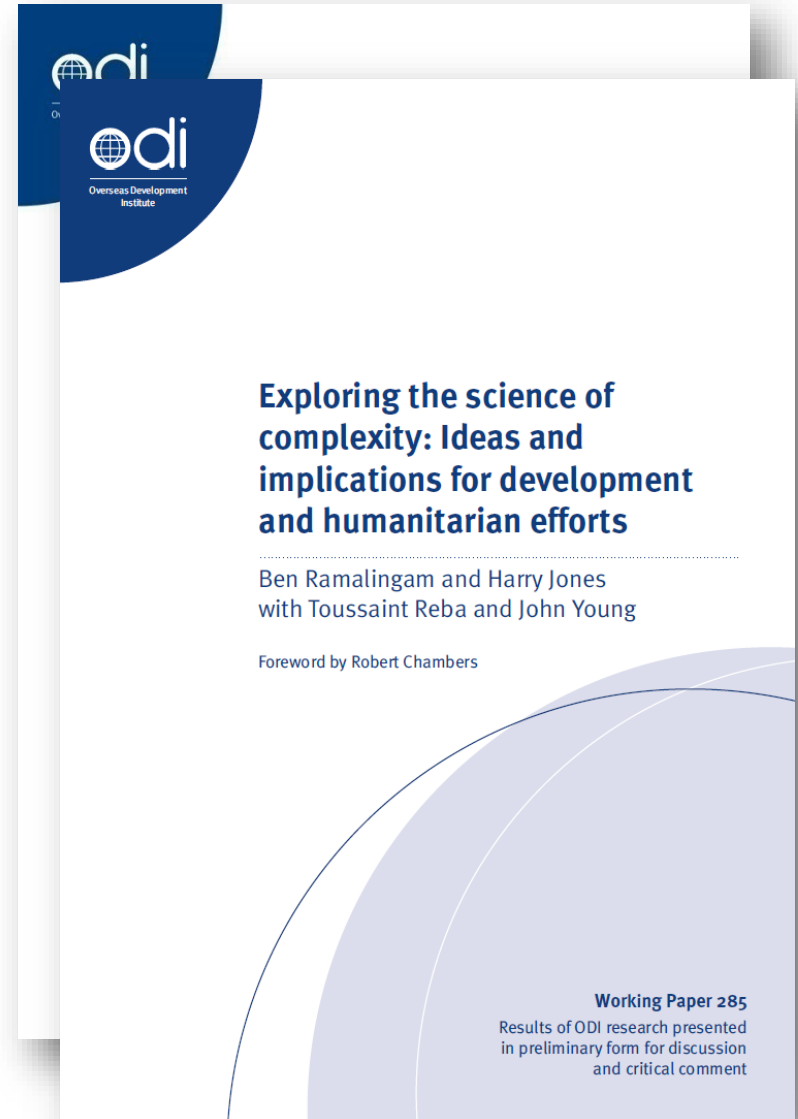
“The whole life of policy is a chaos of purposes and accidents. It is not at all a matter of the rational implementation of the so-called decisions through selected strategies”

Clay & Schaffer (1984), Room for Manoeuvre: An Exploration of Public Policy in Agricultural and Rural Development, Heineman Educational Books, London

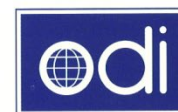
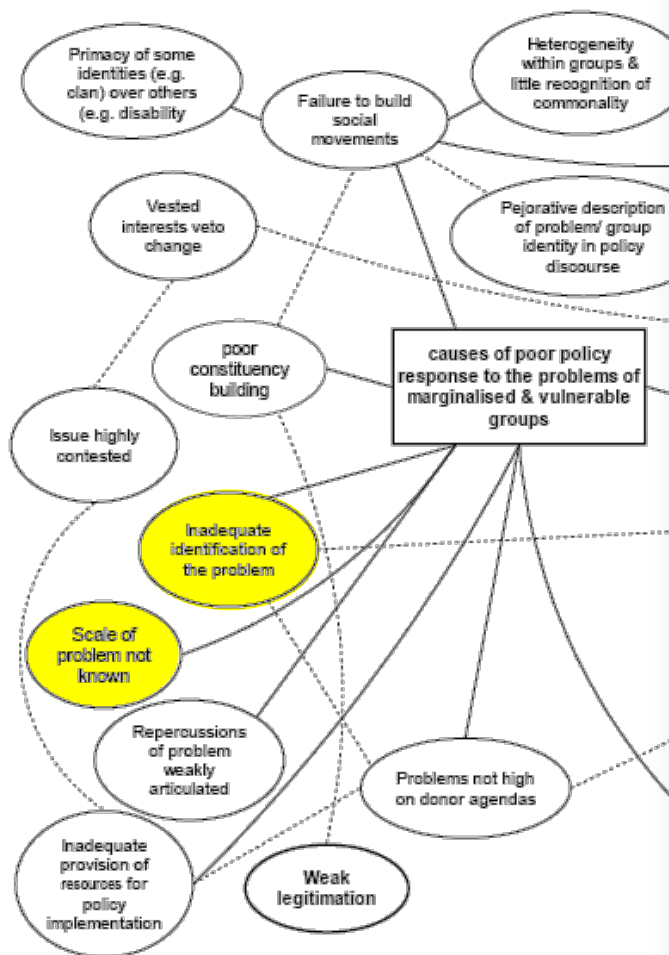


Policy is complex

- Interconnected
- Feedback
- Emergence
- Nonlinearity
- Sensitivity
- Changing
- Edge of chaos
- Adaptive agents
- Self-organising
- Co-evolution



Research plays a minor role



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Fracture Points in Social Policies for Chronic Poverty Reduction

Kate Bird and Nicola Pratt with
Tammie O'Neil and Vincent J. Bolt



**Chronic Poverty
Research Centre**

Working Paper 242

Results of ODI research presented in preliminary
form for discussion and critical comment

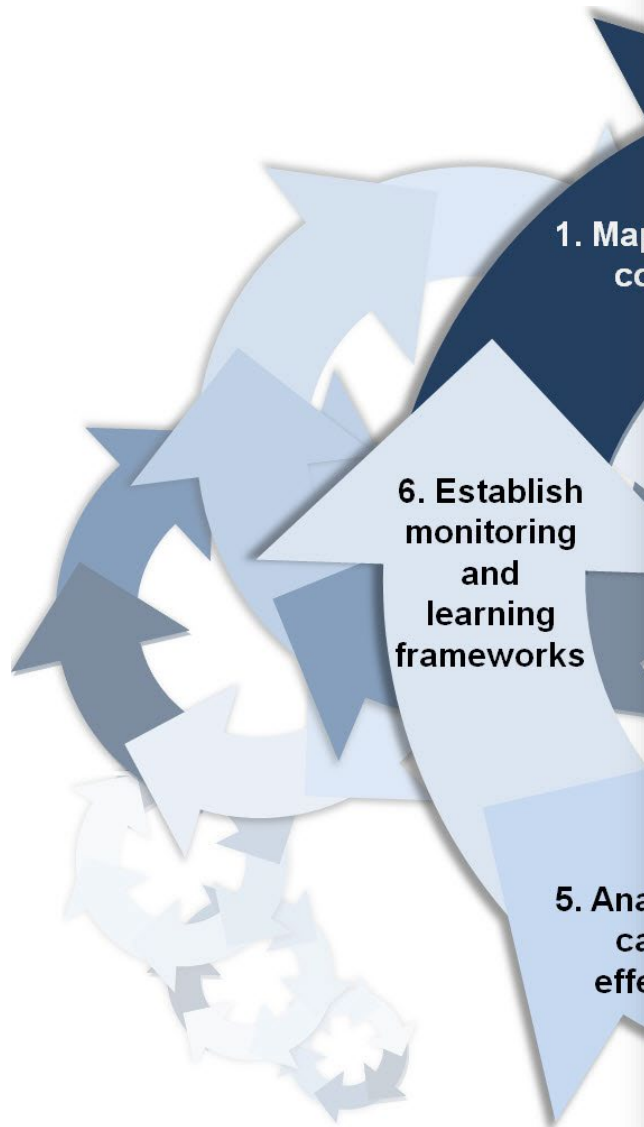
Research can transform lives

“The results of household disease surveys informed processes of health service reform which contributed to a 43 and 46 per cent reduction in infant mortality between 2000 and 2003 in two districts in rural Tanzania.”



TEHIP Project, Tanzania: www.idrc.ca/tehip

An iterative flexible approach



Helping researchers become policy entrepreneurs

How to develop engagement strategies for evidence-based policy-making

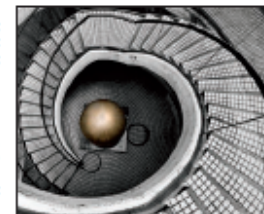
Donors spend billions of dollars on development research each year, but what is the impact on policy? What really influences policy-makers? Is it hard facts? Is it stories and anecdotes? What are they looking for, and who do they listen to, when considering policy options? Facts alone – no matter how authoritative – may not be enough.

This Briefing Paper summarises ODI's work on understanding how policy processes operate in the real world, as part of its mandate to inspire and inform policy and practice that lead to the reduction of poverty. ODI's Research and Policy in Development programme (RAPID) helps other organisations, and ODI itself, lock together high quality applied research, practical policy advice, and policy-focused dissemination and debate. RAPID also ensures organisations have the skills, capacities and networks necessary to engage successfully in policy discussions.

The paper condenses five years of work (see Box 1 overleaf) into six key lessons that are essential to any researcher or organisation wishing to generate evidence-based policy change, and an eight-step approach for policy entrepreneurs wishing to maximise the impact of research on policy. This is known as the RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA).

Six lessons

First, policy processes are complex and rarely linear or logical. Simply presenting information to policy-makers and expecting them to act upon it is very unlikely to work. While many policy processes do involve sequential stages – from agenda setting through decision-making to implementation and evaluation – some stages take longer than others, and several may occur more or less simultaneously. Many actors are involved: ministers, parliament, civil servants, the private sector, civil society, the



The ROMA steps help policy entrepreneurs work in complex environments.

media, and in the development sector, also donors – all of them trying to influence the process, and each other. While Gay and Schaeffer's 1984 book, *Room for Manoeuvre*, describes 'the whole life of policy as a chaos of purposes and accidents', RAPID prefers terms like 'complex' (Ramalingam et al., 2008), 'multifactorial' and 'non-linear'. Recognising this complexity is essential for policy entrepreneurs if they are to engage with policy. Treating complex processes in a simplistic manner can undermine the chances of achieving the desired outcome. Strategies must be fluid and able to adapt to changing contexts, and effective monitoring and learning systems are essential to keep abreast of the ever-changing dynamics.

Second, research-based evidence – the hard facts – often plays a very minor role in policy processes. An ODI study of factors influencing chronic poverty in Uganda found that only two of 25 were related to information gaps (Bird et al., 2004). In a talk on evidence-based policy-making at ODI in 2009, Vincent Cable MP (Cable, 2009) said that policy-makers are, in effect, incapable of using research-based evi-

Key points

- Researchers and policy-makers are missing chances to turn research findings into lasting change for the world's poor
- Policy processes are complex and rarely linear or logical
- Policy entrepreneurs need to be strategic, systematic and flexible in design, monitoring and learning of policy engagement

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ODI Briefing Papers present information, analysis and key policy recommendations on important development and humanitarian topics.

This and other ODI Briefing Papers are available from www.odi.org.uk

Policy objectives

- *Discursive:* Client-focused services
- *Attitudinal:* Farmers have good ideas
- *Procedural:* Participatory approaches to service development
- *Content:* UU20, UU25. New guidelines
- *Behavioural:* Approach being applied in practice



The Cynefn Framework

COMPLEX

Cause and effect are only coherent in retrospect and do not repeat
Pattern management
Perspective filters
Complex adaptive systems
Probe-Sense-Respond

KNOWABLE

Cause and effect separated over time and space
Analytical/Reductionist
Scenario planning
Systems thinking
Sense-Analyze-Respond

CHAOS

No cause and effect relationships perceivable

Stability-focused intervention

Enactment tools

Crisis management
Act-Sense-Respond

KNOWN

Cause and effect relations repeatable, perceivable and predictable

Legitimate best practice

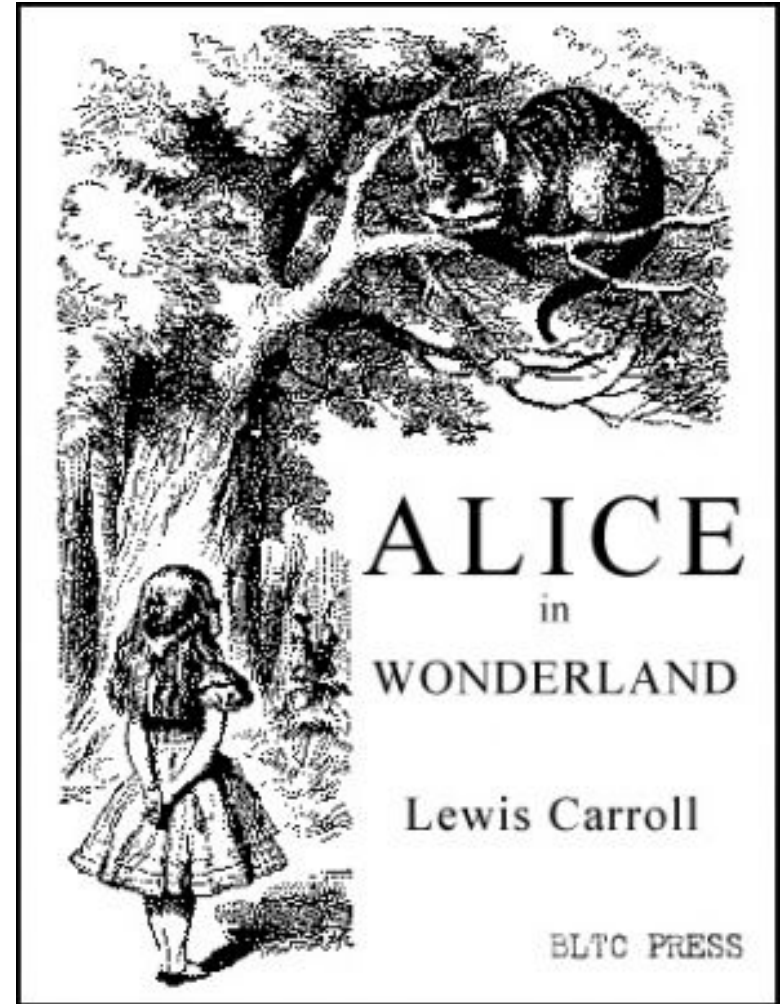
Standard operating procedures

Process reengineering
Sense-Categorize-Respond

Source: Kurtz and Snowden (2003, p. 468)

What should you measure?

*“If you don't know
where you are
going, any road
will get you there”*

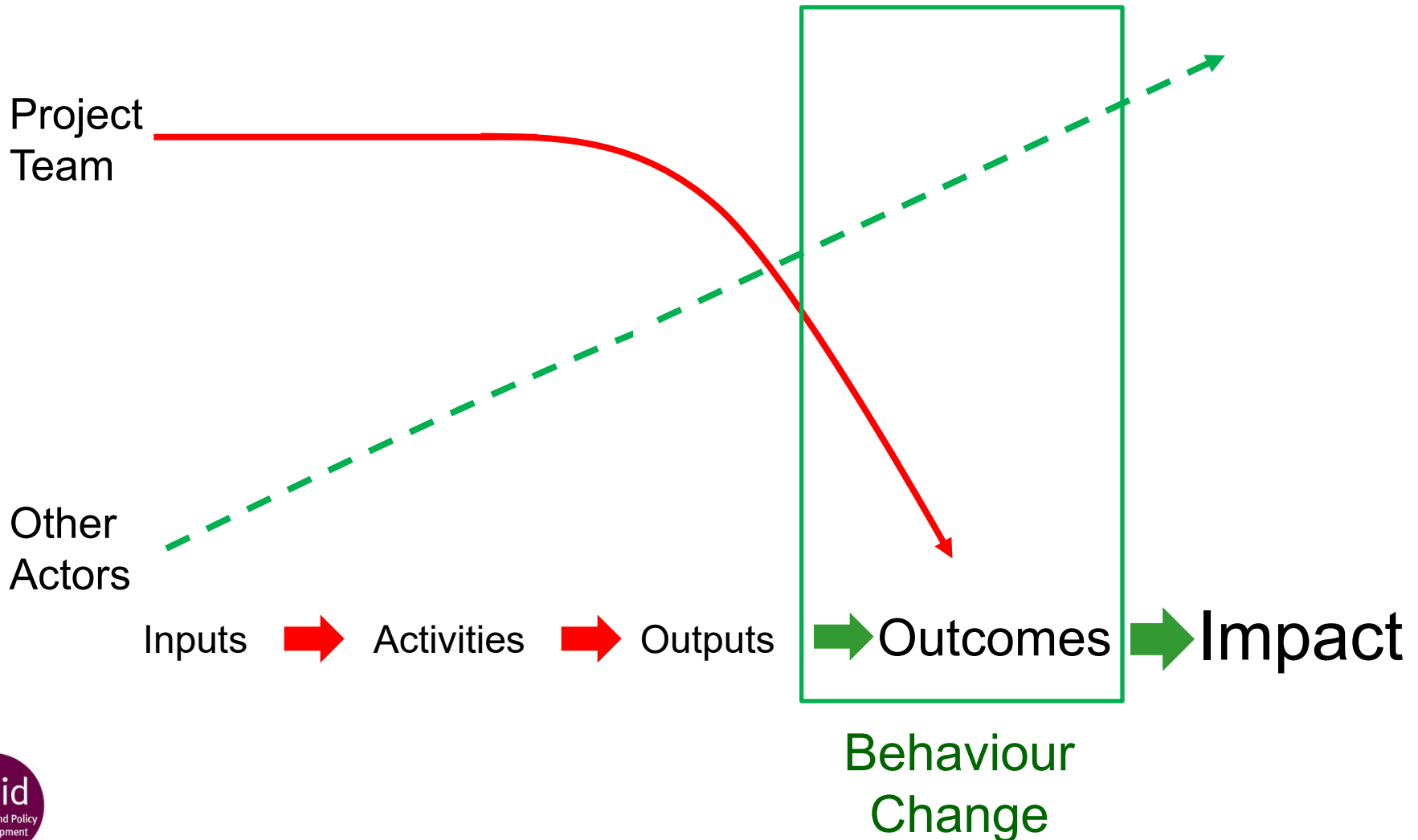


What should

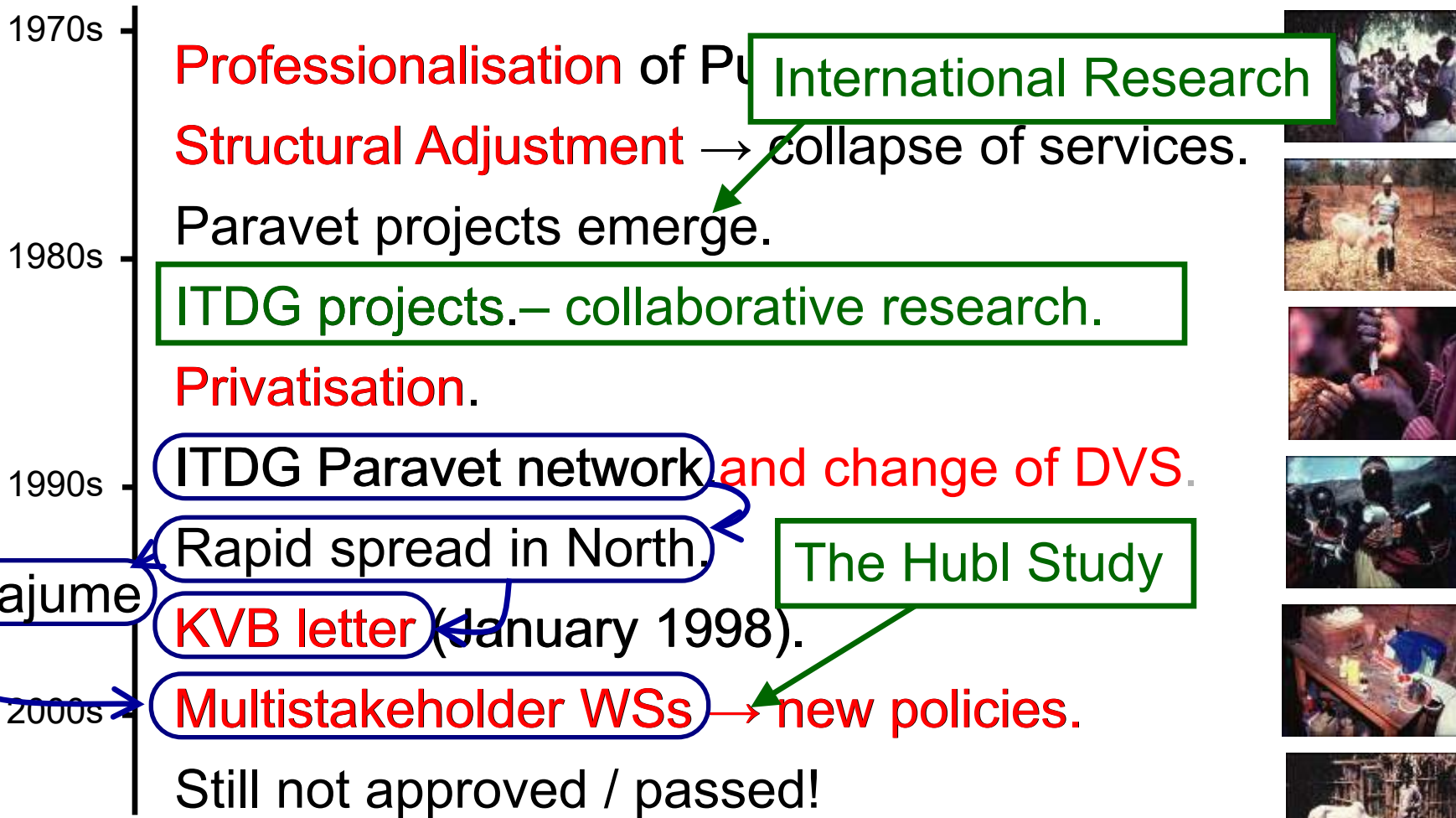
1. Strategy and direction – *the right thing?*
2. Management – *planned to do?*
3. Outputs – *are they for the audience?*
4. Uptake – *are people working?*
5. Outcomes and impact – *having any impact?*



Focus on behaviour change



Episode Studies



Outcome Mapping

THREE



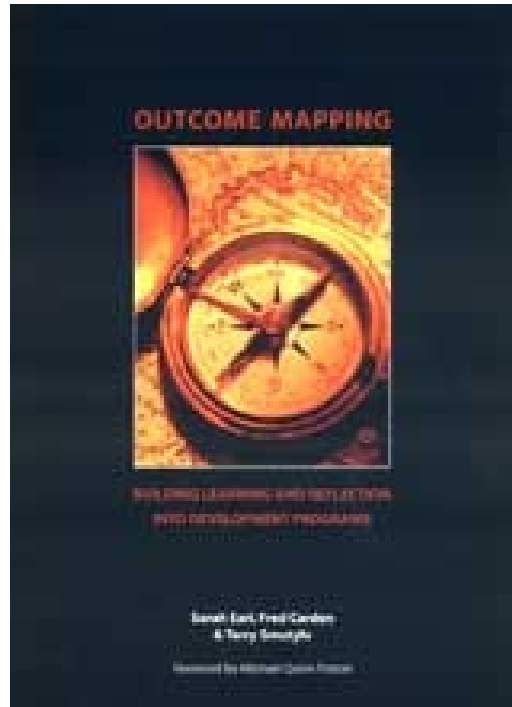
OUTCOME &
PERFORMA

STEP 8: M

STEP 9: O

STEP 10: S

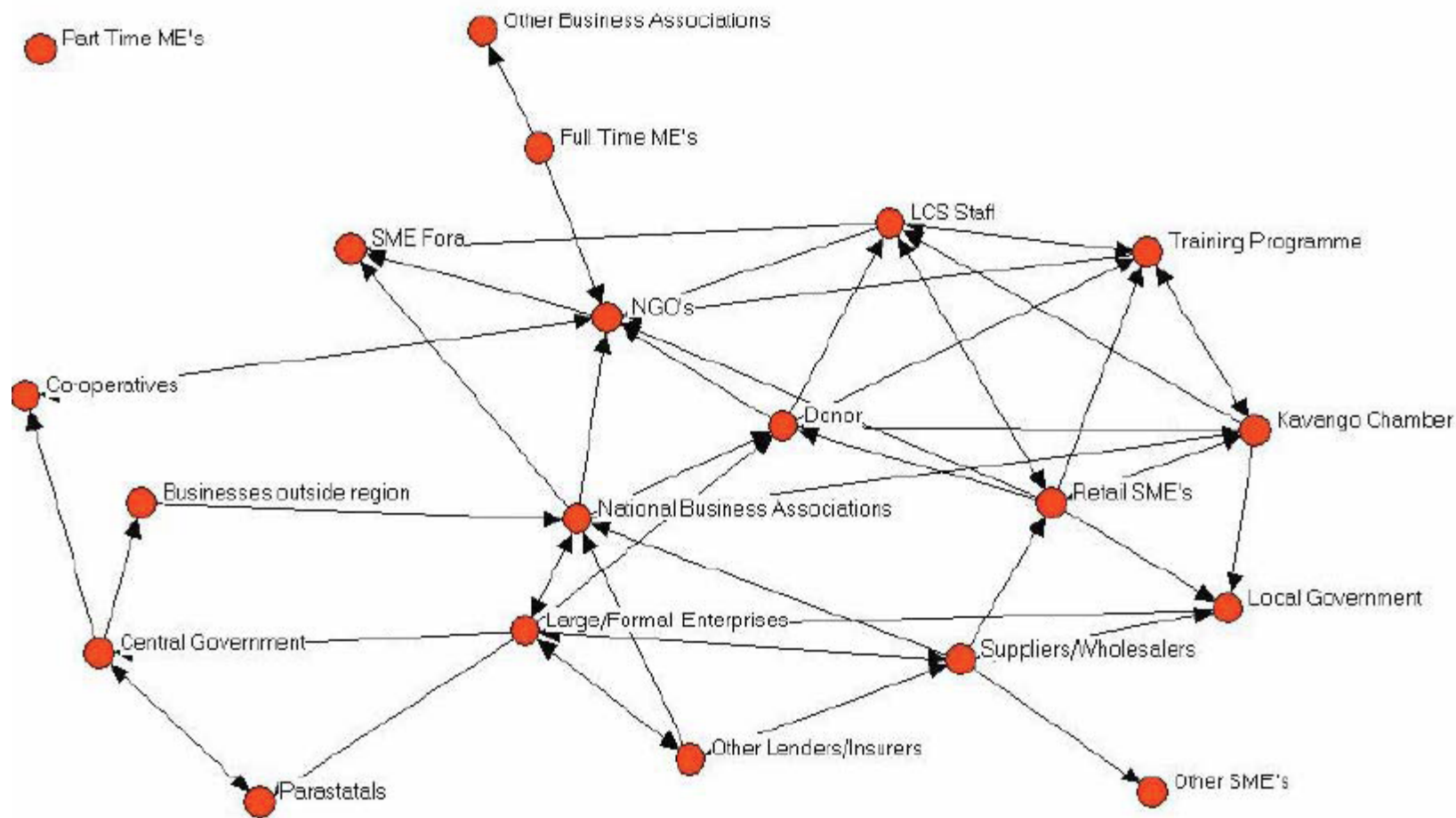
STEP 11: P

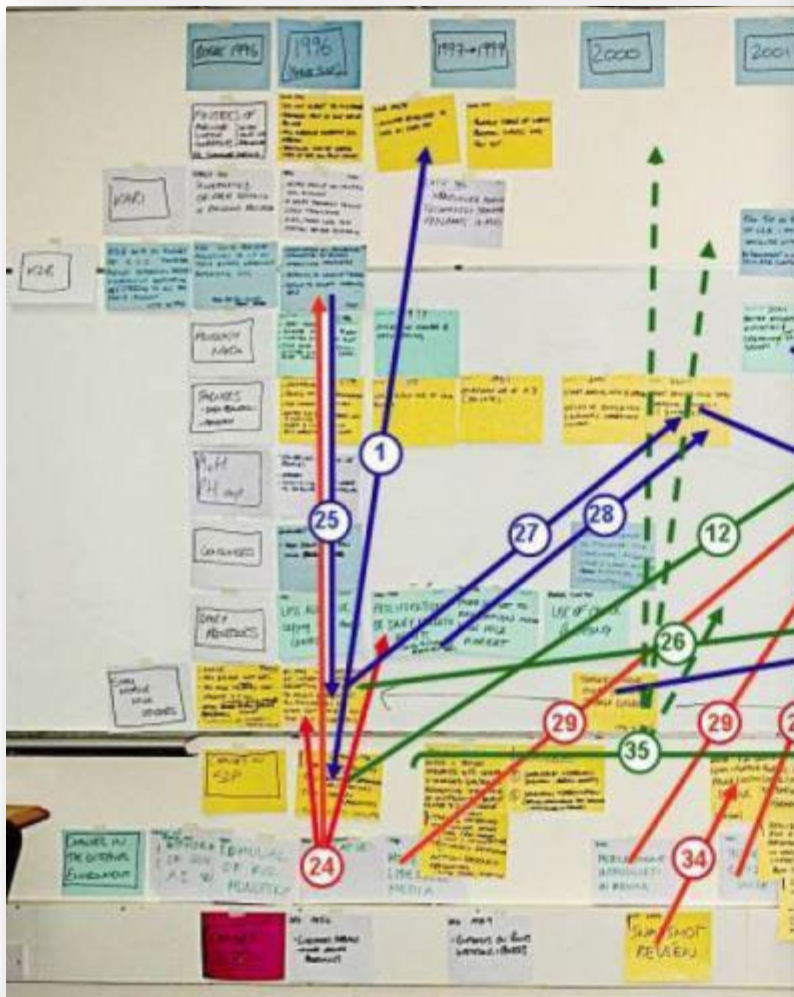


OUTCOME
MAPPING:
Building Learning
and Reflection
into Development
Programs
*Sarah Earl, Fred
Carden, and Terry
Smutylo*

http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9330-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Social Network Analysis





Informal Traders Lock Horns with the Formal Milk Industry: The role of research in pro-poor dairy policy shift in Kenya

C. Leksmono, J. Young, N. Hooton,
H. Muriuki and D. Romney

Working Paper 266

Results of ODI/ILRI research presented
in preliminary form for discussion
and critical comment

Most Significant Change

1. Collect “stories of change” from different stakeholders
2. Systematic analysis of “significance”.

The ‘Most Significant Change’ (MSC) Technique

A Guide to Its Use

by

Rick Davies and Jess Dart



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Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, Australia | Learning to Learn, Government of South Australia
Oxfam New Zealand | Christian Aid, United Kingdom | Exchange, United Kingdom
Ibis, Denmark | Møllefolkøst Samvirke (MS), Denmark
Lutheran World Relief, United States of America

Version 1.00 – April 2005

Others....

- Classical case studies (IDRC, IFPRI)
- Stories of Change (Denning)
- Innovation Histories (CIAT)
- HERG Payback Framework (Hanney)
- Micro-Narratives (Snowden)
- Impact matrices (Davies)
- Peer evaluations (CHSRF)
- Systematic reviews?
- RCTs?

Conclusions

- Research to influence policy/practice:
 - Clear objectives
 - Understand the context
 - Theory of change
 - Iterative / learning approach
- Measuring impact
 - Clear objectives
 - Theory of change
 - 5-levels
 - Multiple methods
 - Triangulation
 - Expect the unexpected