



STRATEGIC
M&E
PROJECT



Module 1: Introduction to Impact Evaluation

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CY 2024 Capacity Development on Impact Evaluation

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Why the interest in IE?
- IE in the Policy/Program/Project Cycle
- Types of Evaluations
- Choosing What to Evaluate
- Defining IE
- Characteristics of a good IE
- Evaluability Assessment

Why the interest in IE?

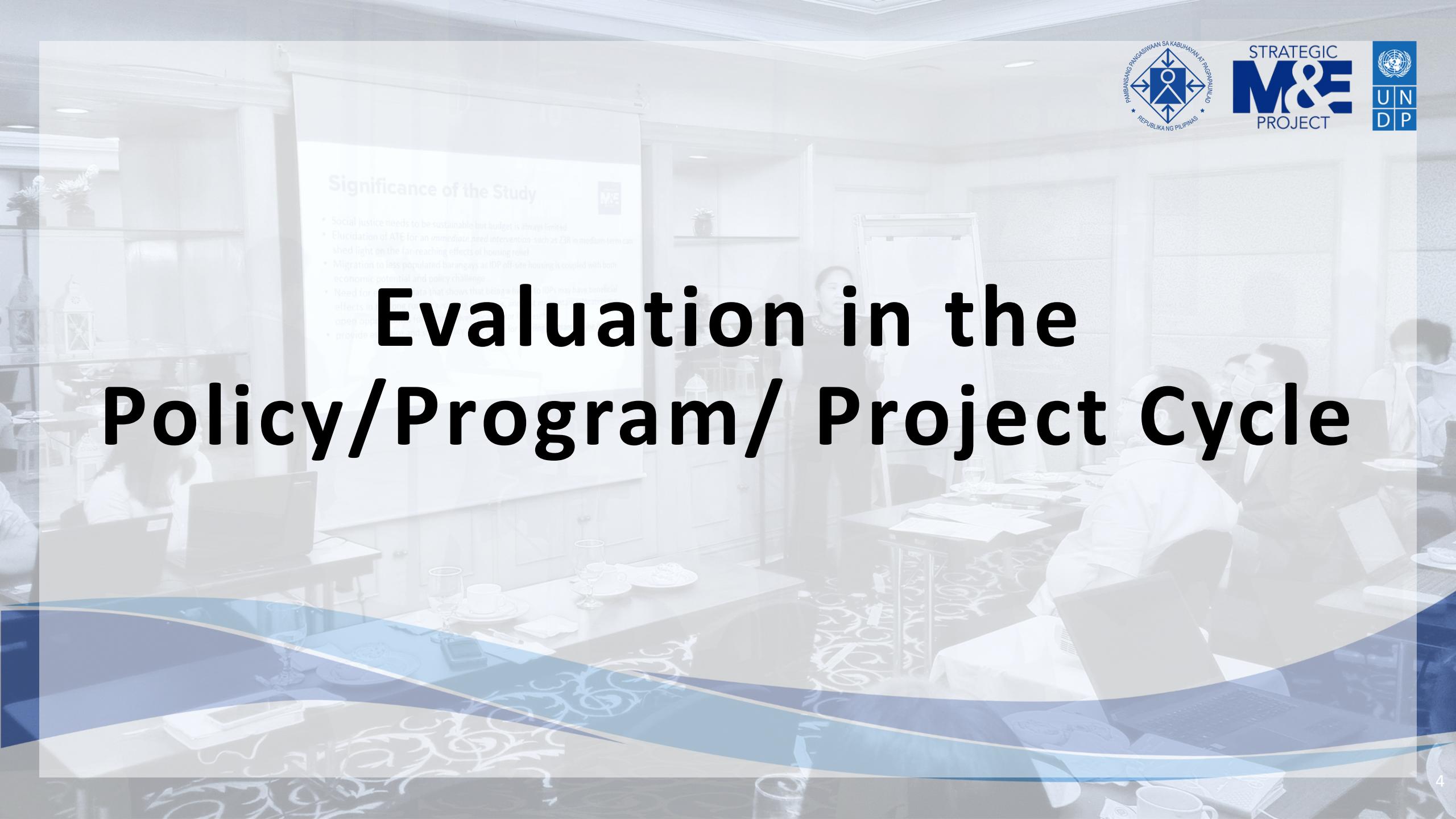
- Part of the broader agenda of evidence-informed decision making
- Focus has shifted from inputs and outputs to higher-level outcomes and results
- Concern for enhanced accountability, informed budget allocations, and better guidance for decisions
- We want to establish a link between monitoring, evaluation, management decisions, and budgets (value for money)
- We want to improve project/program/policy design



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Evaluation in the Policy/Program/ Project Cycle

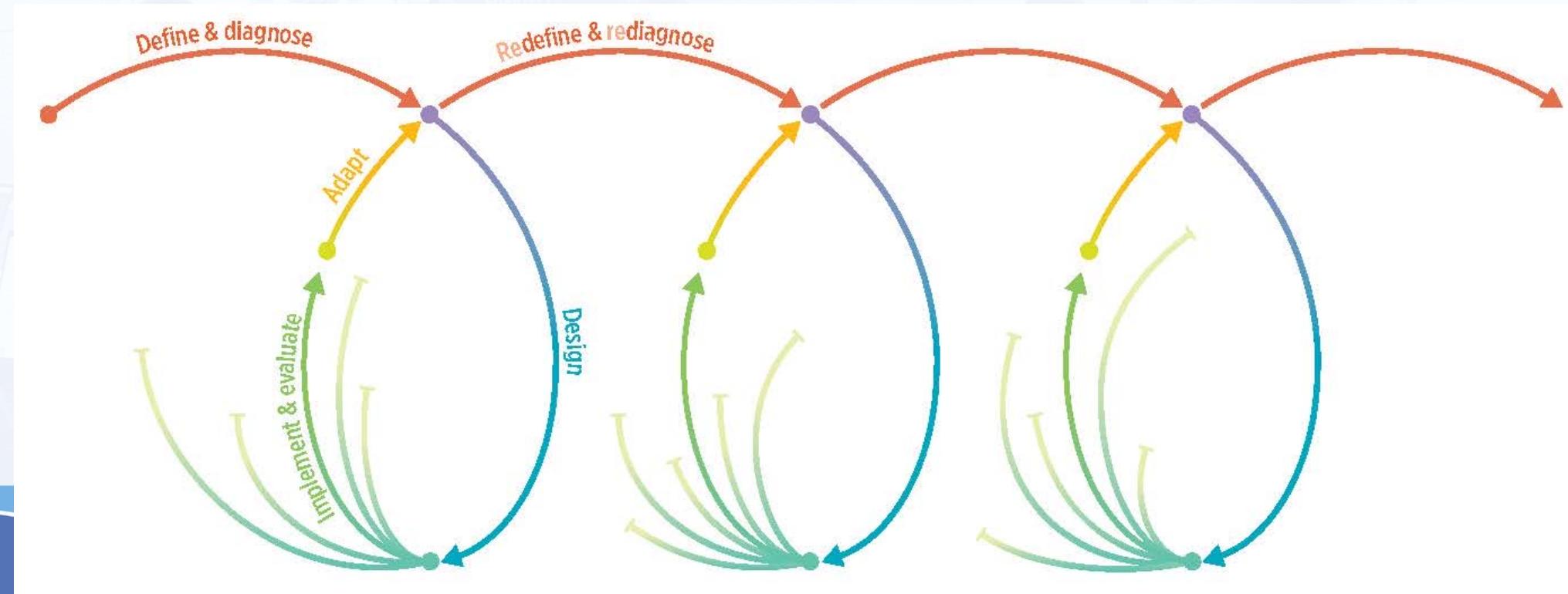
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- Significance of the Study**
- Social justice needs to be sustainable but budget is always limited
 - Elucidation of ATE for an *immediate need intervention* such as ZBR in medium-term can shed light on the far-reaching effects of housing relief
 - Migration to less populated barangays as IDP off-site housing is coupled with both economic potential and policy challenge
 - Need for data that shows that bona fide IDPs may have beneficial effects in terms of economic development and social integration in developed communities
 - provide evidence for policy advocacy

Evaluation in the Policy/Program/ Project Management Cycle



A better illustration

Emphasizes the role of learning and improvement



Source: WDR 2015

Motivations for M,E and L

- We need to manage better (**management objective**)
 - How can we make our projects/programs/policies more efficient and effective
- We need to keep clients/funders happy (**accountability objective**)
 - How can we justify the continuation or expansion of existing projects/programs/policies
- We need to learn (**learning objective**)
 - What works and what doesn't and why

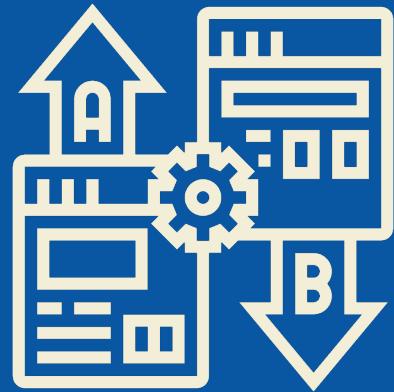
What are the risks when we don't do M,E and L?

- An ineffective project/program/policy will continue to waste resources
- We operate by 3Is: ideology, ignorance, inertia
- We will miss opportunities to improve a project/program/policy and generate better benefits
- We will miss opportunities to save money we could have spent on more worthwhile projects
- We cannot confidently attribute positive changes in a desired outcome to a policy/program/project and generate more support

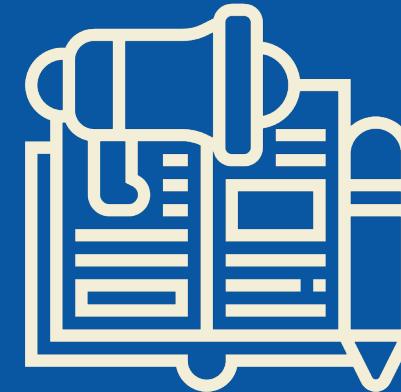
Bottom line: It is very costly not to do M, E and L! Ignorance is very costly!

Monitoring

A continuous process of collecting and analyzing information:



To compare how well a project, program, or policy is performing against expected results



To inform implementation and program management

Evaluation

A systematic, objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, program, or policy, its design, implementation and/or results, asking:

Q1

Descriptive Questions
to determine what is taking place and describe aspect of a process.

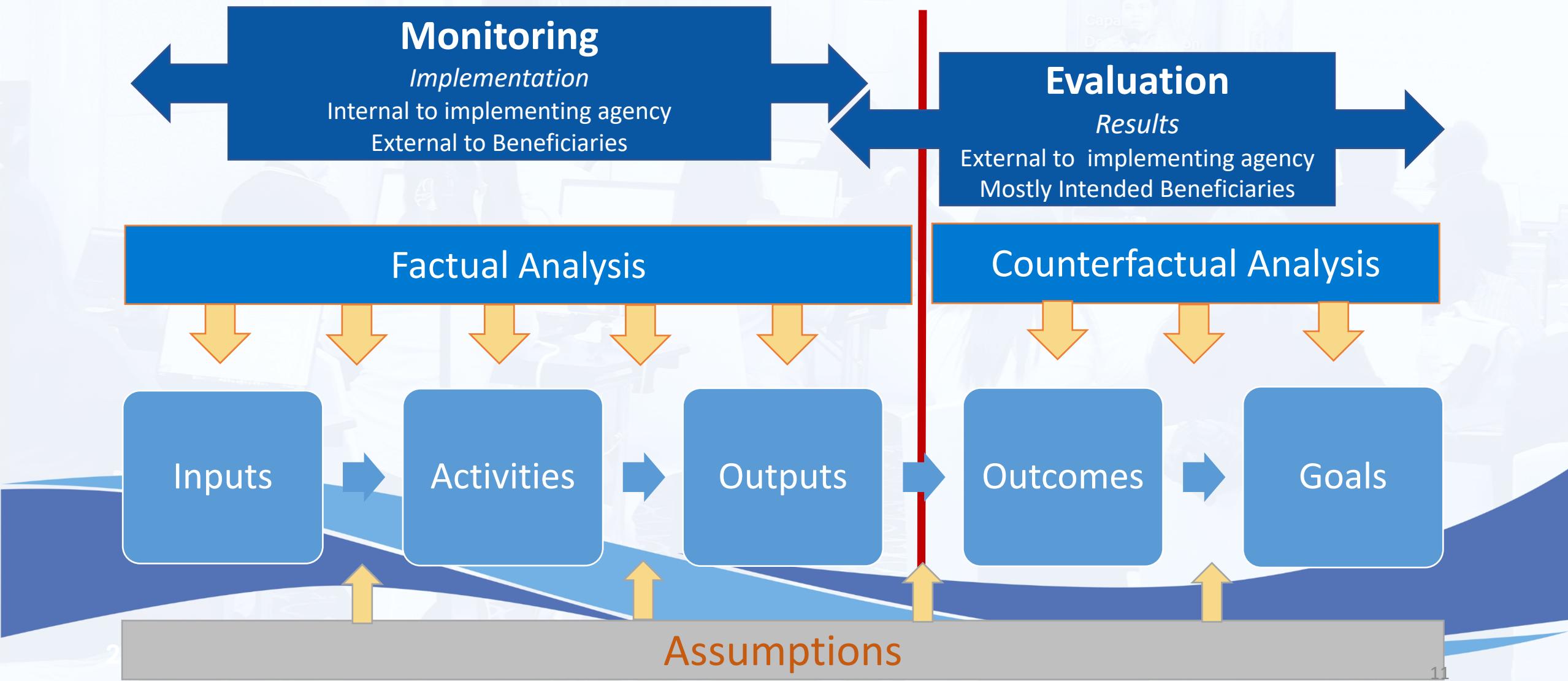
Q2

Normative Questions
to compare what is taking place to what should be taking place.

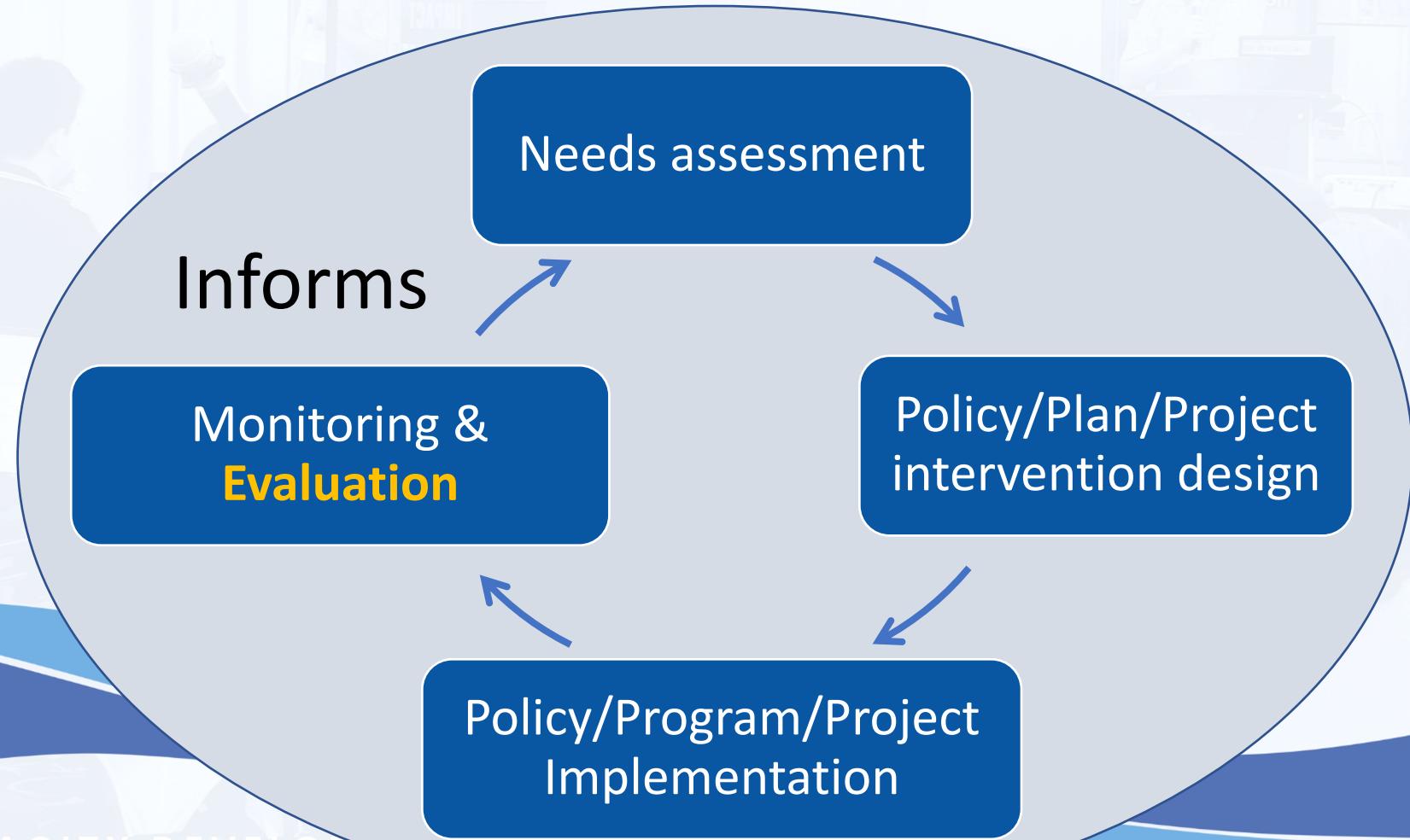
Q3

Cause-and-Effect Questions
to examine outcomes and assess what difference the intervention makes in outcomes

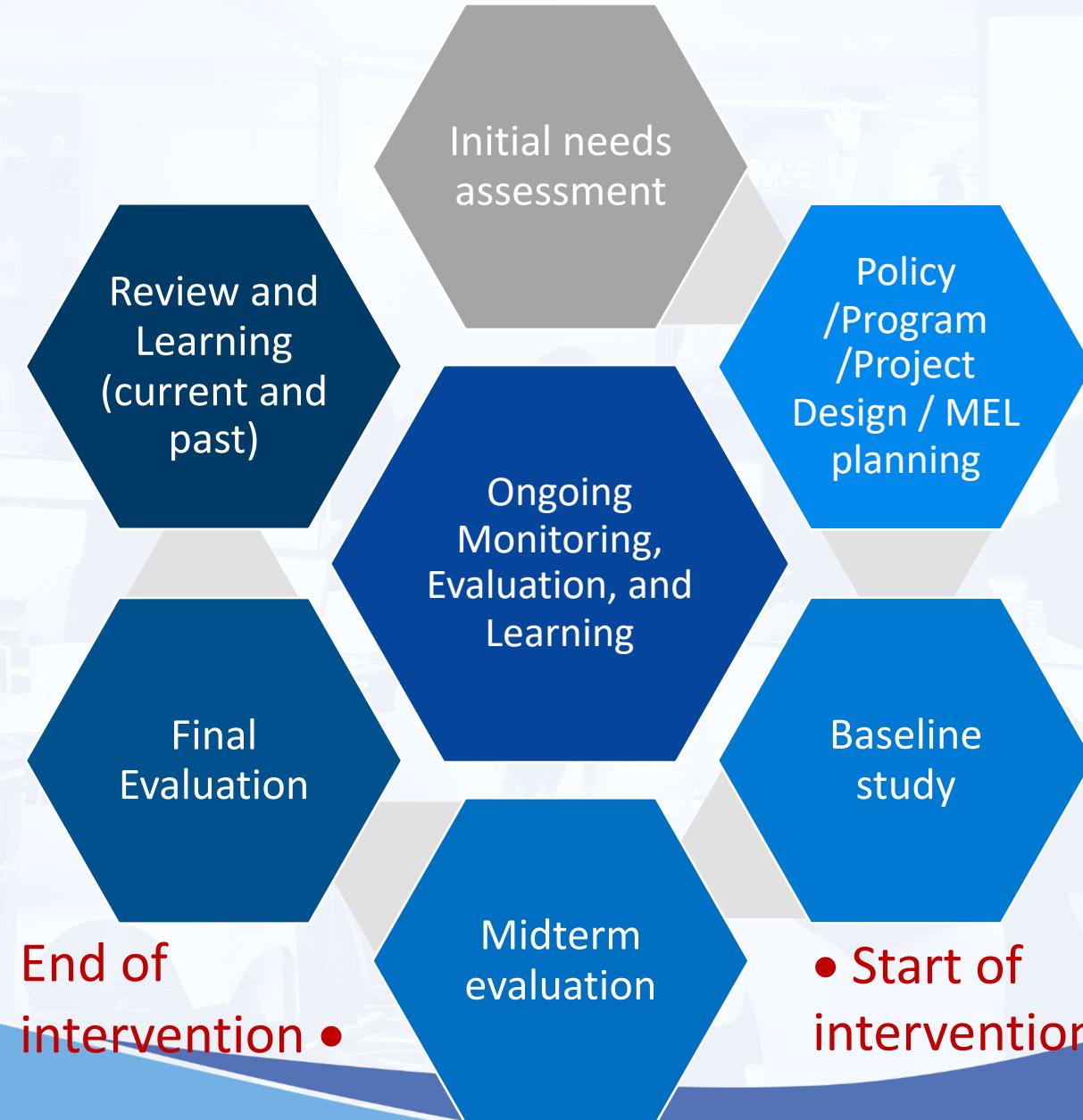
Evaluation in M&E



Evaluation **informs** the Policy/ Program/Project Management Cycle



The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Cycle



Types of Evaluation

Types of Evaluation (1/4)

Nature 1: Quantitative vs. Qualitative

- Qualitative Evaluation
 - Focuses on the socio-cultural and institutional context
 - Designed to identify and understand mechanisms through which policy/programs/project may have an impact
 - Not designed to assign the impact on outcomes against relevant alternatives
- Quantitative Evaluation
 - The focus is to assess outcomes against relevant alternatives (or counterfactual outcomes)

Types of Evaluation (2/4)

Nature 2: Formative/Process/Operational vs. Summative/Impact

- Process/Operational evaluation
 - Examines how programs were implemented
 - Looks for gaps between planned and realized outputs
 - Some assessment of the relationship between the hierarchy of objectives
 - The common objective is to finetune or redirect the project if necessary
- Impact Evaluation
 - Determine whether changes in outcomes of interest are due to program intervention and not to other factors

Types of Evaluation (3/4)

Timing 1: Ex-ante vs. Ex-post Evaluation

- Ex-ante evaluation
 - Predicts program impacts using data before program implementation
- Ex-post
 - Examines outcomes after program implementation

Types of Evaluation (4/4)

Timing 2: Prospective vs. Retrospective

- Prospective
 - Evaluation is included in the program design and built into program implementation
- Retrospective
 - Evaluation done after program implementation
- 3 reasons why prospective evaluation likely to produce more robust and more credible results
 - Presence of baseline data
 - Definition of program success likely to be defined better
 - Treatment and comparison group identified before program implementation
 - Possibility of a randomized assignment into treatment and comparison group

Summarizing Perspectives (1/2)

Two dimensions:

(1) Program stage

(2) Evaluation function

Program Stages	Evaluation Function	
	<i>Constructive/Formative</i>	<i>Conclusive/Summative</i>
Implementation (Process)	Constructive/Formative process evaluation	Conclusive/Summative process evaluation
Impact on clients (Outcome)	Constructive/Formative Outcome Evaluation	Conclusive/Summative Outcome evaluation

Adopted from: Chen (2014) Practical Program Evaluation: Theory-Driven Evaluation

Summarizing Perspectives (2/2)

Type of Evaluation	Questions answered
Needs Assessment	What is the problem?
Program Theory Assessment	How, in theory, does the program solves the problem?
Process Evaluation	Did the program work as planned?
Impact Evaluation	Were the goals achieved? At what magnitude? For whom? Why?
Cost Effectiveness Analysis	Given the magnitude of impact and costs, how does it compare to alternatives

Source: J-PAL

Choosing what to evaluate

Choosing what to evaluate (1/2)

- Spend evaluation resources wisely
- No need to evaluate everything
- Criteria
 - Stakes are high
 - Large budget share
 - Affects many people
 - Little existing evidence of impact
 - For policy issue
 - For target population

Choosing what to evaluate (2/2)

(Gertler et al., 2016)

Program to be evaluated should be:

- *Innovative* – new and promising approach
- *Replicable* – can be scaled up and applied in a different setting
- *Strategically relevant*- a flagship initiative, large budget, large number of people, can generate large savings
- *Untested*-little evidence on effectiveness, worldwide or for particular context
- *Influential*-results used for key policy decisions

Defining IE

Definitions of IE

1

“Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer a specific **cause-and-effect** question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a program on an outcome of interest?” (Gertler et al., 2016)

2

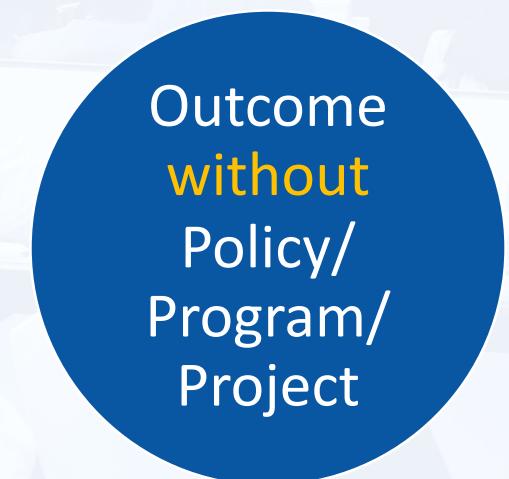
“An impact evaluation is a study that attempts to **measure the causal impact of a project, program, or policy** on an outcome of interest to governments and other interested parties.” (Glewwe and Todd, 2022)

Source: 1) Gertler, Paul J., Sebastian Martinez, Patrick Premand, Laura B. Rawlings, and Christel M. J. Vermeersch. 2016. Impact Evaluation in Practice, second edition. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-0779-4. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO; 2) Glewwe, Paul, and Petra Todd. 2022. Impact Evaluation in International Development: Theory, Methods, and Practice. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-1497-6. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO.

Impact Evaluation: Basic Elements

Special features:

- **Attribute** the difference to the policy / program/ project alone
- Establish a **cause-effect** relationship



Characteristics of a good Impact Evaluation

Characteristic 1: Internal Validity

- This is the case of ensuring that one is “**comparing mangoes to mangoes**” (valid counterfactual issue)
 - If observation units with the project and those without project do not differ systematically at the outset of the project, any difference that subsequently arises between them can be attributed to the project rather than to other factors

Characteristic 2: External Validity

- Whatever impact estimate we generate, it must be **representative of the population** we are studying
 - ❖ If we are studying the response of poor people to an extension program, we are less interested in the response of somebody who is not poor
 - ❖ If we are studying the response of poor communities to the extension program, we are less interested in the response of Makati to the extension program
 - ❖ If we expect differences in responses (heterogeneity), our sampling should be able to cover these variations
- Importance **of sampling – size, and distribution**

Characteristic 3: Utilization

- A valid estimate will have little value if not used in policy / program / project decisions
 - ❖ The importance of answering the **right questions**
 - ❖ The importance of answering the right questions at the **right time**
 - ❖ The importance of crafting an **appropriate message** for the intended audience

Characteristic 4: Learning

- A good evaluation must facilitate learning
 - ❖ It should estimate not only the average impact but also differential impacts across socioeconomic and demographic groups (heterogeneity), if any
 - ❖ It should also answer the question why
 - ❖ Highlights the importance of the causal theory

Evaluability Assessment

Elements in Evaluability Assessment (1/2)

- **Policy / Program / Project Description**

- Objectives, intervention, target population
 - The justification of any policy / program / project is the achievement of its objectives.
 - Specifying intervention is critical in identifying its impact.
 - The target population determines where to measure impact.
- Causal theory – pathway from inputs to intended outcomes; evaluation is an assessment of causal theory.
- Contextual factors that may influence the implementation and outcomes of the program or policy, including social, economic, and political factors outside the control of the policy / program / project influence.

- **Implementation Fidelity**

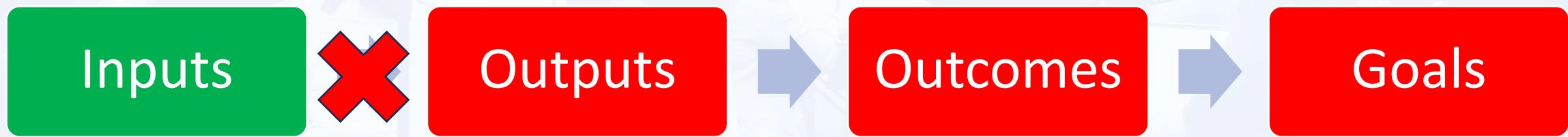
- There is no sense in evaluating a program that was poorly implemented. If not sure, do a process evaluation first.
- Two elements to policy / program / project success: Implementation, Theory

Implementation Failure vs Theory Failure

Successful intervention



Implementation Failure



Theory Failure



Elements in Evaluability Assessment (2/2)

- **Data availability and quality**
 - Data of reasonable quality for critical indicators throughout the program theory
 - GIGO: garbage-in garbage-out
- **Feasibility**
 - Available resources (budget, personnel/technical expertise)
 - Timeframe
 - Political and organizational context
- **Stakeholder interest**
 - Success is dependent on stakeholder (funders, general public, implementers) interest and participation
- **Independence**
 - Can the evaluation be done objectively without undue interference?
 - Implementers cannot be evaluators

Some parting quotations

- Social justice needs to be sustainable but budget is always limited
- Elucidation of ATE for an *immediate need intervention* such as T3B in medium-term can shed light on the far-reaching effects of housing relief
- Housing interventions can have significant long-term impacts on the economy and society. It is important to understand the short-term effects of interventions and that moment by reflection may affect in the long run for reducing the poverty and that moment by reflection may speed opportunities for income diversification for households
- provide evidence and some policy perspective for housing programs in the future

Quotations from the CGD Evaluation Gap Working Group (2006)

“Ignorance is more expensive than impact evaluations”

“Poor quality evaluations are misleading”

Do impact evaluations but do it right!