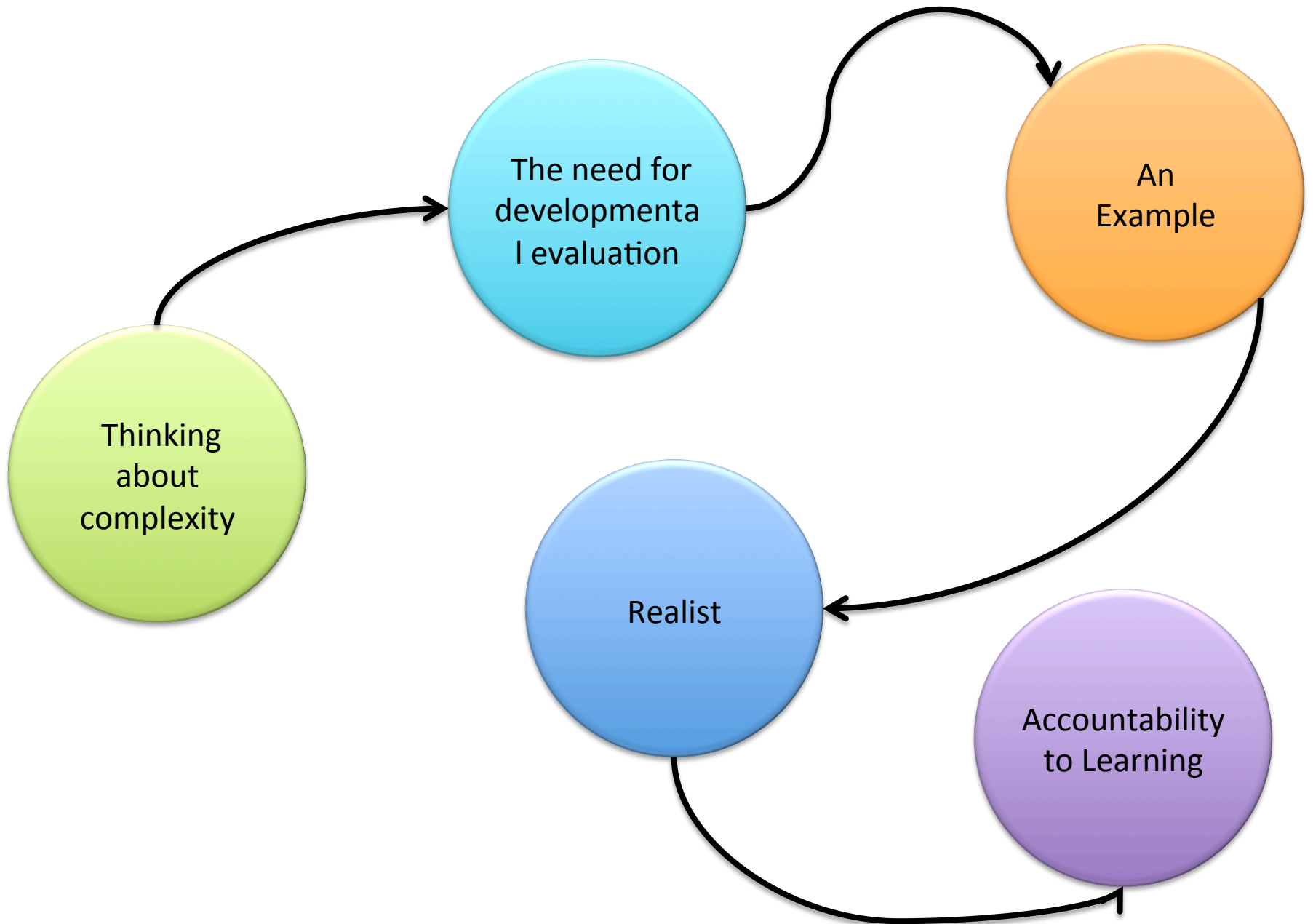
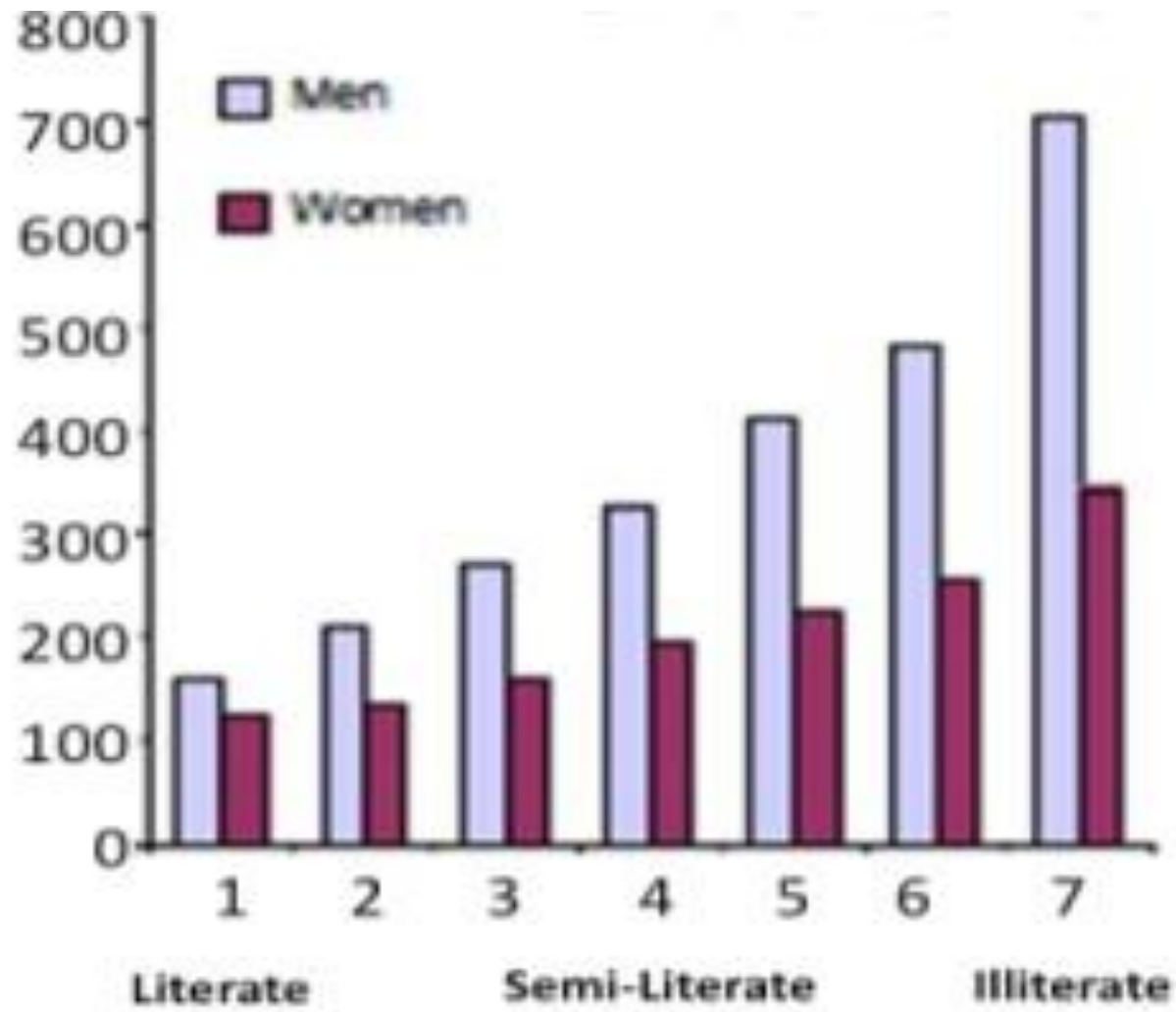


# Evaluation Approaches

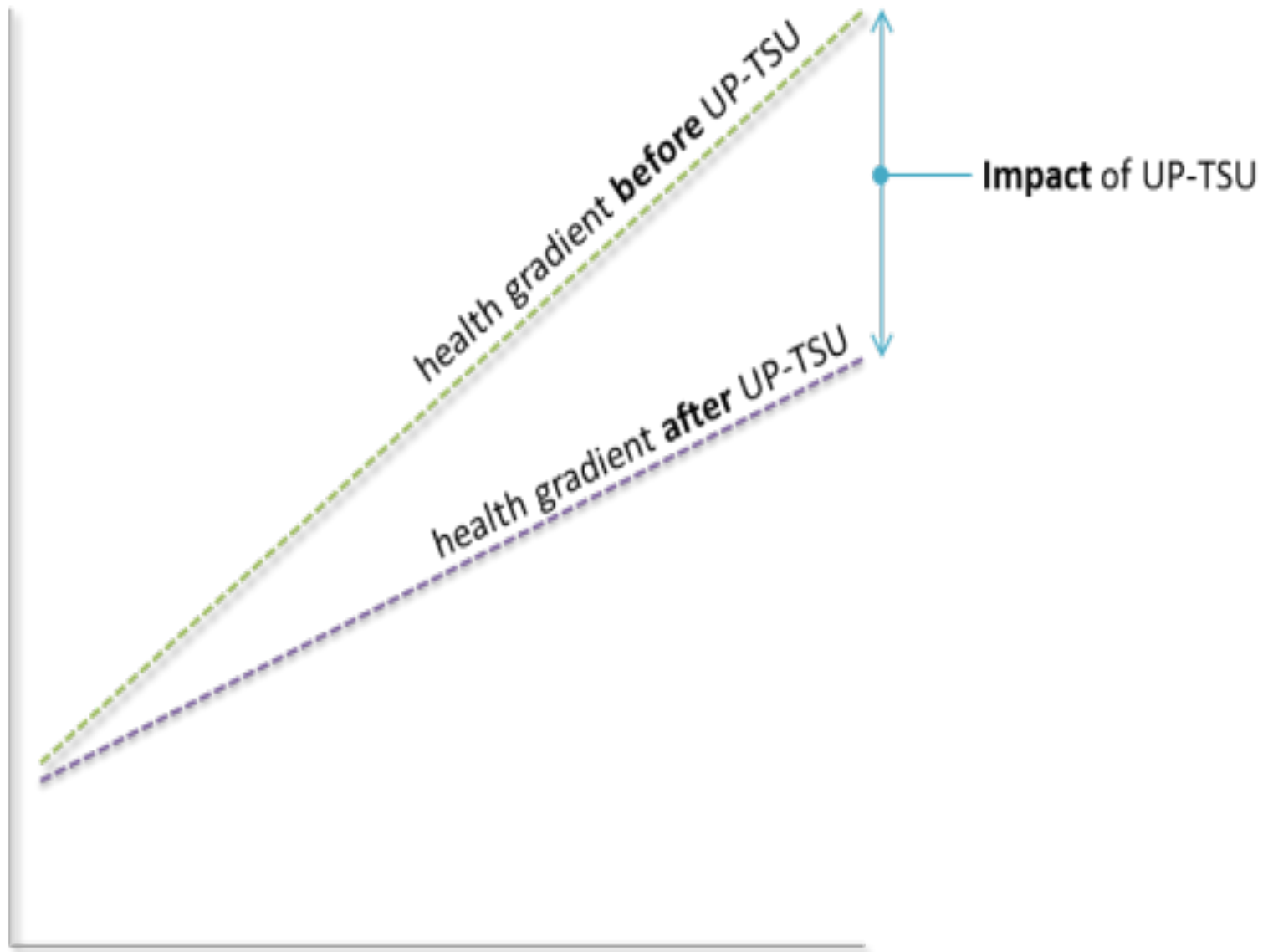
November 25<sup>th</sup> 2014





Individually  
oriented  
preventive  
action

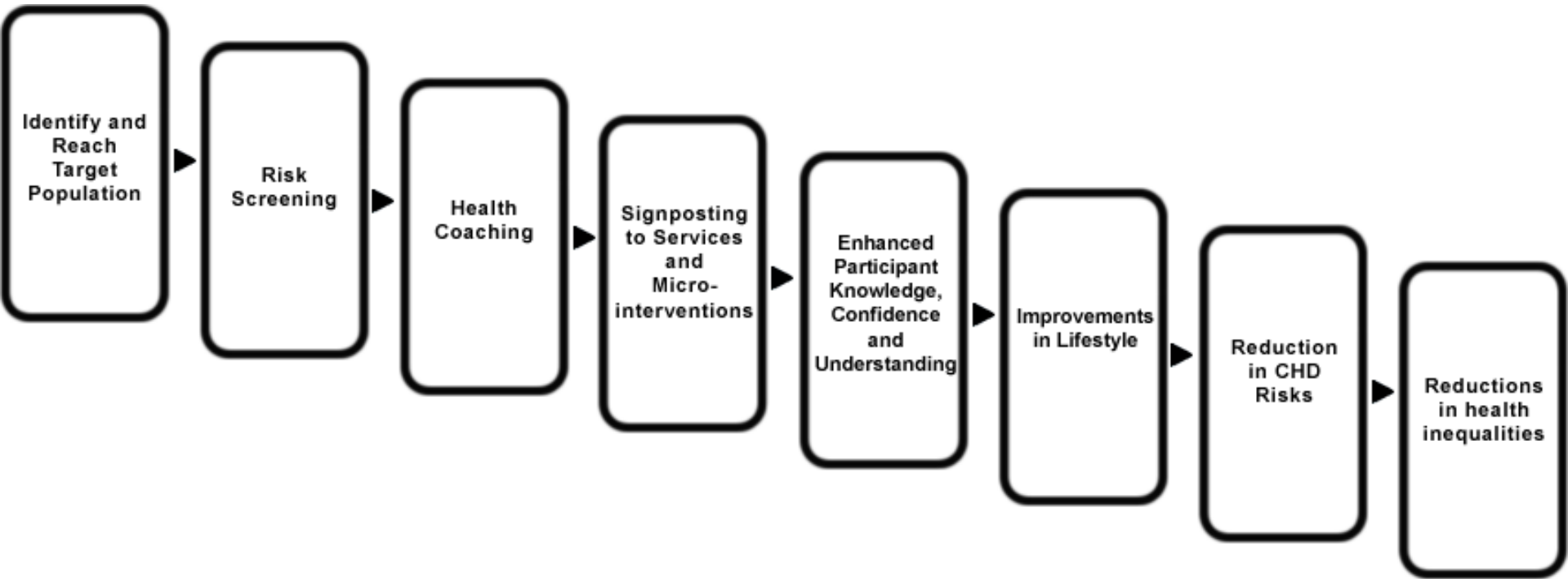




# Purposes of evaluation (Mark, Henry and Julnes, 2000)

- Assessing merit and worth
  - Causal questions, RCT, observational studies
- Programme and organizational improvement
  - Formative evaluation
- Oversight and compliance
- *Knowledge development*
  - *Neglected purpose of many evaluations*

# An Example: Primary Prevention Have a Heart Paisley



## Features of complex interventions (Pawson et al., 2004)

- The intervention is a theory or theories
- The intervention involves the actions of people.
- The intervention consists of a chain of steps
- These chains of steps or processes are often not linear, and involve negotiation and feedback at each stage.
- Interventions are embedded in social systems and how they work is shaped by this context.
- *Interventions are prone to modification as they are implemented.*
- Interventions are open systems and change through learning as stakeholders come to understand them.



# Questions to describe complex interventions

- How hard is it to describe?
- How hard is it to create?
- What is its degree of organization?

## System Dynamic Approaches (Sterman, 2006)

- Constantly changing;
- Governed by feedback;
- Non-linear, History-dependent;
- Adaptive and evolving;
- Characterized by trade-offs;
- Policy resistance: “The result is *policy resistance*, the tendency for interventions to be defeated by the system’s response to the intervention itself.”

# What kind of evaluation will you be doing?

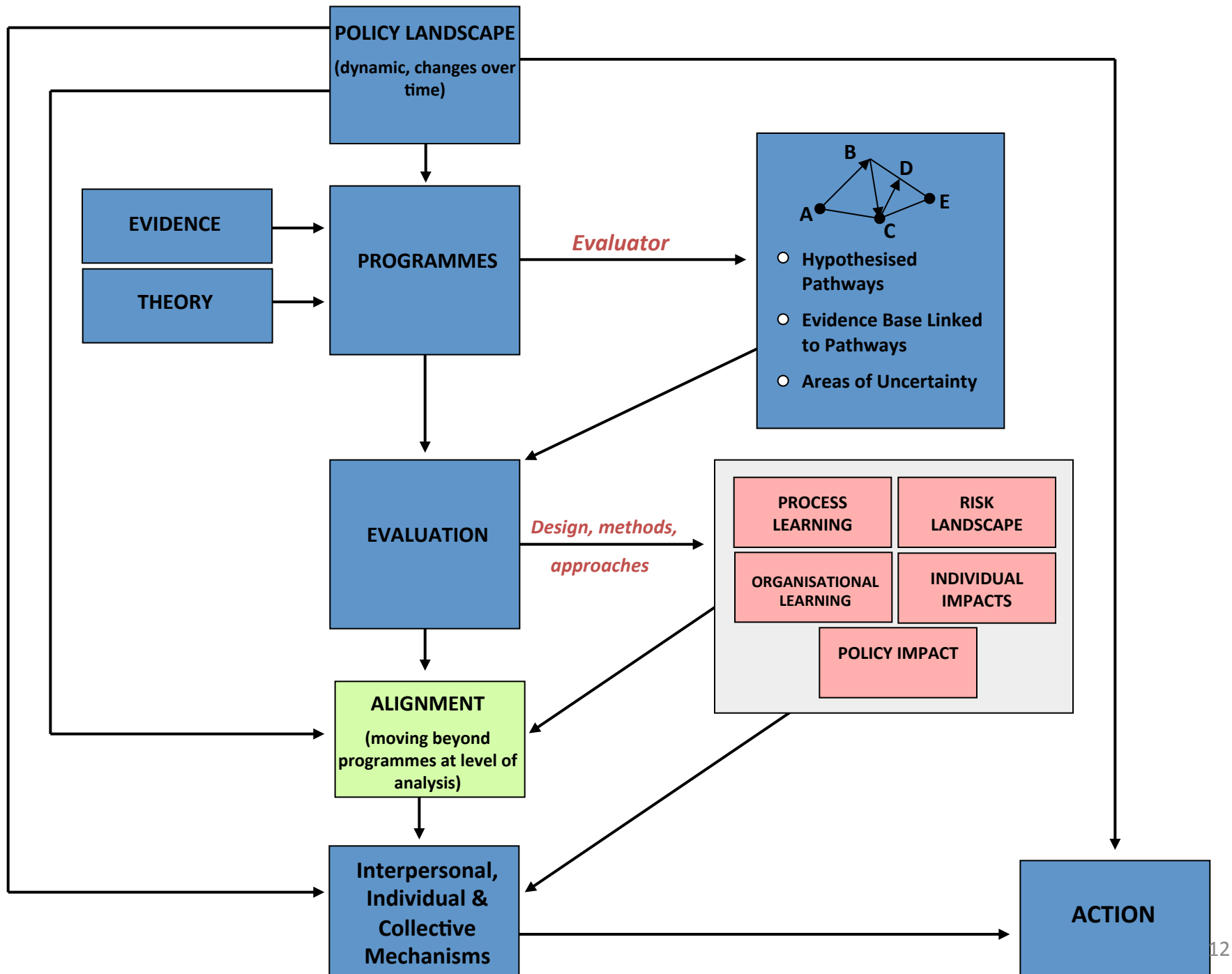
## Formative



## Developmental

## Summative





# Defining Developmental Evaluation (Patton, 2011)

- “How can you tell if an evaluation is truly developmental? I’ll offer a more sophisticated answer as the book unfolds, but let’s start simply with purpose and outcomes: Is the purpose and focus of the evaluation helping develop something? Is something getting developed? Did something get developed? If so, what? How? With what implications? *The focus of developmental evaluation is on developing innovations.*”

# Purposes of Developmental Evaluation

- “Ongoing development in adapting a project, program, strategy
- Adapting effective general principles to a new context
- Developing a rapid response in the face of a sudden major change
- Preformative development of a potentially scalable innovation
- Major systems change and cross-scale developmental evaluation

# What does an evaluator do?

- Hang-out (spend time)
- Understand
- Question
- Relationship-build
- Facilitate
- Create spaces for dialogue
- Workshops
- Connect
  
- BRING IN EVALUATIVE THINKING

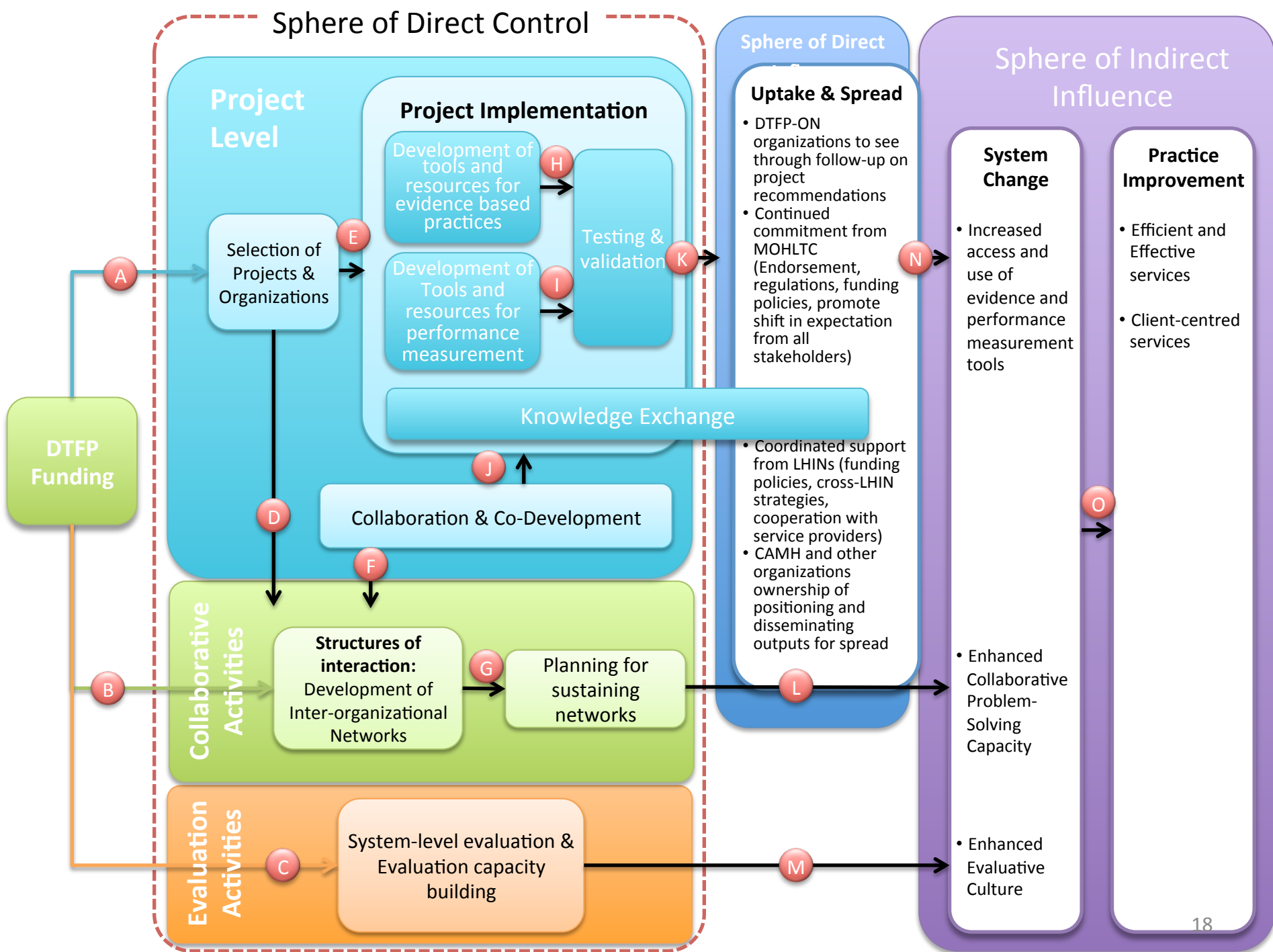
# EXERCISE

- Focus on an intervention you are presently evaluating
- What are areas of the intervention that need to be developed?
- What evidence can you obtain to guide the development?
- What checks can you build in to guide further program improvements?



# DTFP PURPOSE

- *“The DTFP aims to provide the incentive for provinces, territories and key stakeholders to initiate projects that lay the foundation for systemic change leading to sustainable improvement in the quality and organization of substance abuse treatment systems, as well as increase the availability of treatment services to meet the critical illicit drug treatment needs of at-risk youth in high needs areas.”*  
– *(DTFP Framework, Health Canada, 2008)*



# Developmental Evaluation

- Help identify potential areas for connections within DTFP – where can project learn from one another
- Help in documenting project processes, e.g. sampling frame
- Help in learning how to evaluate networks
- Help in building evaluation capacity
- Help in documenting project and system learning
- Help in realizing potential next steps

CLARIFY ROLES THAT MOHLTC  
PLANS TO PLAY REGARDING  
FUTURE OF DTFP

ANTICIPATORY PLANNING  
FOR ADDICTIONS  
TREATMENT SYSTEM

Actions that are needed  
by **MOHLTC/LHINs**

THE LHINs NEED TO BE  
MORE ENGAGED WITH  
DTFP-ON

# Key lessons for the practicing Developmental Evaluator

- **SYSTEMS ARE PROCESSES IN FORMATION:** A “System” is often in the process of FORMATION. There are glimpses of what the system would look like but there is an ongoing needs to dialogue to clarify. Developmental Evaluation can help.
- **DYNAMIC UNDERSTANDING OF MEANING:** The meaning of key terms itself changes over time (e.g. evidence based practice, performance measurement). DE can help.
- **INFUSION OF HUMOR:** Systems (and collaborations of actors) need joy and humor in ongoing relationships. Development evaluation need nimbleness
- **LOOKING FORWARD:** System impacts often require a plan for spread and scaling-up. DE can help.
- **LOOKING BACKWARD:** Policy organizations can have short memories and the rationale for the project itself can be forgotten. DE can help

- **INCOMPLETE AND DYNAMIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE:** The theory of change is often unclear and more importantly incomplete. There is an ongoing need to revise, review and reshape the understandings of the theory of change.
- **PRO-ACTIVE CLARITY ON A FRAMEWORK OF SPREAD.** The thinking about spread is often linear. There is a need to think about spread pro-actively. DE can help
- **CLARIFYING SYSTEM-LEVEL PRIORITIES:** Hard to bring coherence across individual projects without an understanding of such priorities. DE can help
- **CLARIFY CAPACITIES and COMPETENCIES** needed to sustain SYSTEM-level change. Such capacities and competencies are only often clear over time

# How does realist evaluation approach work?

1. Through both document and evidence reviews and stakeholder interviews describe context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations
2. Explore the data (based on an implemented evaluation design) and find if there is support for such CMO-configurations
3. Learn and refine theory based on step 2

*Question: What is missing above to establish results?*

# Different views of programs

Programmes as  
treatments

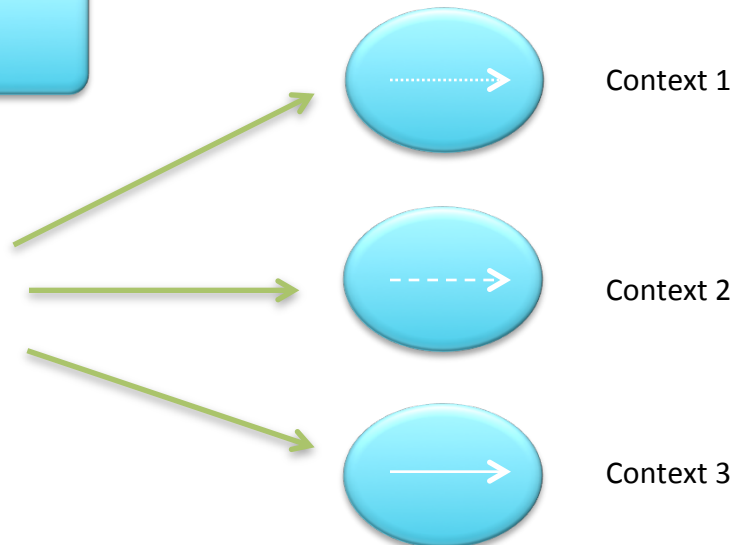
X → Y

Theories of change



Realist Theories

Programme  
mechanism





# Example of Realist matrix (Rogers, 2012)

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
Motivated, high ability students from low income backgrounds	Achievement of threshold level of computer skills and knowledge	Successful entry into computer courses
Students from low income backgrounds with learning difficulties and/or behavioural problems	Mechanism not activated	Unchanged educational destinations

# Example

- Think of your program
- Specify a mechanism
- Under what conditions
- Preliminary plans for testing