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Building Capacity for High-Quality *IDEA* Data

In collaboration with **DaSy, ECTA, NCSI, & NTACT**

ii15

Think Like an Evaluator: Backwards, Forwards, and In Circles

SSIP Interactive Institutes

Albuquerque, NM; April 29-30, 2015
Jacksonville, FL; May 12-13, 2015
Chicago, IL; May 27-28, 2015
Tom Fiore, IDC

Topics

- Why evaluate

- Setting the stage for evaluation: Leadership of a systemic change intervention

- Focus on outcomes

- Evaluation logic

- Planning

Why Do We Have to Evaluate?—But-Yeses

- **Without evaluation, you may be providing interventions that have little or no impact . . .**
  - *But Yes*, evaluation diverts resources from the program.

- **Evaluation processes reflect what most good managers already do informally . . .**
  - *But Yes*, evaluation is complicated.

- **Knowing what is not working offers the opportunity to make improvements . . .**
  - *But Yes*, evaluation may produce results that make the intervention look bad.

- **You <u>don't</u> have a choice—however, if you use evaluation to improve your intervention, both your efficiency and your results will increase. . .**
  - *But Yes*, evaluation is a burden <u>if</u> you do it superficially or without commitment.

What Are We Evaluating?
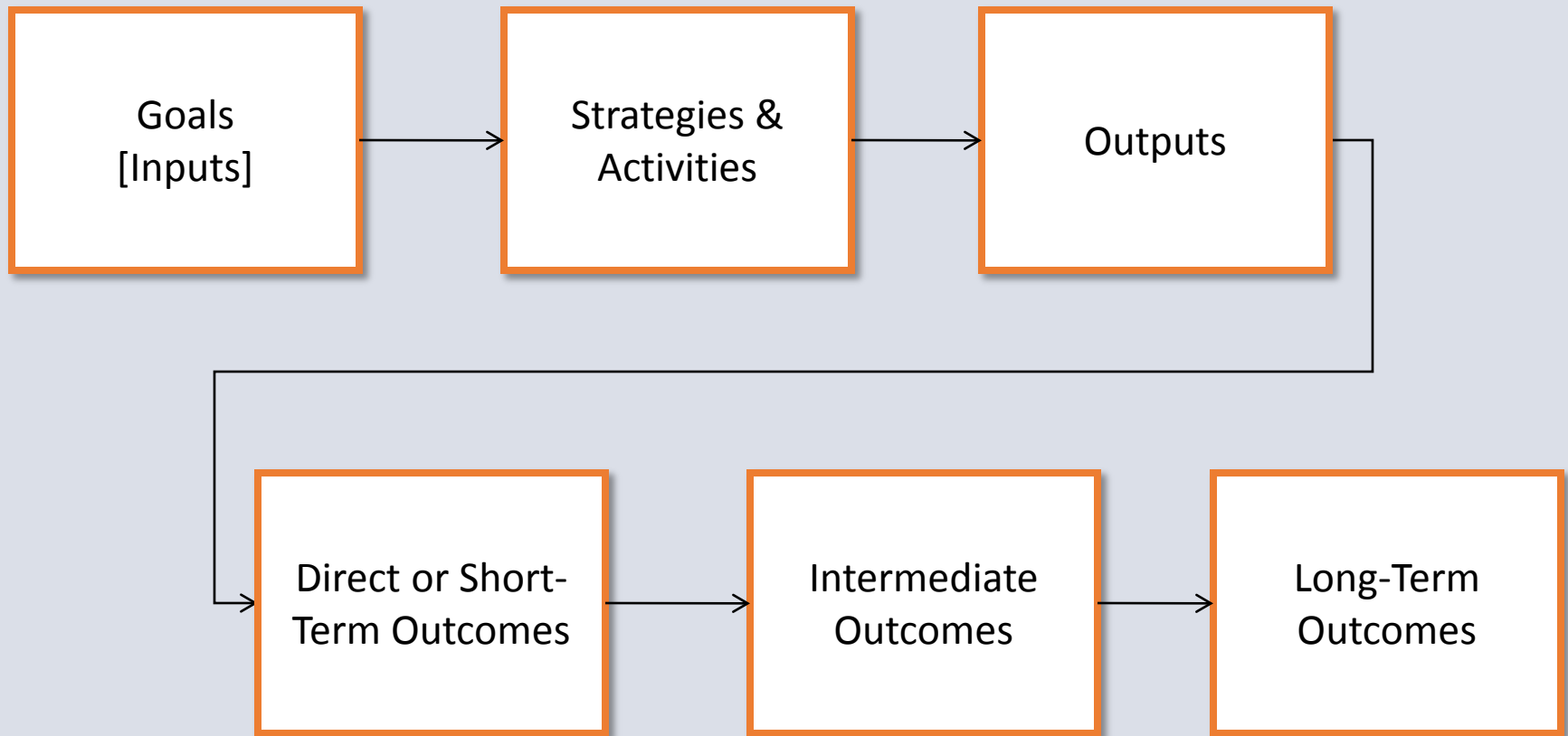
Two overarching questions:

- **How's it going?**
  - Are we successfully accomplishing our activities?
  - Are we moving along appropriately so that we can achieve our goals?
  - What can we do to fix stuff that's not working?
  - Usually call this *formative evaluation*.

- **What good did it do?**
  - Did we accomplish our goals?
  - Can we show that what we did was responsible for the accomplishments?
  - Do the accomplishments matter?
  - Usually call this *summative evaluation*.

Attitudinal Alternative to Evaluation

"All you need is ignorance and confidence; then success is sure."

--Mark Twain

Evaluation Focuses on Processes and Outcomes

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┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│   Goals     │ ───▶ │ Strategies &│ ───▶ │   Outputs   │
│  [Inputs]   │      │ Activities  │      │             │
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┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│Direct or    │ ───▶ │Intermediate │ ───▶ │ Long-Term   │
│Short-Term   │      │ Outcomes    │      │ Outcomes    │
│Outcomes     │      │             │      │             │
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Outcome Components

- **Outputs** can be viewed as . . .
  - Program accomplishments
  - Direct results of the activities
  - Description and number of products and events
  - Customer contacts with products and events
  - Fidelity of program activities

Outcome Components

- **Short-term outcomes** can be viewed as . . .
  - What customers/clients learn as a result of outputs
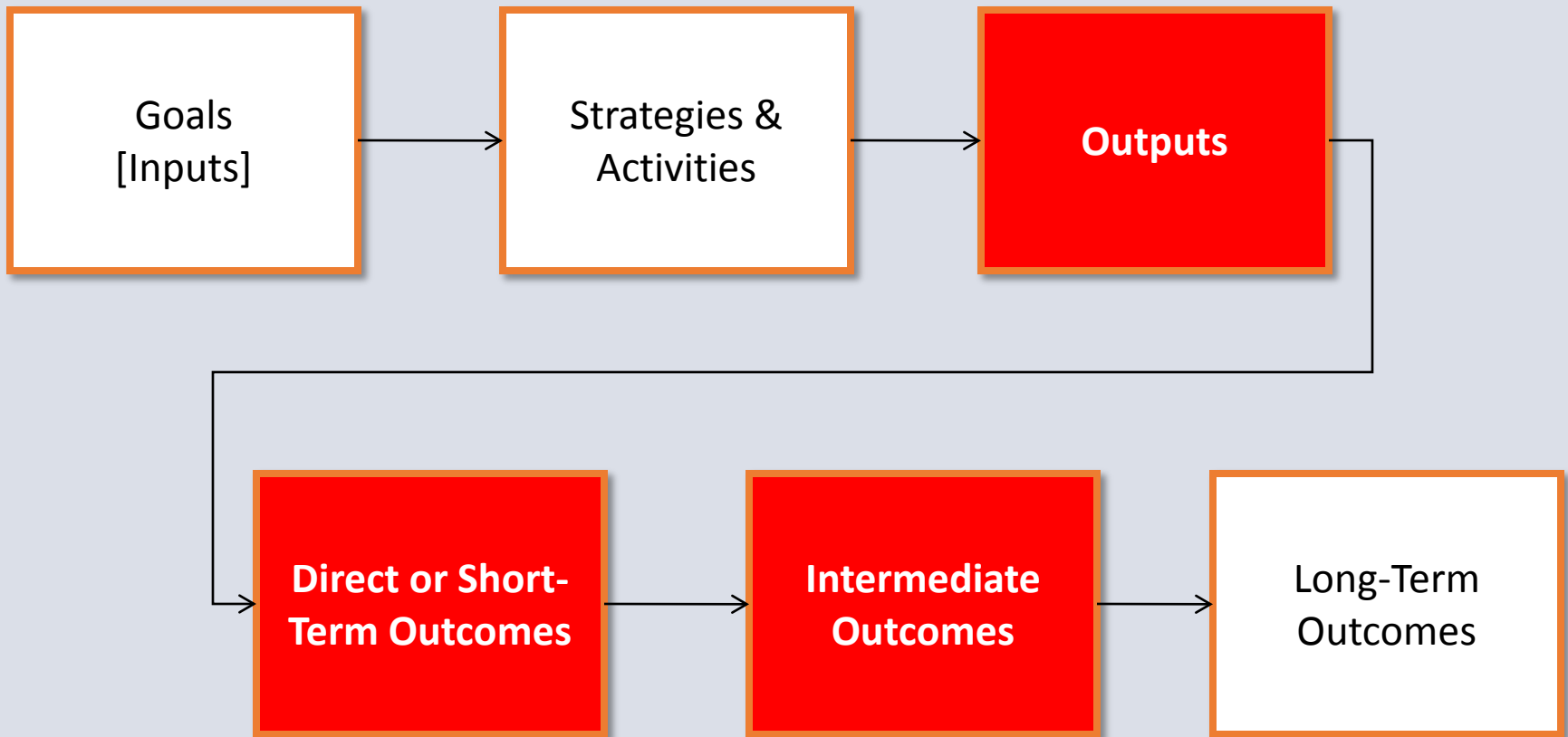 - What awareness, attitudes, or skills they develop

Outcome Components

- **Intermediate outcomes** can be viewed as . . .
  - Changes in adult actions or behaviors based on knowledge or skills acquired
  - Fidelity of the planned interventions
  - Improved organizational functioning
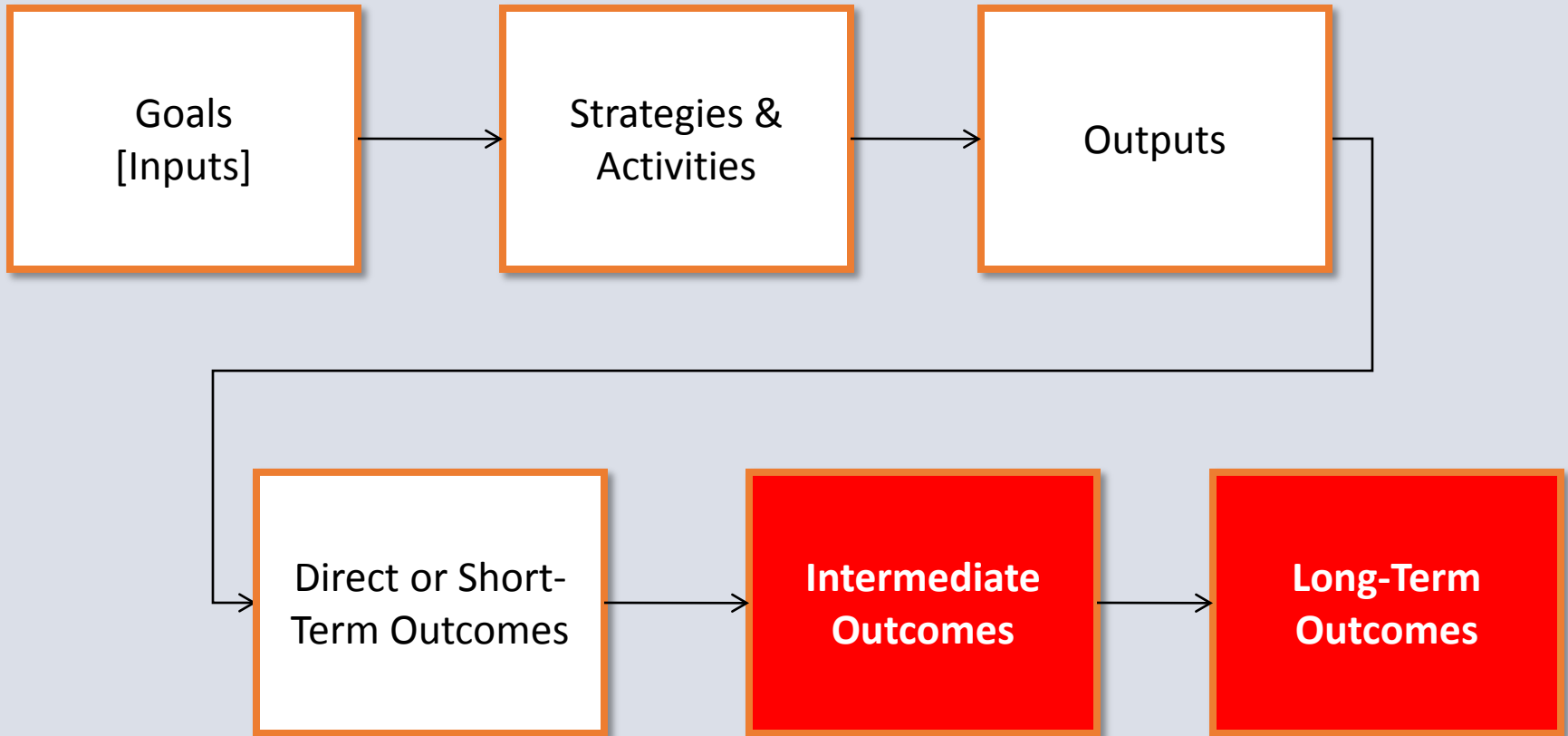 - Improved system functioning

Outcome Components

- **Long-term outcomes** can be viewed as . . .
  - The broadest program outcomes
  - The results that fulfill the program's goals
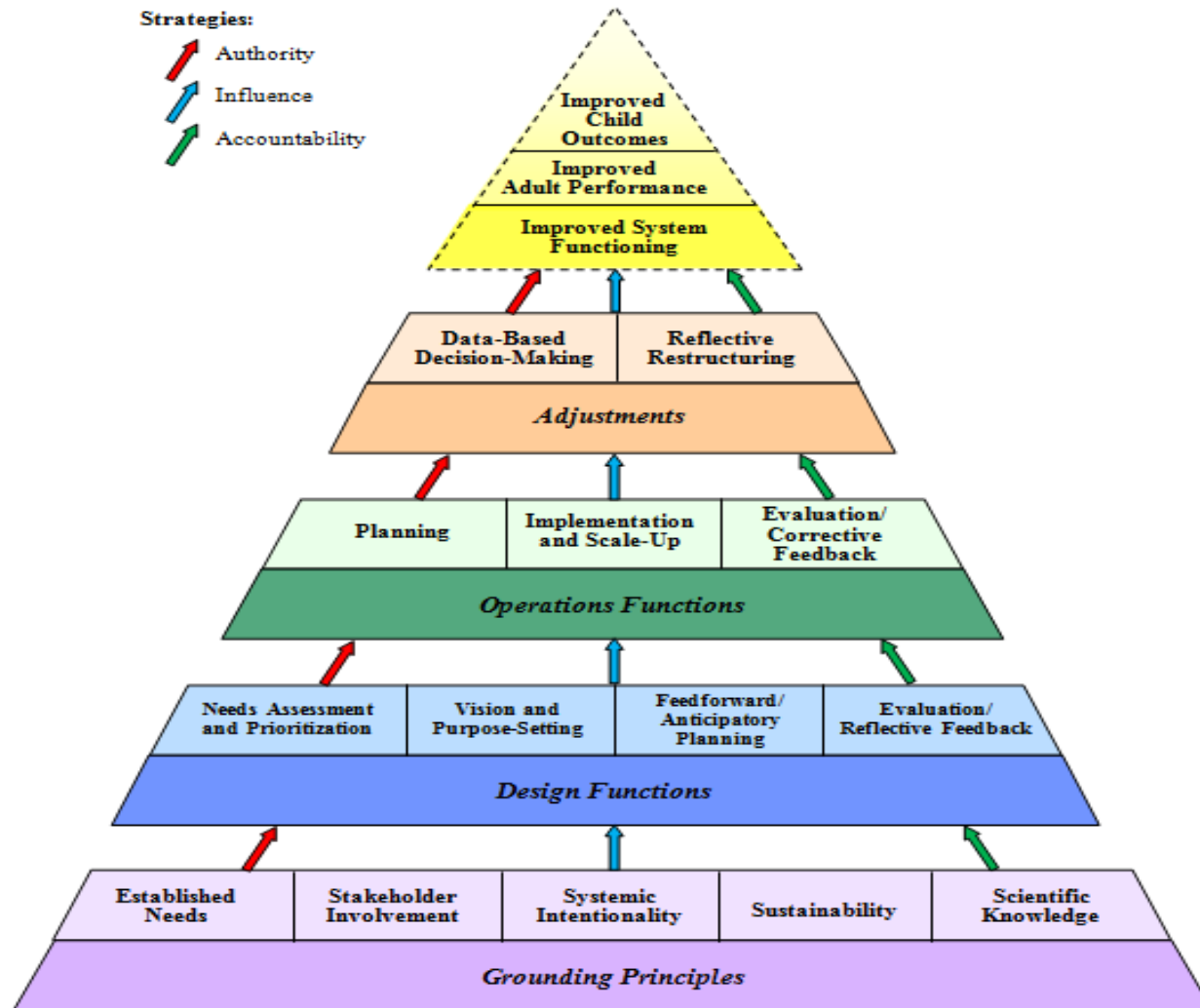 - The impact on children or families
  - Program sustainability

Formative Evaluation Focus


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Goals          →    Strategies &    →    Outputs
[Inputs]            Activities
                                           ↓
Direct or Short-  → Intermediate   →  Long-Term
Term Outcomes       Outcomes           Outcomes
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Summative Evaluation Focus

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┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐
│    Goals    │ ──> │ Strategies &│ ──> │   Outputs   │ ──┐
│   [Inputs]  │     │  Activities │     │             │   │
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Systemic Change Leadership

Systemic Change Leadership
Grounding Principles

Foundation of a systemic change effort:

- *Established Needs*—identified and updated by various stakeholders and supported by data

- *Stakeholder Involvement*—integral part of the planning, with significant involvement in decisions

- *Systemic Intentionality*—systemic change is deliberate and volitional; commitment to a systemic process

- *Sustainability*—provisions made for long-term continuation of successful reform

Systemic Change Leadership
Grounding Principles

Foundation of a systemic change effort [continued]:

- *Scientific Knowledge*—Begins with evidence-based knowledge about the content of the intervention and the strategies for achieving it; confirmed and advanced through the collection and analysis of data in local contexts

Systemic Change Leadership
Design Functions

Design functions for a systemic change effort:

- *Needs Assessment and Prioritization*—collecting needs data, engaging stakeholders, prioritizing, documenting and justifying the legitimacy of the identified needs

- *Vision and Purpose-Setting*—shared vision of an outcome state guides the intervention, developed through a consensus-building process that includes stakeholders

- *Feedforward/Anticipatory Planning*—leaders as change agents who promote the vision, garner support, urge change, publicize results; prospective use and communication of information; anticipating and manipulating possible eventualities

Systemic Change Leadership
Design Functions

Design functions for a systemic change effort [continued]:

- *Evaluation/Reflective Feedback*—monitor progress toward the desired outcome state, modify efforts when needed; information used to determine the overall value of results and the performance of organizations and systems in achieving results

Systemic Change Leadership
Operations Functions

Operations functions for a systemic change effort:

- *Planning*—plan with consideration of historical, cultural, and political environment; align with existing policies and initiatives; monitor ongoing environmental changes, making adaptations when appropriate; allocate sufficient resources for systemic strategies

- *Implementation and Scale Up*—collaborative process with distribution of power, authority, and responsibility among stakeholders and strategic partners; continuous nurturing of intervention

- *Evaluation/Corrective Feedback*—monitor progress, modifying efforts when needed; revise continuation plans and develop improvement plans; discontinue activities that fail

Systemic Change Leadership
Adjustments

Adjustments for a systemic change effort:

- *Data-Based Decision-Making*—identify, collect, analyze, and interpret data necessary to make continuous adjustment and correction; objective use of data for accountability and efficiency

- *Reflective Restructuring*—use data and other information to judge the overall value of results in achieving the vision, to judge the performance of pertinent organizations and systems, and to modify the vision or restructure organizations and systems to increase the opportunity to achieve the vision

Systemic Change Leadership
Desired Outcomes

Desired outcomes for a systemic change effort:

- *Intermediate Outcomes*—the results of program actions, activities, and initiatives; in a systemic education intervention, these outcomes are usually *improved system functioning* and *improved adult performance*; they serve as touchstones or benchmarks of the progress of the intervention program

- *Child and Family Outcomes*—the ultimate goal of most systemic intervention efforts

Systemic Intervention – What to Evaluate
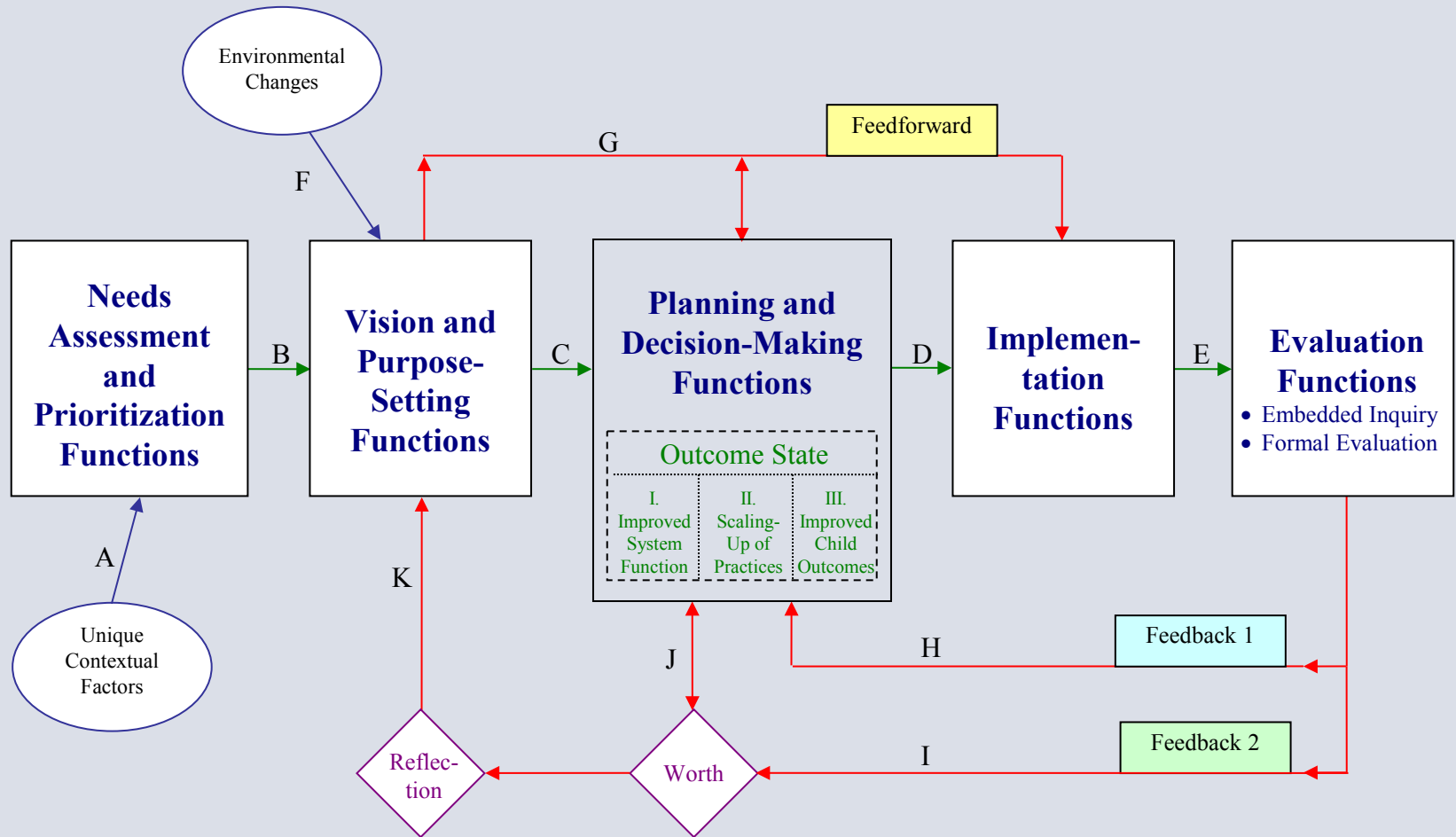
OSEP's SSIP Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Component	OSEP Evaluation Question	*Systemic Intervention Model* Arrow
3(b)	If different stakeholders were recruited for Phase II's evaluation, how were they recruited and what organizations or groups do they represent?	A
	How might the stakeholders participate in creating the evaluation questions to be asked and in judging the acceptability of the strategies used and outcomes achieved?	B,C,D
	How will stakeholders continue to be informed and provided opportunities to weigh in on the ongoing implementation of the evaluation?	I,J,K

OSEP's SSIP Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Component	OSEP Evaluation Question	*Systemic Intervention Model Arrow*
3(a)	Will the evaluation be handled internally or externally, and are sufficient resources identified to conduct it?	D
	What are the identified measureable inputs (resources), outputs (strategies and activities), and short and long term outcomes?	E
	What are the links between the evaluation and the theory of action and other components of the SSIP? • To what extent did [an activity] produce a change in [an outcome]. • To what extent were milestones in implementation reached on schedule?	H

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OSEP's SSIP Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Component	OSEP Evaluation Question	*Systemic Intervention Model* Arrow
3(c)	How does the evaluation measure State infrastructure changes needed to better align current initiatives identified in the infrastructure analysis conducted in Phase I?	C,D
	What are the criteria for successful implementation based on the measure(s) established (e.g., the level of proficiency on a fidelity measure)?	I,J
	What is the State's system for collecting implementation data and data applicable to the SIMR that yields valid and reliable data collected at regular intervals?	H,I

OSEP's SSIP Evaluation Questions

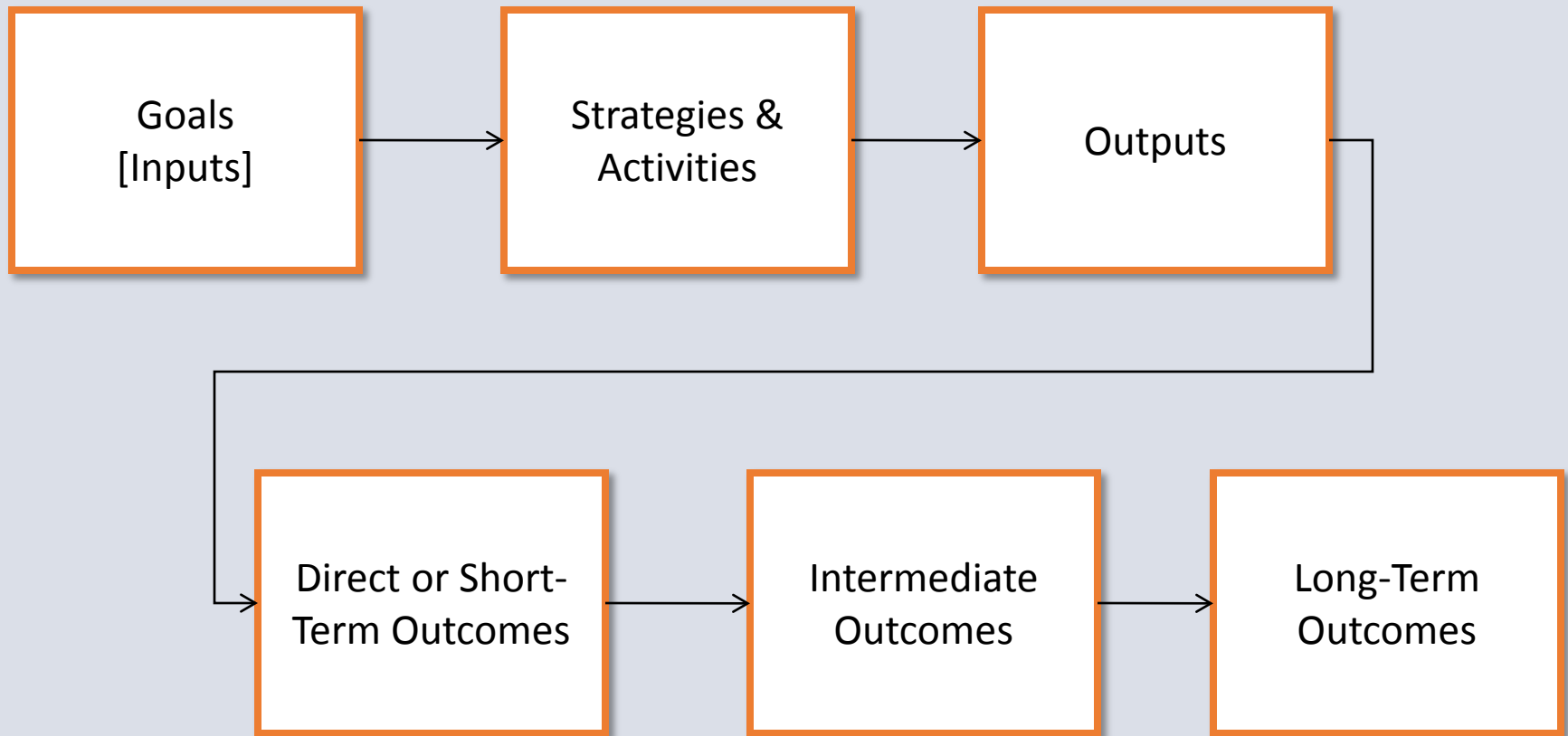| Evaluation Component	OSEP Evaluation Question	*Systemic Intervention Model Arrow*
3(c)-cont.	If the State's evaluation process is based upon a sample of the target children with disabilities then, how does the State ensure that the sample is representative of all of the children exposed to the coherent improvement strategies?	D,I
	What comparison(s) will be made to demonstrate the effectiveness of the coherent improvement strategies? For example, did student results change over time (e.g. pre-post) or did results change when compared to other groups students?	J

OSEP's SSIP Evaluation Questions

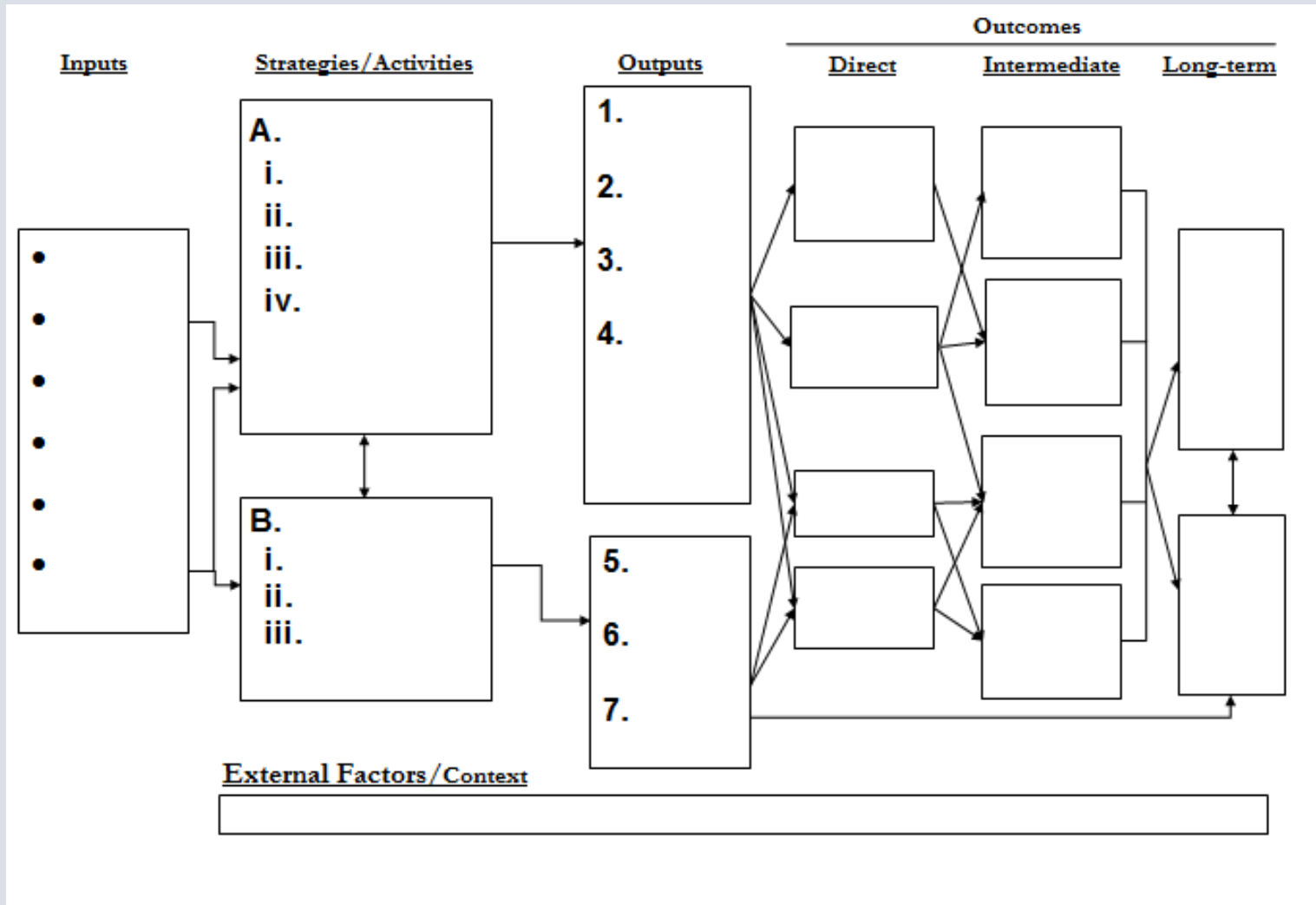| Evaluation Component	OSEP Evaluation Question	*Systemic Intervention Model* Arrow
3(d)	How often is the data reviewed? Who is participating in the review? How are changes made to the implementation and improvement strategies as a result of the data reviews?	J,K,C,G
	How does the State evaluate the effectiveness of the TA and/or professional development? If the TA and/or professional development are determined to be ineffective, what is the process for making adjustments?	J,K,C,G
	What is the process the State will use to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary?	K,B,C,G

Logic Model for Evaluation

Evaluation Focuses on Processes and Outcomes

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│    Goals     │ ───▶ │ Strategies & │ ───▶ │   Outputs    │ ──┐
│   [Inputs]   │      │  Activities  │      │              │   │
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      │ Term Outcomes │      │   Outcomes   │      │   Outcomes   │
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Logic Model for Evaluation

Evaluation Focuses on Processes and Outcomes

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│    Goals    │─────▶│ Strategies &│─────▶│   Outputs   │──┐
│  [Inputs]   │      │  Activities │      │             │  │
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     │ Term Outcomes │     │  Outcomes    │     │  Outcomes    │
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Evaluation's Focus on Outcomes—Backwards for Program Planning

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│  Long-Term   │ ───> │ Intermediate │ ───> │ Direct or Short- │
│  Outcomes    │      │  Outcomes    │      │  Term Outcomes   │
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┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│   Outputs    │ ───> │ Strategies & │ ───> │   Inputs     │
│              │      │  Activities  │      │              │
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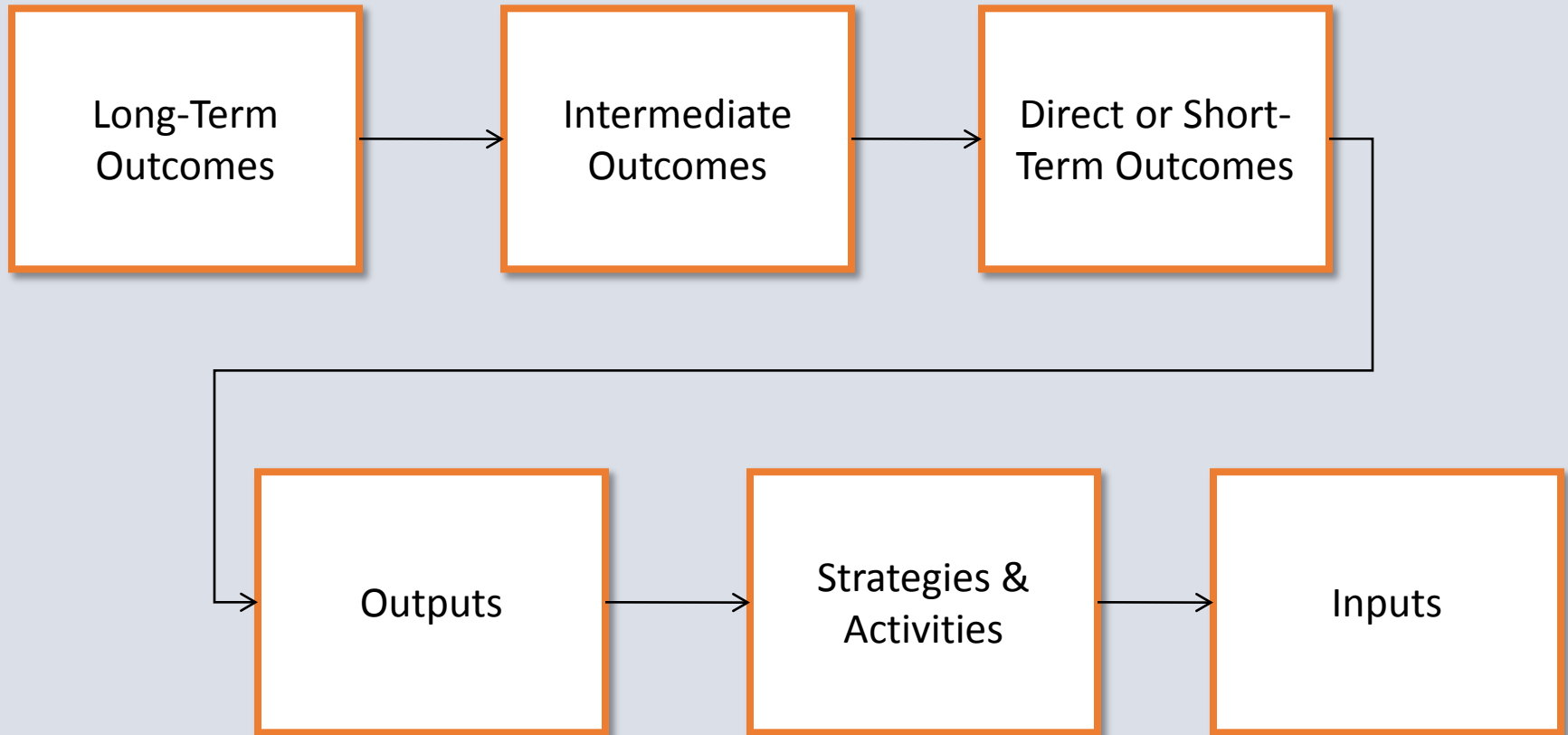
Steps in Planning Your Evaluation

- Create a logic model, specifically for the evaluation, that shows important activates that lead to outputs that can be counted and outcomes that can be measured

- Develop overarching and specific evaluation questions—the specific questions are the ones that indicate what data you'll be collecting and analyzing.

- Map the specific evaluation questions to data collection and analysis tasks.

- Prepare a timeline.

Take This Away

- Systemic improvement not simple—requires forethought and rethinking.

- Someone has to nurture change.

- Planning and decision-making are central.

- Focus must always be on desired outcomes.

- Outcomes are not static.

- Management requires knowing where you're going as well as where you are.

- Evaluation provides managers with information they need.

- You can't afford not to evaluate.

In Conclusion

- There's no one way to do all this
- Evaluation is local evidence
- Evaluation is management

- Some tools, templates, and support available at the Building an SSIP Evaluation Plan session

Questions or Comments

For More Information

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Project Officers: Richelle Davis and Meredith Miceli

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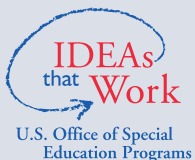
Bonus Slides

Systemic Intervention – What to Evaluate
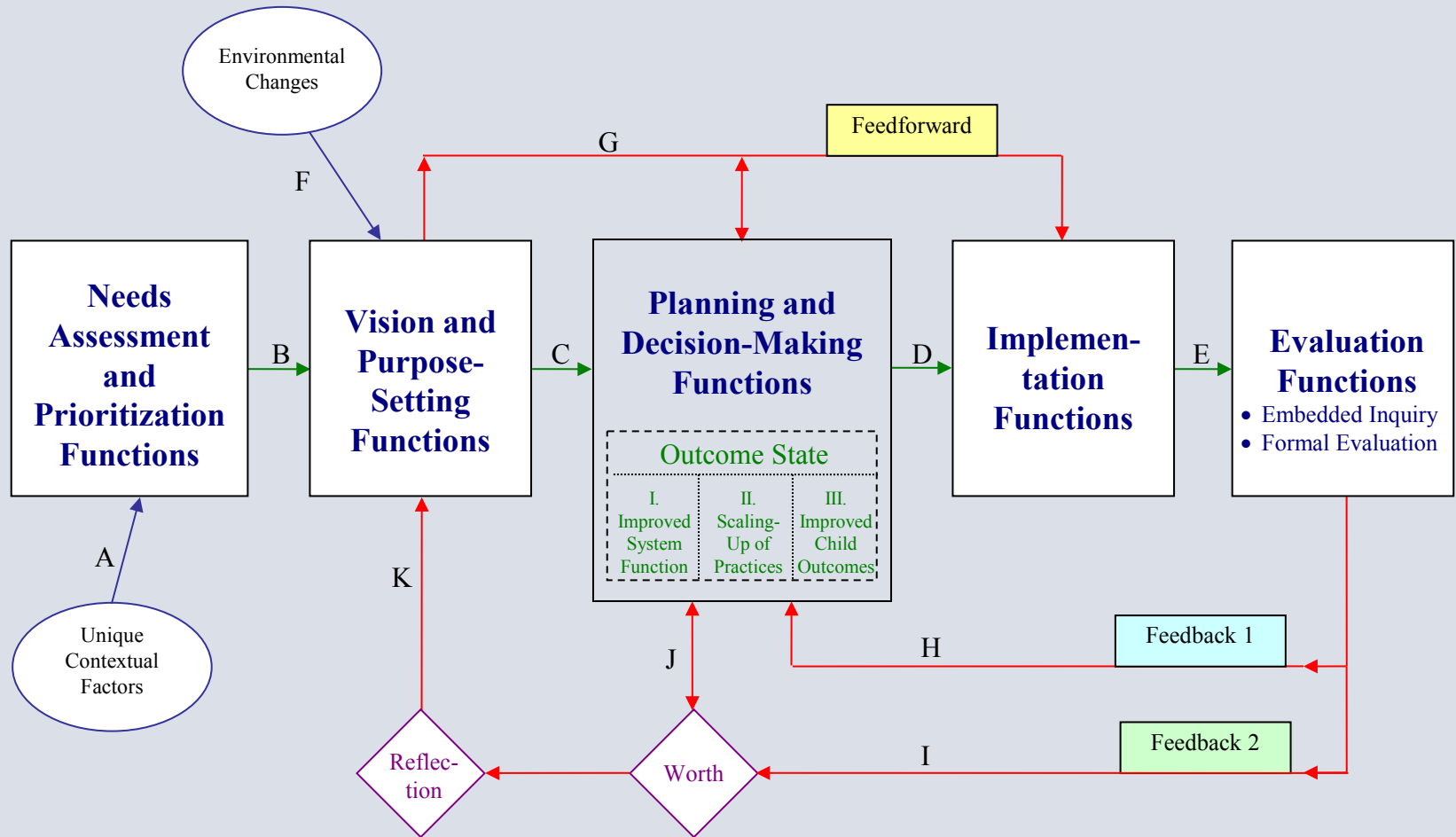
Explanation of the Five Administrative Functions

Needs Assessment Functions

- Collecting needs data

    - Quantitative data

    - Qualitative data

    - Opinions

- Engaging stakeholders in dialogue about needs

- Prioritizing needs (while considering context, resource, logistical, and other constraints)

- Documenting and justifying needs selection

Explanation of the Five Administrative Functions (cont'd.)

Vision and Purpose-Setting Functions

- Establishing, by consensus, a vision of a desired outcome state that defines the fundamental intention of the systemic change

- Establishing an overall direction and purpose

- Committing to shared responsibility and accountability

- Considering environmental issues and changes

- Maintaining focus

Explanation of the Five Administrative Functions (cont'd.)

Planning and Decision-Making Functions

- Allocating resources (people, money, materials)

- Creating policies, procedures, guidelines, regulations

- Ensuring policy and other alignments

- Designing implementation strategies

- Adjusting to environmental issues and changes

- Using feedback to monitor implementation

- Making course corrections

Explanation of the Five Administrative Functions (cont'd.)

Implementation Functions

- Instituting policies and regulations

- Executing strategies and activities, particularly through collaborative partnerships

- Providing and administering stipends, awards, and subgrants

- Establishing model demonstration, pilot sites

- Providing guidance, technical assistance, training, materials, and other support to customers

- Disseminating information to customers

- Collecting data

Explanation of the Five Administrative Functions (cont'd.)

Evaluation Functions (Embedded and Formal)

- Establishing metrics for outputs and outcomes
- Establishing measurable expectations for management and implementation
- Designing evaluation plan
- Collecting data
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Disseminating findings
- Determining recommendations based on findings

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model

A. **How are historical, political, and other contextual issues considered in the identification of the needs and the selection of the stakeholders involved in determining the needs?**

1. How were the needs identified that are related to each project goal?

2. What contextual issues influenced the selection of needs?

3. How does the SIG project relate to past initiatives or programs in the state that have addressed similar needs?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

B. **How are needs translated into the vision of the desired outcome state?**

   1. For each project goal, what is the vision of the desired outcome state or the core purpose?

   2. How were the identified needs translated into the vision of the desired outcome state or into the core purpose?

   3. Who participated in defining the vision or purpose?

   4. How has the vision or core purpose been communicated?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

C. **How are decisions made about goals and broad strategies that transform the vision into plans?**

   1. For each project goal, what is the planning and decision-making process for translating the vision of a desired outcome state into project activities?

   2. Who was involved initially in deciding on and crafting the details of the plan for project activities?

   3. Who is involved in ongoing decisions regarding the continuing overall direction of project activities?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

D. How do plans and ongoing decisions lead to collaborations, actions, and activities that pursue the vision?

1. What is the process of translating plans into project activities?

2. For each project goal, who is collaborating/ partnering to implement the planned activities, and what is the nature of those partnering relationships?

3. What effort has been undertaken to build and sustain the collaborative relationships?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

E. **How are the outputs and outcomes associated with decisions and activities identified, selected, and measured?**

1. What have been the direct outcomes (short-term and intermediate) of the activities in each project goal?

2. Which organizations and individuals have these outcomes affected, and do these affected organizations and individuals represent multiple levels of the targeted systems?

3. What unintended outcomes have occurred?

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Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

F. **How are relevant, external environmental changes identified and incorporated?**

   1. For each project goal, how are pertinent changes in the policy and practice environment identified or monitored?

   2. How are these changes communicated?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

G. **How are the vision of the desired outcome state and the core purpose promoted, sustained, and used to drive plans and actions?**

1. How are the vision of the desired outcome state and the core purpose used to stimulate commitment to the project?

2. What is the process for comparing the vision of the desired outcome state and the core purpose to plans, activities, and management processes?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

H. **How is evaluative information used to adjust plans, activities, and management?**

1. What data are collected on the outcomes of the activities in each project goal?

2. How are these data analyzed?

3. How are unintended outcomes identified and measured?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

I. **How is evaluative information used to determine the worth or value of actions and activities vis-à-vis the desired outcome state?**

  1. For each project goal, to whom and in what format are outcome data, related evaluation reports, and environmental change information distributed?

  2. At what points in the overall systemic change process has this information been used to initiate changes?

  3. What has been the decision-making process for making data-based changes to the project?

Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

J. **How are determinations of the worth of actions and activities used to alter plans and management processes?**

1. For each project goal, when problems with the project's implementation and the resulting outcomes have been identified, to what extent has a systematic process of reflection on organizational function (by project stakeholders) occurred?

2. To what extent has reflection resulted in the modification of organizations' underlying norms, policies, and objectives?

3. Has resulting change occurred in organizations at various levels of the targeted system?

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Evaluation Questions Derived From Systemic Inquiry Model (cont'd.)

K. **How do reflections on the worth of actions and activities lead to modifications of the vision/purpose and alterations to organizational structures and management processes?**

1. For each project goal, how have changes in organizational functioning affected the decision-making and planning process for the project?

2. Has organizational change led to the propagation of inter-organization activities related to the focus area that are self-renewing, self-perpetuating, and sustaining?

3. Has organizational change led to broader, ongoing systemic improvements?

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