

Choosing the best intervention

Guidance for Service Deliverers

September 2020
Liz Chaloner and
Ruth Geraghty



Introduction

- Reflecting on past practice
- Issues to consider before implementing a programme or intervention
- Choosing the best intervention – using the evidence

Reflecting on past ~~failures~~ challenges

The context

Decision taken to run a programme of support to parents

How did it go?

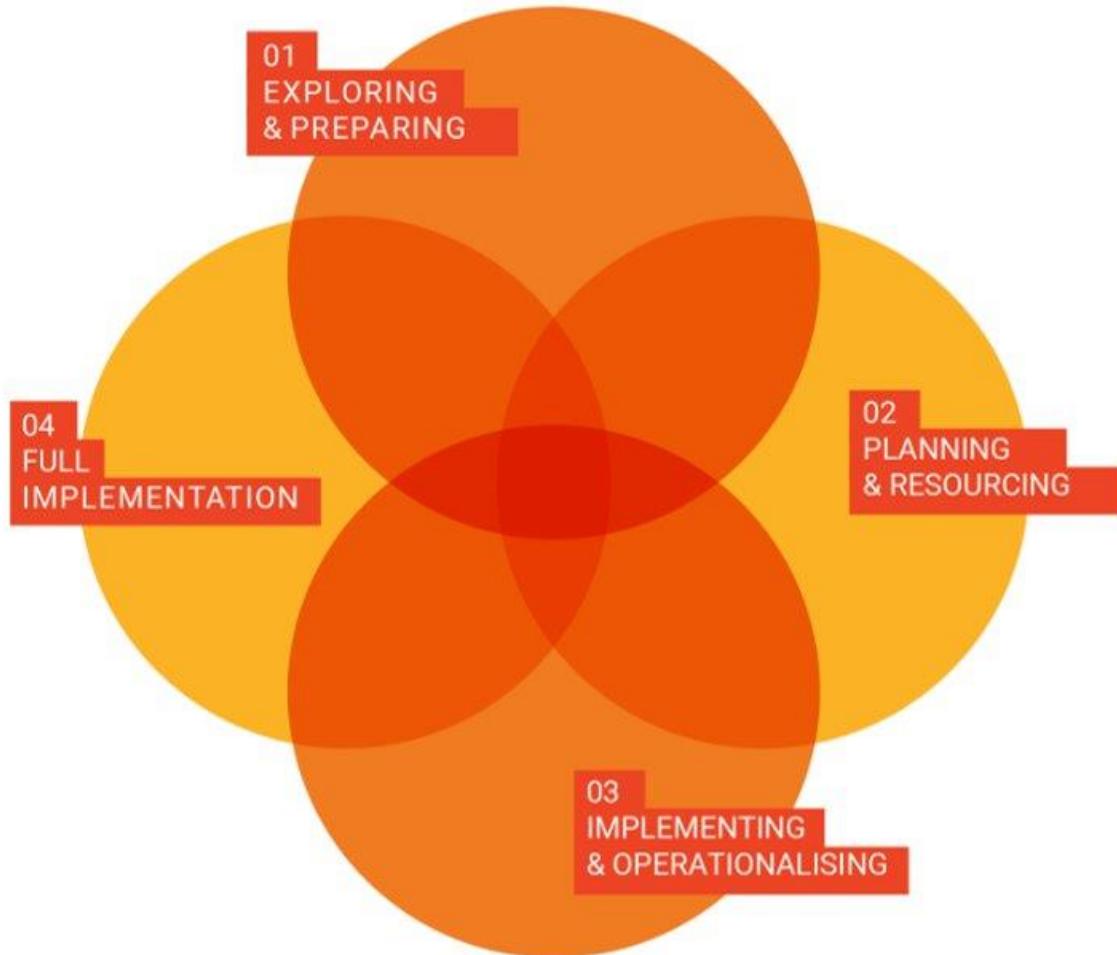
Where did we go wrong - on reflection?

C E S

What does evidence teach us and what do we now know?

- There is no magic bullet
- Children and families benefit when services work together
- Special efforts are required to engage and retain parents – *involvement* is crucial
- Children thrive when they experience consistency
- A range of external factors affect how families engage with services

Implementation stages



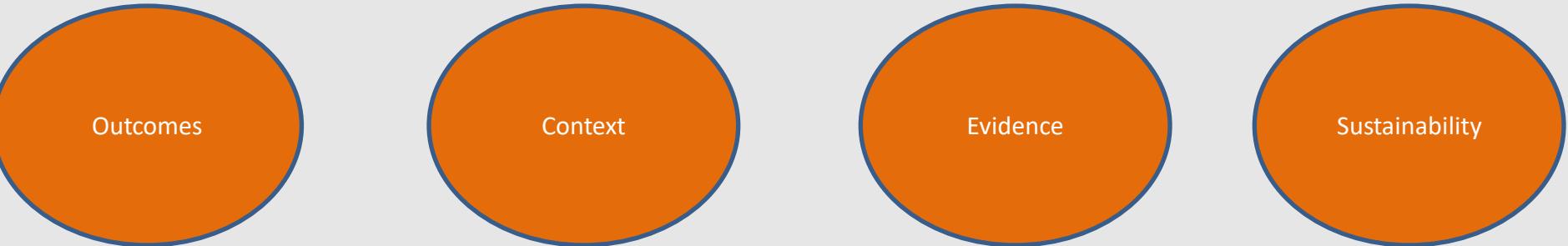
- Research indicates 4 stages in implementing any intervention
- Each stage needs time and attention
- If you skip a stage, you'll end up coming back to it!



Stage 1

Exploring and Preparing

Questions for Service Providers



What are realistic and measurable outcomes?

How does it fit with other government initiatives?
How can we avoid duplication?

Have we consulted with stakeholders about needs and gaps in service provision?
What's the evidence on how to address them?

What can we put in place now to make the approach last?
How will we reach our target group?

Some tools to help in the Exploring/Discovery stage of implementation

- **Logic Models**

<https://www.effectiveservices.org/downloads/NCEC-Implementation-Guide-2018.pdf>

- **Hexagon**

<https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/HeadStart-HexagonDiscussionandAnalysisTool.pdf>

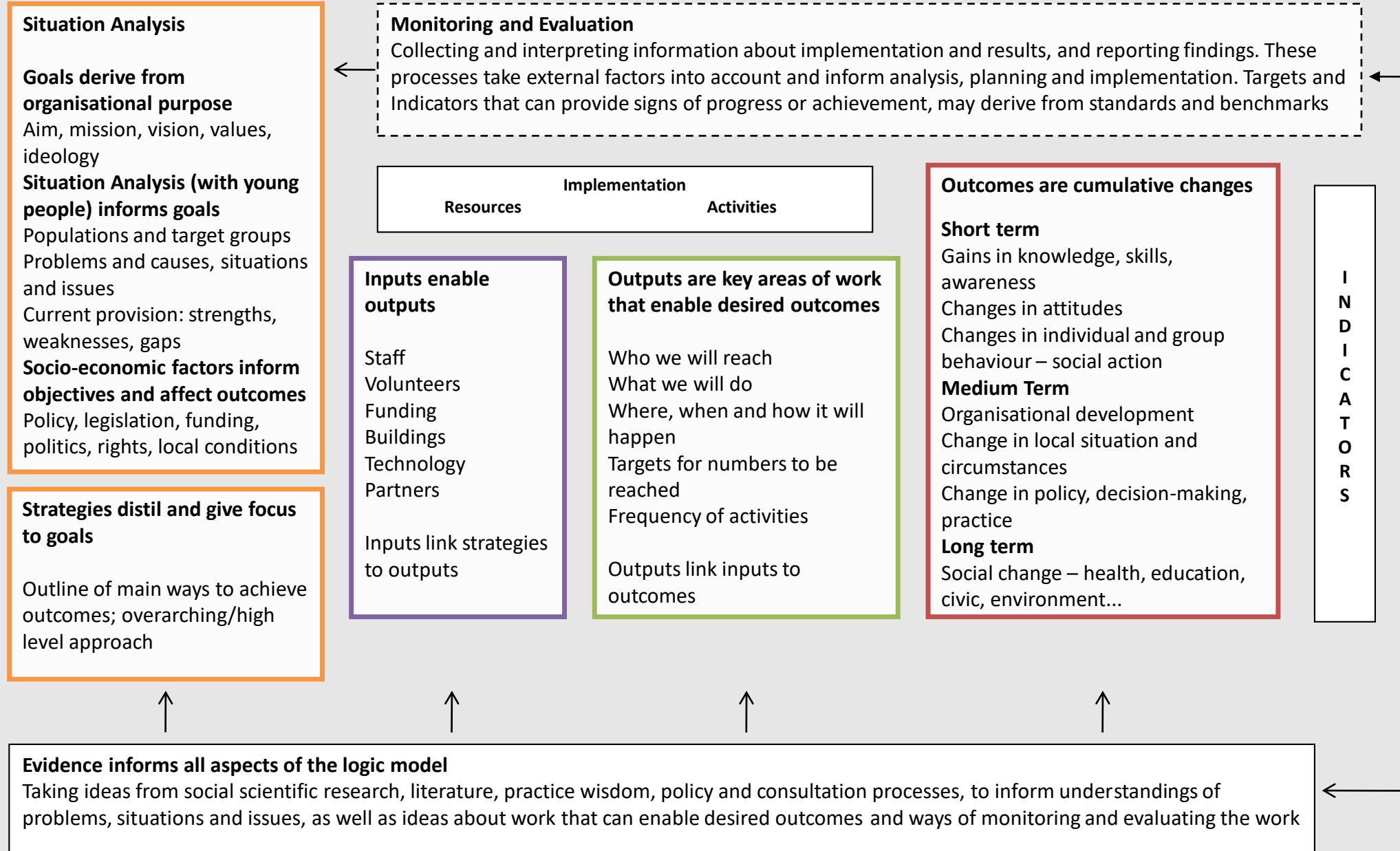
- **Theory of change**

<https://www.effectiveservices.org/downloads/NCEC-Implementation-Guide-2018.pdf>

- **Stakeholder engagement tool**

<http://effectiveservices.org/resources/article/stakeholder-engagement-tool>

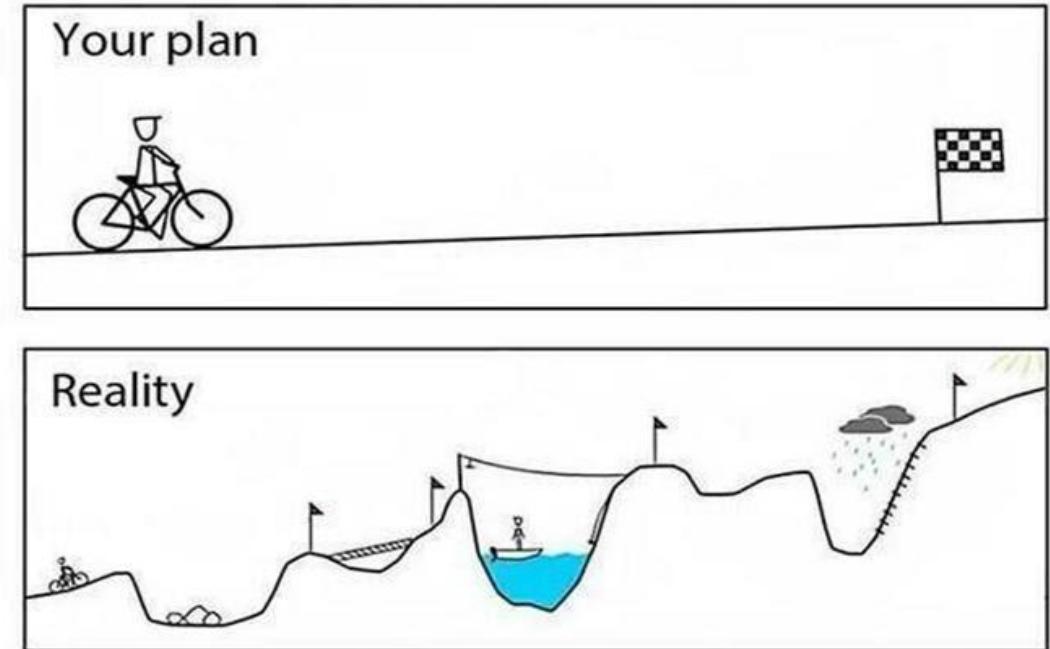
CES approach to Logic Modelling



Reality check

Use the logic model in light of:

- The resources you have available
- Challenges you face
- Benefits you will gain from implementation



The Hexagon – developed by NIRN



The theory of change for your programme/service

- Are you clear on the problem that exists as well as the population you want to reach?
- Is this intervention based on sound theory and informed by relevant evidence?
- Is the proposed intervention outcomes focused? Are these outcomes clearly defined, at all levels of the organisation?
- Will/Is the intervention delivered by well-trained, well-supported personnel? Have the required and available resources (time, money, personnel) been realistically considered?
- Are you clear about how the progress of the intervention will be monitored and how you will show it is achieving the desired outcomes?

What is meant by the term evidence?

The case that can be made for a particular belief, a claim, a course of action or a decision

The available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid (Oxford English Dictionary)

Key terms – evidence based

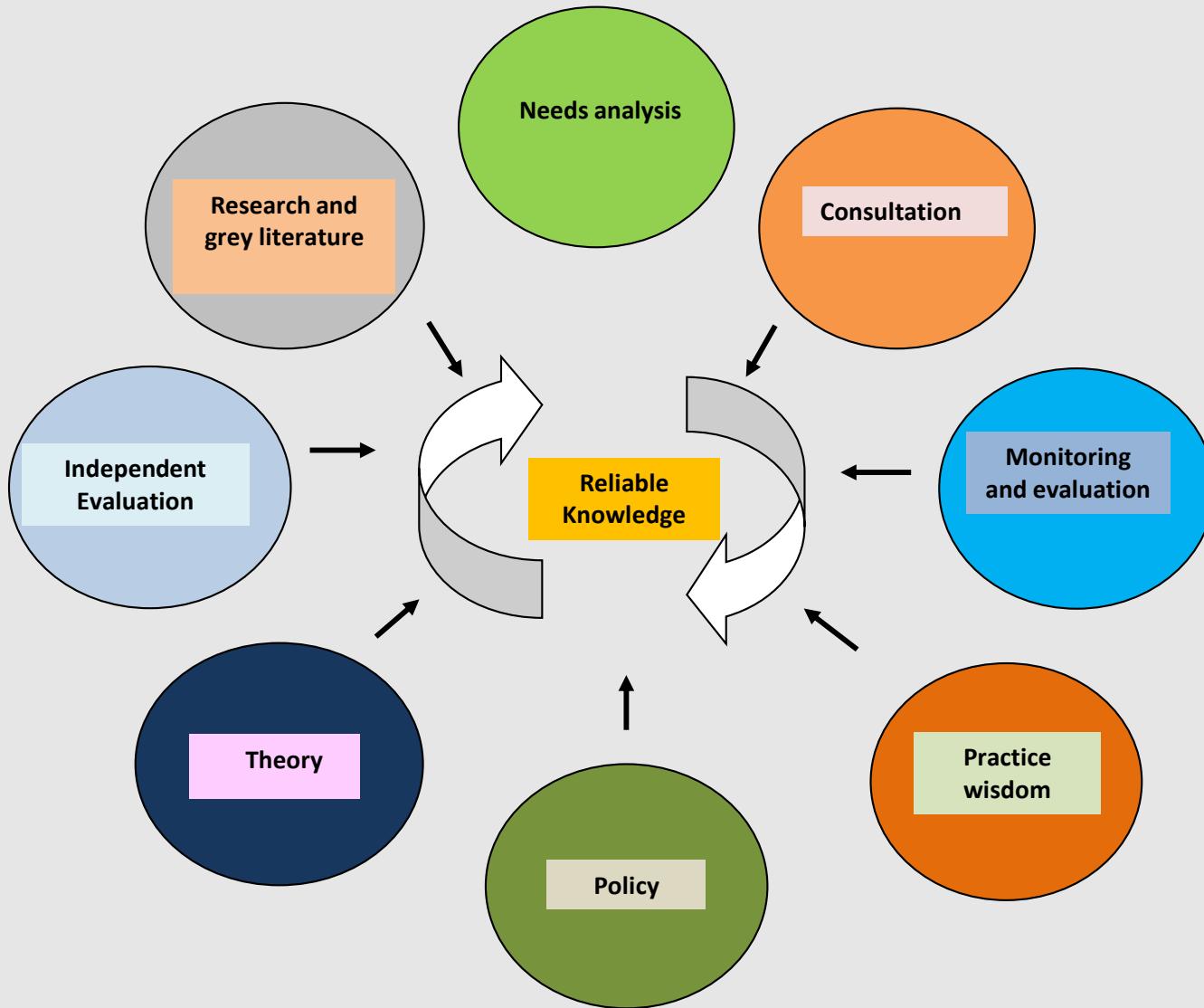
The term ‘**evidence-based**’ is used to describe a programme, a service or intervention that has consistently been shown to produce positive results by independent research studies that have been conducted to a particular degree of social scientific rigour.

A circular portrait of Sandra Nutley, a woman with short, light-colored hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark jacket over a white collared shirt.

Being evidence informed

- The term ‘evidence-informed’ is used to describe practice, policy and/or commissioning which is based on the integration of experience, judgement and expertise with the best available external evidence from systematic research.
- Sandra Nutley 2010

An evidence-informed approach



Five Features of Effective Implementation



Leadership was needed at every level



Services took time to explore and prepare; understanding local needs and strengths helped



Feasibility issues were addressed



Staff understood the benefits of the initiative being implemented and were supported



Relationships and partnerships were valued



Prevention and Early Intervention Research Initiative

New outputs
24th September 2020

What do you want to measure?

 Search...

- Searchable public database
- Information about standardised measures
- Used by at least one PEI evaluation or GUI study, i.e. used in an Irish context
- Due for launch at end of 2020 via CES and partner websites
- Public site under construction: <https://effectiveservices.force.com/s/>
- User testers needed!

Library of reports in the DRI



- Searchable collection of research and evaluation reports from PEII, PEIP and ABC evaluations
- Preserved in Digital Repository of Ireland: <https://repository.dri.ie/catalog/95947h22g>
- Each report has detailed metadata attached (very rich description) - fully searchable
- Blog post: <https://dri.ie/new-collection-prevention-and-early-intervention-publications-0>