Toolkit for evaluating placed-based delivery approaches

2 August 2018

This toolkit accompanies the Place-based Evaluation Framework, commissioned by the Queensland Government Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS), the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), and Logan Together.
It has been prepared by Clear Horizon, in partnership with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI), Collaboration for Impact and Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA).

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1. Toolkit architecture and how to use

This toolkit accompanies the Place-based Evaluation Framework (2018) developed on behalf of Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS), Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), and Logan Together.

The toolkit aims to provide links and resources for tools to address your chosen key evaluation questions. Each link is rated for user friendliness using a circle system:

●○○ a method suitable for an adequately prepared novice
●●○ a method of intermediate difficulty, possible with an internal team
●●● an advanced method aimed mostly at professional evaluators or researchers

1.1. Architecture of toolkit

Contents	
Getting Started	A planning tool for developing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan
Level 1: Tools for assessing place readiness indicators	To help you assess the readiness of a place for embarking on a place-based delivery approach
Level 1b: Tools for developing the baseline and tracking change	To help you decide on population level indicators, and to collect the baseline and track change
Level 2: Tools for tracking enablers	To help you evaluate enablers for change that are particularly relevant for the work of a support organisation (facilitating partner)
Level 3a: Tools for capturing and understanding systemic change in our community	To help you consider how to evaluate systemic changes in your community
Level 3b: Tools for tracking social innovation projects	To help evaluate specific projects
Level 3c: Tools for capturing ripples beyond place	To help you evaluate influences beyond place, such as changes in policy.
Level 4: Tools for instances of Impact for families and communities	To help you capture emerging impact on individuals, families and micro-places
Level 5: Tools for population-level impact	To help you capture and make an impact claim about positive outcomes for individuals, families and communities and at the population level
Tools and resources for reflective practice and strategic learning	For reflective practice and strategic learning
Tools and resources for reporting	For producing great reports
Tools and resources for ensuring ethical conduct	Guidelines, processes and resources for ensuring you use an ethical and legal process.

2. Getting started

2.1. Comprehensive planning tool

In addition to this toolkit we provide a planning tool template. By working through the toolkit and planning tool with your partners, you should be able to scope out a contextually tailored monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) plan. This should help you choose a set of key evaluation questions, and select the most appropriate tools. Remember every MEL plan is different because every context is different!

●○○ *Planning tool for MEL of PBA* (see separate 'planning tool'; the document is also accessible on Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Planning Tool)

We recommend working through the separate planning tool using a workshop format. We find 2-3 full-day workshops are usually required: one to scope out the needs and set the principles; one for the theory of change; and one to agree on key evaluation questions and tools.

2.2. Tools that are culturally appropriate and community friendly

Of the tools we provide in this toolkit, some are likely to be more community friendly than others. Here we want to point out a toolkit developed specifically for working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities. For a general guide on cultural capability, please see Annex 3 in the framework.

	Description of the tool	Source
Data collection toolkit 'Dilly bag' ●○○	The ARPNet Dilly Bag is a field guide based on experiences that came from training workshops and projects involving the members of the Aboriginal Research Practitioners' Network (ARPNet).	Dilly bag field guide

3. Level 1: Tools for assessing place readiness indicators

Foundations 1	1.1 Place readiness and interest in systemic changes in our community	1.2 Sufficiently resourced facilitating partner convenes and catalyses systemic change in our community	1.3 Agile and adaptive funders, initiators and intermediaries

3.1. Level 1 – Evaluating readiness for change

'Foundations' refer to the readiness of people to begin the change journey at the start of the PBA. Because there are different foundations, some PBAs may take much longer to get up and running than others. When designing and initiating a PBA, it is important to check in on all these aspects to give insights as to what sort of design and timeframe will work. In our theory of change, we note three elements of foundations: place readiness, facilitating partner readiness and funder readiness (see Level 1 of the generic theory of change, Section 4.5 of the framework).

There are many tools that relate to community or place readiness, rather than looking at funders and initiators. For examining funder or facilitating partner readiness, we suggest conducting some probing semi-structured interviews with a range of people with different perspectives.

	Description of the tool	Source
Tool for assessing community readiness ●●●	This is a very comprehensive tool for assessing community readiness to tackle an issue.	Community tool Box – Community Readiness tool
●●○	Another simpler tool for assessing community capacity to change	Assessing community capacity for change by K4health
●●○	The capacity assessment was developed for Indigenous communities (from Canada)	Self-assessment tool from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
●●○	This model uses 5 domains to address readiness and offers practical advice: • Community Knowledge of the Issue • Community Knowledge of Efforts • Community Climate • Leadership • Resources.	Community readiness for community change by the Tri-Ethnic centre
●○○	This framework describes different stages of community life. It is accessible and should provide insights into where your community is at.	Community rhythms: 5 stages of community life. Harwood Institute.
Semi-structured interviews ●○○	For probing and inquiring about funder and facilitating partner readiness, semi-structured interviews can be used. It is important to conduct these with a range of different stakeholders who hold different perspectives.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Semi-structured interview

4. Level 1b: Tools for developing the baseline and tracking change

In addition to understanding community readiness, we need to establish a baseline so that later we can measure whether things are changing for individuals, families and communities.

Setting the baseline relates strongly to Level 4 tools – impacts for individual, families and communities. Here we provide resources to help select meaningful population-level indicators and to measure the foundations (baseline). This is strongly linked to developing a 'shared measurement system' and is an important part of PBAs.

Developing a baseline for your population of interest is important for focusing your work, and for enabling you to know if change has happened. It needs to happen after you have become clear about the focus of your work, and the outcomes you are aiming for.

In order to set a baseline we suggest you first develop a 'high-level theory of change'. By this we mean the population-level results you aspire to achieve and the preconditions for change which may include things like changes in behaviour, attitudes, norms and capabilities. Unlike a full theory of change, it does not go into detail of what we will do to catalyse change. Developing a 'high level' theory of change and looking at scholarly literature about your given outcome area can help groups identify key preconditions/determinants for change that can be addressed through collaborative effort. Depending on your chosen outcome, there are some great evidence-based resources for this (such as the ARACY Nest framework[1]).

Once the high-level theory of change is clear, groups are encouraged to select a few key indicators at the population level and set targets to mobilise people and raise aspirations. So for population-level results, you ideally have 1-3 great inspiring indicators, each accompanied by a time-bound and quantitative target.

	Description of the tool	Source
Developing a shared measurement system ●●○	This website provides an overview of how to develop a shared agenda and shared outcomes, and a small set of indicators to track. It includes links to examples.	Collaboration for Impact website
Developing a shared measurement system ●●○	This website provides tools and seminars about developing a shared measurement framework. FSG has a lot of great resources.	FSG breakthroughs in shared measurement

[1] ARACY - The NEST in action

	Description of the tool	Source
Developing indicators together ●●○	A guide from the Intersector Project to help collaborative partners identify and agree upon indicators.	The Intersector Project: Agree on Measures of Success
Developing indicators at the population level ●○○	A simple slide pack that talks about population indicators and how they are best developed using a results-based accountability framework	Collaboration for Impact website link to presentation
Developing indicators at the population level ●●○	More about results-based accountability and how to implement it	Results accountability guide
Evaluating collective impact ●●●	A 3-part series of downloadable handbooks that walks partners through the process of assessing progress and impact, provides case studies and examples, and sample questions, outcomes and indicators	FSG guide for assessing progress and impact with example outcomes and indicators

5. Level 2: Tools for tracking enablers

In accordance with Level 2 of our theory of change, the enablers for change are the things that need establishing to enable the systemic changes that are needed to achieve population-level shifts. They can be evaluated and tracked, and they are important markers for success in the initial years of a PBA, but can apply across all years. The generic ones offered in this framework are shown above.

Note we encourage communities to also develop their own enablers, which we refer to as 'principles'. They can be measured in the same ways as enablers.

5.1. How to evaluate enablers for change

While we refer to them as 'enablers for change', they are also equivalent to what Michael Quinn Patton refers to as 'effectiveness principles'. They provide advice and guidance on what to do, how to think, what to value and how to be effective. They are particularly useful to measure in the initial years. In addition to the five enablers for change, we also encourage PBA collaborations to add their own locally relevant principles.

In accordance with Patton's guidelines around Principles-focused evaluation, we suggest the following considerations:

- Check whether they are meaningful for the stakeholders.
- Check whether they are showing up in the data.
- Check whether they are leading to systemic changes.

One great way of operationalising these questions is to develop a performance rubric for each of the principles (ideally co-designed). Later, you can score your own performance after examining the data, then decide what to do differently (e.g. what happened, so what, what now).

5.2. Rubrics

What are rubrics?

Rubrics are an alternative way to establish performance standards and are gaining in popularity. They are a broad-brush way of transparently defining what good, excellent (etc.) quality, value or performance would look like.

Rubrics are extremely valuable as they allow interpretation of qualitative, quantitative and mixed method data as a set. They can also help build a shared consensus about what is valuable. Unlike an indicator, rubrics are arguably a truer representation of the criteria that we value. They are also harder to manipulate. They are great to ensure that community, cultural and organisational values are incorporated into an evaluation. We provide example rubrics against each of the enablers. These rubrics were developed as part of the co-design process for this framework, and aim to provide a concrete example rather than being prescriptive.

	Description of the resource	Source
Principles-focused evaluation ●●○	Principles-focused evaluation is an approach to evaluation that focuses on effectiveness principles as a key construct to evaluate. Seems to be very relevant for evaluating complex, systems change interventions such as PBAs.	Textbook: Principles-focused evaluation – the guide – 2018, MQ Patton. Webinar: Principles-focused evaluation featuring Mark Cabaj and Michael Quinn Patton
Rubrics ●○○	A rubric sets out clearly criteria and standards for assessing different levels of performance. They are a natural partner to evaluating principles, as they enable people to get really clear about what they look like when they are showing up.	Overview of rubrics from Better Evaluation

5.3. Broad sweep tools for Level 2

Broad sweep approaches evaluate all the enablers with one tool. They include the collaborative health tool, which is an online survey, or a more comprehensive process evaluation that could be conducted externally. Alternatively, you can collectively measure each one discretely as part of your monitoring and evaluation system. This can be done in a collaborative, participatory manner. In the sections below, we provide example rubrics; these can be used with the broad sweep tools or specific tools. Or they can simply be used as a collaborative and reflective exercise where stakeholders come together, and score themselves and reflect on what they need to do differently.

	Description of the tool	Source
Collaborative health tool ●○○	Collaboration for Impact (CFI) have a collaboration health tool that covers of a lot of the items in the enablers. It is an online survey tool. It can be used in a broad sweep way to collect data against all your enablers.	Collaborative health assessment tool
Process evaluation ●●●	A process evaluation is intended to document, assess and help organisations learn from the early development and implementation of a program. Juanez and Associates et al. (2011) suggest assessing the extent to which program is adhering to the agreed PBA enablers and principles.	This PDF resource has lots of good ideas and example indicators for conducting a process evaluation in the initial years: Best practices in place-based initiatives: Implications for implementation and evaluation of Best Start (2011)

5.4. Specific tools for evaluating each of the enablers

It is important to 'get clear' what success looks like for your group, about the enablers, before you set out to measure them. Here we suggest that you develop a rubric for each enabler, then consider how you will collect data to see whether this enabler is happening, and whether it is leading to desired outcomes.

For each of the enablers we offer an example rubric and some tools. It is important to note that these example rubrics are only a 'starter pack' and you will need to do further work to make them relevant and shared by your community.

Community priorities and aspiration direct activities and investment

Example rubric 1: Community priorities and aspiration direct activities and investment

Rating	Description/dimensions of merit
Highly effective	• Funding models changed to support priorities • Clear articulation of priorities - community members can articulate priorities • High correlation between priorities vs activities • Strong agreement about community priorities • New activities (innovative) have emerged in response to community priorities • Collaborative process: wide cross-section of community involved in setting priorities, and collaborative outcomes/logic development • Culturally appropriate processes used • Collaborative community-led process • People are excited by goals • Greater community agency
Acceptable	• Coordination and communication between services • Some agreement about priorities • Priorities documented, developed and widely available • Clear process for 'hearing' and reviewing priorities • Community organisations more responsive to community priorities • People centred services
Bar or hard hurdle	
Less than acceptable	• Priorities only reflect 'some' people's priorities • Community does not care or does not know about the initiative
Detrimental	• Priorities are not determined by the community • Priorities and aspirations only reflect funders' priorities • Individual/organisational priorities receive and drive activities • Community voice ignored; feel disengaged/angry • No correlation between priorities and activities • Timeframes are set by funders that do not allow sufficient time for engagement with the community • Process is not inclusive, particularly if it is not inclusive of the priorities of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

	Description of the tool/ resource	Source
Evaluating engagement toolkit ●○○	Toolkit for evaluating engagement at planning events	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Evaluating events and training
Spot check to test priorities ●○○	We provide no tool here, but suggest you: • Keep a public record of agreed community priorities and goals • Have a checklist that you use to ensure that all activities and investments align with this • Do an annual check against this, to check the relevance of investment and activity – you can score this in an annual reflection workshop.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Reflection workshop

Capacity building to achieve sustainability and self-determination

Example rubric 2: Capacity building to achieve sustainability and self-determination

Rating	Description/dimensions of merit
High effective	• People living in the community have the skills, knowledge and confidence to lead their own ventures • People take responsibility; people feel empowered • People have a risk appetite, and are willing to try new things • There is a willingness and capability to experiment with new ideas • People talk openly about their 'failures' • There is a supportive authorising environment • There is shared leadership; shared power with participatory and transparent governance arrangements • Informed by 'experts' when required • Shared resourcing; flexible pooled funding agreement • Stakeholder transfer knowledge back to own organisations • Shared identity as a place
Acceptable in early stages	• People are beginning to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to lead, and are taking first steps • A few individuals are beginning to take responsibility • People are willing to be involved but there is insufficient structure to support them • People are around table but are somewhat disempowered
Bar or hard hurdle	
Less than acceptable	• No or little willingness to be involved • Access is there but not promoted
Detrimental	• Blocking • Driven by 'smartest in room'

	Description of the tool	Source
Assessing capacity building ●●○	This is a tool specifically for assessing community capacity building.	Menzies School of Health Research: Capacity building assessment tool
Evaluating a capacity building workshop ●○○	In addition to tools for assessing overall capacity, it is good practice to evaluate any discrete capacity building workshops you might use. Here we provide an evaluation toolkit for evaluating events with a simple participant feedback sheet, mixed with participant observation, and debrief and follow-up.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Evaluating events and training
Evaluating capacity building	Semi-structured interviews are a useful tool to evaluate changes in capacity building efforts.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Evaluating events and training

	Description of the tool	Source
●○○		

Transparent governance with a common agenda

Example rubric 3: Transparent governance with a common agenda

Rating	Description/dimensions of merit
Highly effective	• Committees convene regularly • TOR are public and regularly updated, reviews • Decision making processes are clear and decisions are followed through to action • Representative of stakeholders; is reviewed regularly and updated if needed • Shared agenda is a living document and updated regularly
OK/good	• Committees convene meeting • Transparent governance; public Terms of Reference (TOR) • Representative of stakeholder; have a documented nomination process • Work plan (agenda) is negotiated with members
Acceptable	• Committee exists • Internal TOR • Stakeholders engaged in governance • Agenda set based on common work plan
Bar or hard hurdle	
Less than acceptable	• Committee is obsolete; no members • Do not know why we need committees? • High turnover with loss of corporate knowledge • Individual agendas
Detrimental	• Low-quality evidence • Corrupt committee; conflicts of interest • Conflicting agendas

	Description of the tool	Source
Simple reflection exercise ●○○	Rather than use a new tool, all committee members can simply score where they think the committee is sitting, then you can have a reflective conversation about how to improve.	Use above rubric and reflection process
Governance assessment tool ●○○	A basic tool can involve committee health check.	A self-assessment tool for a board or committee

Multisector collaboration and joining-up services

Example rubric 4: Multisector collaboration and joining-up services

Rating	Description/dimensions of merit
Highly effective	• Services are seamless for the client (client-centred) • Policy permission/support to share (data, $, services) • Contracting enables collaboration and joining-up • Eagerness to collaborate and share • Agencies rewarded/encouraged to collaborate • Holistic service delivery • Investment and focus on early intervention • Client eagerness to engage • Contribution evaluation shows our efforts caused impacts • Strong trust between partners • Case management system is shared • Extend reach to most vulnerable • Increase in community confidence
OK/good	• Willing to share info • Responsive to incorporate individual needs • Agreed community plan provided for place rather than agency • Skilled and confident facilitators supporting joint planning and investment • Agencies and NGO/communities actively collaborate and plan together
Acceptable	• Committed champions at the top (each player) • Clear about purpose why for collaboration • Cost effective • Agencies meeting clear agendas action oriented (not joined)
Bar or hard hurdle	
Less than acceptable	• Silo approach remains/status quo • No information sharing • No joined up investment co-funding • No joint planning/co-design • No shared outcomes
Detrimental	• Increased competition for resources/profile • Fatigued • Lack trust; relationship damaged; turf wars; tension blaming • Overwhelmed

	Description of the tool	Source
Collaboration inventory	The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory can be used to assess community-wide collaborations.	The Wilder Foundation free online collaboration assessment
Case studies of cross-sectoral partnerships	Designed to help individuals create their own case studies about partnerships more successfully and use them as effective tools for change.	The Case Study Toolbook
Actor maps	An actor map is a visual depiction of the key organisations and/or individuals that make up a system, including those directly affected by the system as well as those whose actions influence the system.	FSG blog on systems mapping look, in particular, at the actor maps.
Simple Social Network Mapping	A way of tracking changes in multi-sectoral collaboration is to create a visual map of how services are provided before, midway and after. This can be done together in an annual reflection workshop, followed by scoring of the rubric.	There is a multitude of complex apps and webpages on SNA. Try here for a no-tech step-by-step simple version, arising from international development A little more complex, try this resource: Social Network Analysis: 'How to guide' (2016)

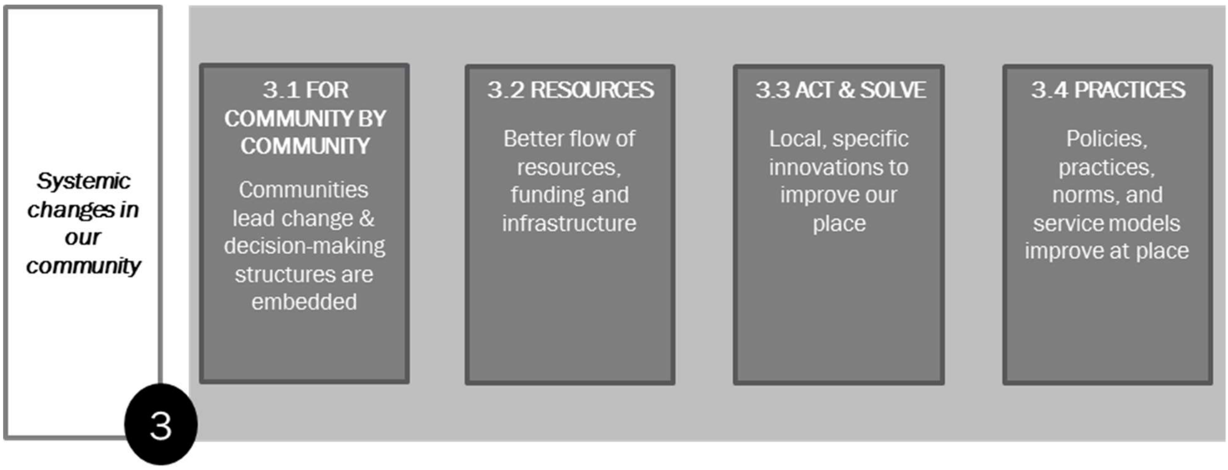
An integrated learning culture

Example rubric 5: An integrated learning culture

Rating	Description/dimensions of merit
Highly effective	The following dimensions are seen in a collaborative and high quality manner: • Continuous reflection and sense making based on evidence • knowledge and data is shared openly and robust • Assumptions are uncovered and interrogated including challenging 'scripts' (way of we do things) • We apply learning and make adaptations in our actions • Meaning making from facts and data • People feel safe to challenge and question things • We know what data we want to collect and do it well • Careful 'scaffolding' of learning journey/process • Formative feedback loops.
Acceptable	• As above, but not all dimensions achieved to the same level of depth and quality and some may be absent.
Bar or hard hurdle	
Less than acceptable	• Focusing on data collection only, rather than how we understand/make sense of it
Detrimental	• No time devoted to reflection and meaning making • Focus exclusively on 'shared measurement'; 'zero sum game at early stage' • Excluding people from learning • Unreliable 'sloppy' data

	Description of the tool	Source
Self-reflection ●○○	A simple technique is to discuss together and score where your collaboration is at an annual reflection workshop. Here you discuss examples of work from the previous year and then individually score where you think you are on the rubric along with why you have given yourselves that score.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Reflection workshop
Adaptive management log ●○○	A simple tool to document when you have change your direction or changed an activity as a result of learning from data or your MEL work. This can feed into the above.	No link for this tool. Simply make a log of when you pivot, note why you made the pivot and what evidence supported you making this change.

6. Level 3a: Tools for capturing and understanding systemic change in our community



By systemic changes in our community, we refer to what needs to change in the way things are done in terms of community leading change, flows of money and power, practices, policies and service models. These are examples of the sort of systemic changes that may be required to achieve your population level changes. You will need to work hard to decide which the essential ones are, and it is worth making them more specific to your context. The boxes above are really just 'buckets' (or domains) to help you think about the sort of changes that might be needed.

6.1. Broad sweep tools

Broad sweep approaches evaluate all of the buckets/domains of systemic changes with one broad tool. They include some comprehensive approaches such as 'outcomes mapping' or "outcomes harvesting". Alternatively, you can collectively measure each one discretely as part of your monitoring and evaluation system. Some of these tools require more expertise than others and we have indicated this with the star rating system.

	Description of the tool	Source
Outcomes harvesting ●●○	A multistep inductive evidence gathering process that first collects evidence of what has changed, and then working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention contributed to these changes through a detailed and intensive evidence gathering process, which could include qualitative and/or quantitative data. Use for innovative efforts where you have a high level of uncertainty about what outcomes might occur and/or where you want to capture both intended and unintended outcomes, positive or negative	Outcome Harvesting by Grau & Britt Retrospective 'Outcome harvesting': Generating robust insights by Rassman, et al.

	Description of the tool	Source
MSC ●○○	MSC is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation. It involves stakeholders collecting stories about significant change directly from families and individuals. It is participatory because many project stakeholders are involved both in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data. It can be used to help understand the impact on individuals in quite an authentic and powerful manner.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: MSC MSC User guide
Outcomes mapping ●●○	A very comprehensive approach to tracking changes in behaviour. They develop a special type of rubric called "progress markers" and track changes in key people. This approach is widely used in international development.	Outcomes mapping overview on Better Evaluation website
Impact log ●○○	Is a very simple tool to get people search for potential impacts. It is simply an email address which people respond to.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Impact log
Ripple effect Mapping ●●○	Describes a low-cost, participatory method to conduct impact evaluation using elements of Appreciative Inquiry, mind mapping, and qualitative data analysis to engage program participants and other community stakeholders to reflect upon and visually map the intended and unintended changes resulting from a program or complex collaboration.	Ripple Effect Mapping
Evaluating systems change ●●○	A step-by-step guide to design and implement an evaluation of systems change. Includes guidance for developing research questions, data collection tools, and reports. Very comprehensive	A Practical Guide to Evaluating Systems Change in a Human Services System Context
Disrupting Systems Dynamics framework ●●●	A framework for market systems interventions that outlines a pathway for systemic change and presents a complementary set of indicator areas, or 'domains', that signal systemic changes. The framework distinguishes between agent-level change (changes in voice, level of investment, amount of innovation, perceptions and beliefs, imitation, and institutionalisation of new practices) and collective level change (changes in norms, governing rules, and networks). Used when working on market systems in particular, or adapt to use for other types of decentralised systems that have a heavy emphasis on changing normative behaviour among many independent actors.	Disrupting Systems Dynamics: A framework for understanding systemic changes by Markel, Sparkman and Fowler Practical tools for measuring system health by T Sparkman Evaluating systems and systemic change for inclusive market development by ben Fowler

6.2. For community by community

This domain is about the community agency. That is the extent to which communities are leading change and that community decision-making structures are embedded into business as usual. For this domain, it may be possible to simply track a few indicators, such as those in the table below. In cultural contexts, art-making as a tool to collect data from the community to understand the extent to which they have agency, and/or leading the change might also be relevant.

	Description of the tool	Source
Example indicator ●○○	Pre-and post-assessment of the proportion of decision-making bodies where there is meaningful representation by community members	No source – simple indicator to track
Example indicator ●○○	No. of self-organised groups, led and managed by community members	No source – simple indicator to track
Example indicator ●○○	Proportion of respondents who agree that community is leading change and decision making.	No source – simple indicator to track
Semi-structured interviews ●○○	For probing and inquiring about with community members about the extent to which they have seen changes in community agency. It is important to conduct these with a range of different stakeholders who hold different perspectives.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Semi-structured interview

6.3. Evaluating changes in flows of resources, power and infrastructure

Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools are participatory visual tools used to map the situation in a community, but can be used before and after to understand change. They were developed from international development and can be a very powerful way for exploring and understanding flows. There are hundreds of tools, but the power mapping tools are particularly relevant.

	Description of the tool	Source
PRA tools ●○○	Service web	Tools together now. 100 participatory tools to mobilise communities for HIV/AIDS. Participatory learning and action a trainers guide
	Transact maps	
	Power mapping	
	Asset mapping	
	Network mapping before and after	

6.4. Evaluating our efforts to act & solve

This domain has a separate section, as it often involves designing and evaluating social innovation projects. Because of large investment into this, we suggest each substantial project gets its own mini-MEL plan. This is covered in section 7.3b below.

6.5. Evaluating practice changes

This domain is quite broad and involves changes in policies, practices, norms, and how service models improve at place. It can also include changes in behaviour in individuals, families and communities. This will be directed by your tailored theory of change. Here we focus on how to measure changes in service providers and services.

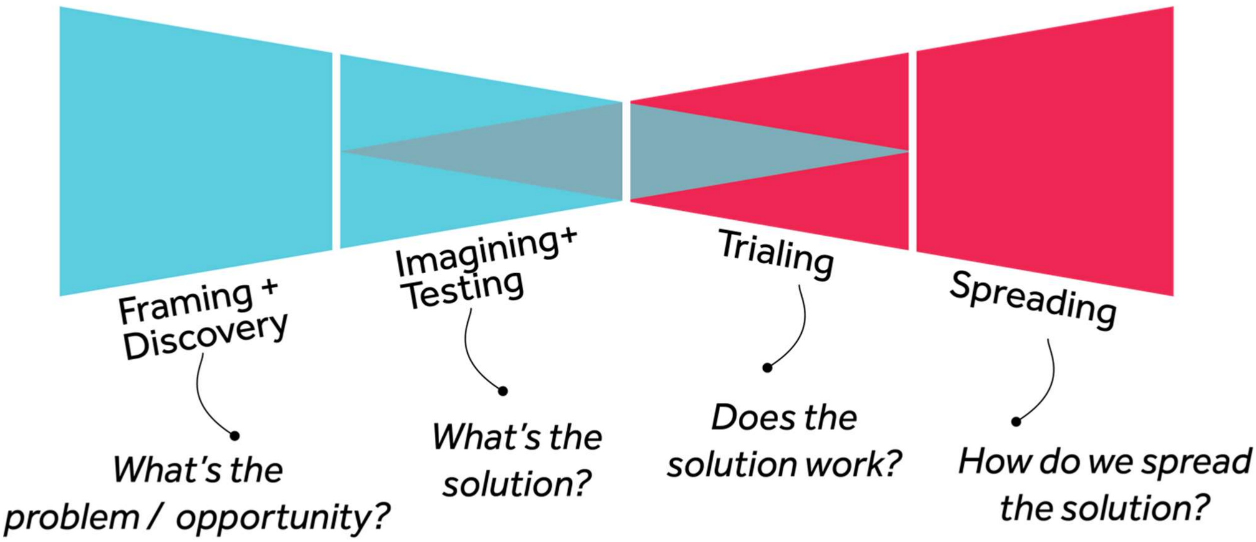
	Description of the tool	Source
Outcomes mapping ●●○	A very comprehensive approach to tracking changes in behaviour. They develop a special type of rubrics called 'progress markers' and track changes in key people. This approach is widely used in international development.	Outcomes mapping overview on Better Evaluation website
Semi-structured interviews ●○○	For asking community members about their experience of services, it is important to conduct these with a range of different stakeholders who hold different perspectives.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Semi-structured interview

7. Level 3b: Tools for tracking social innovation projects

Many collaborations implement social innovation projects to try to tackle specific and complex problems together. Sometimes this involves experimentation and testing. In his extensive research on how people, organisations and societies tackle complex issues, Tim Harford's book "Adapt: Why Success Always Starts With Failure" surfaced a number of principles that capture the spirit of almost all research on social innovation. Common ones include:

- Small bets before big bets – smaller experiments are less costly and risky than big experiments and can also be turned into bigger experiments if the results of smaller scale experiments are promising
- Safe-to-fail – social innovators should construct their experiments in a way that if they do not work out, clients and the organisation are not unduly harmed
- Test multiple ideas – testing an array of ideas, rather than one, improves the chances of finding one that works (aka do not have all your eggs in one basket!).

More recently, social innovators have focused on rapid prototyping. The diagram below outlines the social innovation process (source: TACSI).



- Framing and Discovery: unpacking and understanding the issues, problems and opportunities communities are facing, and naming and testing the assumptions that we have used to frame these issues. This stage of the innovation process helps us to ask ourselves whether we are actually addressing the right issues, and to discover what the issue looks like from different perspectives so that we can design effective responses that can lead to positive outcomes.
- Imagining and Testing: generating and exploring ideas that could respond to these issues, and then testing tangible representations of these ideas (e.g. sketching, simulations, modelling, storyboards) with stakeholders from across communities (including end users and beneficiaries), and then using the results to further develop and refine ideas (or make decisions about not pursuing the idea).
- Trialling: testing more complete versions of a model in the field over a longer period of time with more rigorous testing.

- Spreading and Continuous Improvement: testing incremental improvements or refinements to an existing model or practice.

When evaluating these types of innovations it is important to choose a suitable method for the stage in the design cycle. Evaluating early stage ideas requires different tools than late stage ideas. For this reason we provide the tools and resources in three sections:

- tools for ideation and early stage prototypes
- tools for later stage prototypes and early pilots
- tools for later stage pilots.

To learn more about social innovation generally, see the resources below.

	Description of the Resource	Source
Human-centred design (HCD) ●●○	Human-centred design (HCD) is about building a deep empathy with the people you are designing for; generating lots of ideas; building "prototypes" with the people you're designing them for; and rigorously testing the better ideas in the form of pilots.	Human-centred or User-centred Design, IDEO The Greater Good Studio website also has case studies of a human-centred approach in practice
HCD ●●○	The NESTA Foundation has a strong focus on innovation in the non-profit and public sectors. See 'source' column for some of the key resources.	Prototyping, NESTA Foundation Experimentation Toolkit: an interactive toolkit to help researchers and civil servants be more experimental Better Public Services through Experimental Government Prototyping: this webpage contains seven different tools to understand, plan, and evaluate prototypes, a central methodology for rapid experimentation
HCD ●●○	This resource is especially aimed for community doing their own testing.	Community Based Experimentation, Development Impact & You
Evaluating rapid experiments ●●○	This resource provides an overview of how to evaluation rapid experiments for testing new ways to tackle tough problems.	Rapid Evaluation Approaches for Complex Change Initiatives

7.1. Tools that may be suitable for probing and early stage prototypes

There are lots of different ways to test prototypes and ideas. A key feature of developmental testing is that it needs to be quick! Rapid cycles of iterative prototyping, create the need for rapid testing. Designers do a lot of this as a natural part of prototyping. The methods here, from evaluation, can be added to the design toolkit.

	Description of the tool	Source
Rapid Prototyping ●●○	Prototyping is a way of testing and evaluating ideas with users. There is a huge amount of resources on this, but this resource is a great starting point.	Penny Hagan provides a range of tools for involving community in prototyping.
Developmental testing ●●○	Mini experiments and other developmental testing methods	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Tools for developmental testing"
Impact framework ●●○	The Frontiers of Innovation IDEAS Impact Framework is a simple design process for developing, testing, deploying, and iterating programs. IDEAS stands for: • Innovate to solve unmet challenges. • Develop a usable program with a clear and precise theory of change. • Evaluate the theory of change to determine what works for whom and why. • Adapt in rapid-cycle iterations. • Scale promising programs.	Harvard University: Center on the Developing Child, Frontiers of Innovation research and development platform
Evaluating prototypes ●●○	This paper by Mark Cabaj classifies different types of prototypes, and offers insights about how to evaluate different types of prototypes	Evaluating Prototypes: An Aid for Action

7.2. Tools that may be suitable for later-stage prototypes and pilots to improve the model

These types of endeavours are worth developing a nested MEL plan for. You can use the separate planning tool for developing a MEL for a specific project. In keeping with best practice, it is important for you to be clear about what evaluation questions you need answered and for whom.

	Description of the tool	Source
Mini-MEL	For a simple approach to evaluation plan for a pilot you can use the planning tool to scope the evaluation, clarify the theory of change for that pilot and plot out your questions and methods	Mini-MEL plan: Use relevant parts of the separate planning tool.
Realist evaluation	Realist evaluation focused on researching what works in what situations and why. It can be a powerful approach to use in early stage pilot, as it can hone the intervention down and provide insights about who this sort of intervention will or will not work for.	Better evaluation page on realist evaluation
QCA	Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) is a case-based method that attempts to bridge qualitative and quantitative analysis through capturing the richness and complexity of individual cases, while at the same time attempting to identity cross-case patterns. QCA does this through comparing factors across a number of cases in order to identify which combination/s of factors are most important for a particular outcome	Clear Horizon blog on QCA Better Evaluation: What is QCA? Qualitative Comparative Analysis: A valuable approach to add to the evaluators toolbox by CDI
EvalC3	Evalc3 is a free excel based application that is a simpler version of QCA developed by Rick Davies. Could be a great way to understand and test your late stage pilot or prototype and needs around 30 cases.	EvalC3 website
Contribution analysis and process tracing	An approach for assessing causal questions and inferring causality that reduces uncertainty about the contribution the intervention is making to the observed results. It entails assembling confirming evidence first, testing its plausibility with other actors, and then assembling disconfirming evidence or evidence for alternative explanations for change.	See Section 10.3 on assessing contribution

7.3. Tools that may be suitable for later pilots to demonstrate that a solution works

Proving its effect

While experimental designs such as randomised control trials (RCTs) and quasi-experimental designs are tricky for evaluating a whole PBA, for a small pilot or project testing a new service approach they may be suitable. If your pilot evaluation aims to provide strong proof as to whether the intervention works, then you will need to use methods that test attribution.

It should not be understated that the most reliable evidence for quantifying program impacts generally comes from implementing one or more of the designs listed below. Many other techniques in the toolkit help to understand the process for change and learning but do not describe an intervention's measurable contribution to change or value for money which contribute to a shared accountability for outcomes and impact.

	Description of the tool	Source
RCTs ●●●	This guide, looks at the use of Randomised Control Trials (RCTs). While we do not endorse RCTS for a whole PBA, it may have some relevance to evaluating a specific pilot. The paper gives an overview of RCTs and then outlines when it is appropriate to use it, provides examples of using the method and outlines some of the problems that may be encountered when using RCTs in impact evaluation. Larger sample sizes are needed and requires a statistician.	UNICEF guide to randomised control trials
Quasi experimental approaches ●●●	This guide, looks at the use of quasi-experimental design. The paper provides a brief overview and then provides an outline of when it is appropriate to use and some of the ethical and practical limitations of its use. Requires a statistician.	UNICEF quasi-experimental design methods
Propensity-score matching ●●●	A quasi-experimental approach to estimate the difference in outcomes between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries based on a sampling method that matches the characteristics of each person or case who received the intervention as closely as possible to those of a person or case who did not (the 'control'). This strategy requires a statistician. This is useful for a specific subset of a larger population. When a) those receiving the intervention cannot be randomly assigned, and b) those who participate are systematically different from those who do not. Larger sample sizes are needed.	An Introduction to Propensity Score Methods for Reducing the Effects of Confounding in Observational Studies by Peter Austin

	Description of the tool	Source
Interrupted time series design ●●●	The interrupted time series (ITS) design is increasingly being used for the evaluation of public health interventions; it is particularly suited to interventions introduced at a population level over a clearly defined time period and that target population-level health outcomes. Requires a statistician.	Overview of interrupted time series design
Contribution analysis and Process tracing ●●○	Process tracing and contribution analysis approaches show promise of being suitable approaches for getting a reasonable level of evidence to make an impact claim. They less rigorous than experimental approaches, but may be sufficient in your context. They do not rely on statistics instead rely more on providing an evidence-based case.	See Section 10.3 on assessing contribution
Realist evaluation ●●●	As mentioned in Section 7.2, realist evaluation is focused on researching what works, in what situations, for whom and why. In the case of early stage pilots, this approach can be used to propose 'context-mechanism-outcome' statements. The mechanisms can be tested using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. This helps build theory around for who and where this service model might work.	Better evaluation page on realist evaluation

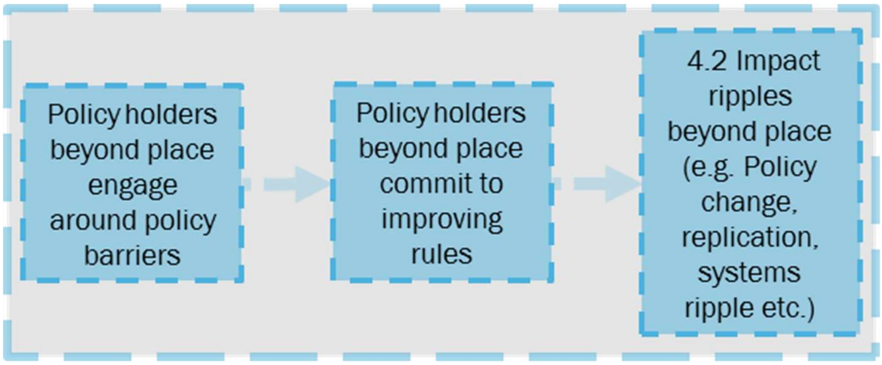
Demonstrating value for money of a pilot or new service model

In addition to proving whether the pilot works, sometimes we also want to assess the social return on investment or the value for money. These type of analysis help to make a case for whether it is worthwhile for government to scale the pilot to other areas. These sorts of approaches can also be applied at a range of levels in PBAs.

	Description of the tool	Source
SROI ●●○	Social return of investment	Better Evaluation overview of social return on investment
Contribution + SROI ●●○	Contribution analysis with social return on investment	Redstone strategy group's methodology for combining return of investment with value for money

	Description of the tool	Source
Value for money ●●○	Comprehensive overview of value of money from an international development perspective	Oxford Policy Management's approach to assessing Value for Money
Social Value ●●○	Evaluating social value in the context of procurement and commissioning from a holistic perspective. This is written for those who are undertaking social procurement, but it is also relevant for anyone measuring social value more generally.	Social Traders: Measuring the impact of social procurement (framing the value question in commissioning and social procurement) by Ingrid Burkett and Joanne McNeill

8. Level 3c: Tools for capturing ripples beyond place



Sometimes PBAs influence the broader policy or delivery context. Things 'leak' out beyond the community in unexpected ways, or perhaps you are planning on influencing the broader system by demonstrating and advocating for solutions.

In either case you might wish to track the 'ripples' that emerge from your PBA that ripple out beyond place. This was an optional pathway in the theory of change (see the above blue boxes).

	Description of the tool	Source
Significant instances of policy and systems improvement (SIPSI) ●●○	This tool is a mash up of MSC and outcomes harvesting, developed by Clear Horizon originally for the Australian aid program. It tracks possible systems and policy changes and captures them by way of an evidence based story. The narratives are reviewed by a panel to determine the level of contribution and significance.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: SIPSI See 'Significant Instances of Policy and Systems Improvement'
Outcomes harvesting ●●○	Outcome Harvesting is an evaluation approach in which evaluators, grant makers, and/or program managers and staff identify, formulate, verify, analyse and interpret 'outcomes' in programming contexts where relations of cause and effect are not fully understood.	Better evaluation page on outcome harvesting
Episode study ●●○	Episode study is a type of case study that focuses on describing how a policy or systemic change came about, as opposed to the intervention. It is structured like a story, tracking backwards from a policy/practice change to the chronology of changes, key drivers, and what it was like before the change.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Episode study Overseas Development Institute (ODI) background note: A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence (2011)
Tools for evaluating policy ●●○	Tools from the US that provide good background to evaluating policy change.	Evaluation Innovation SEDL.org

9. Level 4: Tools for instances of impact for families and communities

Instances of impact 4

4.1 Instances of impact for individuals and families (specific cohorts and/or for micro-places)

Instances of impact for individuals and families can also occur at the sub-population level and occur earlier in the life of a PBA than population-level change. 'Instances of change' are an important lead indicator that change is beginning to happen. This level of change can happen as at different levels. It can include:

- changes for just a few individuals or families who are working closely with the PBA as part of a pilot or trial of a new way of working
- changes for a micro-place, that is a sub-set of the broader population of people who live in the place that is covered by the PBA
- changes for a specific cohort (such as changes for year 10 boys who are at risk of dropping out of school).

9.1. Changes for just a few individuals or families who are working closely as part of a pilot or trial of a new way of working (who are directly benefiting from early work)

Communities and funders alike all place community impact at the centre of their work. For this reason, it is worth keeping an eye out for early signs of change for individuals, families and communities, even if it is for just a few families. Stories showing how families have benefited from innovations or new ideas are important to capture, as well as understand where things have not work. Positive change stories can create momentum and build trust that things are heading in the right direction.

Early changes can be traced in a broad based, inductive manner mostly by using story-based approaches such as Most Significant Change (MSC) technique or other case study approaches. MSC has been used and enjoyed in different cultural contexts, with vulnerable cohorts, young people and can be combined with other techniques such as photo elicitation and participatory video. There are also quantitative surveys that have been tested and validated that can provide more quantitative evidence of changes for individuals and families – but these tend to need bigger sample sizes to understand trends. (Please note, sometimes 'conventional' methods and tools from one cultural context may not be validated in other contexts.)

Participatory and engagement techniques

	Description of the tool	Source
MSC ●○○	MSC is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation. That sees stakeholders collecting stories about significant change directly from families and individuals. It is participatory because many project stakeholders are involved both in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data. It can be used to help	[Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: MSC]

	Description of the tool	Source
	understand the impact on individuals in quite an authentic and powerful manner.	
Sensemaker ●●○	Sense maker is a powerful proprietary tool for collecting and making sense of stories. It can deal with thousands of stories, and may be worthwhile if you plans are big.	Introduction to sensemaker
Case studies ●●○	There are many different types of case studies, and lots of resources available. Here is a starting point.	Toolkit for persuasive case studies
Photo elicitation ●○○	Photos can tap into a deeper part of participants. It can be particularly powerful with young people or people who do not like questionnaires! Over the years, terms like autodriving, reflexive photographs, photo novella, photovoice and photo-interviewing have been coined to refer to the use of photographs to elicit qualitative data (Hurworth et al., 2005; see journal article link).	Wikipedia description of photo elicitation Photovoice method Evaluation Journal of Australasia article on the use of photo-interviewing: definitions and examples
Participatory video ●○○	Participatory video can be a powerfully way to hand over the stick to participants to tell their stories in their own words.	Using video in evaluation
Semi-structured interviews ●○○	For asking community members about their experience of services, it is important to conduct these with a range of different stakeholders who hold different perspectives.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Semi-structured interview
Focus groups ●●○	Focus groups are another way to collect information from groups. Despite its widespread use they have quite a specific research methodology.	Wikipedia overview of focus groups

9.2. Impact for micro-place or specific cohorts of individuals and/or families (sub-population groups)

In order to test our ideas and meet specific contextual change, in PBAs we often zoom in on a sub-population or specific cohort group. It may be a group of families in a micro-community. Here you can use the same indicators that you are using at the population level may be relevant, although for a smaller sample size (sometimes this is tricky if the data sets can't be disaggregated for your community of interest). Or alternatively you may wish to scale up the use of direct data collection as described in the previous section.

Quantitative techniques that rely on a validated tool

Once you move up to a cohort level, you may be able to do more rigorous evaluating – depending on your sample size. You may be able to use a validated survey tools – which can be rigorous, but sometimes are disempowering for families, so care should be taken.

	Description of the tool	Source
Validated survey tools ●●○	Validated survey tools that have been tested for internal validity as well as external validity. You need to find one that is relevant for your context.	Australian Institute of Family Studies: How to choose an outcomes measurement tool Parent Empowerment and Efficacy Measure (PEEM)

10. Level 5: Tools for population-level impact

Population impact 5	Sustainable positive population level impacts

Level 5 of our theory of change is about changes for individual, families and communities at the population level. We need to start thinking about it right at the start of a PBA and all the way through the phases of a PBA.

This is a critical part of PBA as it asks stakeholders to move beyond measuring whether a single grant has achieved impact, to whether the collective efforts of the PBA have resulted in changes at the population level.

In PBAs we track a small number of key indicators at the population-level indicators at key points throughout the PBA. Some people collate the results every year, others find it best to measure every few years. The steps are:

- measure key population-level data at baseline (see Level 1)
- set targets for what we hope to see at different stages (see Level 1)
- measure key population indicators at key periods (such as every year, or every 2-3 years) with the same tool that you used for the baseline
- analyse trends to see if there is any change in results, and whether targets have been reached
- analyse the contribution to understand what has caused these changes.

On many occasions, data you are tracking at the population level may be publicly available, although sometimes it is challenging to get it for your particular postcode or in a sufficiently granular manner. Ideally it is best to use data that is available for the locality in which the PBA is working. This limits the amount of effort here since change is long term and difficult to confirm contribution to.

However, the appropriate data set for you will very much depend on your shared goals and indicators.

10.1. Dashboards

Tracking key indicators is best done in a manner that can be shared. To this end, many PBAs use data dashboards to display their key indicator data. Dynamic dash boards can be particularly useful, as they allow people to drill into the data at different locations and for different age groups.

	Description of the tool	Source
Data Dashboard ●●○	A data dashboard can be used to display real time data. It can be used to help share population data trends with communities to assist with decision making and shared measurement	Data dashboard overview

10.2. Assessing contribution

If you do see changes and want to claim these as results of your work it is really important to analyse when these changes have occurred, and whether they would have happened anyway. This is where MEL can start to get quite tricky. For this reason we provide 3 levels of rigour, each requiring more expertise. We encourage all PBAs to, at a minimum, use at least the basic level when making a claim about results.

Level	Approach to contribution
High ●●●	An external evaluation with examines contribution through a process such as (quasi-experimental design (pre-post and control), or externally conducted process tracing and strength of evidence rating
Medium ●●○	An external, or internally conducted process that involves analysis gaining consensus with triangulated evidence of contribution during either: A workshop setting or "expert panel (can be an Indigenous expert panel, if appropriate, or citizen's jury)": • Examine results e.g. trend data • Explore list of plausible causes (LOPC) • Provide evidence, e.g. timelines to eliminate alternatives and include alternatives • Agree on contribution conclusion • Provide strength of evidence rating.
Basic ●○○	Use multiple-lines of evidence. One line of evidence should include asking a range of informants whether they think the PBA caused the change. Make it clear if there are alternative plausible explanation for the result, and make your case. For example use the "what else test".

	Description of the tool	Source
Process tracing ●●○	Process tracing shows promise of being a suitable approach for getting a reasonable level of evidence to make claims about the extent to which a PBA contributed to outcomes. Is a little like a forensic science approach to ruling out different suspects. Has some funny language like 'smoking guns' and 'hoops'. But is quite practical.	Overview of process tracing Straws-in-the-wind, Hoops and Smoking Guns: What can Process Tracing Offer to Impact Evaluation? by Punton and Welle Understanding Process Tracing by David Collier Paper on process tracing by Rosemary Reilly Example of an evaluation that used this approach
Contribution analysis ●●○	Contribution analysis was originally developed by John Mayne, and involves using theory of change and testing alternative plausible explanations for an effect.	Social Science Methods Series (Scottish Government resource) on contribution analysis Contribution Analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect by John Mayne
The "what else test" ●○○	A very simple guide to adding a bit more rigour to a basic look into contribution.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: What else test
●●○	Good resource to read to improve impact claims – covers contribution as well as attribution.	Clearing the fog: new tools for improving the credibility of impact claims by IIED
●●○	Good resource for understanding more about impact and causal attribution.	Overview: Strategies for Causal Attribution by Patricia Rogers

11. Tools and resources for reflective practice and strategic learning

There are a number of different tools and process that can help groups analyse data and make conclusions together. This is a very important part of PBAs due to the emergent nature of systems change work.

Much of this reflective work is done by the role of the developmental evaluator. In Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander contexts, art-making is also used as a process for reflective practice and sense making.

	Description of the tool	Source
Developmental evaluation ●●○	A good reference for developmental evaluation is Gamble, J. A.A. 2008. A Developmental Evaluation Primer. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation.	A great introduction to DE by Gamble
Intentional learning tools ●○○	This downloadable tool provides guidance on how to facilitate 'intentional group learning' activities to enable reflection and dialogue among project stakeholders.	Facilitating Intentional Group Learning: A practical Guide to 21 Learning Activities by FSG
Emergent learning tables ●○○	A structured approach to learning over time in teams or groups about substantive strategy questions. It offers a framework for more systematic review of data and experience through the frame of a meaningful strategic question, and encourages the generation of forward-facing hypotheses about how to improve the work (thus closing the plan-do-act-reflect learning loop with more intention and rigour).	Emergent Learning: A Framework for Whole System Strategy, Learning, and Adaptation by Darling et al. Emergent learning table (slideshare), illustrated by Fourth Quadrant Partners
ORID ●○○	ORID is a specific facilitation framework that enables a focused conversation with a group of people in order to reach some point of agreement or clarify differences. O' stands for objective – the facts that the group knows. 'R' stands for reflective – how people felt about the topic being evaluated. What they liked and disliked. 'I' stands for interpretive – What were the issues or challenges. 'D' stands for decisional – What is our decision or response.	The Art of Focused Conversation (p. 21).

	Description of the tool	Source
After action reviews ●○○	An After Action Review (AAR) is a simple process used by a team to capture the lessons learned from past successes and failures, with the goal of improving future performance. 'It's an opportunity for a team to reflect on a project, activity, event or task so that they can do better the next time. It can also be employed in the course of a project to learn while doing. AARs should be carried out with an open spirit and no intent to blame. The American Army used the phrase "leave your rank at the door" to optimise learning in this process. AAR is a form of group reflection; participants review what was intended, what actually happened, why it happened and what was learned. One member of the group facilitates, capturing results on a flip chart or in a document.	Better Evaluation description of After Action Review UNICEF Knowledge Exchange Toolbox
What happened, so what, what now ●○○	A great framework for moving beyond description to decision.	A critical reflection framework information sheet
Learning briefs ●○○	There are many ways to do this, but it can be great to focus on what was done, and what was learned in a simple report. Here is one example.	Learning brief template
Reflection workshop ●●○	This participatory, utilisation-focused approach to MEL facilitates dialogue among project staff, and often donors, and engages them to make sense of MEL data (activities, outcomes, impacts, crosscutting issues etc.). It also involves them in the development of findings and recommendations.	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Reflection workshop

12. Tools and resources for reporting

	Description of the tool	Source
Blog on persuasive evaluation reports	A blog about how to create engaging evaluation reports with lots of great ideas and links.	Blog by Patricia Rogers on persuasive evaluation reports
Performance story reports	Performance story reports are essentially a short report about how a program contributed to outcomes. Although they may vary in content and format, most are short, mention program context and aims, relate to a theory of change, and are backed by empirical evidence (Dart and Mayne, 2005)	Report on outcomes and get everyone involved: The participatory performance story reporting technique by Jess Dart (2008)
Dummy report	A dummy report is produced with fake data to get people to agree beforehand on what a good report might look like	

13. Tools and resources for ensuring ethical conduct

If you are going to collect data from people then you need to consider ethics, confidentiality and privacy. The most common place that you need take note of ethics is as part of the design of ethical procedures for participant interviews or survey.

It's good practice to have a written policy that ensures that all research and evaluation studies require a documented process for enabling potential participants to make an informed decision about their involvement in the study. While the formality and detail of this process may differ, in most cases it will involve the development of clear, concise and accessible information sheets for participants that explain:

- The purpose of the research or evaluation study
- The types of outputs that will be generated from the information they provide, e.g. digital recordings/notes from interviews, quotes, stories etc.
- How their information may be used, e.g. quotes in a summit workshop, quotes in reports to specific audiences, video etc., emphasising that it will be de-identified
- How their consent will be recorded, e.g. digitally recorded, verbally and recorded in interview notes, a signed consent form etc.
- How their permission to use specific quotes and stories will be obtained, e.g. selected quotes will be sent to participants for 'member checking' or review prior to use at a summit
- How their information will be managed and stored, including re-identification and de-identification etc.
- That they can withdraw from the study at any time.

The ethics process for each data collection project should be outlined in the research/evaluation plan, including a summary of any significant ethical risks and how they will be managed.

Depending on the nature of the research and evaluation study and client requirements, formal ethics clearance and signed participant consent forms may also be required. Formal clearance is often needed where research and evaluation involves direct inquiry with children, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, and vulnerable and marginalised people.

13.1. Best practice processes and products for ethics

Where no formal ethics process is required, there are a number of key processes and products that represent best practice and can be built into any research or evaluation project. These are:

1. The development of a clear, accessible and contextually appropriate Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF) (see example in table of tools below). In some contexts, the PICF will need to be translated into a community's first language – in some contexts this can happen verbally through a local a local interpreter, including Elders and volunteers, accompanying the evaluator.
2. Providing the PICF to interviewees/participants before their involvement so that they can make an informed decision about their participation. This is often accompanied by the interview/focus group schedule so that potential participants can make an informed decision about their participation.

3. Stepping participants through the main points of the PICF at the start of the interview/ focus group and providing them with the opportunity to ask any questions or clarify any issues, then obtaining either written or verbal consent.
4. In some cases, clients are provided with the option to 'member check' or review selected quotes/vignettes (i.e. the ones you intend to use in a summit or a report) or the full interview transcript and make changes or add material. Ideally, this should be done before the quotes are shown to others, i.e. at a summit workshop. This option is particularly important when working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities where ownership of words and stories is important and also where there are distinct sensitivities or risks associated with the project or participants' wellbeing.

Ethics committees

Depending on the nature of the research and evaluation study and client requirements, formal ethics clearance and signed participant consent forms may be required.

Where ethics processes are required to go through an ethics committee, a substantial amount of details and risk management is required to respond to potential concerns of the committee. Particular aspects tend to raise 'red flags', including the types of people being consulted (i.e. higher demands are made when consulting with children, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, vulnerable and marginalised people, such as people experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, incarceration etc.), the provision of informed consent from participants and the use of personal and interview data obtained from the evaluation (i.e. management of confidentiality, de-identification and re-identification of data, privacy etc.).

If approval from a Human Research Ethics Committee is required, it is important to understand the timeframe for this process and ensure this is factored into the evaluation timeline, as sometimes this process can take several months.

	Description of the tool	Source
Ethical conduct ●●○	A resource developed by Clear Horizon and a collective impact initiative in Victoria to guide ethics in a complex multi-site PBA in Victoria	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Ethics, privacy and safety in place-based work
Code of ethics for AES ●○○	Performance story reports are essentially a short report about how a program contributed to outcomes. Although they may vary in content and format, most are short, mention program context and aims, relate to a theory of change, and are backed by empirical evidence (Dart and Mayne, 2005).	AES code of ethics and guidance
Example PICF ●○○	Example participant information and consent form	Clear Horizon's 'Tools for evaluating complexity' series: Ethics, privacy and safety in place-based work
National ethics	Where a full ethics process is required by the client and they have not provided a preferred ethics form, the generic National Ethics Application Form	National Health and Medical Research Council: NEAF

	Description of the tool	Source
application form ●●○	(NEAF), now called the Human Research Ethics Application (HREA).	