

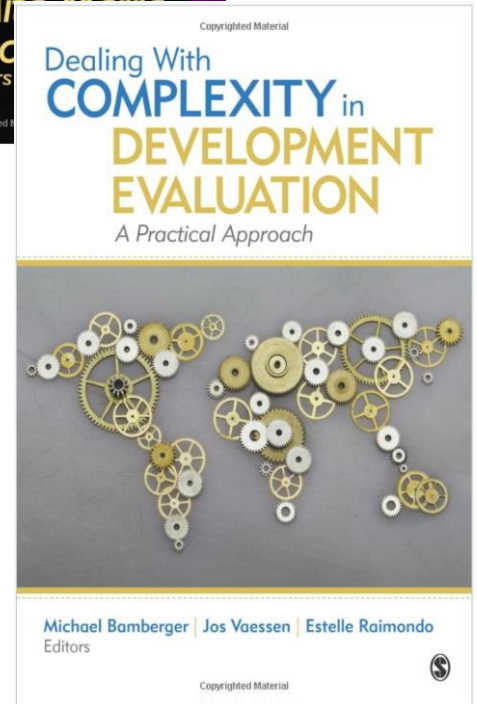
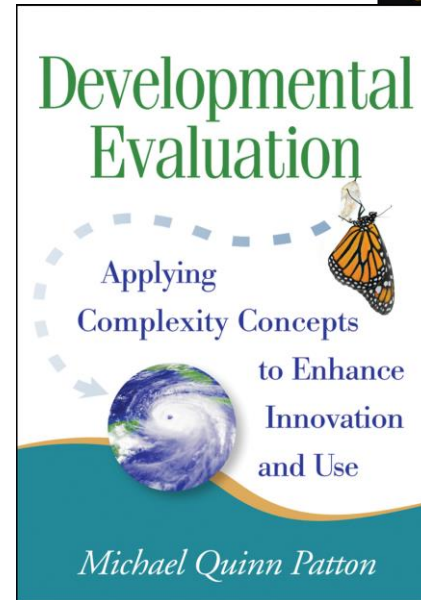
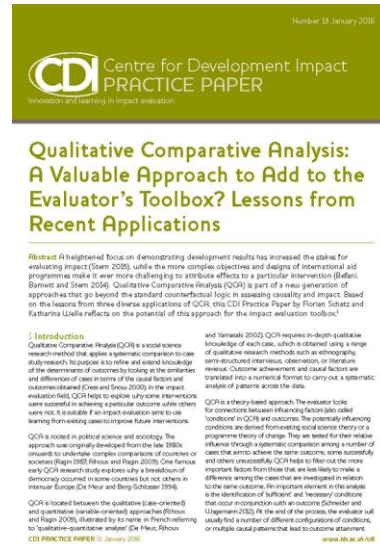
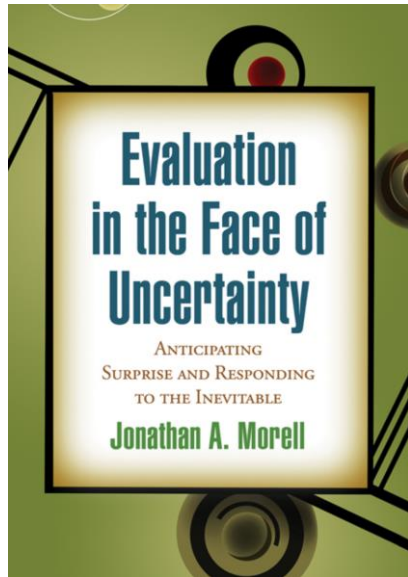
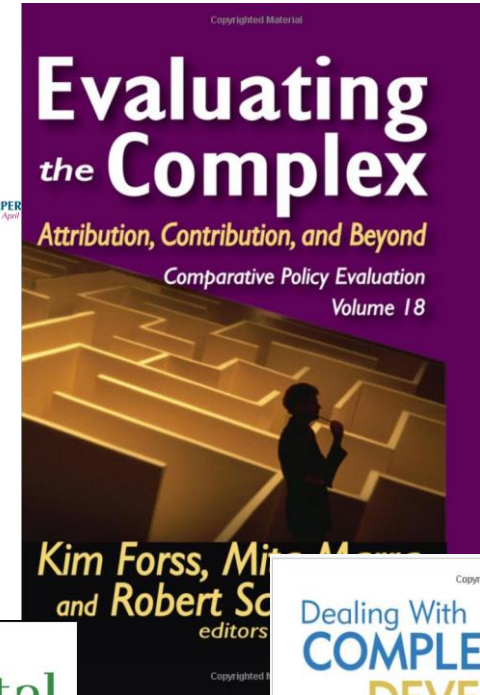
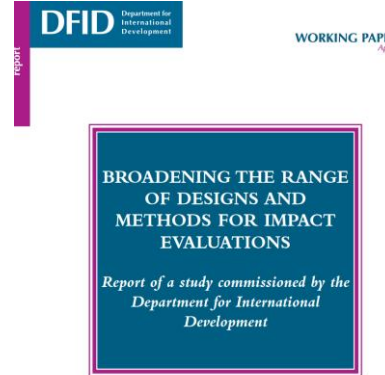
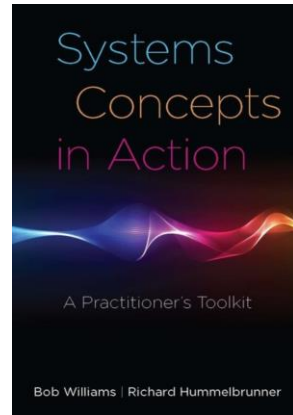
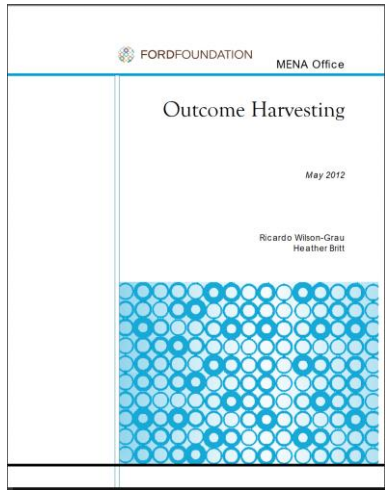
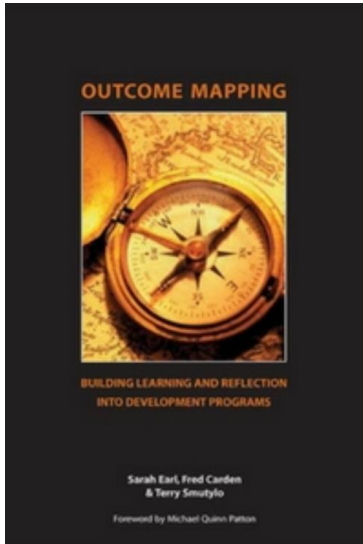
The imperative of a complex systems lens on evaluation for 'development'

ZENDA OFIR

SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVES ON POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION CONFERENCE

BRITISH LIBRARY KNOWLEDGE CENTRE, LONDON

26 JUNE 2018



Contribution Analysis
“Addressing Attribution Through Contribution Analysis: Using Performance Measures Sensibly”
John Mayne
 Office of the Auditor General of Canada
 June 1999

On what basis do we judge (development) ...?



This is not necessarily 'progress' or 'success' ...

Objectives achieved;
Targets met

Stakeholder expectations
met;
Compliance with work plan

Positive outcomes;
(Small) percentage
improvement (through a
RCT)

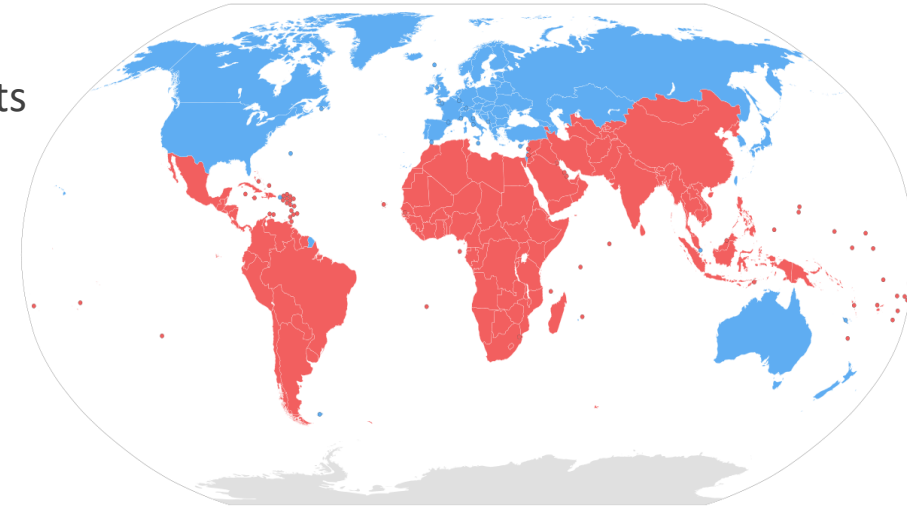
Some model of
development confirmed

Good Results-based
Management (RBM) or
Adaptive Management
demonstrated

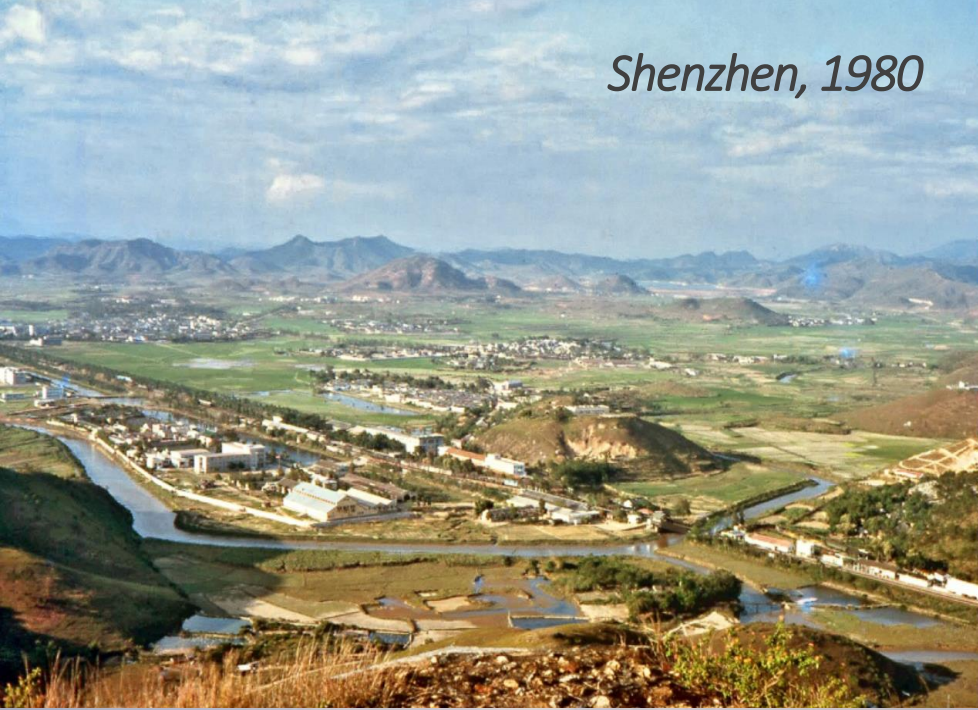
'Satisfactory' rating for
some (DAC) criteria

Five BIG failures of the **development evaluation system** - by NOT recognizing complexity

1. “Programme evaluation” - linear RBM, logframes, theories of change, RCTs (esp. without understanding); simplistic notions of “evidence”
2. Impact-besottedness - without attention to negative consequences, essential tradeoffs, or the sustainability of the positive changes/impacts
3. The micro-macro paradox
4. No attention to “trajectories” towards transformation
5. Outdated or unproven models of development that ignore the complex adaptive systems nature of development



Shenzhen, 1980



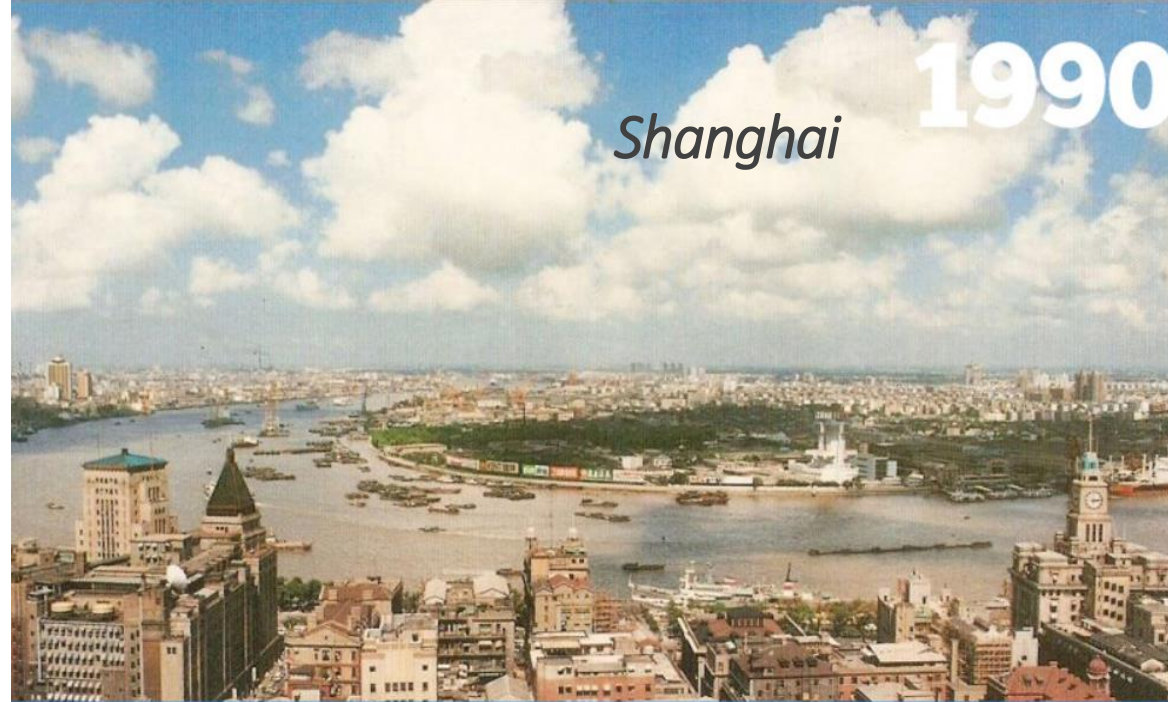
Shenzhen, 2015



Transformative
development

Shanghai

1990



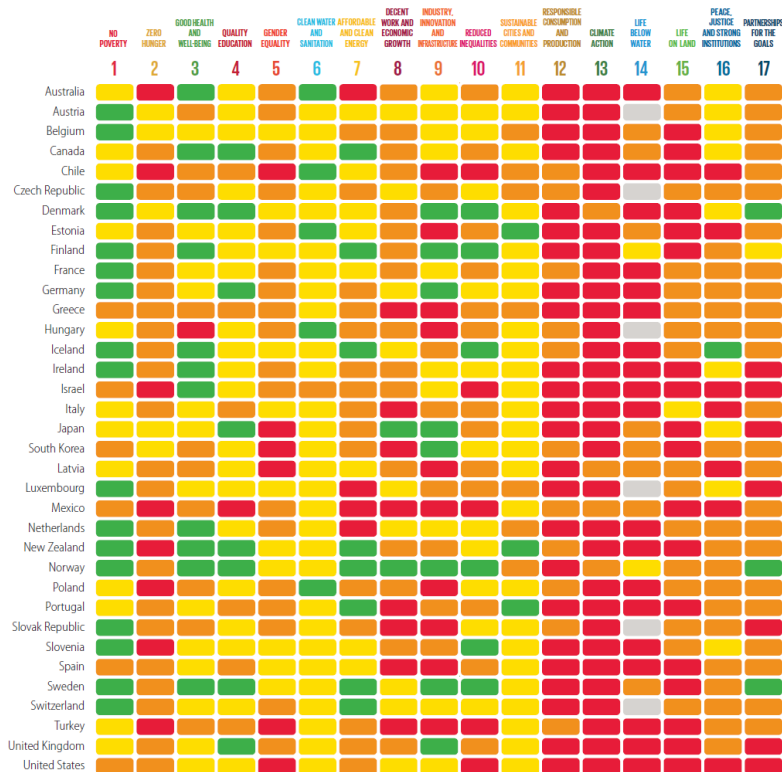
Shanghai

2010

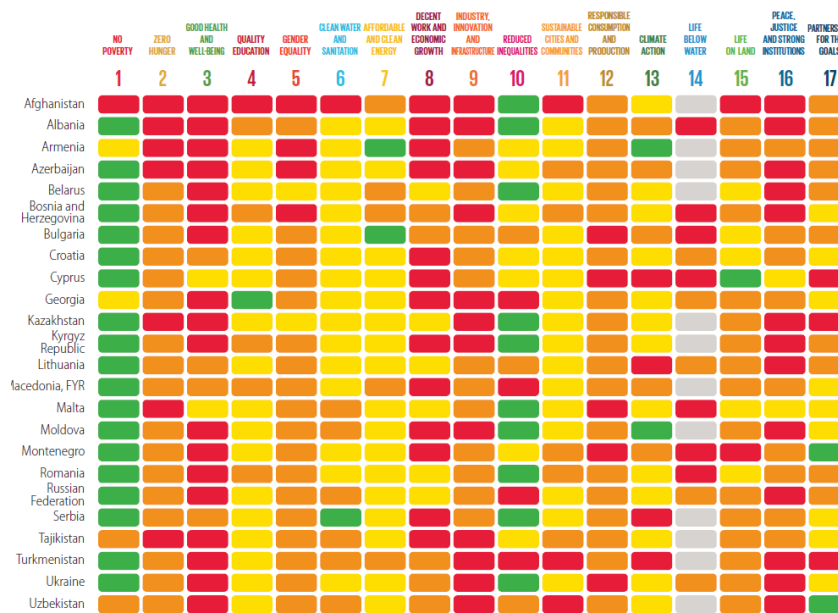


All countries need to focus on “(sustainable) development”: Status of the SDGs in 2017, per region

OECD Countries

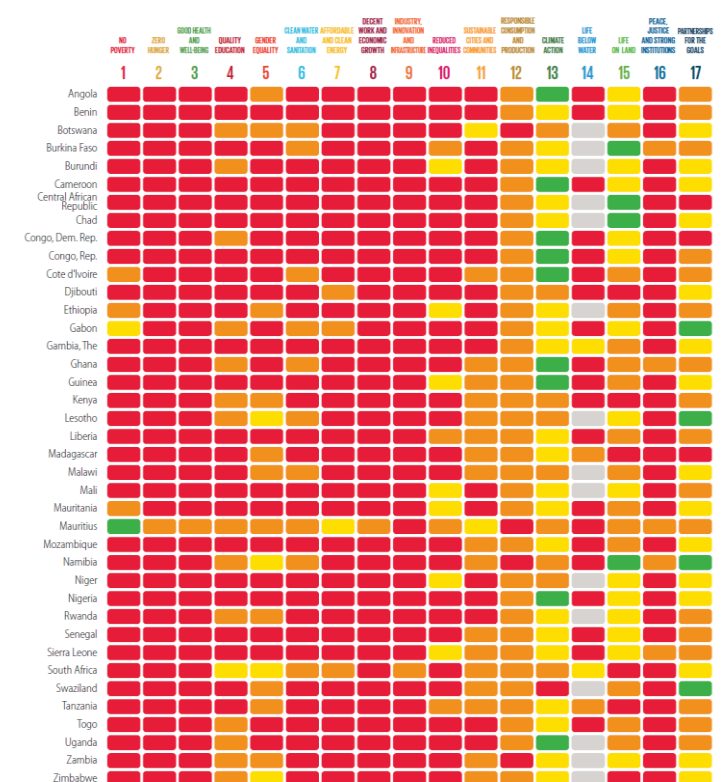


Eastern Europe & Central Asia



A green rating on the SDG Dashboard denotes SDG achievement, and is assigned to a country on a given SDG only if all the indicators under the goal are rated green. Yellow, orange and red indicate increasing distance from SDG achievement.
 For more information on the dashboard methodology, refer to part 2. Full metadata on the indicators used is available at www.sdgindex.org
 Source: Authors' analysis

Sub-Saharan Africa



Understanding of “how change happens” from a complexity perspective has important implications for evaluation

We need to use evaluation to help **interventions to be done better BEFORE getting to impact, by recognising their complex adaptive systems (CAS) behaviour:**

1. Allowing for improvisation – beyond “adaptation” and “experimentation”
2. Co-evolution - e.g. of institutional and economic development
3. Synergistic effects / Amplification based on small interactions)
4. Leverage points / catalytic pathways
5. Interconnected relationships, cognisant of “attractors”, esp. related to power

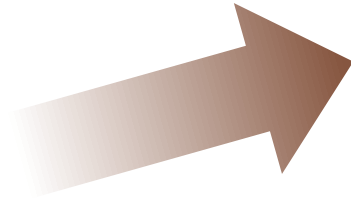
And more ...

... recognising that

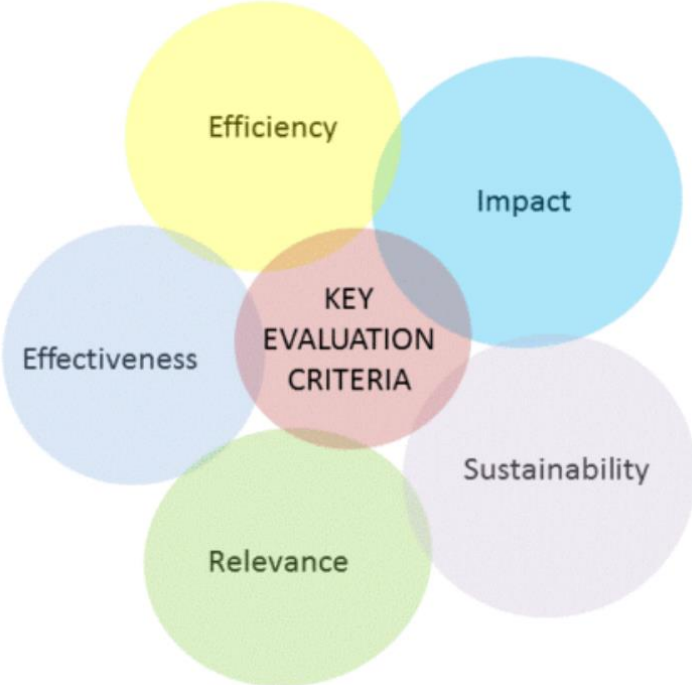
.... we can create **conditions that can influence** – but not control - the direction in which situations develop

.... understanding **societal dispositions** – resulting from culture/context co-evolution - is critical.

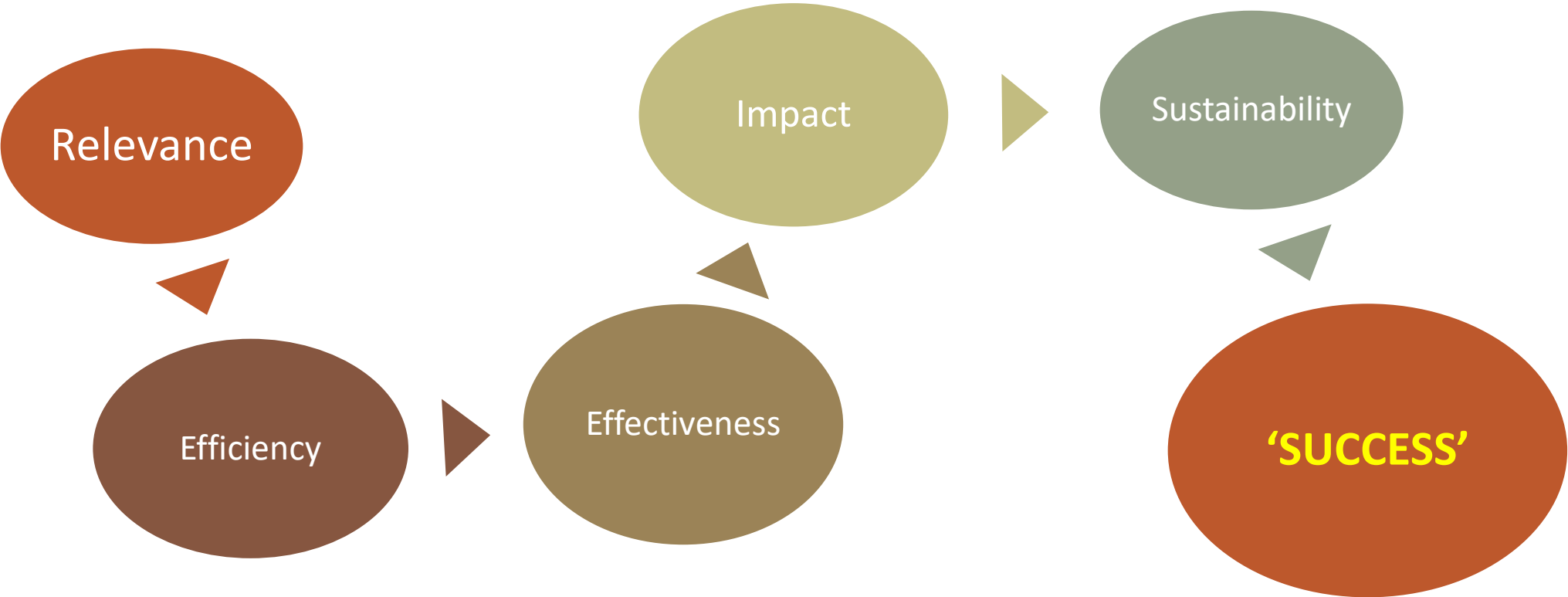
Evaluation questions



Evaluation criteria



Our 'theory of the assessment of development'



'Development-centric' evaluation criteria

1. Nature of
'development'
(esp. as complex adaptive
system)

2. Global, societal &
organizational norms
and mandates

3. Specific stakeholder
interests

Totally flexible



Source: zendaofir.com

Moderately flexible



Source: zendaofir.com

Core set determined by the nature of development - not flexible ...

Coherence (incl. ref. to alignment, synergistic effect, integration, coordination)

Significance (incl. ref. to relevance, scale, scope, timeliness, catalytic, transformation)

Responsiveness & Improvisation (incl. ref. to culture & context, anticipation, adaptation, etc.)

Evaluation criteria determined by

Characteristics of 'Development'

(esp. as *complex adaptive system - CAS*)

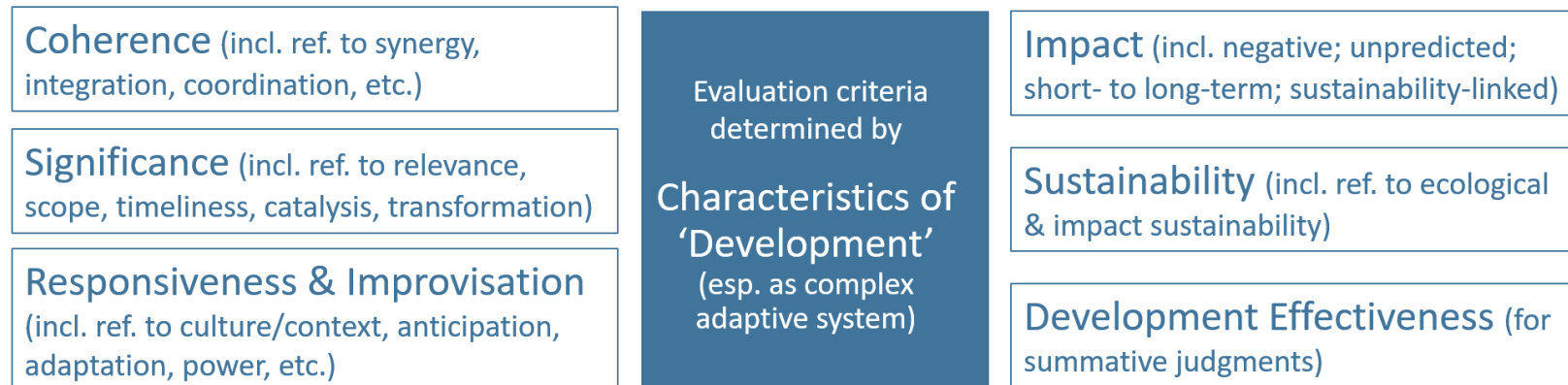
Impact (incl. negative; unpredicted; short- to long-term; sustainability-linked)

Sustainability (incl. ref. to ecological sustainability; impact sustainability)

Development Effectiveness (for trajectories, strategic judgment & insights)

Source: zendaofir.com

So choices have to be made



Source: zendaofir.com

THANK YOU

