



The Presidency  
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation



# Role of Evidence in Policy Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation

**KZN Research  
Dissemination  
Conference**  
Durban, KZN

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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI



# Summary

- Importance of evidence
- Why use of evidence is critical for strategic management





# Evidence-based policy-making

**“By 2035 KwaZulu-Natal will be a prosperous province with a healthy, secure and skilled population, living in dignity and harmony, acting as a gateway to Africa and the world.”**





# Evidence-based policy and practice

- Helping people make better decisions and achieve better outcomes, by using the best available evidence from research and other sources
- Knowing what are effective interventions (“what works?”)
  - In achieving which outcomes?
  - For which groups of people?
  - Under what conditions?
  - Over what time span?
  - At what costs?, **plus**
- *Integrating* research with decision makers’ knowledge, skills, experience, expertise and judgement

Source: Phil Davies, course in Evidence-Based Policy Making and Implementation





# Some problems with evidence

- Evidence is not the only factor
- Little agreement on what counts as ‘evidence’
- Evidence is always contestable/contested
- Evidence is seldom definitive, nor self-evident
- Evidence is almost always probabilistic/uncertain
- Not all evidence is of equal value
- Not all research is of equal value/sufficient quality
- Positive evidence is usually reported more than negative
- We need the *balance of evidence* – research synthesis
- Source: Phil Davies, course in Evidence-Based Policy Making and Implementation





# Evidence versus Opinion

**Evidence:** (Wide and deep) Data that meet the standards of:

- internal validity (coherent – shows causality between variables)
- external validity (a study that allows its findings to generalize)
- reliability – consistency of data (test-retest)
- adequacy of reporting – statistics adequate and data support findings

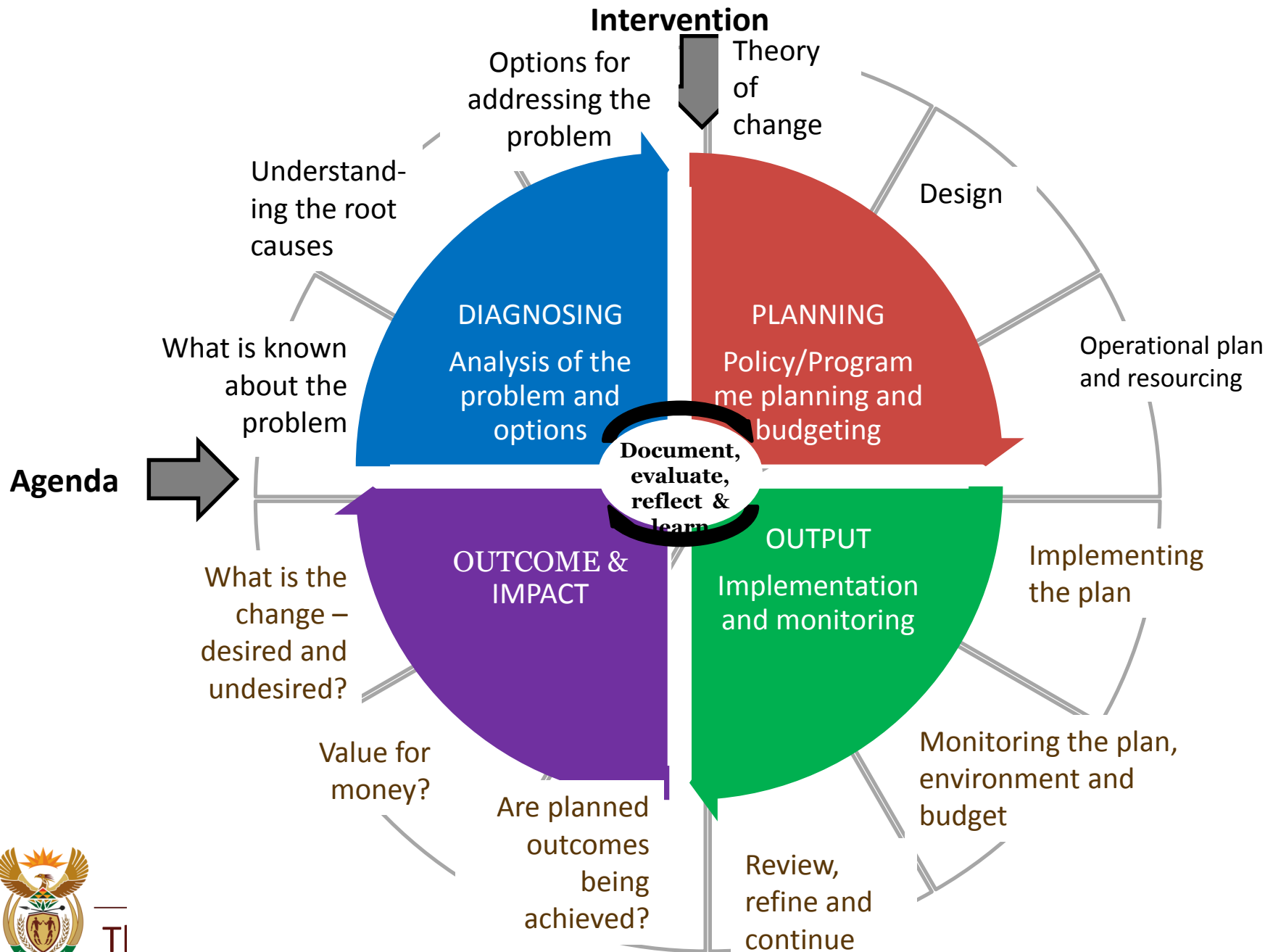
## Opinion

- Statements and claims that do not meet the standards of evidence
- Key qualities: positional, subjective, partial (selective), hard to verify



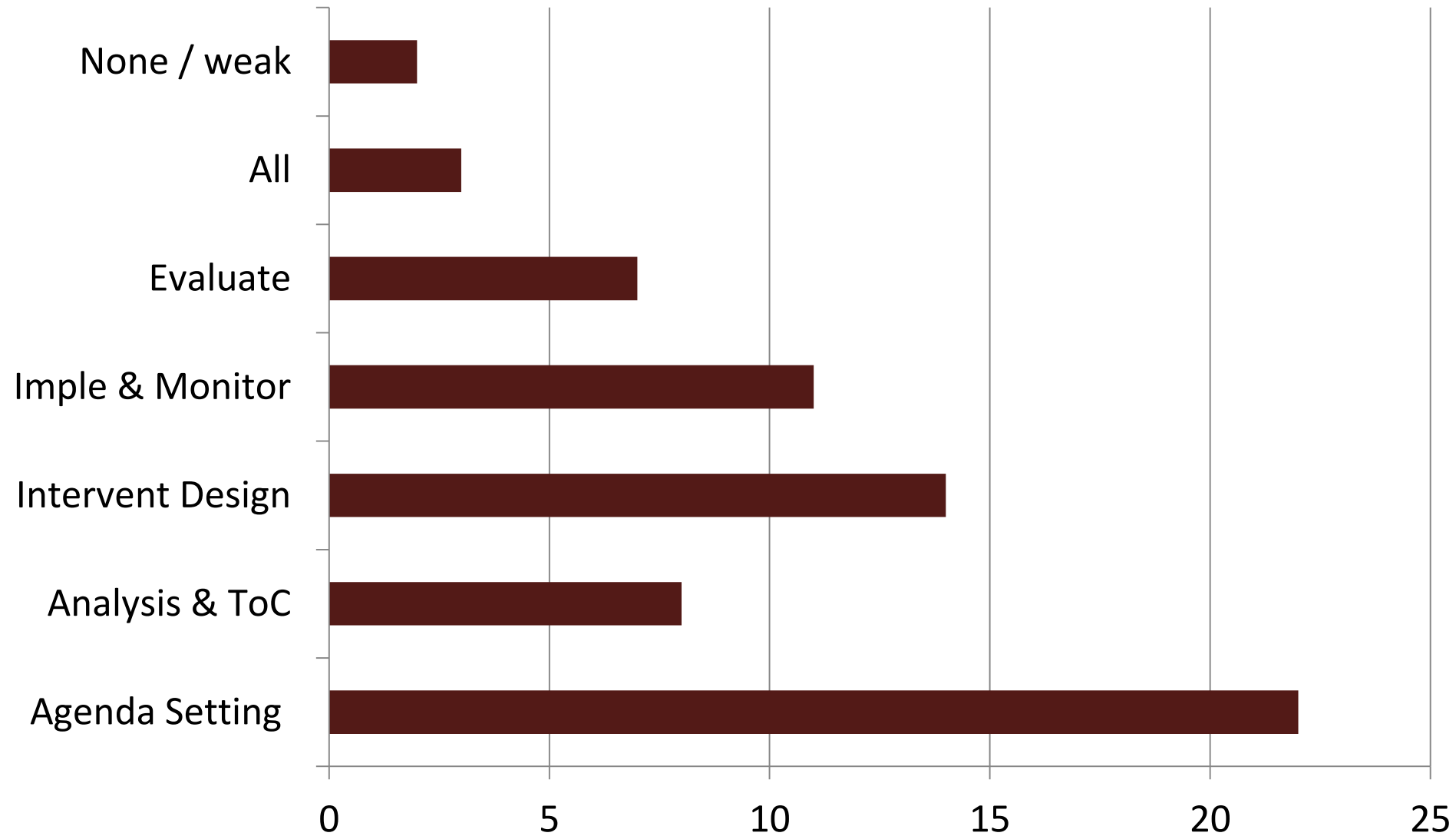


# Evidence Based Policy Making and Implementation





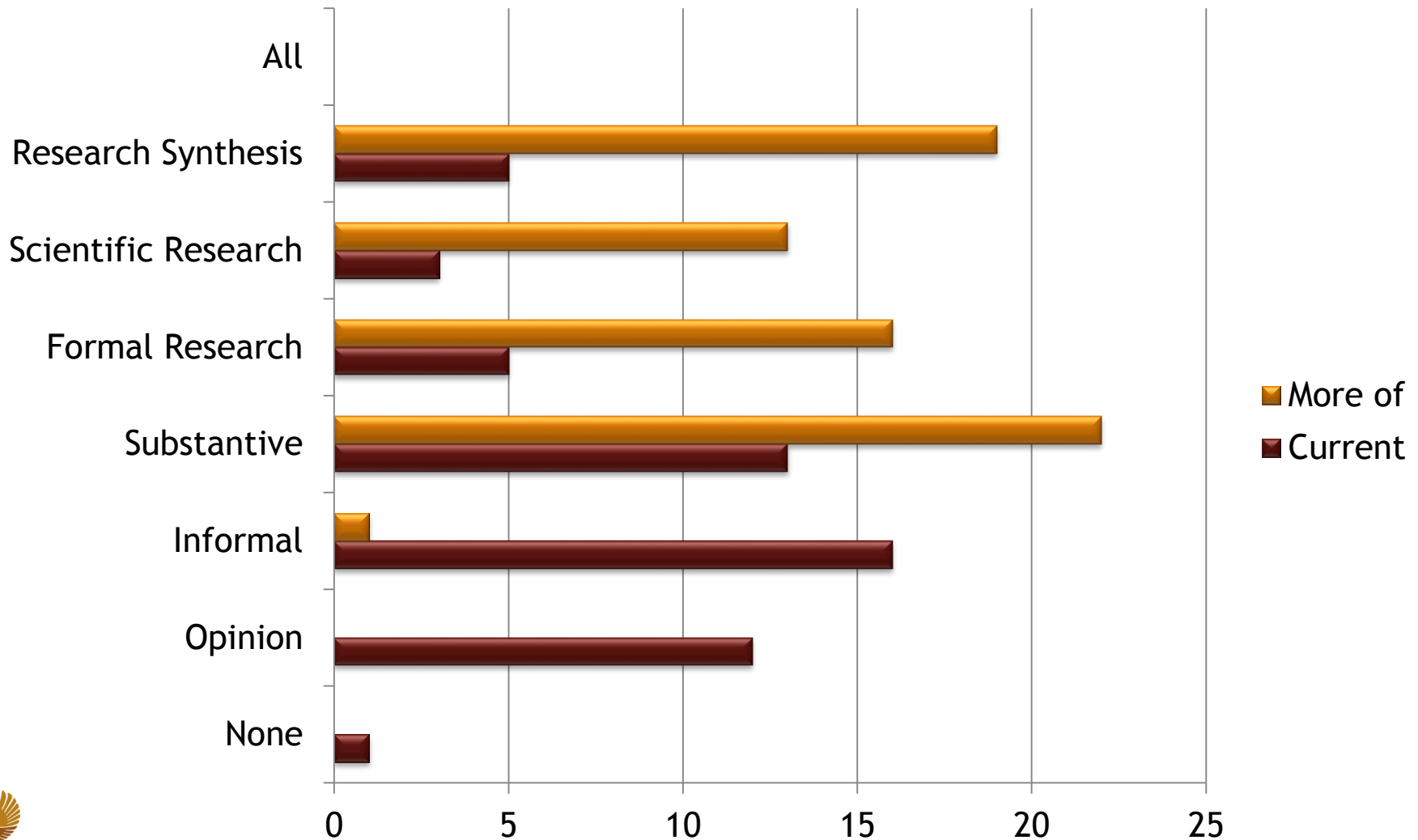
# Where in Policy Cycle do you use evidence?





# Type of evidence most often used for policy decision-making

(interviews with 55 senior managers)





# The main factors that influence policy

(interviews with 55 senior managers)





# Definitions



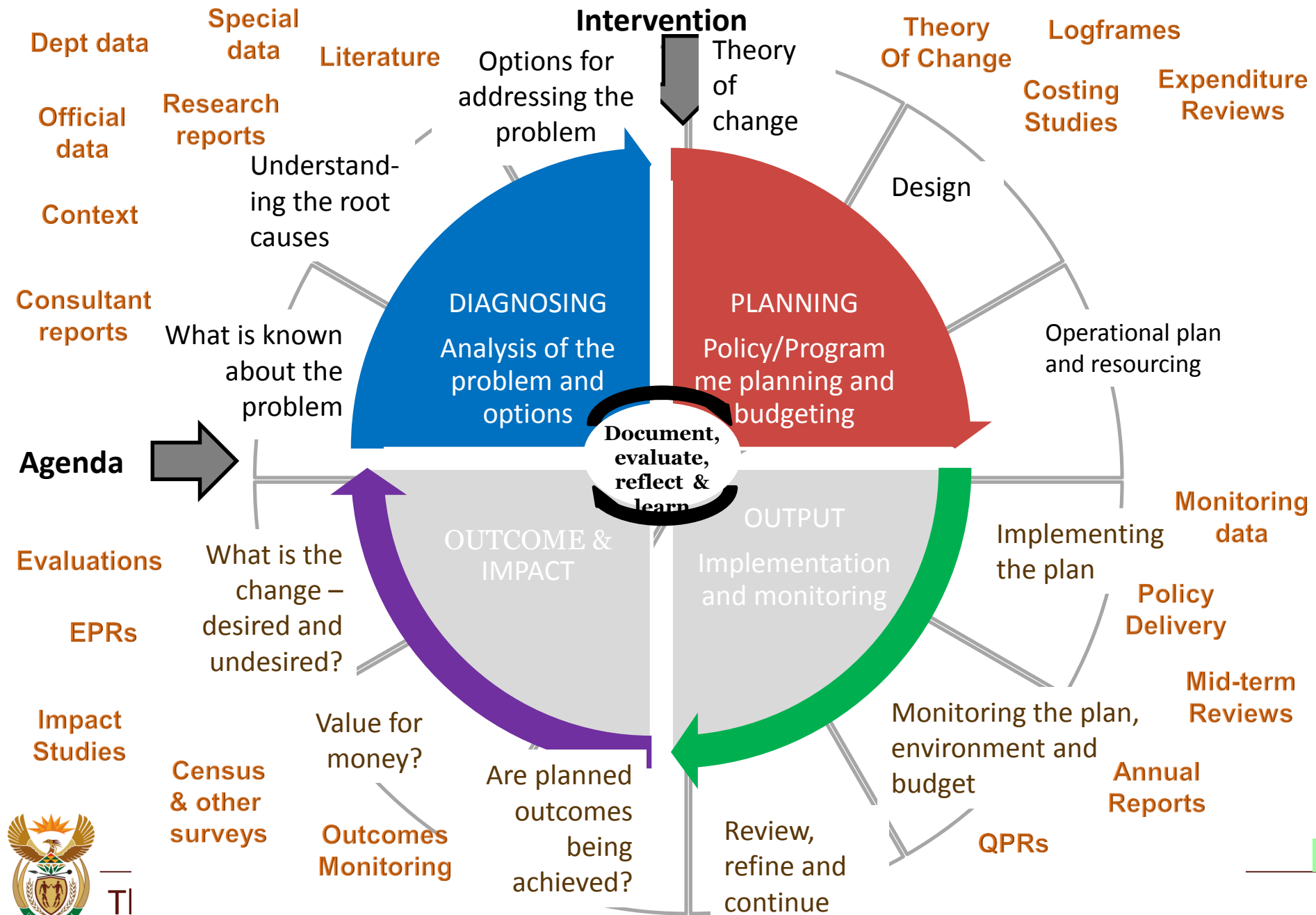
## CONTINUUM OF TYPES & SOURCES OF EVIDENCE USED

None	Opinion	Informal	Substantive	Formal Research	Scientific Research	Review & assessment of available evidence
No explicit basis for policy decisions	Of the policy makers; or broadly accepted public opinion; lobby groups; others	Anecdotal, stories, uncritical use of information to hand, partial & limited	Careful truth seeking, developmental evaluation, data analysis of survey & admin data	Empirical, appropriate design & methodology	Statistical, comparative, causal	Testing, analysing & synthesising available evidence. Rapid reviews; systematic enquiry; meta-analysis

*Adapted from: Hayes, W, 2002, The Policy Cycle*

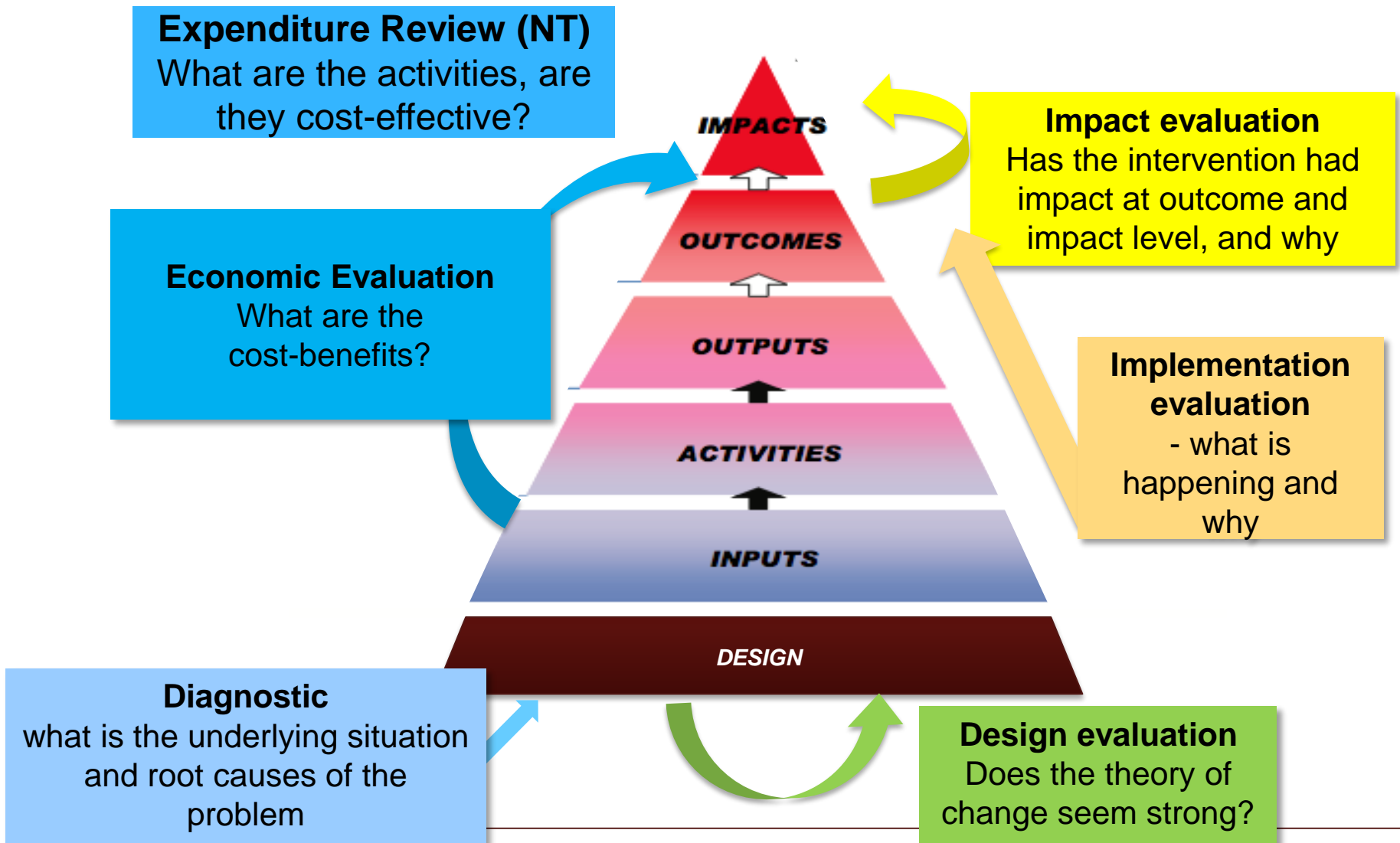


# Evidence Based Policy Making and Implementation



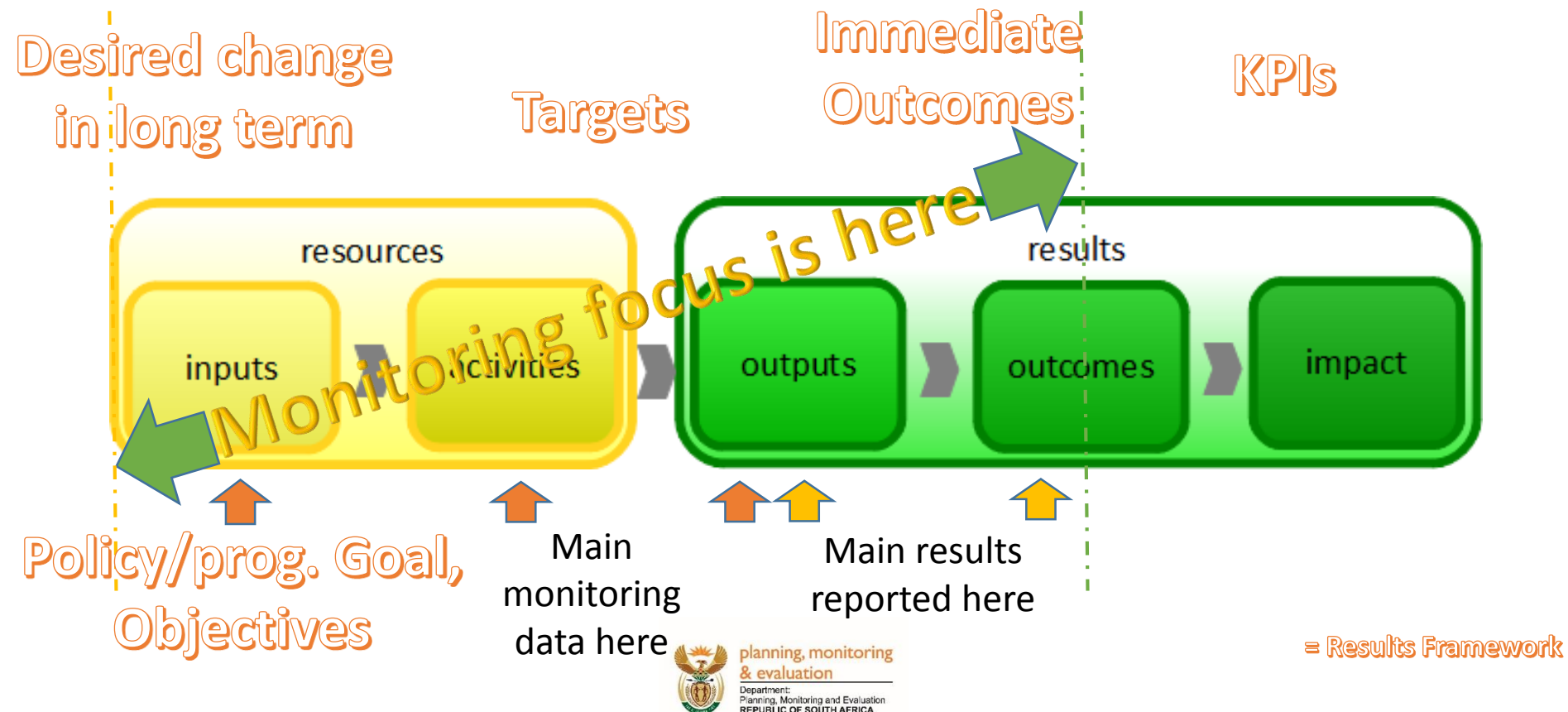


# Different types of evaluations related to questions around the outcome model





# Government Proj/Prog Monitoring System





# Implementation Evaluations: sense of emphasis, importance



**Evidence-based**

**Independence**

1. Design (ToC, **results framework**)
2. Outputs
3. "Results" (immediate outcomes) to date

**Effectiveness**

Sources of Evidence: Policy documents, prog/dept. monitoring records, literature data

1. Org. Design
2. Management & Accountability
3. Value-for-money? Comparison
4. Systems, Procedures

**Efficiency**

Sources of Evidence: prog/dept. monitoring records, other records eg minutes, primary evaluation data

1. Institutionalization
2. Financial
3. Content

**Sustainability**

Sources of Evidence: Policy documents, prog/dept. monitoring records, primary evaluation data

1. Current Data
2. Emerging Insights, Lessons

**Impact**

Sources of Evidence: quality prog/dept. monitoring records, primary evaluation data

1. **Relevant** & aligned?
2. **Appropriate** for Context and Stakeholders

**Relevance**

Sources of Evidence: Policy documents, programme/dept monitoring records





Thank you

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Evidence and Knowledge Systems

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