

# PHCRED Short Course

April 2007

Planning Project Evaluations

**Paul Aylward – Tri State-Wide Coordinator**

©Paul Aylward, 2007  
[paul.aylward@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:paul.aylward@adelaide.edu.au)

# evaluations or WOMBATs

(a waste of money, brains and time)



Unfair to  
wombats!

# What is Evaluation?

*“A process applying systematic methods to collect substantial, meaningful and relevant information to judge according to values, needs, criteria or standards, the extent to which programmes effectively and efficiently meet desirable programme goals”*

(Lawrence, 1982)

*“The process of obtaining and disseminating information of use in describing or understanding the particular program, or making judgements and decisions related to past, existing or potential programs.”*

(The Australasian Evaluation Society)

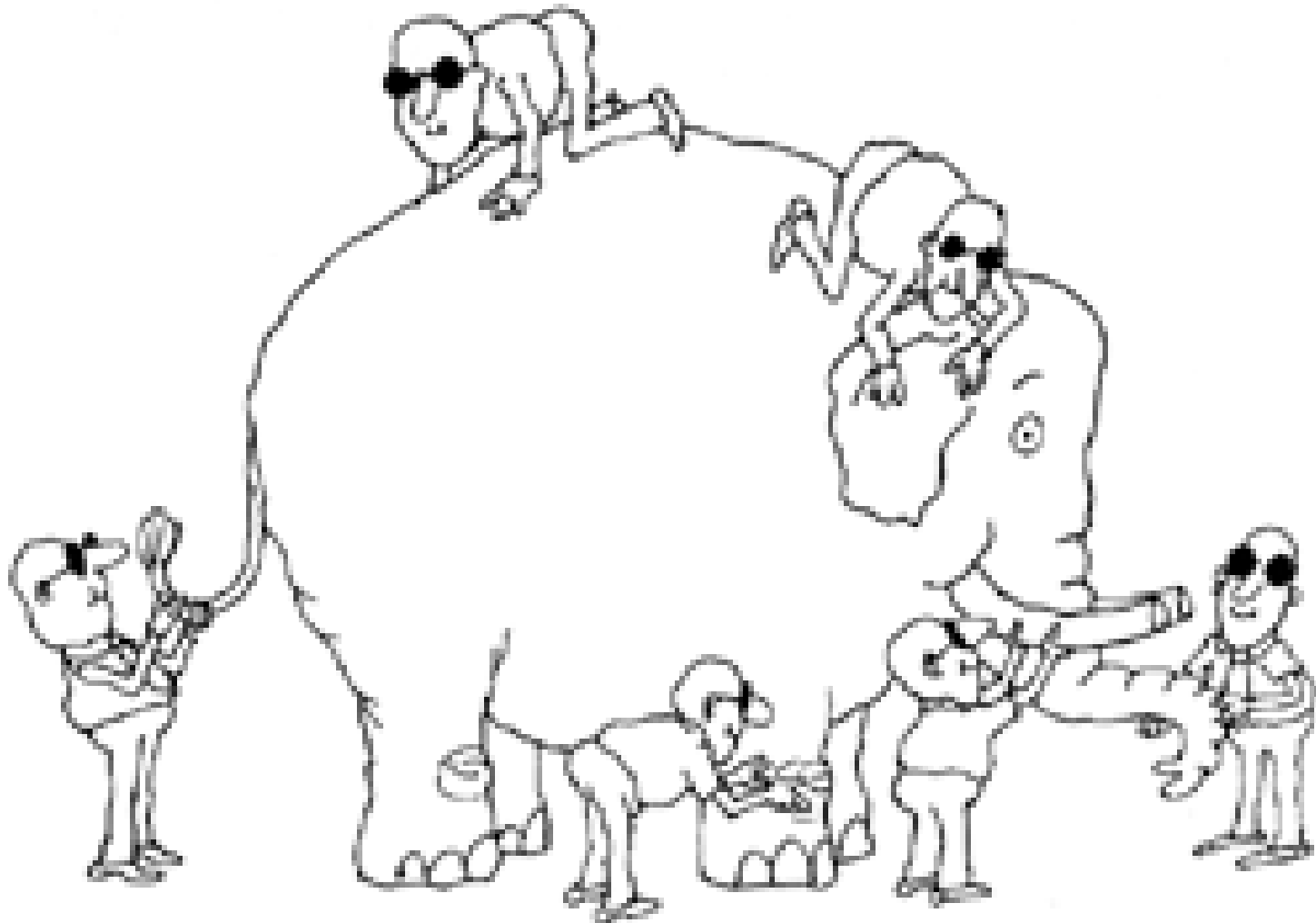
# Employee Appraisals

- *"He sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them."*
- *"This employee is depriving a village of an idiot."*
- *"Got into the gene pool while the lifeguard wasn't watching."*
- *"Got a full 6-pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to hold it all together."*
- *"Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming."*
- *"He's so dense, light bends around him."*

# Evaluation - An Issue of Communication?

- Accurate and valid information
- Clear messages / mutual understanding / meaning
- Co-operation and collaboration of subjects
- Openness Honesty and Trust

Each blind man gets an accurate idea of a part of the elephant, but no one 'sees' the whole beast.



# Why do Evaluation?

**\*Accountability \*Improvement \*Knowledge**

§ to learn from our actions

§ to tell people about what we have done and achieved

§ to share what's been learnt with others

§ to help plan for the future

§ to be accountable to funding bodies, managers, communities and ourselves!

# Who is the Evaluation for?

- § Participants
- § Funding bodies
- § Auspicing organisation
- § Steering or advisory group
- § Other primary health care workers
- § Primary health care researchers
- § Politicians and policy makers
- § Other community based groups and organisations planning or undertaking similar work

# Some 'Flavorsome' Evaluation Approaches

- Formative Evaluation
- Action Research / Participatory Action Research
- Empowerment Evaluation
- Summative Evaluation
- Cluster Evaluation
- Synthesis Evaluation
- Realistic Evaluation
- Benett's Hierarchy and 'TOP'
- Utilization Focused Evaluation
- Program Logic

# Who should do Evaluation?

## – External evaluation consultant

- easier to be ‘objective’
- no vested interest
- sits outside the organisation’s political and power structures
- may add ‘credibility’
- may be more ‘expert’
- May be a contractual requirement

# Who should do Evaluation?

## – Internal evaluation

- knows the program, context, people
- usually less resource requirement
- poses less threat to colleagues and participants

# Who should do Evaluation?

## – **Combination Internal + External**

- Maximises benefits of both and hopefully cancels out the negatives!
- Builds capacity and understanding in primary health care workforce and organisations
- Builds capacity amongst evaluators
- Informs suitable and meaningful approaches
- Participatory Action Research

# Some Key Needs of Evaluation

- Planning: Identification + clear definition + logic of:
  - objectives
  - Strategies
  - Process, impact, outcome indicators
  - Methods for addressing/measuring indicators

# Some Key Needs of Evaluation

- Clear definition of roles in evaluation
- Full awareness/knowledge of complexities in the field
- Informed choice of techniques to access information
- Optimum output within budgetary boundaries
- Clearly demonstrate effectiveness

*Incorporate Evaluation from the outset  
as an integral part of the project*

# Early questions to consider

- Why is the evaluation being done and who is the audience?
- Who will do and manage the evaluation?
- Are there enough resources to do the evaluation?
- Is the program sufficiently well defined to do a formal evaluation?

## Questions (cont...)

- Is there a logical fit between the goal, objectives and strategies?
- Are the objectives measurable?
- Do the evaluation activities need ethical approval?

# Questions (cont...)

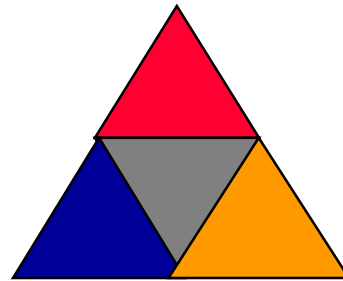
- Who 'owns' the evaluation and data collected?
- Who are the stakeholders and how will they have a voice in the evaluation?
- How will the results be disseminated and used?

# Evaluation Plan

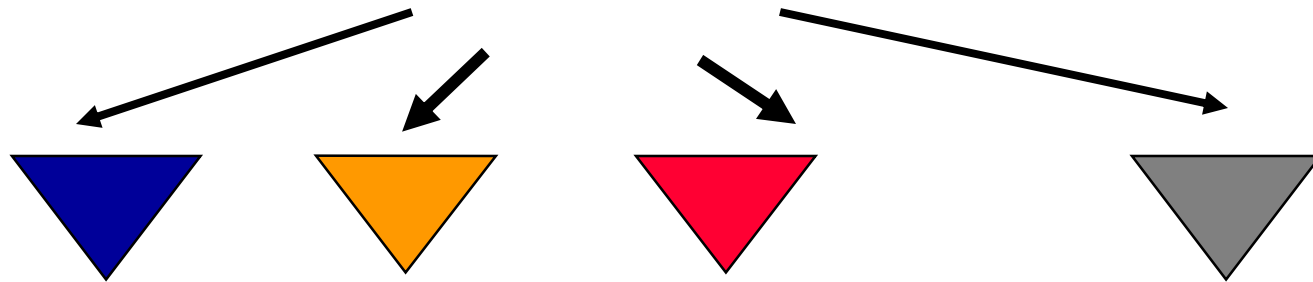
- What your project aims to achieve
- Main activities (strategies)
- Information need to be collected (indicators)
- Methods needed to collect information
- Provides clear guide – identifies stakeholders
- Demonstrates logic of program/project
- Can be adapted to a ‘work-plan’

# Goals, Objectives, Indicators and Methods

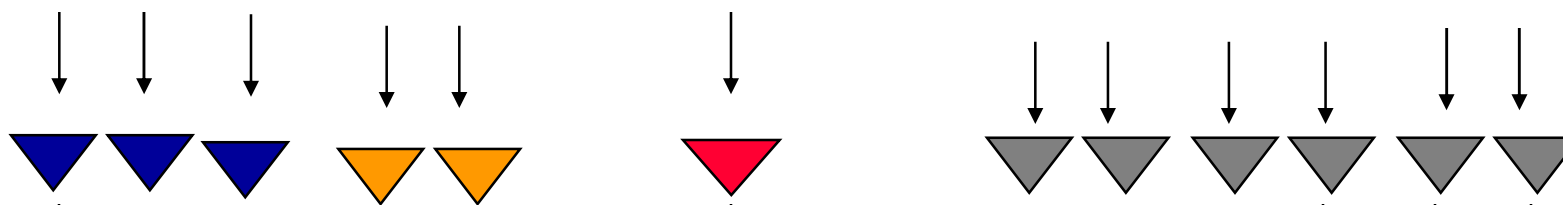
**GOAL**



**Objectives**



Strategies



**Indicators**



Questions?

**Methods**



Objective	Strategies	Process Indicators	Data Collection Methods	Impact/Outcome Indicators	Data Collection Methods
<p><u>Objective 1:</u> To Improve the Self Esteem of young Indigenous people in the region</p> <p>↑</p> <p><u>Objective 2:</u> To empower young Indigenous people to address issues of grief and loss in the young Indigenous community</p> <p>↑</p> <p><u>Objective 3:</u> To encourage Indigenous young people to express their ideas and thoughts in the context of mental health and well-being</p>	<p>Liaise with and engage appropriate service providers and members of the Indigenous Community to Plan and deliver Forums</p> <p>Engage with Aboriginal Education workers to help promote the program and recruit Aboriginal youth to attend activities</p>	<p>Service Providers and community members consulted in planning phase of the program</p> <p>Service Providers engaged to help delivery of program</p> <p>Number and nature of Educational Workers and Institutions approached and engaged</p>	<p>Document Review</p> <p>Document Review</p>	<p>Production of program of 15 Forums to be conducted at a culturally suitable and accessible location</p>	<p>Document Review</p>
	<p>Adapt a youth participation mentoring model from the 'Community Health Adolescent Murraylands Peer Support' model specifically for working with Indigenous young people</p>	<p>Nature of adaptations made to CHAMPS and perceived appropriateness</p>	<p>Document Review</p>	<p>Indigenous youth report increased sense of: Self worth and pride attributable to attending Forums</p>	<p>Group Feedback from Indigenous</p>
	<p>Implement a program of Forums using education, networking and mentoring to target issues of identity, racism and self-worth</p> <p>Provide a culturally appropriate and safe environment for young Indigenous people that allows them to speak freely about issues that concern them in the context of mental health and well being</p>	<p>Number of Forums planned and delivered</p> <p>Number and characteristics (age, gender, residence) of Aboriginal youth attending Forums</p> <p>Content covered, range of materials and training provided and activities conducted - client and Provider satisfaction</p> <p>Evidence of networks developed through program participation</p>	<p>Focus Group of Service Providers engaged in delivering program</p> <p>Group Feedback from young Indigenous attendees</p>	<p>Indigenous youth report feeling more able to address issues of grief and loss attributable to attending Forums</p>	<p>Focus Group of Service Providers engaged in delivering program</p>
	<p>Integrate the issue of grief and loss from a young Indigenous perspective through education, life skills training and developing support networks</p>	<p>Mentoring activities enacted and client perceived suitability and satisfaction</p> <p>Perceived suitability of venue, times, location, facilities</p> <p>Reported freedom of expression of issues</p>	<p>Interview with PO</p>	<p>Indigenous youth report feeling better equipped to express themselves about mental health and well being</p>	<p>Interview with PO</p>
<p>Create opportunities for young Indigenous people to identify, design, implement and evaluate both ad- hoc and sustainable programs and activities to improve mental health and well-being</p>	<p>Nature of facilitation and planning activities engaged – number of youth involved in organisation</p> <p>Satisfaction of young people engaged in activity</p> <p>Suitability of proposed activities to improve mental health and well-being</p> <p>Integration of evaluation procedures to assess effectiveness of activities</p>	<p>Interview with PO</p> <p>Document Review, Group Feedback from Indigenous attendees</p>	<p>Nature and number of activities and programs designed and implemented</p> <p>Evidence of sustainability (partnerships, funding)</p>	<p>Interview with PO</p> <p>Document Review</p>	

### Murray Mallee Indigenous Initiative: Phase 1

1

Aim: To work with the Indigenous community of the Murray Mallee towards improving the mental health, well-being, resilience and self esteem of Indigenous youth (13-18 year olds) in the context of Suicide Prevention through the development and Provision of 15 Indigenous Youth Forums.

# Definitions

- Goal: Statement of long term change (“outcome”) aimed for (e.g. reduced mortality)
- Objectives: statements of more specific and immediate changes needed (“impacts”)
- Strategies: Approaches used to achieve objectives

# Goal or Aim

- Broad purpose or intent
- Contain statements of what is hoped to be achieved in the long term.

Example: Harm Reduction Unit:

*To reduce the harms associated with  
illicit drug use*

# Objectives

## **Statements that:**

- Describe specific changes that will contribute to the achievement of the goal
- Give clear guidance as to the changes expected
- Provide the measuring stick for assessing whether your project or group has been effective

# Example of Objectives

## Harm Reduction Unit

*To decrease the incidence of unsafe drug use, including unsafe injecting practices*

*To increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of drug use and related health issues by health care services, other organisations and communities.*

*Increase availability of, and access to sterile injecting equipment.*

# Indicators

- Guide the information needed to collect in order to make decisions about how program is going and what difference it makes.
- Can be expressed as a proportion, percentage, rate or ratio - in order to make meaningful comparisons
- Can also be expressed more qualitatively

# Indicators

- Process indicators
  - measures of program quality
  - measures the efficiency and appropriateness of strategies that the program employs
- Impact indicators
  - measures of how well you are achieving your objectives
- Outcome indicators
  - measures of how well you are achieving your longer term goal

# Developing Relevant Indicators

- Define success for the strategies you will employ in your program AND the objectives as if they worked perfectly
- Discuss widely with those involved in the development of the program
- Recognise the limitation of what success may mean for the particular strategies and objectives

# Types of Indicators

- **Process Indicators:**
  - Numbers who have been involved, and who have participated
  - What has actually been done
  - Quality of what has been done.
- **Impact Indicators:**
  - changes in awareness, knowledge, skills
  - increases in the number of people reached
  - policy changes
  - changes in behaviour
  - changes in community capacity
  - changes in organisational capacity (skills, structures, resources)
  - increases in service usage
  - improved continuity of care

# Process indicators : Parent Support Group

## Strategy:

*The provision of information to parents on issues relating to substance use of children and strategies of how to deal with it.*

## Success defined:

*Parents are happy with the information provided. The information is understandable and relevant to them*

## Possible Indicators:

*The proportion of the parents involved who are satisfied with the information provided*

*Proportion of parents attending the PSG sessions*

# Impact indicators : Parent Support Group

## Objective:

*To improve the coping skills of individual parents.*

## Success defined:

*Parents employ strategies that allows them to cope better with their children's behaviour children's drug use. Parents are less spun out about about dealing with their children's behaviour.*

## Possible Indicators:

*Proportion of parents who report having adopted new coping skills.*

*Proportion of parents reporting feeling less stressed in relation to dealing with their children's behaviour*

# Process Evaluation

- Q: What are we doing?
  - **Documentation of activities** - is the project as planned? changes and reasons for change?
  - **Reach and Scope** - Number and diversity of participants? Attempts at contact (leaflets etc)
  - **Quality** - Satisfaction with activities and materials? (participants, service providers, advisory groups)

# *Process evaluation questions*

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What resources were put into this work?
- How satisfied were the participants (clients and staff) with working in this way?
- Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the approach?
- What process difficulties were encountered and (how) were these addressed?
- What information was produced and utilized?
- Who was it disseminated to?
- How was it received?
- What groups was this area of work intended to serve?
- What groups did it actually reach, who was missed and why?
- What were the benefits, usefulness and effectiveness of the approaches used?
- What factors influenced the usefulness and effectiveness of strategies?

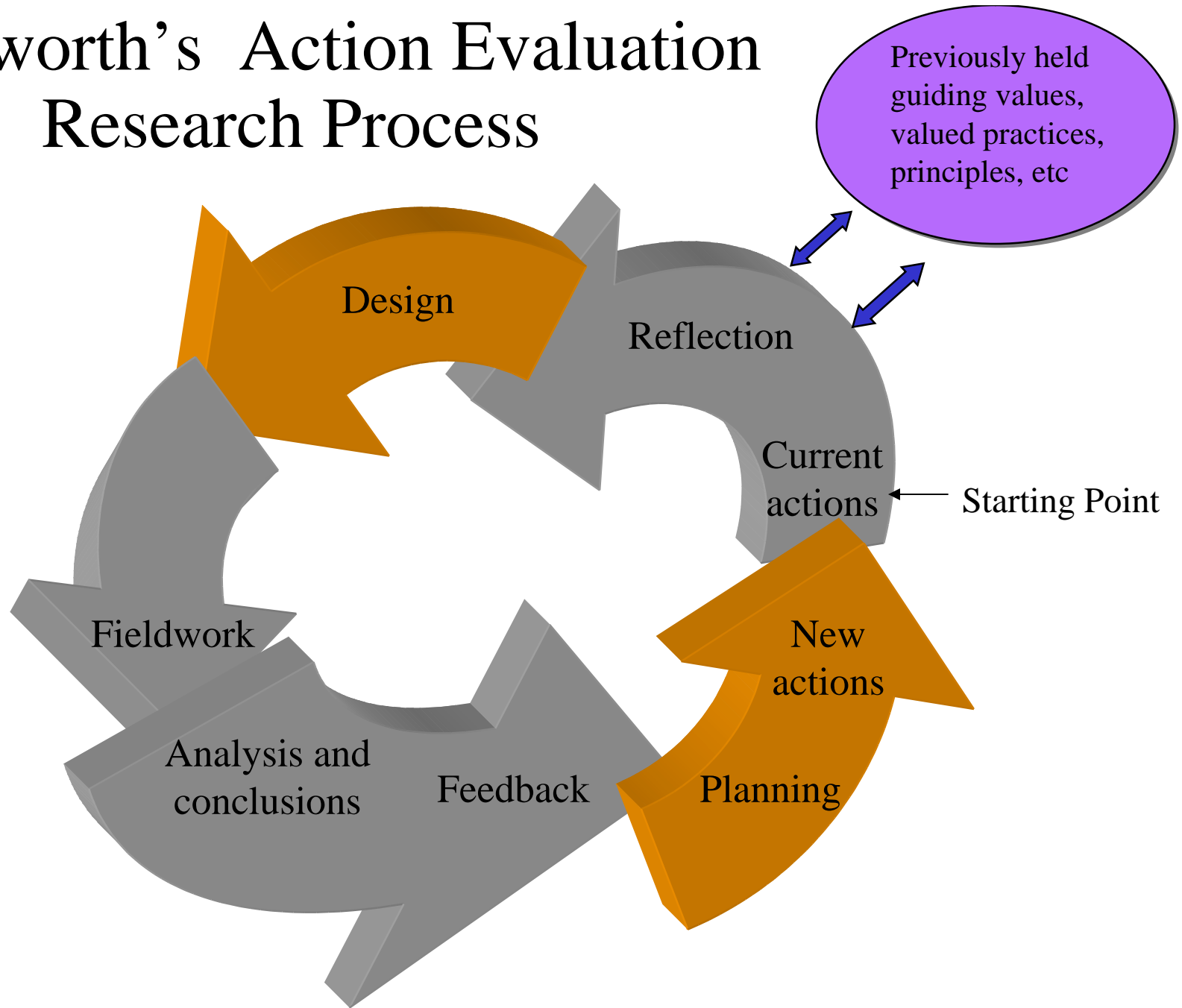
# Impact Evaluation

- Extent to which objectives achieved - e.g.:  
changes due to project in:
  - Knowledge and awareness
  - behaviours
  - skills
  - beliefs and attitudes
  - (policy or systems change?)

# Outcome Evaluation

- Progress made toward the Goal of the project (long term achievements)
  - Mortality
  - Morbidity
  - Other Health Status indicators

# Wadsworth's Action Evaluation Research Process



## *Impact / Outcome evaluation questions*

- What changes have there been in behaviour amongst clients?
- What changes have there been in the number of clients voluntarily seeking treatment?
- How has client risk behaviour changed through involvement with the project?
- How did awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of clients change due to the program?
- What role have other agencies/organisations in any client changes identified?
- In what ways has capacity building been promoted or enhanced by the program?
- Where there any unexpected outcomes for clients or staff involved?

# SMART criteria for selecting indicators

- **Simple** - is it clearly understood what the indicator is about?
- **Measurable** - is there a capacity to collect data to address the indicator?
- **Accessible** - can it be used, is there data available to address it?
- **Relevant** - is it relevant to the program
- **Timely** - does it address information that is relevant to the timeframe of the program

# Evaluation Using External Criteria

- did the program use a positive well-being, holistic view of its clients?
- encourage individual/community participation and/or control
- use multi-sectoral strategies?
- involve multi-disciplinary teams
- acknowledge social determinants of outcomes
- provide equitable/accessible/affordable/acceptable services

# Evaluation questions using the Ottawa Charter

To what extent did the program.....

- develop healthy public policy?
- create supportive environments?
- strengthen community action?
- develop personal skills?
- reorientate services?

# Program Planning and Evaluation Wizard

Available on CD (from the SA Community Health  
Research Unit) or from the following web site  
address:

<http://www.sachru.sa.gov.au/PEW/index.htm>



# References

- Aylward, P. (2005). Evaluation for AOD Projects and Programs. In N. Skinner, A.M. Roche, J. O'Connor, Y. Pollard, C. Todd (Eds.), *Workforce Development TIPS (Theory Into Practice Strategies): A Resource Kit for the Alcohol and Other Drugs Field*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia
- Hawe, P et al (2000) 'Evaluating Health Promotion, A Health Workers Guide' MacLennan and Petty
- \* Planning and Evaluation Wizard (PEW – [www.sachru.sa.gov.au](http://www.sachru.sa.gov.au))
- Quinn Patton, M (1997) *Utilisation Focussed Evaluation*, Sage.
- Weiss, C (1998) *Evaluation*. Prentice Hall