Summarising change in complex programmes – indicators vs learning questions
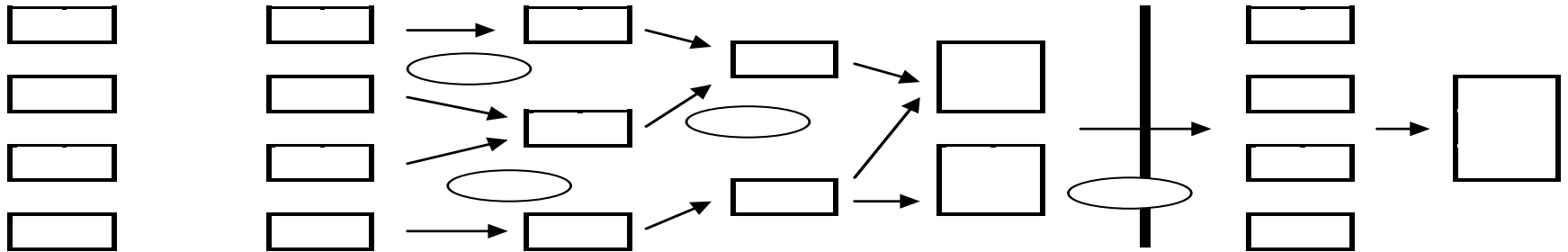
NGO Federatie, 2-5 October, 2018

Summarising portfolio performance

Based on work by INTRAC Associate Nigel Simister
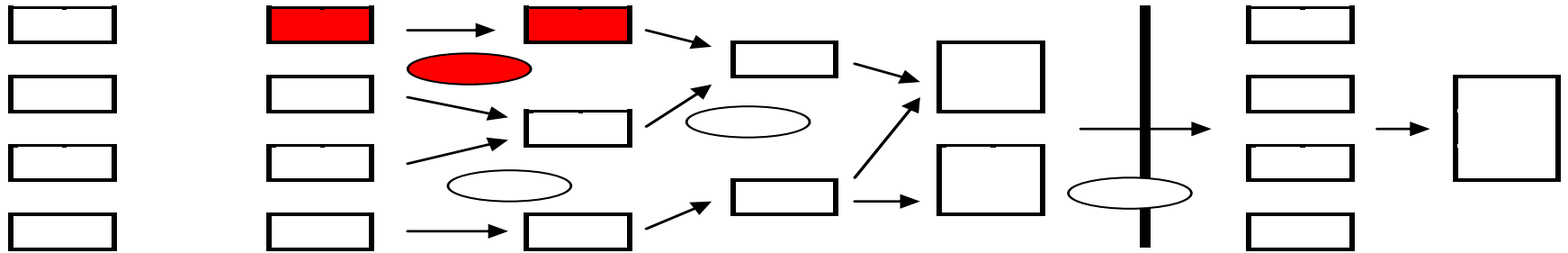
Summarising portfolio change

Evidence of change can be sought for each key part of the impact pathway

Evidence can be intended to:

- Measure change
- Assess change
- Illustrate change

Summarising using indicators

Types of evidence - indicators

Direct indicators	Aggregated indicators
"Basket"/ Framing indicators	Scoring/ Rating indicators
Others?	Mixed indicators

Summarising through other evidence
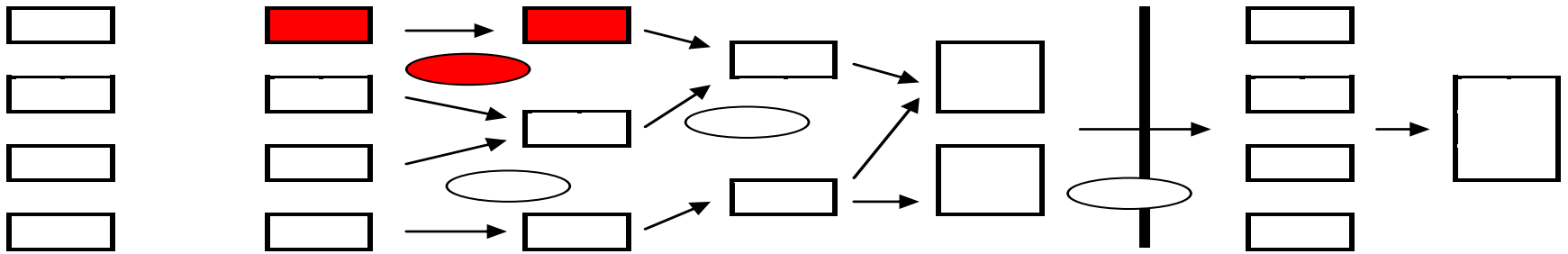
Types of evidence - questions

Learning questions	Formal research
Case studies	Rapid research
	Sensemaking
Strategic assessments	Others?

Summarising portfolio performance

a) Direct indicators

b) Framing indicators

c) Aggregated indicators

d) Other indicators – ranking/ rating, mixed

e) *Case studies / stories of change*

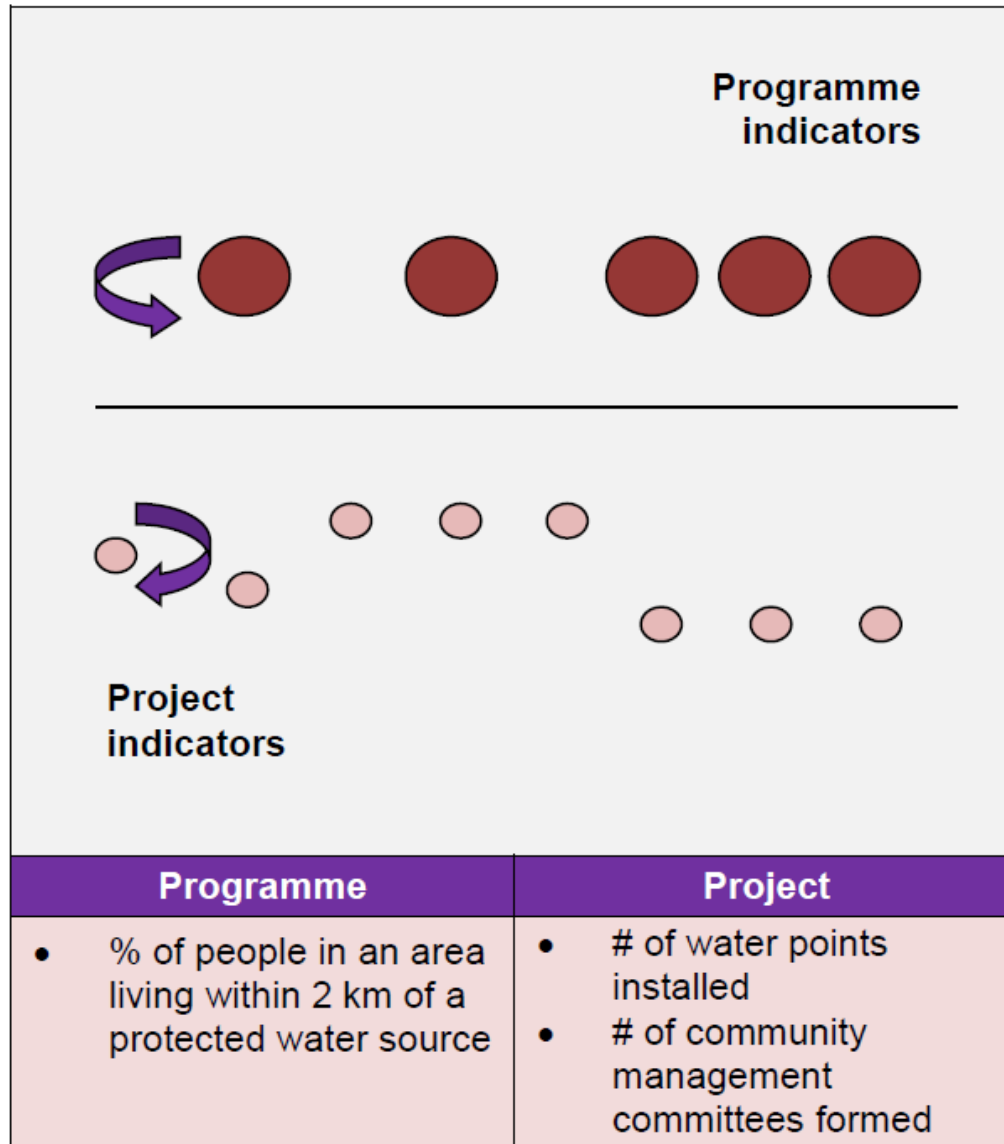f) *Strategic assessments*

g) *Questions*

a) Direct Indicators

Direct (portfolio) indicators are those you collect using your own resources or secondary sources.

They do not rely on information from projects.

To do this you need:

- to be able to argue you have influence over any changes
- to show your contribution to those changes

Direct indicators

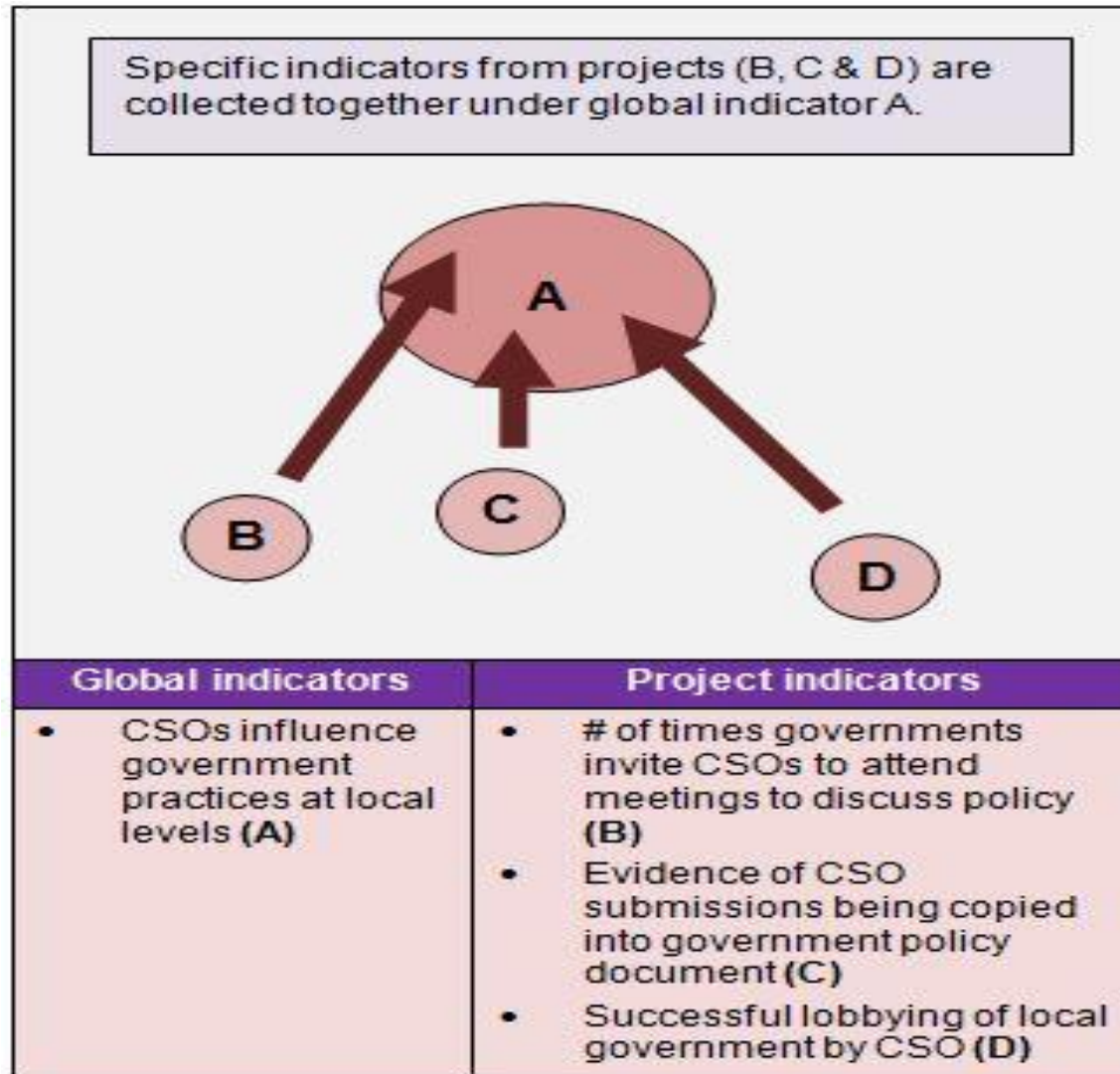| Programme	Project
• % of people in an area living within 2 km of a protected water source	• # of water points installed • # of community management committees formed

b) Framing Indicators

Framing indicators are broad <u>domains</u> of change, used to collect together examples from projects:

- Changes in ways CSOs influence government
- Improvements in policy and practice regarding bullying in schools
- Improvements in relationships between different communities

Framing indicators

Specific indicators from projects (B, C & D) are collected together under global indicator A.

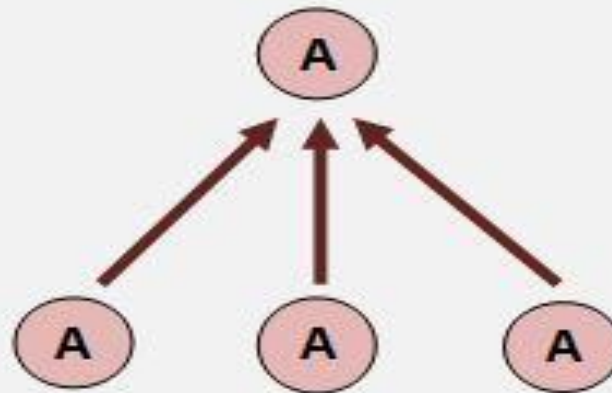| Global indicators	Project indicators
• CSOs influence government practices at local levels (A)	• # of times governments invite CSOs to attend meetings to discuss policy (B) • Evidence of CSO submissions being copied into government policy document (C) • Successful lobbying of local government by CSO (D)

c) Aggregated Indicators

Indicators developed by adding together performance from different projects/ programmes.

Can **only** be done if:

- the same indicator definitions are used

- all relevant projects collect the information

- activity or change is assessed over similar timescales

- similar tools and methods are used

- the quality of information collection is consistent

- contributions to change are broadly similar.

Aggregated indicators

Indicators from projects are aggregated together to calculate global indicator A. All indicators are defined in exactly the same way.

Example indicators at both global and project level

- # of local government decisions influenced by CSOs
- # of people enrolled in new schools
- # of farmers with increased crop yields of at least 30%
- # and % children 0–23 months who are underweight (weight for age), by gender
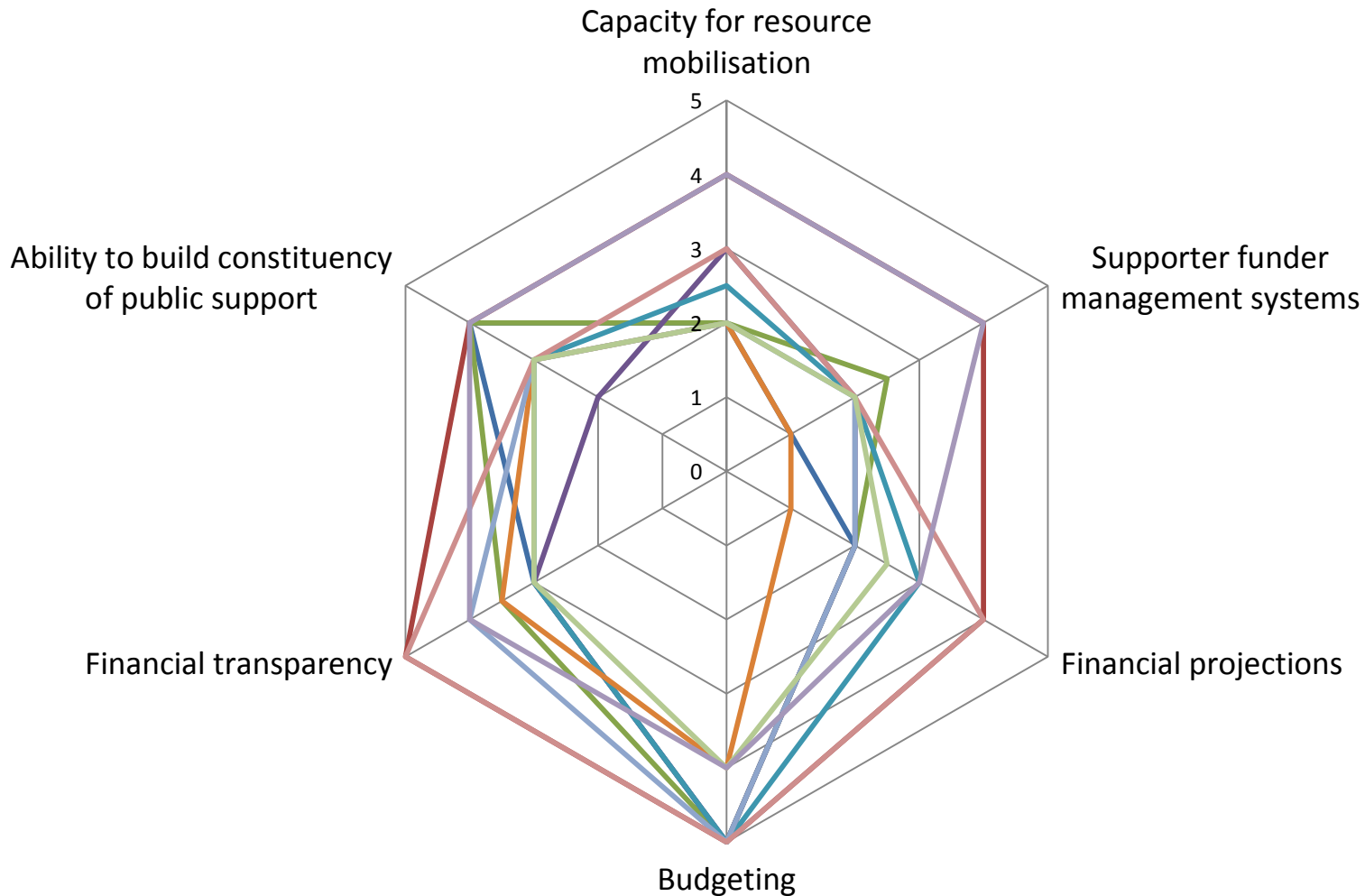
d) Ranking / rating indicators
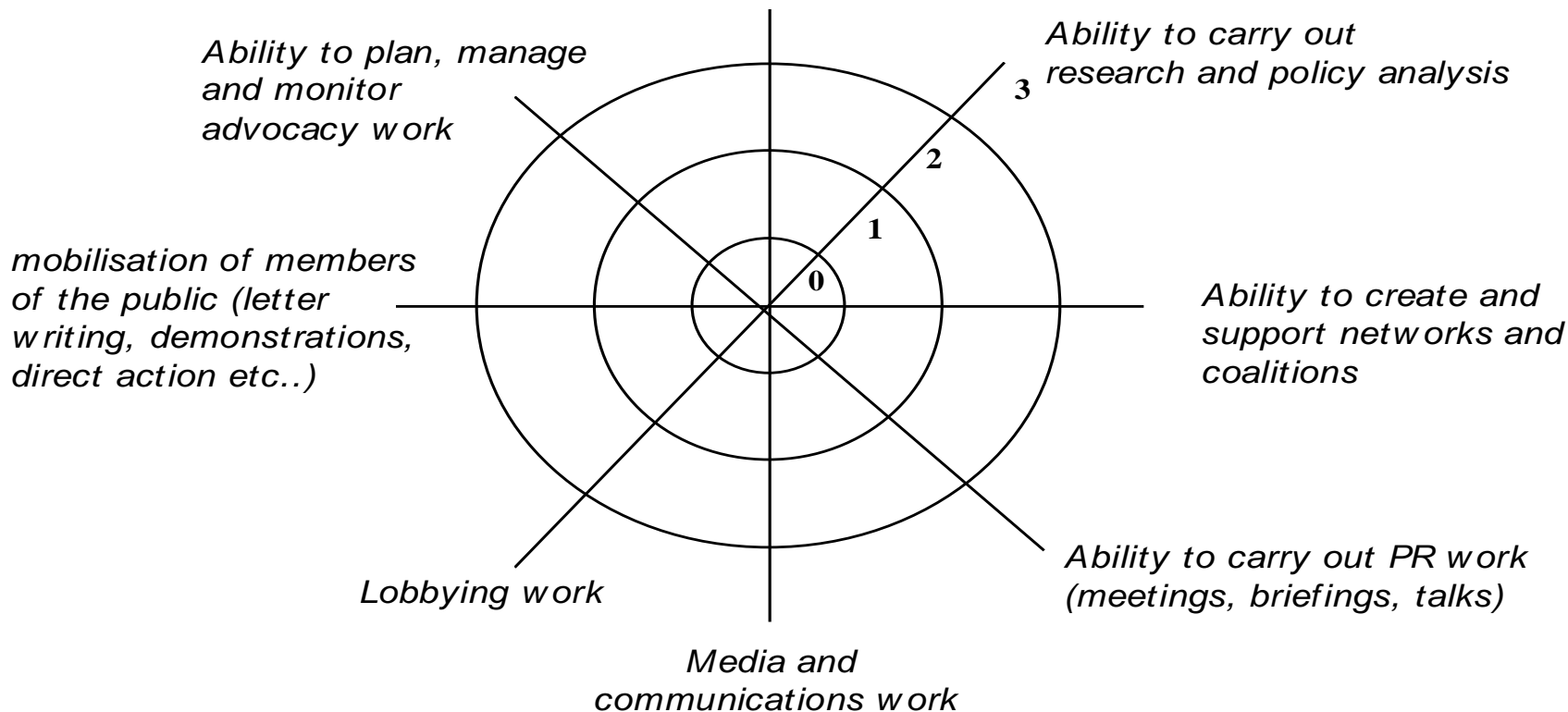
0 = an undesirable level calling for a large amount of improvement
1 = a poor level having much room for improvement
2 = a good situation with some room for improvement
3 = an ideal situation with little room for improvement

Ranking / rating indicators

Radar chart with axes: Capacity for resource mobilisation, Supporter funder management systems, Financial projections, Budgeting, Financial transparency, Ability to build constituency of public support. Scale 0 to 5.

d) Mixed indicators

and description of cases where …

- Policies have been changed
- Pilot studies have been replicated
- Lessons have been disseminated
- Funding has been mobilised

… with a verifiable contribution from [INGO]

Summarising portfolio performance

a) Direct indicators
b) Framing indicators
c) Aggregated indicators
d) Other indicators – ranking/ rating, mixed
e) **Case studies / stories of change**
f) **Strategic assessments**
g) **Questions**

e) Case studies
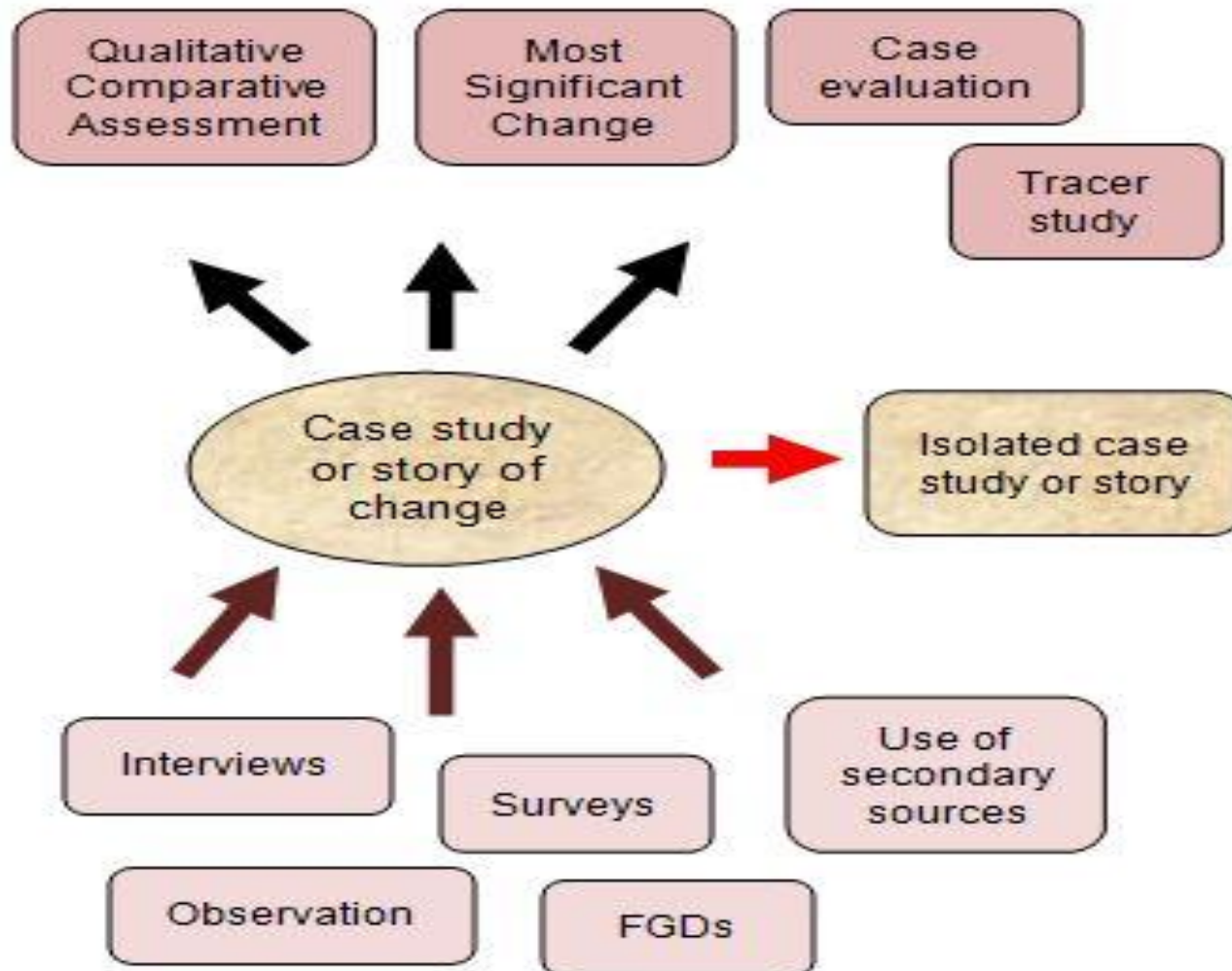
f) Strategic Assessments

- Key lessons learned and disseminated that are being used by other agencies to bring about change

- Pilot projects that are being mainstreamed or scaled-up by other agencies

- Examples of innovative projects or projects that diverge from business-as-usual approaches, with rigorous assessments of strengths as well as weaknesses

g) Monitoring / *learning* questions

- What significant changes have occurred in the capacity of partner NGOs?

- What changes in policies, practices, ideas, and beliefs have happened?

- To what degree has [an organisation] contributed to the changes?

- *What are the best ways of changing teacher practice in schools?*

- *Who are the main winners and losers from opening up water supply to private contractors in rural areas?*

- *Why don't communities engage in providing feedback to government health workers?*