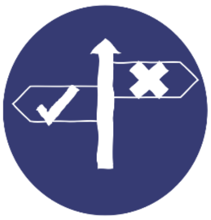
Top tips for working with peer evaluators to enhance the understanding and measurement of impact

These top tips were produced with thanks to Anna Marriott from NDTi's Research and Evaluation Team and Ikra Shakoor, Peer Evaluator, as part of the Advocacy Awareness Week 2024 webinar: *Working with peer evaluators to enhance the understanding and measurement of impact.* They are based on learning from the Time to Talk Next Steps Evaluation, by Victoria Mason-Angelow.

Make coproduction the core of everything you do.
Coproduction is important in understanding what the work is hoping to achieve; think of yourselves as partners in the work you are undertaking.

Make sure you pay people fairly for their contributions and taking part. Compensate people for their contributions, skills, and expertise when working with you.



Consider the ethics of your evaluation.
Ensure your evaluation is ethically sound by clearly informing peer evaluators and participants about the data you collect, how it will be used, and how you will safeguard its confidentiality, especially regarding sensitive information.

Establish ground rules.
Make sure you set ground rules to make sure the sessions and meetings feel safe for everyone taking part. Also make sure you have a safeguarding policy.

Consider the time needed for training peer evaluators.
Ensure ample time is given to make sure training enables people to fully understand the processes and requirements to perform the role effectively.

Be readily available to answer any questions.
This fosters a fully inclusive and personalised working relationship and trusting environment. Encourage people to ask questions – no question is too small, and no question is ever silly!

Don't assume that everybody will want to do everything.
Find out people's strengths, skills and interests and what they want to contribute to the project.

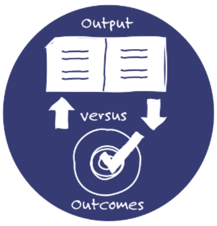
Share learning as you go.
This means you can be flexible and do things differently as the project evolves and ultimately, have greater impact. Though this approach can make the work for complicated, in the longer term you end up achieving the best outcomes for people and the project.

Look at how other studies have been conducted.
Consider how their insights can inform your practices and improve your research methods or ways of working.

Think about where your team will meet.
Venues and meeting places could be somewhere informal or offer broader team building activities, for example, instead of an office meet at an amusement park or café.

Make sure resources are available in numerous formats.
Avoid complex words or confusing abbreviations. Instead, use Easy Read, video explainers, images, or visual keys to make information clearer and more engaging.

Make training resources and recordings available.
Ensure that resources and recordings of all training sessions are made available to those who may have missed them or need to revisit the material throughout the programme as a refresher.



It's crucial to distinguish between outcomes—what you aim to achieve—and outputs.
Ask yourself: what can you measure to track progress toward those outcomes? What indicators signal meaningful change? Consider the data you need to collect and the steps you must take to capture real impact. This could involve tools like surveys, interviews, or focus groups. Additionally, explore new or alternative methods to engage with your audience, such as social media for broader reach.

When creating surveys think about the time it will take people to answer them. Also consider the language used – think about how your questionnaires will suit different audiences.

Be aspirational – think about your 'vision statement'.
About what change you want to see as well as a set of 'outcome statements'.

Vision for Change

→ Vision

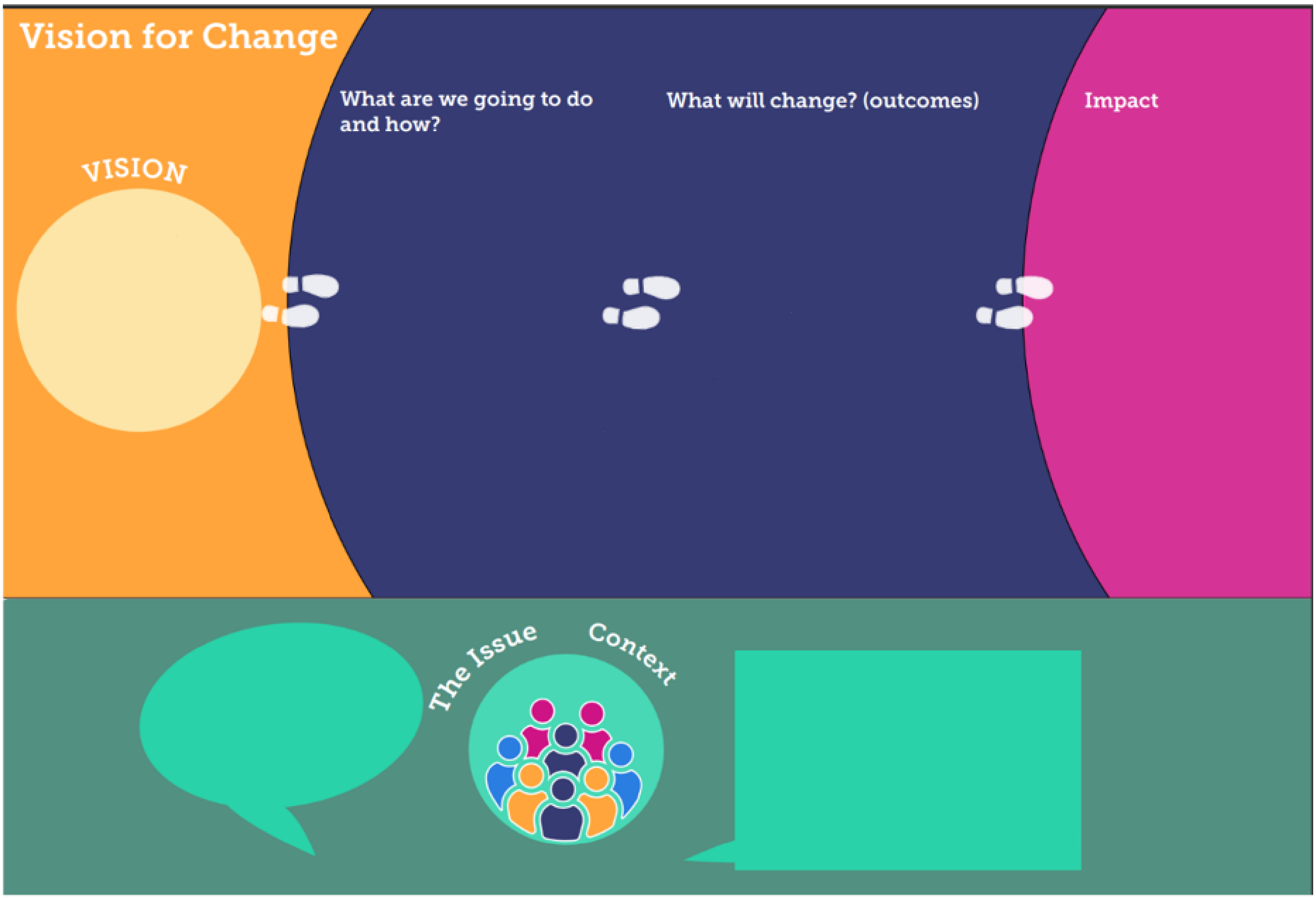
→ The issue

→ The context

→ What are we going to do and how?

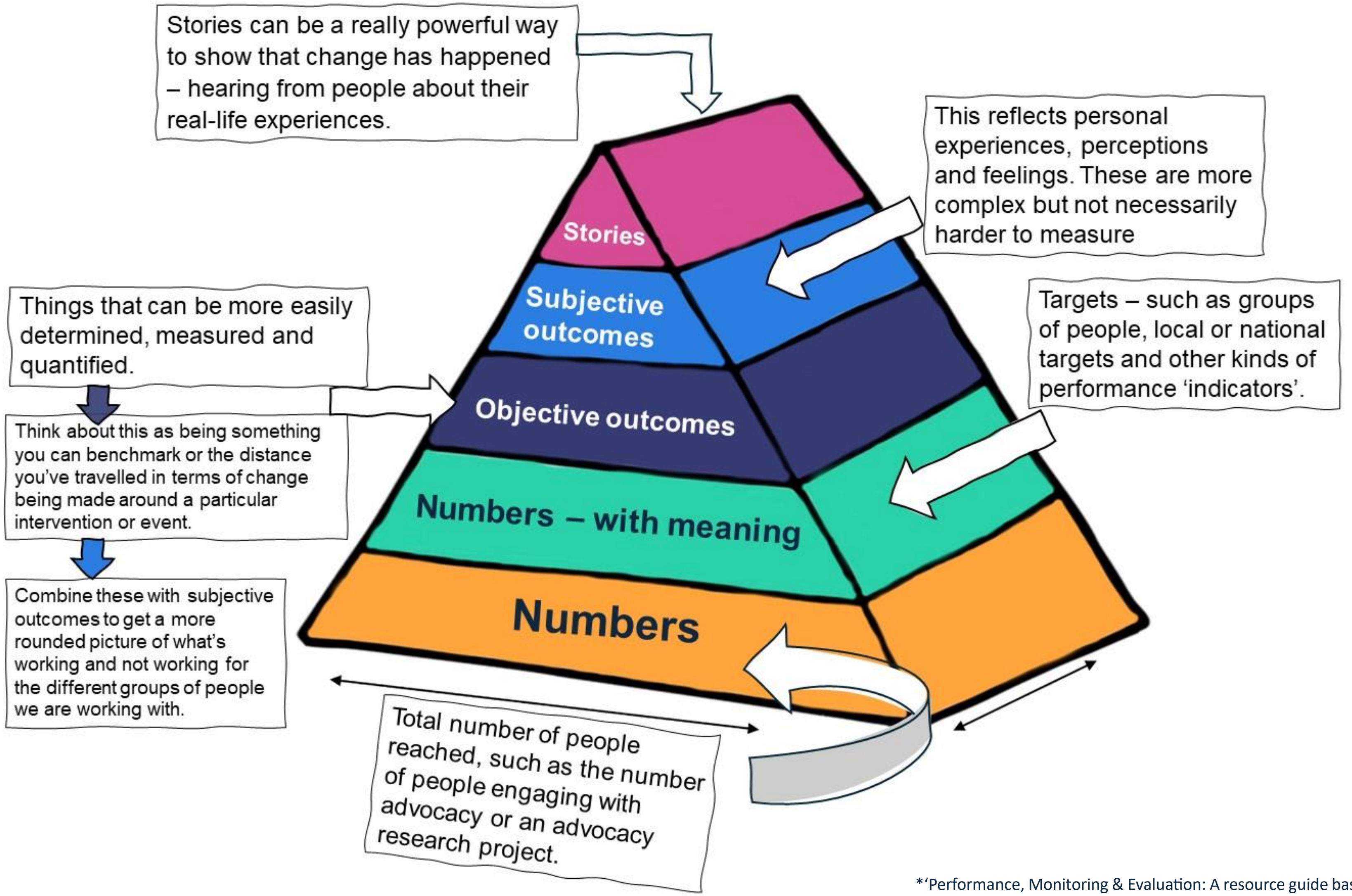
→ What will change? (Outcome)

→ Impact



The five layers of evidence triangle is a framework that can be useful in measuring impact:

This approach to evaluating outcomes was designed by Dave Burnham, Head of Information at Lancashire County Council. This holistic approach to measurement is recognized by the Department of Health as being appropriate for capturing and assessing change relating to the personalisation agenda*. NDTi has used it for a range of development and evaluation purposes.



*'Performance, Monitoring & Evaluation: A resource guide based on learning from the individual budget pilots and in Control' which is part of the Department of Health's Putting People First Personalisation toolkit.

Helpful resources

McColl, A. (November, 2023). *Partners Make Time to Talk: Expanding Support for Young People with Additional Needs*. National Development Team for Inclusion - NDTi: *https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/change-development-project/partners-make-time-to-talk-expanding-support-for-young-people-with-additional-needs*

Mason-Angelow, V. (February, 2024). *The Costs and Benefits of Time to Talk Next Steps*. National Development Team for Inclusion - NDTi: *https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/the-costs-and-benefits-of-time-to-talk-next-steps*

Mason-Angelow, V and McColl, A. (July, 2024). Time to Talk Next Steps - Final Evaluation Report. National Development Team for Inclusion - NDTi: *https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/time-to-talk-next-steps-final-evaluation-report*

Mason-Angelow, V and Blood, L. (August, 2024). *Learning Together: Inclusive Research and Evaluation Training*. National Development Team for Inclusion - NDTi: *https://www.ndti.org.uk/projects/learning-together*