
A DISCUSSION WEBINAR

CAN OUTCOME HARVESTING BE USED TO ASSESS
VALUE FOR MONEY?

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CONTENTS

1 VFM: What does it mean in practice?

2 The ActionAid methodology

3 VfM and the OH Steps



HELLO!

A bit about myself...

Why are we here?

{ 1

The Value for Money Agenda

Reasons and Contradictions

}

Why VfM and why now?

- Performance of the aid industry
- Emergence of aid sceptics
- Accountability to tax payers.



Donors' push for VfM

Agencies working out what VfM means



Source: <https://blogs.elon.edu/soc3761504/2015/06/25/assignment-8-the-crisis-caravan-part-ii-2/>

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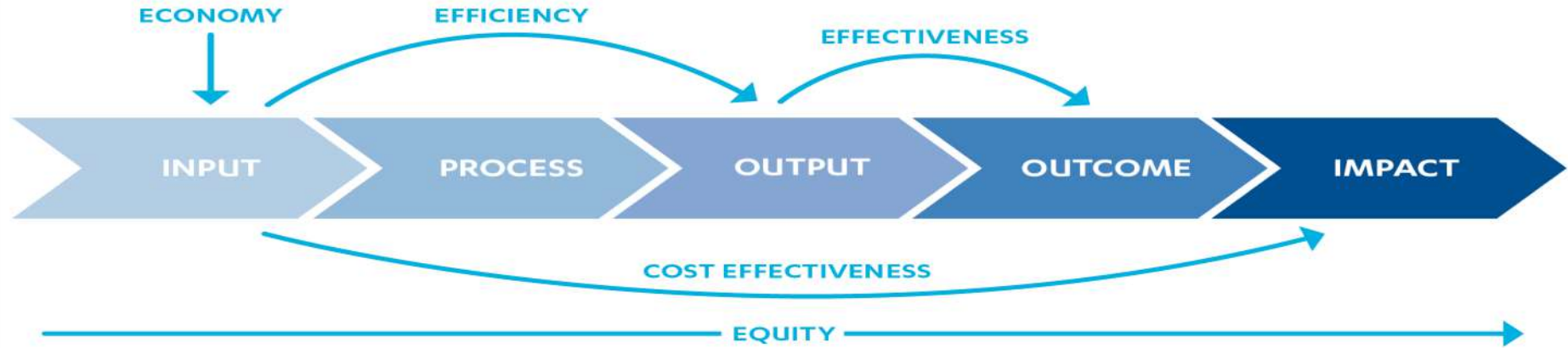
Value for Money (VfM) in our programme is about **maximising the impact** of each pound spent to improve poor people's lives.

The purpose of the VfM drive is to develop a better understanding (and better articulation) of **costs and results** so that we can make more **informed, evidence-based choices**. This is a process of continuous improvement.

”

DFID's Approach to VfM (2011)

DFID's Approach to VfM



Framework components

Input:

Staff, raw materials, capital.

(eg vaccine and vaccination consumables)

Process:

The methods by which inputs are used.

(eg delivery logistics)

Output:

Results delivered directly by DFID or our agents.

(eg children vaccinated)

Outcome:

We exercise less direct control over outcomes than outputs.

(eg children less susceptible to major childhood diseases)

Impact:

Long-term transformative change.

(eg poverty reduced)

The 4Es framework

Economy	Getting the right price
Efficiency	Doing things in the right way
Effectiveness	Doing the right things
Equity	Not leaving anybody behind
Cost Effectiveness	Maximizing the impact relative to the investment

ICAI's Review of DFID's Approach

- Limited assessment of VfM across different target groups
- Short-termism
- Focus on costs and efficiency
- Limited analysis of VfM implications of **adaptive management**
- Limited measurement and reporting of long-term transformative change
- DFID's VfM approach does not support **local capacity, accountability and leadership**



Further Reflections

- No adaptation of a private sector concept
- Reinforcement of power imbalances
- Assumption that social change can be predicted and controlled
- VfM associated to costs and financial management
- Assumption that programmes can be compared
- Value by when? Value for whom?
- Where is the learning?



Photo: <https://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/national/15017185/>

{ 2

Participatory VfM Analysis

Shifting the debate

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Building ActionAid's VfM Approach

Value for Money (VfM) in our programme is about maximising the impact of each pound spent to improve poor people's lives.



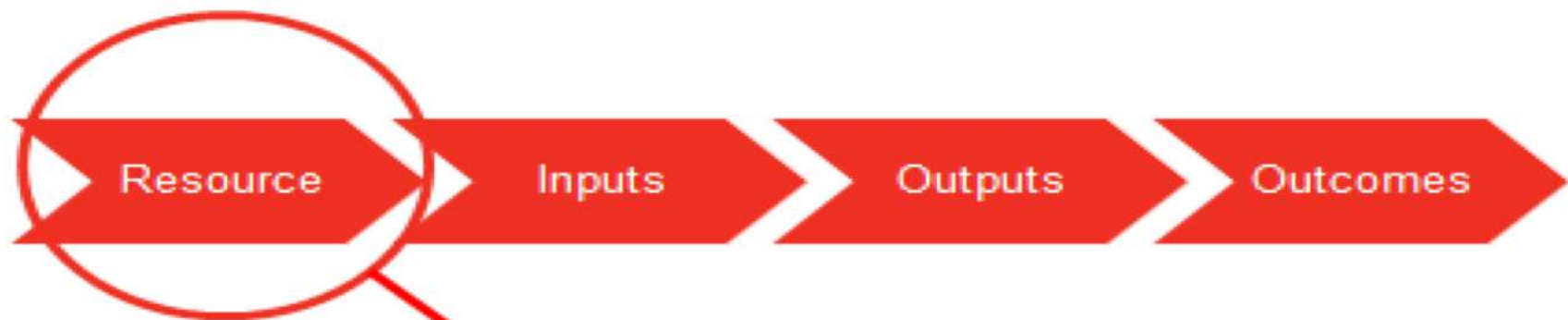
What investments are working and which ones are not?

What have we learnt about what should be done differently in the future and/or in other similar programmes?

People living in poverty at the centre of the VfM judgement

Action-focus:
VfM enabling
adaptive
management

VfM
as part of
organizational
ways of working



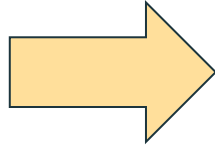
Mainstream: we question the resources

Radical: we question the outcomes



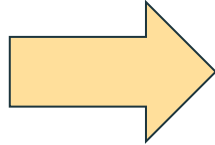
Highlights of the Approach

WHO



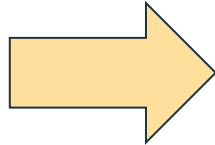
Communities, with a focus on the most marginalized of the targeted groups

WHAT



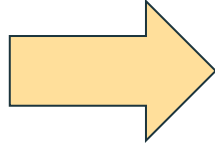
The **change** generated and whether the resources are allocated in the right places

WHEN



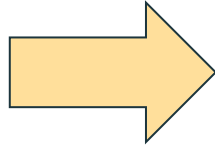
Yearly or in line with participatory review and planning exercises

WHERE



On the **ground** where programmes are happening

WHY



To **learn** and **change** strategies and budgets based on the evidence

Preparing for the VfM Analysis

1



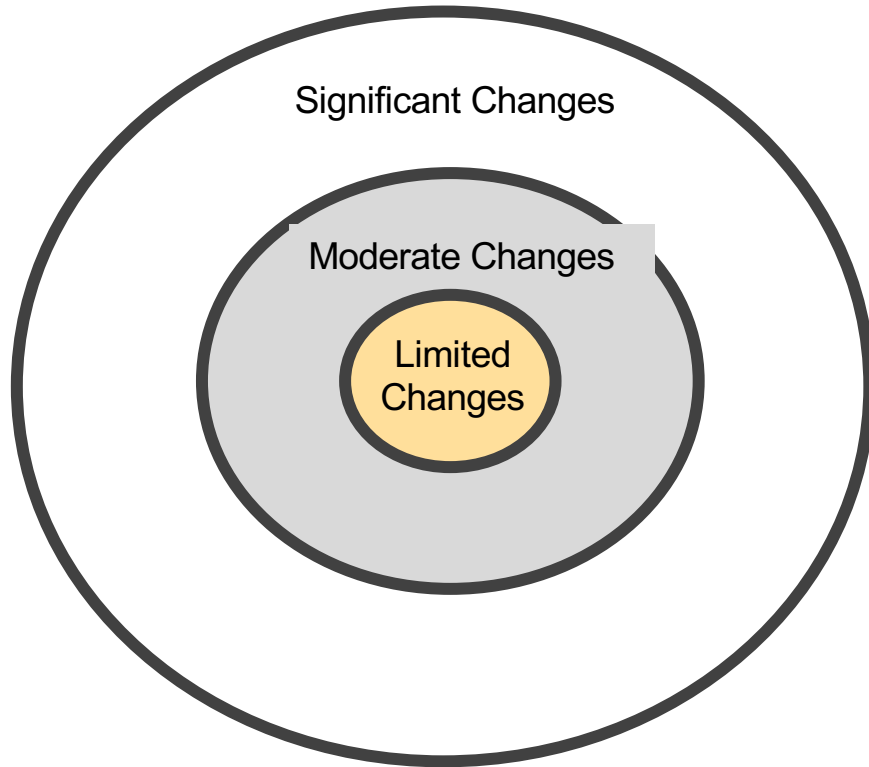
Break down the programme into its different components (4 or 5)

2



Associate an investment level to each component: high, medium, low

In the communities



Investment



High



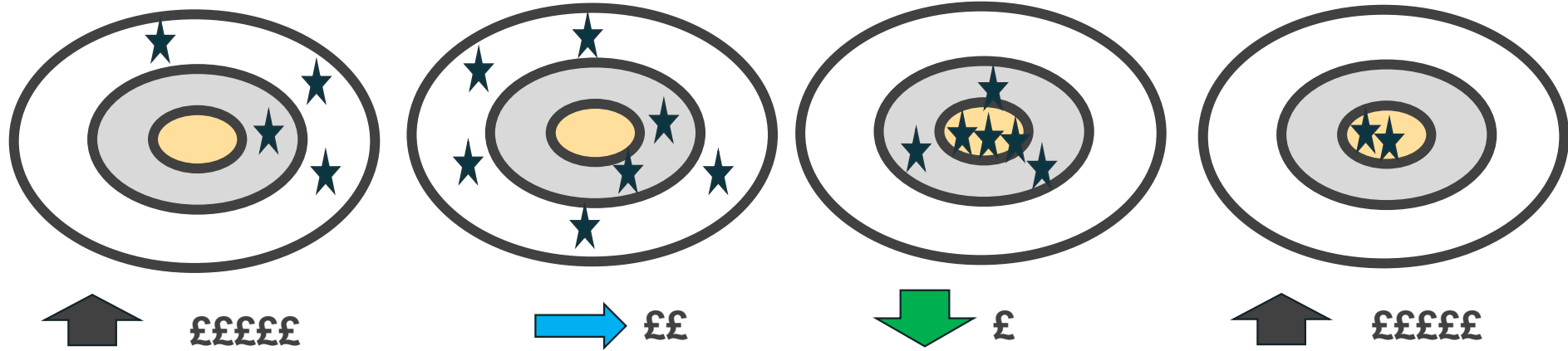
Medium



Low



Participatory VfM Analysis



■ IF YOU WERE TO GO BACK WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT THESE ACTIONS WERE DONE AGAIN?

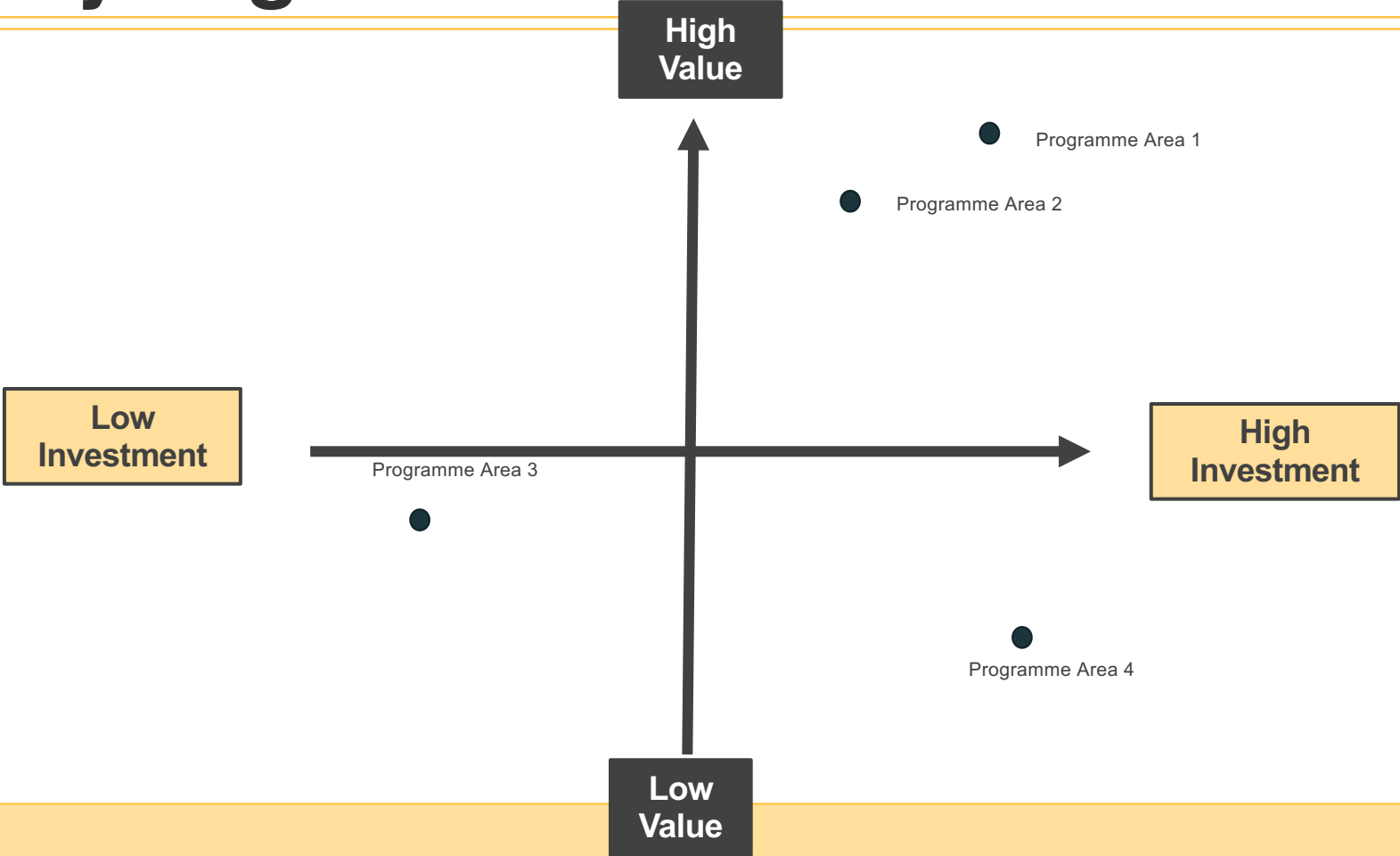
■ HOW COULD WE HAVE ACHIEVED MORE RESULTS?

■ ARE THE CHANGES WE HAVE ACHIEVED GOOD ENOUGH?

■ WHAT COULD WE DO MORE IN THE FUTURE?

■ HOW WOULD YOU PLAN THE MONEY?

Analysing the VfM



{ 3

VfM and Outcome Harvesting

Reflections

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“

Outcome Harvesting is an evaluation approach that allows you to **identify, formulate, verify, analyse and interpret ‘outcomes’** in programming contexts where relations of cause and effect are not fully understood.

Outcome Harvesting can serve to track the changes in behaviour of social actors influenced by an intervention. However, it is designed to go beyond this and support **learning about those achievements.** ”

”

Ricardo Wilson Grau

https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting#OH_what_is_OutcomeHarvesting

Outcome Harvesting (OH)

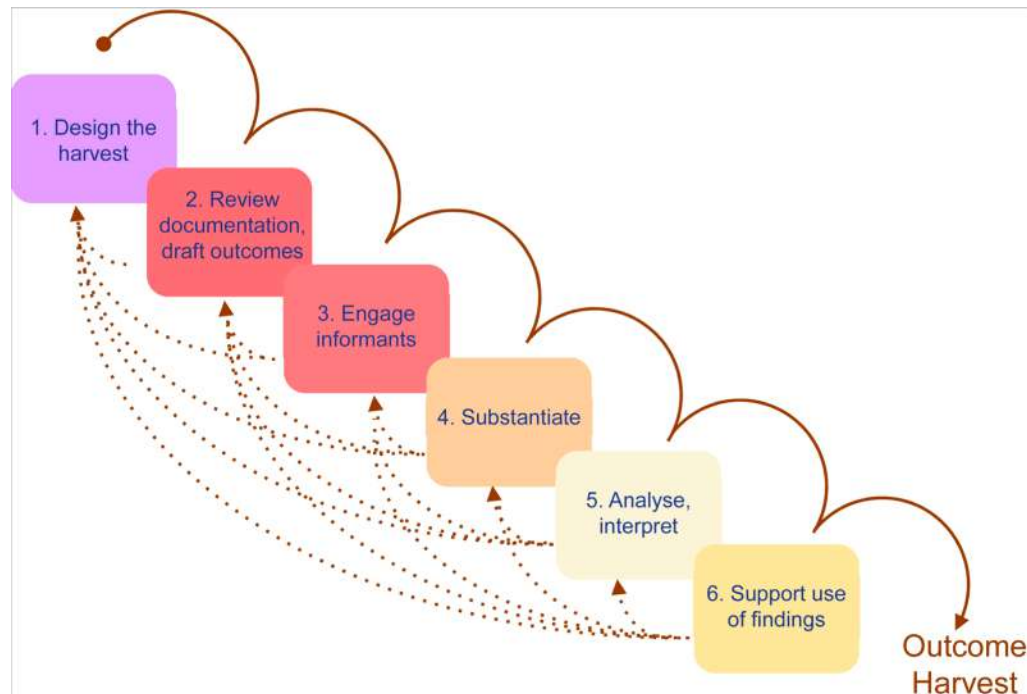
- Six iterative steps
- Outcome as a verifiable change in an actor (practice, behavior, attitude, policy)



*What has changed? In who? When?
Where?*

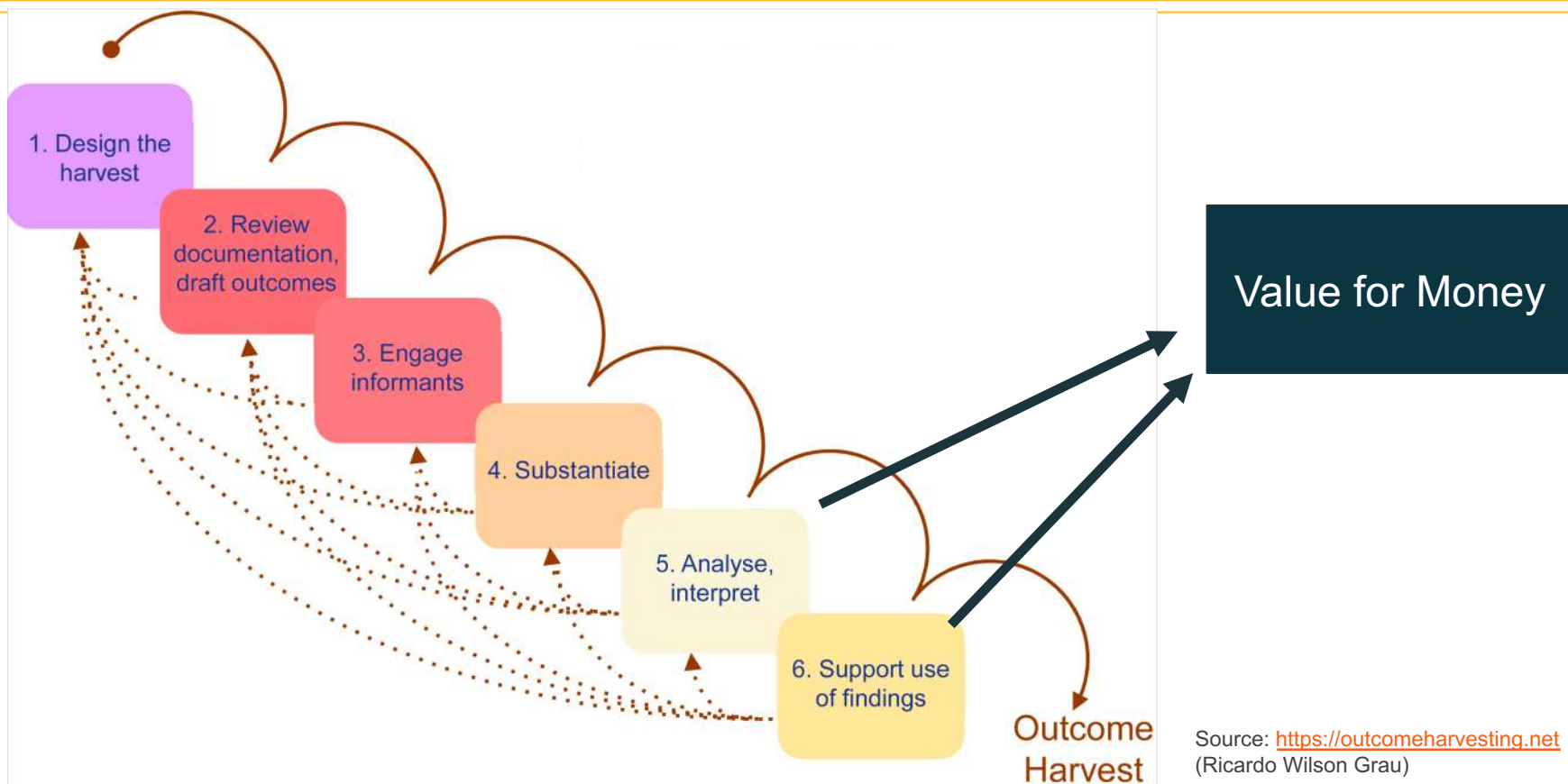
Is this change significant and why?

How have we contributed to it?



Source: <https://outcomeharvesting.net> (Ricardo Wilson Grau)

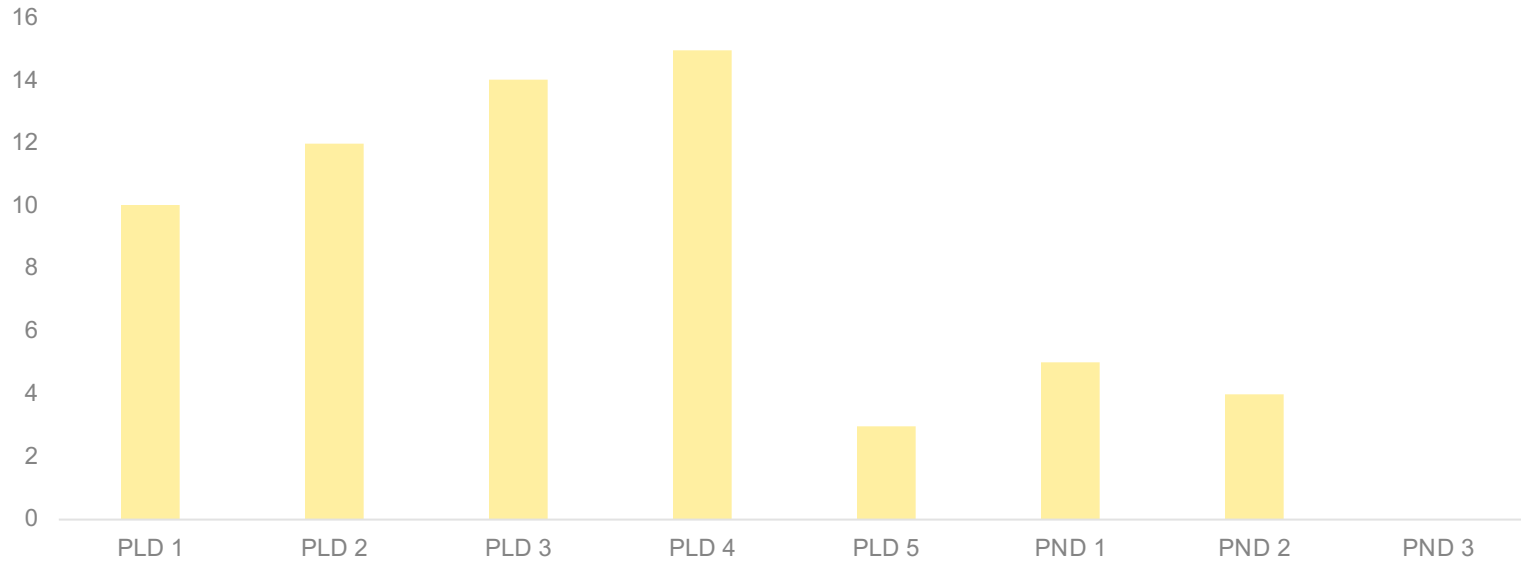
Linking OH and VfM



Source: <https://outcomeharvesting.net>
(Ricardo Wilson Grau)

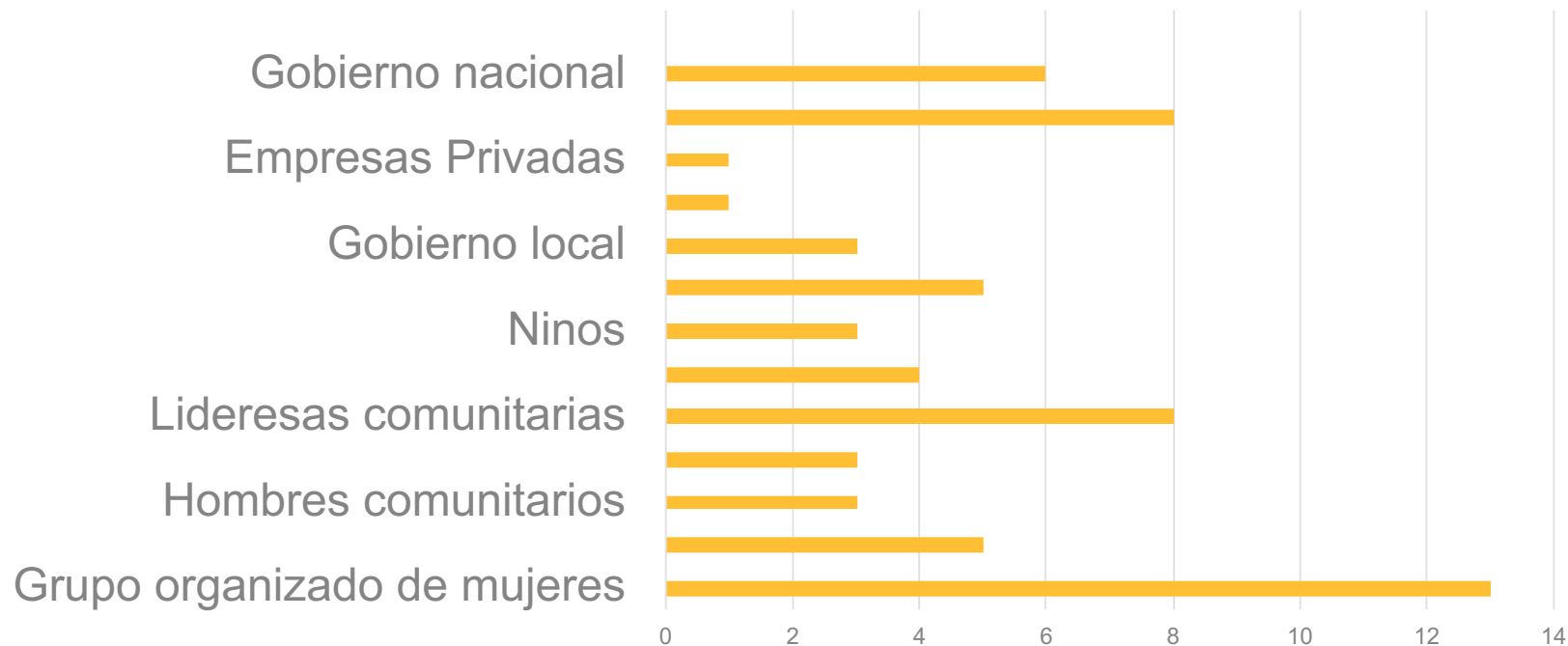
OUTCOMES PER PROGRAMME

Outcomes per programme



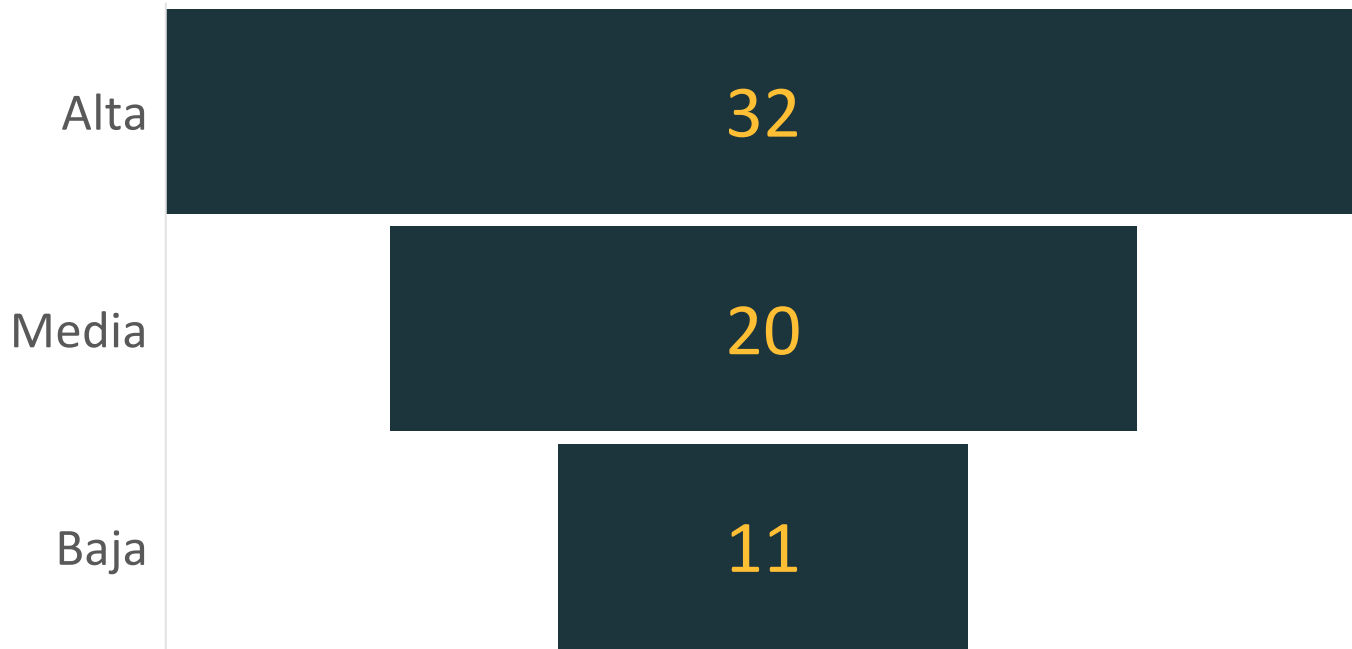
SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES PER ACTOR

Numero de alcances por actor



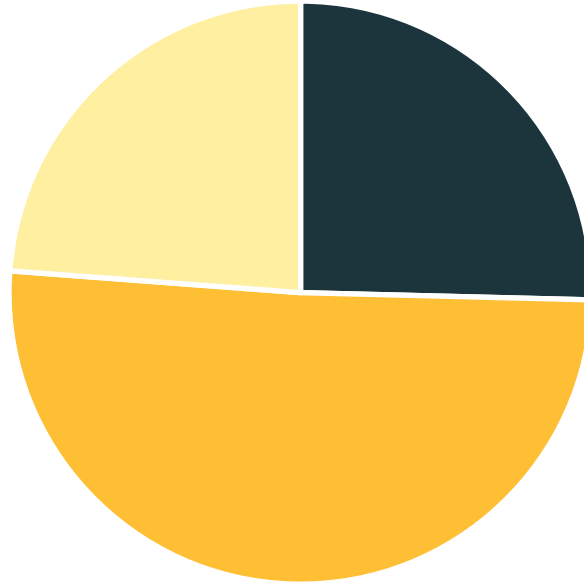
OUTCOMES PRR SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL

Numero de alcances por significancia



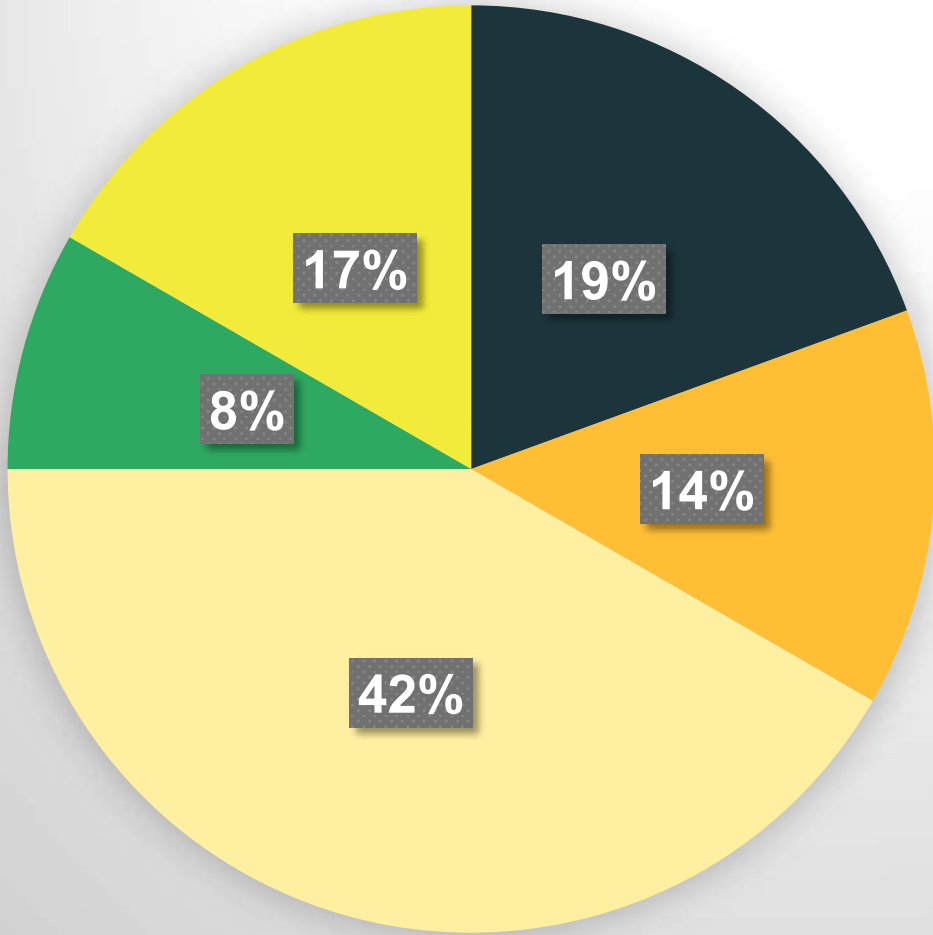
OUTCOMES PER CONTRIBUTION LEVEL

Numero de alcances por nivel de contribucion



■ Alta ■ Media ■ Baja

SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES PER THEMATIC AREA



- Violence against women
- Women's economic empowerment
- Natural Resources Management
- Human Rights Defenders
- Community Projects
- Other

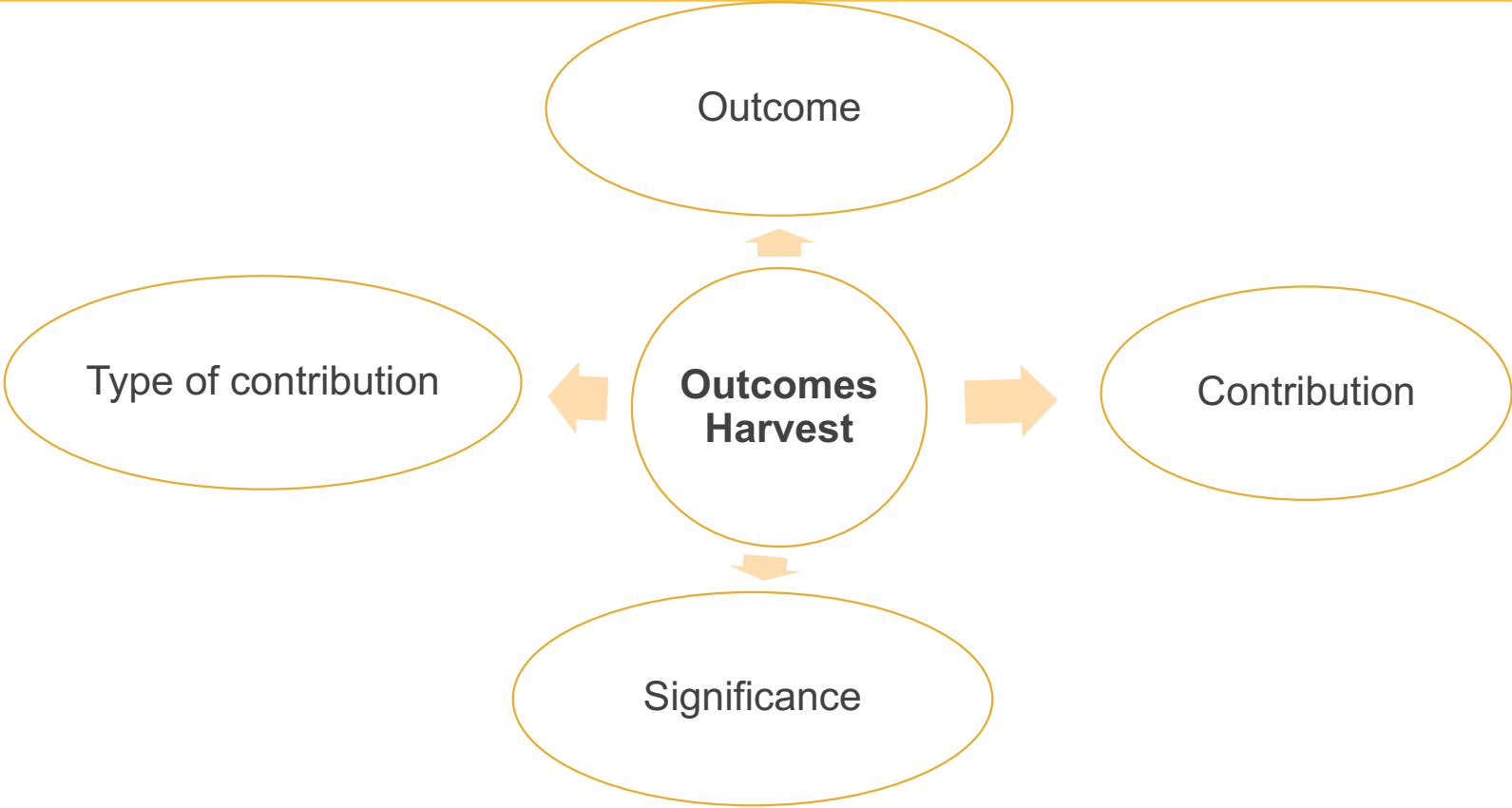
Integrating VfM: Our M&E questions

- Which **actors** have we influenced?
- What **changes** have occurred that we have contributed to?
- Which **investments** are working and which are not (contributing to change)?

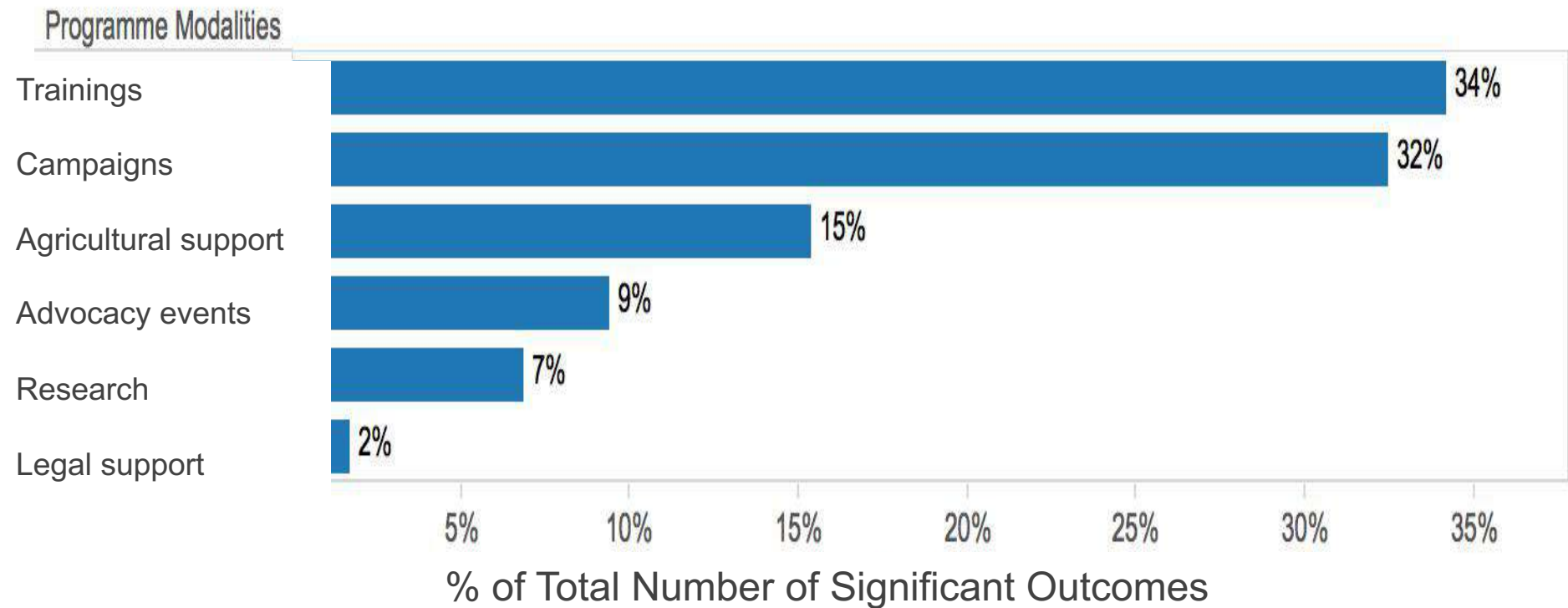


Source: <https://www.traffic.org/site/assets/files/1851/sbcc-me-good-practice-guidelines-2018.pdf>

The data



SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES BY CONTRIBUTION TYPE/MODALITY



Preparing for the VfM Analysis

Type of contribution:

- Trainings
- Campaigns
- Agricultural support
- Advocacy events
- Research
- Legal support

Investment:

- 10,000
- 5,000
- 15,000
- 2,000
- 20,000
- 30,000

Investment Level:

- Medium
- Low
- Medium
- Low
- High
- High

Analysing the VfM

Miracles happen!

Type of Contribution with most significant outcomes

There is value!

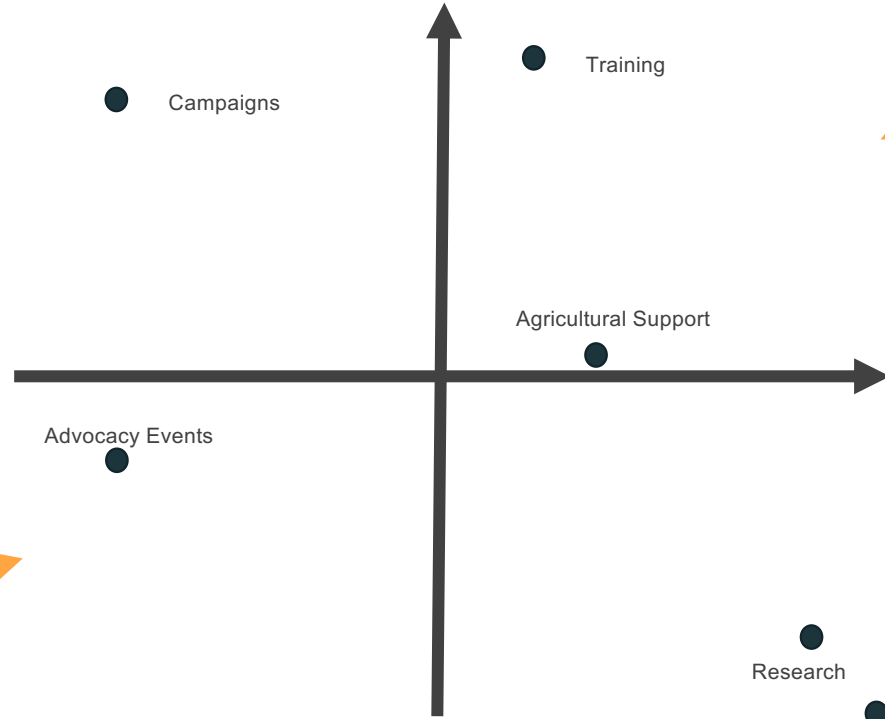
Low Investment

High Investment

No pain no gain!

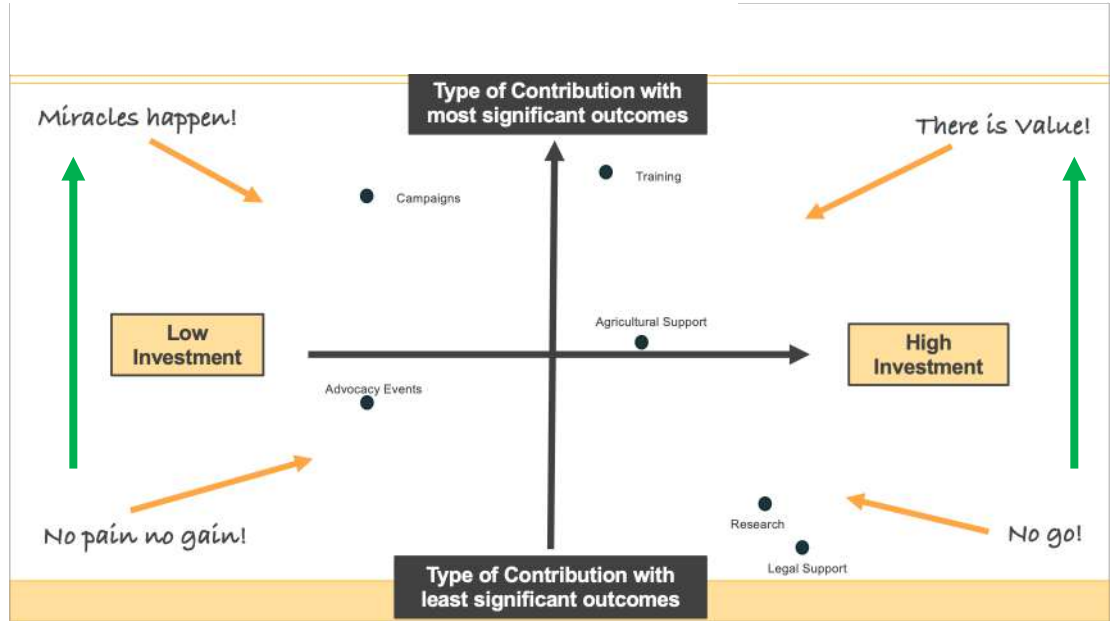
No go!

Type of Contribution with least significant outcomes



Supporting the use of the findings

- What do we drop?
- What do we strengthen?
- How do we change the resource allocation?
- Where and how to we changes strategy and tactics?
- How do we adapt to what is really happening?



Conclusions

The opportunity:

- OH as the input for the analysis of the value
- Adding the investment in the analysis allows to question what a programme is doing
- Give voice to people
- Simple tools that can be used internally
- Foster learning about what is changing
- Integrate in planning cycles
- Use to make strategic decisions
- Question ideological models



Photo: <https://businessadvice.co.uk/franchising/a-z/franchising-a-z-o-is-for-the-opportunity/>

Resources

Learning Paper. Value for Money in ActionAid: Creating an Alternative.

https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/actionaid_value_for_money_creating_an_alternative.pdf

Toolkit. How to do participatory VfM Assessments.

<https://1drv.ms/w/s!AvG7pZCxVCbngZh22pOZeDB1sUC1A>

Blog. Time to do value for money in international development differently?

<https://www.ids.ac.uk/opinions/time-to-do-value-for-money-in-international-development-differently/>

Blog. Out of the Box Consulting.

<https://www.obconsulting.co/blog>

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THANK YOU

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