

Lessons learned from a portfolio-level evaluation in Nigeria and DRC:

The Family Planning Country Action Process Evaluation (FP CAPE)

Sian Curtis^{1,2}, PhD; Meghan Corroon¹, MURP, MPH; L. Lin Ong¹, PhD

¹Family Planning Country Action Process Evaluation project, Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, ²Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

1 FP CAPE evaluation purpose & goals

BMGF investment portfolio of FP initiatives in the DRC and Nigeria

Investment portfolio



Complex and dynamic portfolio to evaluate, existing evaluation approaches considered



Synthesize real-time evidence how/why the portfolio may be driving change



While there is a growing literature that discusses complexity in evaluation, there are currently few examples of applications of evaluation approaches. This project:

- ▶ Addresses the needs of funders and program strategists
- ▶ Examines entire portfolios of programs
- ▶ Works prospectively through time
- ▶ Provides actionable, real-time synthesized findings

2 Approach

Traditional program evaluation approaches are inadequate to understand complex and changing portfolios of interventions and how they may achieve transformative and sustainable changes in outcomes.

Additionally, there is an ever-pressing need for decision-makers to make sense of the profusion of individual project evaluations, data sets, new methods etc. to make decisions in real time.

The resulting evaluation methodology has been implemented for approximately 2 years in both countries. The evaluation uses primarily existing data complemented by small-scale, mainly qualitative data collection.

Images from annual meeting and data collections



3 Theory of change, organizing framework

FP CAPE's research questions are based on a theory of change that defines and monitors causal linkages, starting with portfolio investments and moving to increased national mCPR. This acts as a starting point, an organizing framework to help stakeholders use the evaluation.

National/state level development

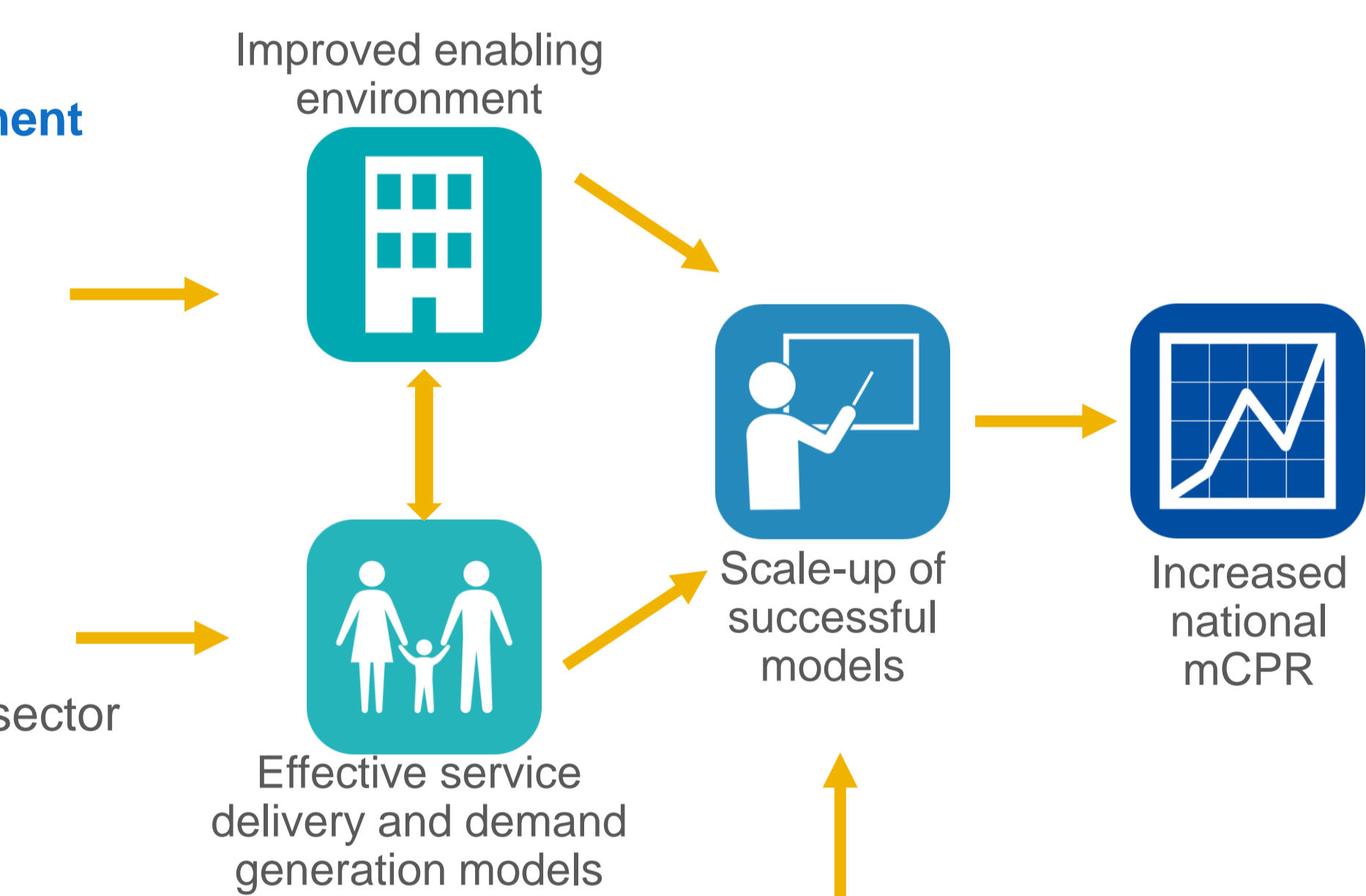
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Government of Nigeria management capacity
- ▶ Data generation and use

Model testing and learning

- ▶ Demand generation models
- ▶ Service delivery models
- ▶ New method through private sector

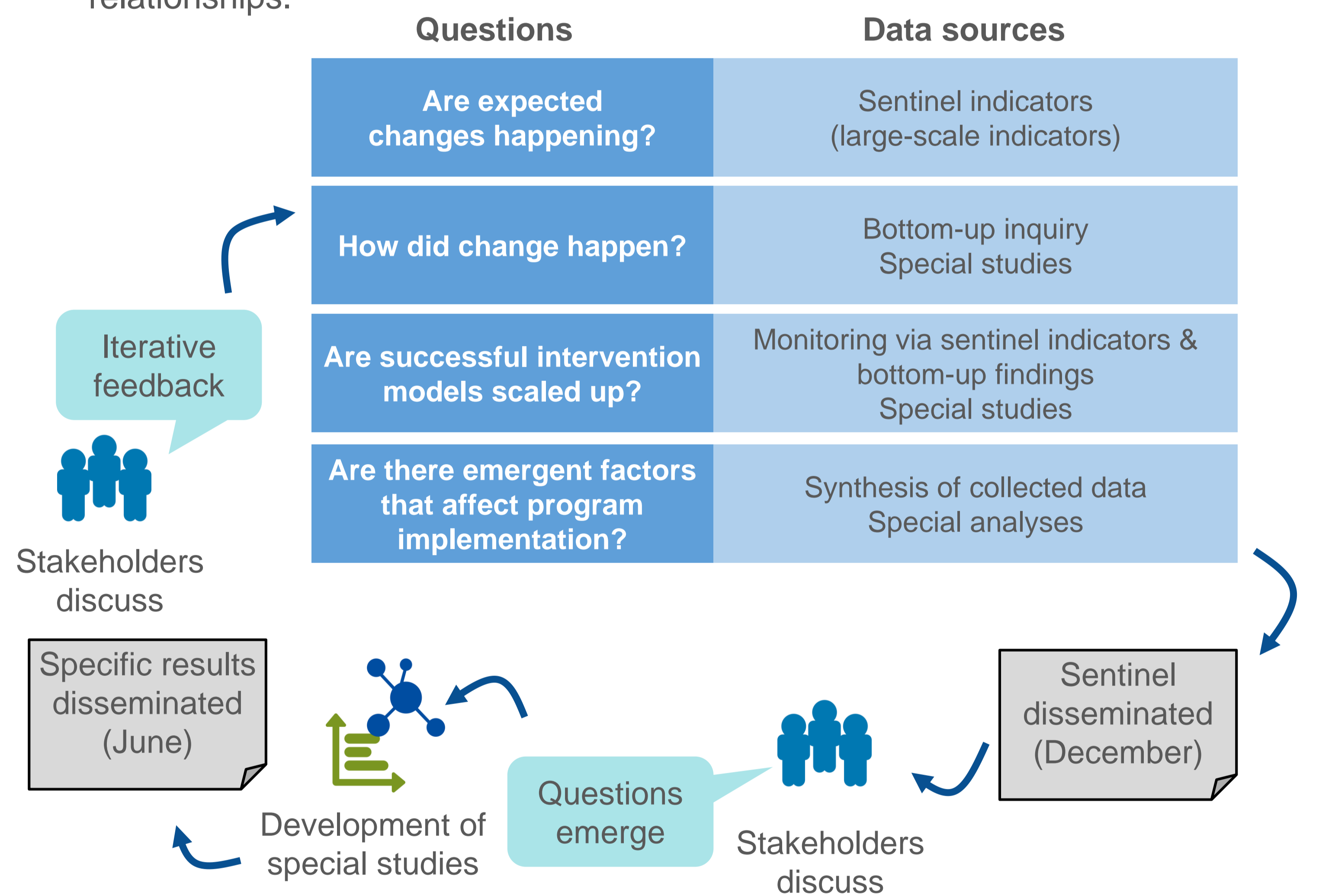
Replication & Scale-up

- ▶ The Challenge Initiative
- ▶ Scale up of Sayana® Press nationally



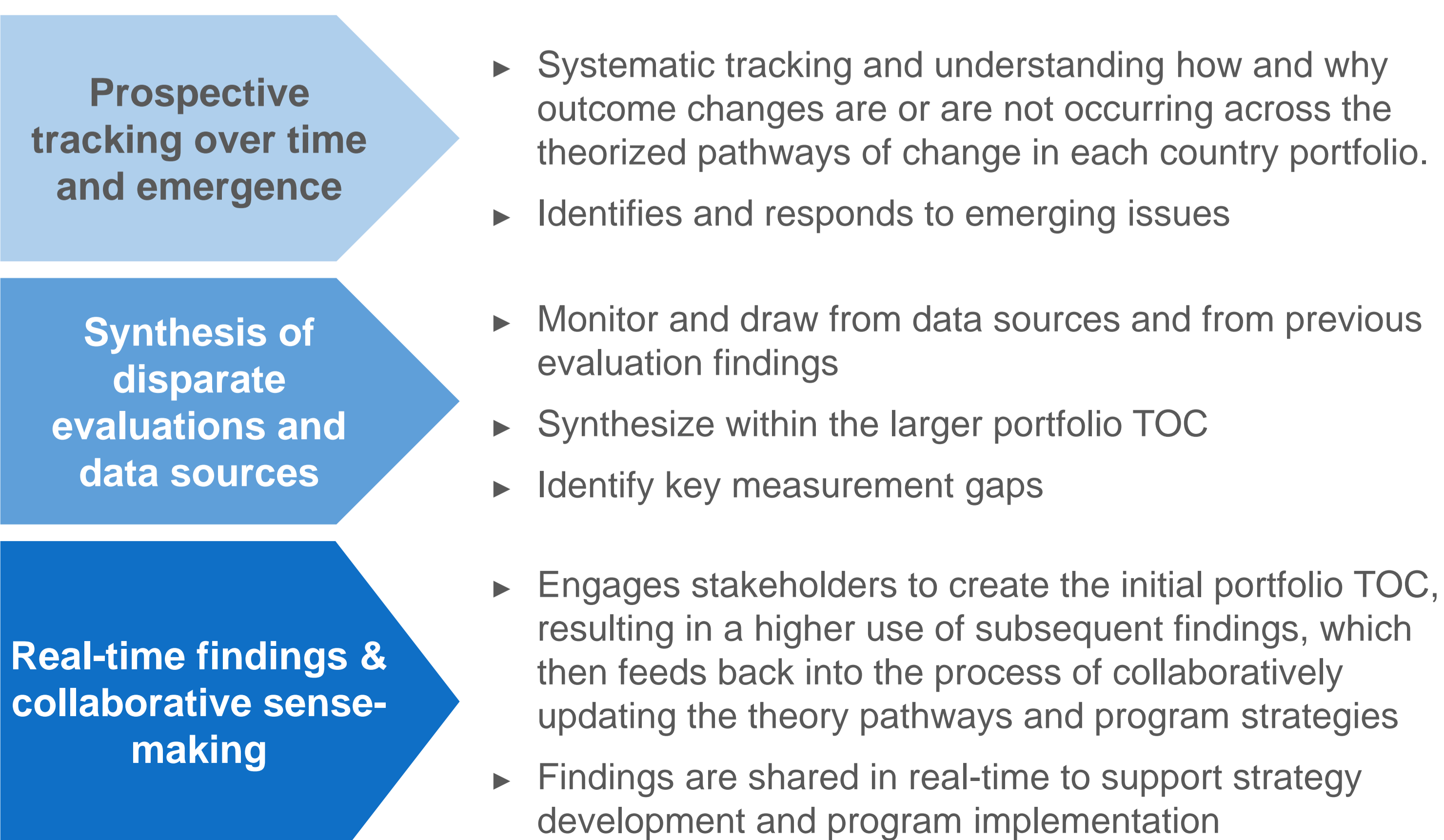
4 Iterative evaluation approach

FP CAPE balances rigor and pragmatism to dynamically evaluate this portfolio. The rhythm of the project is driven by data availability and stakeholder relationships.



5 Advantages to this evaluation approach

One unexpected by-product of this evaluation approach was enhanced program, donor, and government coordination to clarify goals and strategies.



6 Reflections on methodology

Factor	Pros	Cons
Heavy input into Theory of Change	▶ Heavy input on the initial TOC resulted in high level of appropriation and use of results	▶ Takes time ▶ Less technical "precision" in the TOC and critical assumptions.
Evaluating a large number of investments	▶ Reflective of system reality ▶ Portfolio level is new	▶ So many moving pieces! ▶ Level a challenge ▶ Rely on a lot of internal systems to detect key changes/events
Interdisciplinary/novel methods	▶ Interesting – putting pieces together ▶ Technical exchange and learning within the team	▶ Higher risk – donor needs to accept that ▶ Different language across disciplines ▶ Risk of confirmation bias with some methods
Prospective & Iterative	▶ Dynamic and adaptive –lots of opportunity for creativity	▶ No "FINAL" answer – "what we know now" ▶ Requires continuous strategic assessment and prioritization