

## IMPROVING IMPACT WITH KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT



A WEBINAR ORGANISED BY NEXUS EVALUATION LTD

29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023



## INTRODUCTION

We organised this event with funding from Novo Nordisk Foundation and support from The Network for Advancing and Evaluating the Societal Impact of Science (AESIS Network) for 3 main reasons:

1. Knowledge management is often not well known, understood nor used systematically to improve organisational learning, effectiveness and impact
2. Research, Evaluation and knowledge management overlap and complement each other, yet silos working is still the norm.
3. Often people think of knowledge management as a specific type of activity, but there are so many tools, approaches and ways to implement it.

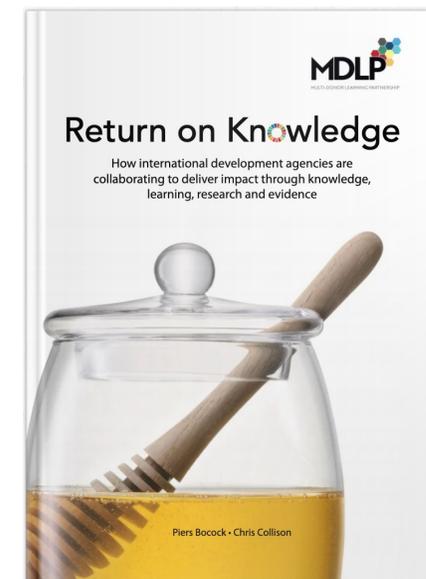


## INTRODUCTION

Our hope is that by the end of this webinar we can give you:

- A good sense of what knowledge management is
- With some practical examples that demonstrate the variety of ways in which it can be used to improve learning, effectiveness and impact
- And to help break the silos between KM, research & evaluation

To do that, we have designed the session around a new book called “[Return On Knowledge](#)” which has contributions from nine of the world’s most influential agencies. The book is a synthesis of stories, examples and insights that demonstrate where and how KM practices have made a positive impact on strategy and programming.





## WEBINAR HOST & GUEST SPEAKERS' PROFILE



**Yulye Jessica Romo Ramos** is the Founder/Director of [Nexus Evaluation LTD](#), a consultancy company that maximises social impact and results for clients with the use of systemic, culturally-sensitive and equitable approaches.

She is one of the contributors to the book [Return on Knowledge](#) (2022) and has approx.15 years' experience at the nexus between a) strategy; b) organisational development and c) monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL).



**Chris Collinson** is an independent management consultant and is director and owner of Knowledgeable Ltd. He helps improve performance by discovering and sharing what organisations know.

Chris serves as visiting faculty at Henley Business School, as an advisor to the International Olympic Committee and as a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD. Most recently co-edited [Return on Knowledge](#) (2022).



## WEBINAR HOST & GUEST SPEAKER'S PROFILE



**Kerry Albright** is the Deputy Director/Principal Adviser – Evaluation at United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). She is also a co-chair of the [Multi-Donor Learning Partnership](#).

She is a senior management level professional with over 25 years of experience of research and evaluation in international development, with a specialism in development communication, evidence-informed policy development and analysis, innovation systems, research-policy linkages, organizational learning and knowledge management.



**Stacey Young**, PhD, is USAID’s first Agency Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning Officer, leading Agency-wide knowledge and learning approaches. Dr. Young also co-chairs the [Multi-Donor Learning Partnership](#).

Through her vision and leadership, USAID developed a holistic approach to Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) which is now acknowledged as leading the field in learning and adaptive management for international development.

# Introduction to the MDLP and Knowledge Management

Chris Collison

KM/OL Consultant and MDLP Facilitator

Knowledgeable Ltd

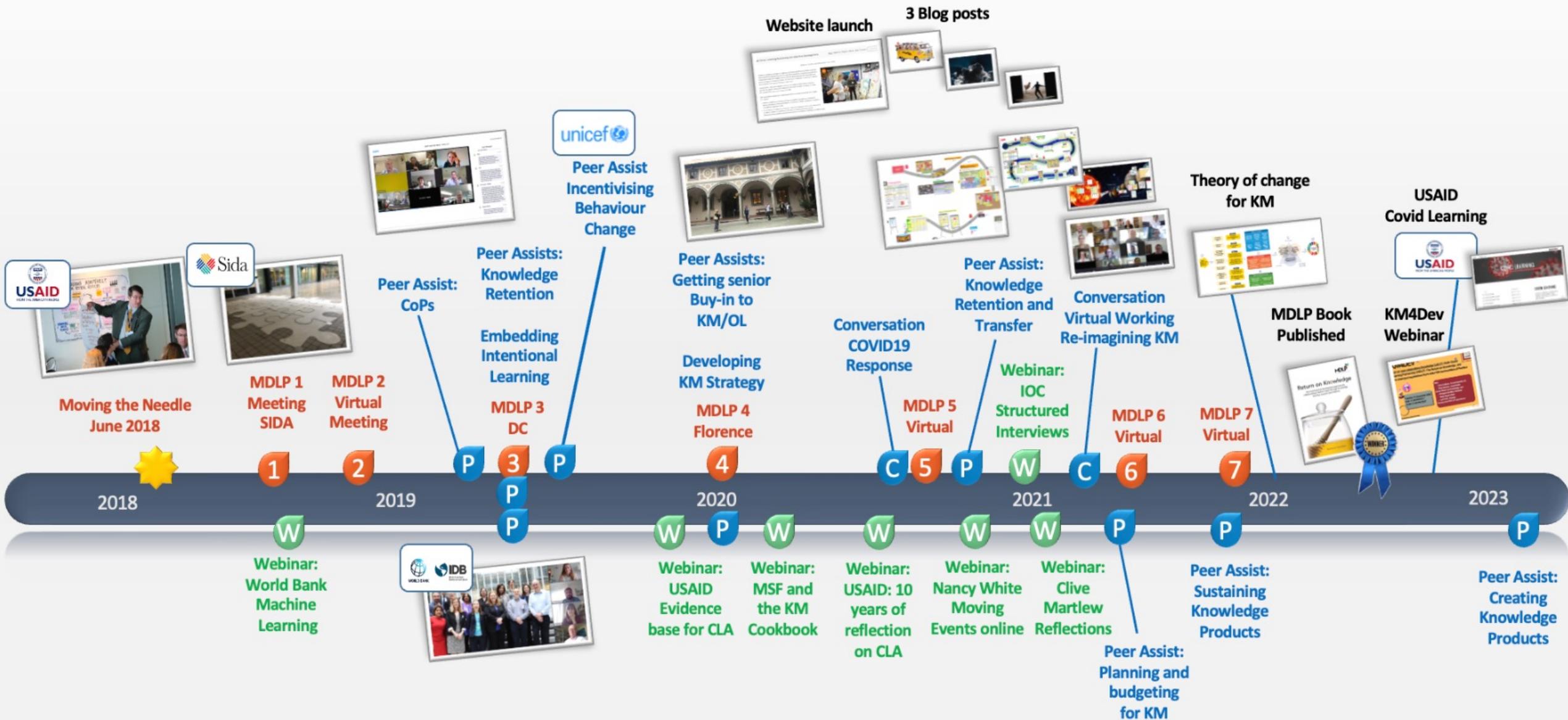
[chris.collison@outlook.com](mailto:chris.collison@outlook.com)

[chriscollison.com](http://chriscollison.com)

[mdl4dev.org](http://mdl4dev.org)



# The story so far...



-  Clive Martlew - Reflections on KM and OL in DfID
-  Fred Fulton IFRC - Learn to Change
-  IOC - Structured Interviews and Visual Learning
-  KM Cookbook, Standard + Médecins Sans Frontières
-  MDLP Use of SharePoint and Yammer - Ian Th...
-  Moving events online - Nancy White
-  USAID - Evidence Base for CLA
-  USAID CLA - Ten years of reflector...
-  World Bank Machine Learning
-  PA - Developing KM Strategy
-  PA - Embedding Intentional Learning
-  PA - Getting senior buy-in to KM, OL, Research & Evidence
-  PA - Incentivising Behaviour Change



### COVID Conversation

MDLP members met yesterday to shar...  
 chris.collison@outlook.com April 10, 2020

### IOC Webinar slides and video available

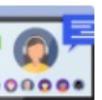
Christian Napier from the IOC shared...  
 chris.collison@outlook.com March 19, 2020

### MDLP Website live!

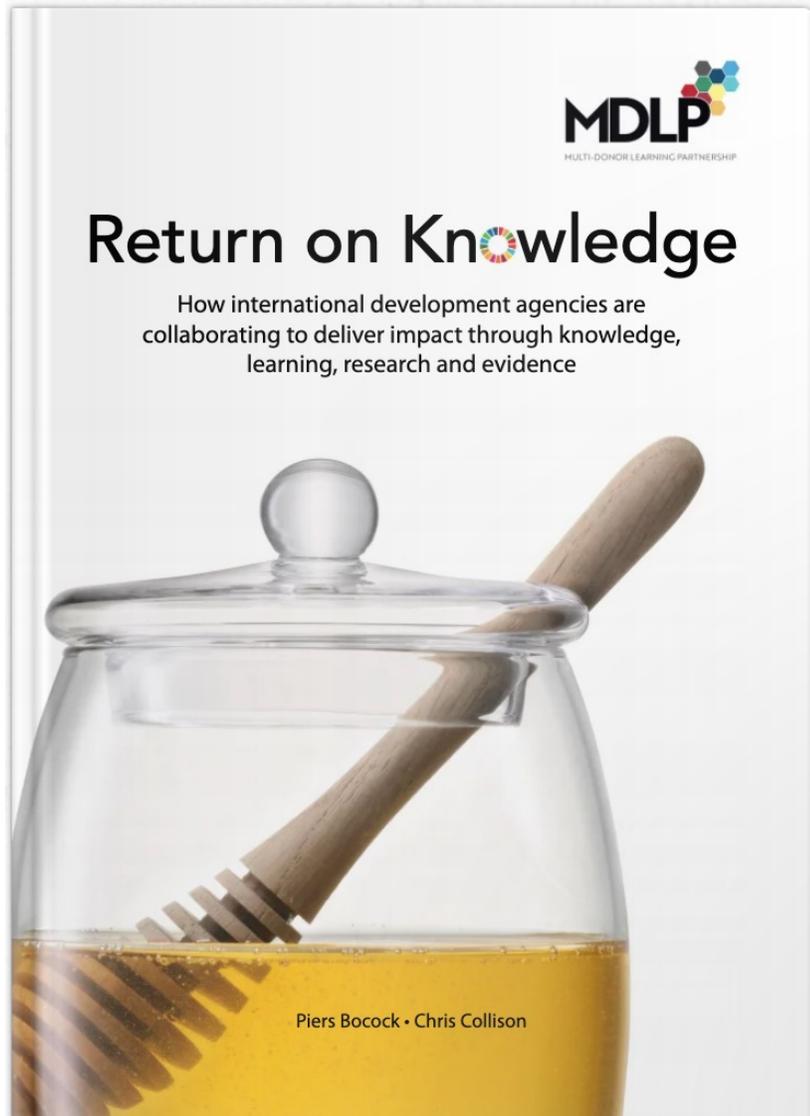
Our public presence is now up and...  
 chris.collison@outlook.com March 2, 2020

[See all](#)

### Quick links

-  Overview of...
-  MDLP Meetin...
-  Peer Assist C...
-  Webinars
-  Events Calen...
-  To Do items

# But *what do we mean by* Knowledge Management?



We're making a buzz about the first MDLP Publication...

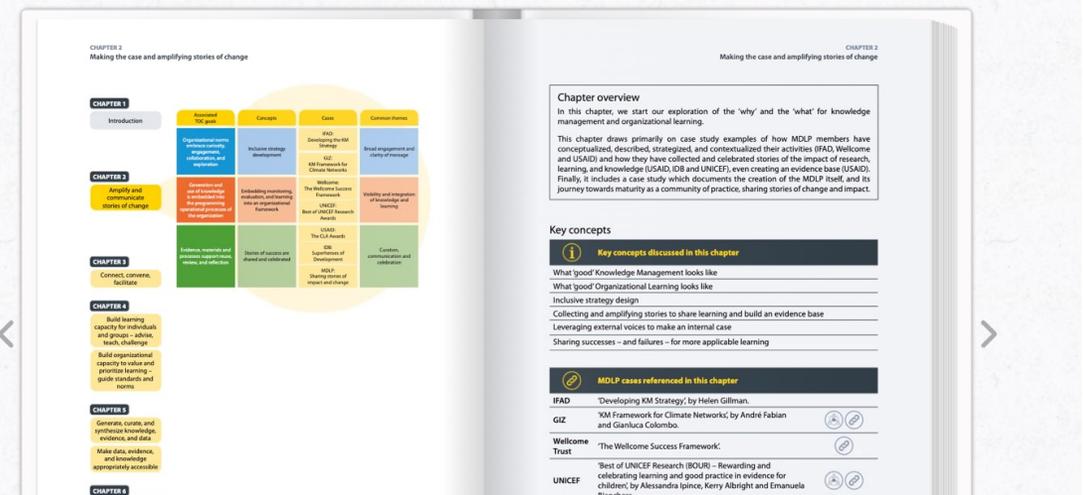


*Return on Knowledge. How international development agencies are collaborating to deliver impact through knowledge, learning, research and evidence.*

Effective collaboration around knowledge management and organizational learning is a key contributor to improving the impact of international development work for the world's most vulnerable people. But how can it be proven?



Return on Knowledge | pages: 28 - 29 / 284



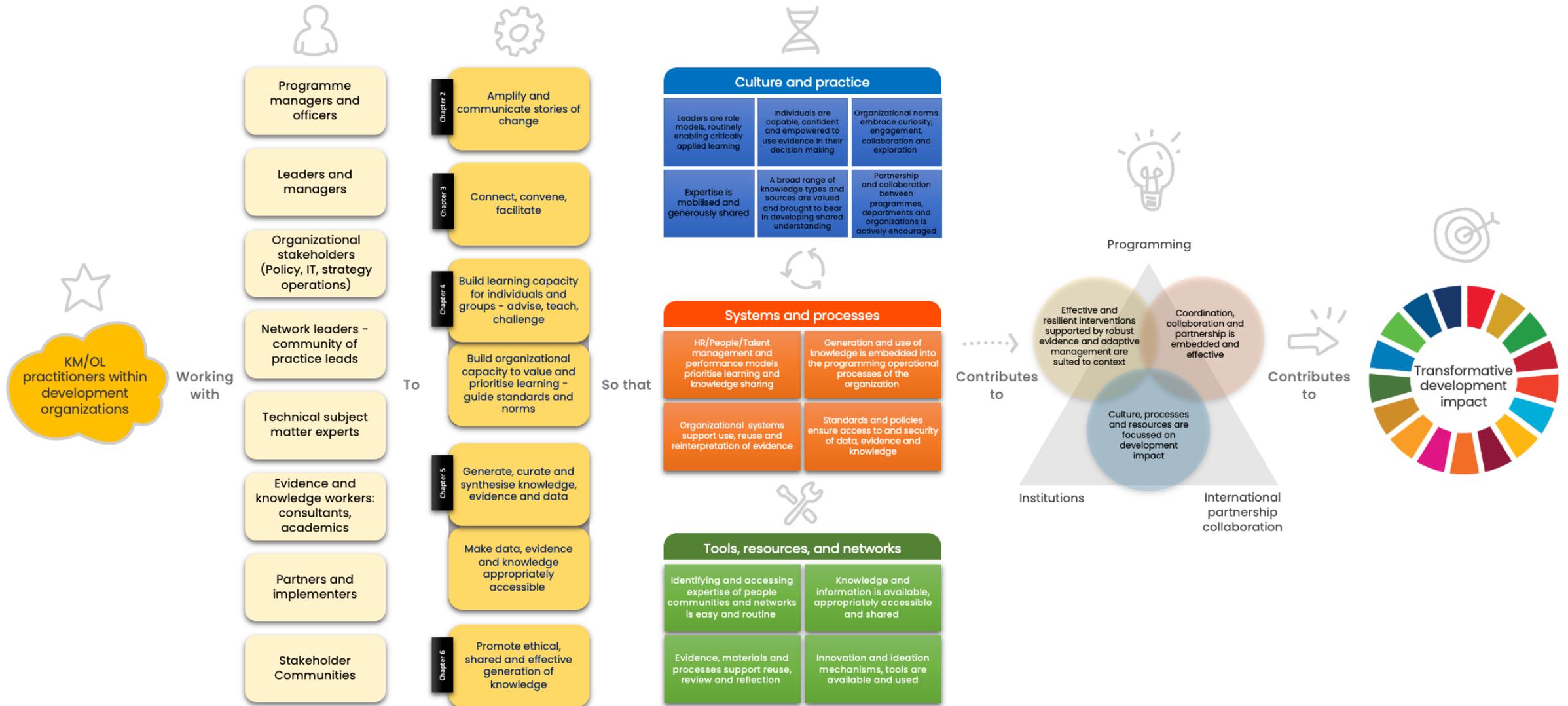
But *what do we mean by* Knowledge Management?



# Some of the key capabilities of Knowledge Management & Organisational Learning



# MIDLIP's Theory of Change for Knowledge Management & Organisational Learning





# Return on Knowledge: Three examples bridging KM, Research & Evaluation from UNICEF



Kerry Albright  
Deputy Director/Principal Adviser- Evaluation,  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
[kalbright@unicef.org](mailto:kalbright@unicef.org)



# Example One: UNICEF Evidence Survey

## CASE STUDY 20



Jorinde van de Scheur

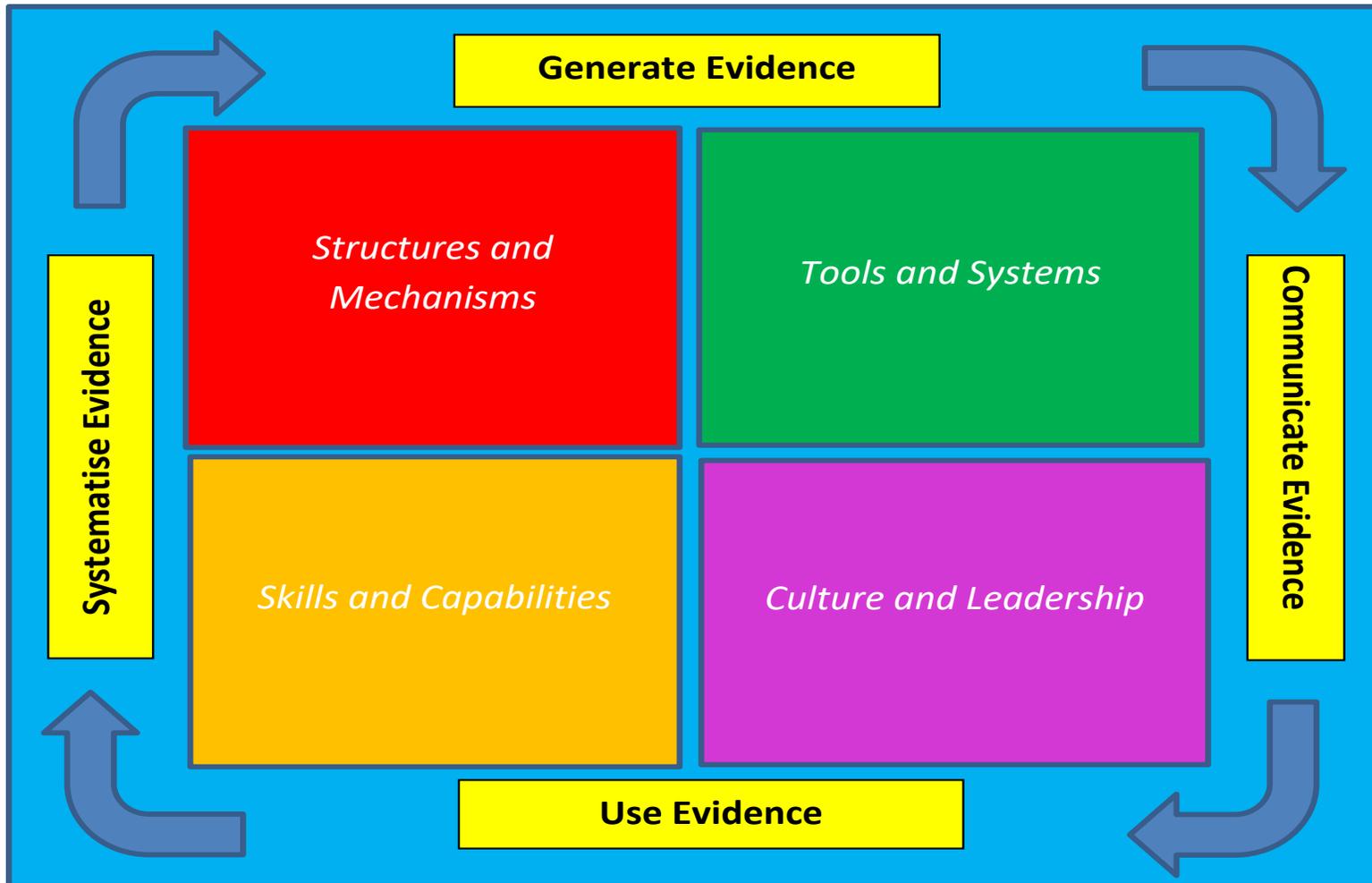


Kerry Albright



# Description of the Tool- Evidence Survey

Figure 2.1: Intervention Pillars for Strengthening an Evidence Culture at UNICEF



Framework adapted from the ICAI 2014 review of 'How DFID Learns' (2014)

Evidence Survey 2018, based on similar surveys from the World Bank and DFID

Jointly developed by UNICEF research, evaluation, data and KM functions

Evidence Diagnostic- deep dives in EAPR and ROSA, 9 webinars and virtual FGD's + 4 results webinars (with INASP/Politics & Ideas)

# Impact

- Provided an excellent **baseline of attitudes** towards, and the use of, evidence among all staff worldwide.
- Identified different experiences between offices
- Identified many **'evidence champions'**
- Led to a **learning event series about evidence on gender**
- **Regional evidence strategies** developed
- Informed UNICEF's first **Global Knowledge Management Strategy** and **UNICEF's Strategic Plan for 2022–2025**.
- Creation of UNICEF's **first dedicated Chief of Evidence position** in the India country office
- **Strengthened relationships with external partners**



# Reflections

- **Universality**
- **Senior level buy-in**
- **Survey Length**
- **Survey itself quite restrictive**
- **Staff Rotation**
- **Localized ownership**
- **Both a failure and a success**



# Example Two: Best of UNICEF Research

## CASE STUDY 4



**Emanuela Bianchera**



**Alessandra Ipince**



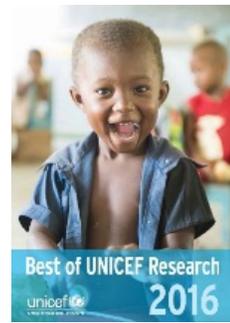
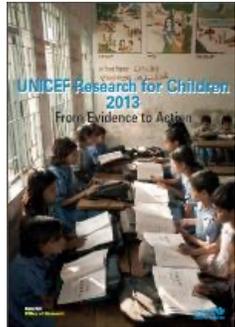
**Kerry Albright**



**Jorinde van de Scheur**



# Description of the Tool: Best of UNICEF Research



- Raise visibility of high-quality research that has successfully shaped practice, programming and policy for children around the world
- Identify research that has a high potential for further impact/scale
- Reward excellence and inspire others
- Raise external awareness of UNICEF as a ‘thinking’ organization
  - BOUR as a key incentive for conducting rigorous research within UNICEF’

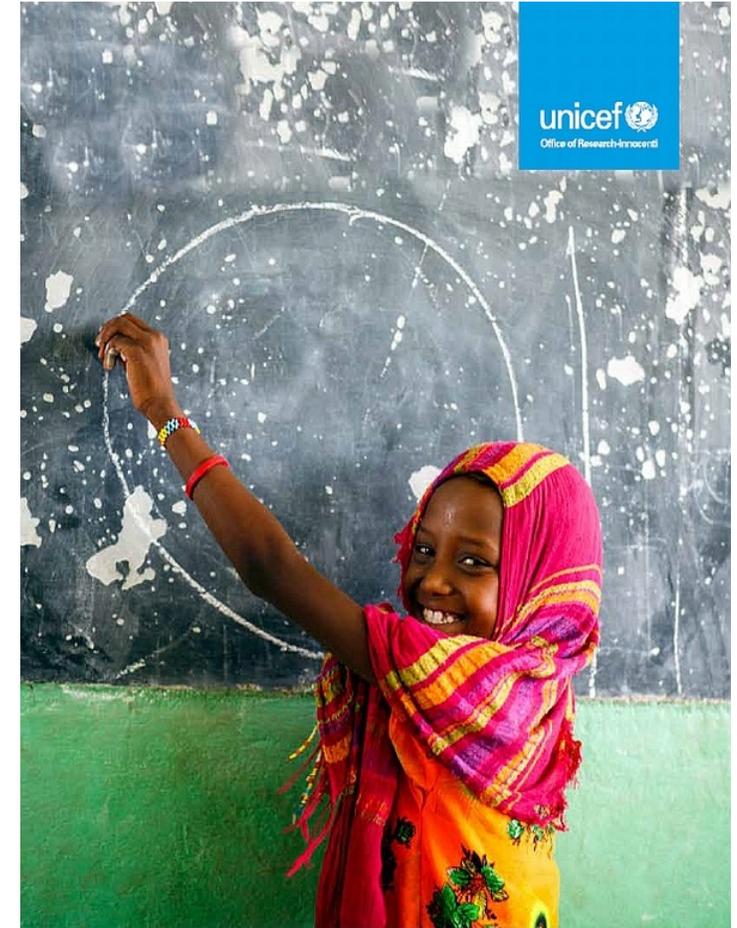
# Impact

After seven years of running the annual *Best of UNICEF Research* competition, it was decided to conduct a ‘retrospective’ analysis - looked at subsequent **research impacts of previous winners**; the **value of the competition**; and **lessons learned** as well as ‘softer’, intangible internal factors such as **enhanced advocacy, capacity, confidence** etc.

Found evidence that BOUR:

- Raised **research quality, ethical standards** and **built capacity**
- Supported those **pioneering research**
- Led to **scaling up/replication**
- Created a **knowledge database** of quality, impactful research
- Facilitated channels for engagement and uptake and **further leverage**
- Led to **additional investment**
- Supported **publishing of findings**
- Increased the **profile** of the Office of Research-Innocenti
- Recognition increased **staff visibility** and acknowledgment as experts within their offices

*“Within UNICEF, it is like a Nobel Prize – it really helps to position a subject.” (Anon)*



Best of UNICEF Research Retrospective:  
Documenting impact and lessons learned

# Reflections

- Importance of **incentives** to motivate knowledge-sharing
- It is important to actively manage potential **conflicts of interest**
- Need to **balance political** aspects as well as **technical**
- Importance of **award certificate**
- **External panel** gives credibility but also raises visibility
- Producing a **joint edition with evaluation** added value but brought challenges
- **Expensive** exercise if done properly
- Encouraging **feedback** and listening to colleagues and reviewers is crucial to keep the project relevant



# Example Three: Evidence Synthesis

## CASE STUDY 21



**Kerry Albright**



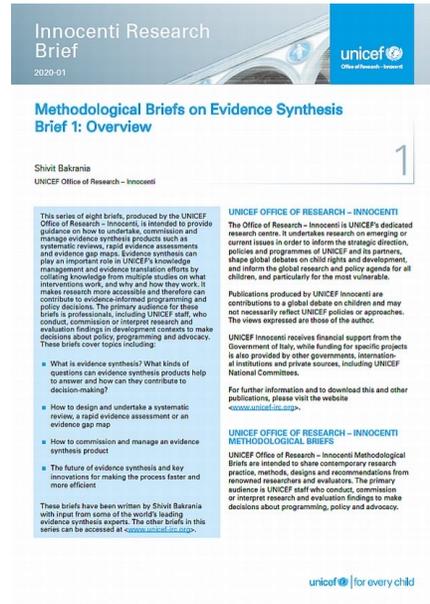
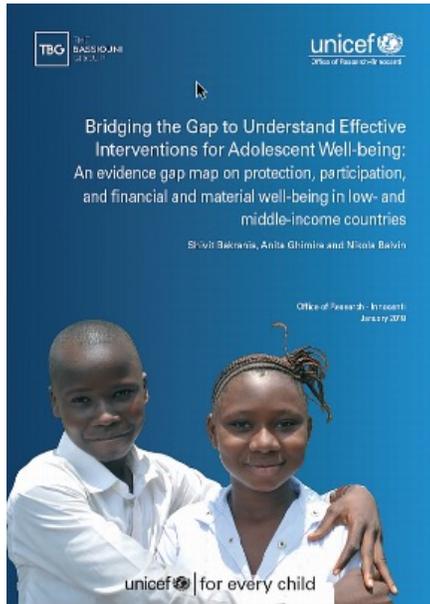
**Shivit Bakrania**



# Description of the tool: Evidence Synthesis



- Making it as simple as possible for people to access summaries of bodies of evidence a bird's eye view of the entire global evidence base to inform design and delivery of new programmes, policies and advocacy strategies
- Setting our findings amongst the broader body of evidence with independent quality assurance and transparent inclusion/exclusion processes
- Supporting time-strapped colleagues to access top level findings and 'at a glance, interactive overviews of evidence of what works (or doesn't), how, where and why'
- Helping to strategically prioritize future research themes, according to demand and existing evidence gaps (or avoid duplication of effort)



# Impact

- Became a **strategic KM tool** e.g. MegaMap as a “Living map”
- Evidence gap maps increasingly influential in **informing programming** within UNICEF
- **Evaluation** now also increasingly looking at meta-evaluation and synthesis
- Sparked interest in **regional and country level maps** across country offices
- UNICEF seen as a **positive outlier in the UN system**
- **Campbell Collaboration coordinating group**
- **COVID-END**
- Global Commission on Evidence for Societal Challenges
- New **UNEG evidence synthesis working group**
- **SDG Synthesis Coalition**



# Reflections

- **Incentives** for evidence synthesis
- Evidence syntheses are **living efforts**
- It is essential to combine this with **more active knowledge brokering** with potential users from the outset
- Need to combine with **supporting multimedia products**
- Evidence synthesis products, especially those produced at a global or regional level, are a useful starting point to thinking about ‘what works’ and the potential for scaling up success. They also need to be combined with **localized, contextual knowledge**
- There is still a need to expand learning within the sector on the appropriate **balance between formal and informal/tacit knowledge in evidence synthesis production**
- Increase UNICEF’s **capacity to conduct, manage, commission and use evidence synthesis**





unicef   
for every child

  
**MDLP**  
MULTI-DONOR LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Thankyou for Listening!  
[kalbright@unicef.org](mailto:kalbright@unicef.org)    <https://www.mdip4dev.org>



# Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA)

at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Roundtable: Improving Impact with Knowledge Management

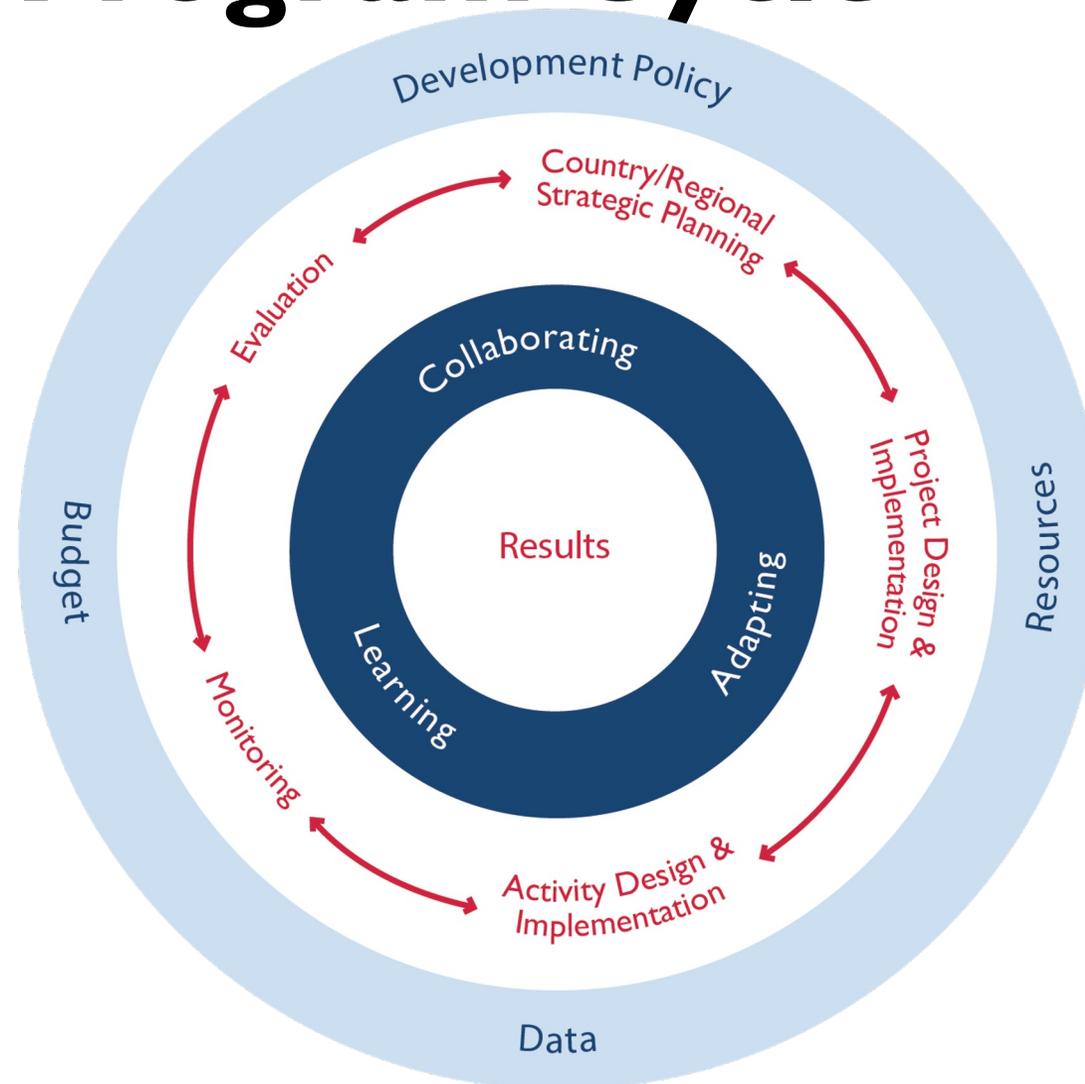
AESIS/Nexus/Novo Nordisk  
29 March, 2023

Stacey Young, USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning  
[styoung@usaid.gov](mailto:styoung@usaid.gov)



# Context/opportunity: Rebuilding USAID Program Cycle

- 2009/10
- Evaluation
- Country strategies



- Project planning, implementation
- Program monitoring
- **What else?**  
*Collaborating, Learning and Adapting*

# What often goes wrong in development...



**Data & evidence stay on the shelf—programs have weak evidence base**



**Coordination is lacking, synergy is lost**



**Outdated practices are still used**



**Programs fit poorly with the context**



**Plans & implementation approaches remain static, even as things change**



**Development is donor-driven, not country-led or community-owned**



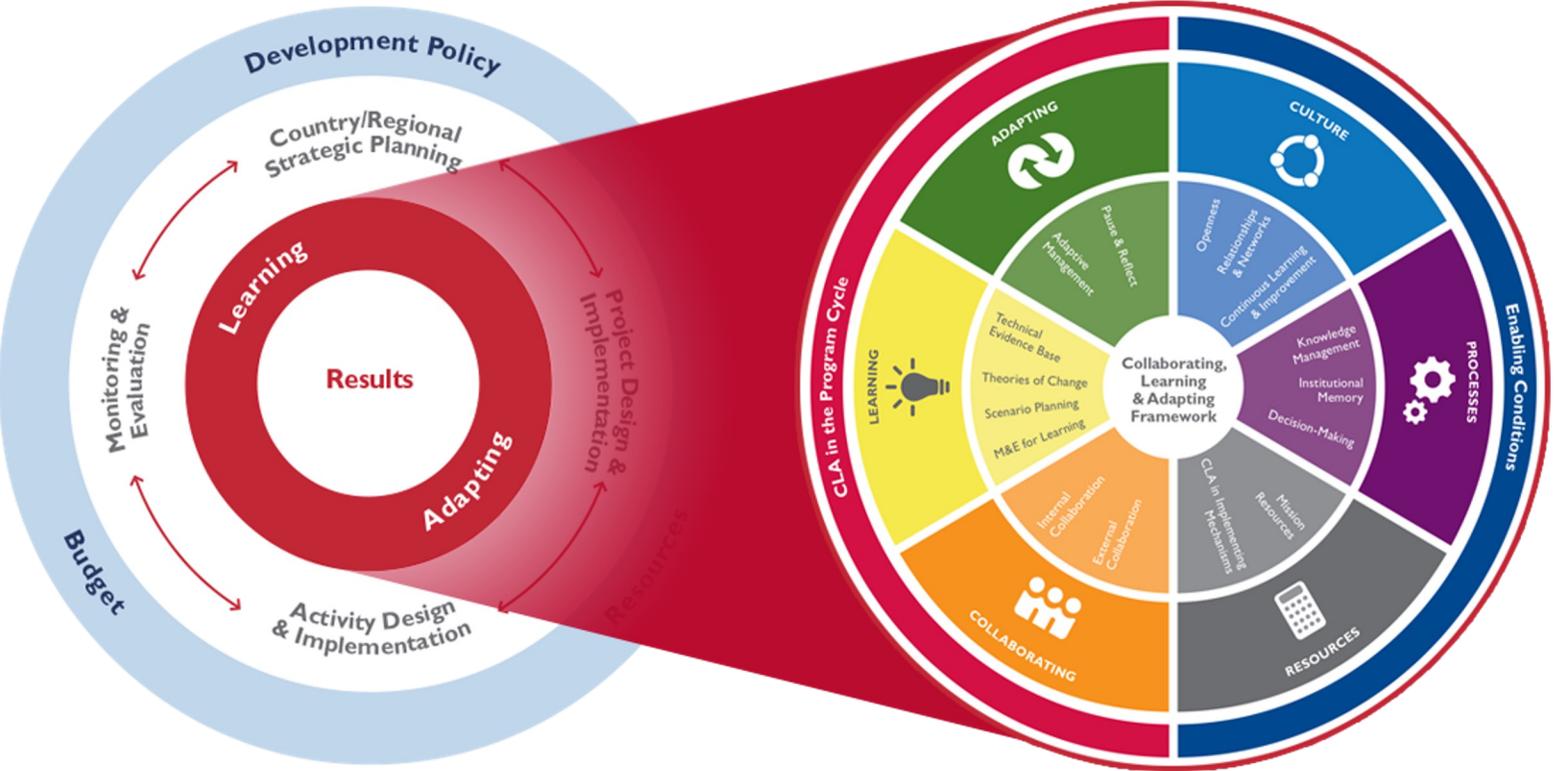
**Influence is not used strategically**



**Implementation modes assume passive “beneficiaries” vs. active development agents**

an  
help!

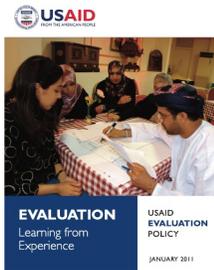
# Solution: Collaborating, Learning and Adapting integrated into the Program Cycle



# 2009-2014: Establishing CLA

2009-10

CLA co-created with **USAID/Uganda** as part of new country strategy process



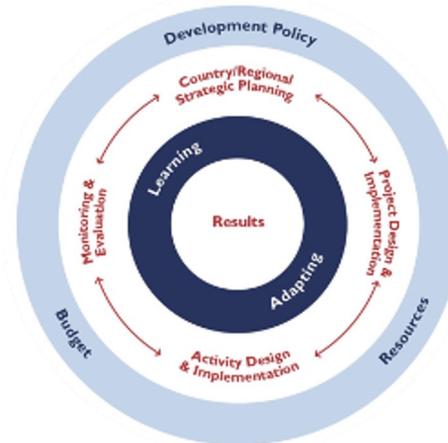
2010-2011

USAID creates **Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL)**, introduces **Program Cycle** with **learning and adapting** component.



2011-2012

USAID/PPL builds out **program cycle policy guidance** and **capacity building**.



2012-2013

**USAID Learning Lab** and ProgramNet websites launched. First mission-based **CLA Advisor**.



2013-2014

**USAID LEARN** contract awarded. Over 30 missions integrating CLA into programming to some degree.



## CLA in the Program Cycle

## Enabling Conditions

Collaborating	Learning	Adapting	Culture	Processes	Resources
<b>Internal Collaboration</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and prioritize other teams/offices for strategic collaboration.</li> <li>2. Decide how to engage those teams/offices.</li> <li>3. Collaborate with those teams/offices based on decisions reached.</li> </ol>	<b>Technical Evidence Base</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Track the technical evidence base.</li> <li>2. Apply the technical evidence base in planning and implementation.</li> <li>3. Contribute to/expand the technical evidence base.</li> </ol>	<b>Pause &amp; Reflect</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Variety and purpose of pause &amp; reflect opportunities.</li> <li>2. Timeliness of pause &amp; reflect opportunities to inform decision-making.</li> <li>3. Quality of pause &amp; reflect opportunities.</li> </ol>	<b>Openness</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sense of comfort in sharing opinions and ideas.</li> <li>2. Openness to hearing alternative perspectives.</li> <li>3. Willingness to take action on new ideas.</li> </ol>	<b>Knowledge Management</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Source various types of knowledge from stakeholders.</li> <li>2. Distill knowledge.</li> <li>3. Share knowledge with stakeholders.</li> </ol>	<b>Mission Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis CLA.</li> <li>2. Professional development in CLA.</li> <li>3. Procurement of CLA support.</li> </ol>
<b>External Collaboration</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and prioritize key stakeholders for strategic collaboration.</li> <li>2. Decide how to engage key stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Collaborate with key stakeholders based on decisions reached.</li> </ol>	<b>Theories of Change</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality of theories of change.</li> <li>2. Testing and exploration of theories of change.</li> <li>3. Awareness among stakeholders about theories of change and the learning that results from testing them.</li> </ol>	<b>Adaptive Management</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze learning from implementation and/or pause &amp; reflect opportunities.</li> <li>2. Inform decision-making.</li> <li>3. Follow through on decisions reached to manage adaptively.</li> </ol>	<b>Relationships &amp; Networks</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of trusting relationships.</li> <li>2. Exchange of up-to-date information.</li> <li>3. Use of networks across the system to expand situational awareness.</li> </ol>	<b>Institutional Memory</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to institutional knowledge.</li> <li>2. Staff transitions.</li> <li>3. Contributions of Foreign Service Nationals to institutional memory.</li> </ol>	<b>CLA in Implementing Mechanisms</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mechanism type and scope enables CLA.</li> <li>2. Budgeting.</li> <li>3. Staff composition and skills.</li> </ol>
<b>Scenario Planning</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify risks and opportunities through scenario planning.</li> <li>2. Monitor trends related to scenarios.</li> <li>3. Respond to and apply learning from monitoring.</li> </ol>	<b>M&amp;E for Learning</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevance of monitoring data to decision-making.</li> <li>2. Design and conduct evaluations to inform ongoing and future programming.</li> <li>3. Align monitoring, evaluation, and learning efforts across the strategy, project, and activity levels.</li> </ol>	<b>Continuous Learning &amp; Improvement</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff take time for learning and reflection.</li> <li>2. Motivation for learning.</li> <li>3. Use of iterative approaches that enables continuous improvement.</li> </ol>	<b>Decision-Making</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness of decision-making processes.</li> <li>2. Autonomy to make decisions.</li> <li>3. Appropriate stakeholder involvement in decision-making.</li> </ol>		

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting in the Program Cycle: CLA throughout program strategy, design, implementation and assessment

**Enabling Conditions:** organizational culture, processes, and resources that support collaborating, learning and adapting



# 2015-2020: Going to Scale

2015

2016

2017

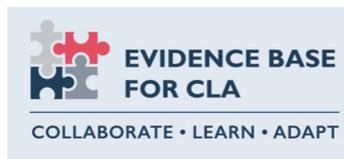
2018

2019

**CLA Maturity Tool** developed; Program Cycle ADS guidance consultations; **CLA Case Competition** launched. First **Moving the Needle** event.



Program Cycle **ADS Guidance updates** mandate certain CLA components. CLA Training developed. **Evidence Base for CLA** begins.



First Regional CLA Training; **CLA Toolkit** launched; start of **Program Cycle Learning Agenda**.



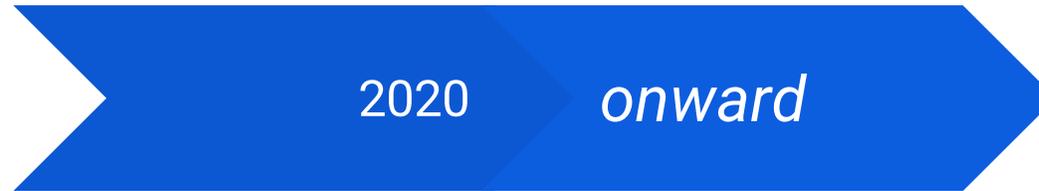
**Leaders in Learning** Podcast. First meeting of **Multi-Donor Learning Partnership (MDLP)**.



**CLA Evidence Dashboard** launched. Over 80 missions documenting CLA integration.



# Post-2020



- Continuing work to institutionalize CLA with fewer resources
- Providing Organizational Development (OD) support to key Agency priorities
- Working with partner to prototype integration of racial and ethnic equity lens

# Lessons:

1. **Manage change strategically:** Piloted with early adopters who helped refine and scale; used examples to stimulate demand; use demand to secure buy-in and resources
2. **Resources are essential for scaling:** time, funding, staff – support contract
3. **Integration vs. proliferation:** Embedded within the Program Cycle rather than establishing a parallel effort
4. **Best of both:** standard process (framework + maturity tool) → customized result
5. **Holistic approach** that addresses enabling conditions/org development
6. **Continuously cultivate leadership support**
7. Built the **evidence base** to answer questions about effectiveness and results
8. **Psychological safety** to voice the unspoken candidly is powerfully attractive
9. **Connect to what people care most about:** CLA “works” because it connects to people’s passion for doing better development

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# Thank you!

## Resource Links

- [CLA Framework](#)
- [USAID Learning Lab](#)
- [CLA Toolkit](#)
- [CLA Evidence Dashboard](#)
- [CLA Case Database](#)
- [Leaders in Learning Podcast](#)

# Tools and Resources

LEARNING LAB

PROGRAMNET

 **CLA**  
**TOOLKIT**

**CLA Training**  
Visit USAID University

**CLA Community of Practice**  
Sign Up on ProgramNet

**CLA Maturity Tool  
(Self-Assessment  
and Action Planning)**



# Podcasts, Videos and Blogs



## What is the Relationship Between Organizational Culture and Learning?

JUN 26, 2018 by PIERS BOCCOCK, STACEY YOUNG [Comments \(1\)](#)



The focus of this episode, our fourth in our [Leaders in Learning](#) series, focuses in on something we've touched on in previous episodes, particularly episode 2: what aspects of an organization's culture contribute to its learning capacity?

In this episode, as with previous ones, we'll hear clips from three of the ten thought-leaders that we interviewed for this series. They are:

- **Chris Collison**, a world-renowned independent consultant (Chris also features in episode 5)
- **Clive Martlew**, Lead for Leadership and Learning at the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) (Clive also features in episode 6)
- **Rob Cartridge**, Head of Global Knowledge at Practical Action (Rob also features in episode 5)

## Intentionally Creating and Maintaining the LEARN Culture: "Walking the CLA Talk" Part 1 of 6

JAN 23, 2017 by PIERS BOCCOCK [Comments \(0\)](#)



*This blog post is part of a USAID Learning Lab series called Working Smarter: Everyday CLA techniques to help you be more productive. The goal of the series is to share practical ways to integrate collaborating, learning, and adapting into your work.*

*Piers Boccock is Chief of Party of the USAID LEARN contract.*

As promised in my [blog from earlier this month](#), this is the first installment of a 6-part series in which I share my personal observations and application of USAID's [Collaborating, Learning and Adapting \(CLA\) Framework](#) over the first two years of leading USAID's Knowledge Management and Learning (LEARN) contract. For this first installment, we're starting with the "Enabling Conditions" side of the graphic, with a focus on creating and maintaining a team culture that supports all of our work, as it relates to the "Culture" component of the CLA Framework.

On a crisp January morning two years ago, a newly formed team of ten individuals gathered around a 30-foot faux wood conference table. Most were meeting each other for the first time, making the usual development credentials small-talk—which development firms they'd done time with, how many countries they'd been to, who knew who within the Agency they'd now be serving. A pair who had worked together previously were *Is within our smattering in their shared*



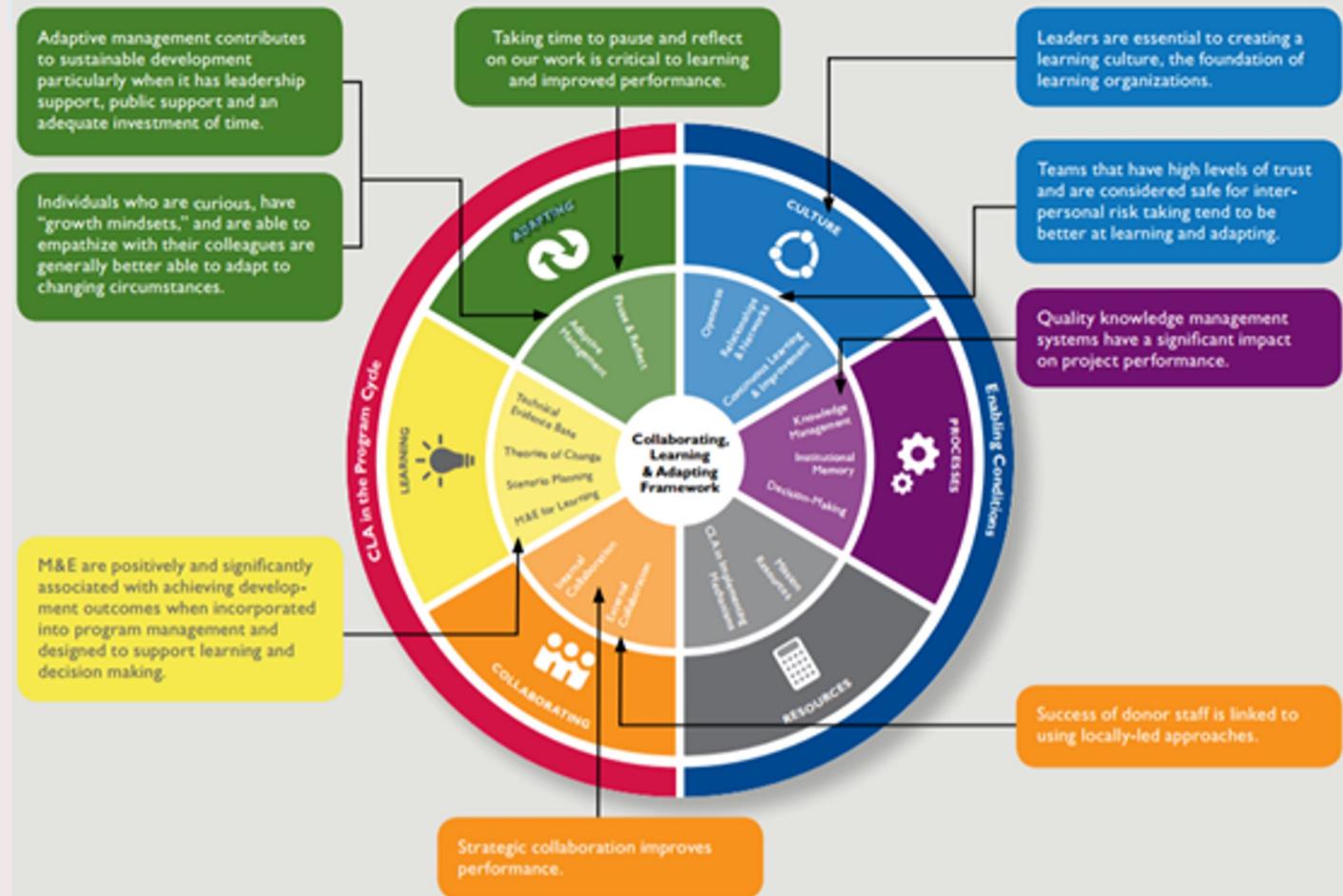
# Building the Evidence Base



EVIDENCE BASE  
FOR CLA

COLLABORATE • LEARN • ADAPT

## CLA EVIDENCE DASHBOARD






**BETTER  
DEVELOPMENT  
RESULTS**

**+ ORGANIZATIONAL  
EFFECTIVENESS**







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