

# The Theory of Change approach in practice: lessons learned in evaluating an international advocacy campaign



**Keren Winterford**

Institute for Sustainable Futures University of Technology Sydney

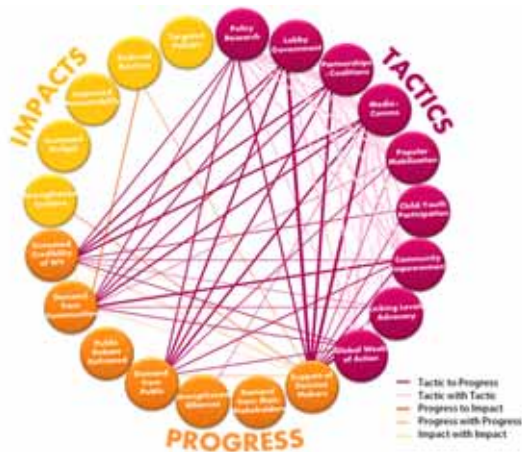
*AES15 - International Evaluation Conference  
Tuesday 8 September 2015*



# Road map for presentation



## Theory of Change



# The Evaluation Focus



# Elements of advocacy and issues for evaluation

Multiple components to advocacy work

Multiple actors do advocacy work

Responsive action to changing context

Change achieved beyond timeframe of the advocacy campaign

Defining success may differ depending on who you ask

# Elements of a theory of change approach for evaluation

- ‘Theory of change’ ....explains how an intervention (a project, a programme, a policy, a strategy) is understood to contribute to a chain of results that produce the intended or actual impacts (BetterEvaluation)
- Evaluating through Theory of Change approach focuses on extent to which chain of results have been achieved and testing the plausible causal connections between change

# Applicability of Theory of Change approach to advocacy campaigning

Multiple components to advocacy work

Multiple actors do advocacy work

Responsive action to changing context

Change achieved beyond timeframe of the advocacy campaign

Defining success may differ depending on who you ask

Contribution

Contribution analysis

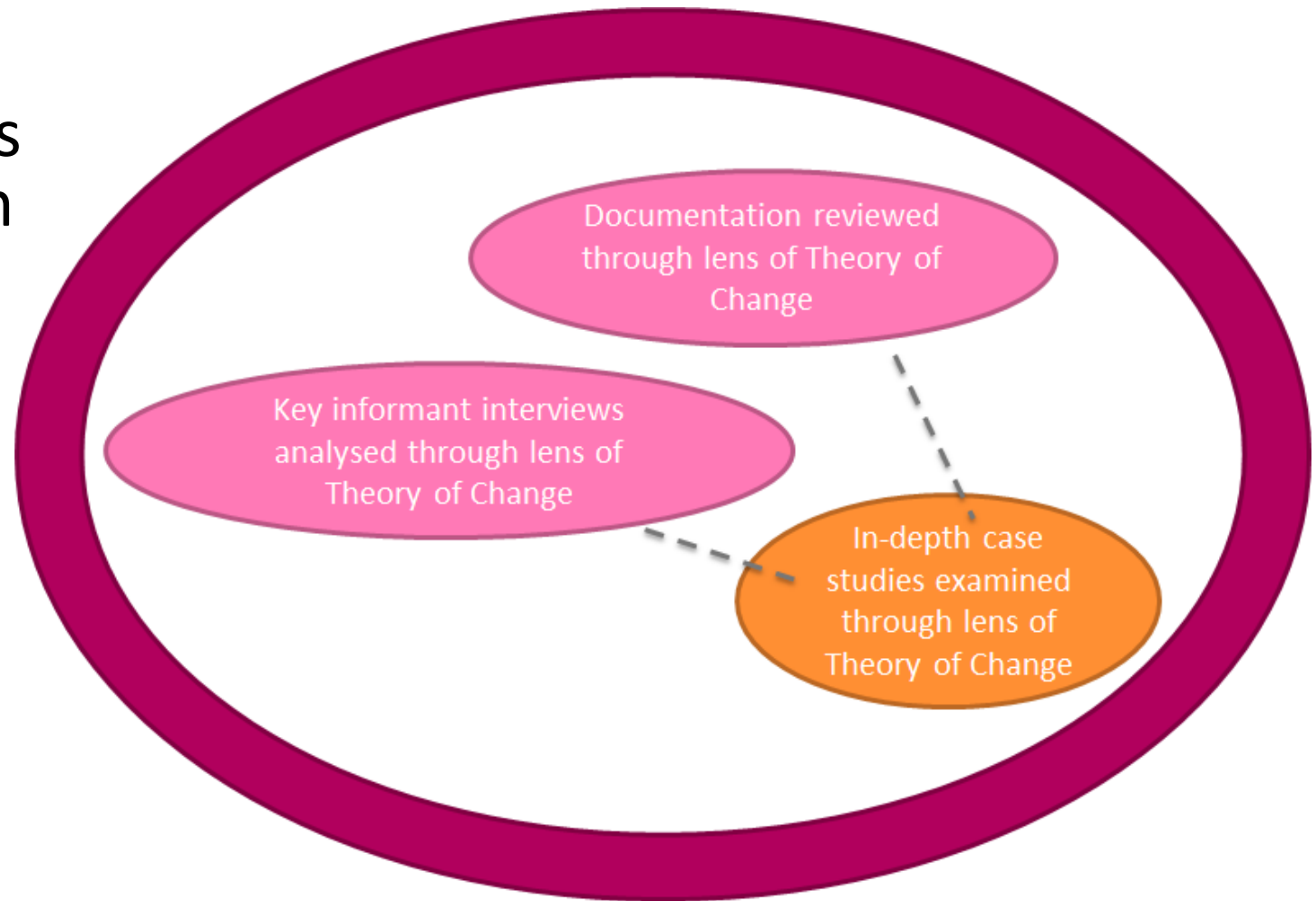
Theory of Change /  
Theory of Action

Interim measures

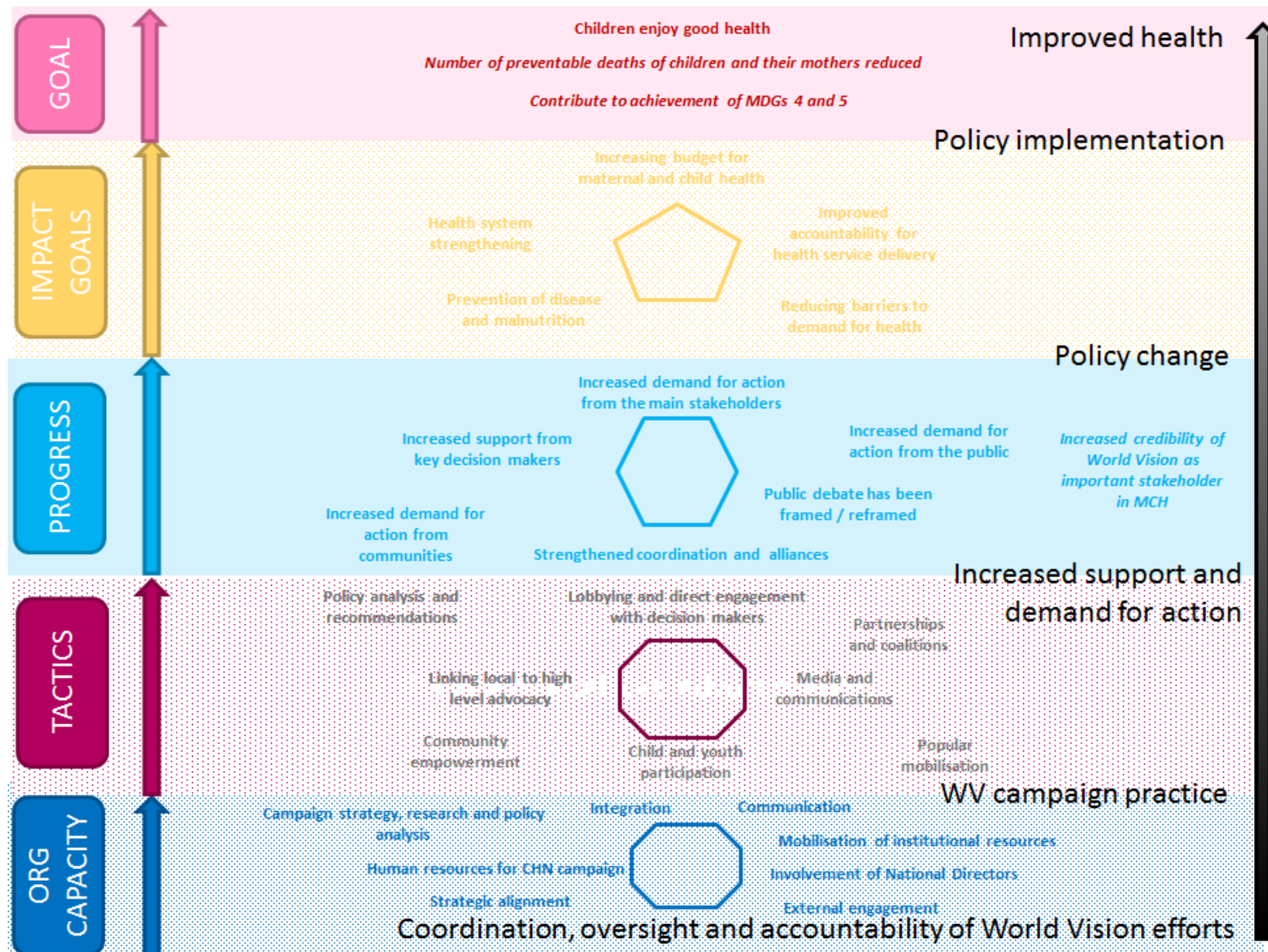
Transparency reveals  
values and reason

# Our evaluation practice to date

Use of the Theory of Change as lens through which to frame inquiry



# Use of the Theory of Change as lens through which to frame inquiry in these areas





# Our practice to date

## **PHASE 1**

- Explore the CHN advocacy campaign model
- Assess contribution of Child Health Now to World Vision advocacy capacity

*Document review*

*Interviews*

*Case studies*

## **PHASE 2**

- Assess the impact or contribution of the campaign to meeting objectives across multiple spheres of influence

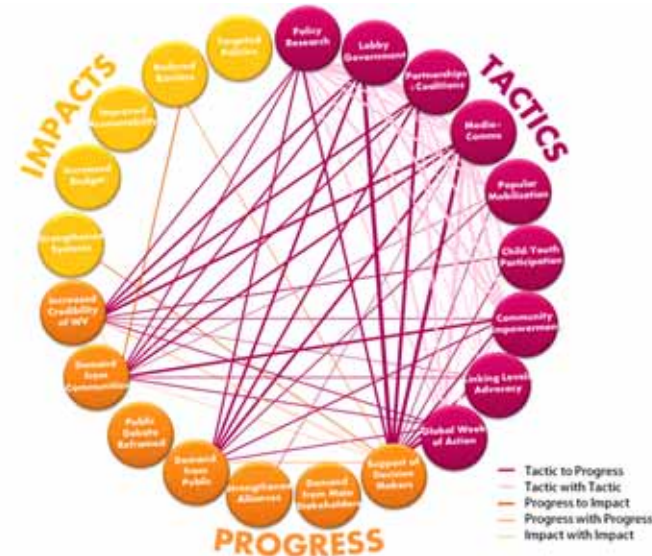
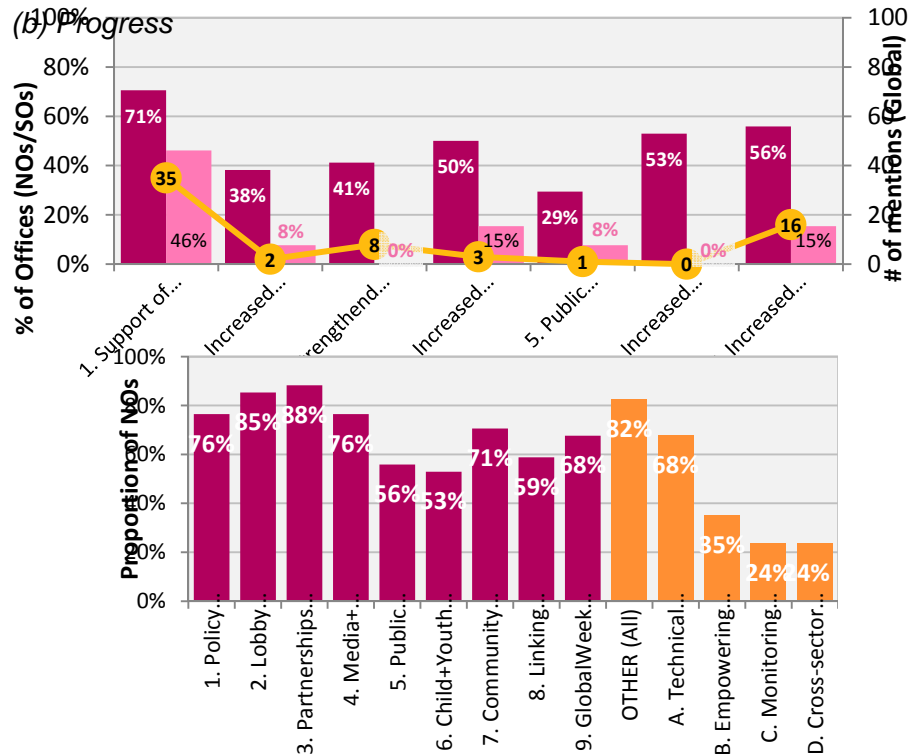
*Analysis and synthesis of locally conducted campaign evaluations*

# Lessons learned so far on the practice of the Theory of Change approach

1. Helps manage and make sense of diverse and multitude of reporting and stakeholder perceptions

# Lessons learned so far on the practice of the Theory of Change approach

- Identifying reported results is relatively easy to do
- Identifying reported linkages is relatively easy to do



# Lessons learned so far on the practice of the Theory of Change approach

1. Helps manage and make sense of diverse and multitude of WV reporting and stakeholder perceptions
2. Identifying results is relatively easy to do
3. Identifying linkages is relatively easy to do
4. Contribution analysis is more challenging!!
5. Mixed method approach works well
6. There is a need for phased approach for evaluation

# Key take homes for theory and practice of a theory of change approach

- ✓ Look outside the Theory of Change
- ✓ Explore both the reported and unreported results – how and why did this happen...
- ✓ Explore ‘what works for whom and under what conditions’
- ✓ Focus more on the detail and the methods to operationalise the Theory of Change approach in practice