RAND HEALTH

Rapid Cycle Evaluation: A Tasting Menu

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Roadmap

- Introduction and approach
- After action reviews
- Broader implications for evaluation

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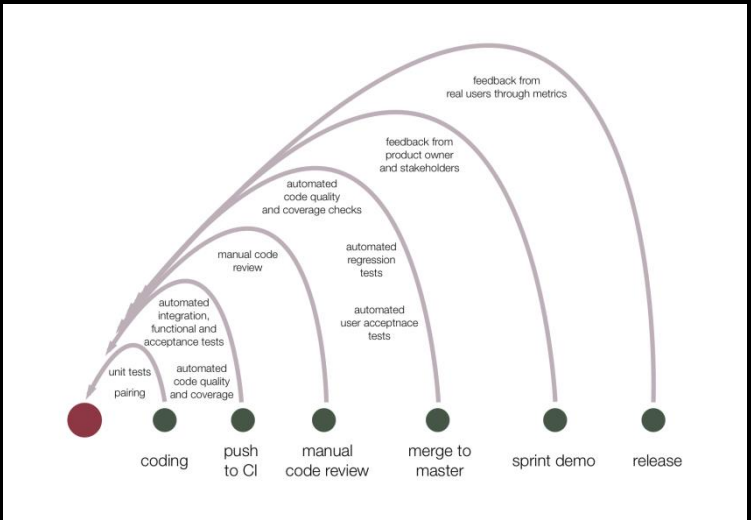
- **Introduction and approach**
- **After action reviews**
- **Broader implications for evaluation**

What Does Rapid-Cycle Evaluation Seek to Accomplish?



Shorten evaluative feedback loops

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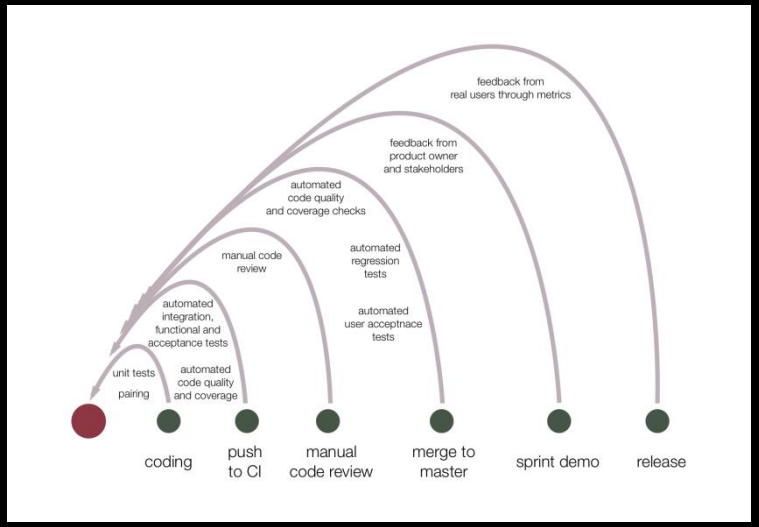
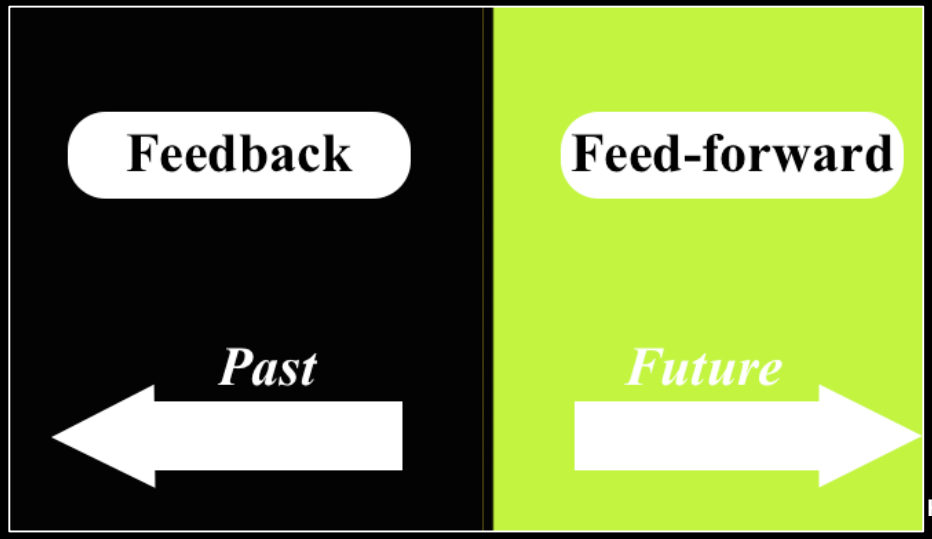


Shorten evaluative feedback loops

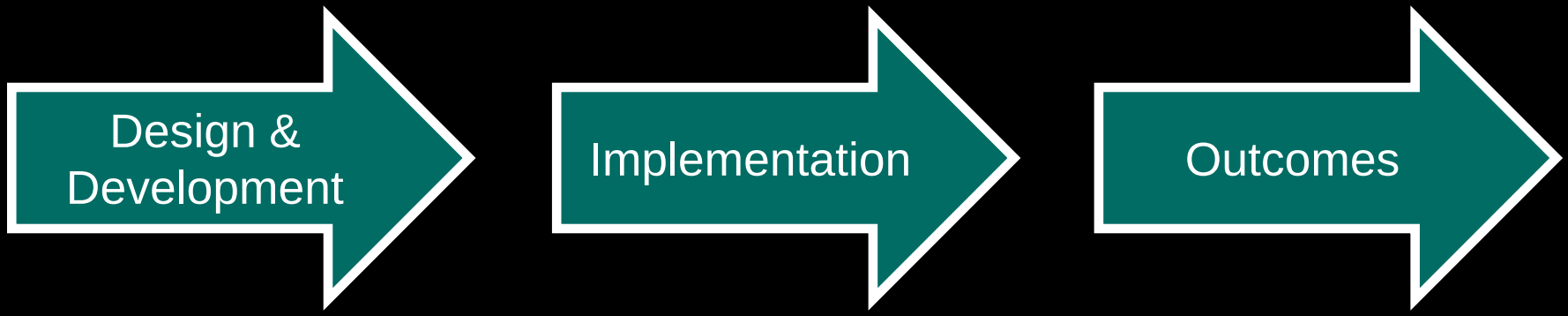
Shift the balance between feedback and feedforward



Focus

- **Approaches that don't require high amounts of technical expertise . . .**
- **. . . and could be embedded more broadly among implementers**

A Sampling of Approaches

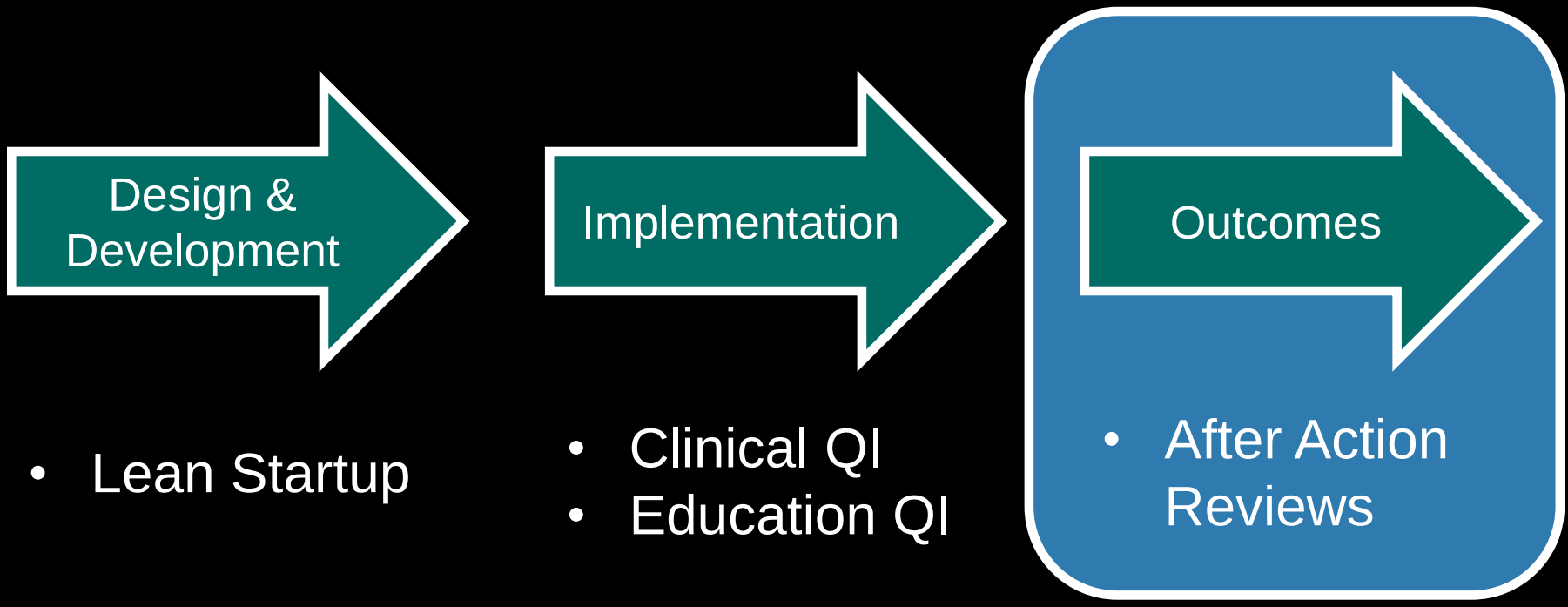


- Lean Startup

- Clinical QI
- Education QI

- After Action Reviews

A Sampling of Approaches



Approach

- Review of academic and grey literature
- Interviews with experienced users
- Authors' personal experience

Topics Addressed

- **Types of events and systems analyzed**
- **Process overview**
- **Evaluator characteristics**
- **Tools and frameworks**
- **Organizational characteristics**

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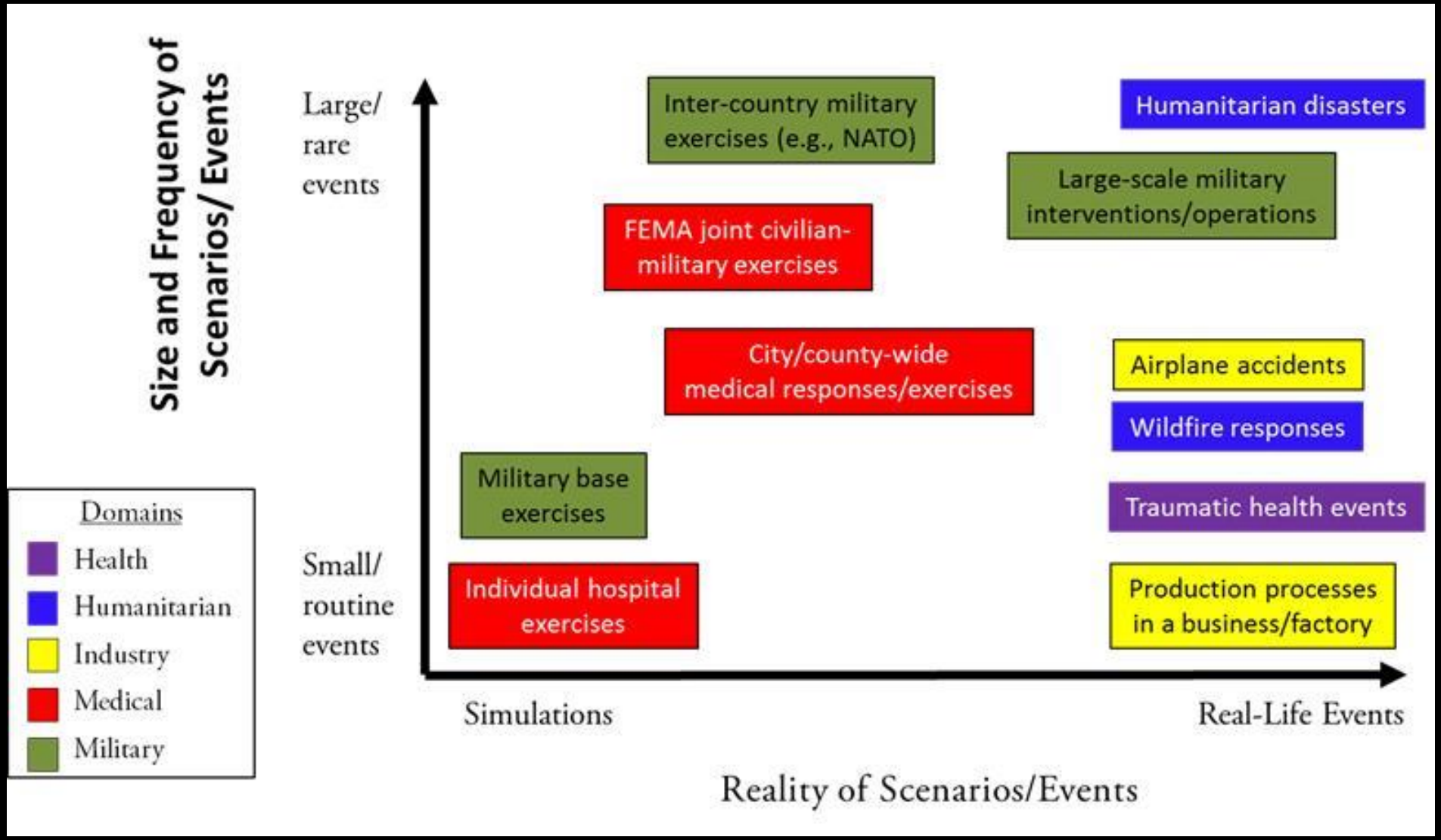
Used on a Range of Relatively Rare, High Consequence Events (Real & Simulated)



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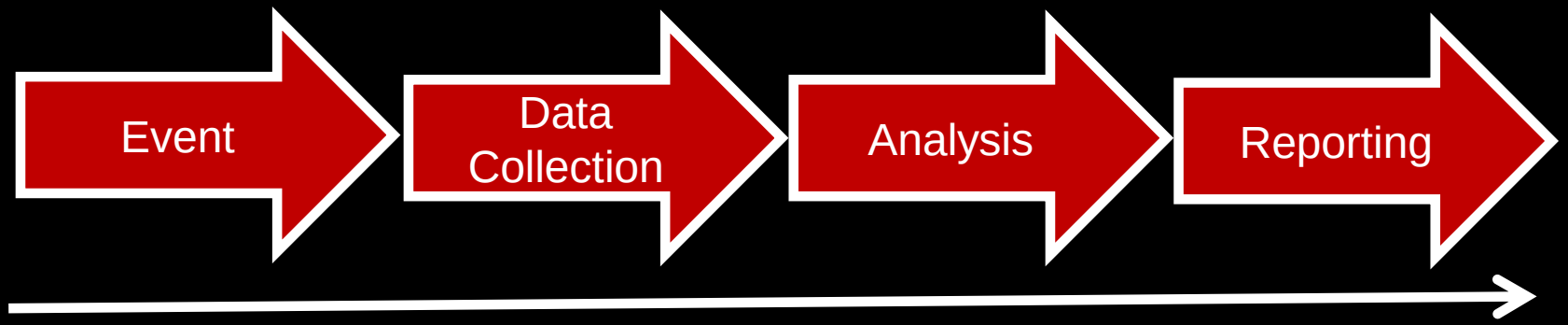

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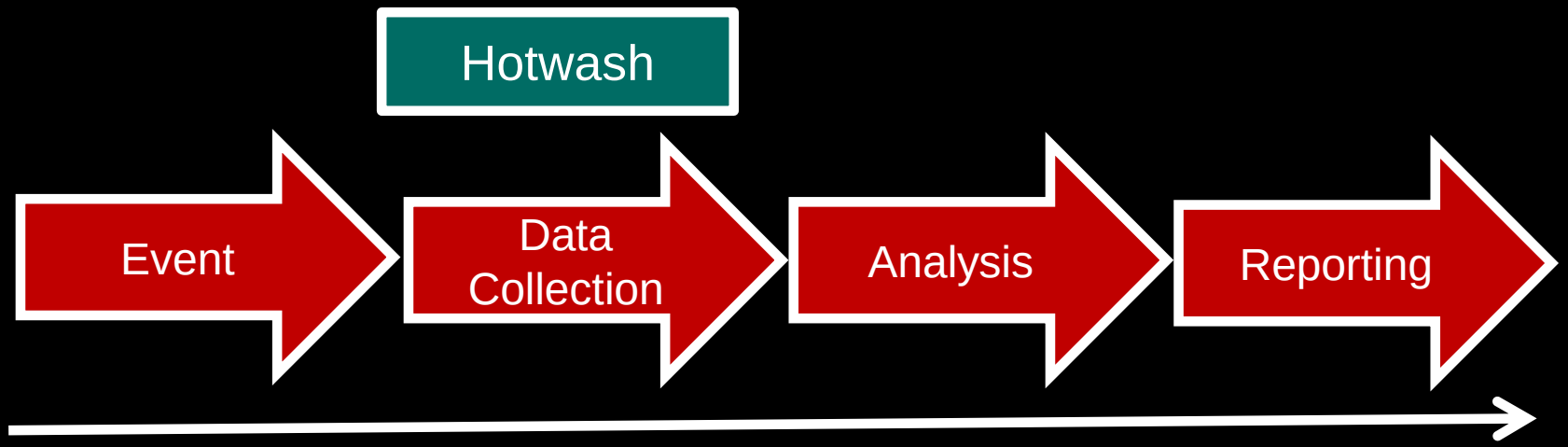

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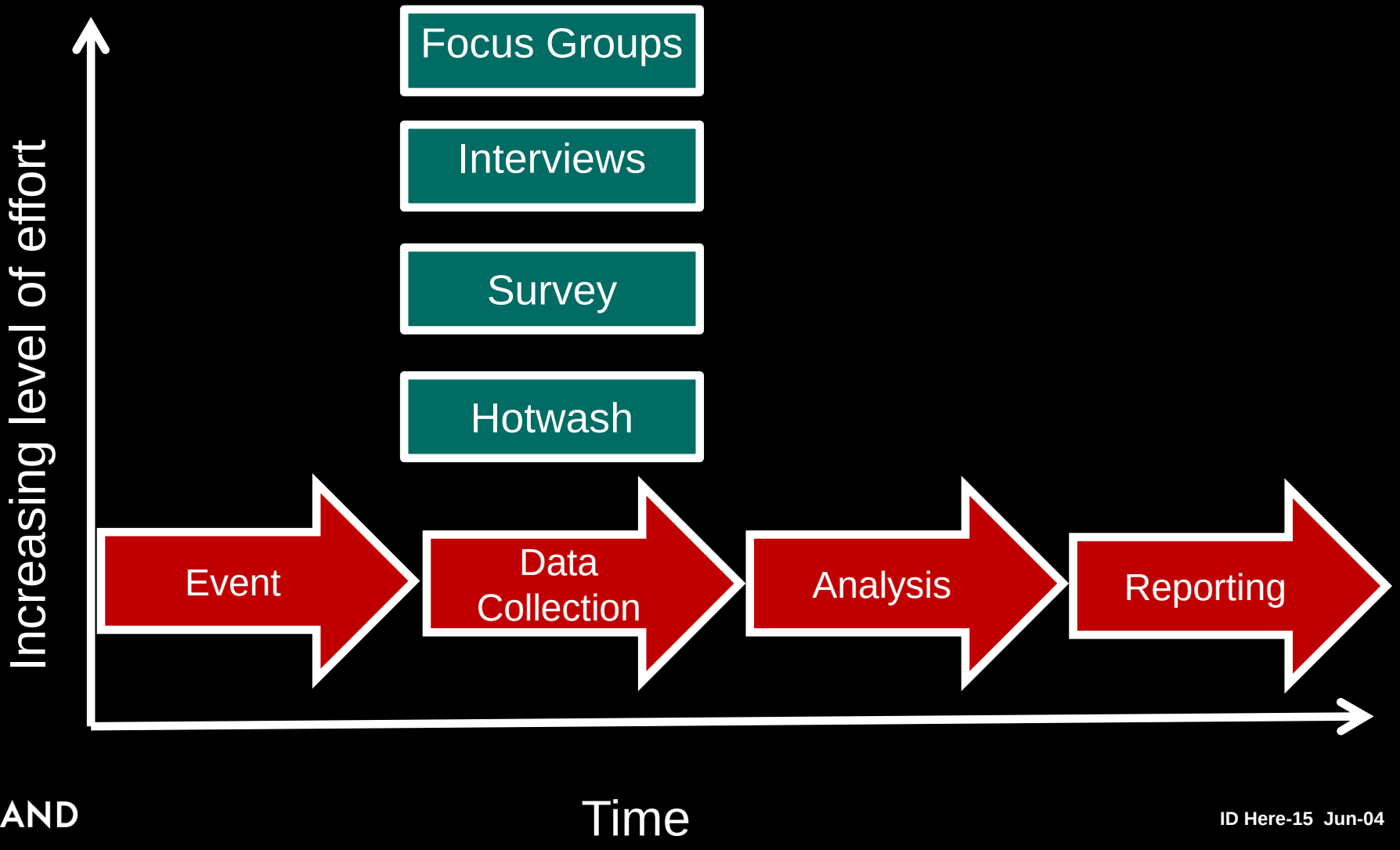

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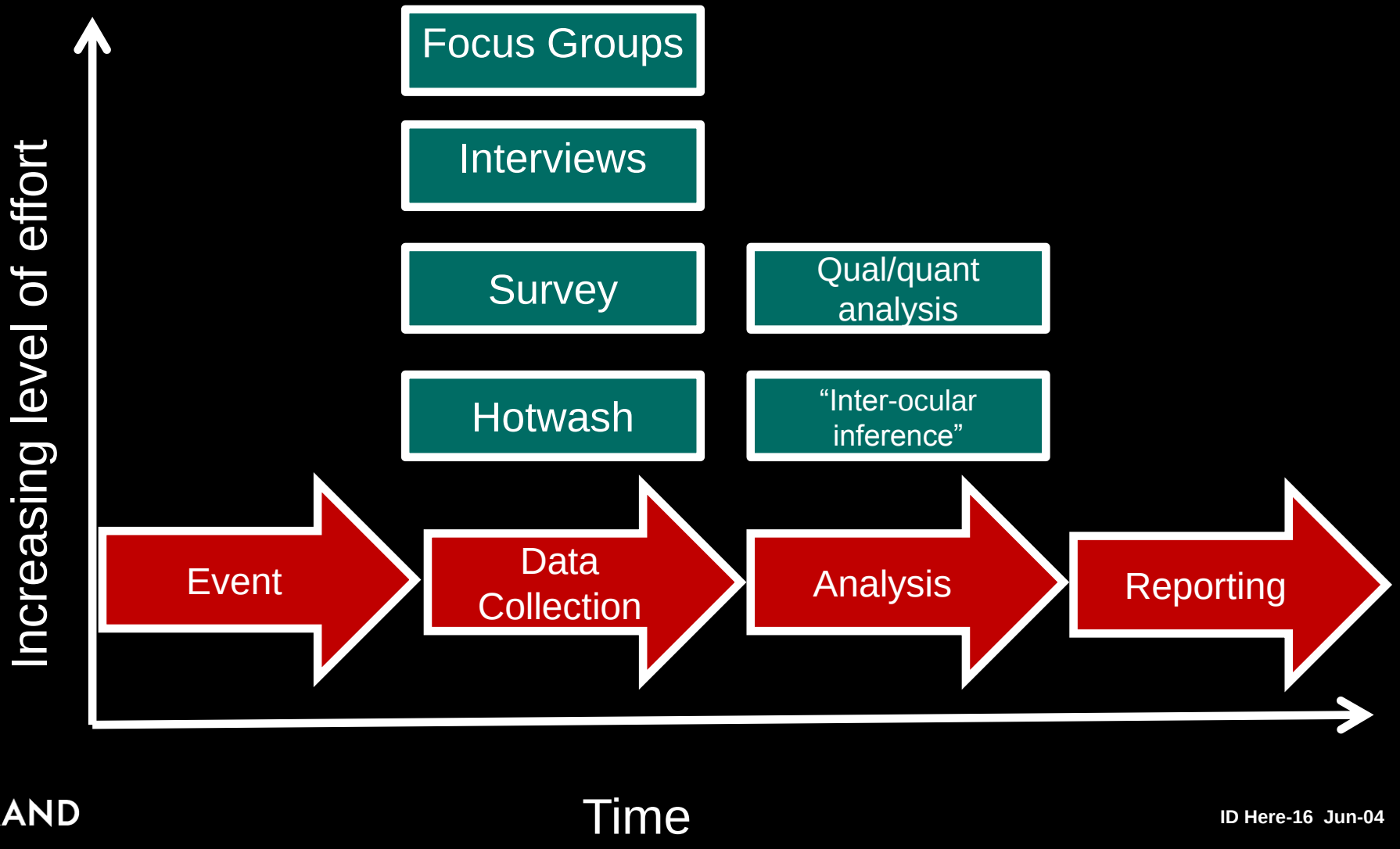

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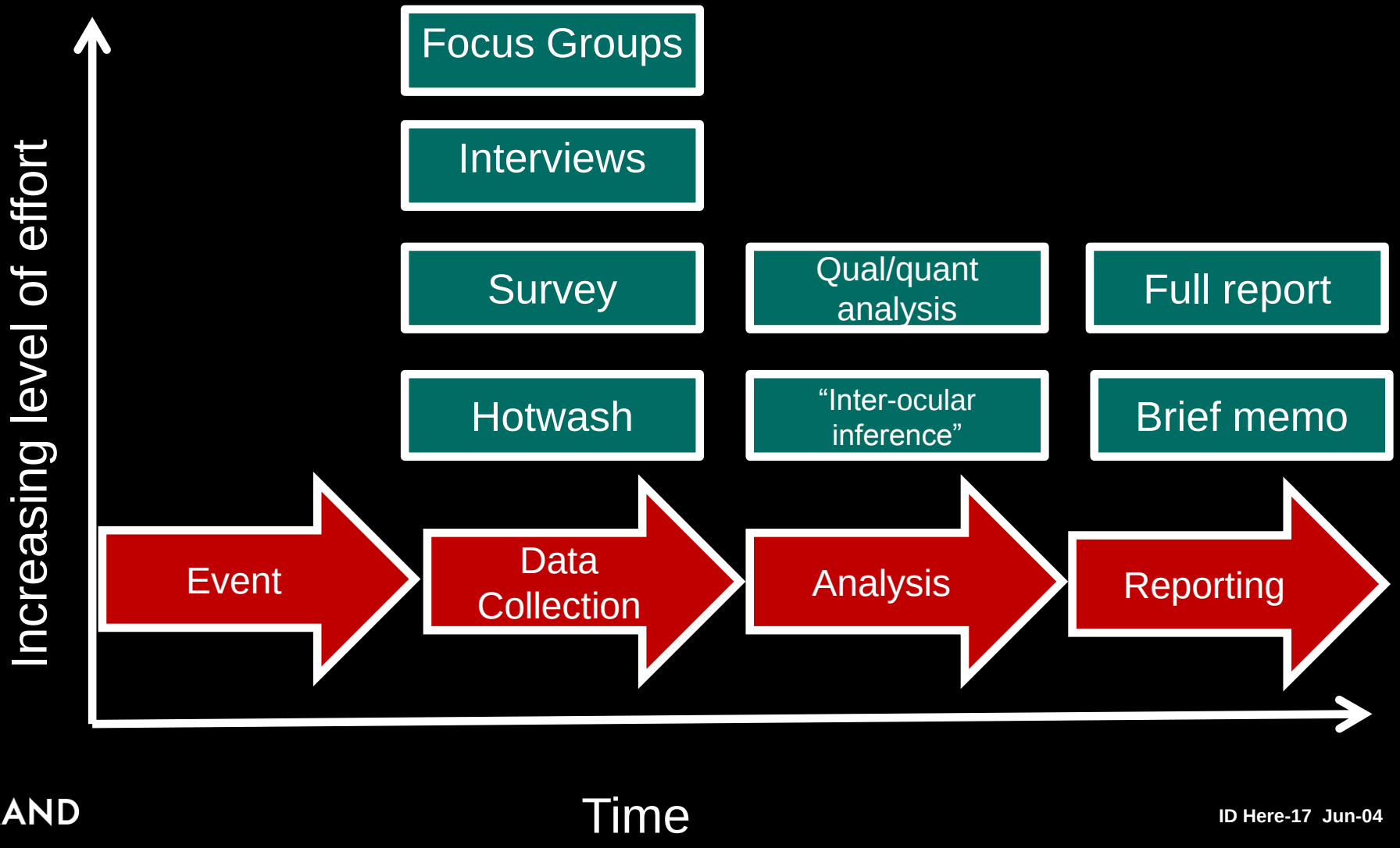
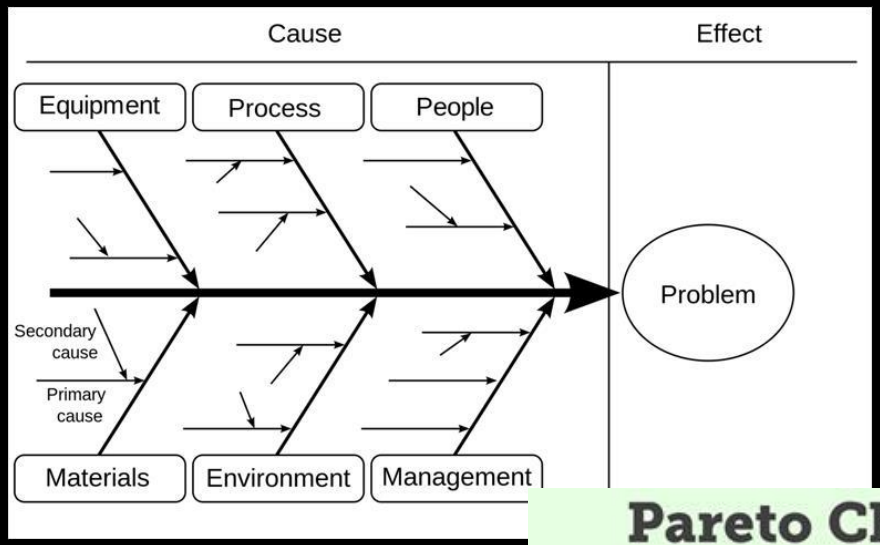
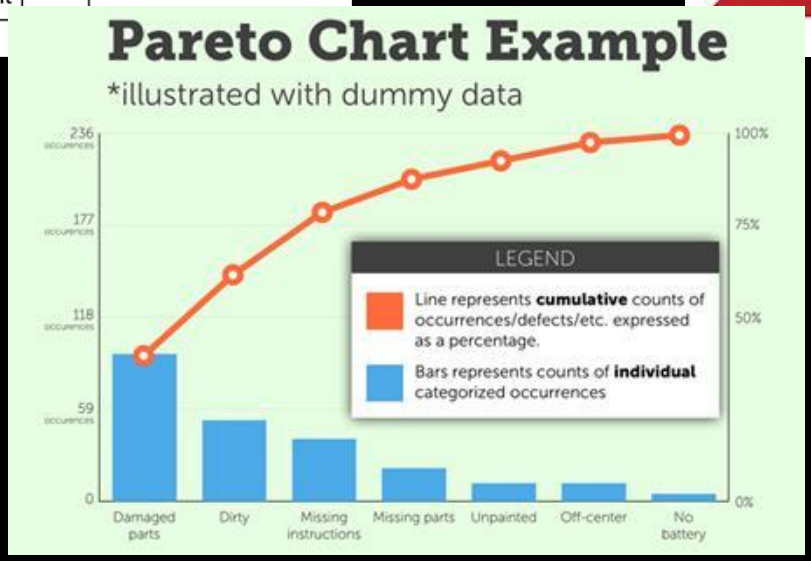


Evaluators Need Strong Facilitation Skills

- Democratic participation by wide range of system agents is key
  - To provide perspectives on all parts of the system
  - To reach full range of potential change agents for implementing corrective actions
- "Process is product"
  - Much of the impact of AARs comes through the process of conducting them...not just in the analytical product

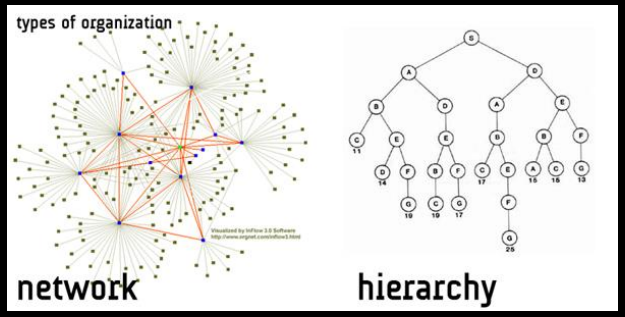
Well-Constructed AARs Often Use Well-Known Analytical Frameworks to Make Sense of Observations





Organization

- **Culture appears to be more important than structure**



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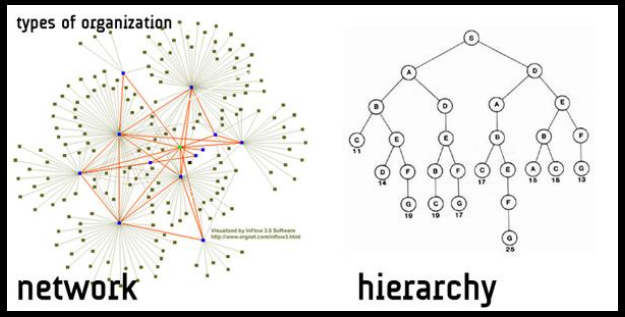

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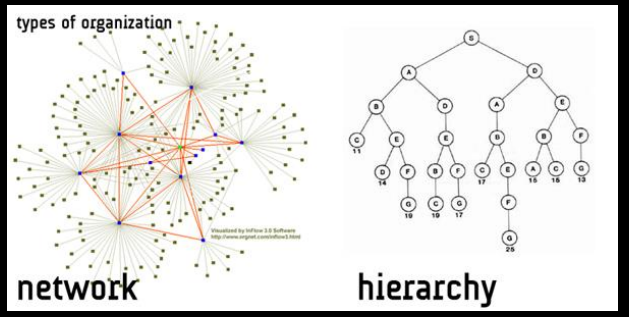

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- Technical support and incentives can increase uptake

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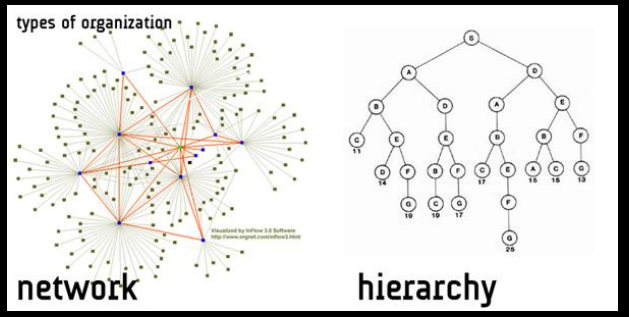

- Sharing among systems and networks of organizations can yield comparative insights

- Technical support and incentives can increase uptake
- Peer assessment can reduce evaluation anxiety

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AARs Could Be Used to Learn from Any "Critical" Incident or Event

- **Incidents/events might be "critical" by virtue of:**
  - **Size, scale, impact**
  - **Uniqueness – i.e., challenges assumptions**
  - **Points of high-consequence decisions**

AARs Could Be Used to Learn from Any "Critical" Incident or Event

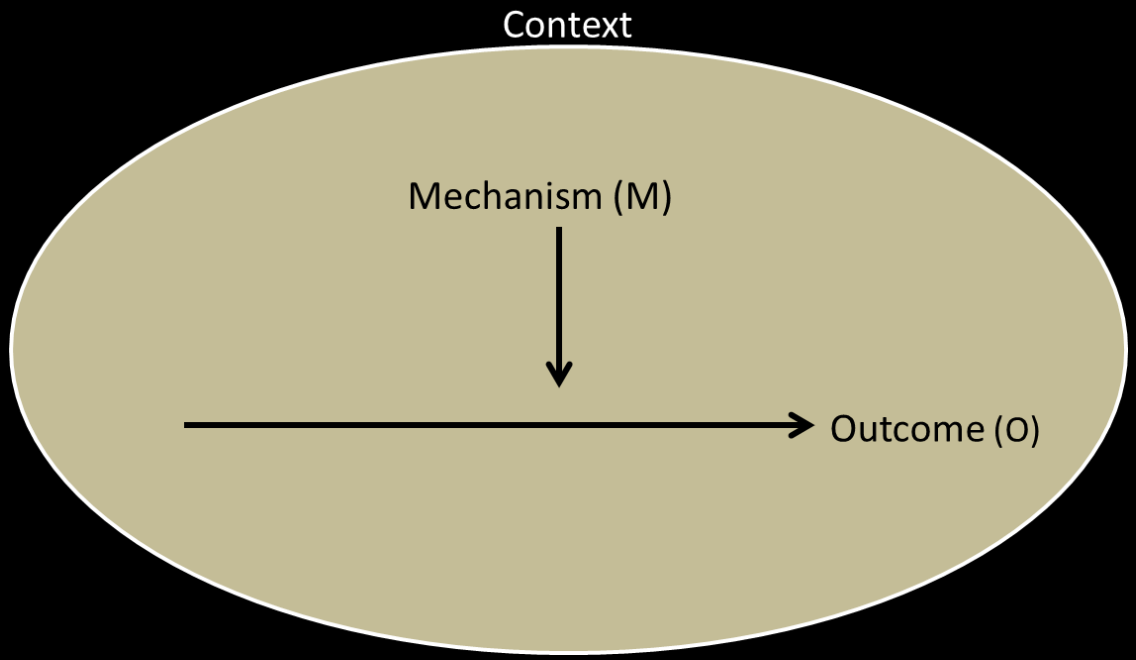
- "Events" = planned; "incidents" = unplanned
- Incidents/events might be "critical" by virtue of:
  - Size, scale, impact
  - Uniqueness – i.e., challenges assumptions
  - Points of high-consequence decisions

Potential examples

- "New directions" in implementation
  - E.g., new populations, partners, contexts
- Surprises
  - Successes
  - Disappointments
- Review of early prototypes
  - Physical
  - Experiential

AARs Could Be Used to Learn from Any "Critical" Incident or Event (2)

- **Events/incidents might be selected in light of program theory**
  - **E.g., context-mechanism-outcome**



Real-time Sense-making is Among the Most Important "Active Ingredients"

- **Need venues for interaction – in-person vs. virtual**
- **Importance of strong facilitation**
  - **Could asynchronous interaction via online Delphi-like processes substitute for real-time interaction?**
- **User-friendly tools to help guide and support sense-making**
- **Network of peer assessors**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Summary: After Action Reviews

Topic	Key Points
Types of Events	• Retrospective learning from singular, often high-consequence, events
Process overview	• Simple set of steps can be scaled up or down • Feasible in “austere” environments
Evaluators	• Requires strong facilitation skills; “process is product”
Tools	• Varies, but strongest varieties use root cause analysis
Organizations	• Requires democratic participation, willingness to learn from failure. • Networked organizations can leverage lessons from cross comparisons