



Doha, Qatar
The International School
on Research Impact Assessment

"Learning to assess research with
the aim to optimise returns"

CASE STUDIES

ALEXANDRA POLLITT
RAND EUROPE
NOVEMBER 10 - 2015



الصندوق القطري لرعاية البحث العلمي
Qatar National Research Fund
Member of Qatar Foundation



Agència de Qualitat i
Avaluació Sanitàries de Catalunya

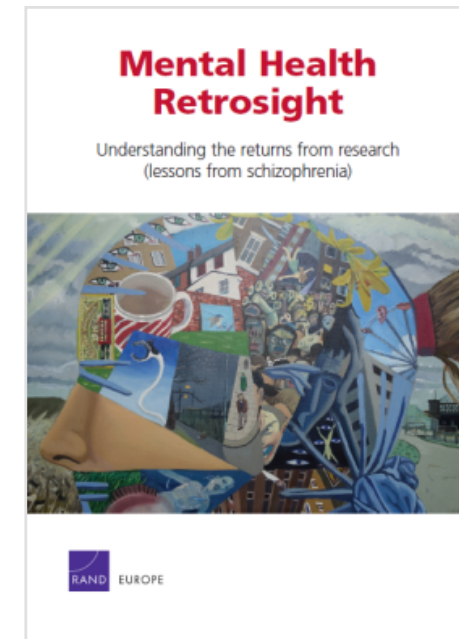


عضو في مؤسسة قطر
Member of Qatar Foundation



SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification

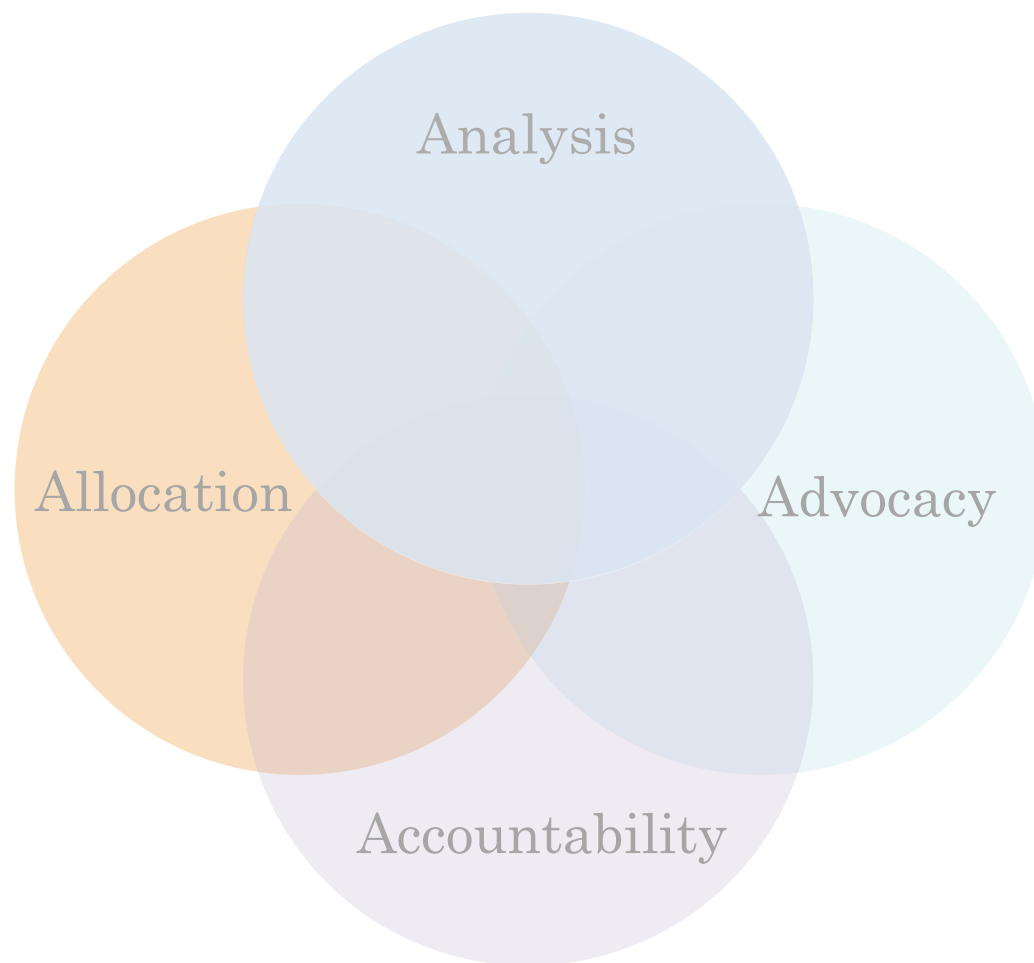


SESSION OVERVIEW

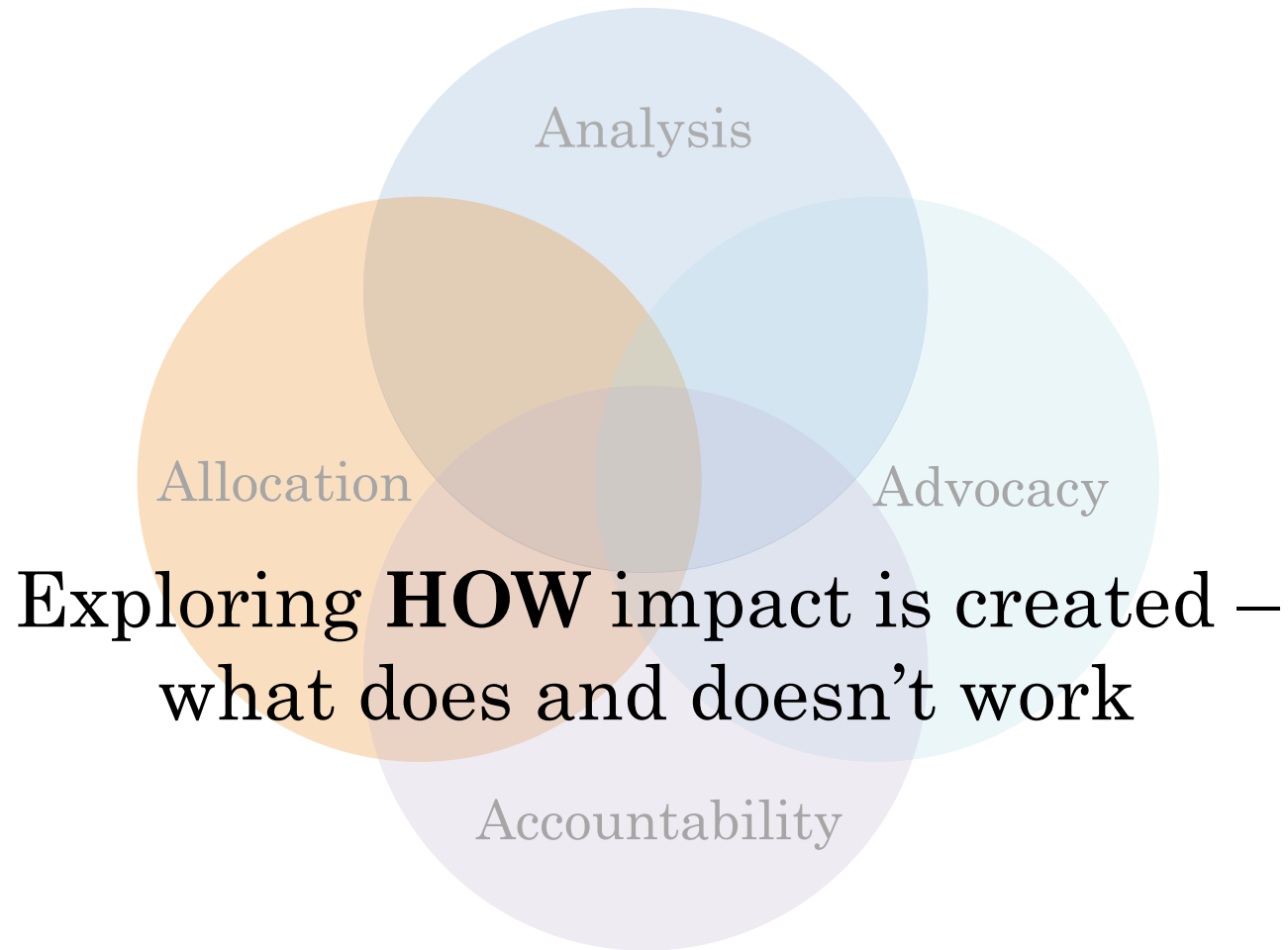
- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification



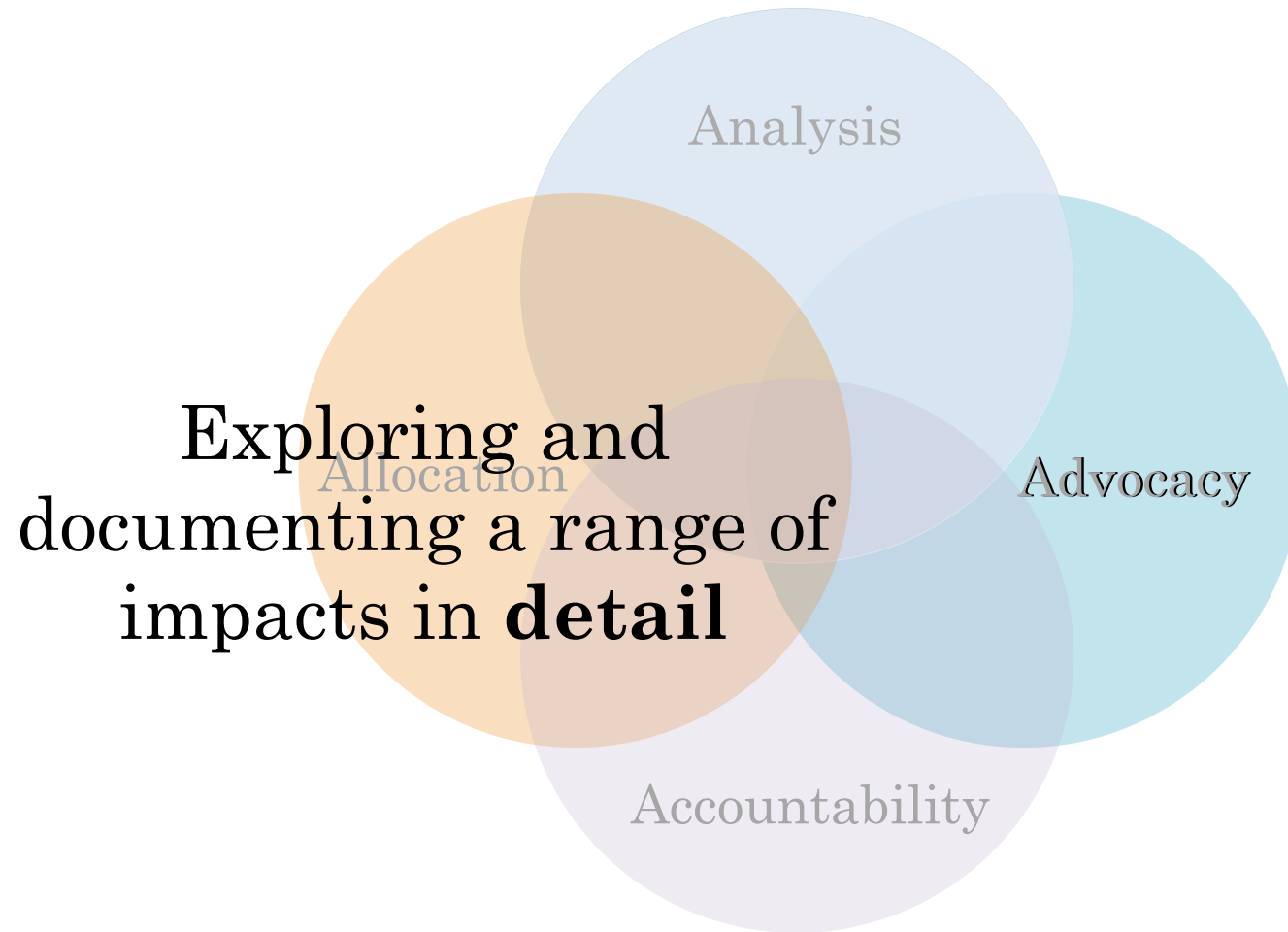
WHY USE THEM?



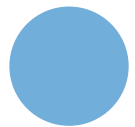
WHY USE THEM?



WHY USE THEM?

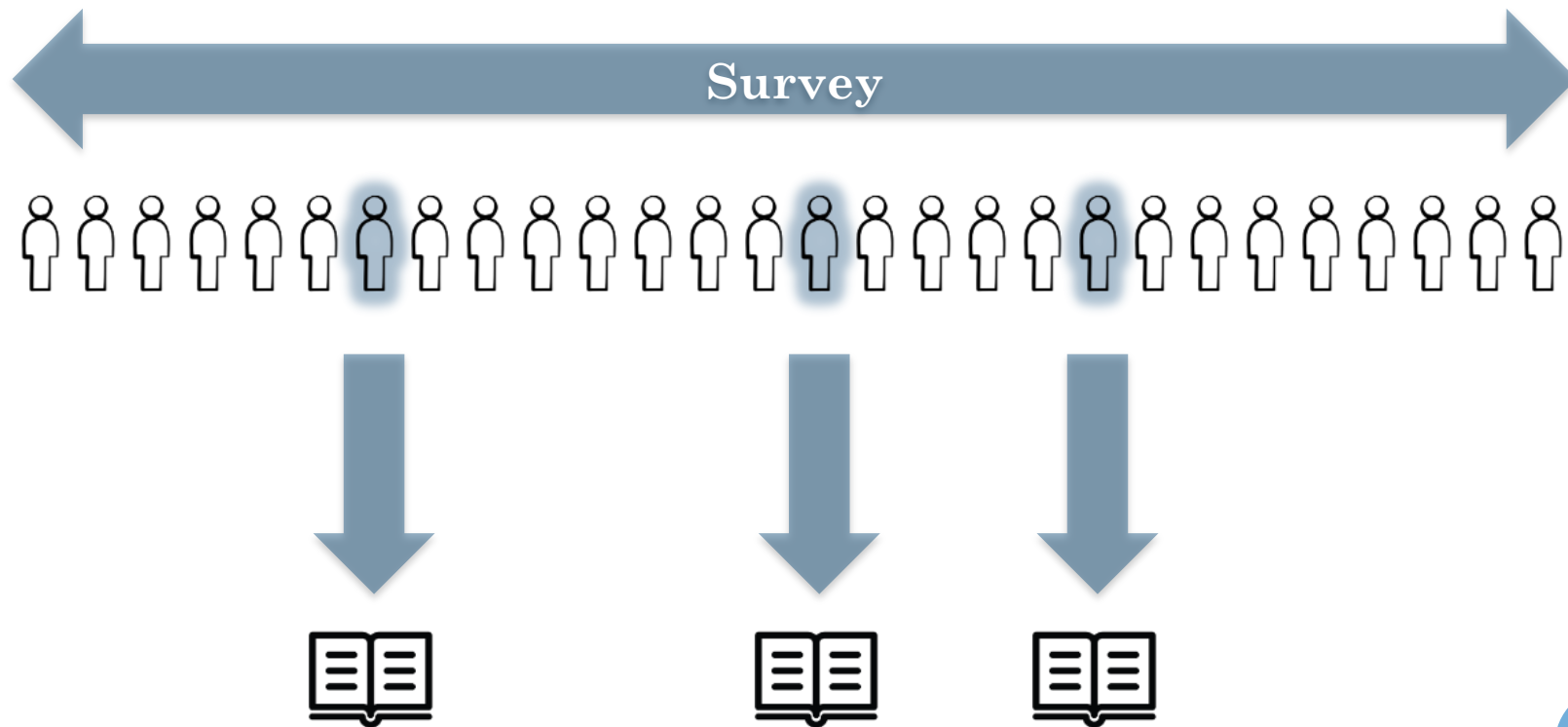


AND WHEN?



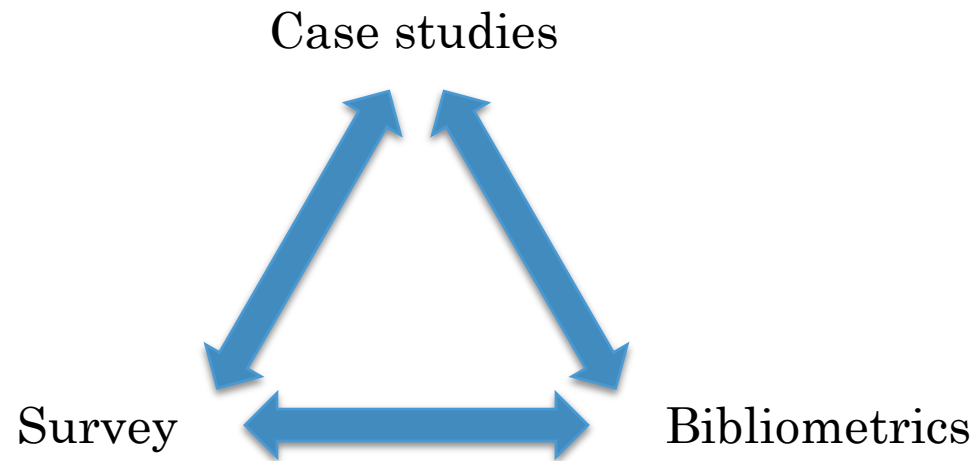
PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE?

- To explore the detail vs high level overview



PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE?

- To explore the detail vs high level overview
- Triangulating data – using multiple methods for deeper understanding

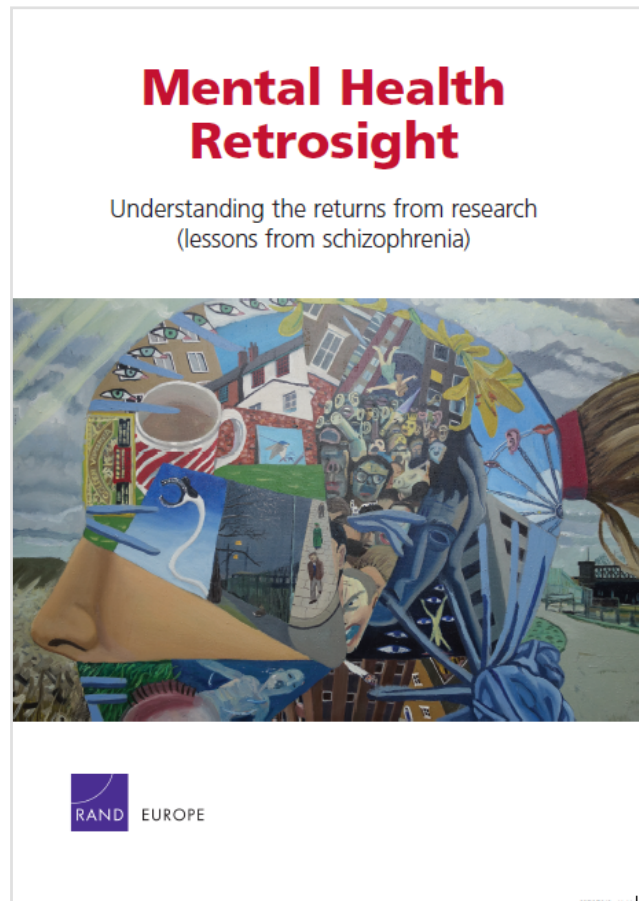


PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE?

- To explore the detail vs high level overview
- Triangulating data
- As an exploratory first stage in setting questions or scope



AN EXAMPLE: MENTAL HEALTH RETROSIGHT



A 3 year, 3 country study,
driven and inspired by the
Graham Boeckh Foundation



AN EXAMPLE: MENTAL HEALTH RETROSIGHT

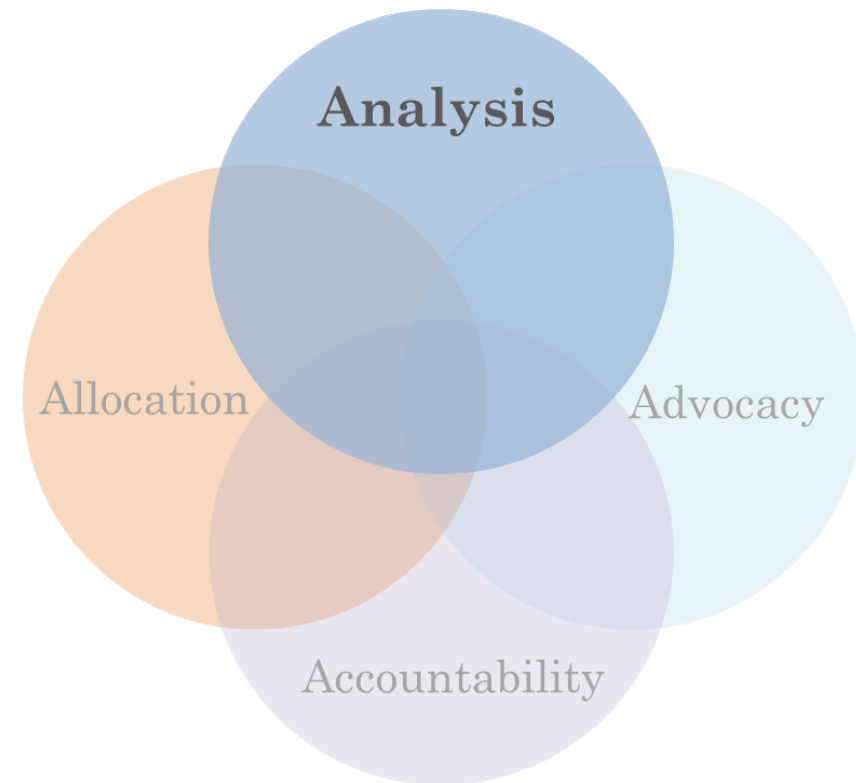
Supported by multiple funders through the International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders



AN EXAMPLE: MENTAL HEALTH RETROSIGHT

Exploring **HOW** impact is created – what does and doesn't work

18 case studies of mental health research carried out in the late 1980s



SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification



HOW SHOULD YOU SELECT CASE STUDIES?

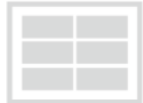
- Being able to extrapolate findings can be useful...
- ...but will you find the interesting stories?
- And what is actually *feasible*?



AN EXAMPLE...



- Identified highly cited papers



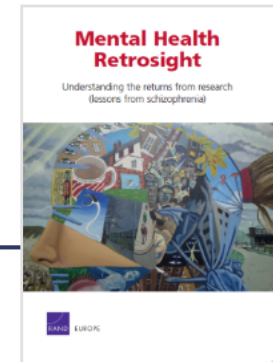
- Assigned to a selection matrix



	UK	US	Canada
Basic			
Clinical			



AN EXAMPLE...



- Identified highly cited papers



- Assigned to a selection matrix



- Randomly selected within matrix



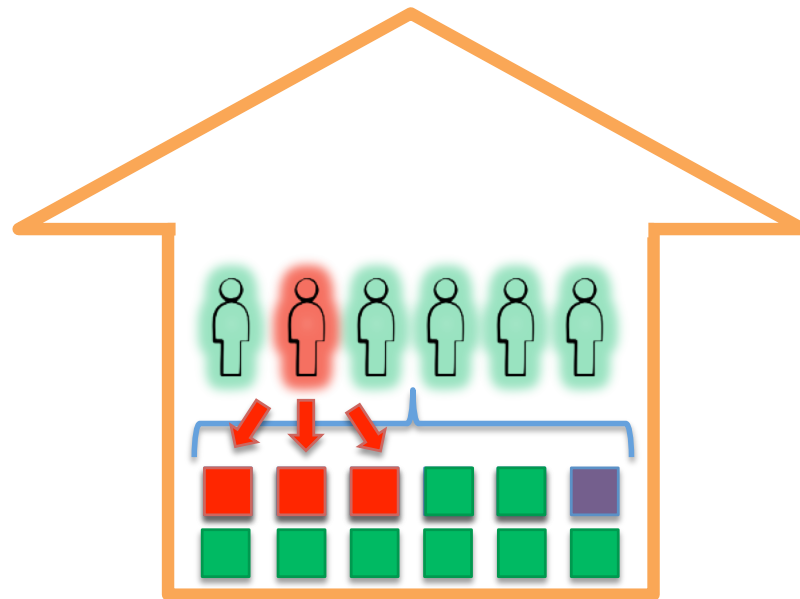
SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification



HOW SHOULD YOU STRUCTURE CASE STUDIES?

- Think about your unit of analysis...



Project
Portfolio / programme
Researcher
Department
Institution

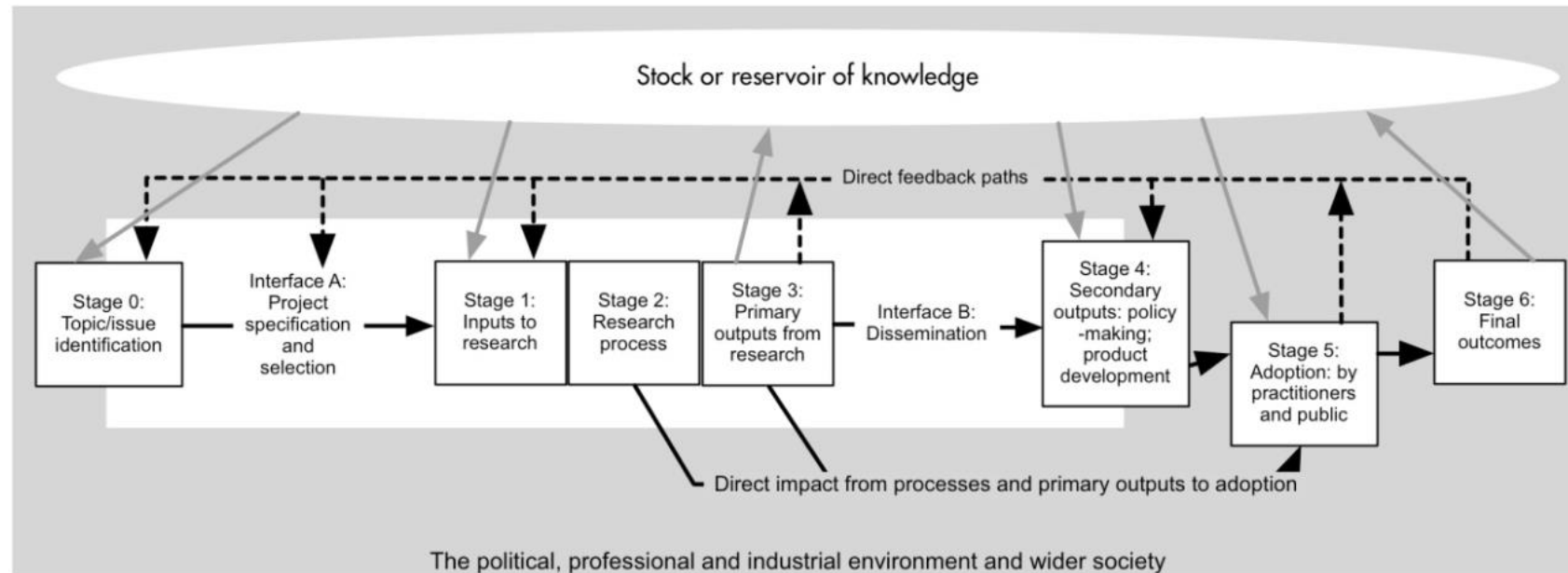
- How will you analyse them?
- Use a framework?



AN EXAMPLE...



The Payback Framework



THE PAYBACK CATEGORIES

**Knowledge
production**



**Academic
impact**



**Research
targeting and
capacity building**



**Informing policy
and product
development**



**Health and
health sector
benefits**



**Broader social
and economic
benefits**



SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification



DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- Case studies are not a single method, but an approach using a variety of methods
- Depends on purpose and framework used – e.g.
 - Interviews
 - Literature reviews
 - Bibliometrics
 - Economic analysis
 - Focus groups



AN EXAMPLE...

- Interviews – with PIs, others in the team, competitors, collaborators
- Bibliometric analysis
- Literature and document review



SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why and when?
- Selection
- Defining a structure
- Data collection
- Data verification

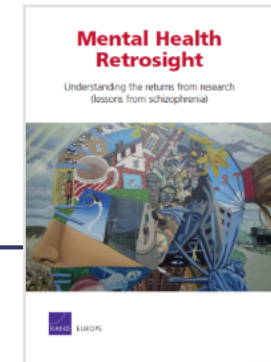


DATA QUALITY AND VALIDITY

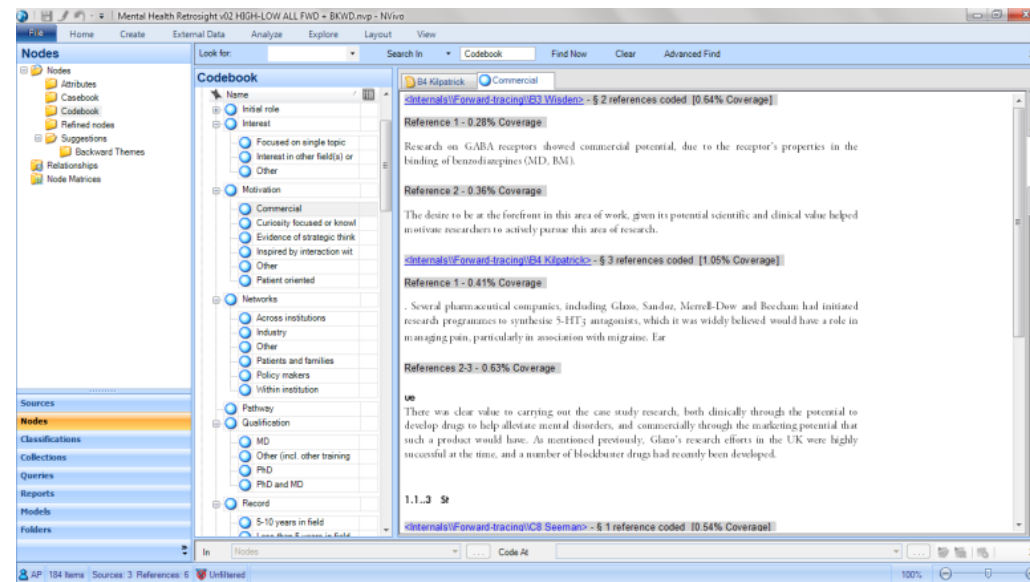
- Particularly important if you want to compare case studies
- What steps can you take?
 - Internal consistency in data
 - Triangulation
 - Expert review
 - Double coding



AN EXAMPLE...



- Peer review of case studies
- Double coding during analysis
- Case studies 'scored' in two rounds



ADVANTAGES

- In-depth – provide **rich context** and nuance
- Get to the ‘**how**’ and ‘**why**’ questions
- **Flexible** – can be tailored to study design
- Can help explore some of the perennial challenges – attribution, time lags, knowledge flows



WEAKNESSES

- **Time and resource intensive** – usually only feasible to carry out a small number
- **Generalisability** – difficult to draw conclusions beyond sample
- Need to consider **counterfactual** – what would have happened anyway?
- Often rely on **subjective** sources



KEY MESSAGES

- Case studies can be a powerful analytical method and a persuasive advocacy tool
- They can be particularly useful in exploring downstream impacts and how/why questions
- Rigour and pragmatism are important



LEARNING ACTIVITY



5 minutes + discussion

1. Using the three scenarios from the '4 As' learning activity (see binder), think about whether case studies would be an appropriate approach.
2. If so, pick one and think about how you might select the case studies



FURTHER READING

- Yin, R. K. (2013). Case study research: Design and methods. Sage publications.
- Guthrie, S., Wooding, S., Pollitt, A., Pincus, H. A., & Grant, J. (2013). Mental Health Retrosight: Methods and Methodology Report. Cambridge, UK: RAND Europe.
- Pollitt, A., Diepeveen, S., Guthrie, S., Morgan Jones, M., Ní Chonail, S., Olmsted, S., et al. (2013). Mental Health Retrosight: Case studies. Cambridge, UK: RAND Europe.



THANK YOU!

Alexandra Pollitt
RAND Europe
apollitt@rand.org

