

SESSION 12

Managing the quality of an evaluation process

Structure of the session

Key players involved in
quality assurance

Managing quality until the
follow up stage

Key steps in quality assurance

- EM responsibilities
- Key steps in QA process
- Quality of reports
- Quality Assessment Grid



Key players
involved in quality assurance

Key players in QA process and their roles

On the contractor side...

Evaluation team leader

- prevents major risks threatening quality
- ensures that each output/report undergoes a detailed quality check



Quality assessor(s) – designated by Contractor

- carefully checks each output for quality



Key players in QA process and their roles

But also on the evaluation commissioner side...

Reference group

- receives all draft reports/outputs for comments



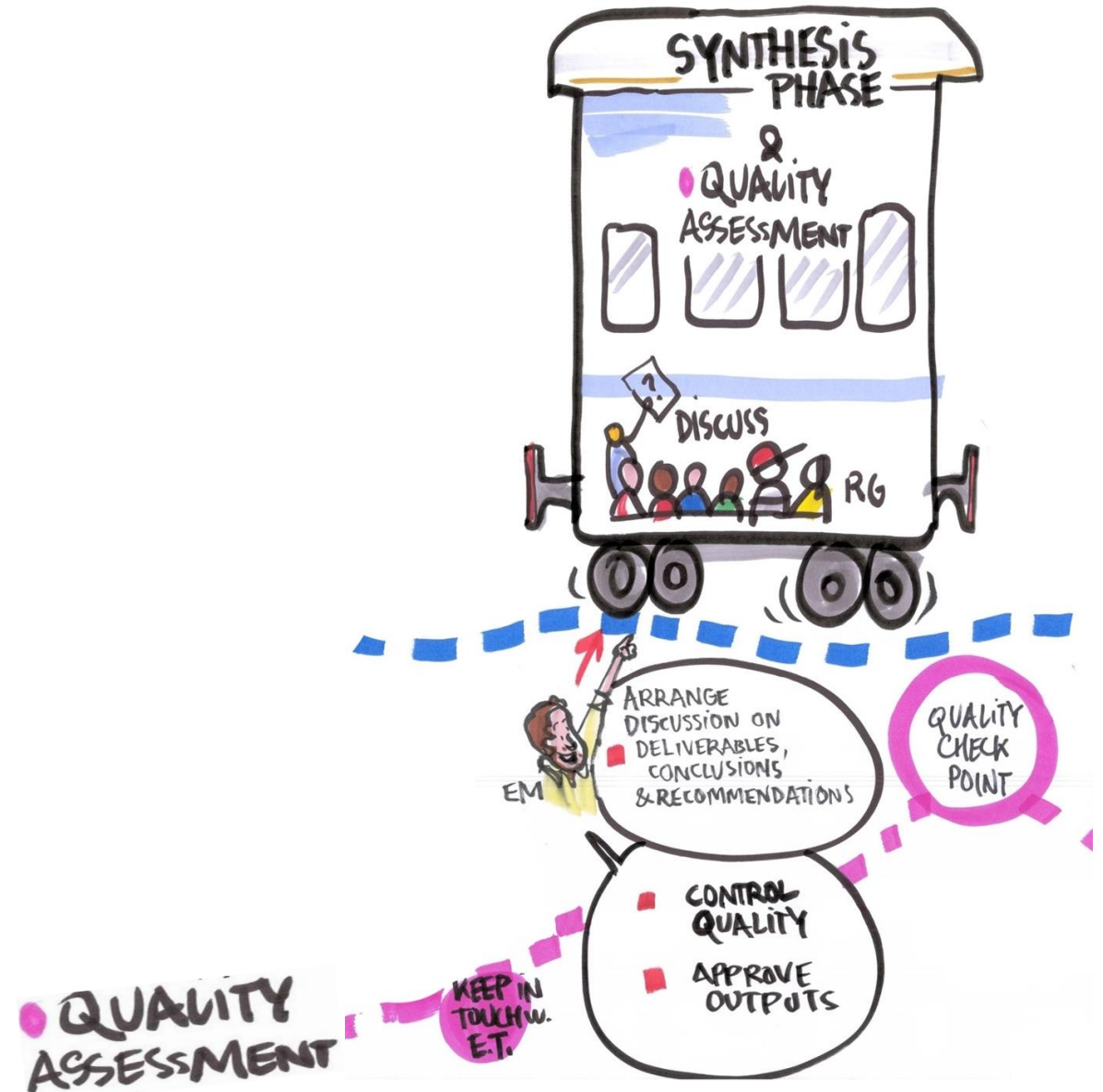
Evaluation manager

- holds ultimate responsibility for methodological quality assessment
- resists the temptation to 'negotiate' the contents of the final report
- respects the evaluators' opinions
- ensures at an early stage that the RG members accept criticism



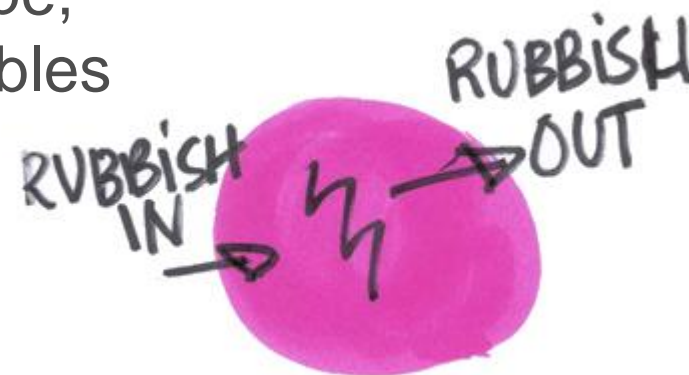
Key steps in quality assurance

- EM responsibilities
- Key steps in QA process
- Quality of outputs/reports
- Quality Assessment Grid



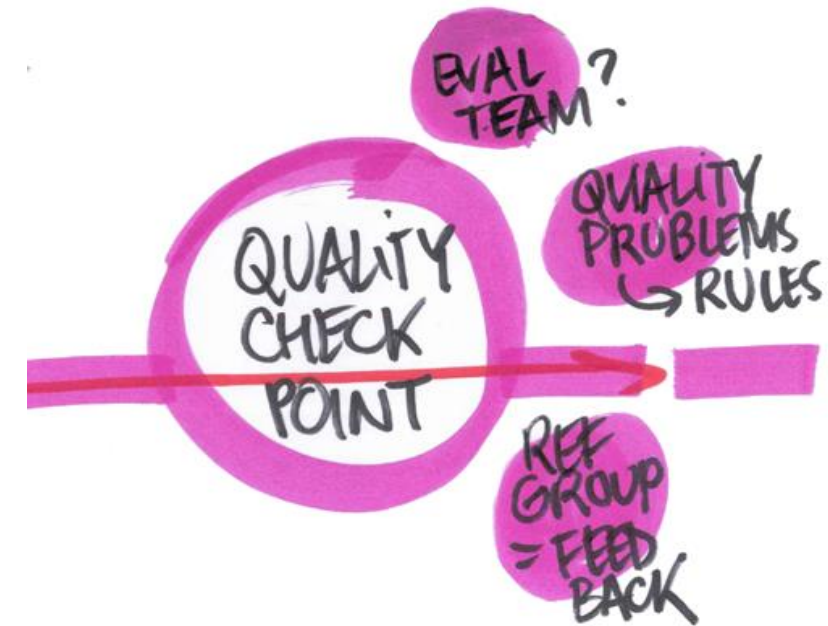
Managing the quality of an evaluation starts early!

- Managing quality starts from the outset, we need to keep **thinking about what we want from this evaluation:**
 - ✓ Define clear ToR with precise objectives, scope, questions, methodology & approach, deliverables and processes
- If the foundations are weak the whole process and resulting outputs will be too

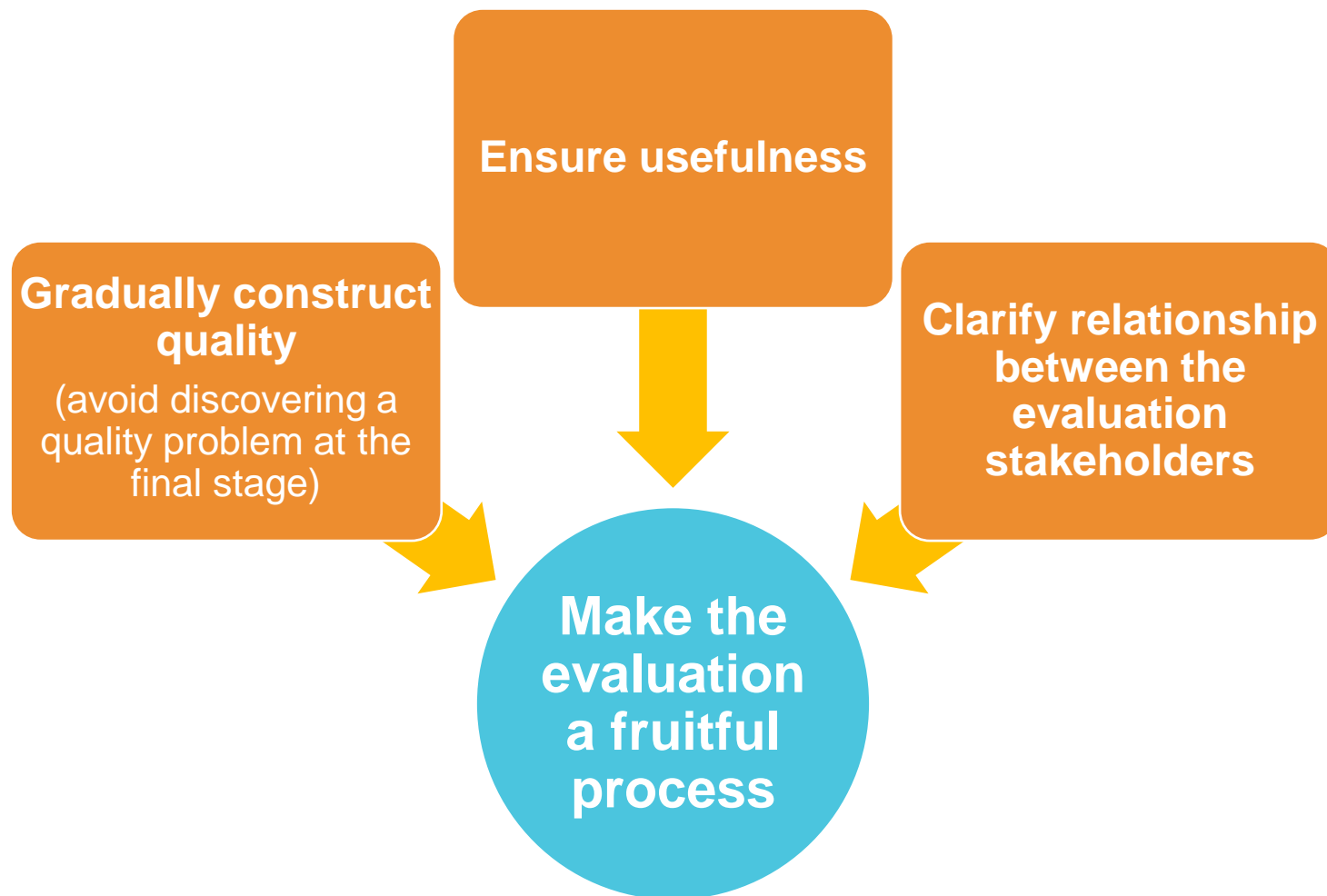


Quality assurance by the evaluation manager

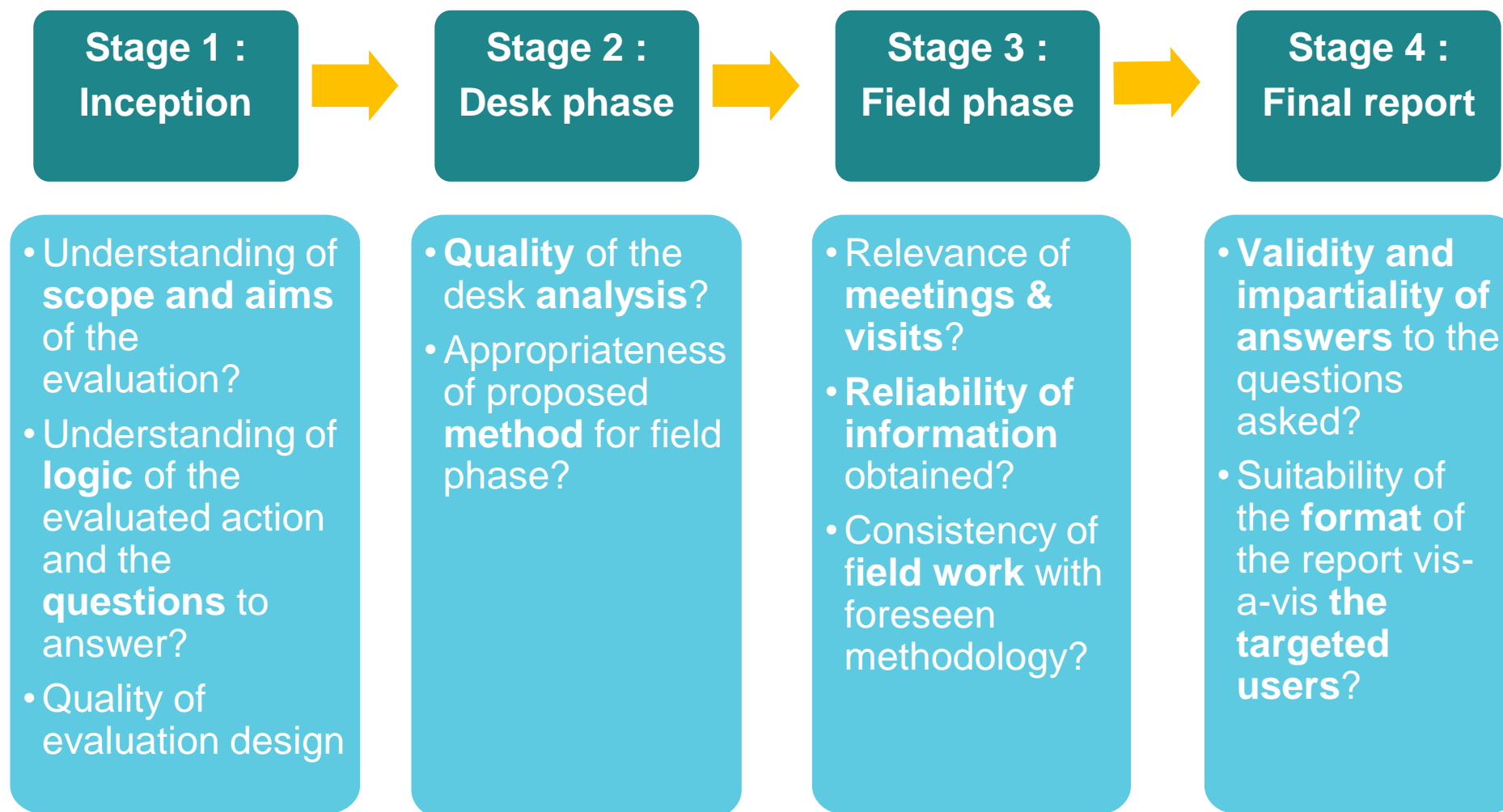
- The **evaluation manager** is **responsible** for ensuring the **quality** of the evaluation by:
 - ✓ Establishing **quality check-points** at different phases in the process
 - ✓ Mobilising the **reference group** to obtain **feedback on quality**
 - ✓ Defining **rules** that deal with quality problems



What do we do when managing quality ?



Key steps in the QA process



Which reports to assess?

- **Final evaluation report** obviously
 - ✓ **Mandatory quality assessment** – fill out the “quality assessment grid” and save it according to procedure

Kick off presentation and inception report to be examined carefully! Adjustments are easier earlier in process.

- But **other deliverables as well !!!!**

Pay **attention to the quality of the process:**
periodically make **contact & debrief**

- ✓ **Check** thoroughly all contractual deliverables **to ensure the next step will be a success**

Main criteria for the quality of the inception report

Satisfying needs

- **Understanding of requirements & expectations** related to :
 - ✓ *Regulatory framework*
 - ✓ *Terms of reference*
 - ✓ *Reference group*

Method justification

- **Sound and accurate description of :**
 - ✓ *Data collection and analysis methods for desk phase*
 - ✓ *Data collection and analysis strategy for field phase*
 - ✓ *Method used for addressing questions*

Evaluation questions & criteria

- **Faithful reflection of:**
 - ✓ *Results (intervention logic)*
 - ✓ *(sub)-sectors, themes and instruments*
 - ✓ *DAC criteria, coherence and EC added value*

Synthesis of questions for overall assessment



Main criteria for the quality of the desk phase report

Satisfying needs

- **Understanding of requirements & expectations**
(Regulatory framework, ToRs, group)
- **Understanding of context of the evaluation**
(development cooperation, international & EC or partner policies)
- **Preliminary responses to evaluation questions**

Method justification

- **Sound and accurate description of :**
 - ✓ *Data collection and analysis method applied in desk phase + problems & limitations*
 - ✓ *Data collection and analysis strategy for field phase + risks & limitations, and justification for not adopting other methods*

Data reliability

- Indication of **data sources**, self-assessment of **data reliability** and **limitations**

Preliminary analysis

- **Analysis** of collected **data to answer questions**
- **Deduction of assumptions to test** in the field



Assess quality of the final report

- Check whether the **evaluation meets professional standards**
- Verify if the format of the **report is suited to the targeted users' needs**



Fulfillment of the commissioning service's requirements by evaluators

Distinction between **valid/well grounded conclusions** and those to use with **caution**

Robustness of the evaluation vis-à-vis the **criticism** generated by **value judgments on successes & failures**

Quality Assessment Grid (final report)

1. Clarity of the report	▪ Readable, understandable, length, language, key messages
2. Reliability of data, robustness evidence	▪ Data collected according to methodology, sources, limitations biases and mitigating measures described
3. Validity of findings	▪ Evidence based, address eval criteria, triangulation, cause-effect links, comprehensive, contextual and external factors
4. Validity of conclusions	▪ Linked to findings, address eval criteria and EQs, representativity of stakeholder groups, coherent and balanced
5. Usefulness of recommendations	▪ Linked to conclusions, concrete, achievable, targeted, prioritised, timebound
6. Appropriateness of LL analysis	▪ If specifically requested by ToR.

Quality Assessment Grid (final report)

Legend: scores and their meaning

Very satisfactory: criterion entirely fulfilled in a clear and appropriate way

Satisfactory: criterion fulfilled

Unsatisfactory: criterion partly fulfilled

Very unsatisfactory: criterion mostly not fulfilled or absent

The evaluation report is assessed as follows

1. Clarity of the report

This criterion analyses the extent to which both the Executive Summary and the Final Report:

- Are easily readable, understandable and accessible to the relevant target readers
- Highlight the key messages
- The length of the various chapters and annexes of the Report are well balanced
- Contain relevant graphs, tables and charts facilitating understanding
- Contain a list of acronyms (only the Report)
- Avoid unnecessary duplications
- Have been language checked for unclear formulations, misspelling and grammar errors
- The Executive Summary is an appropriate summary of the full report and is a free-standing document

When assessing this element, attention should be paid to the extent to which both documents **read as a single document**. As far as possible, the executive summary should refer the reader to the relevant parts in the main report. The main report is to be a standalone document and refer to its annexes for further specifications. The use of unnecessary **jargon is to be avoided**. Both documents should be comprehensible to non-specialist audiences, including those external to the EU. Specialist terms and concepts should be explained. The report shall be complete and include all the relevant chapters listed in Annex III to the ToR.

Strengths*

Weaknesses*

Contractor's comments

Contractor's comments

2. Reliability of data and robustness of evidence

This criterion analyses the extent to which:

- Data/evidence was gathered as defined in the methodology
- The report considers, when relevant, evidence from EU and/or other partners' relevant studies, monitoring reports and/or evaluations
- The report contains a clear description of the limitations of the evidence, the risks of bias and the mitigating measures

Strengths*

Weaknesses*

Score*

Contractor's comments

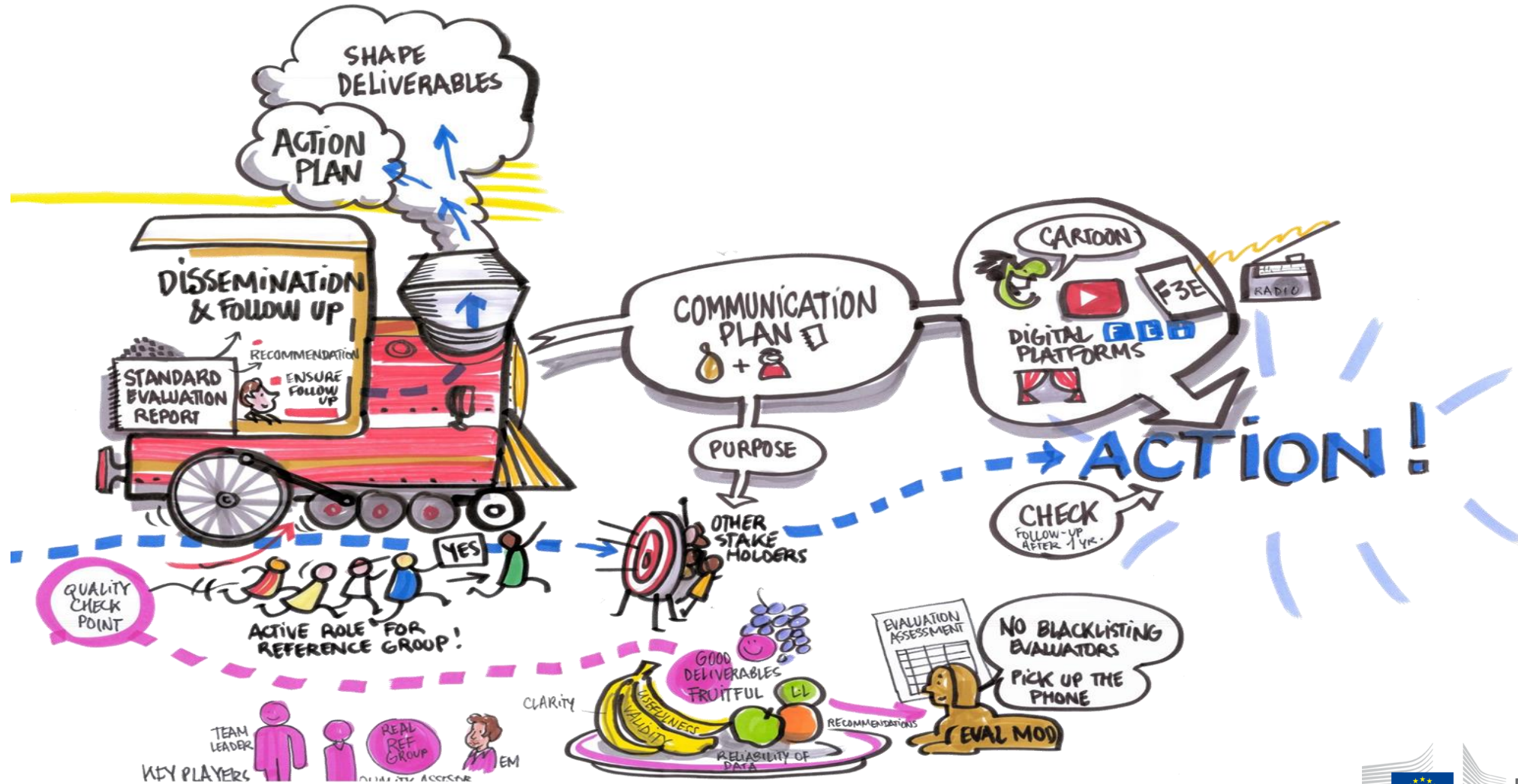
Contractor's comments





Managing quality until the follow-up stage

A follow up to go from evaluation to action



Assign responsibilities for follow up & feedback

Prepare a '[follow-up](#)' sheet (automated in EVAL module) stating for each recommendation:

- *Accepted / partially accepted / not accepted*
- *Who's in charge*
- *Planned date of completion*
- *Comments*

Check if promises have been kept

- *Have all accepted recommendations been implemented 6/12 months later?*



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