

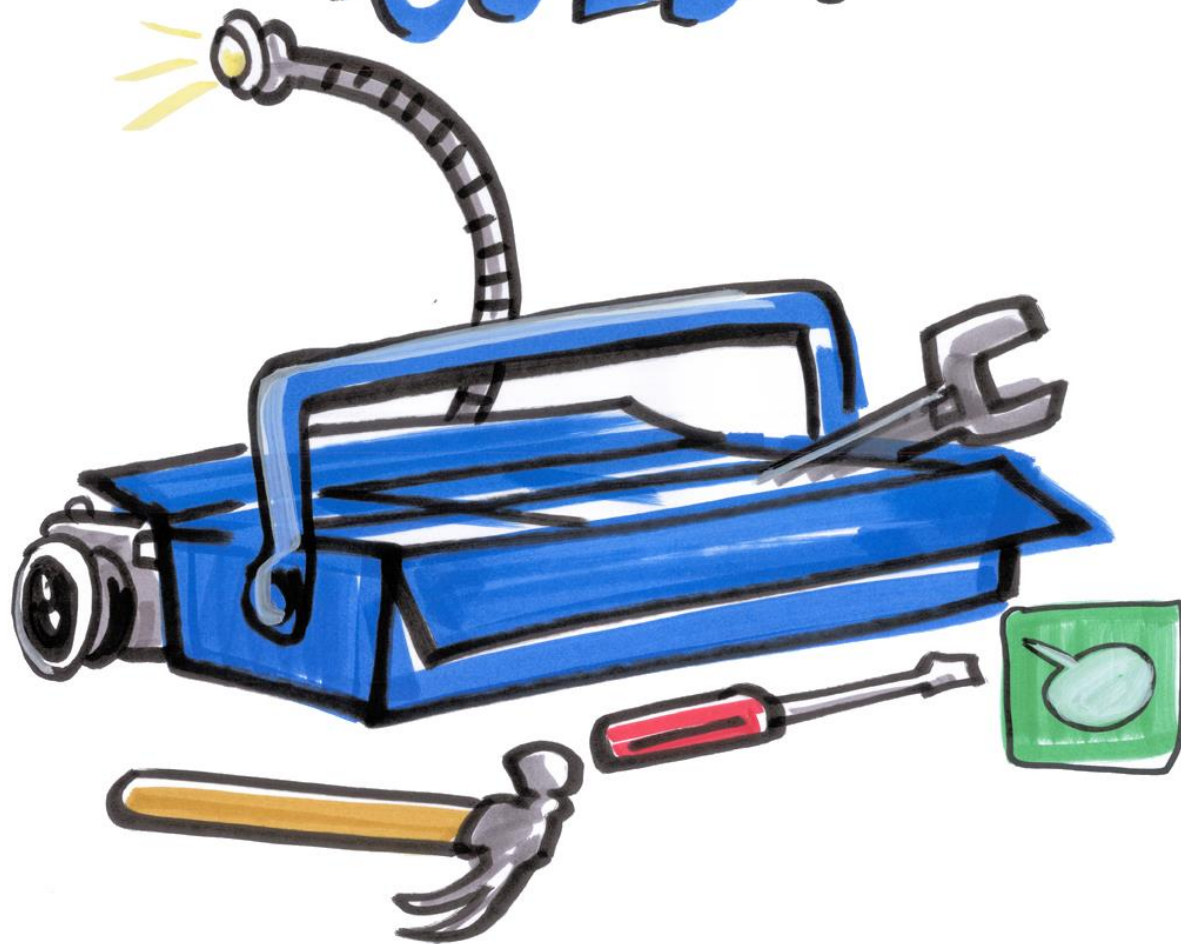


# SESSION 7

**Introduction to evaluation tools**

**Evaluation in crises & evaluation  
in hard-to-reach areas - HRA**

# EVALUATION TOOLS :

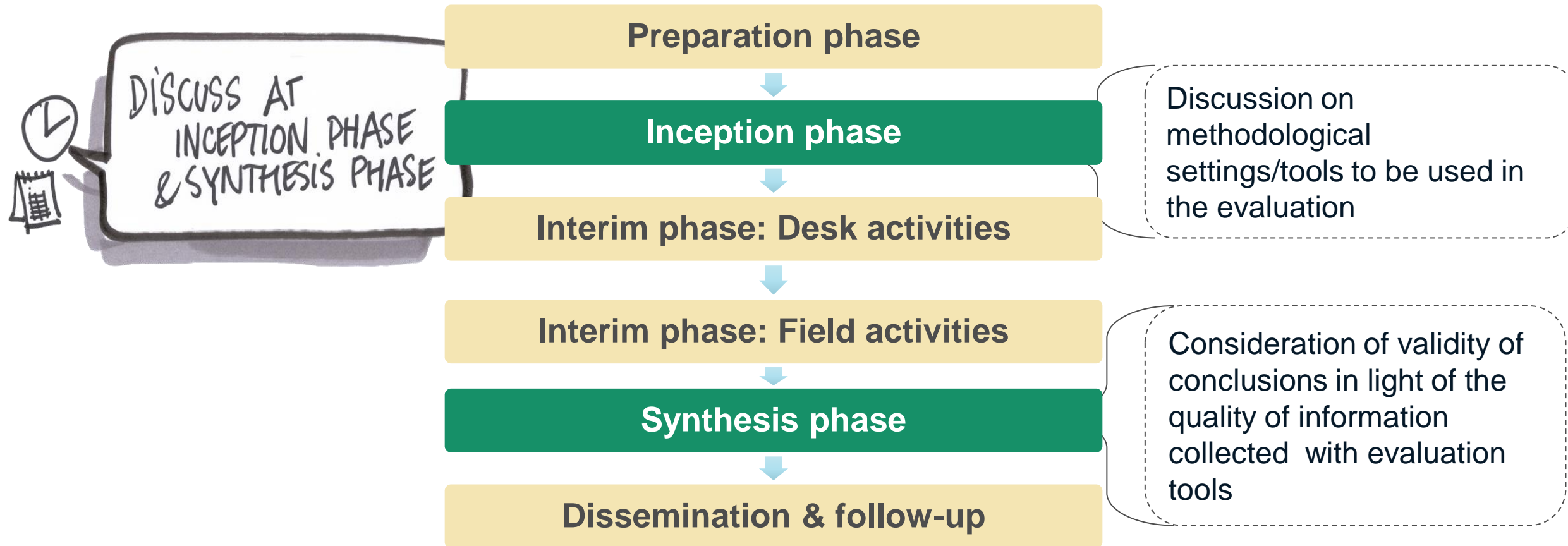


## Introduction to evaluation tools



*Crucial stages for  
discussing evaluation tools*

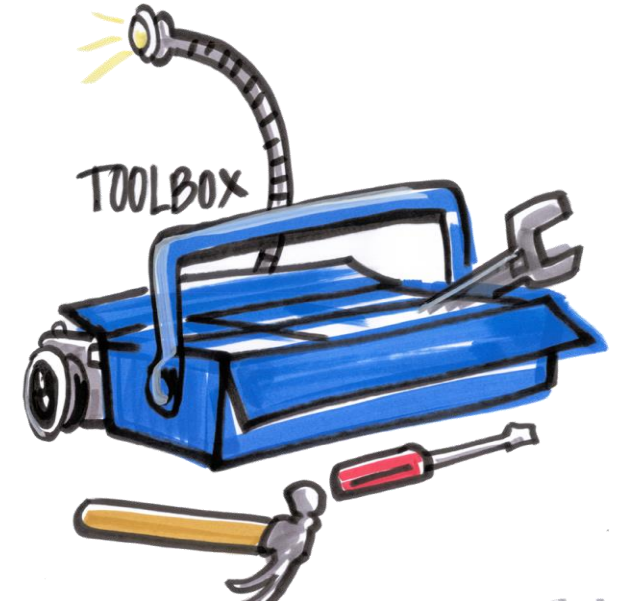
# Two most important phases for discussing evaluation tools



# Validity and appropriateness of evaluation tools

**Guiding questions to design and select the most appropriate evaluation tools and methods:**

- What kind of data do we need - quantitative or qualitative?
- Who is our target audience?
- Which tools will allow us to collect richer, more robust and sound data?
- Are data collection tools and methods adapted to the cultural context and do they take into account key issues such as :
  - ✓ Relevance to local traditions and way of life
  - ✓ Technical and language barriers
  - ✓ Openness to information sharing



# Key criteria for selecting (mix of) evaluation tools

- Specific **functions** and **ability to be implemented**
- Need for **specific data** (check availability and reliability in advance!)
- Necessary **resources** for using the tools
- Necessary **time** for preparing and using the tools
- The **availability of qualified and suitably skilled experts** (good knowledge of national languages and cultures, field experience, experience with specific evaluation tools e.g. RCG)

➡ Often a combination of tools suited to the context, adapted to the objectives of the evaluation and for triangulation





## *Evaluation in Hard-to-Reach Areas*

Constraints, techniques, and ethical  
aspect

# What are “hard-to-reach areas”?

- Around 2 billion people and half of the world's poor live in fragile or conflict-affected states (FCAS)
- 2016: EU's development cooperation with FCAS represented 52.8% of total DEVCO/INTPA commitments.
- 2019: commitments of DAC members to FCAS = 60% of overall expenditure.
- Logistic and security risks make the travel to some areas of FCAS particularly challenging – sometimes impossible.



# What are “hard-to-reach areas”?

- Apart from FCAS there are other areas where traveling is particularly challenging:
  - ✓ Post-disaster areas (*natural, man-made*)
  - ✓ Areas with other physical, logistical, security or health-related obstacles
- We define these regions of the world as “**Hard-to-reach areas**”.
- This definition includes but is larger than FCAS

# What about evaluations in HRA?

- A traditional approach to evaluation in hard-to-reach areas is destined to fail:
  - ✓ professional evaluators available to travel to these areas is limited
  - ✓ security risks make conventional field missions unrealistic
- **There are very few INTPA evaluations in these areas**
- However, there are solutions, requiring the use of specific methodologies and tools
- They have been used for a few years now by different agencies
- They are innovative in an evaluation context, but experience is growing



Cycle of conferences

Evaluation in hard-to-reach areas

In 2019 the ESS of DG INTPA organized a cycle of conferences to share with INTPA/EUD staff and the global evaluation communities some lessons from the use of these techniques.

**Ultimate goal:** to encourage OMs in Delegations and HQ to evaluate their interventions in hard-to-reach areas by requesting their evaluators to use suitable evaluation techniques that have been tried and tested by other agencies in similar contexts.



Cycle of conferences

**Evaluation in hard-to-reach areas**

## Some lessons from this initiative

*(final stock-taking paper, video recordings, slides, reference literature are [accessible from here](#))*

# Use of geo-spatial data



- Satellite data for both outputs and outcomes analysis
- Of immediate application in some contexts (*land use and planning, forestation, agriculture, environmental projects...*)
- Require substantial interpretation work when applied to other contexts (*migration, impact of civil infrastructures on wealth of local populations...*)
- Sometimes they can support analysis in unexpected fields (*violent extremism...*)
- Important to validate findings with field visits
- No need for skilled evaluators for validation work



# Use of geo-spatial data



The resolution of free satellite images increased enormously over time (from 250 to 10 m)



Commercial satellites deliver images with even higher definitions (up to some cm), but their cost is extremely high and the coverage may be lower.



# Use of geo-spatial data



Satellite data are available in **time series**

- They allow changes over time to be seen
- They allow missing baselines to be reconstructed (*with limitations*)
- Important analysis work is needed to interpret data

**Public satellite data are free**; main providers are:

- Copernicus (delivering also 6 core services: Climate Change, Marine Monitoring, Atmosphere Monitoring, Land Monitoring, Security, Emergency Management)
- NASA



Example in Mali, conflicts impacts perceived from satellites:

[https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/visuel/2021/01/24/dans-le-centre-du-mali-des-villages-rases-par-les-violences-et-la-famine\\_6067424\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/visuel/2021/01/24/dans-le-centre-du-mali-des-villages-rases-par-les-violences-et-la-famine_6067424_3212.html)



# Mobile-phone based feedback mechanisms



- Allow gathering of a large amount of data
- Used to administer:
  - ✓ SMS-based surveys
  - ✓ Messaging-based surveys (*require smartphones*)
  - ✓ Interactive voice recording surveys
  - ✓ Interviews through call centers
- Benefits
  - ✓ Mobile phones are widespread, easy to use and cheap
  - ✓ No need to use smartphones for SMS surveys
  - ✓ Versatility
- Problems
  - ✓ Bias towards phone owners
  - ✓ Literacy bias (*for text surveys*)
  - ✓ Privacy risks
  - ✓ Trust

# Surveys by local enumerators



- Administered in the field, face-to-face
- Allow gathering of a large amount of data
- Can be administered by local enumerators
- Require preparation and training time
- Different supports to be used depending on security conditions
  - ✓ Tablets
  - ✓ Smartphones
  - ✓ Paper-based

# Surveys by local enumerators



## Surveys with tablets / smartphones

- Specialised software allows offline data entry – online transmission or online-online
- Handhelds and software are cheap
- Data collection is fast
- Data automatically transmitted to server
- Post-collection processing is largely automatic, fast, reliable – but requires control
- Handhelds are reusable
- Requires logistic planning
- Discreet but visible; smartphones are less visible than tablets
- **Not to be used in case of security threats, where these tools are banned or culturally inappropriate**

# Surveys by local enumerators



## Paper-based surveys

- To be used when use of handhelds is not advisable
- Not exempt from risks in extreme situations
- Lengthier data collection process
- Very time absorbing post-collection process

# Surveys by local enumerators



## Tablets, smartphones, paper: some common issues, different solutions

- Data anonymization is imperative, irrespective of the tool used
- Data to be destroyed in case of hostility: easy with handhelds, more difficult with paper
- Verification of the work of enumerators: easy with geo-tracking in secure environments, need for random phone calls or a ghost coordinator in insecure environments



# Further opportunities



**Radio programmes**; to inform local beneficiaries of a survey, providing them with contacts for complaining with the work of surveyors etc.



**Monitoring of social platforms**; additional method to inform about a survey, gathering and analyzing reaction to an event etc.



**Additional, non-tech opportunities** exist and proved very effective in some contexts (*children's drawings...*)

**Situation in constant evolution**

# What we have learnt (1)

- **Never, ever, under any circumstance put at risk the security of beneficiaries and of surveyors – not even sub-consciously**
- Need for trade-offs between data robustness and no evidence at all
- Limits and reliability of the evaluation to be acknowledged and reported
- Adequate preparation time to be planned for in the ToR
- ToR must already include indications of the approach we seek; timeline and efforts must be consequent: the ESS is here to help!

# What we have learnt (2)

- Some common ToR underestimations:
  - ✓ Non provision for context-specific methods
  - ✓ Preparation time (including tool development)
  - ✓ Training time of enumerators
  - ✓ Time for developing the surveys
  - ✓ Time for data processing
  - ✓ Expertise for statistical / image analysis
  - ✓ Equipment costs (if needed)
- Never rely on one single method of evidence gathering: this is always true, more so when evaluating in these contexts
- Don't over-focus on technologies: they are a means to achieve an end, not an end *per se*

# What we have learnt (3)

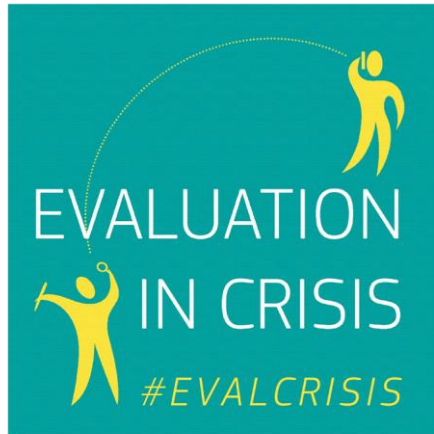
- When evaluating in FCAS (Fragile and Conflict Affected States), **conflict sensitivity** is a **further evaluation criterion**
- All interventions in FCAS should be designed with conflict sensitivity in mind but this is not always the case.
  - ✓ Even in these cases, conflict sensitivity can and should be assessed



## *Eval In Crises*

An ESS initiative for EC evaluation in times of pandemics, but not only!

# EvalInCrisis, an adaptive initiative from ESS



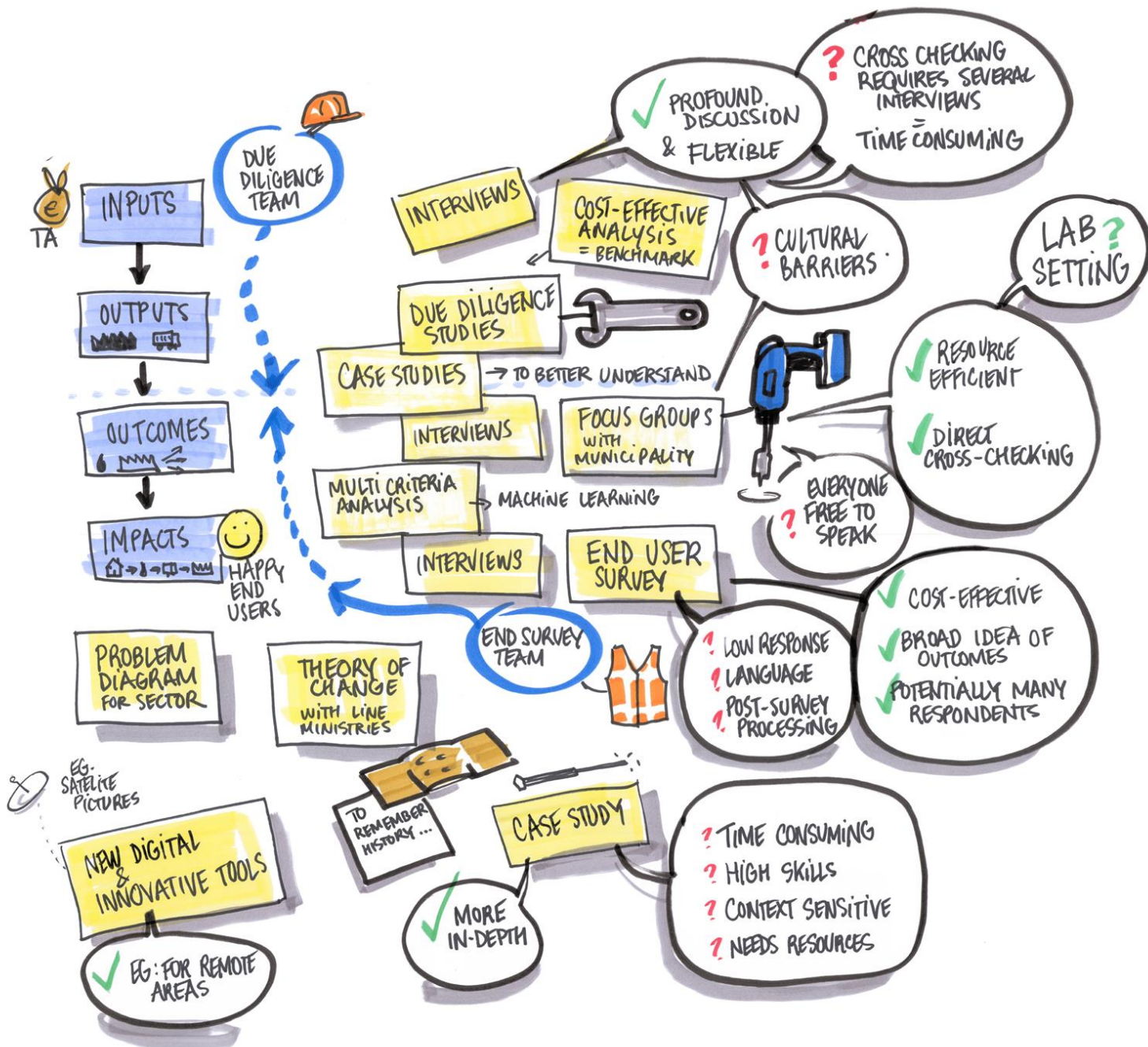
- COVID-19: this global crisis teaches us how fragile we are, as individuals and as societies
- It introduced profound changes in our lives; we shall embrace them and adapt our working habits
- This has several impacts also on evaluation
- The global evaluation community is developing references, reflections, tools to help commissioners of evaluation and evaluators
- #EVALCRISIS is an INTPA/ESS initiative, which gathers and shares useful references, and produces original reflections (podcasts, blog posts)
- Follow the initiative on <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/devco-ess>
- [Register here](#) to receive our bi-weekly newsletters
- INTPA staff with evaluations planned for 2020? Contact [helpdesk@evaluationsupport.eu](mailto:helpdesk@evaluationsupport.eu) to receive personalized support: go/do not go decision, tools, methods...



# Q&A session



**Open question & answer  
session**



## Experience sharing on evaluation tools



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