Today
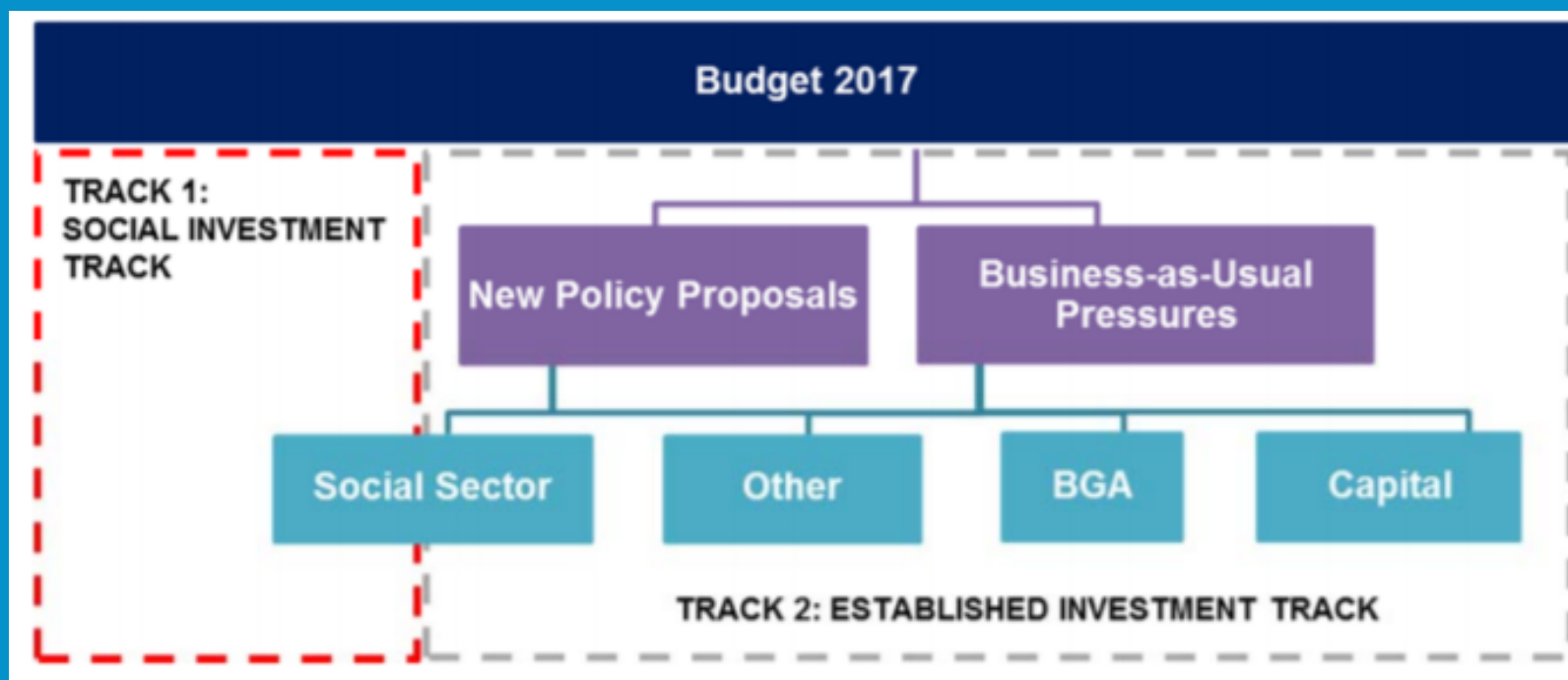
- Setting the scene: Social investment approach
- Budget 2017 process
  - Development of bids
  - Assessing the bids
- Assessing evidence provided
  - How (or whether) evidence had been used
  - Quality of the evidence for, and the effectiveness of, the intervention
  - General assessment of the proposed evaluation plan

Social investment approach

- › Cross-agency
- › Multi-pronged
- › Multi-year
- › Flexible
- › Focused on evaluating, learning and making improvements

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Budget 2017

Track 1: Social Investment Track

SCOPE:
Limited to **social investment initiatives** only, with scope to broaden out in future Budgets.

PURPOSE:
Reward high quality proposals that can deliver results and drive rigorous investment behaviours.

HOW ARE INITIATIVES SELECTED?
Ministers will be able to **opt-in** to this track but will be subject to an early checkpoint with Budget Ministers in November.

FISCAL CONSTRAINTS:
Allocation for this track will be **uncapped** but still subject to the Government's debt target and macroeconomic conditions.

ASSESSMENT METHOD:
An **investment threshold** will be applied to initiatives which increases the level of evidence and analysis required. Proposals that exceed the identified threshold will be weighted higher by Budget Ministers. Final decision rights will remain with Cabinet.

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Elements of Track 1 budget bids

Collaborative approaches are favoured

Particularly collective impact:

"The commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem" (www.fsg.org)

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Budget 2017: developing bids

- Case for change
    - Identify target population
    - Define problem to be solved
    - Preferred intervention
    - Evidence
- Value for money – Cost benefit analysis
- Implementation and effectiveness
    - Focus on evaluation – at expense of implementation & monitoring

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Presence of an intervention logic based on evidence

Input / Resources	Activities (Systems and Processes)	Outputs	Outcomes (Short-term)	Outcomes (Medium-term)	Outcomes (Long-term)
What we invest (time, money, equipment, etc.) The building blocks of your programme	What you do to convert your inputs into outputs (e.g. activating resources such as training/communications/publications/building houses)	What you produce (tangible products/services – i.e. widgets)	The change or benefits participants are expected to achieve in 1-2 years	The change or benefits your participants are expected to achieve in 3-4 years	If the changes or benefits to participants are achieved, then certain changes in communities, organisations or systems are expect in 5+ years

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The "case" for intervention logics

- Identify outcomes & indicators
- Implementation
- Evaluation activities

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Budget 2017: assessing bids

- › Use of evidence
- › Quality of evidence for intervention
- › Evaluation plans

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Use of evidence: The evidence transparency framework

	So, can you see what evidence has been used and the role it has played?			
	Not really/not at all	To some extent	Good	Outstanding
Diagnosis				
Proposal				
Implementation				
Value for money				
Testing and evaluation				

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Diagnosis

Identifies what issue will be addressed.

- ⊙ What policymakers know about the issue, its causes, effects, and scale
- ⊙ How policymakers have assessed the strengths and weaknesses of that evidence

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Proposal: the chosen intervention

- › Why this intervention was chosen

- › What evidence, if any, that choice is based on

- › How the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence base has been assessed, including what has been tried before and whether that worked or not

- › Whether there are other options and why they have not been chosen

- › What the agency plans to do about any part of the intervention that has not yet been decided on

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Implementation: how intervention will operate

- › Why this method for delivering the intervention has been chosen

- › What evidence, if any, that decision is based on

- › Whether there are other methods and if so the reasons for not choosing them

- › If the way to deliver the intervention is still being decided, what the method is for deciding

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Value for Money: "CBAx"

- What the costs and benefits are estimated to be
- The assumptions behind those calculations
- What evidence is being used to make those assumptions
- The uncertainties about the costs and benefits and how the figures are to change

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Testing and evaluation: knowing the policy has worked

- › Any testing that has been or will be done
- › Plans to measure the impact of the policy and the outcomes that will be measured
- › Plans to evaluate the effects of the policy, including a timetable
- › Plans for using further inputs

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The "evidence"...

1. Expert evidence (including consultants and think tanks)
2. Opinion-based evidence (including lobbyists/pressure groups)
3. Ideological evidence (party think tanks, manifestos)
4. Media evidence
5. Internet evidence
6. Lay evidence (constituents' or citizens' experiences)
7. Street evidence (urban myths, conventional wisdom)
8. Cabbies evidence
9. Research evidence

Source: An Insiders Guide to Standards of Evidence by Phil Davies, former Deputy Chief Social Researcher, 2007

How do you use the rating scale?

Define and describe the **intervention**

Gather existing New Zealand and international **evidence** about the intervention

Rate the New Zealand and international **evidence** using the scale
(either or both the New Zealand and international

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Should we fund or continue this NZ-based intervention? (Assessing NZ evidence)

	0 Pilot Initiative	1 Early stage, good in theory	2 Progressing, some evidence	3 Good evidence, sufficient for most interventions	4 Extra evidence for large or high risk interventions
Beneficial			✓	✓	✓
Mixed	✓ Strong theory of change with evidence based logic	✓ Too soon for effectiveness data, but processes and outputs suggest it is on track	✓	Consider weight of evidence, risk, alternatives	Consider weight of evidence, risk, alternatives
No effect			Consider stopping	X	X
Harmful			X	X	X

Effectiveness

Strength of evidence

Should we consider implementing this intervention in NZ? (Assessing international evidence)

	0 Pilot Initiative	1 Early stage, good in theory	2 Progressing, some evidence	3 Good evidence, sufficient for most interventions	4 Extra evidence for large or high risk interventions
Beneficial	X	X	Maybe, depending on alternatives	Maybe, depending on alternatives	✓
Mixed	No effectiveness data yet	No effectiveness data yet	X	Consider weight of evidence, risk, alternatives	Consider weight of evidence, risk, alternatives
No effect			X	X	X
Harmful			X	X	X

Effectiveness

Strength of evidence

Level	Criteria
0	• Pilot of a new initiative, • Evidence-based intervention logic & an evaluation plan • The evidence base will be built over time.
1	• Early stages of implementation or planned but not yet implemented • Evidence-based intervention logic an evaluation plan • The evidence base will be built over time.
2	• Meets all level 1 criteria AND • Has an established documented programme design, with quality assurance • Has been robustly evaluated at least once • To be included, the evidence should indicate positive or beneficial effects. • The evidence base will be built over time.
3	• Meets all level 2 criteria, PLUS it has at least one robust evaluation that reports on efficiency, assesses effectiveness, and some evidence about impact • The evidence supports the causal mechanism • Some information is available to assist with implementation in new contexts.
4	• Meets all level 3 criteria, PLUS it has been replicated at least once, usually at a large scale. • It has been evaluated at least twice & the evaluations provide strong evidence about effectiveness and impact, causality, what works well or less well for different participants and in different contexts. • Ideally, an economic evaluation, such as cost-benefit analysis. • Sufficient guidance available for implementation in new settings.

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Assessing evaluation plan

UNDERSTANDING AND DEMONSTRATING EFFECTIVENESS

How will outcomes be measured and effectiveness evaluated?
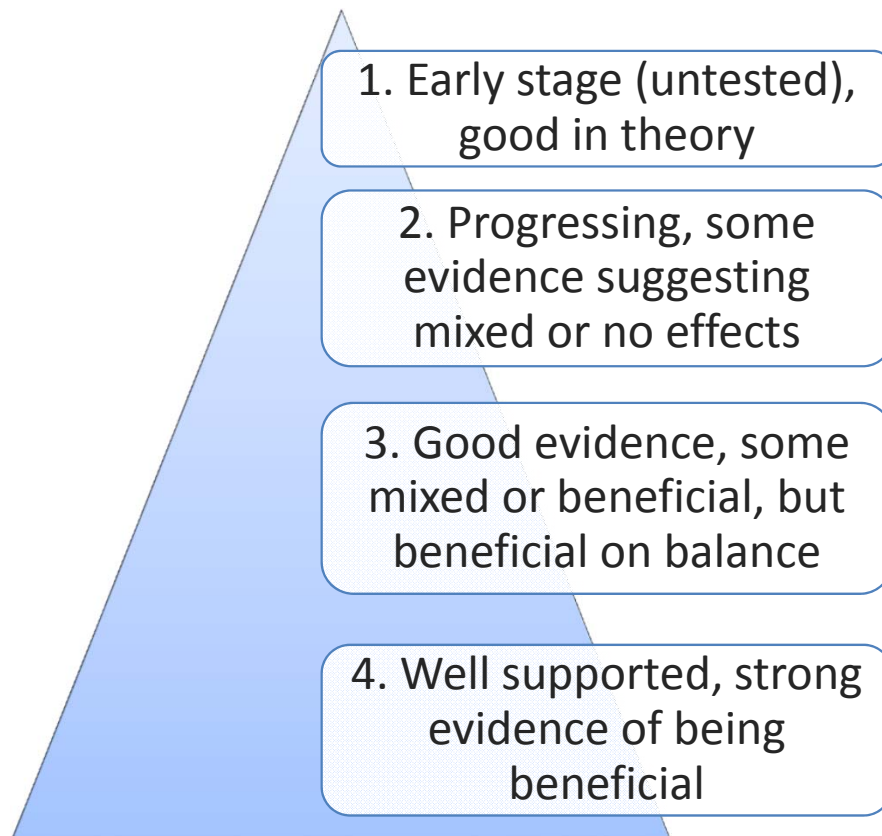
TYPE OF INTERVENTION

Is this a pilot, scale-up or retargeting of an existing service or a new initiative?
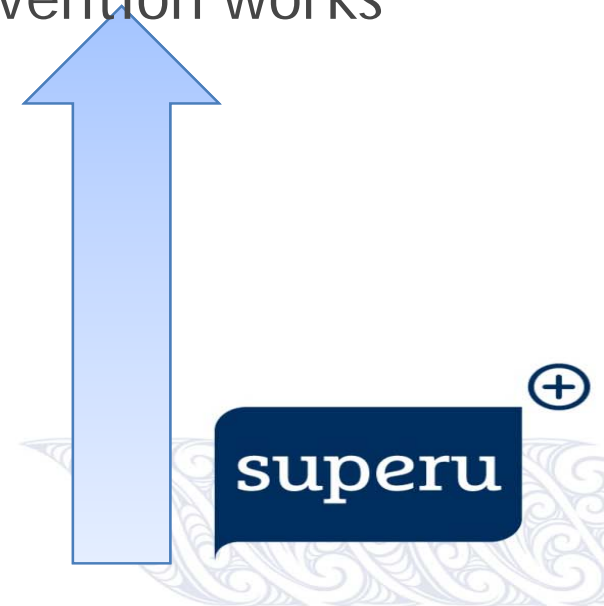
CONFIDENCE IN EVIDENCE

Assessment of reliability and adequacy of evidence used in intervention logic and return on investment calculation

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Assessing evaluation plan

1. Early stage (untested), good in theory

2. Progressing, some evidence suggesting mixed or no effects

3. Good evidence, some mixed or beneficial, but beneficial on balance

4. Well supported, strong evidence of being beneficial

More effort required to generate evidence that your intervention works

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JUNE 2017

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Making sense of evaluation:

A handbook for the social sector
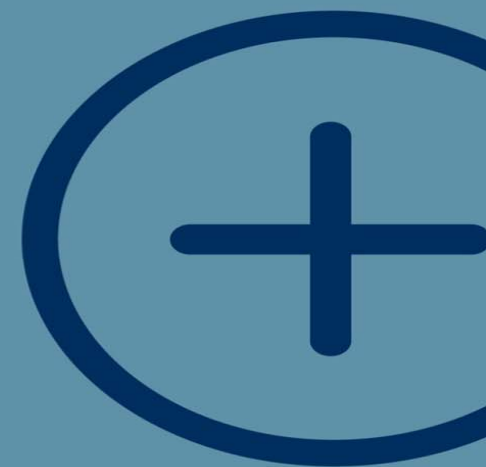
using Evidence for impact

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Points to consider

- Proposal should indicate that monitoring will start early and continue throughout the initiative
- Evaluation should not be an after thought, or occur only at the end of the initiative
    - Exception: may be with well-established programme
- Evaluation should not 100% rely on western scientific method, needs to recognise indigenous knowledge
    - RCT is not necessarily the "gold standard"
- Evaluation should be properly included in the programme budget

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Proposed improvements for Budget 2018

- Increased agency collaboration
- Increased alignment of bids across agencies
- Better integrate the "evidence story" throughout the bid
- Agencies to provide intervention logic and outline underlying assumptions
- Agencies to use Evidence Rating Scale to assess their proposed intervention

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For more information

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