

Session: Enabling impact: the hidden work (Slides: 8-16)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET: FIND THE IMPACT PRINCIPLE THAT IS MISSING

Each scenario looks promising on the surface — strong activities, credible outputs, signs of success. But one or more impact principles may be weak or missing. For each, explore: what appears strong, what might still be missing, which principle(s) are weakest, what risks could emerge later. You may identify more than one. The aim is to use this as a way of understanding the value of the hidden enabling work.

Impact principles

1. Co-design: Fairness and learning in partnership
2. Understanding contexts of evidence use
3. Building and engaging with stakeholder networks
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion
5. Strengthening mutual capacities
6. Embedding impact work into the research process

Scenario 1

A team of policy advisors identify a policy need on integrated peatland restoration and work with APC staff to define the scope and feasibility of a rapid evidence request. Next, a calldown is launched, and following interviews with applicants and scoring of their proposals, the selected research team delivers a high-quality evidence synthesis, spatial analysis and technical recommendations within deadline. Senior policy makers praise the outputs for rigour, clarity and policy relevance. The final report is circulated internally and presented at a cross-government meeting.

The team of policy advisors engage at the kick-off meeting and at the end of the process, and there is limited discussion about how the evidence will be interpreted or applied across different implementation contexts.

Please reflect on what's missing

Scenario 2

A LUNZ Hub APC-commissioned project develops strong working relationships across government, agencies and established stakeholder networks. The project generates follow-up requests, repeat invitations by policy and other stakeholders and continuing collaboration across several projects. Outputs are actively discussed and reused internally.

The same organisations and individuals participate, while some groups engage occasionally or through webinar participation.

Please reflect on what is missing

Scenario 3

A project team adapts quickly to changing policy priorities during delivery of a calldown. Outputs evolve several times in response to emerging policy needs, stakeholder feedback and new opportunities. The project team is praised for responsiveness and flexibility.

The original research questions and underlying evidence framework shifted repeatedly. Some partners reported feeling unclear about the project's direction; others felt their early input was set aside without explanation.

Please reflect on what's missing

Scenario 4 — Capacity assumed, not built

A LUNZ Hub-APC project produces a sophisticated set of integrated indicators and a methodology guide. The outputs are circulated to all four nations' policy teams. Two of the four nations adopt elements of the framework within months.

The other two nations have not engaged further. Informal feedback suggests their teams lack the technical capacity to apply the framework, and no training or follow-up support was built into the project.

Please reflect on what's missing

Synthesis across the four scenarios

- Which principles recurred most often as missing?

- Where in your own work might similar gaps exist?

- Which of these principles is hardest to evidence — even when present?

- What would change in your project planning if one of these principles was made visible from the start?