

Formative and Real-time Evaluation

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DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH:

Evaluation in itself produces learning and know-how



Essential elements

- Developmental purpose
- Innovation niche
- Complexity perspective
- Utilization focus
- Participatory
- Evaluator as co-creator

Design

- Designed to support change and learning, not only improvement
- Focuses on innovation and systems change
- Systems thinking, contextual and cultural sensitivity
- Intended users identified
- Users involved
- Advocacy, evaluation perspective, evaluative thinking, flexibility, timely feedback



Sources: Chelimsky 1997, Fetterman 2001, Patton 1994, 2002, 2008, Rökköläinen 2011; Räsänen & Rökköläinen 2013, 2014

Real time evaluation (RTE) design



WHY?

- ✓ Desire for more timely evaluation results
- ✓ Improve evaluability
- ✓ Promote learning

HOW?

- ✓ Takes place during the course of implementation
- ✓ Provides immediate (real time) feedback
- ✓ Internal (rather than external)
- ✓ Process (rather than impact)

DESIGN

- Formative by nature
- Evaluation is designed to support the development and continuous change
- Results are reported embedded in context (not in isolation)



Challenges



- No standard procedures
 - Choosing the evaluators
 - Reporting
 - Resources
 - Continuity
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- Is it (too) close to monitoring? Consultation?
 - Is it (enough) close to developmental evaluation?
 - There is a tension between accountability reporting and learning

Tension between Accountability and Learning - How to find balance?





What is learning?

- What are the objectives of learning?
 - Change in behaviour?
 - Change in process?
 - Change of operational environment and culture

- What kind of learning do we mean?
 - Learning of individuals
 - learning of groups
 - learning of communities/cultural change

- Who is responsible for learning?

Current developmental oriented evaluations

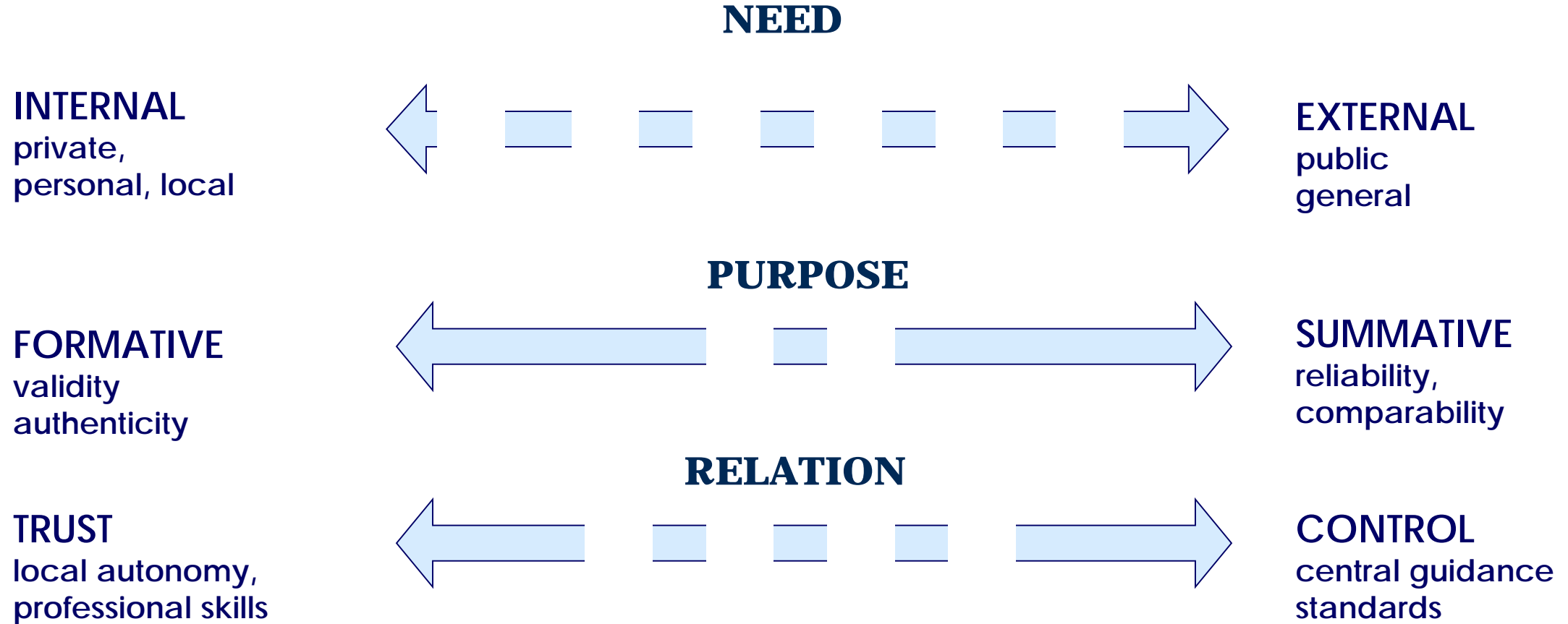


- **BEAM** the Developmental Evaluation of Business with Impact (BEAM) – program with Business Finland (former Tekes = the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation) and MFA (2015 – 2019), implemented by evaluation consultant agency 4Front
- **Evaluation of national sustainable development policy (Agenda2030) in Finland** implemented by Demos (independent think tank), Helsus (Helsinki institute of Sustainable Science, University of Helsinki) and Syke (Finnish Environment Institute) (7/2018 – 2/2019)
- **MFA mid-term review: Self-assessment of the Country Strategy** Department for Africa and the Middle East and Department for The Americas and Asia (Autumn 2018 – Spring 2019)
- Evaluation on **Knowledge management**: “How do we learn, manage and make decisions in Finland’s development policy and cooperation?” (2/2018 – 9/2019)



EVALUATION TENSIONS

(Räkköläinen 2011)



Evaluation is about **developing the future**,
not only past and judgment



Thank you!

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