Introducing Rapid Impact Evaluation (RIE)
And Associated Concepts the Scenario-Based Counterfactual and Simplified Measurement of Effects

Expert Lecture
CES June 2014

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1. Thank you for coming today, and to CES for the opportunity to describe this new impact evaluation method.

2. Housekeeping – I plan to speak for about a half hour leaving the remainder of time for questions and discussion

3. However please feel free to ask questions of clarification whenever you need to. Remember if something is not clear to you, it likely is also not clear to others.

4. The materials I am discussing today come from two papers one already submitted to the American Journal of Evaluation the other near ready to submit.

5. If you want a copy of my speaking notes, slides and other materials leave me your card or write your name and email on a piece of paper and I will send them to you.
1. Work on the method started in the early 2000’s supported by the Hewlett Foundation and piloted on a group of Oregon natural resource decisions.
2. With further support from US Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior the method was improved and applied to two new groups of natural resource management decisions.
3. Several years ago I was invited to provide a series of lectures/workshops at several venues in South Africa. I included the work using the methods I am presenting today, which found an immediate audience, apparently reflecting a hunger to know about impacts and a frustration with existing approaches.
4. Subsequently with support from CLEAR AA (World Bank funded Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results – Anglo Africa) and Wits University in South Africa we developed and delivered training on the method and introduced it to the SA Department of Monitoring and Evaluation. We are now updating the training for admission as a CLEAR AA training. Provision of these trainings has been hugely beneficial for clarifying and refocusing RIE and I am grateful for input from training participants who opened my eyes to its potential.
5. I want to especially thank CLEAR and CLEAR AA Director Stephen Porter. It is very difficult for practitioners to afford the time and resource required to develop methods. Their support has been instrumental in the articulation and refinement of RIE. So far as I know RIE is the only practitioner-developed method specifically for evaluation.
6. The opportunity to present RIE to evaluation groups at the UN Office in Nairobi provided the incentive to communicate RIE in a one hour frame which as you know sharpens ones focus to the main issues.
7. Current applications of RIE include:
   a. Evaluation of a Pacific sustainable community fisheries initiative across approximately 10 nations.
   b. Evaluation of collaborative decision making in the US EPA Superfund program which will involve applying RIE to about 30 cases.

Developing RIE has benefited from inputs of many.

Is a practitioner-developed method, perhaps unique in that regard and likely why the approach prioritizes use and influence of evaluation information good enough for likely decisions, over elegance and precision.
8. Impact evaluation is usually taken to refer to estimating the net change in effects of interest attributable to the intervention by comparing results achieved by the intervention to what would likely have occurred without the intervention.

9. Evaluating impacts has proved challenging, especially for some settings such as:
   a. Multi-system evaluations such as sustainable development and natural resources, but also those in the human system alone where there are many moving parts
   b. Formative and developmental evaluations rarely are able to evaluate impacts likely or achieved
   c. Many smaller project and program interventions funded by multilaterals, bilaterals, national governments, ngos and communities do not have the human and financial capacity for impact evaluation

10. I ask why, if we promote a focus on results and accountability for achieving results, we cannot provide evaluation methods that enable many interventions to evaluate impacts and preview impacts as Scriven suggested years ago?

11. The methods I will present today are our efforts to get round this limitation using a new impact evaluation approach designed for the gaps.
1. I will be introducing the Rapid Impact Evaluation method - or RIE
2. RIE use two additional techniques that enable RIE but appear very relevant for other evaluation settings:
   a. The Scenario-Based Counterfactual
   b. Simplified estimates of direct benefits
3. In applications to date RIE is costing under $25K USD, requires under two months to complete and does not have need of new empirical data.
4. Innovation is a new combination of things that already exist, so too with new methods.
5. RIE brings to evaluation two approaches from other knowledge domains:
   a. An approach to use-inspired research that is based on the extensive work of Bill Clark and colleagues trying to understand (evaluate) why some science knowledge. With Kai Lee from the Packard Foundation we adapted this approach to form Linking Knowledge with Action (LKwA) an approach for grantmakers to support use-inspired research. RIE is built around use, applying the LKwA principles; and so far as I know is the only method built fully around use.
   b. From dispute resolution the concept of “interests” as an approach to managing bias in decision making, applied in RIE to manage the potential for bias arising from our use of expert judgment.
6. RIE also utilizes three techniques newly developed to enable rapid judgments of impacts:
   a. The Scenario-Based Counterfactual provides comparison to a good alternative which decision makers and stakeholders regard as legitimate and salient, and which is generating good quality results. The worth of the Scenario-Based Counterfactual is especially apparent with evaluands with many moving parts, typically involving more than one major system.
   b. RIE forecasts future impacts, based on the logic that impacts are often or usually not directly observable and that the attribution
to the intervention is very difficult. That logic leads us to address likely future impacts early on as part of developmental or formative evaluation, or for summative takes on impacts intended for the gaps. We propose, and are finding success with a focus on two primary mechanisms affecting future impacts, the probability that they will occur, and the likely magnitude. This is a highly simplified but logical and so far effective way of focusing information gathering on the key mechanisms of change in future impacts. Use of this simplified measurement approach means that for two scenarios – the intervention and the counterfactual – each effect can be estimated using four questions, probability and magnitude for the intervention, and then repeated for the counterfactual.

c. Finally, we have found that it is not usually possible to directly judge compound impacts resulting from usually dynamic interaction of direct effects from the intervention, contextual factors and other drivers. After all this is what all the superstructure of other impacts methods focus on. In RIE we reach only to direct effects, and then extend our reach to impacts using agreed good, contemporary and relevant knowledge from the literature, the intervention, simulation models, and other credible sources to provide us with the guidance we need on how to combine direct effects to reach impacts.

7. These five developments are at the core of RIE – and each has its own potential to contribute to evaluation efforts other than RIE.
1. Impact evaluation methods are of course a matter of intense debate, often very intense.
   - For example this issue associated with an effort by the US Government to mandate experimental designs for evaluation in the Department of Education led to the formation of the AEA Evaluation Policy Task Force, reversal of the proposed policy and very public departure of some senior and very good evaluators from the association.

2. I will use the recent US Government Accounting Office inventory developed in response to a request from US Congress to identify methods suitable for evaluating impacts.

3. GAO identified five methods presented here on the slide. All of the methods use comparison methods, comparing the effects of the intervention to what would have occurred without it. The main methods difference between the listed approaches is how they construct and use the comparison – we often refer to the alternative as a counterfactual.

4. Are you all sufficiently familiar with these or should I briefly describe them?
   ASK FOR A SHOW OF HANDS AND HOPEFULLY SKIP ALL BUT LAST POINT

5. The first two are referred to as experimental designs where either the counterfactual is achieved by randomly assigning participants from the same population to the treatment or non-treatment groups, or the second is quasi experimental design where the counterfactual is a population matched to the treatment group using statistical techniques, but who do not receive the treatment. In both cases the statistically estimated difference between the intervention and comparison group is taken to be attributable to the intervention since all other factors are potentially controlled. These are essentially comparison across populations.

6. The third is comparison across time for the same population, often using interrupted time series methods or qualitative approaches such as case studies and other approaches.

7. The final two are specific and important methods...
| 8. All these approaches are with/without. |
| 9. But having *no intervention* is often not possible (legal, ethical) and so the comparison is less salient and legitimate for program decision makers, OK for those making resource allocation decisions across program alternatives. | using largely qualitative approaches to articulate the difference that the intervention made largely using with and without or before and after focused questions. |
1. Being rapid has certain requirements, mainly cost, level of intrusion to the program, how long it takes and data requirements. **But also there is no use being rapid unless the evaluation is used.**

2. The slide provides OUR view of how the five methods for impact evaluation identified by GAO rank against these criteria important for Rapid Evaluations – the last column salience and legitimacy are known to be good predictors of use and influence of science.

3. Clearly being rapid focuses one on expert judgment.

4. This is first a good illustration of why we need multiple approaches to get to impacts, suited to different settings and needs. RIE is an effort to fill a gap by addressing certain types of needs.

5. Because RIE is built around use and influence I need to clarify how we understand these concepts before we turn to RIE, and the specific new methods. The final column in the figure is about use and judges the ability of the various methods to:

   a. Adapt to the specific questions of interest to decision makers and stakeholders and provide evaluation information when there are openings for its use (salience).
   
   b. Satisfy decision makers and stakeholders that the evaluation process was fair in the sense of considering relevant perspectives, ensuring that these perspectives are incorporated into the evaluation, and that the procedures are transparent and understandable (legitimate).

6. To provide a rapid evaluation of impacts that has good prospects of being used we went for the green.
1. We use the knowledge about use and influence that comes from evaluations of global environmental assessments such as the International Panel on Climate Change, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and used in the UNEP Global Environmental Assessments. This work began in the mid 1980’s, most of the synthesis publications appeared in around 2002-05 and can be found by searching for Bill Clark – Harvard or under the Harvard Sustainability Science web site.

2. For RIE we use a somewhat more applied variant that I developed about five years ago with Kai Lee a well-known American scientist who has headed the Packard Foundation Science grant making program for about eight years now.

3. This use-inspired approach states that use is influenced by a social knowledge process rather than the knowledge products – a social knowledge process we describe as joint knowledge production by domain experts, decision makers and key stakeholders – or interests.

4. By engaging in joint knowledge production we promote three aspects that have been shown to influence use positively:
   a. Salience – address questions that are relevant for the interests and in a timely manner driven by the timing useful for the intervention, not the researchers
   b. Legitimacy – viewed as procedurally fair, all relevant interests are included and have opportunity to participate,
   c. Credibility – scientific credibility – acceptable processes, valid results

5. I argue that evaluation debates about methods focus on credibility – rigor, elegance – whereas we should really focus on use given that evaluation is about improving things – and so we also need to include salience and legitimacy when assessing methods, and employ joint knowledge production methods to achieve these.
Comment – I am about to address two important aspects of RIE simultaneously:

a) What does RIE look like?
b) What are interests and why does RIE use interest rather than “stakeholder”?

c) RIE has three stages, the first stage is most important and is where the evaluation starts to engage interests and specify key inputs for evaluation.

RIE is the only impact evaluation method designed around use, and perhaps also the only method designed to promote use more generally in evaluation. That means that every step in RIE is designed to promote use through joint knowledge production focusing on process, not the products and promoting salience, legitimacy and credibility.

RIE has three distinct stages. The first and most important is the design and stakeholder engagement process that requires about 75% of the resources.

a. With decision makers and key stakeholders we jointly design the key elements for the evaluation:
   - Describe the intervention and the theory of change
   - Specify the direct effects and impacts
   - Identify the interests affected by and who can affect success of the intervention
   - Clarify temporal and spatial scales of the intervention, effects and impacts
   - Develop the counterfactual.

b. Jointly means we engage an inclusive group of interests in the design process, and keep it simple.

3. From the field of alternative dispute resolution we learn that it is important to have all interests who can affect outcomes involved in decision making – though not all parties that represent those interests. And from my own work I have reasonable evidence that so long as all interests are represented and participate, the bias that any one interest carries with it tend to be balanced by the collection of other interests.

a. For RIE we use the broad net for interests and include those interests affected by the intervention along with the more conventional interests that can affect the intervention

4. What is an interest? It is a perspective and/or position on the intervention usually representing priorities, values, worldview of organisations and individuals.

a. For example an environmental group and a power generating utility have different interests, an environmental conservation
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<td>donor has a different interest from a subsistence community, a development agency in a national government different from an environmental agency. b. Generally evaluations solicit input from a range of stakeholders and decision makers and in analysis group them in some manner. c. RIE engages key decision makers and stakeholders directly in the knowledge process (not just as sources of information) and we posit that if we do not engage all interests who can affect the intervention and who are affected by the intervention we leave open a serious potential for bias. We do not seek to engage all individuals or parties – but appropriate representation of all interests. d. Further we posit that procedurally we further open the door to bias if we do not, as a starting point, treat all interests as equal and so accord them equal voice. So regardless of the number of individual voices in an interest (e.g. how many federal government parties) all responses in an interest are combined leading to input from, for example, federal, provincial, local and First Nation government, environmental NGOs, commercial users of resources, recreational users, traditional users and so on. e. We suggest, without evidence, that <strong>IF YOU ARE EVALUATING IMPACTS</strong> and you do not weight by interest then in analysis you are creating bias, favouring some well represented interests over other less well represented. f. Many incredibly valuable things can be learned from examining evaluation inputs within an interest (e.g. beneficiaries) – but for impacts we should focus on impacts. g. There is a hierarchy – from participants to organization (whether individuals or organisations) to interests. Each level is more appropriate to some types of analysis, less appropriate to others. For impacts we focus on interests.</td>
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5. We use individual interviews or group processes to work with interests during this first phase, depending on logistics and the nature of the intervention
   – For example in our evaluations of very high stakes environmental and resource management decisions in the US it is a bad idea to get the parties together again, and logistically impossible
   – But for our evaluation of sustainable fisheries in the Pacific we obviously use group processes

6. Stage 2 is information gathering from triangulated groups of experts and work with existing data and knowledge to identify how we will go from direct effects to impacts and also assess external validity of our evaluation judgments.
   a. For RAPID evaluation this cannot be a protracted,
   b. For USE it needs to be transparent and understandable – and gain participation of the interests (decision makers and key stakeholders)
   c. To achieve this we had to develop the new counterfactual and simplify judgments.

7. Stage 3 is the synthesis of the triangulated estimates to generate our impact assessments as well as QA.
1. The Scenario-Based Counterfactual is a counterfactual that compares the intervention to a legal, feasible, plausible and ethical alternative. This is very different from the other counterfactual approaches that are essentially with/without as already described.

2. The scenario used for the counterfactual is often one that key decision makers might well have selected for the intervention.

3. Almost always when one is developing an intervention, alternatives are considered and researched, some remain for the short list and many of these will be approaches already being employed elsewhere, or new combinations of existing approaches.

4. While not selected they remain plausible, potentially feasible, likely legal and efficacious approaches that provide an excellent knowledge base from which to articulate a good alternative that all of the interests would consider a plausible, feasible, efficacious and legal alternative scenario for the intervention.
   - In other words, the reasons they were not adopted are not associated with utility, feasibility, legality – but were likely a result of trade-offs and constraints in decisions.

5. That is what we look for in developing the Scenario-Based Counterfactual with the interests.

6. The handout has two examples, one from an Oregon case the other from the current work in the Pacific...
1. Data collection takes a lot of time and can be resource intensive. RIE cannot afford either. So how do you evaluate without new empirical data?

2. Actually we have a lot of ways to do this – simulation models, Delphi methods for example.

3. And please, let’s recognise that a lot of good evaluative judgments are made without an intensive reaping of empirical observations that assemble around a theory of change. In Fiji I was interested in the balance between catch and effort – a technical measure we use to assess productivity of a fishery. I was talking to the community health worker in a small community on the Coral Coast who said “It used to take six hours to fill out table, it now takes three”. One of the reasons I was in Fiji was to participate in an intensive three day workshop with fisheries economists on catch-effort concepts and measures. Lots of graphs and statistics. But I like the catch-effort approach from the beach. It is a good measure, is salient and legitimate, and simple and transparent.

4. Consider a Tesla electric car service bay – see how simple it can be with appropriate design of the car.

5. The human mind is an amazing hard drive and processor. Engaging appropriate humans who are appropriately expert can be an effective way to judge impacts. The usual critique which I tediously hear in somewhat pompous voices goes something like “You know that experts can be right, but of course they can also be wrong”. Well so too can economists applying the most sophisticated mathematical forecasting models.

   a. For example the recent near collapse of world economies or econometric methods in experimental designs - both founded on Nobel prize winning methods.

6. We are always at risk of being wrong. The point is to be transparent about the risks, potential sources of bias and measurement error and how we address them, and always conduct and report on our assessments of bias and error.
7. Simplifying measurement is a pretty sure way to gain disdain of our precision-focused colleagues. But it is how most everyday evaluative decisions are made, and makes evaluation more accessible and enables a social knowledge process.
1. In evaluation we are making judgments about likely future effects and impacts.
2. The sources of variation are the probability of the effects occurring and the likely magnitude of each effect when it does occur.
3. That is it – probability and magnitude capture almost all variation in future effects.
4. We reviewed this conceptually with a large number of appropriate folks, and of course have been applying it within RIE.
5. Nobody has ever commented that it is too simple. However they do want evidence that it works.
6. We have found that several factors are important for this to work – to mention a few important ones:
   a. We can only reach to the direct effects, experts are reluctant or refuse to judge compound effects – so we had to develop a transport mechanism to get to the impacts of interest.
   b. We need to tend to reliability by specifying the spatial and temporal frames for effects and also for the intervention/alternative scenario.
   c. Biases from particular points of view are offset by biases from other points of view – our approach using interests addresses this well, we need to ensure that all interests are represented and that each interest only gets one vote.
   d. Judgments seem to work best within a bounded context of time, space and scale. We have only worked with interventions where we can frame things within a site – which might be quite narrow such as a specific dam at a specific point on a river or quite broad such as a coastline in Fiji. RIE is thus only able to work with policy interventions that can be represented by a representative sample of locations.

RIE judges direct effects from intervention and uses existing knowledge to move from direct effects to impacts.
1. Clearly we do not have time to work through this in detail.

2. In effect what we do is judge the probability and magnitude for each direct effect - for the intervention and the alternative scenario.

3. We then combine these, after weighting to ensure that interests have equal voice, to estimate the percentage change from the base under the intervention and counterfactual – and then the difference between these to get to the incremental contribution of the intervention for each direct effect.

4. We then use existing knowledge from models, research and evaluation literature to guide us in combining these direct effects to estimate the change in impacts.

5. The calculations are bog standard for impact evaluation, so we need to focus on what is different about RIE.

**RIE calculations are simple and so accessible and transparent to interests.**
1. The counterfactual
2. How we get judgments of direct effects using simplified measurement centering on probability and magnitude
3. How we move from direct effects to impacts
4. The centrality of use
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. What do we end up with?</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Judgments of net incremental change in impacts attributable to the intervention</td>
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<td>3. That key decision makers and stakeholders consider to be legitimate and salient and credible</td>
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<td>4. And which early testing shows to score well on testing of validity and reliability</td>
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<td>a. Cronbach’s alpha &gt;0.94 to date (where all interests are involved)</td>
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<td>b. Validity looks good, external validity is plausibly associated with technical forecasts and subsequent empirical observations about effects.</td>
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<td>5. But a method that many evaluators find less rigorous than should be used for evaluating impacts and contributing to important decisions. <strong>Does this matter if it is good and is used?</strong></td>
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| RIE judgments can be valid and reliable, and promote use. |
| Meet the standard for evaluation. |
| Costs $25K US, takes < 2 months, does not intrude. |
Alternative Scenario for the Marmot Dam Decision

Evaluation of the economic and environmental impacts of using collaborative decision processes to address the issue that the utility wanted to decommission and uneconomic hydro generation facility in a manner that would address important passage issues of endangered salmon and trout and provide benefits for the utility and the other interests.

Up to this point this was the largest dam removal decision in the US and was located on critically important waters for salmon and trout.

The utility was Portland Gas and Electric who are a progressive company that has adopted collaboration for key decisions as opposed to the more usual adversarial approaches.

The evaluand is a long standing effort to support local management of sustainable fisheries in nearshore Pacific waters. The initiative is over fifteen years old and builds on local resource ownership and access structures to jointly achieve ecosystem benefits while improving food security and livelihoods.

The setting for each individual intervention is local but a significant portion of a coastline can be covered by neighboring local interventions as with the Fiji coral coast. The harvesting effort and impacts in the community and water are also local and while tightly connected, water and community can be treated as separate but connected entities.
Introducing Rapid Impact Evaluation (RIE)
And Associated Concepts the Scenario-Based Counterfactual and Simplified Measurement of Effects

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Thanks to Those Supporting and Contributing to Development of These Methods
Impact Evaluation Gaps

• Impact evaluation is rarely warranted for projects and smaller programs.
  – Too expensive and intrusive

• For complex interventions such as multi sector or sustainable development
  – Too many moving parts for the methods

• In developmental and formative evaluations
  – Impacts have not occurred, too expensive
Logic for this presentation

• Introduce the logic, elements and process for Rapid Impact Evaluation
• Describe the first enabling concept – the Scenario-Based Counterfactual
  – With thanks to Michael Carbon who came up with an excellent naming for the method, after many others had tried without success
• Describe the second enabling concept – Simplified Estimation of Direct Effects
• Describe very briefly how we bring this all together
Existing Approaches compare with and without the intervention

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<th>Method</th>
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<td>Same population but only some receive the intervention</td>
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<td>Randomised designs</td>
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<td>Comparison groups</td>
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<td>Time series</td>
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<td>Case studies</td>
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<td>Expert Judgment</td>
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Which options can be rapid?

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Intrusion</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Data requirements</th>
<th>Legitimate and salient</th>
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<tr>
<td>Randomised designs</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Comparison groups</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>Expert Judgment</td>
<td>Low</td>
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Theory of Change to Promote Use

Users
Interests who can influence the intervention and those affected by the intervention

Domain and Technical Experts

Knowledge that is:
- Salient (Timely, relevant, feasible)
- Legitimate (in the face of opposition)
- Credible (Valid, Replicable)

RIE Has Three Stages

I Create the Summary

- Working with key decision-making parties to enumerate and describe:
  - Intervention
  - Counterfactuals
  - Direct effects
  - Interests involved
  - Time and location

II Triangulate judgments of effects for intervention and alternative

- Triangulate Measures (different experts and knowledge, same procedures)
- Decision-maker judgments weighted, one vote per interest
- Decision makers (using web survey)
- Panel of experts (using facilitated workshop)
- Technical advisors (using web survey)

III Use and verification

- Validate, synthesis, test quality
- Synthesis of judgments
- Test validity and reliability
- Test external validity

Consultation with users
Scenario-Based Counterfactual Characteristics

Scenario-Based Counterfactuals are alternatives to the intervention that are efficacious, logically plausible, legal, feasible and which the interests judge very likely

- During design interventions almost always consider options
- Options usually include some that have been applied elsewhere
- Options are often set in law or regulations

Attend to reliability

- Specify the spatial and temporal frames for counterfactuals
- Specify the process, resources and other key considerations necessary that different experts will consider the same counterfactual concept when making their judgments
- Biases from particular points of view are offset by biases from other points of view—need to ensure that all interests are represented and that each interest only gets one vote when defining the counterfactual
- All participants in the evaluation need to agree that the counterfactual is reasonable and plausible, but not necessarily their top choice
We Simplify Methods to Estimate Direct Effects

A result of simplified design – a Tesla service center
Simplified Estimates of Direct Effects

- Probability of an effect occurring and the magnitude are the main source of variation in future effects
- We get three groups of experts to judge probability and magnitude for each effect for the intervention and alternative scenario

- Expertise in knowledge domains
- Expertise in intervention
- Technical Advisors
- Expert Panel
- Intervention Expert Group
Producing Our Estimates

Each expert in the three groups judges probability and magnitude for each effect for intervention and alternative.

Weight so each interest has one vote, combine probability and magnitude to form an index for each effect and for each expert group, calculate difference between intervention and alternative for each effect to estimate change attributable to intervention.

Using external knowledge sources identify and weight effects by relative contribution to impacts, combine to estimate impacts expressed as a % change attributable to the intervention.

Assess validity of estimates of effects and impacts using external data and consultations.

Estimates of changes in impacts attributable to intervention and quality of estimates.
Distinguishing Features of RIE

- Vigorously use-inspired matching applicability in formative and developmental evaluations, and good practice in general
- Extensive preparation of intervention summary provides all necessary design elements, developed jointly with key interests
- Systematic triangulation of expert judgments, attending to potential sources of bias can be rapidly deployed
- Scenario-Based Counterfactual and simplified estimates of direct effects eliminate need for new empirical data
- Use of research and stakeholder knowledge to identify weights to translate direct effects into impacts
- Systematic testing of the quality of the evaluation judgments
  - Judgments of exert groups are have high level of reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha >0.9) and validity (statistically significant to .01 level) and consistent with external data where available.
We need to invest in evaluation-future, not evaluation-past.

What We End Up With

- Judgments of net incremental change in impacts attributable to the intervention
- That key decision makers and stakeholders consider to be legitimate and salient and credible
- And which early testing shows to score well on testing of validity and reliability
- But by a method that many evaluators find less rigorous than should be used for evaluating impacts
Feedback please!

Thoughts?
Ideas?
Opinions?
Questions?
Alternative Scenario for the Marmot Dam Decision

If PGE had developed the dam removal plan on their own and submitted their plan to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in 2001, environmental groups and possibly the Tribes would have litigated using the Endangered Species Act and possibly Tribal legislation. Litigation would have delayed the initial decision by 3 years to 2004 and with additional technical studies required by the court, technical planning would have concluded in 2007. The judicial decision would have supported PGE’s application to decommission the dam and PGE would have breached the dam using explosives much as they did. The judicial decision would not have included transfer of senior instream water rights to the state, deeding of 1,500 acres of shore lands to the Western Rivers Conservancy (providing the formative nucleus for the 9,000 acre BLM managed natural refuge and recreation area), nor would the decision have provided funding for the monitoring program and research on effects of dam removal. In considering the effects of this decision please focus on the watershed immediately below the dam and extending to its intersection with the Bull Run River. Assume that all existing human activities above and below the dam would remain the same.
Alternative Scenario for the Sustainable Fisheries Intervention

Community Alternative
If instead of the community fisheries approach, consider the situation for the three years prior to when you implemented the decision to establish and enforce a (no-take) zone on the reefs, prevent poaching by local and outside fishers, stop dynamite fishing and with periodic ceremonial harvests of preferred species. The technical assistance for resource management and new harvesting methods would not have been available, you would not have been conducting stock assessments on the reef and shoulder areas and you would not have the new gear and equipment provided by the community fishery intervention. All other functions would remain as before, for example community piggeries, waste disposal, cutting of mangroves, if changed under the community fishery approach, would remain as they were prior to adoption of the new approach.

Conservation Alternative
If instead of investing in and supporting the community fishery approach, please consider an alternative where high value ecosystems in the same geographic areas as your community fishery investments would have been identified and one or more large international environmental NGOs would have received a similar level of funding from you and other donors as was provided to the community fishery intervention. The NGOs would have enforced a “no take” zone for these sites (one or more) and employed enforcement and support staff from nearby communities to supplement NGO staff and volunteers. No entry to these zones would be permitted except for traditional or ceremonial purposes, and no harvesting would be permitted during these exceptions. National environment departments would have been cooperative but the national fisheries department would not have cooperated, and there would not have been local and national political support for the conservation initiative.