Complexity, policy and evaluation in practice: Improving theories of change to address complexity
case studies

cut across nexus domains
involve complexity
have innovation potential
topical relevance
data
willingness and ability to collaborate

goal: a step-change:

- in the development of policy evaluation methods that can address complexity across the Nexus
- in the capacity of policy makers, practitioners and researchers to understand and use these methods
- in the application of policy evaluation methods that can address complexity across the Nexus
cut across **nexus** domains
involve **complexity**
have **innovation** potential
**topical relevance**
data
**willingness and ability** to collaborate

{**priorities**}

{**capacity**
REGULATING OUR FUTURE

Why food regulation needs to change and how we are going to do it
Why is it interesting?

- Working with Theory of Change
- Chance to tighten the loop on the policy cycle: (ex-ante; parallel evaluation stream)
- Potential for impact: substantial programme looking at new approaches to regulation
- Complexity
Principles of ROF

Responsibility
It's all about the consumer!
Making sure food is safe and is what it says it is... is the responsibility of the full range of food businesses.

Tailored & Proportional
Segmentation
No longer the "one size fits all" approach.

Information
Use all sources of information.

Recipes for Assurance
Share it all.

Take the challenge to do the right thing
Do the basics then go above and beyond.

User pays
Sliding scale of regulation & cost
Now the verifier is last resort.
ROF – A dynamic and complex system?

STARTING WITH THE STANDARDS: THE FSA

This has a number of elements, reflecting stages in a food business's lifecycle and its interactions with the regulator.
Our approach

Workshop 1: Defining objectives and outcomes
- Four food business scenarios

Outputs:
- Draft theory of change narrative
- Draft outcomes by business types
- Experimental intervention logic

Workshop 2: Identifying intermediate and ultimate outcomes and transition points
- Expect, love, fear to see

Outputs:
- Intermediate outcomes
- Ultimate outcomes
- Draft transition points
- Second iteration ToC narrative

Workshop 3: Core outcomes and defining transition points
- Prioritisation, visioning

Outputs:
- Prioritised shortlist of ROF outcomes
- Final definition of transition points
- Three ToC diagrams for three purposes

Workshop 4: Outlining core evaluation parameters
- Evaluation design framework, scenarios

Outputs:
- Evaluation questions, purposes, audiences, methods

Systems thinking

Collective intelligence

Sense-making

Co-creation
The missing middle and transition points

TPs – Love to see – like to see – fear to see

TP0
Status quo and context at the starting point

TP1
Discovery – knowing how to make the change

TP2
EU exit

TP3
Changing the Assurance Architecture

TP4
RoF embedded
Key learning and insights

- The comfort of not knowing
- ToC creates exploratory conversations
- Agency and how it changes
- Placing complexity up front encourages non-linear thinking
- Disrupting the policy cycle status quo
Richard Allen, The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations
Martha Bicket, University of Surrey
Sue Hartley, University of York (Chair)

DISCUSSION