Menti results: Associations with Regenerative Monitoring & Evaluation

beyond measuring outputs

sustainable practices   qualitative assessment   past and local themes   collaboration

recreate   learn forward   generative dialogue   focus on improvement   sensors

buzzword   restorative   decolonialization   continuous improvement   quant vs qual

soil   intuitive   cycles   **flexibility**   aspirational

strength   **curiosity**   **sustainability**   do no harm   **adaptive**   make sth new   purpose-built

growth and renewal   continuous   a   roots

useful   inspirational   **impact**   **learning**   **healthier**   indicators   unnecessary

aligned   ethical   dynamics   responsive

change   listening   confused   confusing   holistic   progress

adaptability   **necessary**   **systems**   seed   knowledge   alternative

complexity   **participation**   **continuity**   responsible

sustainable   experiential   curious   difficult   hopeful   community

accountability   planetary   data   trees

biodiversity   diverse perspectives   **localization**   measure   adaptative

systemic   healing grievances   ecosystem-centered   interesting

reflective sensemaking   learning focussed   relationship   systemic rebalance

thinking partnerships   collaborative

Expectations (as shared in Menti survey)

❖ Gain new insights, perspectives, inspiration

❖ Better understanding of and a broader perspective on MEL

❖ Expanding knowledge and resources

❖ Learn how to integrate (MEL) better and showcase impact, also in complex systems

❖ Connect, exchange and share experiences

❖ Be empowered to advocate for simple and effective MEL

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About our workshop today

❖ Please keep muted unless asked to speak

❖ Turn off your video if you do not want to be recorded

❖ For tech issues contact Johannes H. via chat

❖ Slides will be shared after the session

❖ Input sessions will be recorded (breakouts won't be)

❖ Breakouts are optional - stay in plenary if you prefer

❖ Use the chat for questions and ideas

Housekeeping

Unity Effect
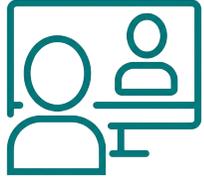
About our workshop today

❖ Welcome

❖ Input with short Q&A: Credible Claims in Complexity

❖ Breakout exercises

❖ Open discussion

❖ Closing

Agenda

Unity Effect

Leading change from the inside out

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Learning & Experience Design

Thriving Teams & Leaders
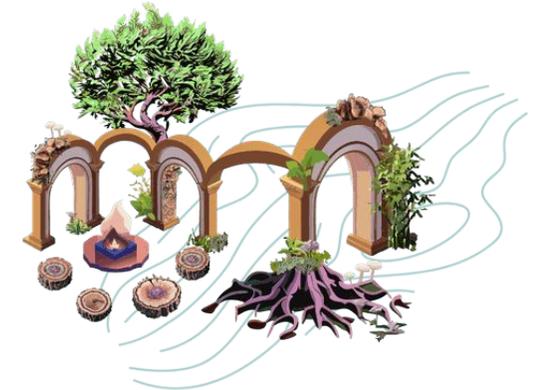
Regenerative Measurement & Evaluation

Creating the **conditions**
in your team and organisation
to thrive and have **agency** in a dynamic world.

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Unity Effect As...

Service Provider

Commissioned support for your specific needs. Typical engagement: day rates or project-based fees.

Resource Provider

Access our open source frameworks and tools, such as the Impact Garden and Capacity Compass.

Partner for Systemic Change

Co-create with us to deepen our impact together - from co-hosting events to applying for joint funding.

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By the Numbers
(since 2021)

143
external projects delivered

53
organisational partners

4,800+
participants reached

1,100+
hours facilitated

8

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Some of our Partners & Clients

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Personal Background

- **Studies in sociology** with focus on phenomenology and complexity science.
- 15+ years engaged in civil society activities.
- **12 years professional experience in MEL:** Fairtrade International, FLOCERT & Unity Effect.
- **At Unity Effect:** Co-founder, CEO & Lead of "Regenerative Measurement & Evaluation".

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Credible Claims

*in Complexity –
core terms*

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Complexity

(with the Cynefin framework)

Complex
Probe
Sense
Respond
Emergent Practice

Complicated
Sense
Analyse
Respond
Good Practice

Disorder

Chaotic
Act
Sense
Respond
Novel Practice

Simple
Sense
Categorise
Respond
Best Practice

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Claims

"A claim is a verifiable statement about the impacts, benefits, or qualities of an intervention, product, or system." (ISEAL Alliance)

Three types of claims:

Type	What it is	Example
Commitment Claim	An aspirational statement of purpose	Our project commits to improving primary education for girls in the region
Performance Claim	A factual, static snapshot of the system's status at a specific point in time ("What is")	85% of girls are enrolled in primary school, but community trust in the school system is rated as 'Low'.
Improvement Claim	A contribution claim asserting that the intervention has resulted in a positive change over time.	Since the start of the intervention, girls' school enrollment has increased by 10%. This improvement can be linked to our work.

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Credible Claims in Complexity

Improvement claims that follow certain principles:

- **Contribution, not (isolated) attribution:** Validating our role as a contributors to meaningful change.

- **Narrative coherence:** Validating the meaning of changes through the lived experience of the people we work with.

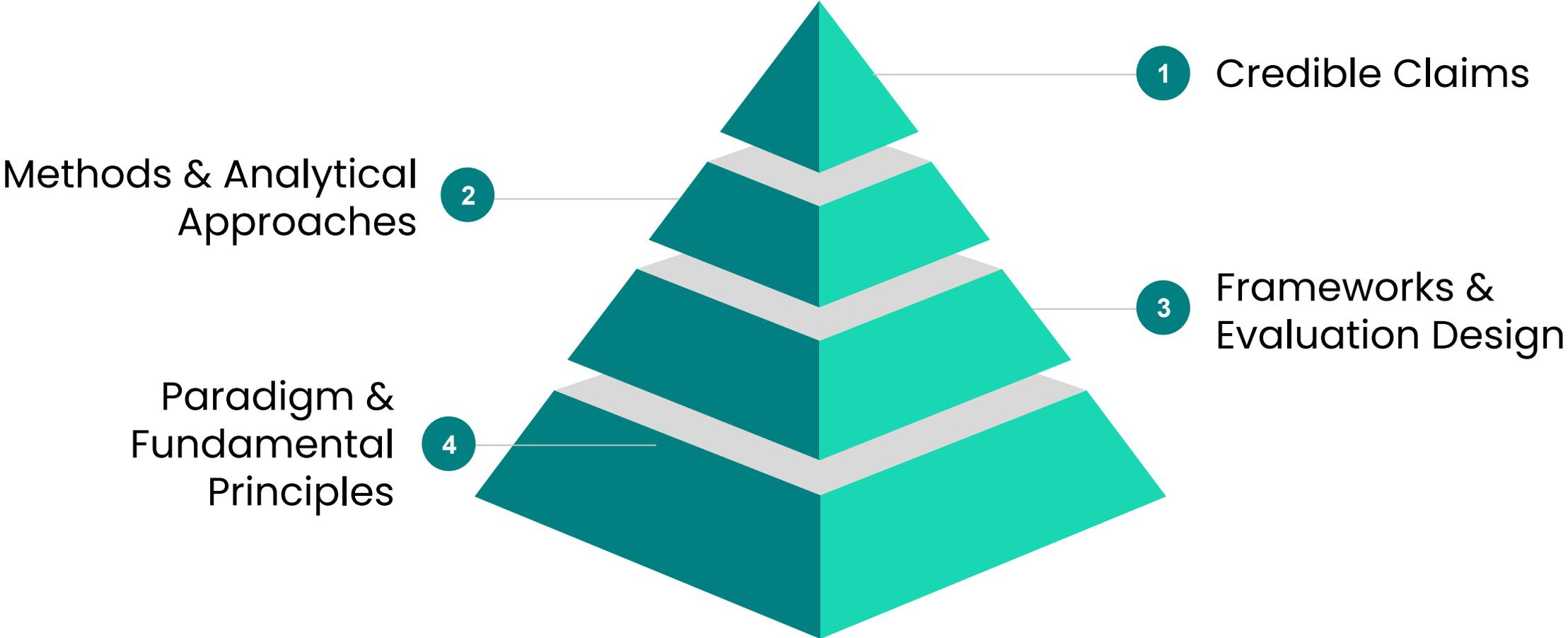- **Systems health as validity check:** Validating the health of the system to sustain the impact.

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The Impact Garden

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Methodology
for Credible Claims in Complexity

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

1. Credible Claims
2. Methods & Analytical Approaches
3. Frameworks & Evaluation Design
4. Paradigm & Fundamental Principles

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

Credible Claims

The synthesis of data into a defensible and factual narrative. It turns raw information into evidence and strategic insight.

(1)

Methods & Analytical Approaches

The specific tools and indicators used to gather evidence. It ensures tracking the right signals, not just the easiest ones.

(2)

Frameworks & Evaluation Design

The structure / tool used to conceptualise the system and desired changes. It determines what is visible (and invisible) in an evaluation.

(3)

Paradigm & Fundamental Principles

The worldview and principles that guide the inquiry. It defines what we value and how we relate to the people we evaluate.

(4)

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Anchoring Gender & Justice

Taking a gender-transformative and justice-oriented approach. Or: A system that extracts from its most vulnerable parts is degenerative by design

- **Epistemic Justice (the foundation):** Becoming aware of and shifting whose knowledge counts.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation to shift power:** going beyond output indicators (e.g. counting participants) to measure structural shifts towards ownership.

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How it connects to the global agenda

Bridging the Gap: From Global Ambition to Credible Evidence

- **OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria:** Expanding the notion of Sustainability, Impact etc. through a system's health lens
- **The 2030 Agenda (SDGs):** Validating equity through a justice lens & operationalising "Leave No One Behind"
- **The Grand Bargain:** Navigating and proving power shifts

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Aligning with the Future of Funding

Providing the evidence base that allows funders to move from project-based approaches to flexible, systemic support.

- **Trust-Based Philanthropy:** Verifying trust through vitality checks & measuring the health of relationships.
- **Unrestricted / Core Funding:** Measuring "soil quality" and the contribution of core funding to systemic changes.
- **Systemic Investing / "Pando" Approach:** Tracking synergies and feedback loops across a portfolio.

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

Credible Claims
An evidence-backed narrative validating the specific contribution to systemic change, establishing rigor in complex environments.

1

Measuring Systemic Vitality & Contribution
Metrics that track the system's capacity to sustain itself - e.g. via feedback loops.

2

Impact Garden Framework
An M&E framework that maps the entire ecosystem - from "soil" (resources) to "pollination" (relationships) - rendering the full scope of value visible.

3

Regenerative Evaluation
A paradigm that approaches projects as living systems, focusing on monitoring and cultivating overall ecosystem health.

4

Unity Effect

The Methodology Briefs

Credible Claims in Complexity

Bridging Accountability and Systemic Practice with the Impact Garden Framework

The Methodology Briefs

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Note on Methodological Coherence

Systemic Intent ⟺ Measurement Tools

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The Paradigm Shift:
Regenerative Evaluation

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

Regenerative Evaluation

A paradigm that approaches projects as living systems, focusing on monitoring and cultivating overall ecosystem health.
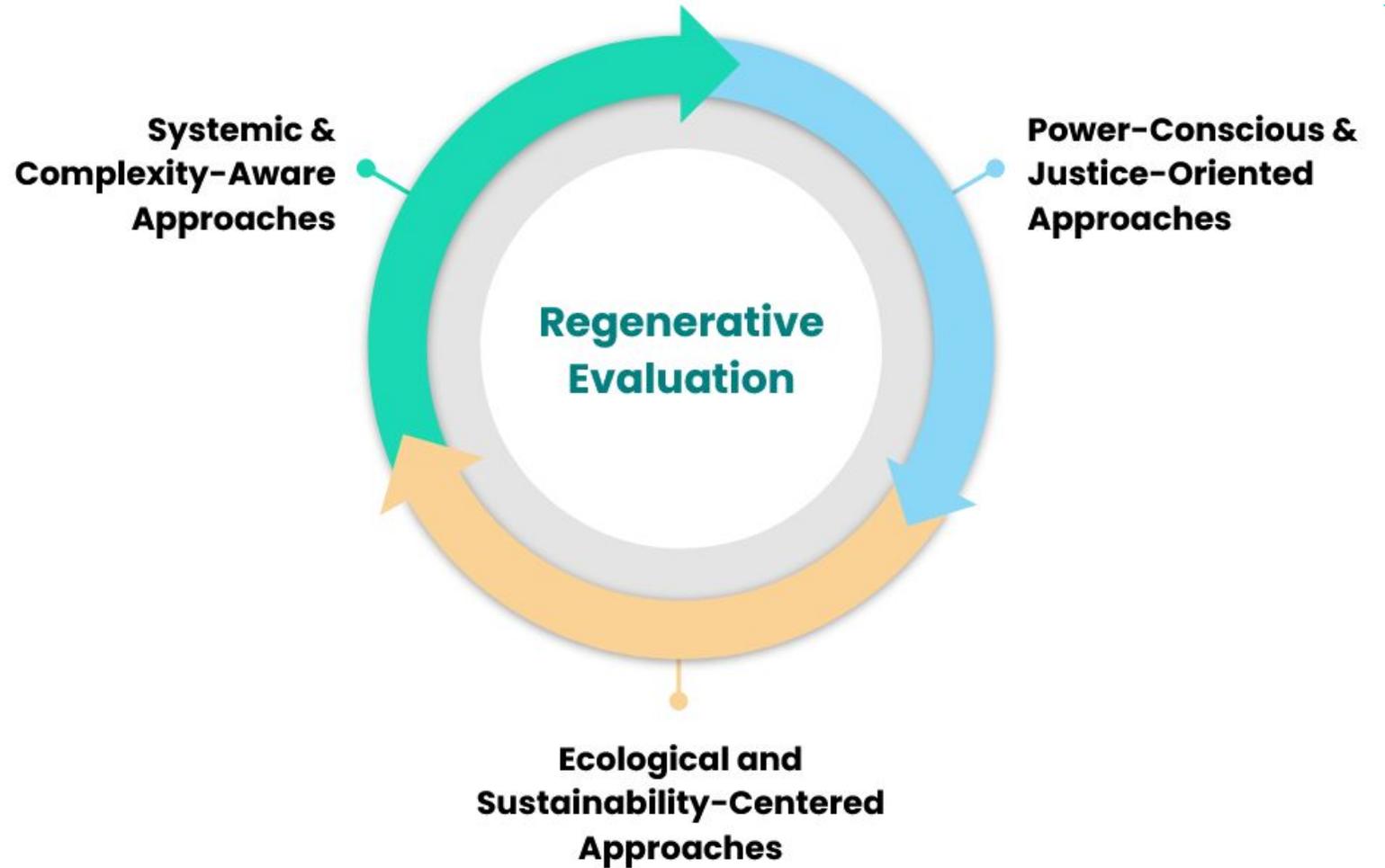
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Background

How can the process of monitoring create energy rather than extracting it?

1. **A global movement:** Over the last 2 years, we have convened practitioners in our community of practice.
2. **A new set of principles:** We have developed 9 core principles that prioritize systemic health over mechanistic control.
3. **The invitation:** Launch of living paper in March 2026

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Weaving together 3 strands of evaluation

Systemic & Complexity-Aware Approaches

Power-Conscious & Justice-Oriented Approaches

Regenerative Evaluation

Ecological and Sustainability-Centered Approaches

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The 9 Principles of Regenerative Evaluation

Align with Cyclical Rhythms of Life

Honors periods of "wintering" (rest) and "composting" (stopping what no longer serves).

Cultivate Self-Awareness & Reflexivity

Recognizes that evaluators are not neutral observers but active participants.

Time as Teacher

Honors the deep past (including colonial histories) while nurturing life-affirming futures.

Shift Power and Center Marginalised Voices

Centers marginalized voices and transitions ownership of evaluation to the community.

Honor Place, Story and Lived Experience

Rejects "copy-paste" solutions in favor of context-specific, lived experience.

Nurture System Vitality

Focuses on the health of relationships and feedback loops within a system.

Unearth and Amplify Innate Potential

Rejects a "deficit mindset" to identify innate strengths and assets.

Embrace Iterative Learning and Emergence

Shifting from "predict and control" to "sense and respond".

Center Love as a Force for Transformation

Views evaluation as a fierce commitment to the flourishing of the system.

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The Impact Garden

Framework

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

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The Impact Garden Framework

Context & Environment

Strategic Vision

Systemic Impact

Direct Outcomes

Adaptive Management & Learning

Change Pathways

Engagement, Collaborations & Uptake

Governance & Roles

Interventions & Activities

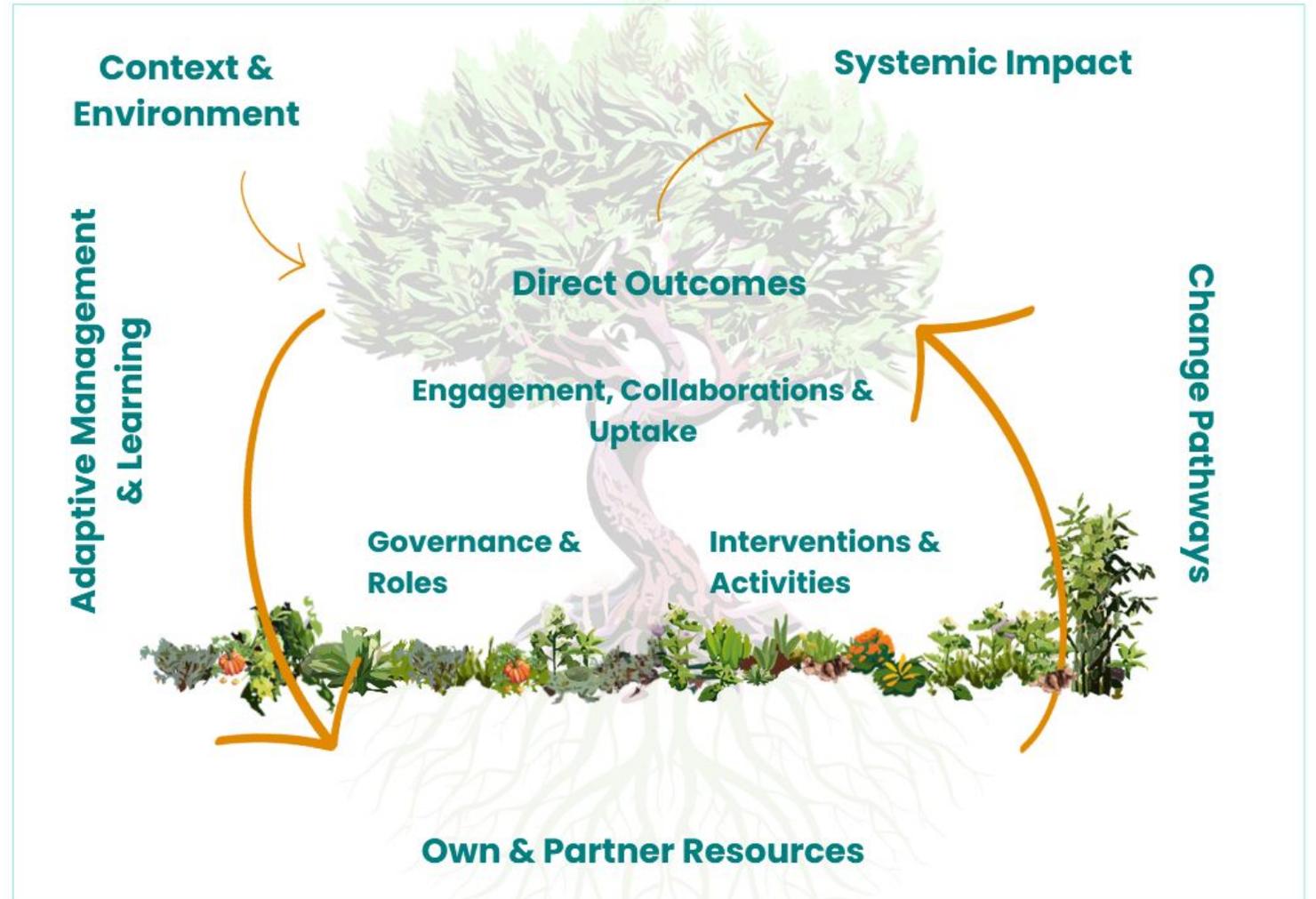Own & Partner Resources

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Key features of the Impact Garden

A framework to understand and measure the conditions for systemic change

1. **10 interconnected dimensions:** Strategically including the soil (resources) and external conditions into the evaluation framework.

2. **Living Systems Logic:** understanding resource flow, growth pathways and feedback loops.

3. **Field-tested:** Used by 500+ practitioners, evaluated more than 1.5m EUR of funding

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Feedback loops within the Impact Garden

Context & Environment

Systemic Impact

Adaptive Management & Learning

Change Pathways

Direct Outcomes

Engagement, Collaborations & Uptake

Governance & Roles

Interventions & Activities

Own & Partner Resources

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Measuring
Systemic Vitality
& Contribution

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The four dimensions of Credible Claims

Measuring Systemic Vitality & Contribution
Metrics that track the system's capacity to sustain itself - e.g. via feedback loops.

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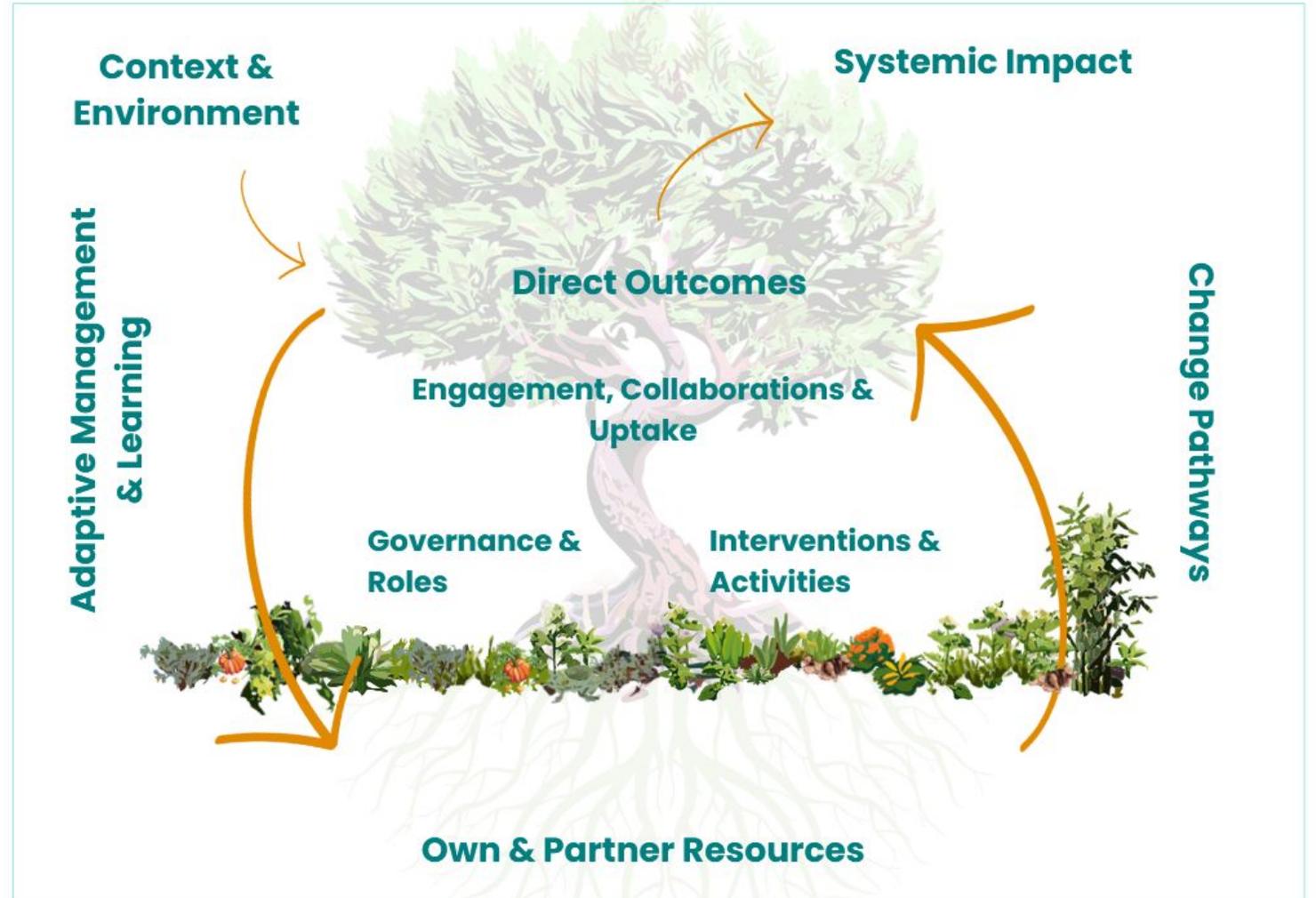
3

Regenerative Evaluation
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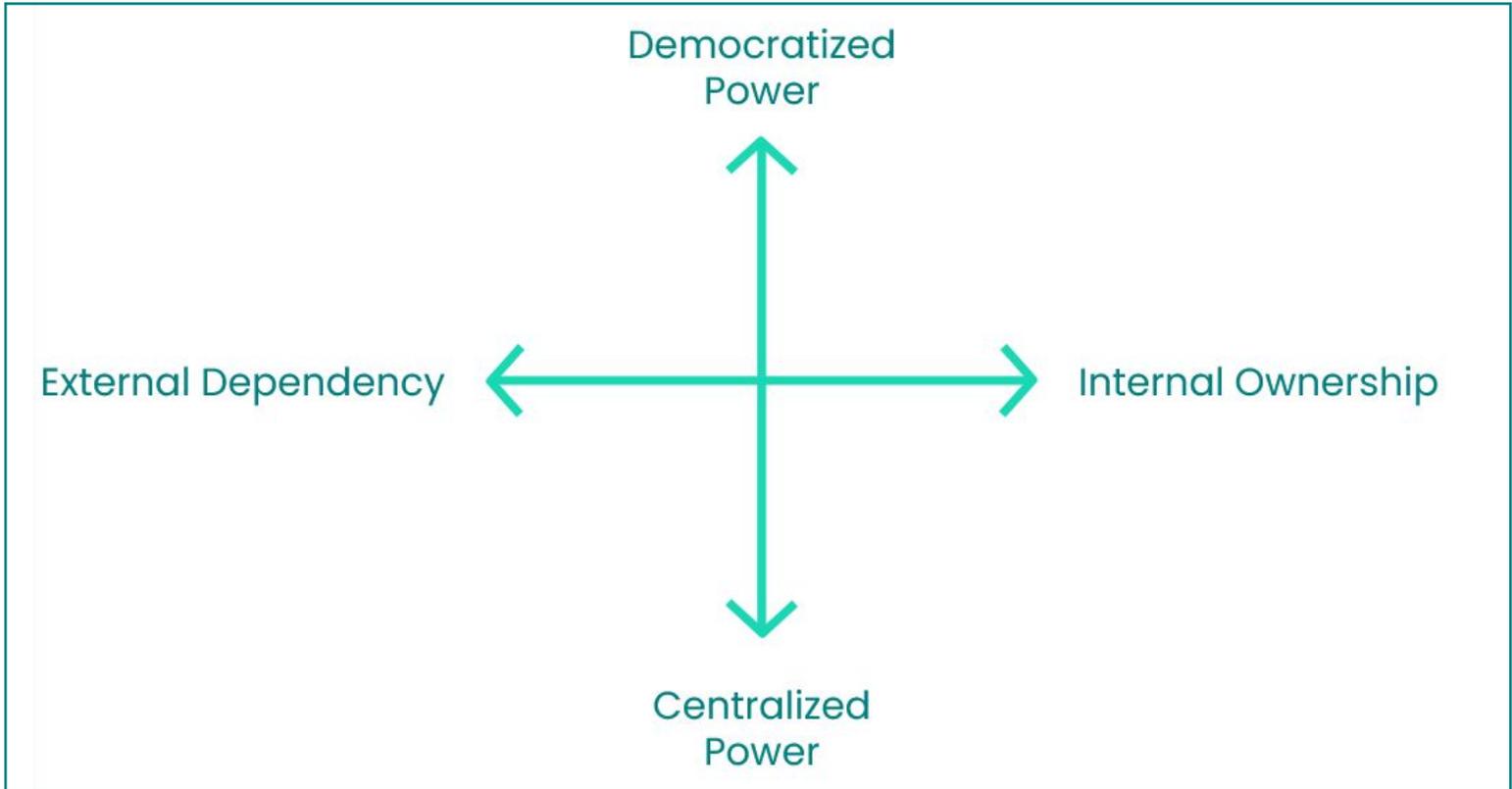
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Feedback loops within the Impact Garden

Context & Environment

Systemic Impact

Adaptive Management & Learning

Change Pathways

Direct Outcomes

Engagement, Collaborations & Uptake

Governance & Roles

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The 7 systemic feedback loops

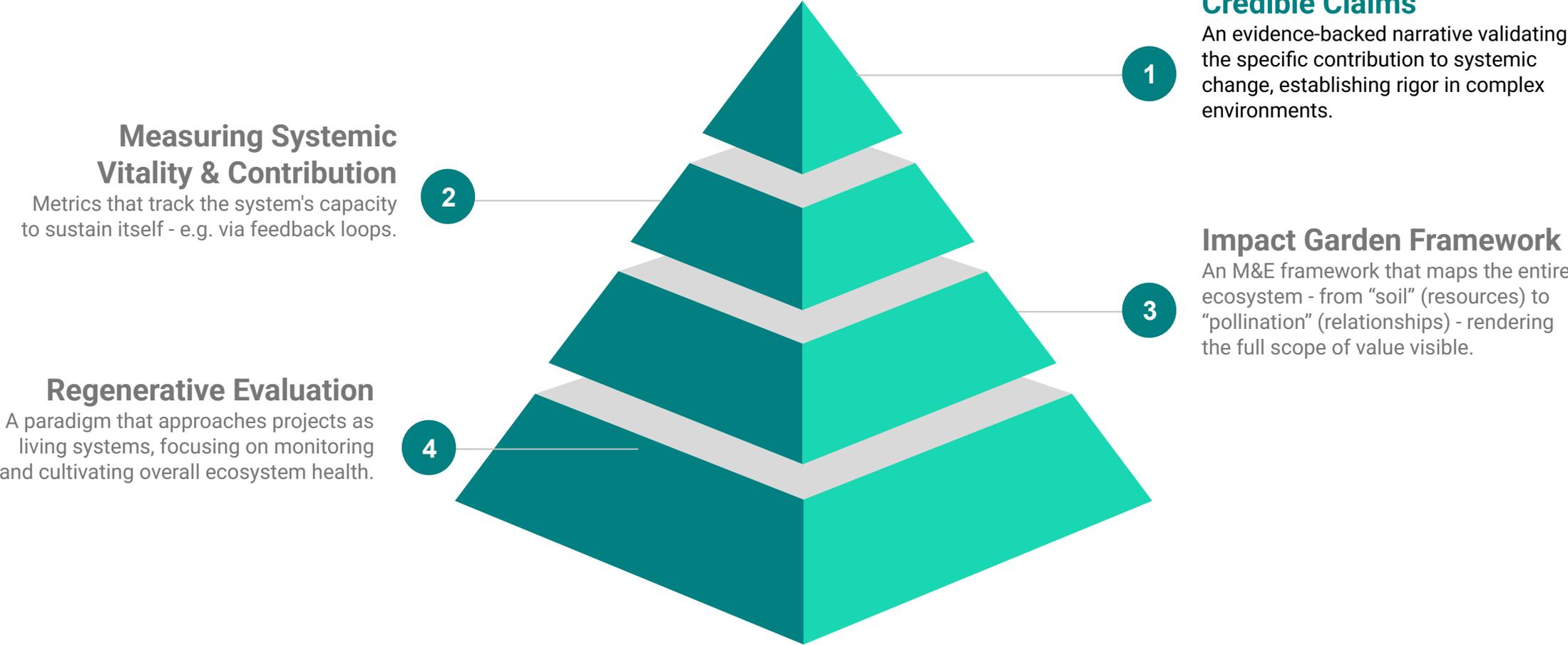| The Vitality Loop	Function (What it does)
1. Self-Reflection	**Awareness.** The system looks at itself to identify needs and tensions.
2. Governance	**Authority.** The system makes decisions and changes its own rules.
3. Capacity	**Talent.** The system generates and transfers the skills it needs.
4. Resource	**Nutrients.** The system generates and manages material/financial resources.
5. Cohesion	**Trust.** The system resolves internal conflict and strengthens relationships.
6. Learning	**Memory.** The system captures lessons from the past to improve the future.
7. Bridging	**Exchange.** The system connects to external markets, governments, communities or networks.

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The Vitality Matrix

Democratized Power

External Dependency ← → Internal Ownership

Centralized Power

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Making
Credible Claims
in Complexity

The four dimensions of Credible Claims

Credible Claims

An evidence-backed narrative validating the specific contribution to systemic change, establishing rigor in complex environments.

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Weaving all dimensions together

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Weaving all dimensions together

The Narrative:

"The project contributed to a 10% increase in girls' enrollment. This is a significant improvement when benchmarked against the national trend of stagnation (space) and moves the region closer to the universal primary education standard (standard)."

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Weaving all dimensions together

The Narrative:

"The project contributed to a 10% increase in girls' enrollment. This is a significant improvement when benchmarked against the national trend of stagnation (space) and moves the region closer to the universal primary education standard (standard)."

This increase was driven by a measured shift in the community's mindset regarding education and has established a **reinforcing capacity loop**: the first cohort of empowered parents (outcome) has formed an independent education committee (new resource).

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Weaving all dimensions together

The Narrative:

"The project contributed to a 10% increase in girls' enrollment. This is a significant improvement when benchmarked against the national trend of stagnation (space) and moves the region closer to the universal primary education standard (standard)."

This increase was driven by a measured shift in the community's mindset regarding education and has established a **reinforcing capacity loop**: the first cohort of empowered parents (outcome) has formed an independent education committee (new resource).

Crucially, the **power dynamics have shifted**. Decisions are no longer made by project staff, but are now fully driven by the mothers themselves. This transition to local leadership ensures that the process is both effective, fair and self-sustaining, meaning these gains are likely to persist long after our funding ends."

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Clarification Questions

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Living Case Example

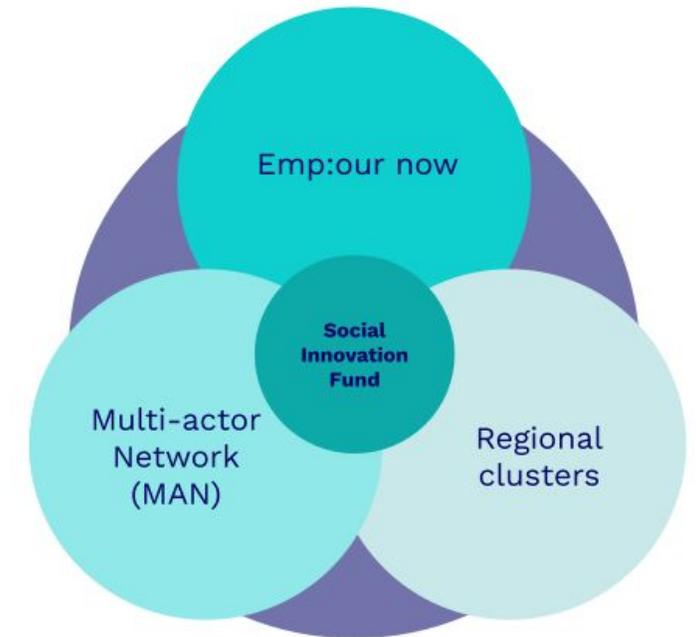*How to apply the Impact Garden framework*

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Intro: the context of emp:our now

January 25, 2022: SEND e.V. secures EUR 1.6 million from Google.org's Social Innovation Fund
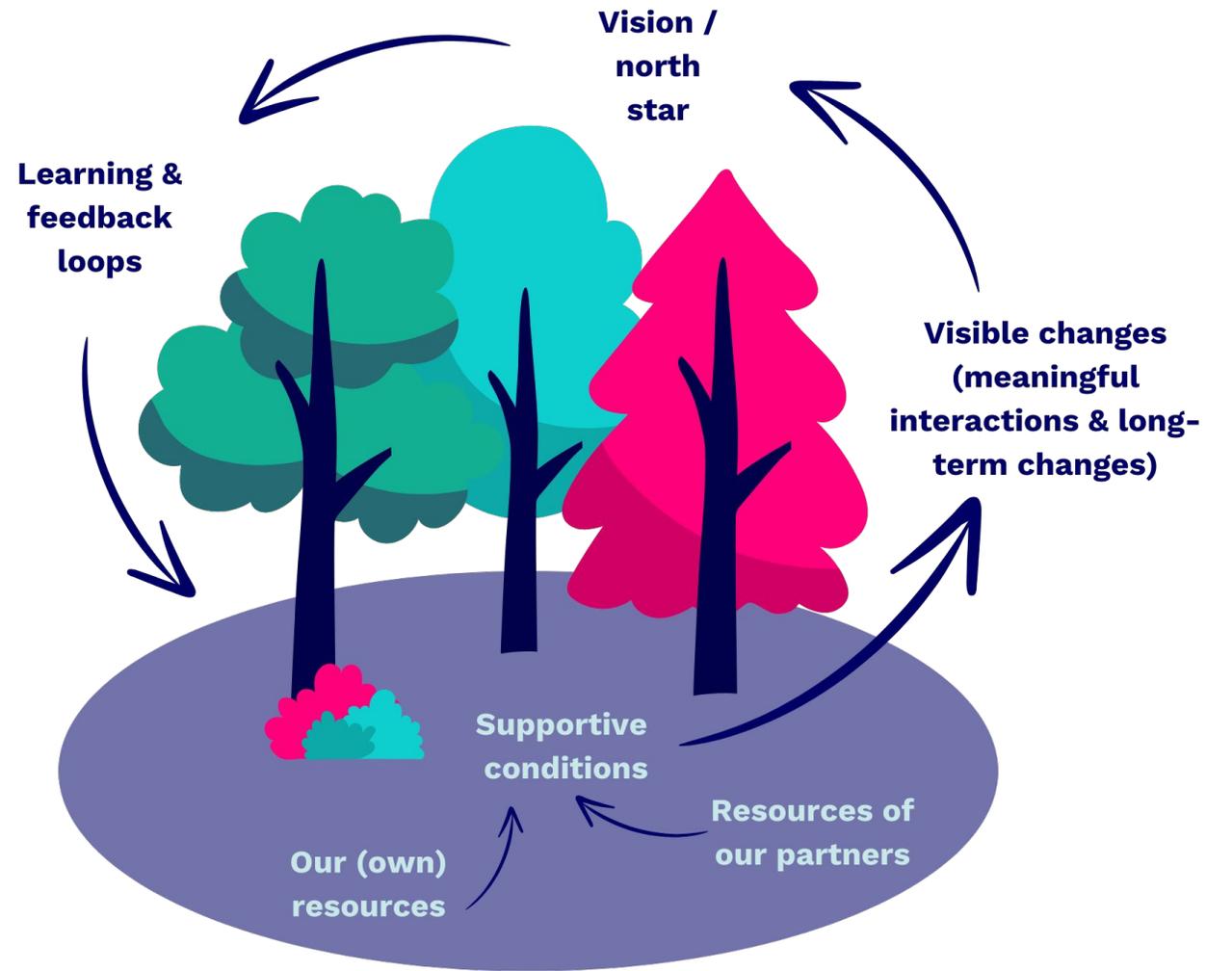
Purpose: Strengthen Germany's social entrepreneurship ecosystem and empower underserved communities

Dual Focus:

- Direct support for (potential) founders and social entrepreneurs
- Engage wider support systems and public institutions

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Taking a regenerative approach

Vision / north star

Learning & feedback loops

Visible changes (meaningful interactions & long-term changes)

Supportive conditions

Our (own) resources

Resources of our partners

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Intention of evaluation & report

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Intention of evaluation & report

Reflect on experiences, lessons, and impact

Emp:our now

Social Innovation Fund

Multi-actor Network (MAN)

Regional clusters

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Intention of evaluation & report

Reflect on experiences, lessons, and impact

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Address sector challenges for true inclusion

Map future pathways for underserved communities

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Intention of evaluation & report

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Emp:our now

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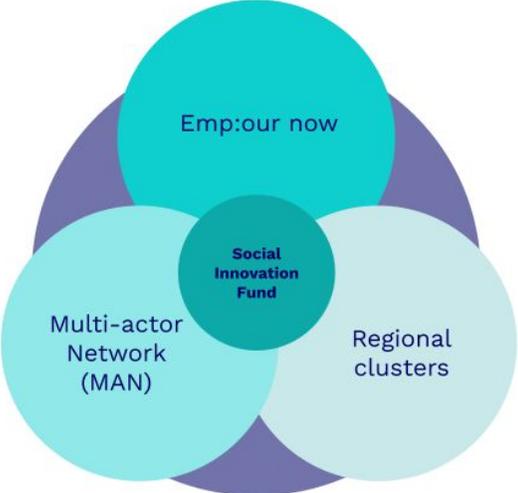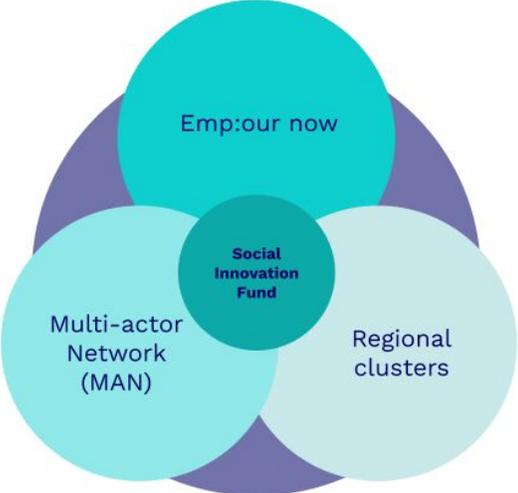
Address sector challenges for true inclusion

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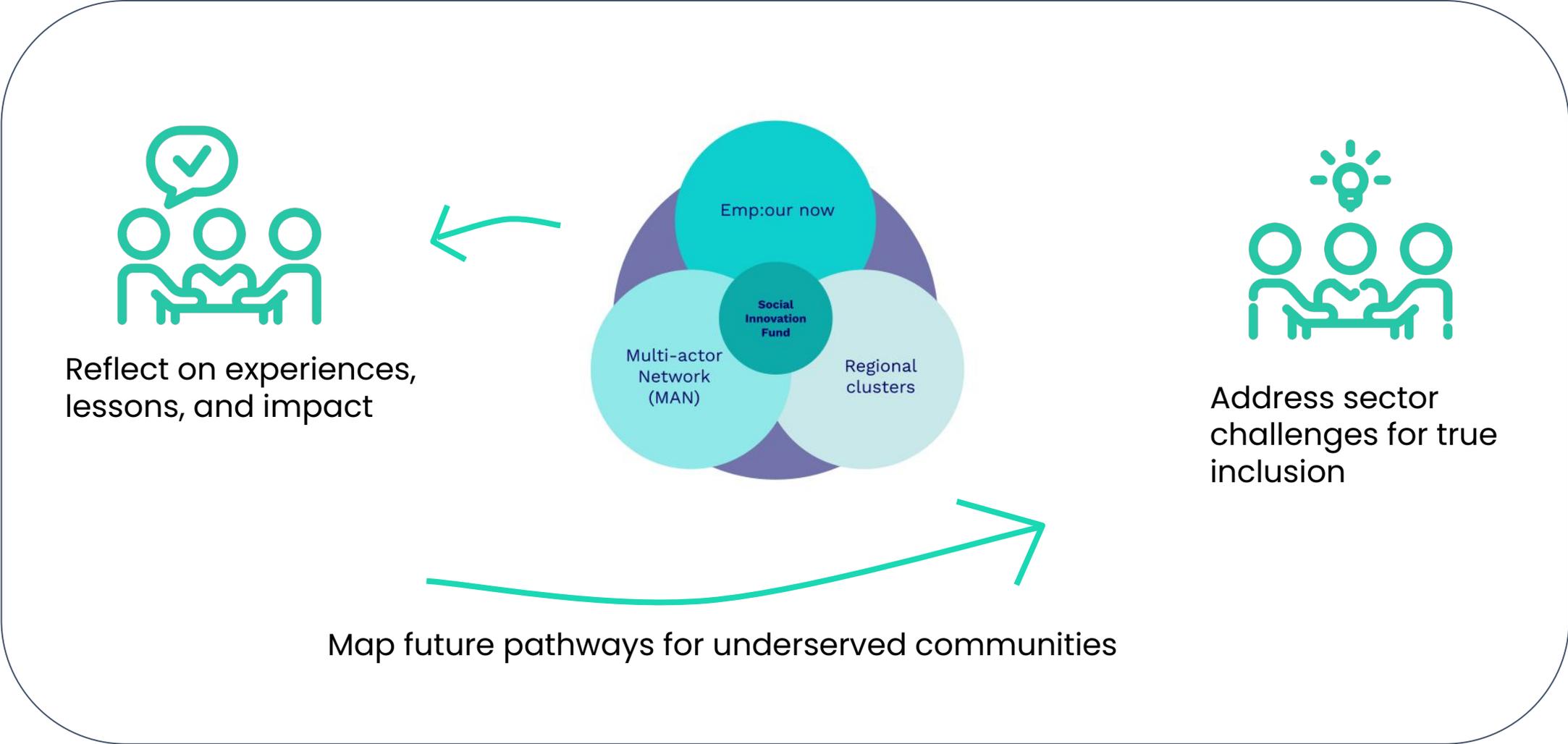
For funders and philanthropy

1 Investing into systemic change

2 Money to the people

3 Regenerative and participatory evaluation

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Invitations

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REGENERATIVE SIGNAL – PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Format: 5 online sessions (Zoom) + self-paced application.

Dates: (all 15:00–16:30 CEST)
- May 20
- June 17
- July 15
- September 16
- October 21

Resources: Access to core frameworks (Impact Garden & Capacity Compass), digital workbook, methodology briefs, and peer community

Certification: Official Certificate of Completion upon finishing the journey

Cost: Tiered Pricing based on organisational capacity.

Open Access (Scholarship) is available to ensure financial barriers do not prevent participation.

Bonus: A private 1:1 consultation session is included for Organisation & Corporate tickets

Implementing (parts of) the methodology

Work with Unity Effect to implement the methodology into your evaluation practices and strategy.

We can support you with:
- a specific project
- across your portfolio
- your organisation's evaluation strategy

<u>Book a free exploratory conversation with us.</u>

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Thank you
for your presence and
participation

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