BOLD THINKERS DRIVING REAL-WORLD IMPACT

# Designing and implementing adaptive programming

## ANU Conference

18th February 2020

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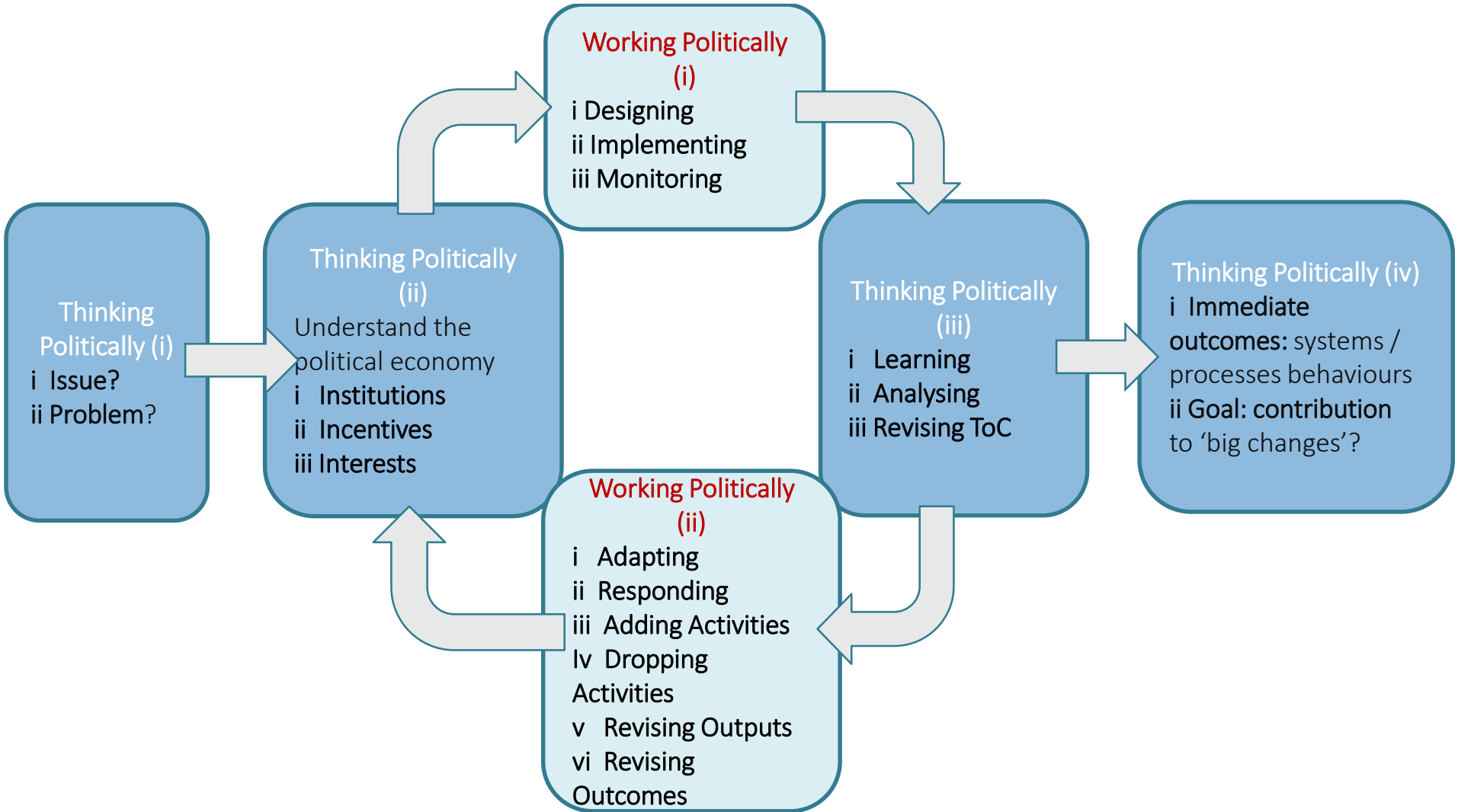
# Contents: 3 slides, ten minutes

1. A framework for designing and implementing ‘adaptive programming’
2. Organisational implications
3. Terminology: Too FAR-fetched?

# 1 A framework (not *the* framework…)

| 1 Pre-design: Thinking | 2 Implementation: Working | 3 Responding; Thinking | 4 Results: Thinking |
|---|---|---|---|
| (i) Project selection | (i) Designing | (i) Learning | (i) Project progress |
| (ii) Analysis | (ii) Implementing | (ii) Strategy testing | (ii) Contribution to bigger changes |
| (iii) Political economy | (iii) Monitoring | (iii) Revising ToC | |



# 2 Organisational implications

In practice, *time does not stand still*, so adaptive programming and delivery requires four functions to be delivered *simultaneously*:

- **Implementation**: the day-to-day, week-to-week task of delivering activities *(how are we doing on physical progress?)*
- **Monitoring**: the regular and frequent checking of progress towards achieving outputs *(are we on track against the plan, the budget – and most importantly – against outputs and possibly outcomes?)*
- **Learning**: our internal and reflexive questioning of progress - what are we learning about translating inputs and activities into outputs and outcomes *(what is working and what isn't?)*
- **Adapting**: revising our implementation plan, adding unforeseen activities and dropping others, changing the balance of inputs, be they cash, people or events etc. *(how are we changing the plan?)*

# 3 Too FAR-fetched?

| Flexibility – Activity level | Adaptation – Activity and Output levels | Responsiveness – Outcome and Goal / Impact |
|---|---|---|
| To what extent does the ability and authority exist (for donor and managing contractor / implementor alike), **within the financial year**, to:<br>➢ *increase or decrease spending and / or the budget, on planned activities?*<br>➢ *increase or decrease the pace of implementation on planned activities?* | To what extent does the ability and authority exist (for donor and managing contractor / implementor alike), **within the financial year,** to:<br>➢ *amend planned Activities in any way?*<br>➢ *add new Activities, inc Pilots?*<br>➢ *drop existing Activities?*<br>➢ *amend agreed Outputs?*<br>➢ *add new Outputs?*<br>➢ *drop existing Outputs?*<br>➢ *amend milestones?*<br>➢ *add new milestones?*<br>➢ *amend the Theory of Action and the Theory of Change?* | To what extent does the ability and authority exist (for donor and managing contractor / implementor alike), **within the program period**:<br>➢ *to amend Outcome and Goal statements in response to policy changes of the donor?*<br>➢ *to amend Outcome and Goal statements in response to policy changes of the host government?* |