ASK THEM! THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK IN EVALUATING WITH AND FOR YOUTH

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PRESENTATION PLAN

- Context and challenges of evaluation in open access youth services

- Integrating feedback into an evaluation framework

- How feedback overcomes (some of) the challenges

- The remaining challenges of our feedback approach

CONTEXT OF EVALUATION – OPEN ACCESS YOUTH SERVICES

- Open access - no referral, universal, unstructured e.g. local youth clubs

- Move to more structured, targeted, programmatic delivery

- Outcomes-based funding

- Advancement of the impact agenda

- Dominant paradigm based on academic standards of evidence

# CHALLENGES OF EVALUATION – OPEN ACCESS YOUTH SETTINGS

- Perpetual challenges of outcome measurement

  – Broad outcomes

  – Individualised outcomes

  – Difficult to measure outcomes e.g. SEL

  – Long term outcomes/ impacts

- Time burden

- Skills in collection and analysis

- Dislocation from practice and experience

THE YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND

- £40m grant fund from UK government and Big Lottery

- "*Investment in VCSE organisations that provide front line open access youth services*"

- 86 organisations across England (working with 10-18 year olds)

- Three years' funding (2017-2020)

- Aims to:

  – Build knowledge base

  – Co-develop shared approach to evaluation

  – Leave the sector with what they need to self-evaluate
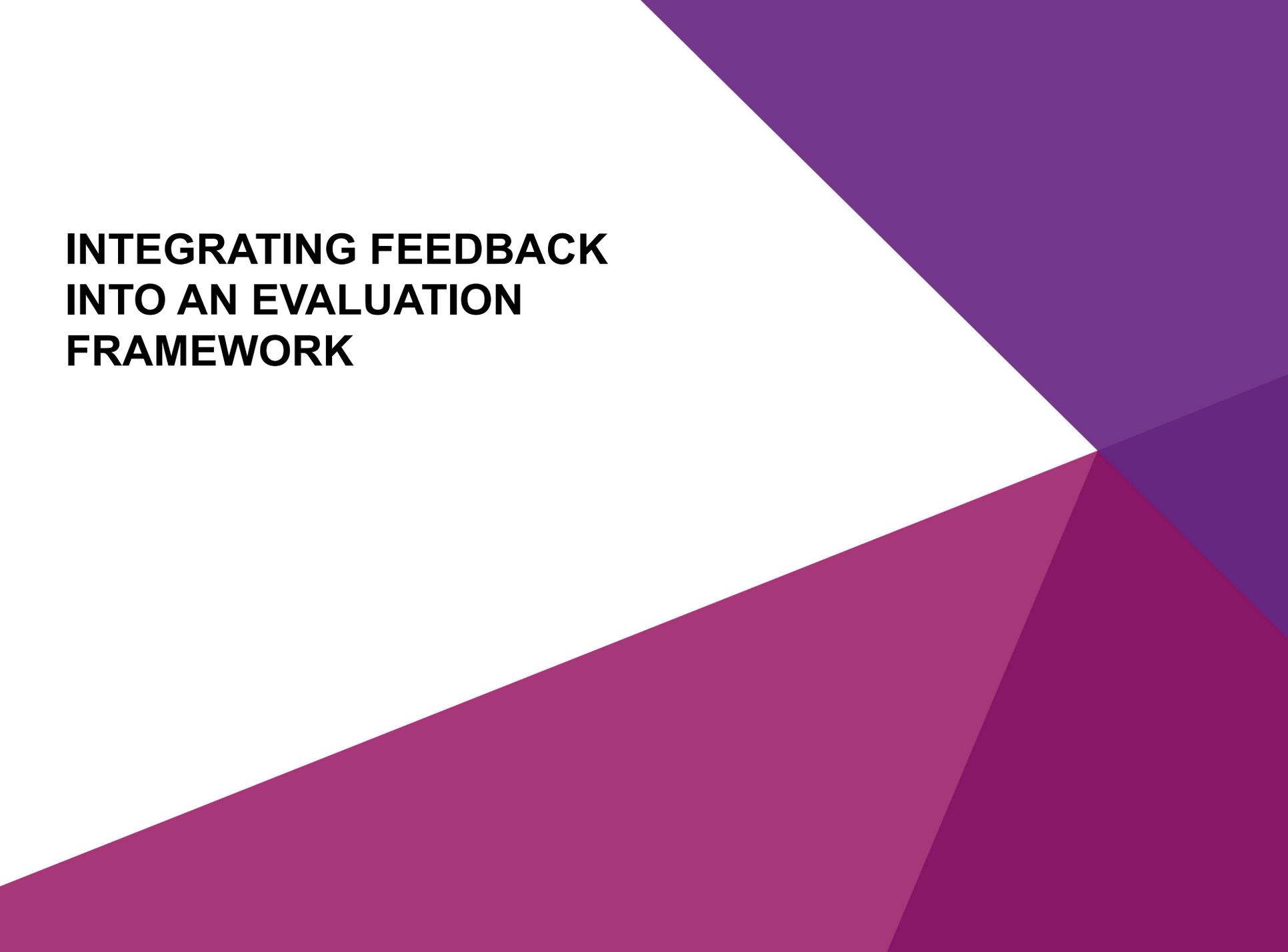
INTEGRATING FEEDBACK INTO AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

TYPES OF DATA
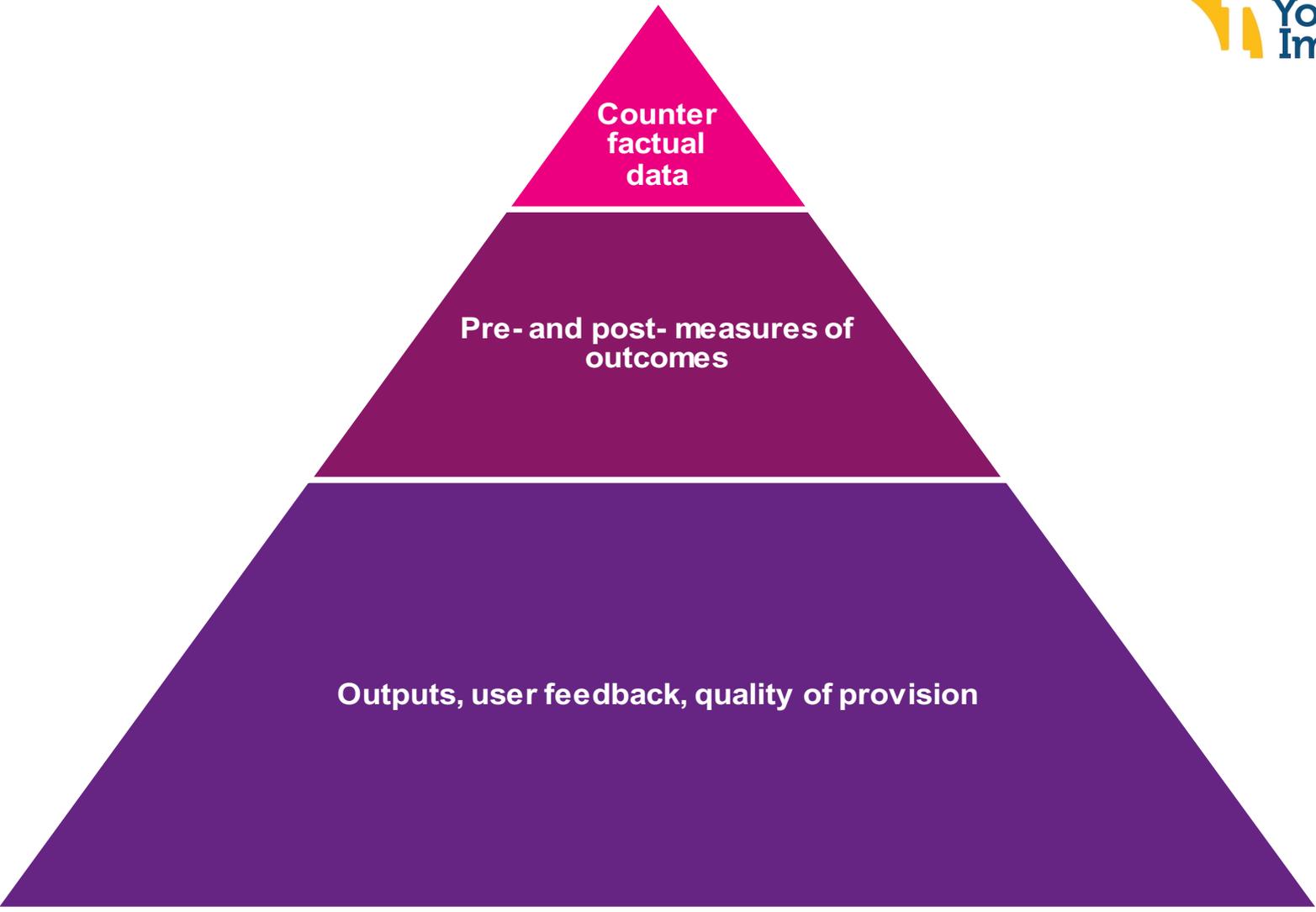
Counter factual data

Pre- and post- measures of outcomes

Outputs, user feedback, quality of provision

FEEDBACK
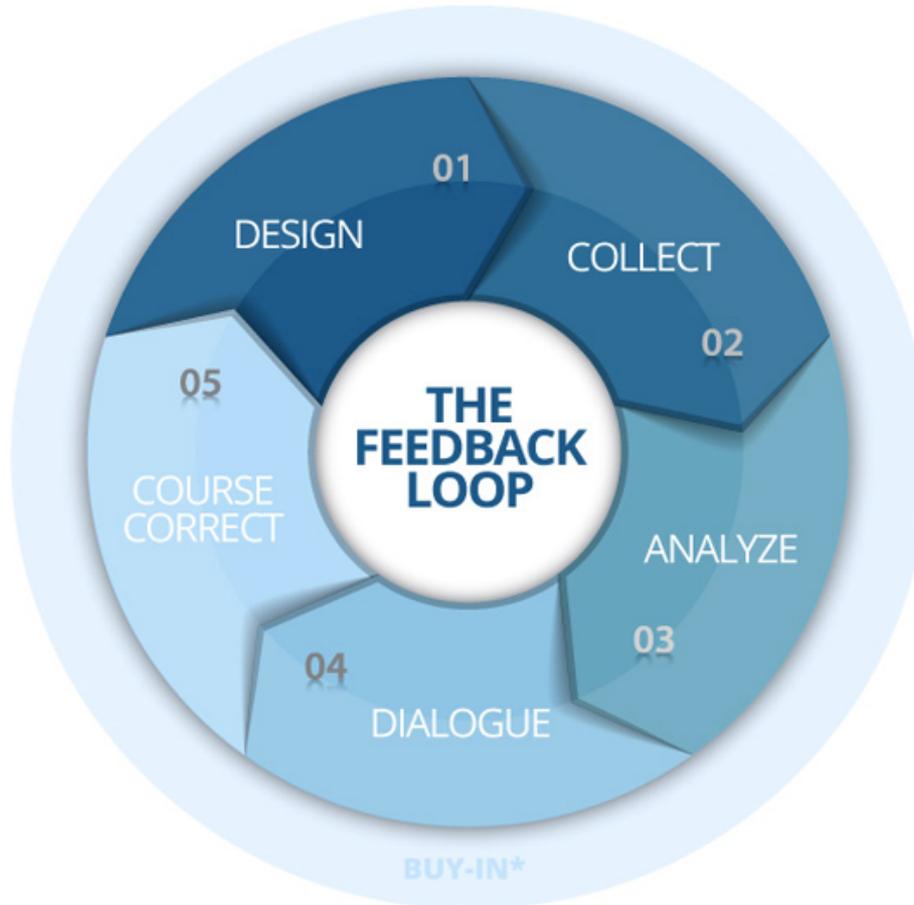
based on the Constituent Voice Methodology™

HOW IS FEEDBACK DATA GATHERED IN THE YIF?

- Continuous (regular) light-touch data collection

- Three to five questions, drawn from a wider standardised bank

- Consistent and systematic

- Guiding principles (anonymity, accessibility)

- Flexible methods - SMS, micro-surveys and tablets, good old paper and pen

- Occasional in-depth 'investigative' dialogue

- Equal emphasis on analysis and course correction

YIF THEORY OF CHANGE - DRAFT

Activities	Mechanisms of change	Intermediate outcomes		Impacts

High quality, open access youth services

Including: youth clubs, sports, arts, social action, informal learning, counselling / therapy, employability and health and wellbeing.

Most often regular and sustained engagement from YP but can be one-off provision.

Mostly universal rather than targeting a specific group

Some issue-based provision

YP engage positively and through choice

Mechanisms of change

Environment & relationships

Young people trust and feel trusted (both initially & more deeply over time)

Young people feel respected

Young people feel safe & secure

Experience

Young people feel positively challenged

Young people feel a sense of enjoyment (including fun & a deeper satisfaction)

Young people feel a sense of purpose & achievement

Community

Young people feel included & a greater sense of connection with their community

Young people feel empowered to create change in their lives and in the world around them

Intermediate outcomes

Increased self-awareness

Increased positive social values

Behaviours
Increased engagement in positive activities
Improved decision-making
Developed more positive relationships

Knowledge / skills
Improved leadership
Improved social & communication skills
Improved emotional intelligence
Acquisition of service specific knowledge / skills
Increased awareness of rights & responsibilities

Attitudes
Increased aspirations
Increased confidence
Increased resilience
Increased independence
Increased willingness to address issues

Accountability line

Impacts

Increased wellbeing including:

Improved mental health

Improved physical health

More stable and secure personal finances and housing

Educational attainment

Sustainable employment

Positive relationships

Personal safety

YIF PROVISION TOC + 5 TYPES OF DATA

NPC

Activities	Mechanisms of change	Intermediate outcomes	Goal

Footfall data measures who are you reaching and how are they engaging

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Context

Quality data measures the quality of your activities and then environment they're delivered in – do you create the context to allow the mechanisms of change to flourish?
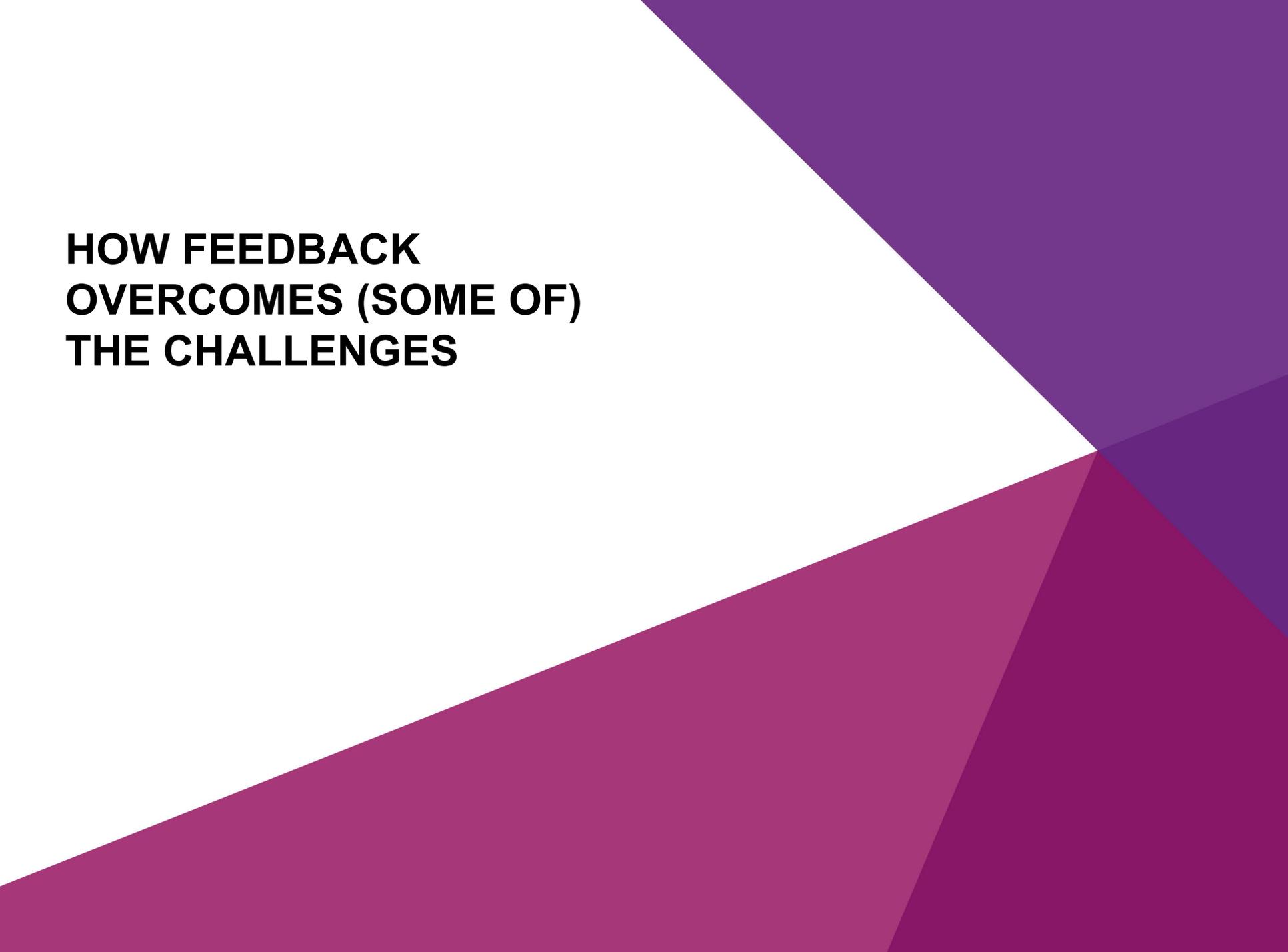
Outcome data measures changes in attitudes, behaviours and knowledge that your services generate

Feedback data measures how young people experience your service – it can capture information on whether the MoC are at play

Impact data measures the long-term difference achieved for young people and their communities

HOW FEEDBACK OVERCOMES (SOME OF) THE CHALLENGES

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

- Linking feedback data to outcomes data means…

  – Don't have to collect outcomes data on all young people

  – Can focus on high quality outcomes data

  – Helps answer the why question

- Grounds evaluation in experience and practice

- Enables a shared approach

- Recognises young people as experts in their own experience

- Equal emphasis on analysis and course correction (integrates practice improvement into evaluation)

REMAINING CHALLENGES OF OUR FEEDBACK APPROACH

- Is the world ready for it?

  - Seen as contradicting the impact agenda of funders/ policymakers

  - Seen as diminishing the importance of outcomes

- Are organisations 'feedback' ready?

- Methodological

  - Standardisation across different users

  - Comparability of collection methods

- Feedback is about more than evaluation (empowerment

  and course correction)

THANK YOU
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