



# How to build uncertainty into your strategy

WEBINAR & DISCUSSION



*hosted by*

**bond**

*Pallu Modi & Christian Meyer zu Natrup*

*April 2020*

**Do Good. Better!**

**MzN**

*International*

# Introduction



**Pallu Modi**

MzN International

Non-profit strategy consultant



**Christian Meyer zu Natrup**

MzN International

Managing director

## Best lock-down activity



# Talking points & guiding questions

- ✓ How do we develop & action a strategy in times of rapid change, constant disruption and uncertainty?
- ✓ Is it even important to have a strategy when everything changes all the time?
- ✓ How do I build uncertainty into my strategy?
- ✓ How do I prepare my organisation for this?

*Presentation with about 10 slides followed by Q&A and discussion. Content is free to share.*

# Uncertainty is not new to our sector

- 2020 Covid-19 (the 1st) pandemic forces a lock down
- 2019 Brexit changes the funding landscape
- 2017-18 Safeguarding issues hit headline
- 2017 Turkey shuts down offices for Syria response
- 2017 DFID's new Terms and Conditions force increased compliance
- 2013-2016 Ebola crises in West Africa, South Sudan Civil War, US election impact on funding

**2021: Hard Brexit?**

2021: Major Recession

2021: a Chinese UN?

2021: Rise in Impact Philanthropy

**2021: COVID 2.0?**

**2021: DFID declines, FCO takes over?**

2021: EU New Green Deal

2021: US Election

# Building **uncertainty** into your strategy

Determine by  
**analysis**



Too much  
uncertainty



**S-A-V-E**



**S**hock proofing  
**A**gility  
**V**alue communication  
**E**valuate with Metrics

Determine by  
**experience**



Too  
individual  
& often  
wrong



# Step 1: Shock proof your engine



## Respond-essentials

- Future organisation will be damaged if this is not working
- e.g. Strategic leadership, quick pivots to new opportunities for impact, global alignment with local flexibility, value-proposition change

## Restart-essentials

- Present organisation will be damaged if this is not working
- e.g. Donor representations, relationship maintenance, minimum programme implementation,

## Life-support essentials

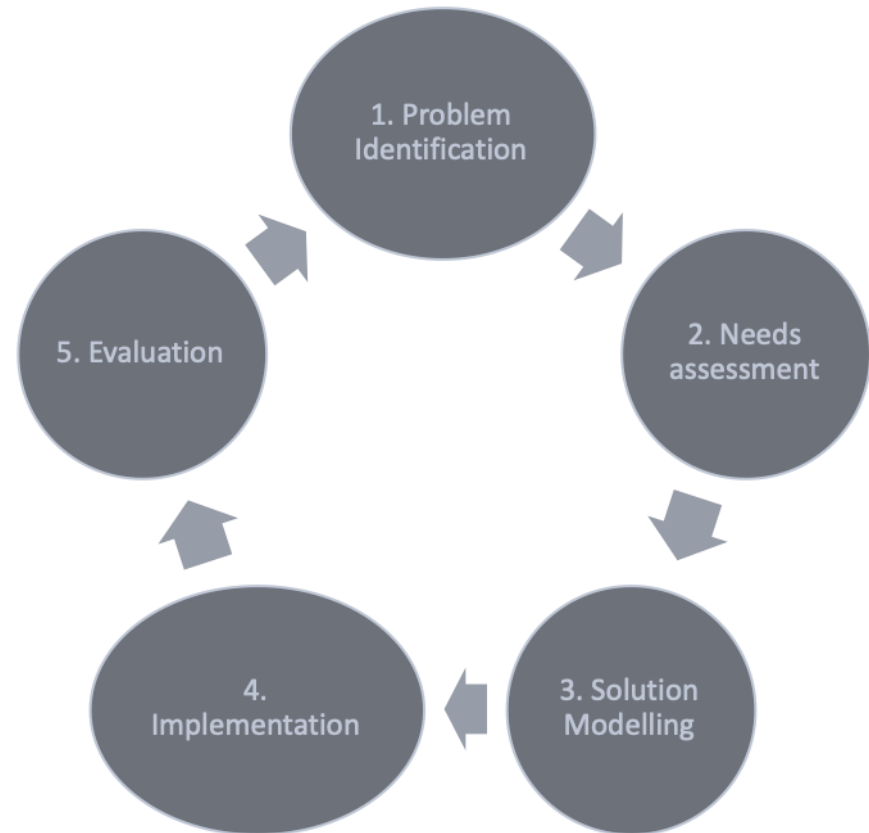
- Organisation will collapse if this is not working
- e.g. core Finance, basic HR for safeguarding, IT, Skeleton presence in-country

# Step 2: Agility is a key success factor

**When everything changes fast, we cannot continue as usual.**

Traditional 'programme & Strategy design does not work in uncertain times.

- ✓ Impossible to foresee needs, requests, context and requirements.
- ✓ Learning is not routinely incorporated unless process is restarted
- ✓ Too slow.



# Step 2: Agility is a key success factor

## Better to respond in a sequential, iterative process

- ✓ **First-mover advantage** by getting hierarchies & structure out of the way.
- ✓ **Motivates the team:** working at speed and without impediments in entrepreneurial fashion is thrilling.
- ✓ **User-led:** The intense & constant close alignment with programme users builds better programmes and more donor loyalty.
- ✓ **Change is build into organisation:** making constant change less daunting.

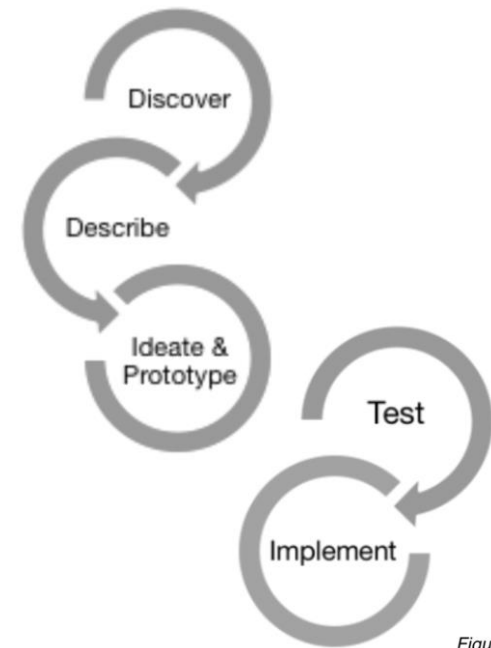


Figure 4

[Source: MzN & University of Bristol study, 2017](#)



# Step 3: Value Demonstration

## ✓ **Client**

Is demand changing? Do you need to consider new delivery models?

## ✓ **Value proposition**

Client needs may not change but may need to think of different ways to create value for them.

## ✓ **Value demonstration**

Consider new ways of showing value, new plans for outreach.

## ✓ **Resourcing**

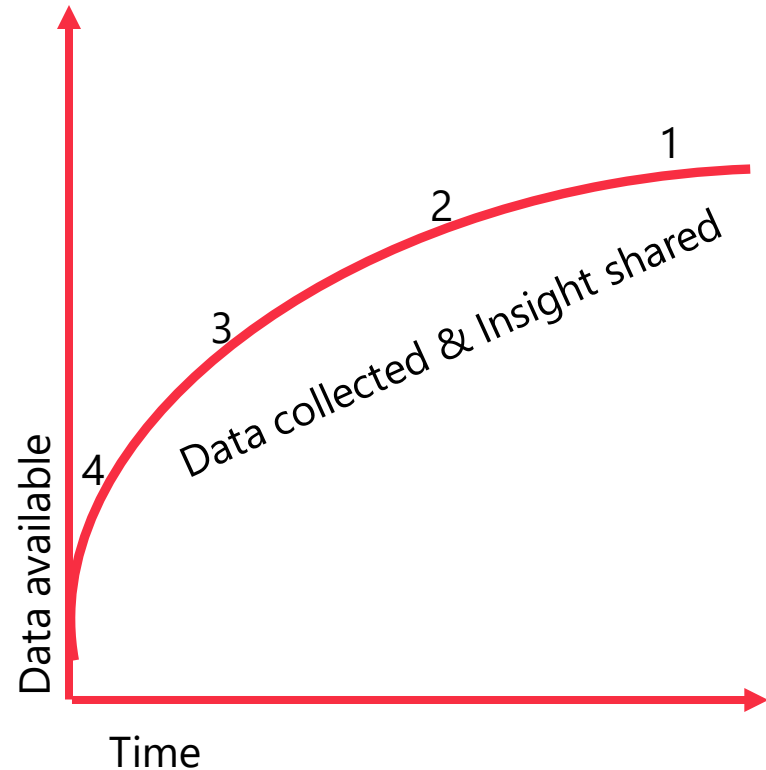
Look at where we need more/less support within your organisations.

# Step 4: Evaluate & share

Even in the most uncertain scenarios we can usually set some sort of strategy by making data and information collection pivotal & prioritising it.

Pair with scenario planning and trigger points to communicate a clear strategy.

- ✓ Clear enough future
- ✓ Alternative futures
- ✓ A range of futures
- ✓ No range or information



# Thank you



This free **webinar** will be repeated on **5<sup>th</sup> May at 11am GMT**

Sign up [here](#)



Join a **THINK2030** session for an invitation-only supportive place to think about the decade of delivery.

Sign up for free [here](#)



Read our **blog** about leading through the new world disorder [here](#)



Check out Bond's support during the Covid-19 pandemic [here](#)

**Do Good. Better!**

