

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ETHICS FOR EVALUATORS IN A TRANSFORMING FIELD

Think Tank session, EES 2022

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OBJECTIVES – THINK TANK

- To reflect on the current state of ethics in relation to the changes we are seeing in society and in the field of evaluation;
- To gather input from other evaluators on the need to for common ethical principles for evaluation in a European context;
- To examine our professional role and identity as evaluators in a changing field.



THREE QUESTIONS

- What are the important transformative shifts we are seeing in society that interact with the field of evaluation?
- What do these transformational shifts mean for the role of ethics in evaluation?
- What does an evaluation ethics mean for our professional identity and role as evaluators?



Program

- Presentation 15 min
- Question 1 – in plenum
- Intro to questions and facilitating discussions 5 min
- Question 2 - discussion/ think tank 25 min
- Question 3 – discussion/ think tank 25 min
- Following up in plenum 10 min

What are the important transformative shifts we are seeing in society that interact with the field of evaluation?

CONSEQUENCES

The evaluator role is changing – and under pressure due to different management forms, interests, values and inequalities in access to power, information etc

New data sources –
fx big data, AI

Absence of fact-based decision-making in politics

MAIN PROBLEM

The traditional evaluation role does not contribute to solving the wicked problems in a systemic transformation

CAUSES

Towards a professional identity of evaluators?



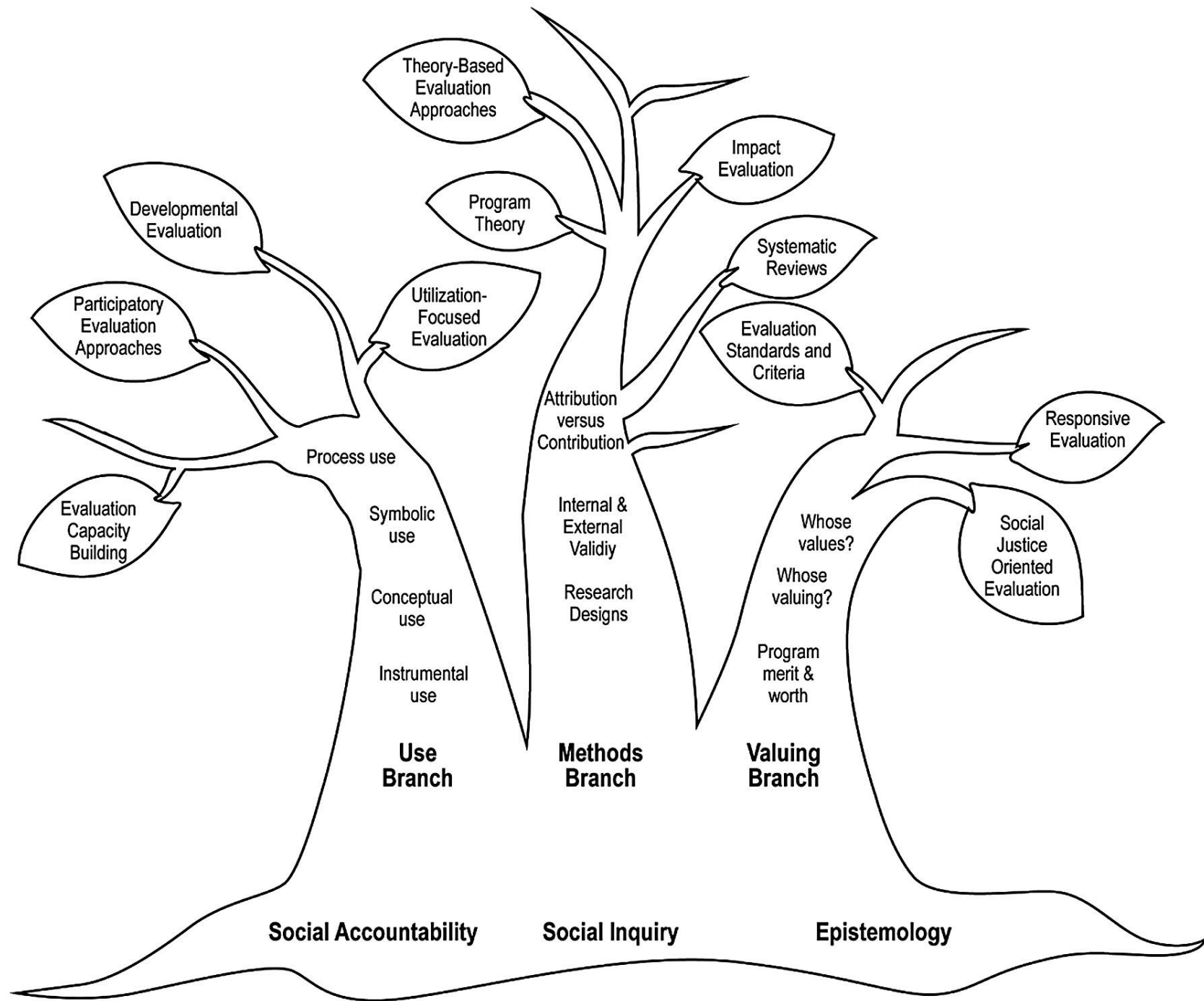
Manuals
Processes
Evidence

Professional reflexive practice – dilemma cases
Collegial criticism and responsibility
Capacity to deal with professional, ethical dilemmas

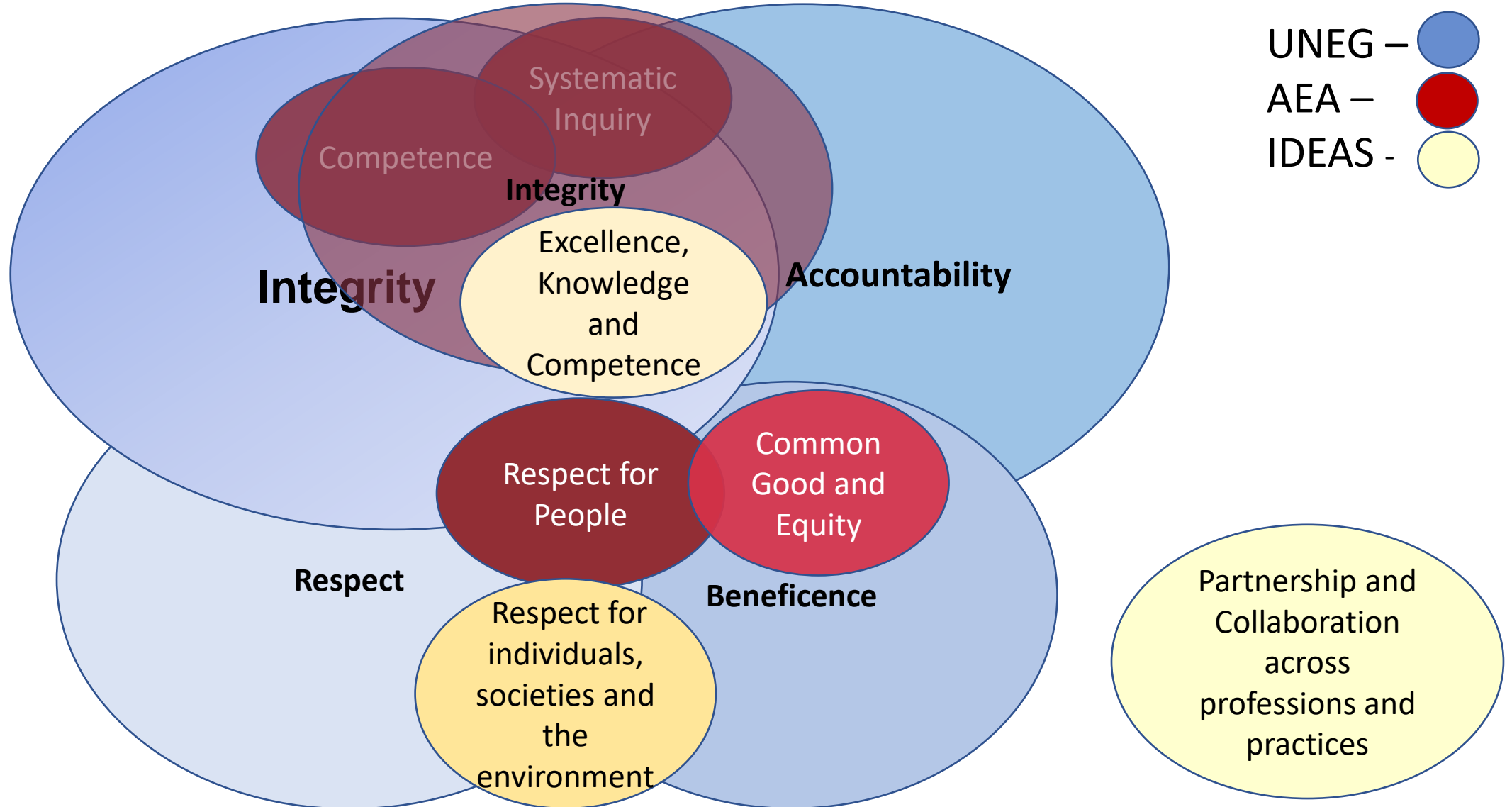
Freedom
Professional
judgement

The purpose is to:

- Develop common professional **ethics**
- Strengthen the evaluators role - creating room for maneuvering
- Strengthen evaluators competence for taking the "good and right" decisions

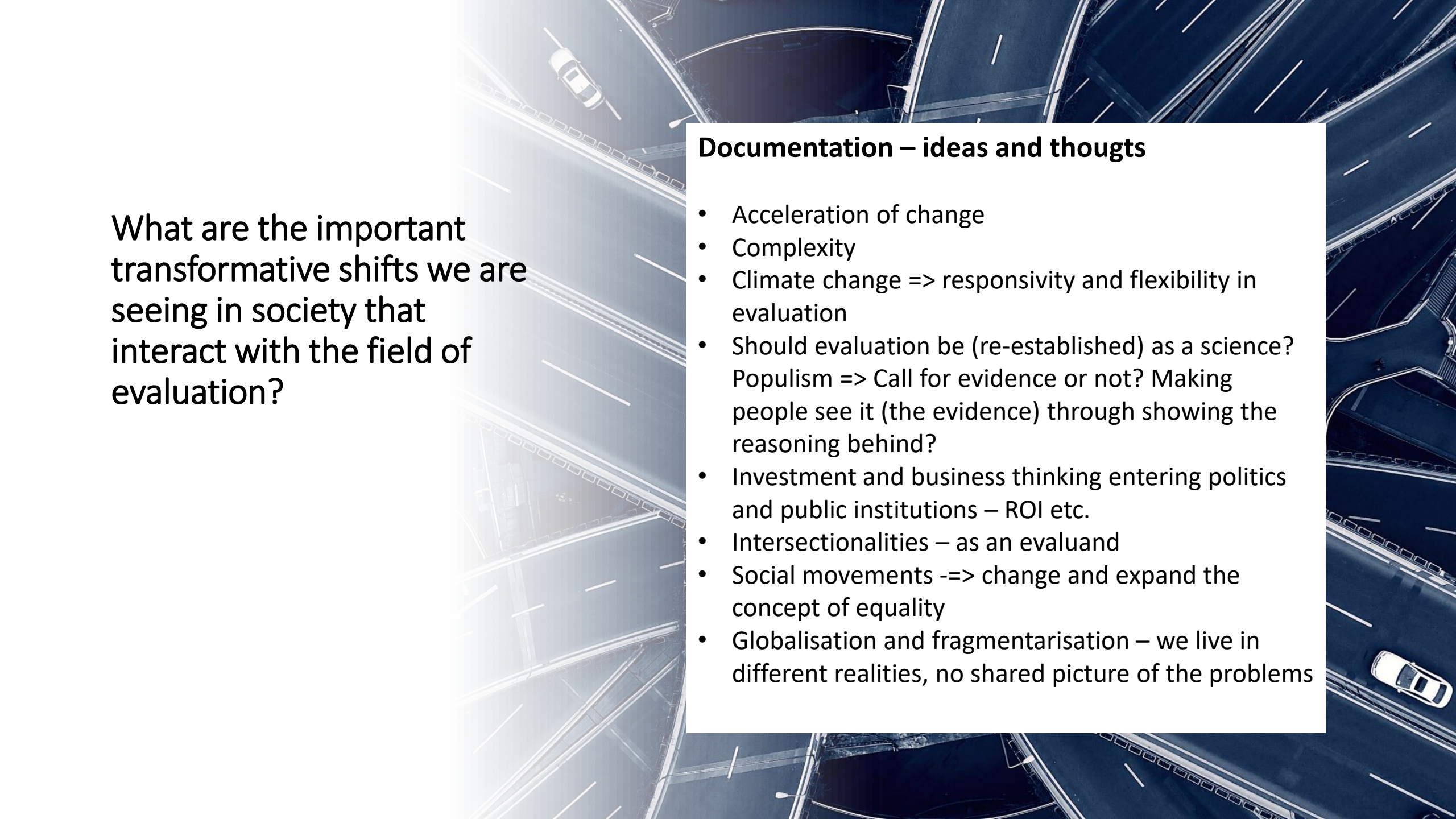


Current Ethical Guiding Principles



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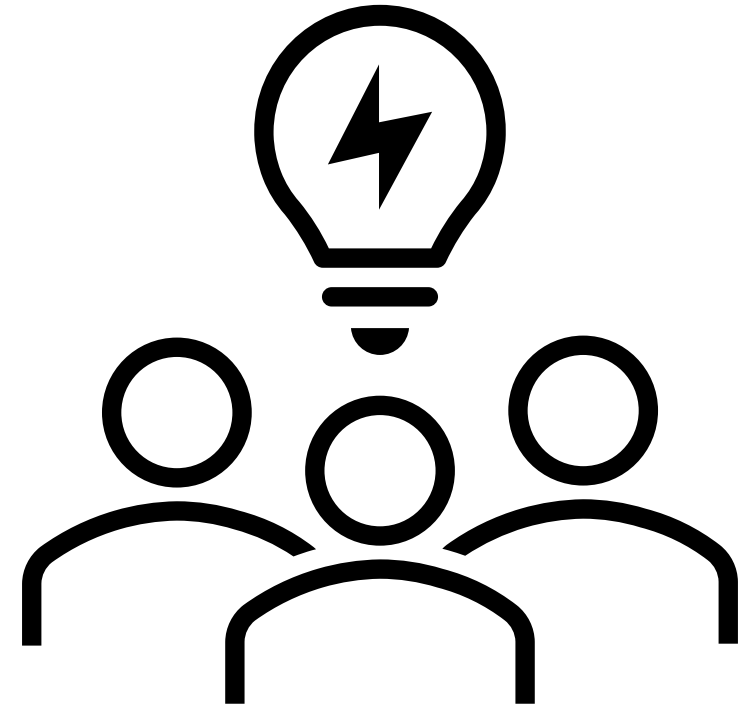
What are the important transformative shifts we are seeing in society that interact with the field of evaluation?

Documentation – ideas and thoughts

- Acceleration of change
- Complexity
- Climate change => responsivity and flexibility in evaluation
- Should evaluation be (re-established) as a science? Populism => Call for evidence or not? Making people see it (the evidence) through showing the reasoning behind?
- Investment and business thinking entering politics and public institutions – ROI etc.
- Intersectionalities – as an evaluand
- Social movements -=> change and expand the concept of equality
- Globalisation and fragmentarisation – we live in different realities, no shared picture of the problems

THINK TANK

1. What do these transformational shifts mean for the role of ethics in evaluation?
(Supportive questions:
 1. Do we need to formulate new ethical principles for evaluation and why?
 2. What is the role of ethics in a transformative evaluation approach?)
2. What does an evaluation ethics mean for our professional identity and role as evaluators?
(Supportive questions:
 1. Does it influence a changing role and how?
 2. How should we use an evaluation ethics for support that role?)



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Process: 1 2 4 All (25 min)

1. Self-reflection (2 min)
2. Pairs-pair up with someone, share and build on your self-reflections (8 min)
3. Foursome-pair up with another pair, share and develop your ideas further. (10 min)
4. All-each group share one or two main thoughts. (5 min)

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Documentation of ideas and thoughts

- The UN guidelines and principles are sufficient
- Build in the principles and conversation about them in the contracting process
- Principles are adaptable to different scales, phases and situations
- What do we do when the principles are not followed?
- How do we go "out of the (evaluators contracting) box" and address the principles on the strategic level?
- Can ethical principles be used to make an evaluation transformative?

THINK TANK

2. What does an evaluation ethics mean for our professional identity and role as evaluators?

(Supportive questions:

1. Does it influence a changing role and how?
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Documentation of ideas and thoughts

- Do no harm (UN principle) – evaluation is an intervention, meaning it has an impact on people etc.
- Evaluation safeguarding
- Be aware of our own values and norms – as well as of other people`s values (respecting each other)
- Ethics is not a solution but a linse to approach the dilemmas – there is no "good and right" solutions

THANK YOU FOR YOUR THINKING CONTRIBUTION!

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www.adaptivepurpose.org

