

# ASSESSING THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF RAPID CYCLE EVALUATION IN EDUCATION

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# OBJECTIVE

- Project Overview
- Define RCE
- RCE Framework
- Essential Takeaways

# PROJECT OVERVIEW



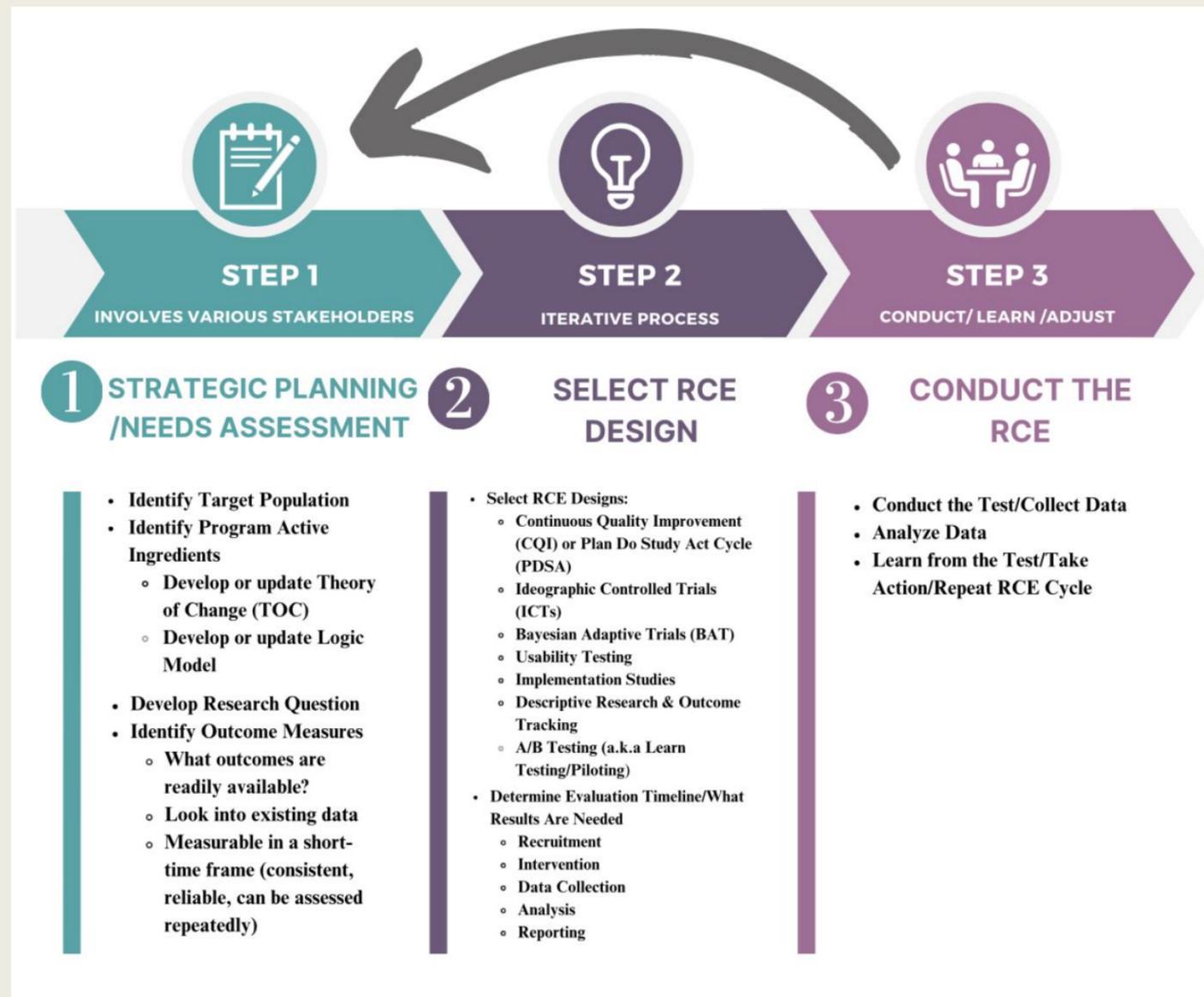
# DEFINE RCE

Rapid Cycle Evaluation is a method that swiftly evaluates the effectiveness of various program components by testing different conditions and offering continuous feedback to enhance program quality.

- ❖ Rapid Feedback
- ❖ Continuous Improvement



# RCE FRAMEWORK



Steps to Rapid Cycle Evaluation (RCE) Process

# RCE FRAMEWORK

General Research Question: What is the most effective approach to coaching teachers?

## CYCLE I



To understand what did and did not work well about the current coaching model

## CYCLE II



To determine coaching model is most likely to be sustainable

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 1

INVOLVES VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

### 1 STRATEGIC PLANNING /NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Identify Target Population
- Identify Program Active Ingredients
  - Develop or update Theory of Change (TOC)
  - Develop or update Logic Model
- Develop Research Question(s)
- Identify Outcome Measures
  - What outcomes are readily available?
    - Examine existing data
  - Measurable within a short timeframe (is it consistent, reliable, and can be assessed repeatedly)?

## Step 1: Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment

### Phase I & Phase II

#### 1. Identify Target Population:

- The target population includes school principals, teachers, and inspectors in Senegal, who are being coached as part of the new Early Grade Reading (EGR) curriculum implementation.

#### 2. Identify Program Active Ingredients:

- The theory of change (TOC) for these coaching models was discussed, acknowledging the evidence from other countries and the unique challenges anticipated in the Senegalese context.

#### 3. Develop Research Questions:

- The primary research question was: "What is the most effective approach to coaching teachers?"

### CYCLE I:

Research question: **To understand what did and did not work well about the current coaching model .**

- Outcome measures included teacher satisfaction, perceived usefulness of the coaching model, and the feasibility of implementing the model
- Data was collected through qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews, surveys, and classroom observations, which provided real-time feedback to inform adjustments.

### CYCLE II:

Research question: **To determine coaching model is most likely to be sustainable.**

- Outcome measures included teacher satisfaction, perceived usefulness of the coaching models, and the feasibility of implementing the models. 3 models were compared.
- Data was collected through qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews, surveys, and classroom observations, which provided real-time feedback to inform adjustments.

RCE Framework  
Example at the  
Program-Level

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 2

MAPS QUESTION TO DESIGN

### 2

## SELECT RCE DESIGN

- Select from various RCE Designs (an iterative process). For example:
  - Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) or Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Cycle
  - Usability Testing
  - A/B Testing (a.k.a Learn Testing/Piloting)
  - Bayesian Adaptive Trials (BAT)
- Determine the following:
  - Recruitment
  - Intervention
  - Data Collection (timeline)
  - Analysis
  - Reporting (what results are needed)

### Step 2: Select RCE Designs

#### CYCLE I:

- **Design:** CYCLE I was exploratory, identifying barriers and
- **Evaluation Timeline:** The timeline was structured to allow for ongoing data collection, analysis, and discussion throughout the school year.

#### CYCLE II:

- **Design:** CYCLE II involved a small-scale randomized controlled trial (RCT) comparing three coaching models.
- **Evaluation Timeline:** The timeline was structured to allow for ongoing data collection, analysis, and discussion throughout the school year.

RCE Framework  
Example at the  
Program-Level

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 3

CONDUCT/LEARN/ADJUST

3

### CONDUCT THE RCE

- **Conduct the Test and collect the data**
- **Analyze the data & learn from the test.**
- **Make necessary adjustment and repeat the update RCE cycle**

#### Step 3: Conduct the RCE (Do It)

##### CYCLE 1:

##### Learn from the Test/ Take Action/ Repeat RCE Cycle:

- The lead implementer and evaluator use the information from CYCLE 1 to adjust the coaching model and to develop two alternative coaching models (Variant A & B).

##### CYCLE II:

##### Learn from the Test/ Take Action/ Repeat RCE Cycle:

- Based on the data analysis, the team identified that in-person coaching by experienced principals (Variant B) led to the best classroom practices. This was a key learning point that would guide decisions about scaling the coaching model.
- The findings from CYCLE II of the RCE informed the decision to potentially scale Variant B during the next school year. The implementers and funders discussed these findings to decide on the most feasible and effective approach for wider implementation.

RCE Framework  
Example at the  
Program-Level

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 1

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## Step I: Strategic Planning/Needs Assessment in Grantmaking

### •Identify Target Population:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Determine the specific communities, organizations, or issues your grant will target. This could involve assessing the needs of potential grantees or the populations they serve.

### •Identify Program Active Ingredients:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Define the key components of the grant programs you are funding. What are the essential activities or interventions that must occur for the grant to be successful?
- **Develop or Update TOC & Logic Model:** Create or refine a Theory of Change and Logic Model that clearly outlines the expected outcomes of your grants, how these outcomes will be achieved, and what resources are needed.

### •Develop Research Questions:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Formulate questions that your grant evaluations will answer, such as "How effective is this grant in achieving its intended outcomes?" or "What are the best practices emerging from this grant?"

### •Identify Outcome Measures:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Determine the metrics you will use to assess the success of your grants. What data will you collect from grantees? Ensure that the outcomes can be measured in a short timeframe and are reliable.

### •Involvement of Stakeholders:

**Grantmaking Application:** Engage grantees, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders in the planning process to ensure that the grant design meets their needs and is practical to implement.

Applying RCE  
Framework to  
Grantmaking

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 2

MAPS QUESTION TO DESIGN

2

## SELECT RCE DESIGN

- Select from various RCE Designs (an iterative process). For example:
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  - Data Collection (timeline)
  - Analysis
  - Reporting (what results are needed)

### Step II: Selecting RCE Designs in Grantmaking

#### •Choose Appropriate RCE Designs:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Select the most suitable RCE design(s) for evaluating your grants. For instance:
  - **CQI/PDSA:** Use this to continuously improve the grant implementation process.
  - **Descriptive Research & Outcome Tracking:** utilize this to track metrics and outcomes that are part of the foundation's existing data collection processes.
  - **Usability Testing:** Foundations can conduct usability testing internally, especially when testing tools, processes, or systems intended for grantees or beneficiaries.
  - **A/B Testing:** Implement this to test different grant strategies or interventions and determine which is more effective.

#### •Determine Evaluation Timeline:

**Grantmaking Application:** Set timelines for when key evaluation activities will occur during the grant period (e.g., recruitment, intervention, data collection, analysis). This will help ensure that the grantmaking process stays aligned with RCE principles.

Applying RCE  
Framework to  
Grantmaking

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## STEP 3

CONDUCT/LEARN/ADJUST

3

### CONDUCT THE RCE

- Conduct the Test and collect the data
- Analyze the data & learn from the test.
- Make necessary adjustment and repeat the update RCE cycle

### Step III: Conducting RCE in Grantmaking

#### •Conduct the Test/Collect Data:

- **Grantmaking Application:** Implement the grant and collect data on its performance. This might include gathering reports from grantees, conducting surveys with beneficiaries, or analyzing financial and operational data.

#### •Analyze Data:

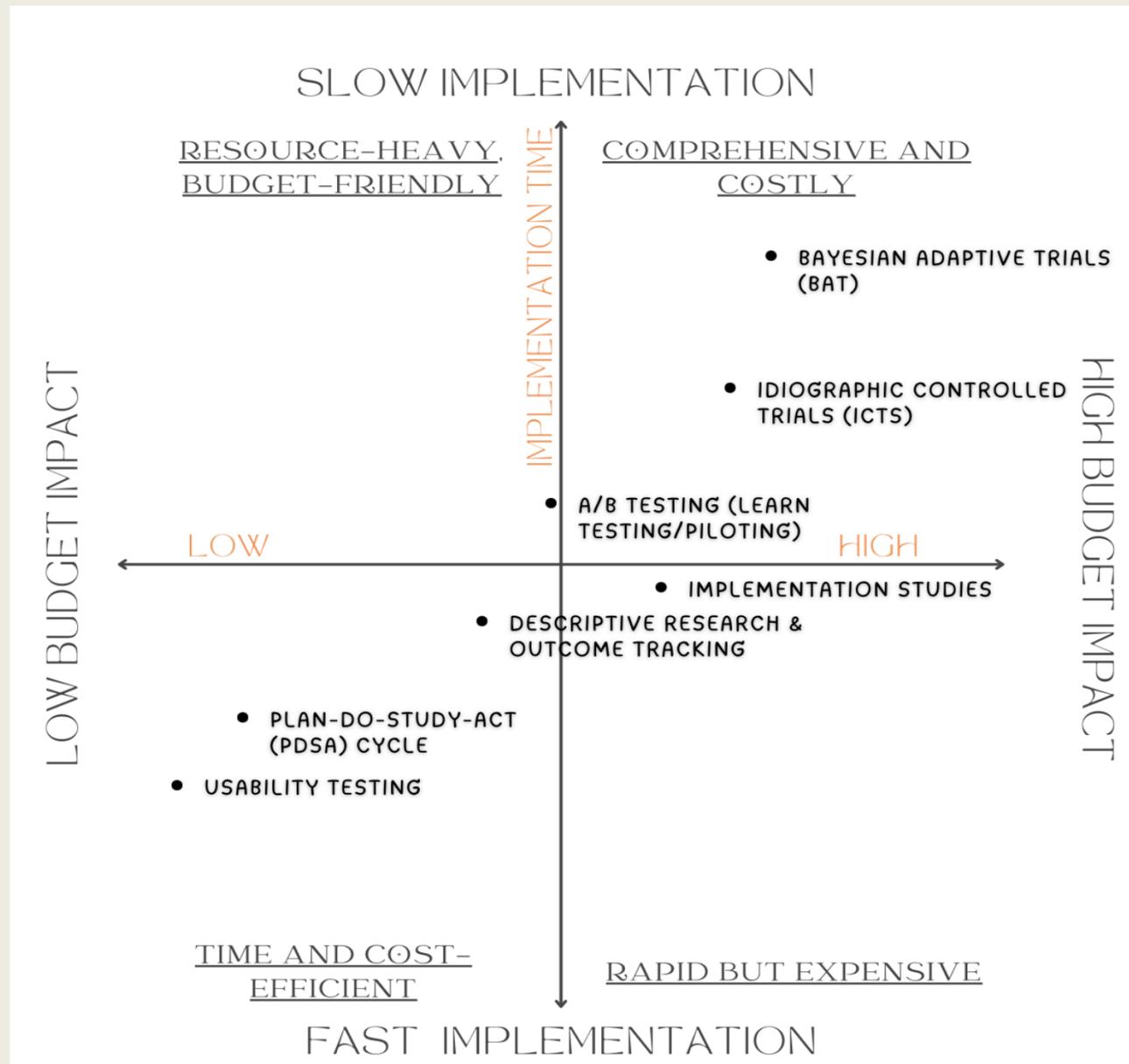
- **Grantmaking Application:** Regularly analyze the data to assess whether the grants are meeting their intended outcomes. Use this analysis to identify areas for improvement.

#### •Learn, Take Action, and Repeat:

**Grantmaking Application:** Use the insights gained from data analysis to make informed decisions about ongoing and future grantmaking. Adjust your strategies as needed and repeat the RCE cycle to foster continuous improvement in your grantmaking process.

## Applying RCE Framework to Grantmaking

# RCE FRAMEWORK



## RCE Designs Easier for Foundations to Conduct Internally

- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) or Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycle
- Usability Testing
- Descriptive Research & Outcome Tracking

## RCE Designs That May Require External Evaluators

- A/B Testing (Learn Testing/Piloting)
- Implementation Studies:
- Idiographic Controlled Trials (ICTs)
- Bayesian Adaptive Trials (BAT)

# Essential Takeaways

## ● Practical Application

RCE can be integrated into existing evaluation frameworks, allowing foundations to build on their current practices.

- ❖ Rapid Feedback
- ❖ Continuous Improvement

## ● Cost-Effective

Certain RCE designs, like Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles, can be conducted internally with minimal cost, making it accessible for foundations with limited budgets.

# Essential Takeaways

## ● Stakeholder Engagement

RCE promotes active involvement of stakeholders, ensuring evaluations align with the needs and goals of all parties involved.

## ● Actionable Steps

Analyze Current Practices: Assess your current evaluation practices and identify gaps where RCE could add value.

- Current evaluation capabilities
- Staff expertise
- Technological tools
- Data systems

# THANK YOU

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## Citations:

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