Implementation Insights.
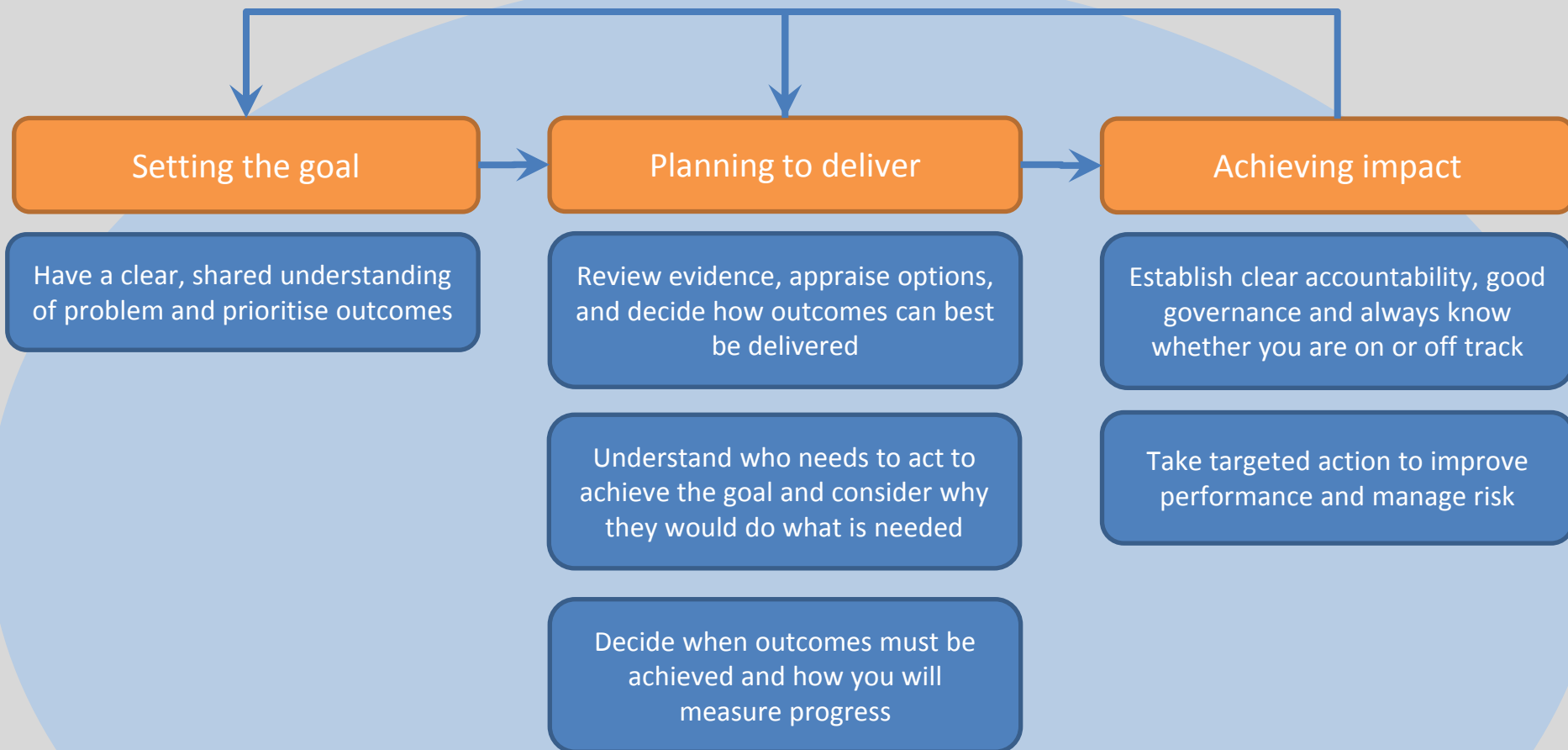
Translating political will into real world impact

"Insights" offer an evidence based approach, tested by a range of external delivery experts and real policymakers, to help you implement more effectively.

Our evidence, based on over 100 "deep dives" spanning a wide range of Government priorities, indicates that teams able to fully answer these questions are more likely to deliver successful outcomes.

"Insights" are flexible in their application: use from start to finish in policy development; to test and enhance delivery of identified solutions; or to focus on a narrow area to enhance performance.

Implementation Insights

Setting the goal

Have a clear, shared understanding of problem and prioritise outcomes

Planning to deliver

Review evidence, appraise options, and decide how outcomes can best be delivered

Understand who needs to act to achieve the goal and consider why they would do what is needed

Decide when outcomes must be achieved and how you will measure progress

Achieving impact

Establish clear accountability, good governance and always know whether you are on or off track

Take targeted action to improve performance and manage risk

Keep asking why: question why your approach is right; why would others take the action required?

How do you know: continuously test against data and evidence from the frontline

Implementation Insights – setting the goal

Have a clear, shared understanding of the problem and prioritise outcomes.

- What problem needs to be addressed? Why does it need to be solved now?

- What are the key constraints (time, money, capacity, legal etc) to tackling the problem?

- How does the goal fit with other policy in the department/government?

- What is the right role for Government?

- What constitutes success in terms of real world impact? How will it be measured?

setting the goal   planning   achieving impact

Implementation Insights - planning to deliver

Review evidence, appraise options, and decide how outcomes can best be delivered

- What policy levers and actions will best deliver the desired outcomes?
- What local, private and international evidence been considered in developing options?
- Why is the proposed solution the right one, as opposed to other options?
- What are the risks? How have unintended consequences been identified? What credible mitigations been identified?
- How can central elements of the solution be tested or piloted before you begin delivering at scale?

Understand who needs to act to achieve the goal and consider why they would do what is needed

- What are the needs, preferences, behaviours and experiences of the users/customers?
- Who is involved in delivery throughout the system? What are the links between them?
- What mix of incentives will best influence people and organisations to deliver?
- Is there existing capacity and skills in the system to deliver the intended policy? If not, how are you going to fill those gaps?

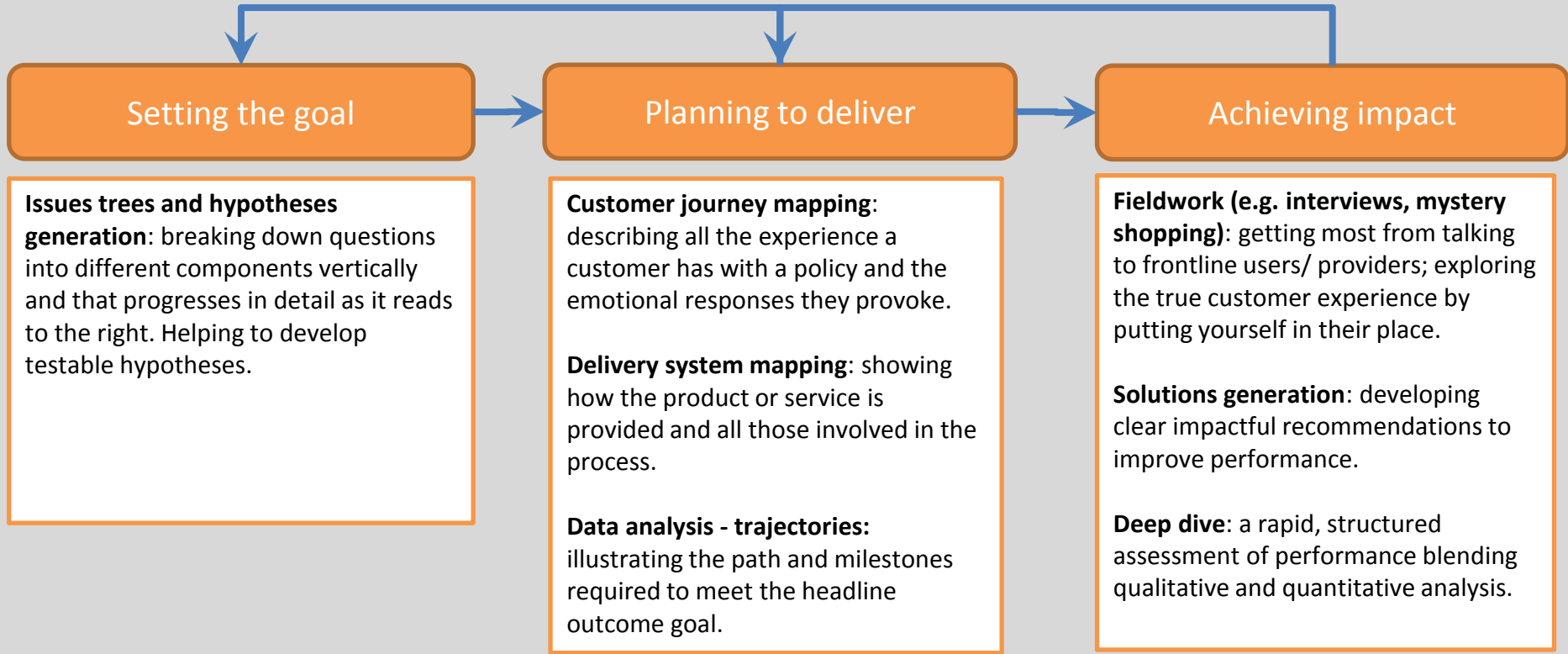**Decide when outcomes must be achieved and how you will measure progress**

- What is the critical delivery path?
- What is the timetable for delivery? How has this been shared and agreed with all involved?
- What is the expected trajectory and interim milestones to the policy goal? How have they been tested?
- How robust and timely is the available Management Information? What early warning and proxy information are available?
- How will qualitative information on progress be gathered?

setting the goal   planning   achieving impact

Establish clear accountability, routine governance and always know whether you are on track or not

- What are the leading indicators and qualitative evidence telling you about future risks?

- What governance and accountability is being used to track delivery? How are Ministers being regularly engaged?

- Who and what is needed to form a capable, empowered core team able to drive delivery?

- What assessment has been made of key dependencies and are these being managed?

- What is the system for tracking and monitoring unintended consequences?

Take targeted action to improve performance and manage risk

- How is the agreed plan being reviewed and iterated to reflect learning from delivery?

- High performance: How is success being learnt from to encourage even greater performance?

- Varied performance: Where and why are things working well? How are you spreading this good practice? What action are you taking to understand and address areas of poor performance?

- Starting to go off-track: What are you doing to understand why this is happening? What actions should be taken to mitigate?

- Seriously off-track: How are you escalating issues? What urgent actions are you taking? How will you know when your strategy/policy/programme has failed?

setting the goal   planning   achieving impact

Implementation Insights – examples of IU and other tools available

Setting the goal

Issues trees and hypotheses generation: breaking down questions into different components vertically and that progresses in detail as it reads to the right. Helping to develop testable hypotheses.

Planning to deliver

Customer journey mapping: describing all the experience a customer has with a policy and the emotional responses they provoke.

Delivery system mapping: showing how the product or service is provided and all those involved in the process.

Data analysis - trajectories: illustrating the path and milestones required to meet the headline outcome goal.

Achieving impact

Fieldwork (e.g. interviews, mystery shopping): getting most from talking to frontline users/ providers; exploring the true customer experience by putting yourself in their place.

Solutions generation: developing clear impactful recommendations to improve performance.

Deep dive: a rapid, structured assessment of performance blending qualitative and quantitative analysis.

For more information on the tools outlined above or to discover additional tools to help improve the implementation of your policy, please contact us: implementationunit@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

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In addition to standard guidance many other areas of Government offer helpful tools that can help enhance implementation, including:

Open Policy Making Toolkit
https://www.gov.uk/open-policy-making-toolkit

Behavioural Insight Team
www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/

What works centres
www.gov.uk/what-works-network

GO Science Horizon Scanning
www.gov.uk/government/groups/horizon-scanning-programme-team

Institute for Government
www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/

Policy profession
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-service-policy-profession