

Impact Toolbox

Tools and methods for a structured approach to your impact ambitions, activities and assessment.

▶ *Interactive PDF.*
Hover/click to filter
or learn more about a tool.

Phase

Stages of the impact process.



Structural level

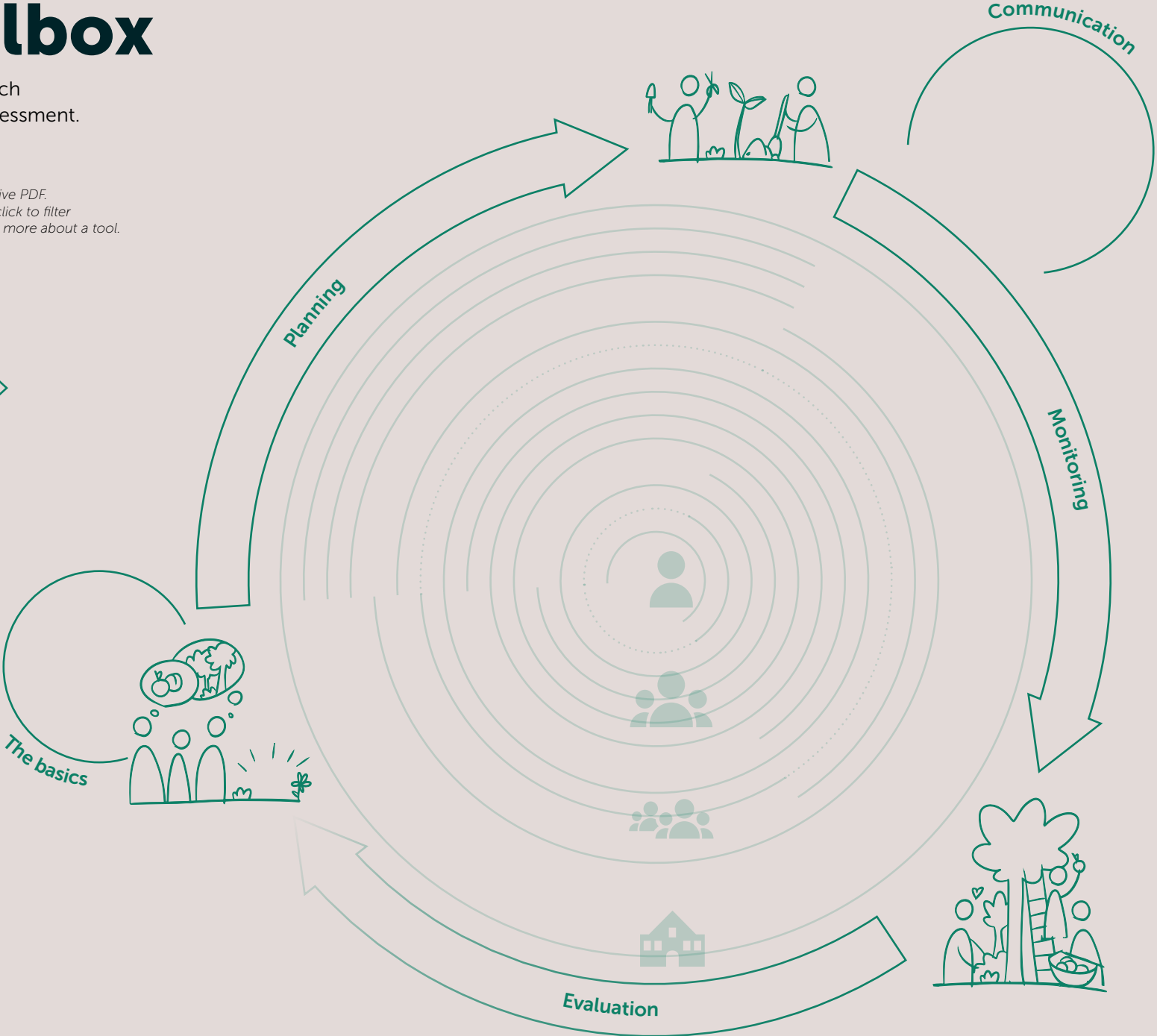
Focus (and target audiences) of the tool/method.

- Individual** (academic-/professional staff)
- Group** (teams, projects)
- Unit** (school, department)
- Organisation** (university)

Pillar

Contexts of application.

- Education**
- Research**
- Engagement**
- Operations** (Governance)



Tools and Methods A to Z





Building Impact Stories: An Inspirational Guide for Communicators

This guidebook has been developed to assist communication professionals in articulating the societal impact of university activities, projects and initiatives that stem from our core missions of education, research and engagement. It also covers the operational activities that enable these core missions. It includes a definition of societal impact at EUR, as well as three steps to guide you through the process of creating an impact story.

Use it to	Articulate the fine-grained details of the societal impact of university activities (i.e., the processes, mechanisms, failures and successes) when writing a communication output.
Who to involve	University staff, societal partners and beneficiaries.
Results	Accessible, comprehensive account of societal impact in EUR communications.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Building Impact Stories: An Inspirational Guide for Communicators. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Nevien Kerk, Shelby Sissing, Dr Giovanna Lima, Erika Hajdu, Dr Bianca Langhout.



Evaluating Student Impact Capacity: A Guidebook for Teachers

This guidebook is designed to assist course coordinators in evaluating students' impact capacity in their courses. It contains the definition of students' impact capacity and a non-exhaustive list of example questions for evaluating societal impact capacity, which can be tailored to specific course's intended learning objectives. This tool has been developed within a collaboration between Impact at the Core and the Evaluating Societal Impact project at EUR.

Use it to	Evaluate students' impact capacity, which will assist you in designing your course to be more impact-driven.
Who to involve	Students.
Results	Data regarding the role the course played in students' impact capacity, thus allowing insight into how you can tailor your course to be more impact driven.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Evaluating Student Impact Capacity: A Guidebook for Teachers. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Lisa Burghardt, Shelby Sissing, Dr Joe Binetti, Dr Giovanna Lima, Anna Smulders, Dr Bianca Langhout, Linda de Vreede.



Flows of Knowledge: A Method for Impact Assessment

The Flows of Knowledge evaluation method provides a framework for assessing the impacts of scientific research on policy and practice. This resource informs readers about the purpose of the method, its building blocks and how it can be used to assess the efficiency of knowledge exchange. By understanding these flows, you can optimise collaboration, improve decision-making, and foster positive societal impact.

Use it to	Learn about the method, which can be used for qualitative data collection focusing on networks and relationships, and for writing impact narratives.
Who to involve	Research teams and those using the research outputs, actors from policy, practice, and intermediary bodies.
Results	Using this method usually results in an impact narrative, optionally supported by indicators and qualitative/quantitative findings.

Read about 'Flows of Knowledge' at eur.nl

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Flows of Knowledge: A Method for Impact Assessment. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Margriet Kim Nguyen, Jorrit Smit, Shelby Sissing, Erika Hajdu.



Fostering Impactful Careers: A Tool for Reflection

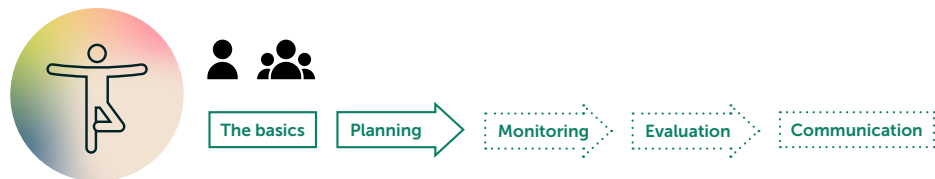
This reflection tool identifies key competencies, activities, and outputs related to societal impact that can be recognised and rewarded within the EUR. It provides direction to help leaders, supervisors, academics, and professional staff to advance a supportive institutional impact environment for academics.

Use it to	Integrate societal impact into (HR) practices and policies by recognising and rewarding impact-driven competencies, activities, and outputs in academia.
Who to involve	Academic leaders, policy advisors, and staff across your unit.
Results	Recognising societal impact in career development and academic activities, fostering an impact-driven culture.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact and Recognition & Rewards (2024). Fostering Impactful Careers: A Tool for Reflection. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Alise Scerbinina, Prof. Dr Arwin van Buuren, Balint Hardy, Bart Wesstein, Dr Bianca Langhout, Christien Bakker, Erika Hajdu, Eveline Braber, Dr Giovanna Lima, Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Nevien Kerk, Dr Stefan de Jong, Tung Tung Chan.



Impact Activities Catalogue

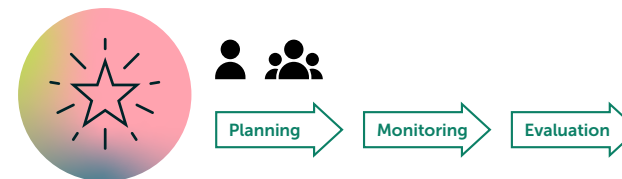
This catalogue describes key societal impact activities undertaken by university staff in the areas of research, education, and engagement. These activities have the explicit purpose of fostering the sharing and co-creation of academic knowledge and expertise with individuals and organisations. It supports a common language for planning, monitoring, and communicating impact, emphasises the need for ethical use of indicators and encourages open dialogue within the EUR community.

Use it to	Support, plan, monitor, and communicate societal impact.
Who to involve	Use by yourself or with your academic leaders, policy advisors, and staff across your unit.
Results	Considering potential impact activities for projects and career development.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact and Recognition & Rewards (2024). Impact Activities Catalogue. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Dr Giovanna Lima, Dr Stefan de Jong, Prof. Dr Arwin van Buuren, Dr Bianca Langhout, Nevien Kerk, Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Bart Westein, Erika Hajdu, Tung Tung Chan, Dr Shiwei Chen.



Impact Indicators: Overview and Selection Menu

This interactive document is a non-exhaustive, broad summary of indicators that supports you in selecting appropriate impact indicators, helping you monitor outputs and outcomes in relation to your intended societal impact. The tool has been designed based on literature and our experiences at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, using the feedback of researchers and experts of academic impact.

Use it to	Select suitable impact indicators for writing and assessing grants, drafting impact statements, narrative CV's, and research proposals.
Who to involve	Depending on the application, your team, and the involved stakeholders.
Results	A selection of indicators to help you collect tangible and measurable evidence for your impact.

Get the 'Impact Indicators: Overview and Selection Menu' at [EDR](#)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact indicators - overview and selection menu. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource. <https://doi.org/10.25397/eur.25451995>

Contributors: Hedi Westerduin, Lisa Burghardt, Prof. Dr Arwin van Buuren, Tatiana Abi Aad, Dr Giovanna Lima, Erika Hajdu, Dr Bianca Langhout.



Impact Narrative Tool

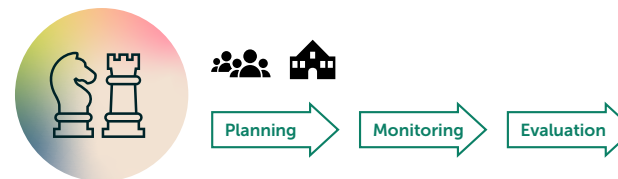
The impact narrative tool is an interactive website that takes you step by step through developing and sharing your impact narrative. The tool was developed in collaboration with the Municipality of Delft, Erasmus Medical Center Rotterdam, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands Center for Youth Health and Healthy Start in response to the challenges people and organisations face in articulating their impact and inspiring others. It contains tailored videos and templates that can be used to gather information that can be developed into a narrative.

Use it to	Inspire movements in which people and organisations are actively engaged in creating sustainable positive change.
Who to involve	Users may be policy makers and healthcare professionals, researchers, and communication professionals. To create a good narrative, involve your stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries.
Results	An impact narrative that you can share with different audiences.

Go to impactnarrative.nl



Contributors: Tatiana Abi Aad, Dr Stefan De Jong, Erika Hajdu, Lattifah Salima Baldeh, Adja Waelpu, Rachita Munshi, Joëlla Hendriks, Yvonne van Neste, Anne Kool, Dianne Slingerland.



Impact Strategy Development Toolkit

This tool was designed to provide an overview of the impact strategy development process. It is based on our experience of collaborating with various Schools at EUR. The tool outlines the three stages of strategy development and guides you to useful resources along the way. The three stages of School impact strategy development include: **1) Discovery** – Where we are. Understand and contextualise current impact practices and policies. **2) Develop** – Where we want to be. Co-create ambition and strategy with various internal and external stakeholders. **3) Deploy** – Formalising Ambition and Strategy. Adopt and monitor societal impact ambition and strategy.

Use it to	Understand the process and select tools to design School-level impact ambition and strategies.
Who to involve	Internal and external community of your School, including management teams, academics, professional staff, students, alumni, and societal partners and beneficiaries.
Results	An understanding of School-level impact strategy development process.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact Strategy Development Toolkit. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Dr Giovanna Lima, Tatiana Abi Aad, Latiffah Salima Baldeh.



Impact Strategy Development: Discovering your Current Organisational Landscape

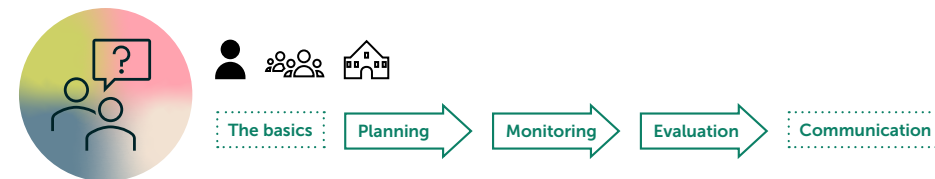
This tool was designed to guide schools and institutions in assessing their current societal impact during the discovery phase of their impact strategy development process. It provides interactive guidelines and questions to help understand existing impact practices, policies, structures, and activities. The tool encourages Schools to examine their current landscape before creating future ambitions and strategies.

Use it to	Assess the current impact practices, existing societal contributions and prepare for developing your impact strategies.
Who to involve	Strategy development team.
Results	Insights into the current landscape of the school in terms of impact in research, education, engagement and operations (e.g. activities, stakeholders, organisational support) as input for impact strategy development.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact Strategy Development: Discovering your Current Organisational Landscape. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Tatiana Abi Aad, Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Dr Giovanna Lima, Nevien Kerk.



Impact Strategy Development: Impact Questions Bank

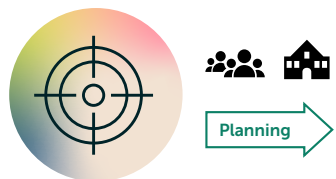
This bank of questions will help you develop an interview guide about societal impact (assessment). It was developed based on interviews conducted for different purposes. You can find questions based on 1) the purpose of the interview (e.g. to support a School in furthering its impact narrative capacity), and 2) the purpose of the question within the interview (e.g. to identify impact ambitions).

Use it to	Develop an interview guide to support your impact initiatives at different stages and for varying purposes, such as developing societal impact stories or gaining insight into how staff perceive impact.
Who to involve	You, your team and anyone else you want to interview (e.g. societal partners and beneficiaries).
Results	An interview guide with questions that will help you with your impact (assessment) ambitions that can serve as input for impact strategy development.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact Strategy Development: Impact Questions Bank. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Maud van Roessel, Dr Giovanna Lima, Shelby Sissing, Tatiana Abi Aad, Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Nevien Kerk, Tung Tung Chan, Lisa Burghardt, Bart Wesstein.



Impact Strategy Development: Organisational Goals

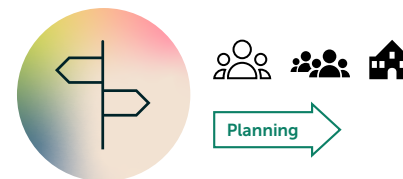
This catalogue describes organisational changes within academic units that can foster societal impact. They relate to aspects of organisational practice and environment that demonstrate a healthy approach to impact, in which enabling conditions are in place. It maps out a specific set of options that can help deliver on the Schools' impact ambitions, designed to facilitate the process of strategy development within the Schools, and encourage an open dialogue within the EUR community.

Use it to	Shape an impact strategy once the impact environment and ambitions are defined.
Who to involve	Strategy development team.
Results	Considering potential impact strategy options for your School (or another organisational unit).

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact Strategy Development: Organisational Goals. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Dr Giovanna Lima, Nevien Kerk, Shelby Sissing, Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Tatiana Abi Aad, Erika Hajdu.



Impact Strategy Development: Workshops Exploring Impact Ambitions

This tool was developed to help craft societal impact ambitions through a bottom-up approach. It provides a structured framework for staff to collaboratively identify impact ambitions and pathways that contribute to their School or Department's vision and identity. The tool empowers users to independently facilitate workshops that enable strategic planning.

Use it to	Facilitate a School or Department in defining, exploring, and aligning their societal impact ambitions with the needs and identities of their staff.
Who to involve	Strategy development team, staff, and if preferred (societal) partners and beneficiaries.
Results	A set of societal impact ambitions, aligned goals and pathways as input for impact strategy development.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Impact Strategy Development: Workshops Exploring Impact Ambitions. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Dr Giovanna Lima, Nina Escriva Fernandez, Linda van Klink, Dr Bas Karreman, Erika Hajdu, Mariela Miranda van Iersel, Tatiana Abi Aad.



Journey of Progress Card Set

Take a first step towards formalising your shared understanding on how and why change is supposed to happen in a given context. The cards facilitate a collaborative discussion, helping you to think about a joint goal and ways to get there, building pathways from a desirable future to the specific actions and necessary steps needed. Journey of Progress allows for a more interesting, structured and time efficient approach to developing your Theory of Change.

Use it to	Find a collaborative vision and explore your contribution to impact.
Who to involve	Your team and your (societal) partners and beneficiaries.
Results	A draft Theory of Change, an overview of change elements.

Get 'Journey of Progress' at eur.nl



Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Journey of Progress – Theory of Change card game. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Physical object. <https://doi.org/10.25397/eur.25311478>

Contributors: Erika Hajdu, Dr Stefan de Jong, Dr Giovanna Lima, Dr Bianca Langhout, Lisa Burghardt, Pablo Ortiz de Zaldumbide.



Preparing Case Studies for Impact Within SEP (2021-2027)

Based on the experiences with the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP) at the Erasmus University Rotterdam as well as literature on impact evaluation, this guide provides useful tips for the different phases of selecting and writing case studies for the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP) (2021-2027), with a specific focus on highlighting societal impact.

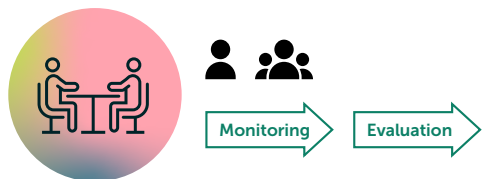
Use it to	Prepare for the SEP self-evaluation and for selecting and writing impact case studies that are part of a unit's self-evaluation narrative.
Who to involve	Individual researchers and research groups , professional staff (advisors such as policy or library staff) and societal stakeholders.
Results	A roadmap and action points approaching the SEP evaluation.

Read about how to 'Prepare Case Studies for Impact within SEP' at eur.nl



Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Preparing Case Studies for Impact Within SEP (2021-2027). Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Lisa Burghardt, Lotte Houtepen, Maud van Roessel, Dr Stefan de Jong, Dr Giovanna Lima.



Productive Interactions (SIAMPI): A Method for Impact Assessment

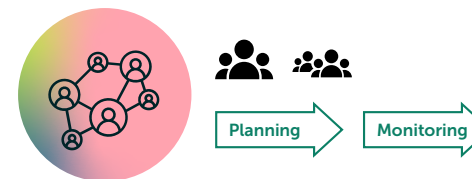
This is an introduction to productive interactions/SIAMPI as a method for impact assessment focusing on processes, interactions and stakeholders rather than prioritising outputs of research. This resource informs readers about the method’s purpose, building blocks, and how it can be used to highlight the mechanisms that might bring about societal impact, with a focus on so-called productive interactions and the role of stakeholders.

Use it to	Highlight the mechanisms that might bring about societal impact for projects with elements of co-creation, action research, living lab approaches, or other forms of stakeholder engagement.
Who to involve	Researchers, industry and private parties, public organisations, the government as well as members of the general public.
Results	Insight into the social relationships and networks, for example in the form of a visualisation to facilitate learning processes.

Read about 'Productive Interactions' at eur.nl

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Productive Interactions (SIAMPI): A Method for Impact Assessment. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Lisa Burghardt.



Proximity Lens on Structural Collaborations: A Method for Impact Assessment

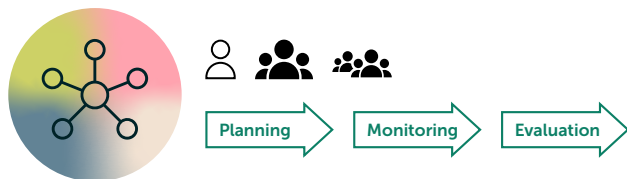
Proximity dimensions provide a lens to identify and highlight the conditions that enable successful cooperation and relationship building processes. In this description based on literature and our experiences, you can read about the method’s purpose, building blocks, and how it can be used when establishing a collaboration or collaborative project, to inform or improve the design of the collaboration.

Use it to	Understand and evaluate structural collaborations or long-term research projects (co-creation, action research, transdisciplinary research, living labs).
Who to involve	All actors who are involved; project management, researchers, beneficiaries, and ideally all key stakeholders (i.e., consulted, informed, or involved). An external assessor if you are involved in the collaboration yourself.
Results	Insights into how to strengthen your collaborations, potentially to be translated into practical, formal, and social preconditions.

Read about 'Proximity Lens on Structural Collaborations' at eur.nl

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Proximity Lens on Structural Collaborations: A Method for Impact Assessment. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Hedi Westerduin, Jorrit Smit.



Stakeholder Mapping Guide

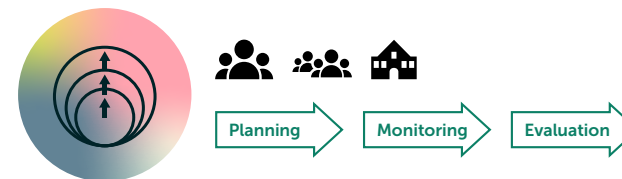
This resource is a (non-exhaustive) collection of materials on stakeholder mapping, analysis, and engagement, based on the experiences and insights of the Evaluating Societal Impact team. It has been put together to help you foster collaboration with your partners and beneficiaries within the impact ecosystem in which you work, and includes pointers to different resources and tips for various organisational levels and uses.

Use it to	Understand and learn about stakeholder mapping, select tools and methods according to your needs.
Who to involve	Your team and the relevant stakeholders.
Results	Action points, a stakeholder map, or an engagement plan based on your focus.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Stakeholder Mapping Guide. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Erika Hajdu, Nevien Kerk, Dr Giovanna Lima.



Theory of Change (ToC): A Method for Impact Planning and Assessment

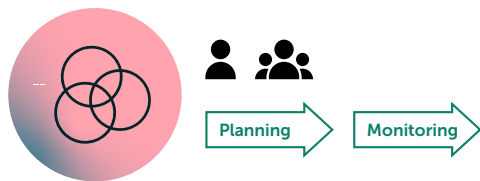
Theory of Change (ToC) is a formative, process-based evaluation method that is most often used to inform or improve project planning. This is a description of the framework based on scientific literature, in which you can learn about Theory of Change, including where, when, and how to use this method to describe how you envision certain changes to happen in a given context, and specify outcomes and outputs of your activities.

Use it to	Assess the feasibility of your goals, set up a monitoring and evaluation plan, write the impact section of a grant application.
Who to involve	Research project management, beneficiaries, and ideally any key stakeholders who you engage with (i.e., consult, inform, or involve). It is useful to have a facilitator moderate the discussion.
Results	Most often a graphical depiction and/or impact narrative of the impact pathways identified throughout the process.

Read about 'Theory of Change' at eur.nl

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Theory of Change (ToC): A Method for Impact Planning and Assessment. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Lisa Burghardt, Lotte Houtepen, Tung Tung Chan, Margriet Kim Nguyen, Dr Stefan de Jong, Erika Hajdu.



Thinking About my Impact and Engagement: A Worksheet

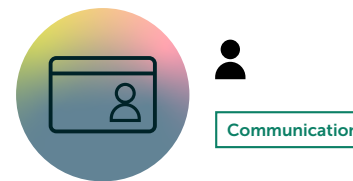
This brief printable worksheet was designed for academics to consider how their project or individual work relates to society. What does making positive societal impact mean to you? How do you map current and potential partners and beneficiaries? How to align your work to their needs? Filling out the worksheet takes 10-15 minutes, after which it can be discussed with others.

Use it to	Think about your impact goals, partners and beneficiaries, and engagement plan alone or in a workshop setting.
Who to involve	Researchers in your team.
Results	A stakeholder overview with questions and ideas on how to engage them in your project.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Thinking About my Impact and Engagement: A Worksheet. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Dr Giovanna Lima, Dr Stefan de Jong, Erika Hajdu.



Writing your Academic Bio: A Workbook

This tool helps academics create strong scholarly profiles. It guides users to present their achievements and the impact of their work within society. It can be used by academics who want to communicate a complete picture of themselves and their work.

Use it to	Generate a short academic profile e.g. for your profile page and communicate a complete picture of who you are and what your work is about, emphasising its societal relevance and impact.
Who to involve	This tool is for individual use.
Results	A short well-crafted scholarly profile that effectively communicates a holistic picture of your work.

(Link will follow)

Evaluating Societal Impact (2024). Writing your Academic Bio: A Workbook. Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). Online resource.

Contributors: Latiffah Salima Baldeh, Dr Giovanna Lima, Nina Escriva Fernandez, Dr Bas Karreman, Drs Judith Gulpers.

Filtered Views



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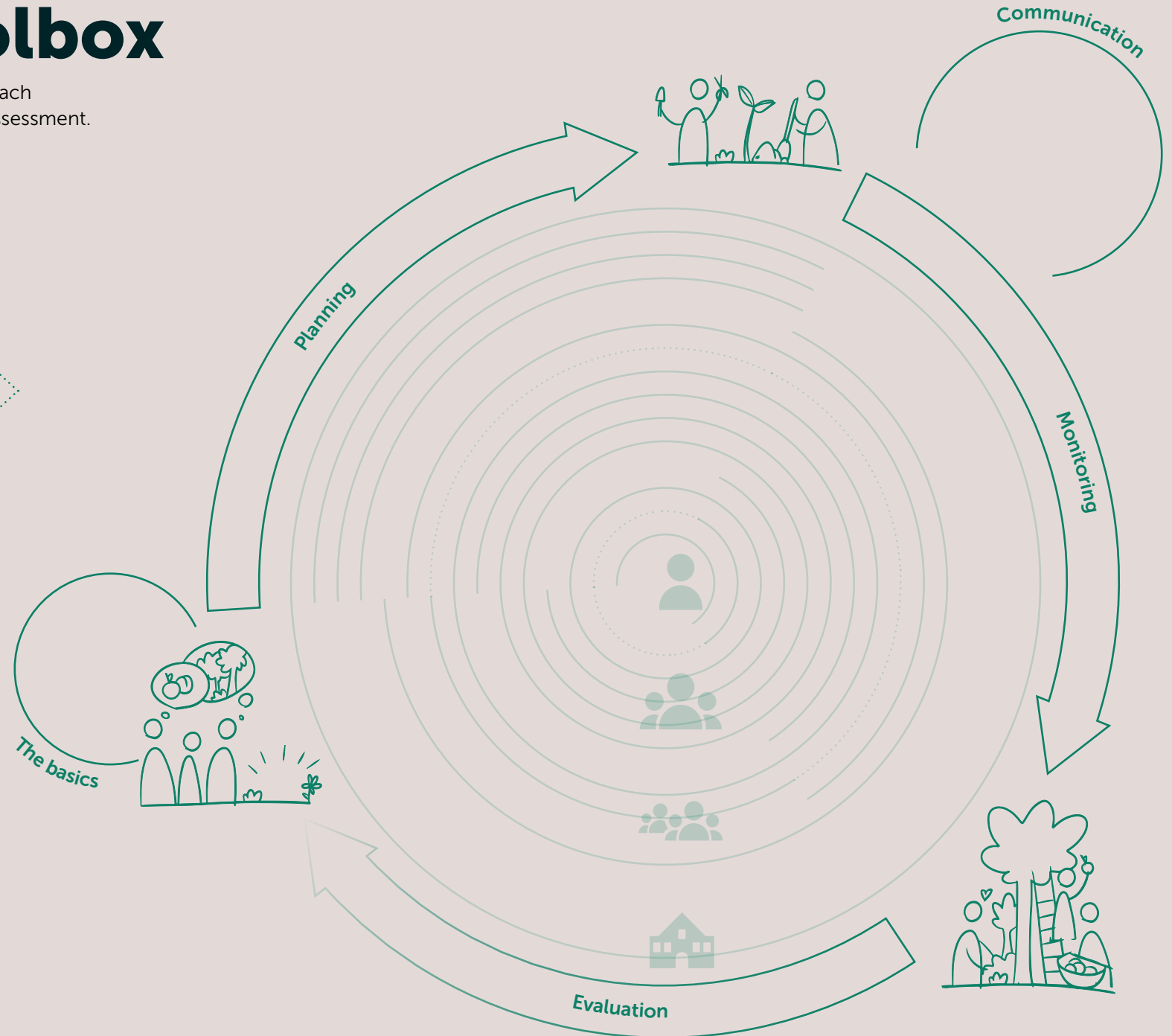
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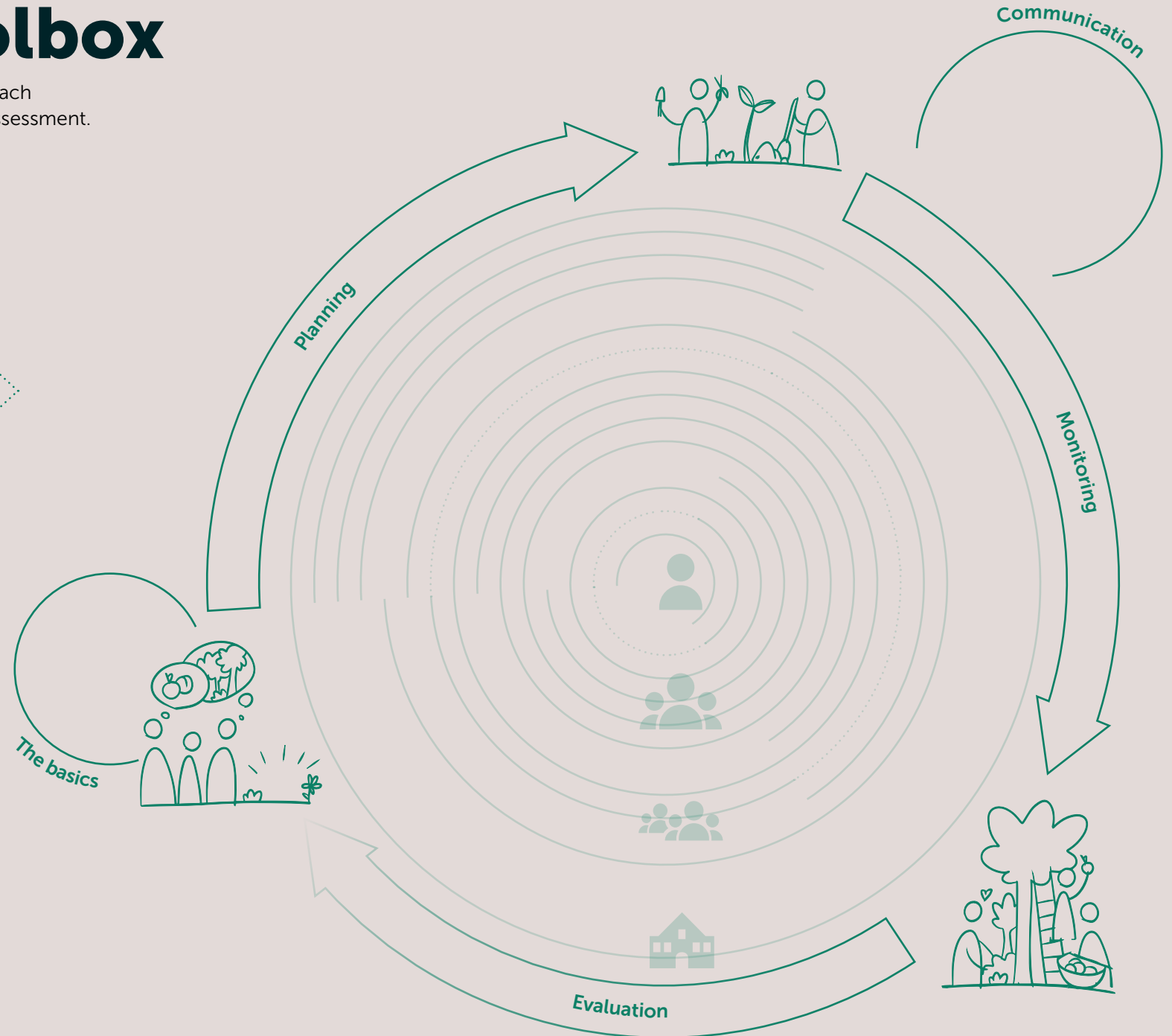
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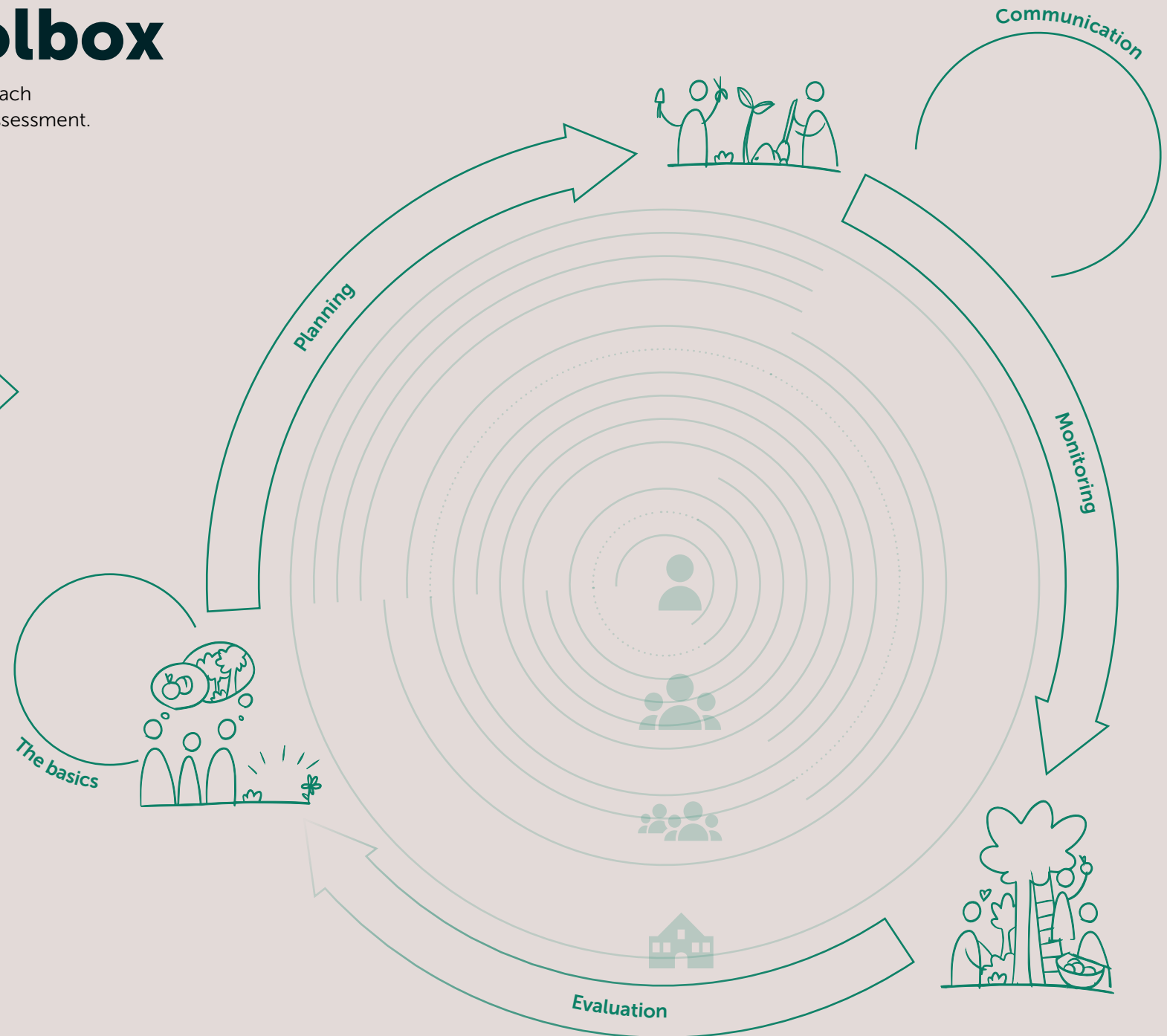
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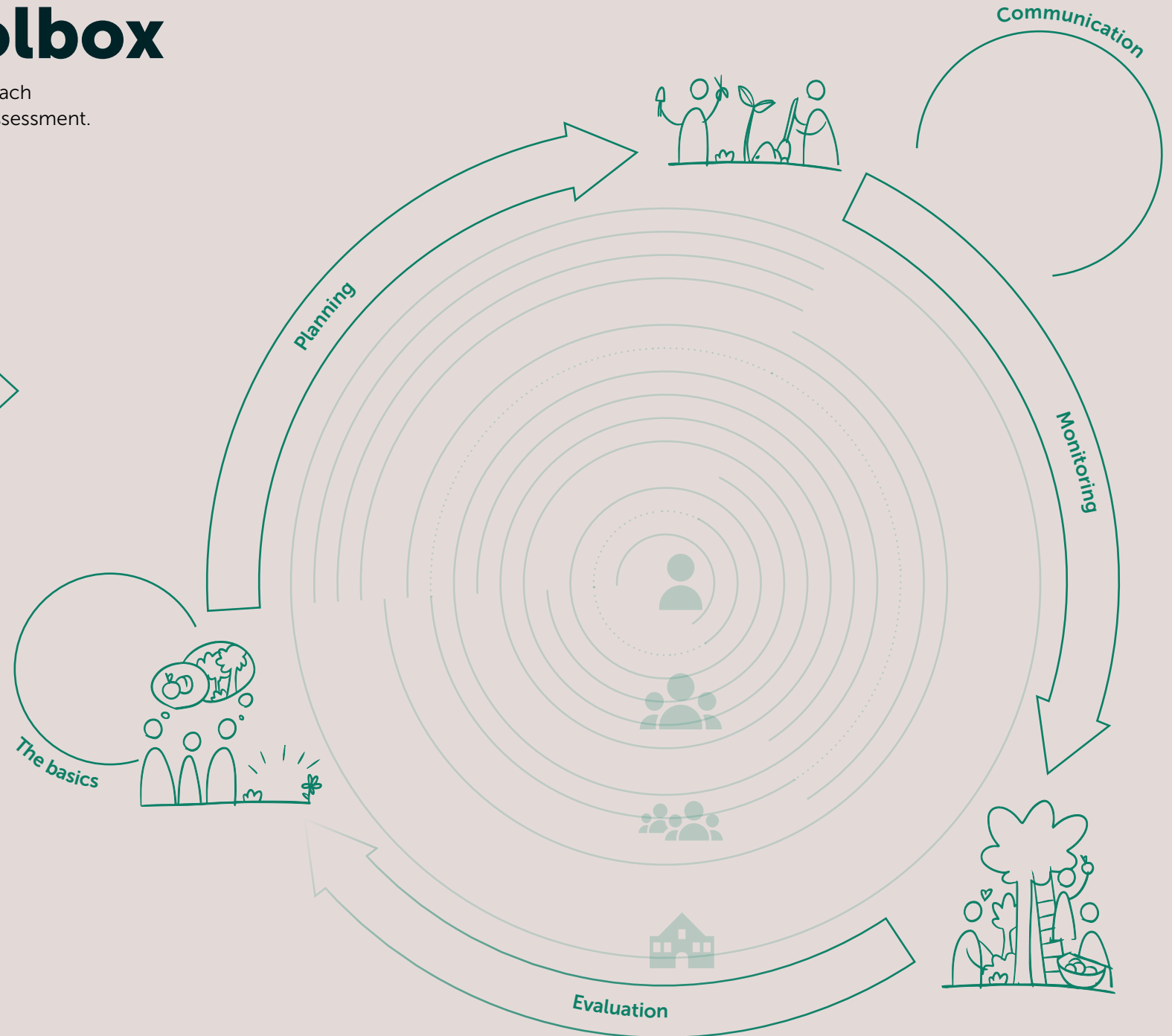
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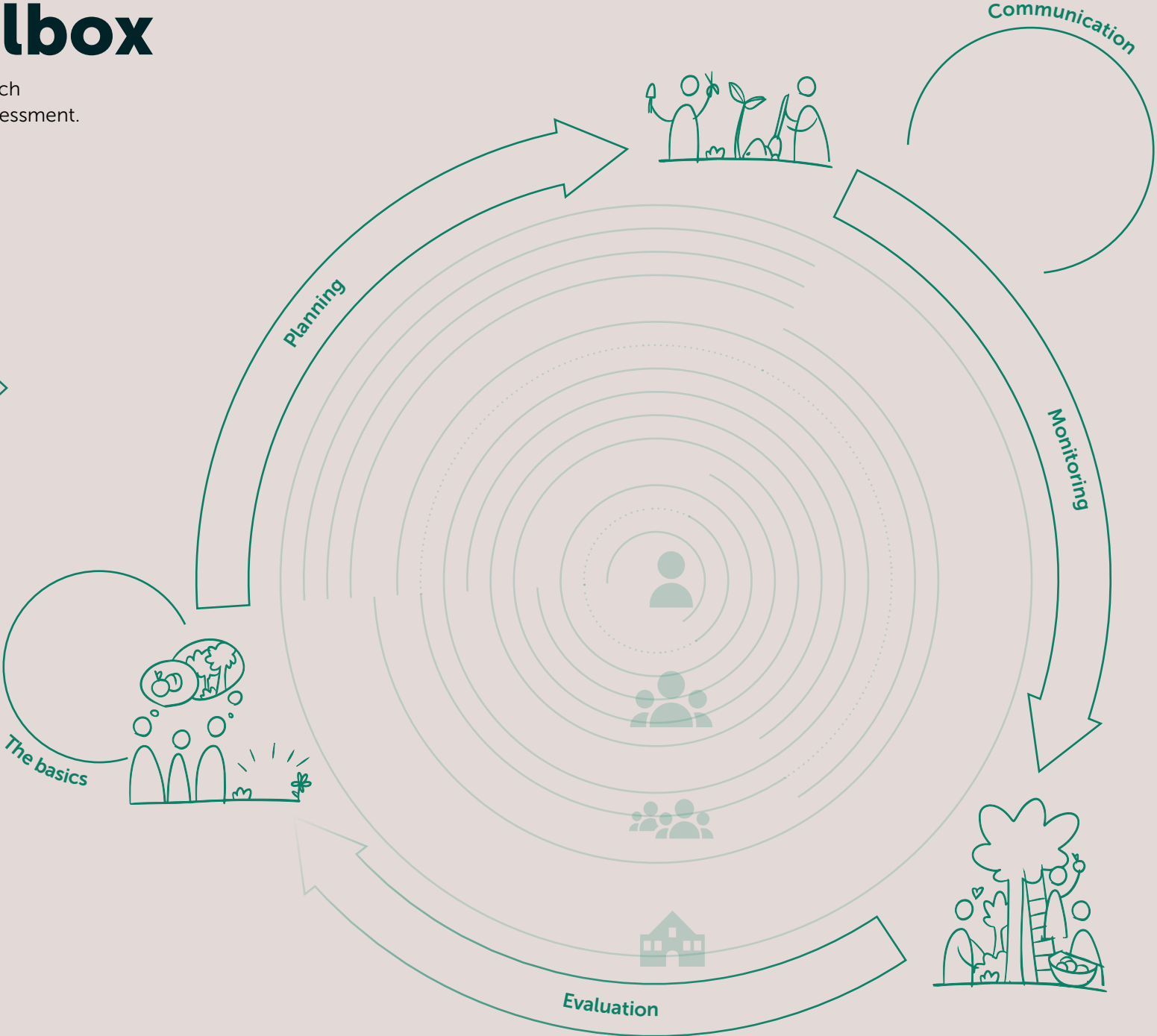
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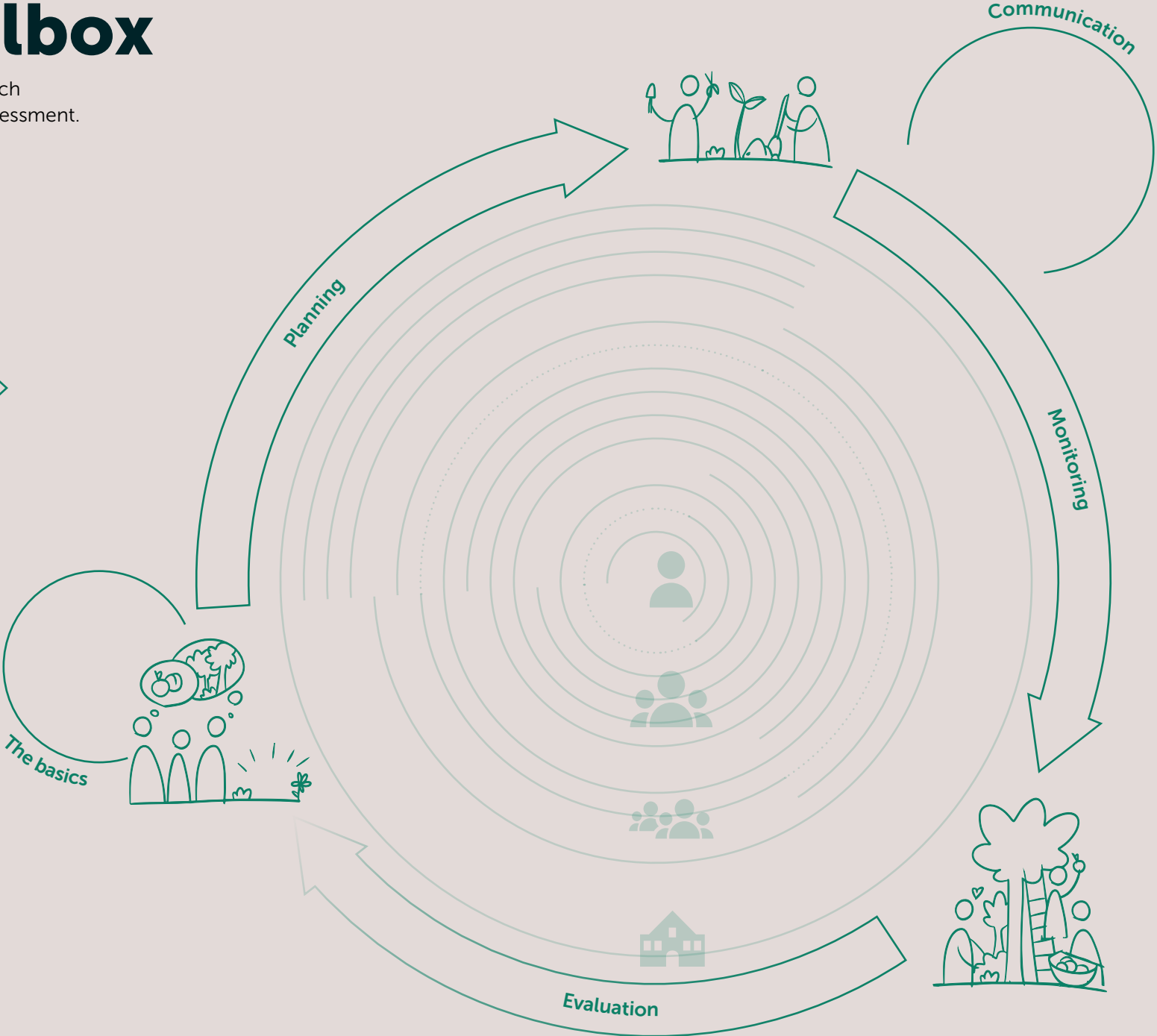
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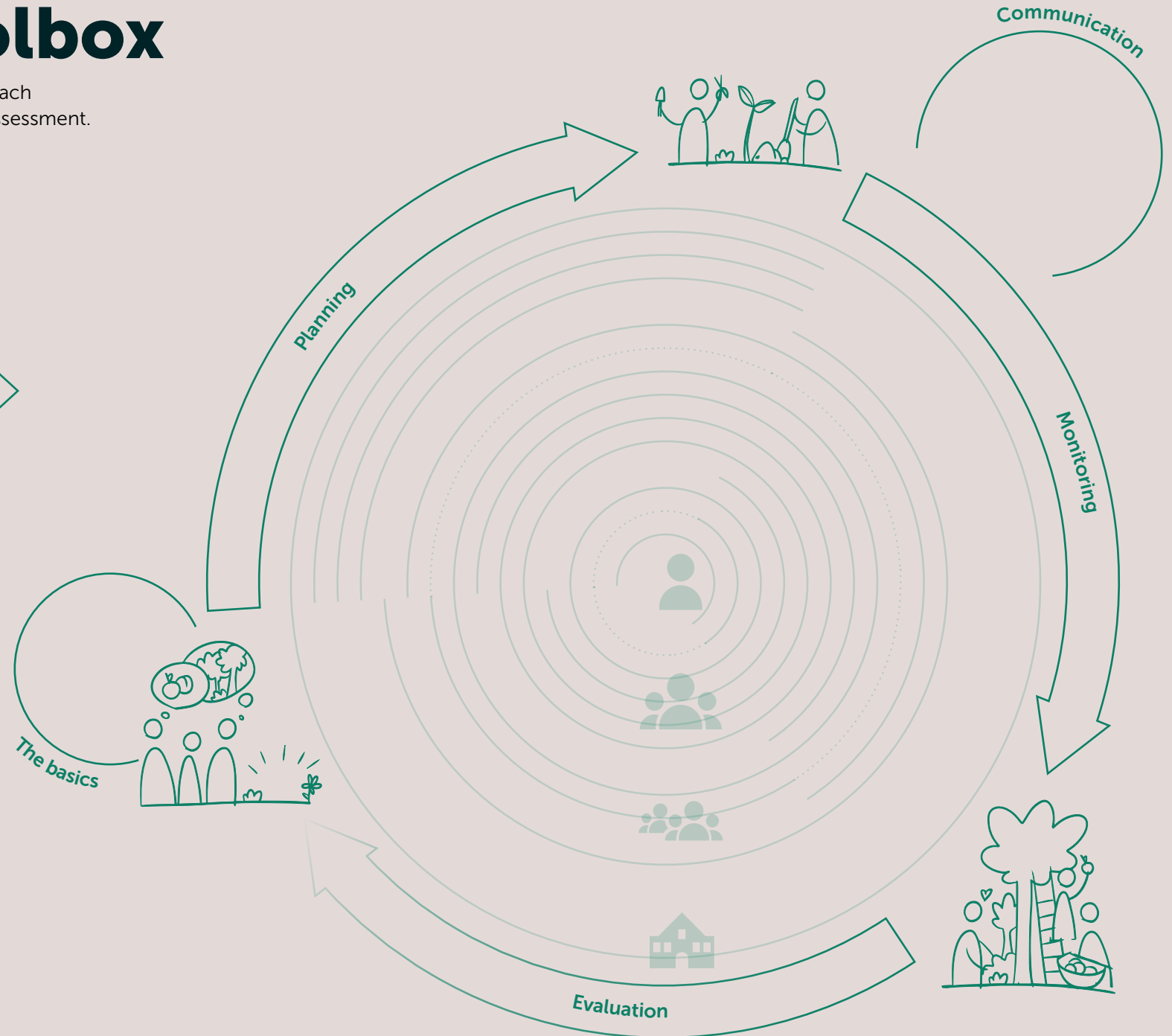
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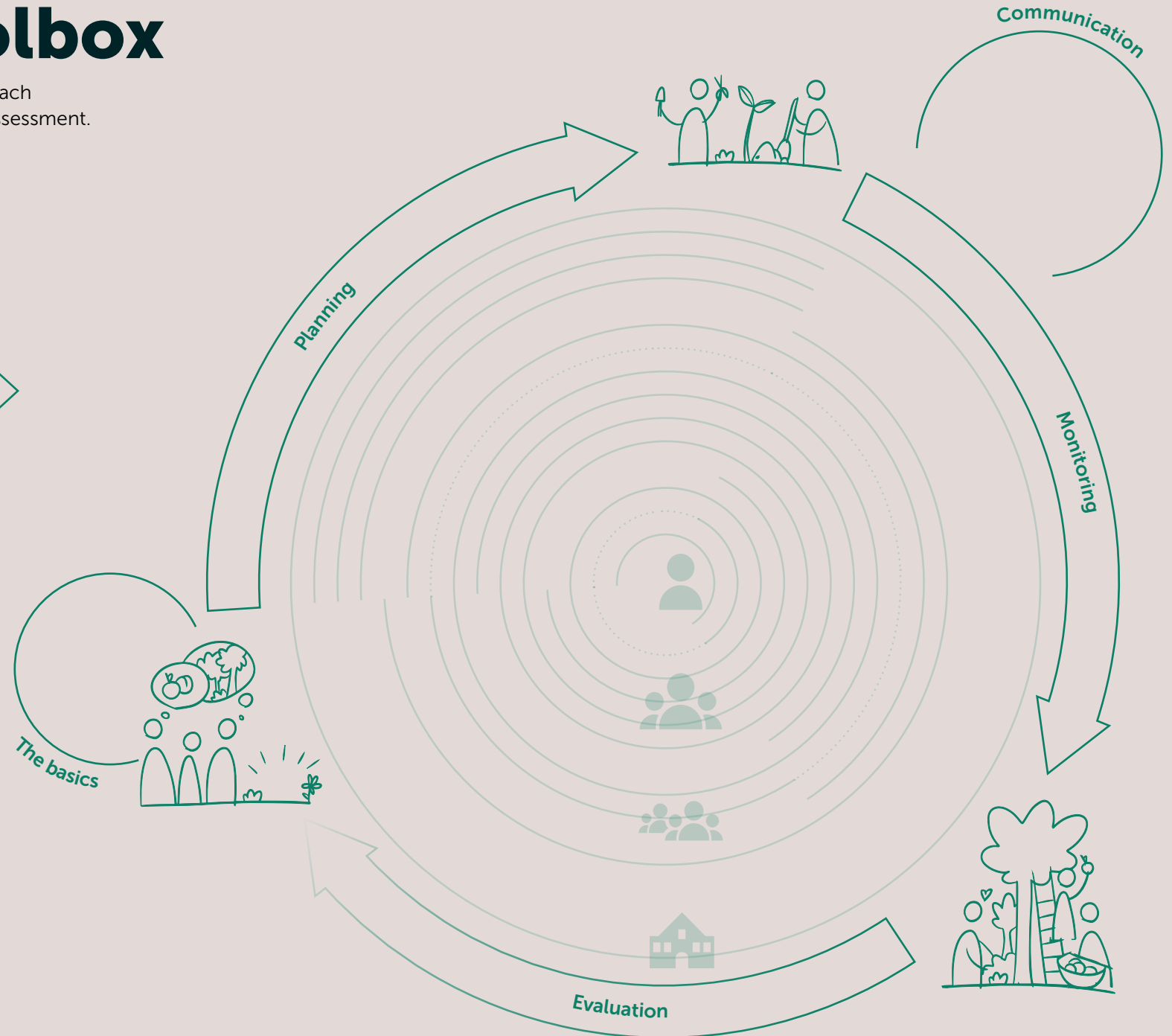
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- Research**
- Engagement**
- Operations** (Governance)



Impact Toolbox

Tools and methods for a structured approach to your impact ambitions, activities and assessment.

Phase

Stages of the impact process.



Structural level

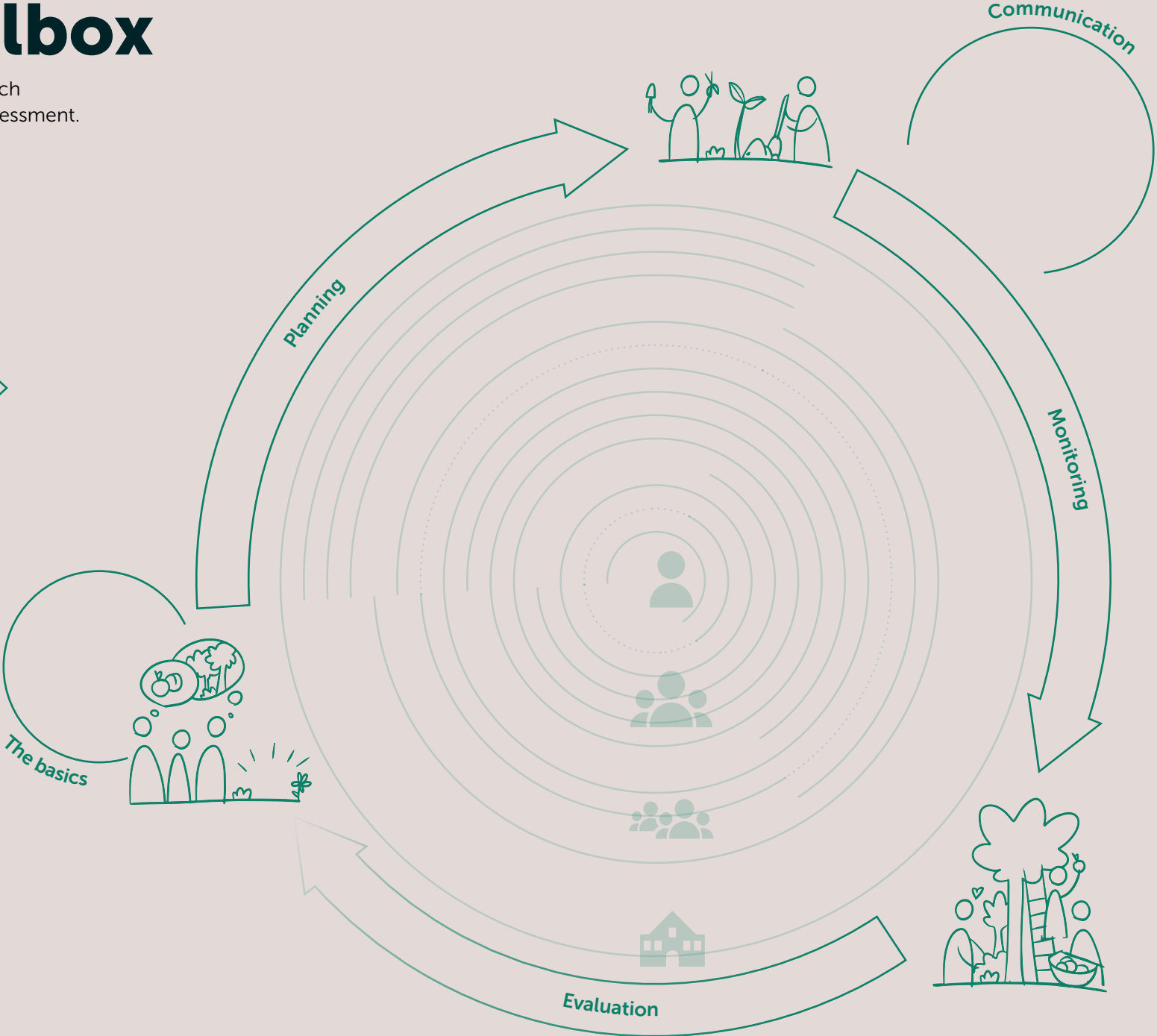
Focus (and target audiences) of the tool/method.

- Individual** (academic-/professional staff)
- Group** (teams, projects)
- Unit** (school, department)
- Organisation** (university)

Pillar

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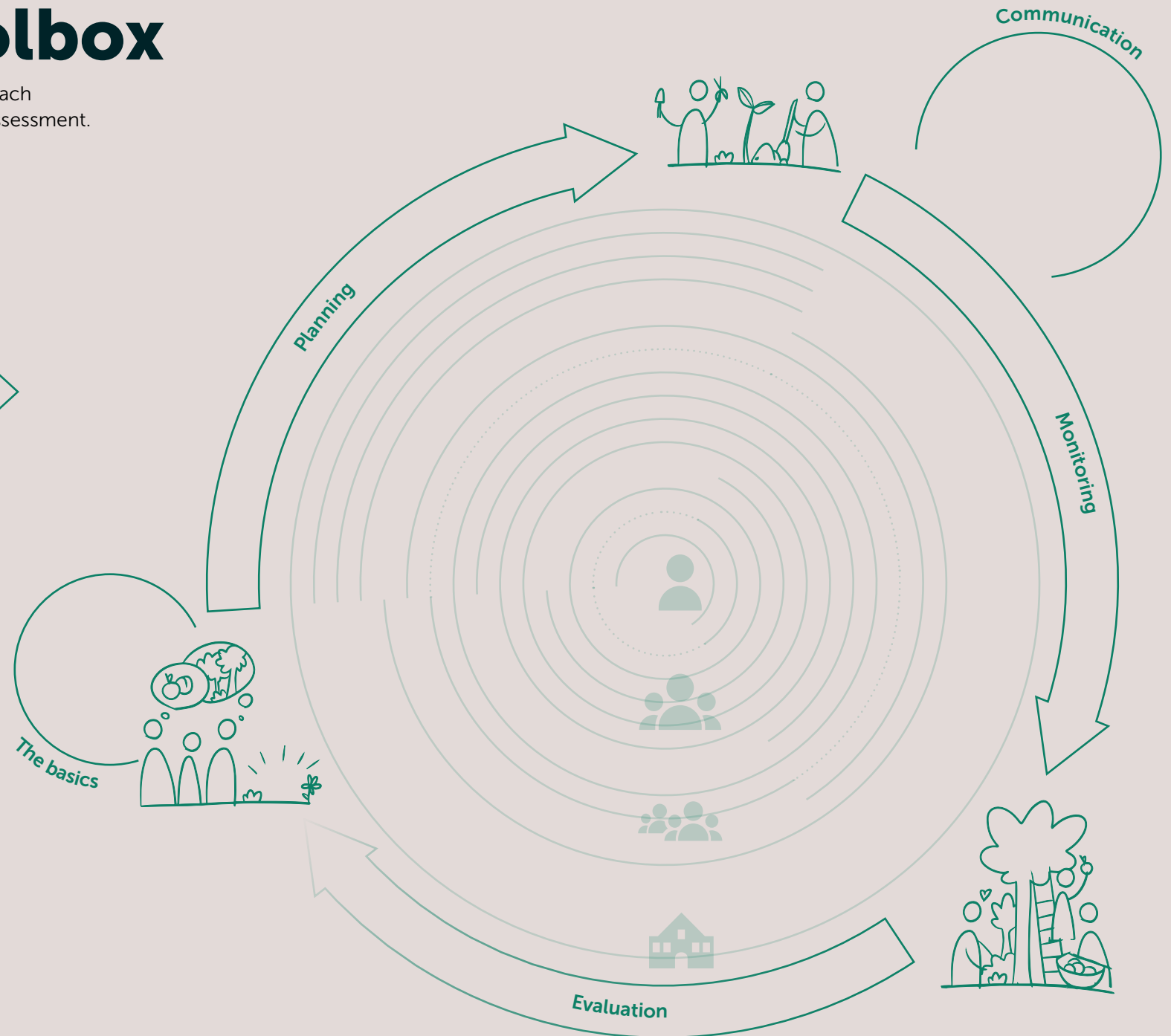
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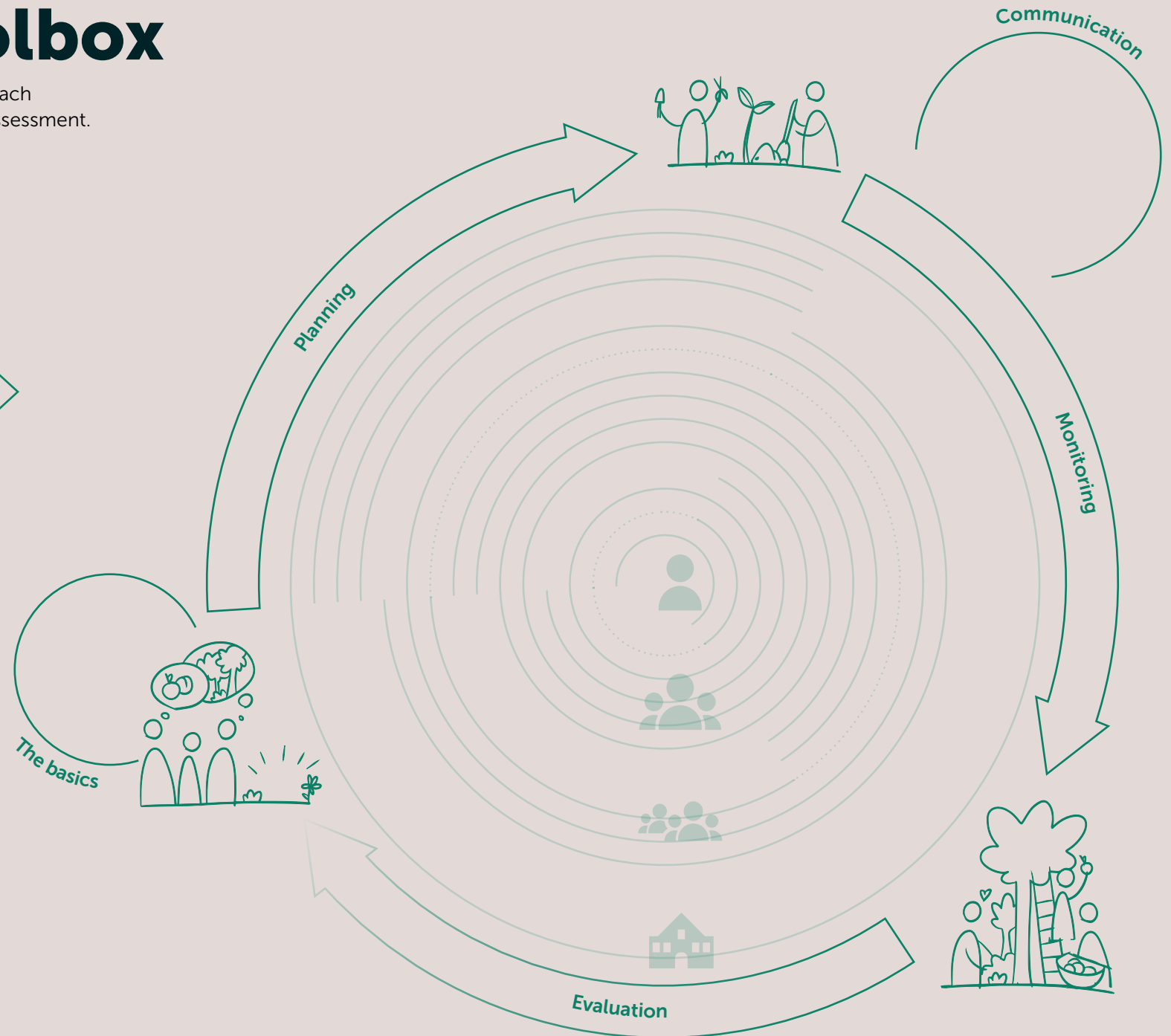
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Colophon

The **Impact Toolbox** by the Evaluating Societal Impact project is a catalogue of tools and methods that helps university staff select resources for a structured approach to academic impact ambitions, activities and assessment. This document is a supplement to [the website of the same name](#), meant to overcome some of its technical limitations.

The collection draws upon a range of sources, such as the experience of experts in the field of impact evaluation and literature on the topic.
Many of the tools have been co-designed and tested at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

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Rotterdam, the Netherlands

**Erasmus
University
Rotterdam**

You can use and change the majority of tools listed in this collection, including this Toolbox itself (for example, downloading and customizing it for your School) but you must give credit to the creator, not sell it, and if you share your version, it must also be free under the same license.