Evaluating participation & its thresholds in foodbanks and inclusion projects
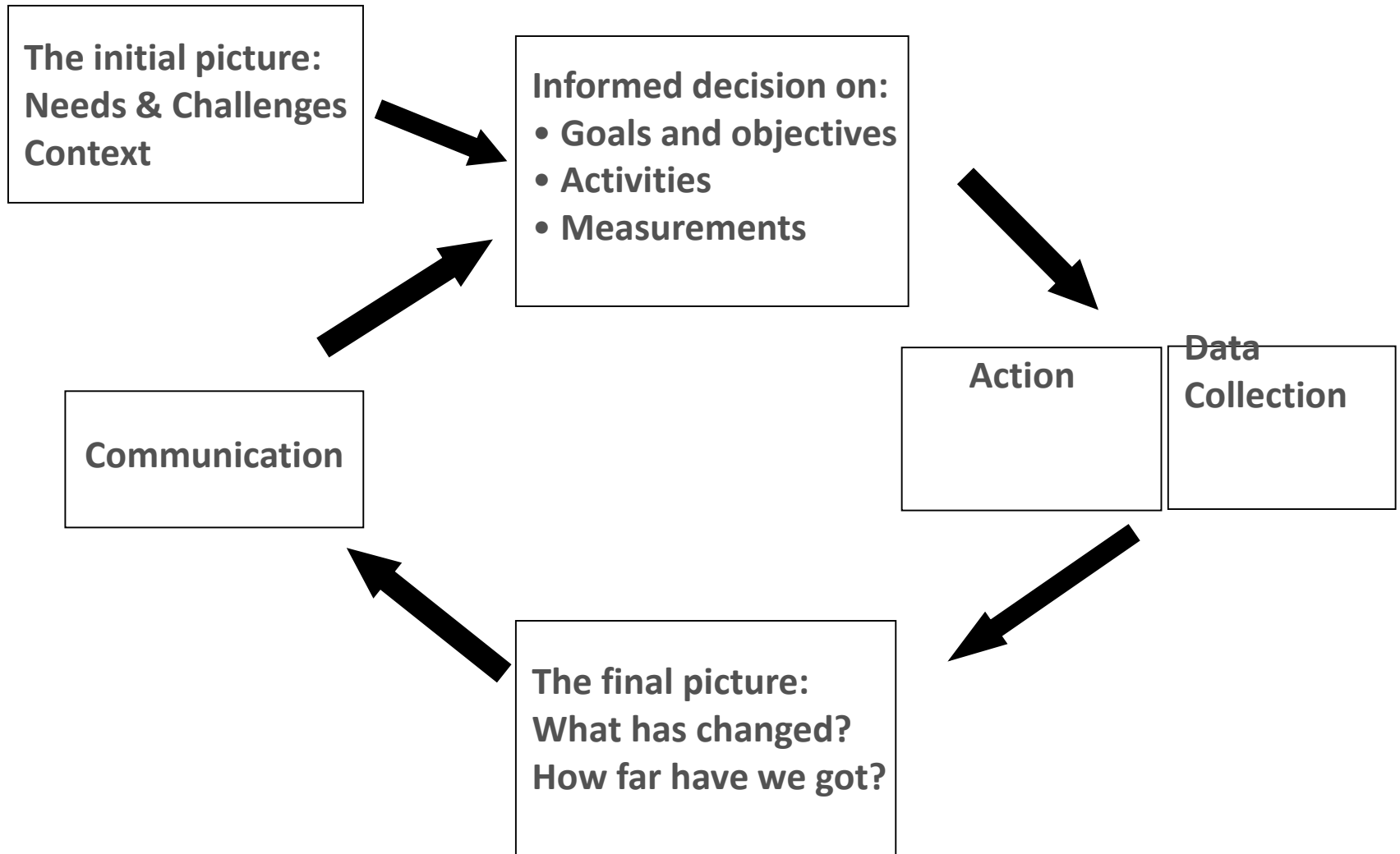
**18th FEAD NETWORK MEETING
7-8 NOVEMBER 2019 - BRUSSELS**

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About participation, thresholds, and networks

- **Participation of the target groups**

- **Thresholds to participate**

- **How to improve participation**

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The cycle of evaluation

**The initial picture:
Needs & Challenges
Context**

Informed decision on:
- **Goals and objectives**
- **Activities**
- **Measurements**

Action

Data Collection

Communication

**The final picture:
What has changed?
How far have we got?**

Who participates?
Why participate?

- **Defining and reaching the target groups**

- **Why do they participate?**
  - **Economic rationality: more leeway for non-food expenditure**
  - **Trying to 'meet ends' isn't necessarily rational behaviour**
  - **Economic rationality versus social rationality**
  - **To avoid stigmatisation & further exclusion; to foster chances on inclusion**

- **Integration in networks**

- **Emotional support**

- **Food (and material) aid is accepted 'under protest'**

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Some thresholds to participate

- **Lack of entitlement**

- **Informative thresholds: not knowing one's rights, unawareness of what is being offered and available, or being wrongly informed about it.**

- **Situational thresholds on the side of the service and of the client, and as a result of (inadequate) communication between both**

- **Dispositional thresholds, based on attitudes and perceptions: refusal to apply for, or accept, some form of assistance to which one is entitled (fear of stigmatisation).**

- **Institutional thresholds: the circumstances and procedures on the supply side that exclude, or discourage, potential recipients from participation, such as the physical (in)accessibility of the service, how the service is provided (opening hours, language proficiency, attitude of providers)**

- **Financial barriers, lacking financial resources.**

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Improve participation

- **Active involvement of the target group will**
  - **contribute to the effectiveness and the quality of aid**
  - **increase the credibility of the providers**
  - **increase the willingness of the target group to participate**
  - **help to reach under-represented groups**
  - **empowering**

- **Providers should build up a network with organisations and institutions, which are not directly involved in the provision of food and material aid but will foster social inclusion**

- **Integrated accessibility relates to the capacity of the service providers to:**
  - **reaching target groups in the right places;**
  - **conducting appropriate, meaningful communication;**
  - **tapping into their world and into their living conditions**
  - **engaging 'para-professionals' with a personal experience of poverty & exclusion.**

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