Reasons and risks of overemphasizing measuring vs understanding

- Tendency to over-emphasize on measurement as a sound method, despite existence of other methods
- Measurement (quantitative and qualitative) as the only way to communicate results
- Misunderstanding of measuring and missing out on other exclusive use of qualitative and quantitative
- Use of measuring has its limits
- Process of measuring is taken without questions, but it can also be flawed
- Difficulty to give numbers who do not mean much
- Quantitative measuring has its limits
- Challenge is that most donors still request target numbers to be fulfilled - little flexibility
- Too much measurement can lead to missing the point - indicators might be positive when in fact are not
- Often indicators are meaningless, waste of time and money
- Little investment in knowledge and understanding which is useful for accountability
- Quantitative measuring has its limits
- Use of measuring because of time constraints (tight deadlines)

Solutions: how do we address the overemphasis on measuring?

- Since not everything is linear, measuring does not always work
- Importance to understand the dynamics of change
- Importance to diversify the evaluations and include several methods
- Measuring only makes sense within understanding and should come AFTER understanding
- Understanding can be done at any stage of the evaluations - from inception to end of the project
- Defining purpose and use the outset is critical to help prioritize ‘whose understanding’
- We need to talk structure - a network and a map which are not described as qualitative nor quantitative
- Mixed methods
- Once one understands the perception of people, designing data becomes easier
- Not binary
- Maybe we feel donors want the classic approach, whilst they might be open to new perspectives, if we present and argue them well
- Changing the mindsets of donors and other stakeholders
- Communication with maps
- This can be done through communicating with maps
- Maps help to communicate with the audience
- Try to change the mindsets - measuring can be
- Communicate with maps
- Participatory approaches bring evidence and information which would not be available otherwise
- Involve the people
- Outcome harvesting
- Find out more about the project outside the logframe
- Costs are not as high - knowledge loss costs are higher
- Create ‘indicator reference sheets’ - defining a common understanding of the indicators
- Understanding can be done at any stage of the evaluations - from inception to end of the project