



Fuel



Feed • Uplift • Educate • Love

I am sharing Fuel's story of COLLABORATION

With the hope that it can

INSPIRE,
ENABLE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS
& IGNITE ACTION

I'm going to structure the sharing as follows:

1. ORIGIN, CONTEXT & BACKGROUND OF JOURNEY
2. OUR RESPONSE / APPROACH / METHODOLOGY
3. KEY REFLECTIONS LOOKING BACK OVER 17 YEARS

So that in the breakaway we can engage on

“How to leverage what has been learnt in
this case study”

ORIGIN, CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

ORIGIN, CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND



- In 2006 when I returned to SA with my family, having run the Nando's UK supply chain, I knew deep down that I wanted to do something different
- I had a chance conversation with Charles Luyckx, one of the shareholders and senior execs about my return to SA and he shared his vision to use “education” to help young people to have better prospects in life
- We knew nothing about “curriculum” but we did know a lot about “multi-site food service”
- Charles had become aware of how poorly the school feeding system was performing (in fact the EC provincial programme had just been suspended for a few months)
- We realised that this was our chance to partner to make a difference.....

ORIGIN, CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND



We wanted to help the government school feeding “**system**” to **improve** and ideally for the change to be **enduring**

Early on we seriously considered 2 routes:

1. Support/drive improvement in a manageable part of the system:
 - a. Work in a single district (say 100 schools) in a province that wanted help
 - b. This would take maybe a couple of years
 - c. Once done say “this is how it’s done - good luck with the other 19,900 schools”

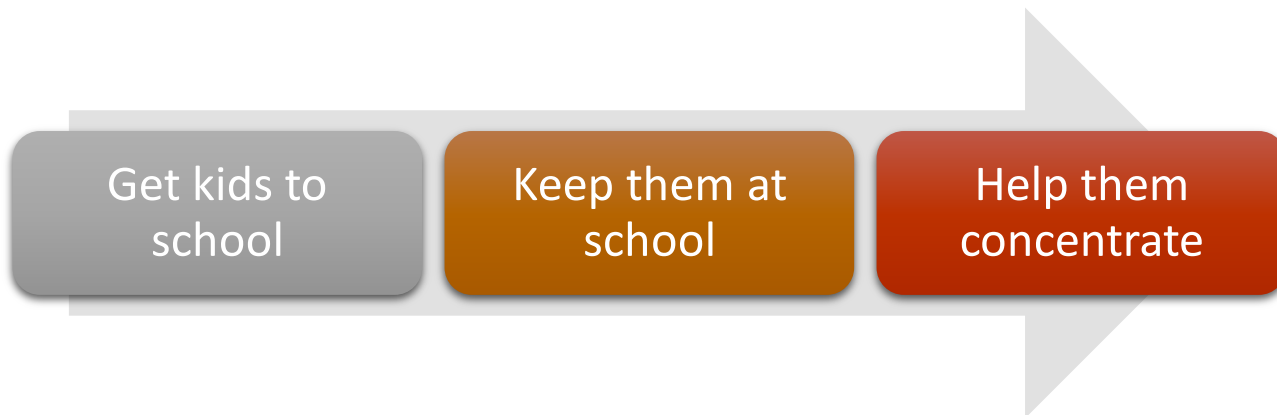
2. Work alongside, support and collaborate with the broader system
 - b. Take a long-term view, a patient approach, a more sustainable result
 - c. Collaborate with the system that had all of the following:
 - b. Funding
 - c. Policy
 - d. Dedicated human resource
 - e. Intent

Our choice became obvious.....

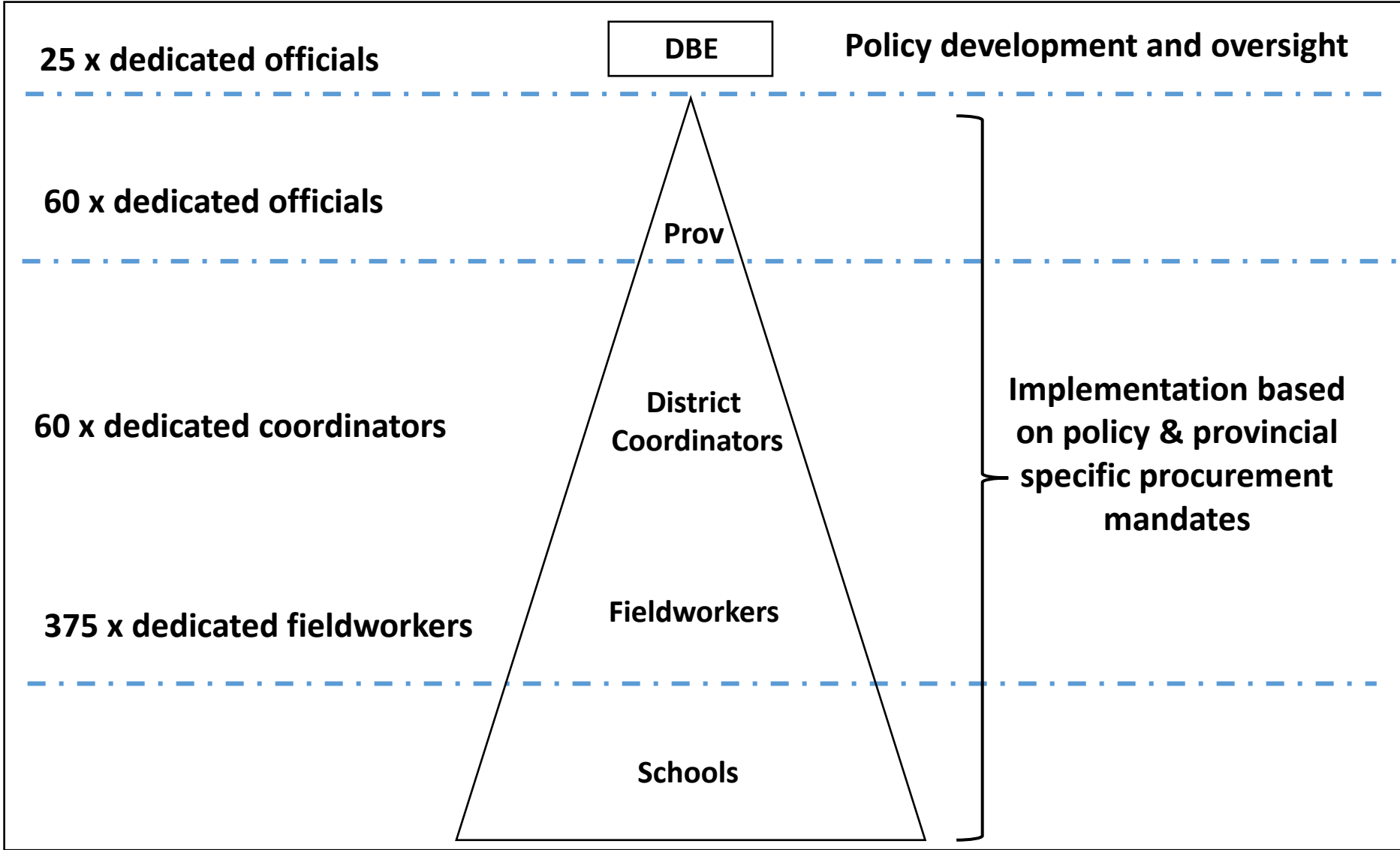
THE NSNP SYSTEM



- The National School Nutrition Program (NSNP)
- Introduced by President Mandela in **1994** and for the first 10 years managed by the **Department of Health (DOH)**
- In **2004** NSNP transferred to the **Department of Basic Education (DBE)**
- Funded via a **Conditional Grant** with an annual budget of **R10 billion**
- Serves a **cooked mid-morning meal to 10 million learners in 20,000 schools**
- Strategic goal – “to enhance **learning capacity** and improve **access** to education”



THE NSNP SYSTEM



RESPONSE, APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY



2007 – 08

Research,
engagement and
relationship
building

2009 – 10

Co-creating the
MRR methodology
in a single province
and demonstrating
it works

2011 – 15

Rolling out MRR to
4 more provinces
("diving deep")

2016 – 18

Extending MRR
nationally and
having MRR
formally adopted
by the system
("wide" vs "deep")

2019 – 23

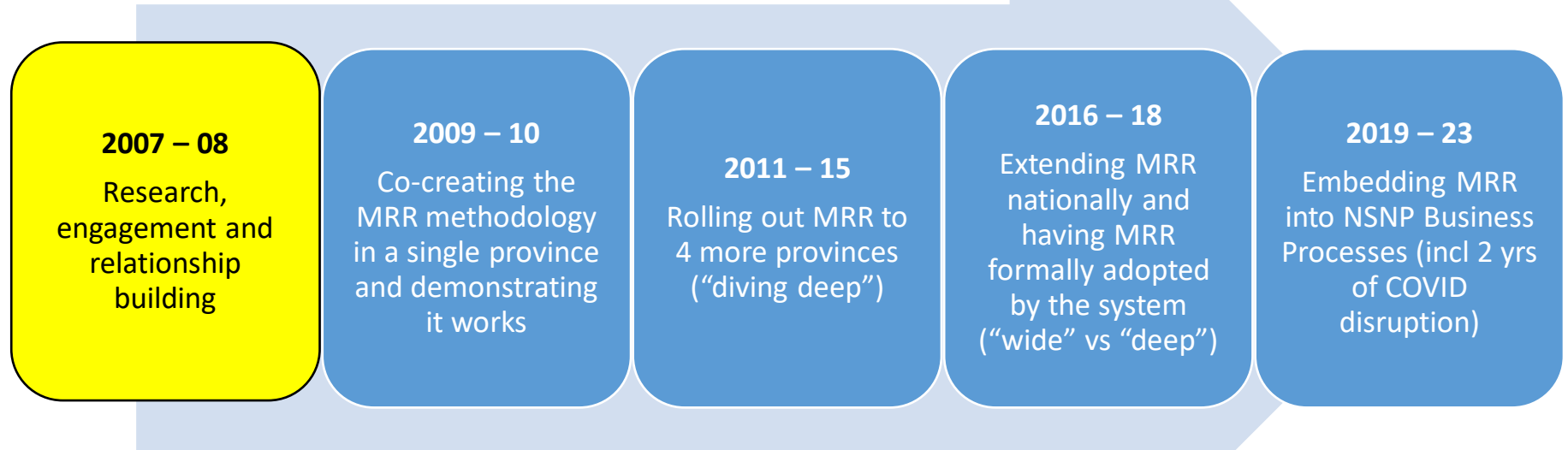
Embedding MRR
into NSNP Business
Processes (incl 2 yrs
of COVID
disruption)

KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY



Good intent alone did not open the door

It took a letter from Robby Brozin to the Minister for them to take us seriously



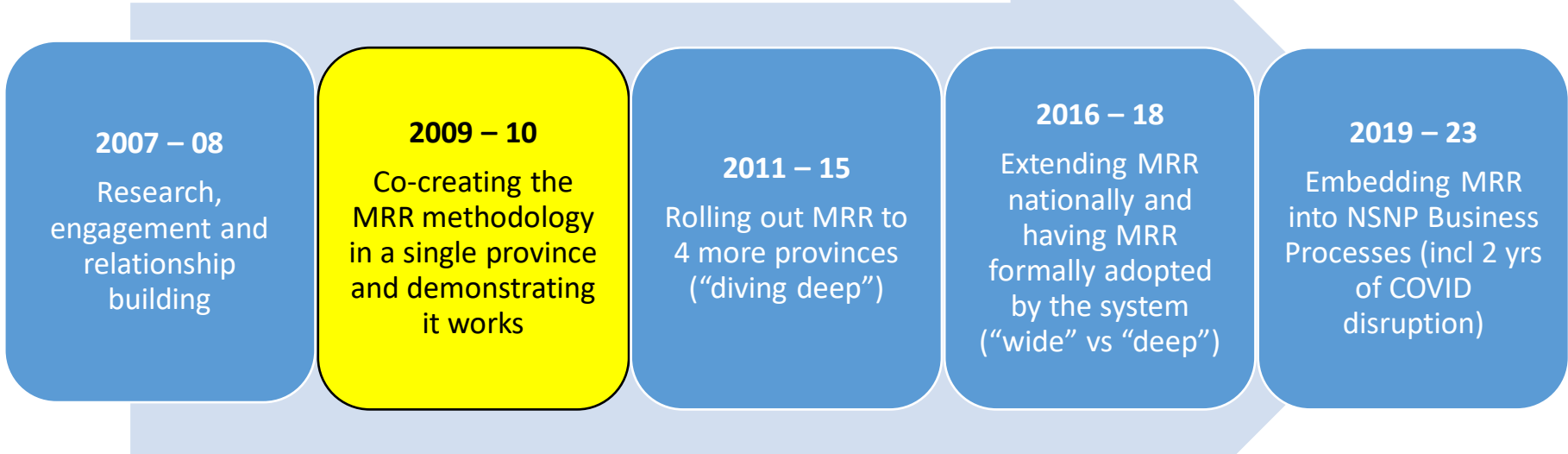
We soon realised that it was critical to understand the diversity in the provincial systems in order to be able to support improvement

KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY



Introduced to senior management in the NW by an NGO that was forced to withdraw due to funding

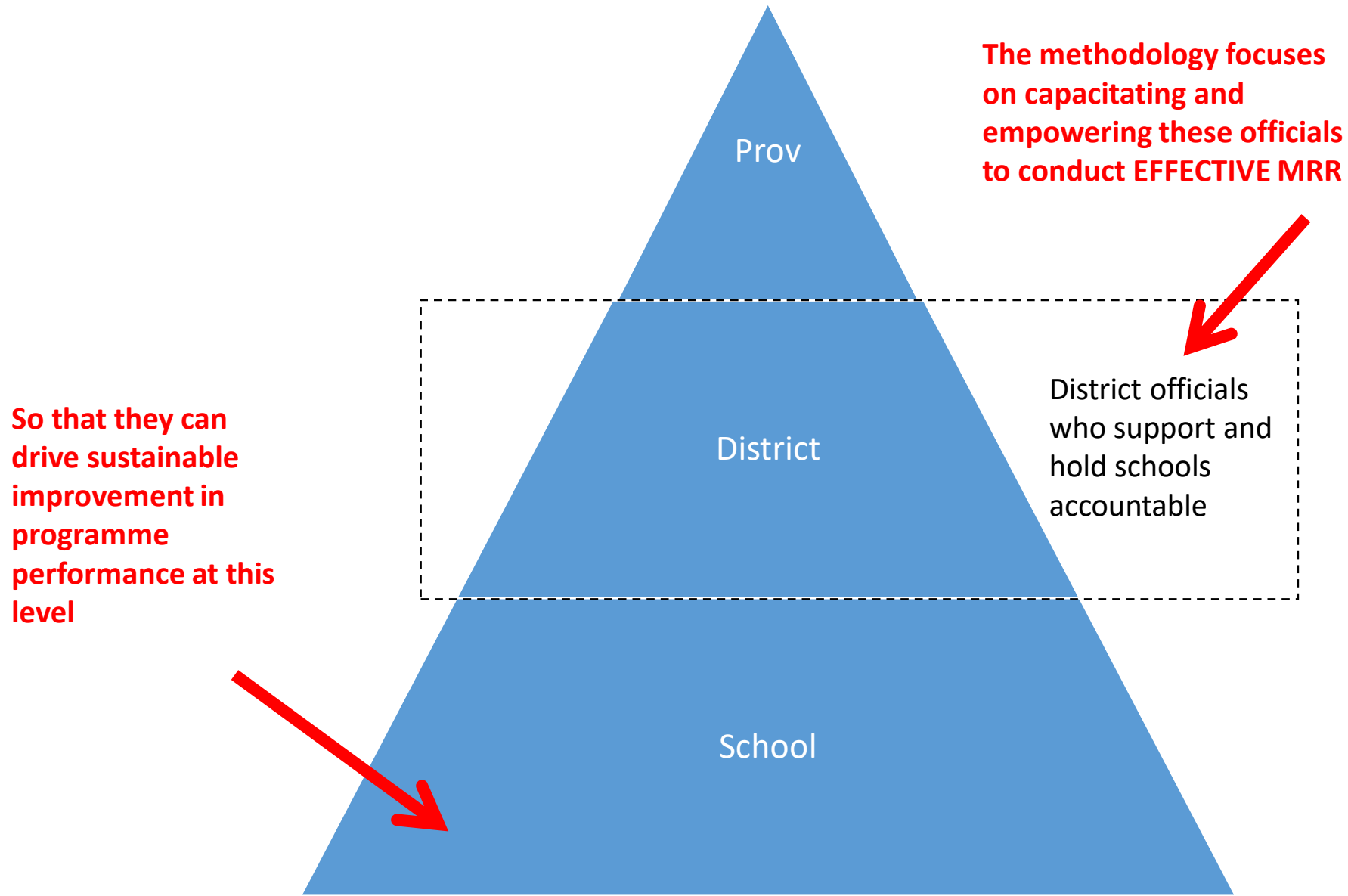
Our business instincts lead us to start by bringing effectiveness to the procurement system (top down)



After a year we realised that that this approach was not going to work and was far from sustainable (the system actually pushed back)

This was the catalyst for developing the “MRR” methodology

MRR – PULLING THE LEVER

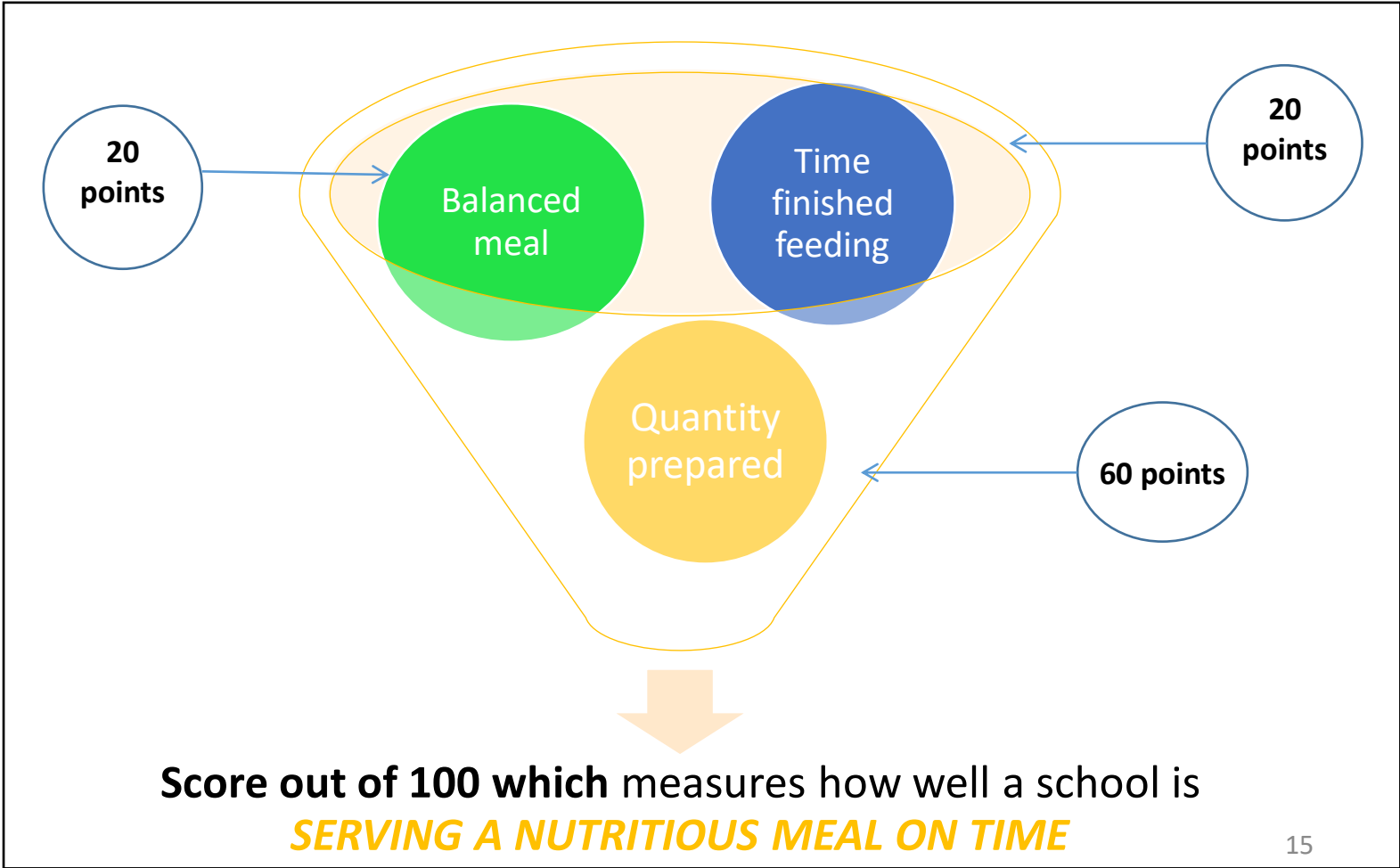


MONITORING REPORTING & RESPONDING

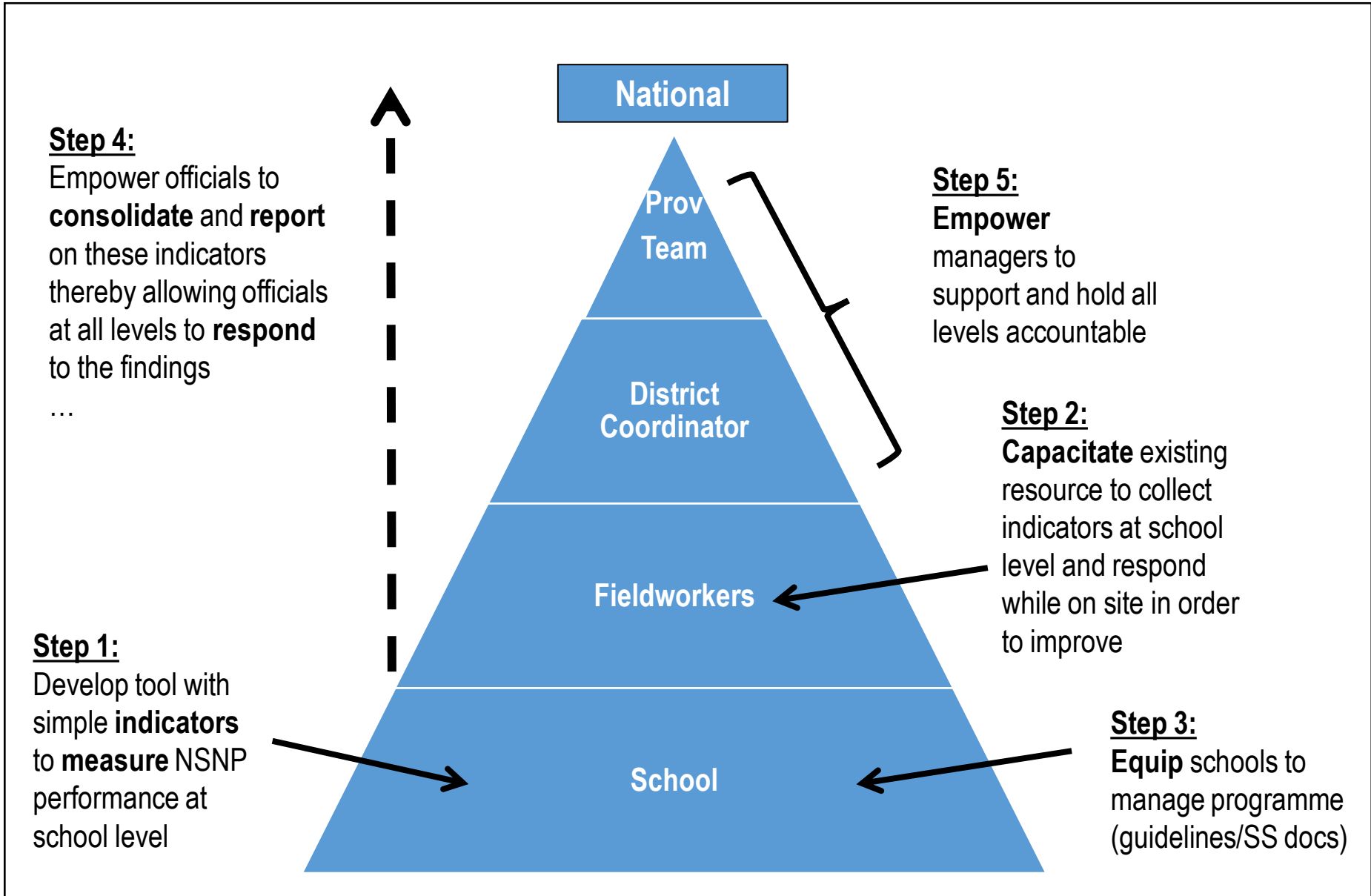


- Together with NSNP officials in the provinces we co-created a methodology for the NSNP to drive performance which we call “**MRR**”
 - **M**onitoring (collecting)
 - **R**eporting (analysing/understanding/sharing)
 - **R**esponse (improving)
- **MRR** allows NSNP officials at each level of the system to:
 - Understand and measure success
 - Share this information (success) and
 - Respond in order to support improved performance
- Underlying MRR are a core set of **principles** that help it to be effective:
 - Build it together so that it is ultimately owned by the users
 - Ensure a clear understanding of success (KPI developed for the NSNP)
 - Measure performance objectively – scoring / colour coding used
 - Hold people accountable to things within their control

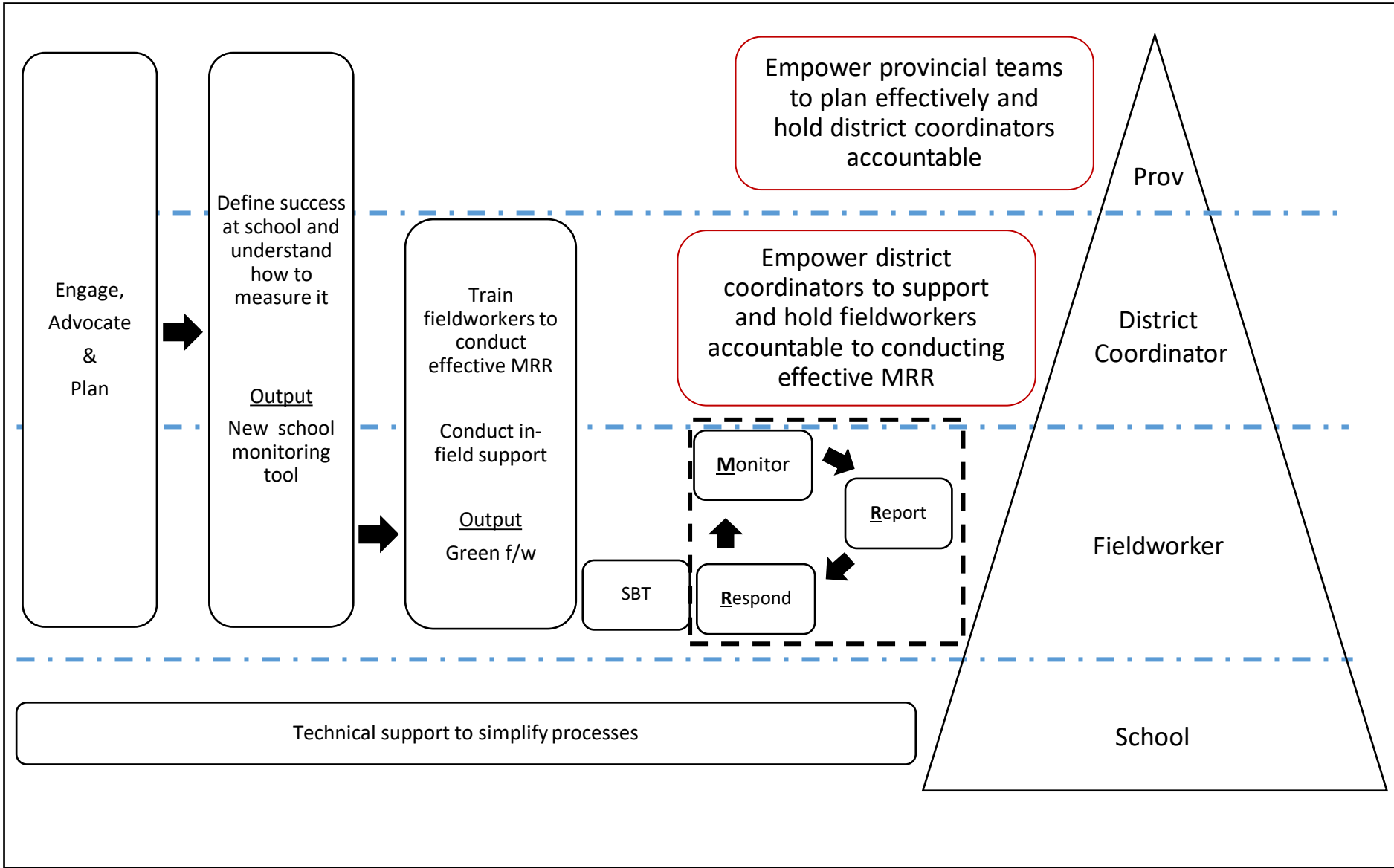
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)



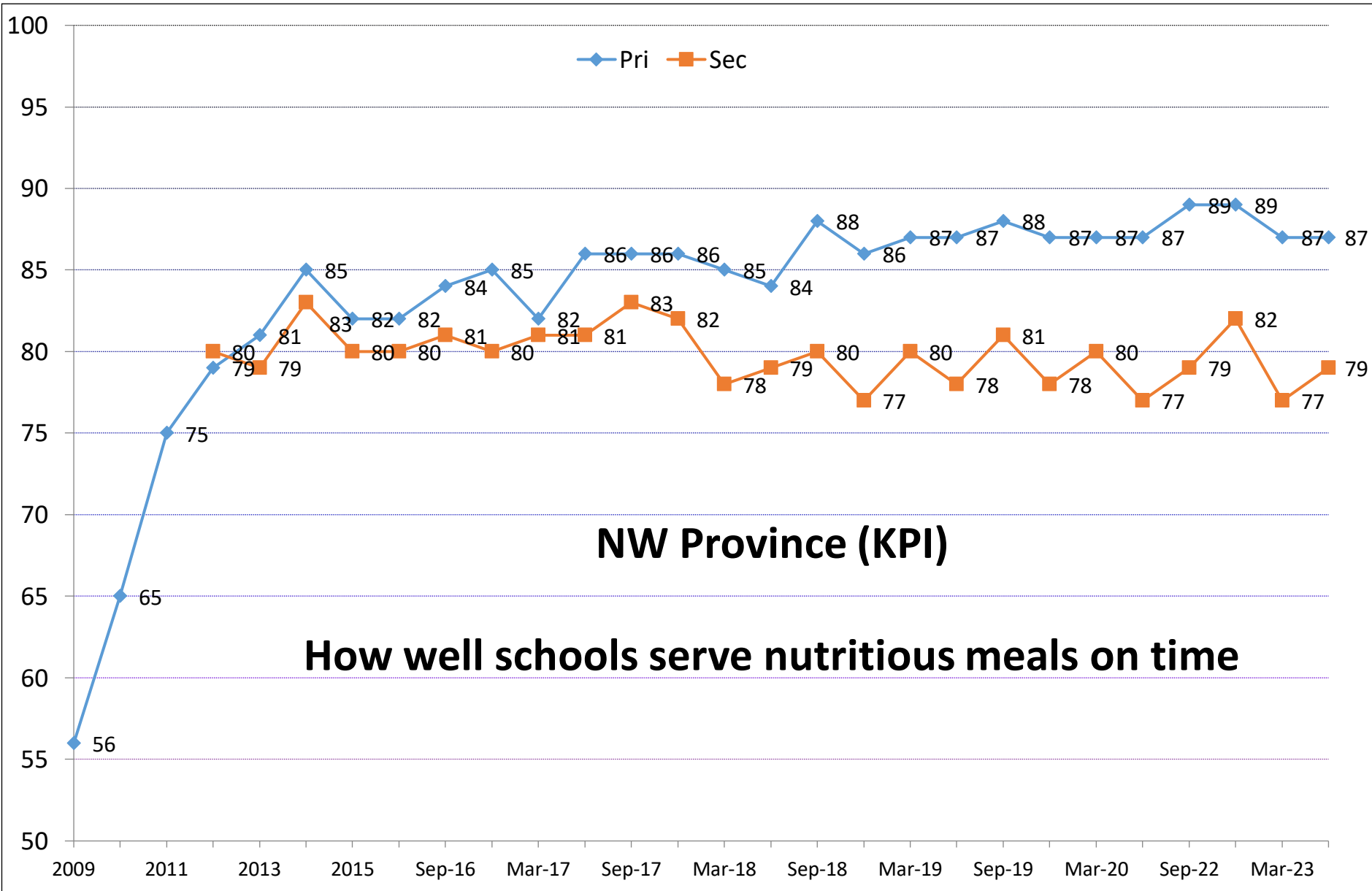
OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY



2 YEAR MRR IMPLEMENTATION JOURNEY



THE METHODOLOGY WORKS...

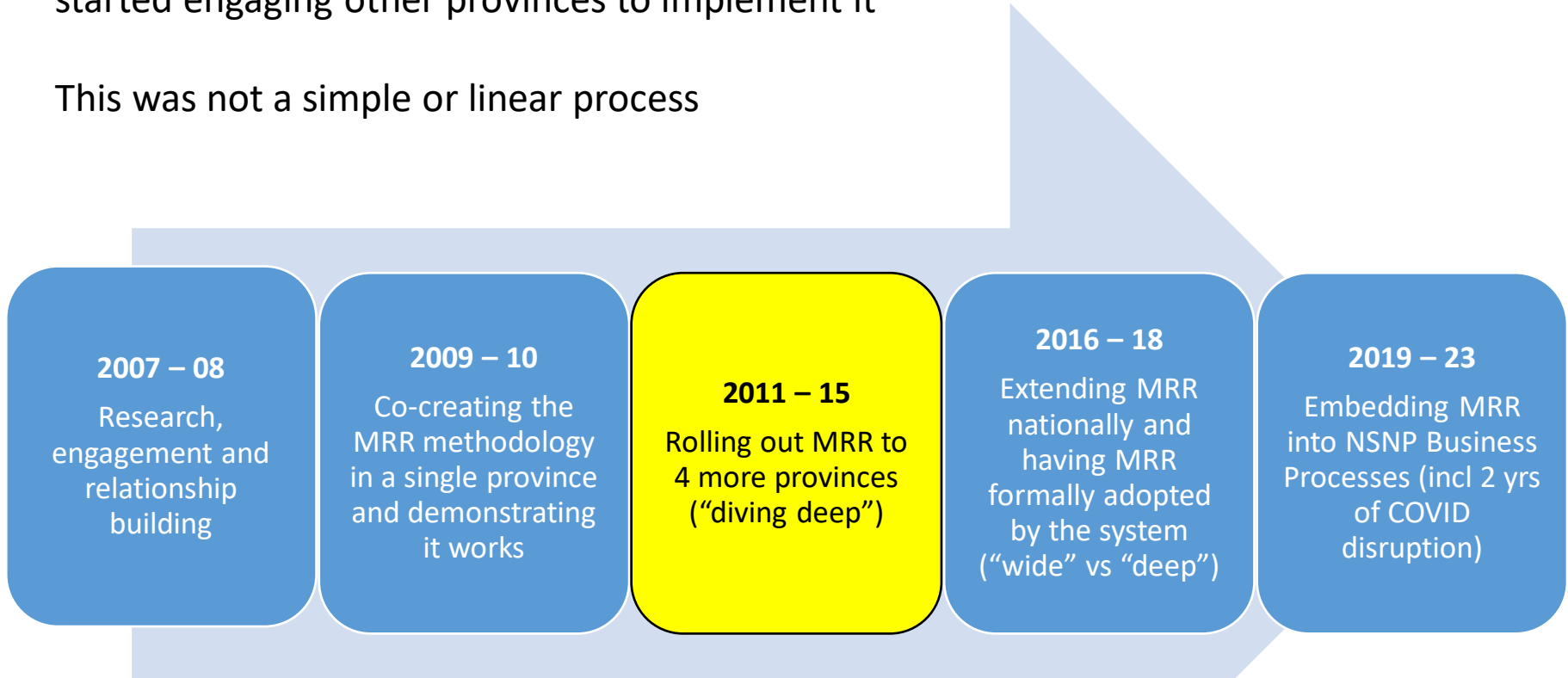


KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY



Once we had a sense of the power of MRR we started engaging other provinces to implement it

This was not a simple or linear process



Provinces with bigger challenges seemed to be more open minded about asking for help / wanting change

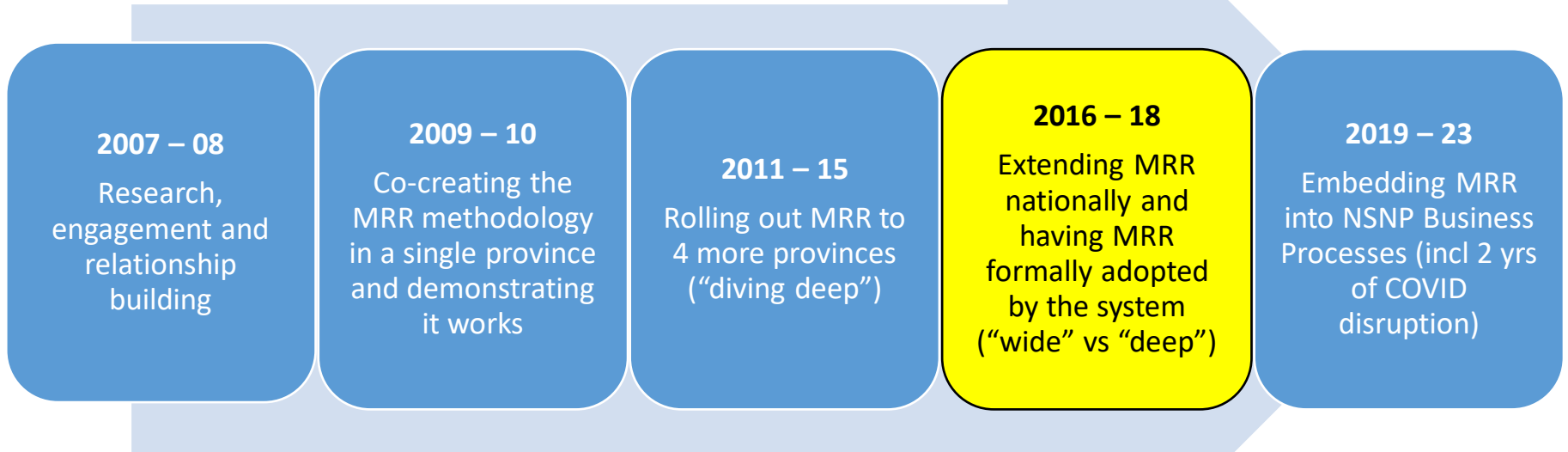
By Dec 2015 MRR was implemented in 5 provinces (NW, LIM, MP, FS and EC) and we had started in KZN

KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY



We realised that if we were committed to supporting the “system” then we had to get all 9 provinces to implement and use MRR

This meant going wide when it was tempting to continue to go deeper in 5 provinces already engaged



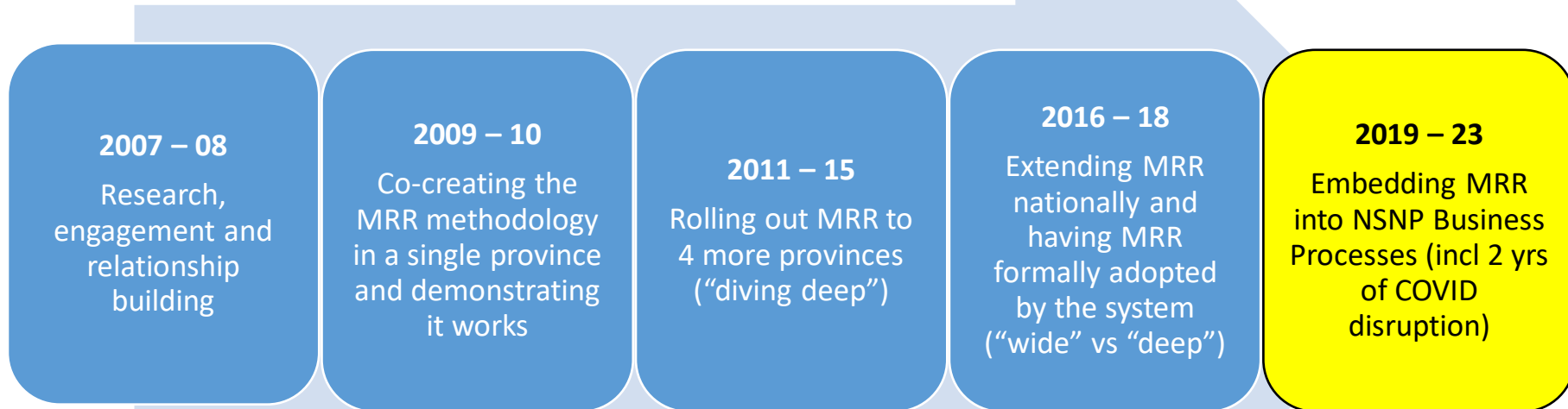
The process to engage the remaining provinces differed and we knew we needed DBE to adopt MRR

In 2015 DBE adopted “MRR” as the preferred monitoring methodology and they played a key role in lobbying for all 9 to use it

KEY MILESTONES IN THE JOURNEY

We have worked closely with DBE to embed MRR into:

- **Policy** (Conditional Grant Framework, M&E Framework)
- **Business processes** (Business Planning, Reporting)



Covid was a real “speedbump” in the journey but we all got through it and amazingly learnt things from it

For the last few years we have been transitioning to “maintenance” and expect that from 2024 onwards we will be able to support the system on this basis

A SYSTEM ABLE TO HOLD ITSELF ACCOUNTABLE



Nat DBE

- Enable and manage Business Planning processes
- Hold Provinces accountable to Business Plans
- Report and Respond to improve NSNP performance

Prov

- Plan and provide resources effectively
- Hold District Coordinators accountable
- Report and Respond to improve NSNP performance

**District
Coordinator**

- Plan effectively and implement key activities
- Support & hold Fieldworkers accountable
- Report and Respond to improve NSNP performance

Fieldworker

Fieldworkers “Conduct Effective MRR”

School

Schools “Serve Nutritious Meals on Time”

KEY REFLECTIONS LOOKING BACK OVER 17 YEARS

KEY LEARNINGS OVER THE 17 YEARS



Values and culture inherent in the organisation

- Teams pursuing a collaborative change management model with government need to be nurtured and developed in order to stay the course
- We invested heavily in building a set of values to help us be resilient and we hold ourselves accountable to those daily....to name a few:
 - “Move forward with the end in mind, one step at a time”
 - “Act with conviction and patience and be prepared to tough it out”
 - “Work together and leverage all contributions”
 - “Tailor our engagement”
 - “Ask for help”
- Our founder/core funder has driven a culture of “we don’t need to take the credit”
- Limited bureaucracy – focus on impact / core ops team focussed on implementation without having to chase funding
- People being confronted with change prefer to see the same faces along the journey
- Stay below the radar and remember that it is their “system” and not ours and if you take on a change management role then be careful of taking on a “justice” role
- In 17 years we have never been quoted in press – in fact we stay fiercely out of it
 - Carte blanche
 - DBE taken to court during Covid

KEY LEARNINGS OVER THE 17 YEARS



Enabling government officials to be their best

- Behaviour change cannot be microwaved – trust needs to be built and maintained
- Believe it or not most government officials want to know how they are doing and would like to do better at their job
- Government, however, unlike the private sector is very poor at enabling this:
 - They are not clear enough on key measures of success (lead and lag)
 - They manage performance in a highly compliant manner
- One of the single biggest motivators for me and the team has been seeing first-hand the change in the 500 officials in the system
- Officials changed their behaviour because they wanted to not because they had to (mainly because they could see/feel the impact they have/improvement they make)
- Co-create to get buy-in but be clear on how and when to do it so that the right outcome is achieved
- Officials don't mind being held accountable if they can see that it is fair and that they have been given a chance to succeed
- In 17 years we have never had a complaint from the Unions for the way that the 500 officials have been supported and held accountable

KEY LEARNINGS OVER THE 17 YEARS



Bridging Policy to Practice (a glaring gap)

- There is a critical and significant role to be played in terms of bridging the gap between policy and practice
- There are lots of NGO's that underestimate how important this is
- To quote Mary Metcalf beware of “Magical Thinking – that if it is in policy then it will automatically be done!”
- We have seen the changes in implementation through the following:
 - Implementers at all levels need things to be practical and simple in order to get them done
 - “Don't tell me what to do” – “Show me how to do it”
 - Policy tells me what to do / not how to do it
 - Objectivity is critical – applying a score really helps
- Aligning M&E – we have managed to work with different parts of the system at DBE to align the way that the system is “monitored” and “evaluated”

A Systemic Approach

- “LEVERAGE – doing more with less
- Don't underestimate what you can achieve by working with the bureaucrats and middle managers (they are far less constrained by election cycles)
- An incredible return on investment (R5m vs R10bn annually)
- We don't need to reinvent the wheel to replicate (GIBS research)

THANK YOU!