REPRODUCTIVE HEATLH

AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

Binay Kumar
JHU/IIHMR, Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Support Unit
Ministry of Public Health

Reproductive health research methodology training
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Lecture overview

- What is research?
- Why do research in reproductive health?
- What are the types of research?
- The process.

What is research?

- Information gathering
- Collecting and analyzing new information in order to increase our understanding

The scientific approach

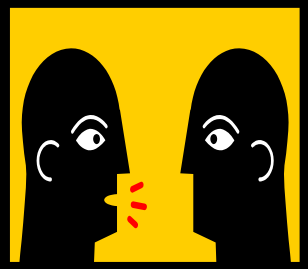
- Identify and define "**PROBLEM**"
- Determine the "**HYPOTHESIS**"
- Collect and analyze "**DATA**"
- Formulate "**CONCLUSIONS**"
- "**APPLY**" conclusions to the original hypothesis

Types of research

A Trained Birth Attendant (TBA)is introduced in a community for the first time.

Dr. Raheem:
"How many cases of complication were handled successfully?"

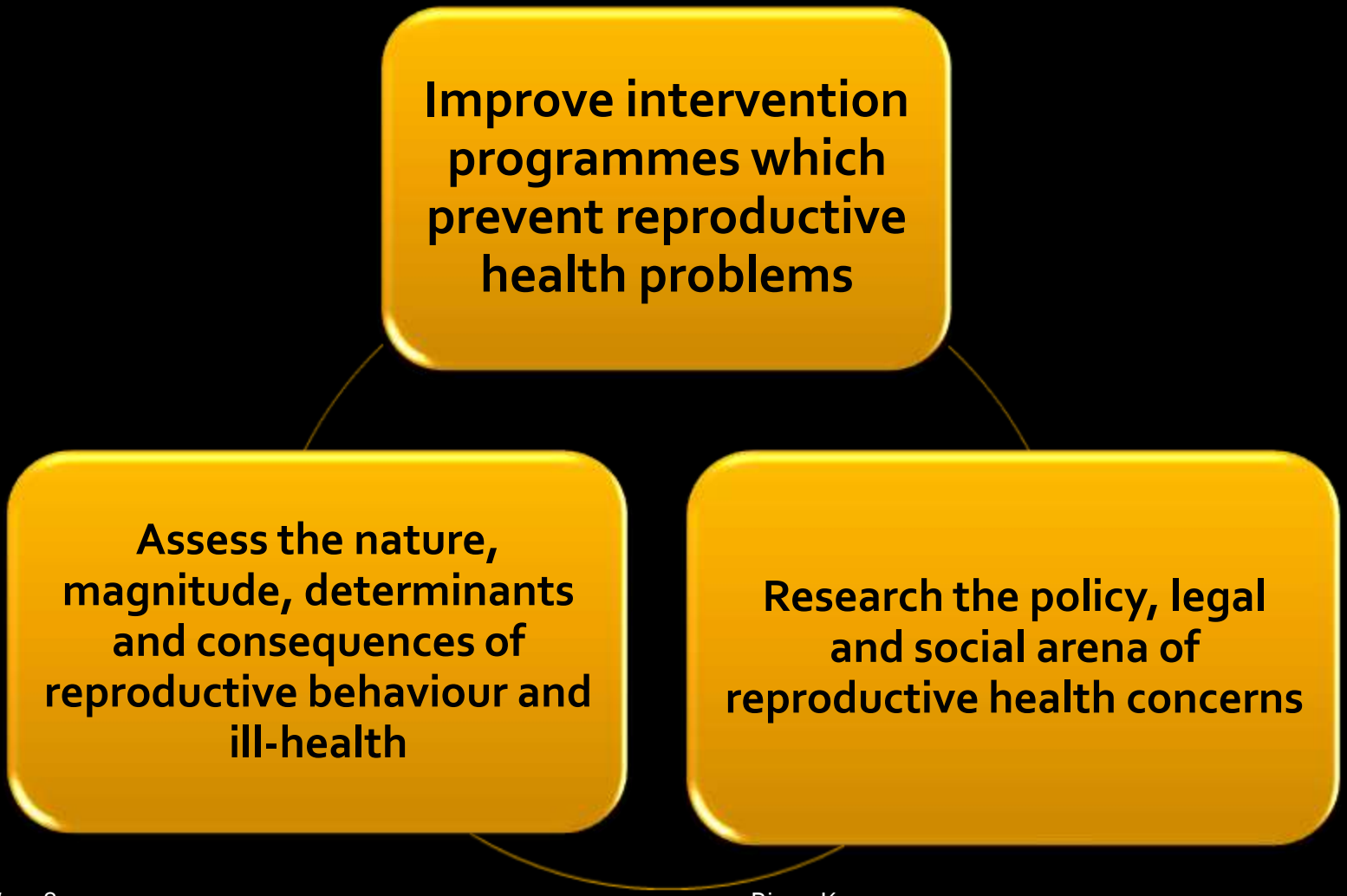
Dr. Laila:
"What do the people in this community think about the TBAs?"



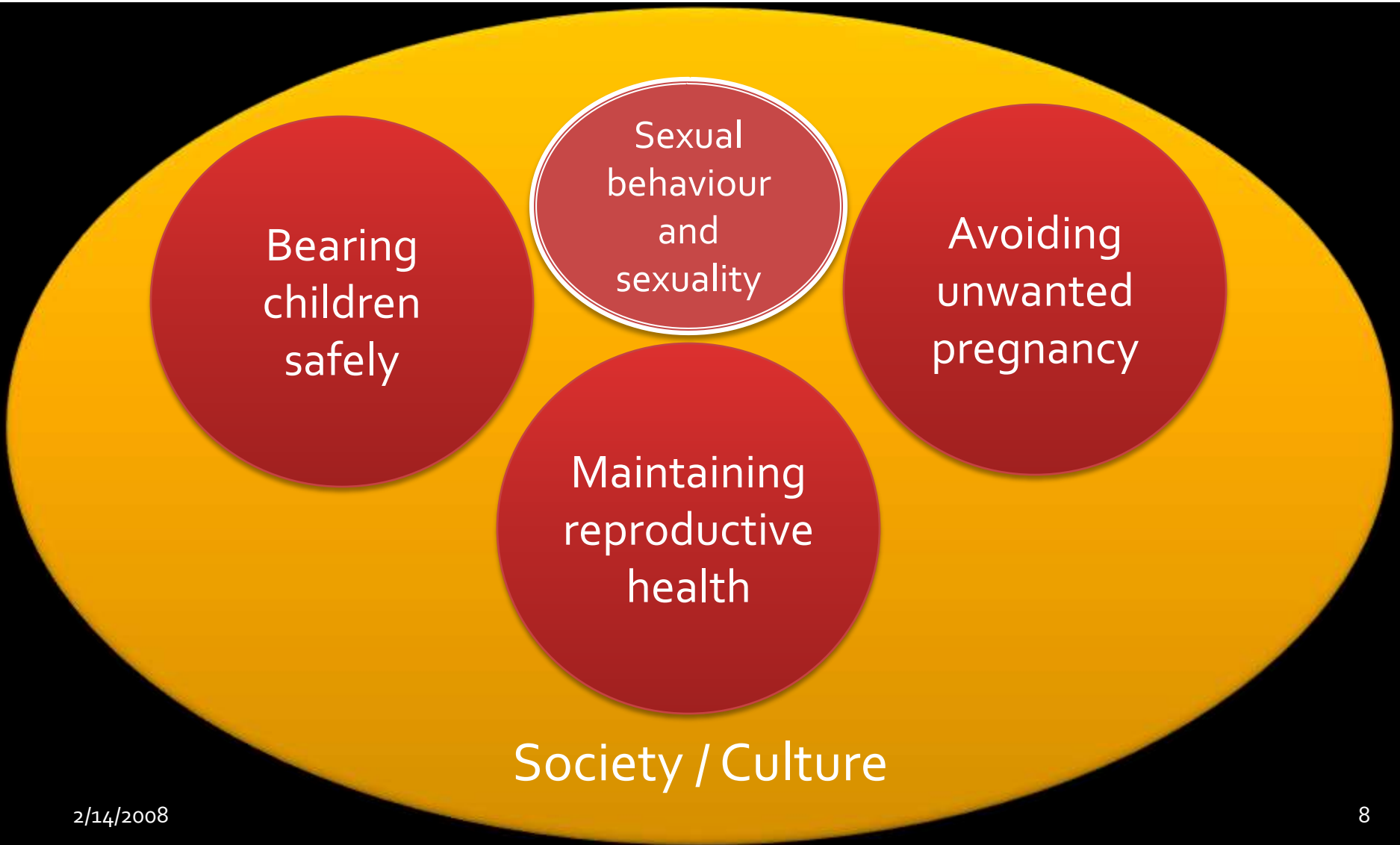
Types of research

- **Quantitative:** Answers questions about data that can be quantified in order to explain and predict.
- **Qualitative:** Answers questions about nature of phenomena in order to describe phenomena and understand it from the participant's point of view.

Reproductive health research: WHY?



Reproductive health research: DOMAINS



What roles can you play?

- Participate in studies
- Answer surveys
- Collect data for a study
- Develop a project

How to start?

- Start with a role that uses your current knowledge and matches your interests.
- You can learn research methods, data analysis, writing, and presenting skills as you choose to expand your abilities.
- Most importantly, find a mentor who can guide your interests and support your work.

Motivation?

- a fascination with a particular area of Reproductive Health
- a desire to know the answer to a burning question
- a desire to take on the intellectual challenge of academic methods

What do you want to achieve?

The primary endpoint should be your *personal development*

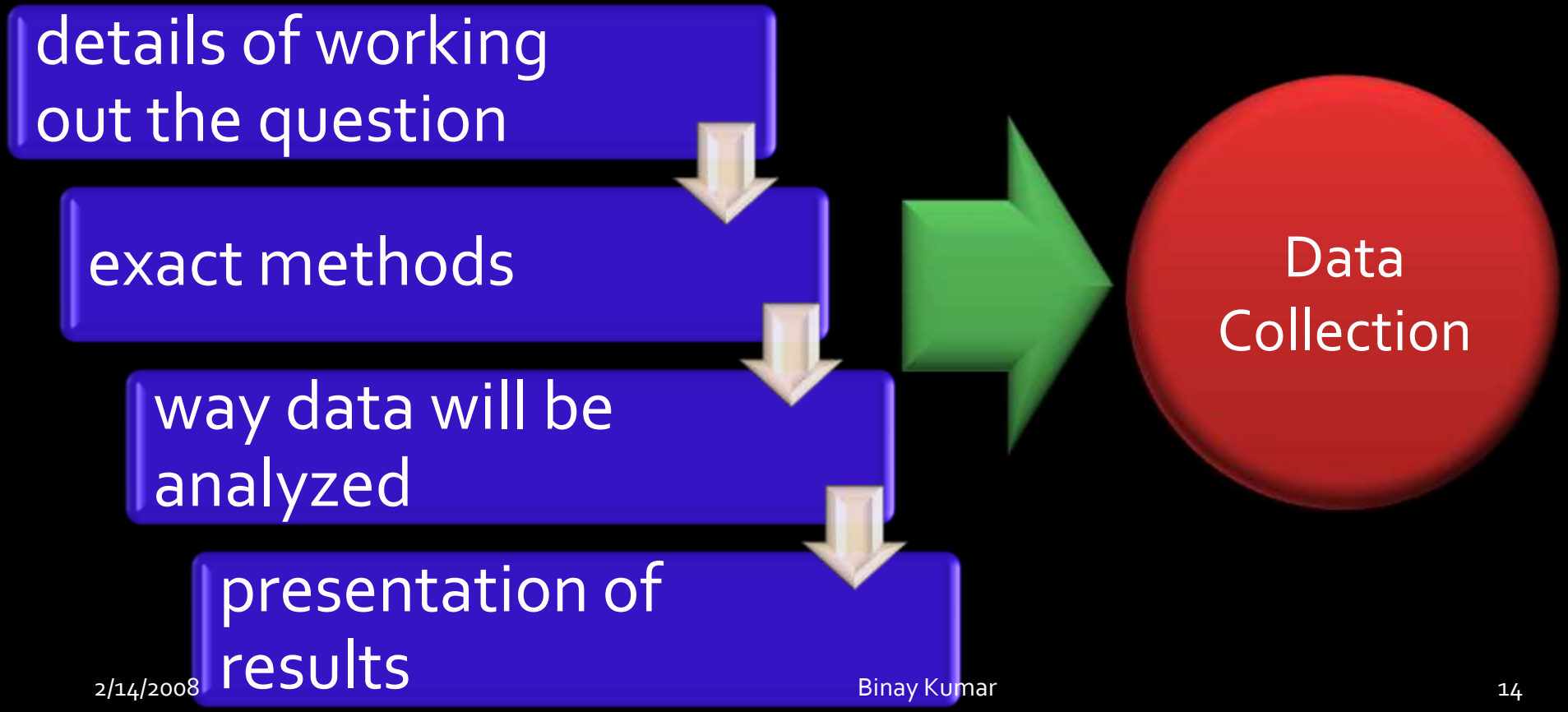
- there is a satisfaction at
  - becoming expert in a particular field
  - producing original information
  - learning self-motivated work
- acquiring these skills takes time and practice.

Initial planning

- It is very very important
  - to adopt a *structured approach* from the beginning
  - to get expert advice early on
- This sounds simple and obvious but
  - many people ignore this advice
  - rush to designing a data collection sheet!
- If you ignore this advice things will be difficult

The Structured Approach

A successful project requires a ***structured*** *and* ***disciplined*** approach.



The research question

Why a good research question?

Good research questions need to be *specific*, so that you may

- choose the appropriate methods
- identify the required resources
- plan your work realistically
- define useful objectives

A good research question means?

- Relevant
- Feasible/realistic in terms of research and your academic abilities
- Original
- Interesting
- Clear /specific and simple

Relevant

- The question is of interest to Reproductive Health
- Question is raised through your reading of the literature or through your practice
  - filling a gap in knowledge
  - analyzing assumptions in your practice/training
  - monitoring a development in practice
  - comparing different approaches
  - testing theories within a specific population

Feasible/realistic

- Are you able to *access* what you need
  - people (recruitment)
  - statistics
  - documents from which to collect the data and address the question fully?
- Can this data be accessed within the limited *time* and *resources* you have available to you?

Original

- Try to not simply copy questions asked in other years
- It shows your own imagination and your ability to construct and develop research issues.
- If not wholly original at least substantial: it needs to have sufficient scope to develop into a project.

Interesting

This is the key to MOTIVATION!

- The question needs to be one that interests **YOU**

and

- is likely to remain interesting for the duration of the project

Clear /specific and simple

- A good research question will be clear specific and simple
- This allows you to define the resources needs to answer it satisfactorily
- Clear on the: who, what & why?
- Clear on the: where, when & how?

Who, what & why?

- Who (study population)?
  - general: community
  - specific: men and women in their reproductive age (15 to 49)
- What (is the intervention)?
  - general: RH education
  - specific: 1 to 1 sessions on STIs/STDs
- Why (are we trying to do this)?
  - general: improve reproductive health
  - specific: reduce incidence of STIs/ STDs in the next year

Where, when & how?

- Where (within which setting?)
  - general: primary care
  - specific: patients in the Basic Health Center
- When (time frame)?
  - general: years
  - specific: finished in 8 months
- How (can we implement)?
  - general: the team will work together
  - specific: follow the protocol

Clear /specific and simple

- Once you have a clear question, review it to see if really requires research

The "so what" test

- What is the benefit of answering your research question?
- Who will it help (and how)?
- If you cannot make a definitive statement about the purpose of your research, think again….

THANK YOU