

Learning Event SDC: Beneficiary Assessment. Bern 30-31.01.13

# Beneficiary Assessment: the case of SAHA (Madagascar)



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# Background: 'Programme SAHA'

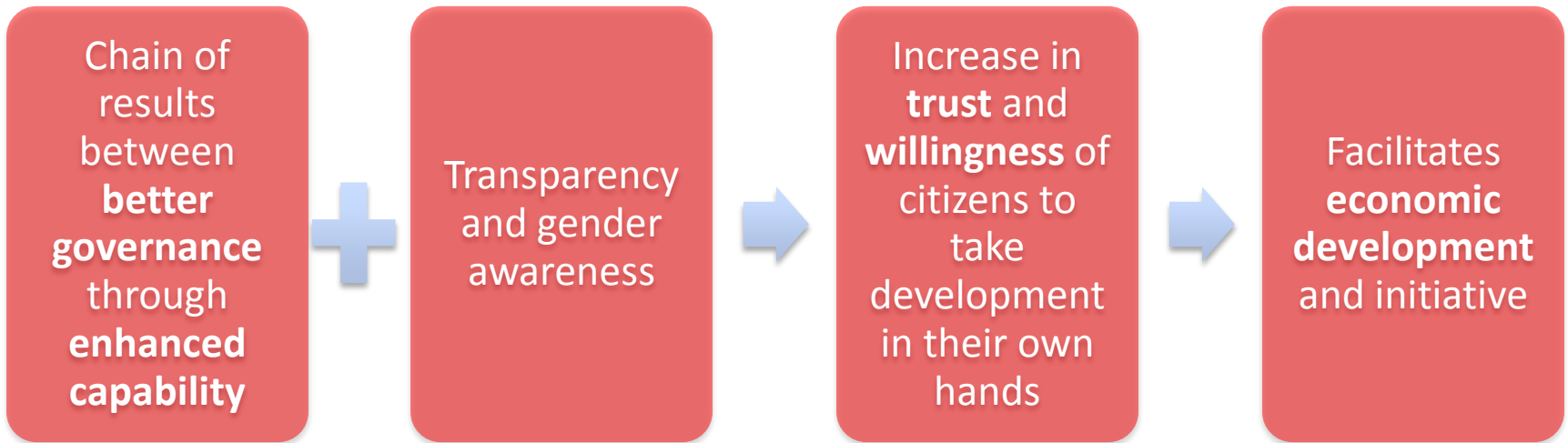


- Programme started in 2000
- Aims: poverty reduction and livelihoods improvements in 3 regions of Madagascar
- Works with grassroots organisation in 2 areas: **Governance and Economics**
- Capacity building and financial support of PALIs
- Last 6 years not yet evaluated after change from **micro to meso** level

# Main questions

- External evaluation: focus on **relevance, effectiveness** and **sustainability** with a focus on testing the hypothesis of the Phases 3 & 4
- BA: focus on **questions identified by the citizens observers** (Governance, Safety, Gender, Sustainability and Impacts)

# Findings



**BUT:**

- **Political context**, insecurity and retreat of the state compromise results

# Findings (cont.)

- BA also points towards the risk of a **two tiers development**: SAHA zone with good governance but limited **dissemination** beyond boundaries
- EE concurs with BA findings mostly with some caveats but can't test the hypothesis

# Degree of inclusion

## 'Assessors':

- BA trios made of **beneficiaries** (ie. members of associations themselves members of partner organisations (PALIs))
- Good age and gender balance; less so on **economic status** or **literacy levels**
- Selection of CO through SAHA channels and profile ToR

## 'Assessed':

- Trios interviewed mostly **beneficiaries** (ie peers) rather than 'common citizens' non-association members



# Quality of participation

- CO fully engaged and motivated throughout (3 months), good group dynamic and oral participation
- Facilitation in **Malagasy** and consultant in remote facilitation with limited instructions
- Total **freedom** to chose questions/areas for BA
- CO participated to learn, out of sense of **duty**
- Plans to start an association of COs

# Responsiveness

- BA presented as CO's own evaluation and source of information for EE
- CO presented results to local communities and to PALIs and SAHA in 3 regional and national workshops
- No promise of use of results BUT active brainstorming and planning during workshops with plans to build on findings
- Feedback well received by PALIs , Partners and SAHA
- SAHA wants to adapt some of BA technique in their M&E system



# Link with program cycle

- **Final evaluation** though some extension of activity in different programme
- SAHA team keen to get BA outcome for planning of next phase

# Scope and quality of BA information

- Good quality of information
- **Corroborated** by PALIs and other documents
- Next to no **quantification**
- Capacity for **analysis** limited without support

# Costs/Benefits of BA

- Powerful **demonstration** for SAHA and others that the '*paysans*' know a lot and can conduct an evaluation
- COs reported feeling **empowered** and enriched by new **insights** and **learning** (eg. national workshop)
- **Time costly** for Consultant and limited time to test hypothesis but enormous insight gained
- 30000 € roughly probably well spent because of learning that occurred and potential **pool of COs** for SAHA

# Set up

- 6 trios
- 1 workshop June (preparing evaluation questions, and logistics) + pilot total 10 days
- 9 weeks of data collection (3 weeks per trio) with weekly meetings with local facilitator
- 1 analysis workshop (September) + 3 public feedback workshops



# Set up (cont.)

- COs chose themes and questions
- Hardly any quantification
- Peer to peer mostly but not exclusively
- Facilitators translated in French daily workshop outputs; each CO received a full report of discussion in Malagasy
- SAHA staff not involved during process; involved in regional workshops as group discussion facilitators



# Conclusion

- BA is valid and valuable part of evaluation
- **Enriching** experience for all involved COs: learnt a lot and gained **confidence** and some did transform; SAHA became more opened to potential of genuine participatory process
- Cannot replace external evaluation in that donors or programme managers may have other **interests**

