



HELVETAS

Swiss Intercooperation

Beneficiary Assessment – a participative approach for impact assessment



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1. Introduction and justification for BA

Increasing pressure to demonstrate aid effectiveness (“value for money”)

WE'VE BEEN FOCUSING ON
POVERTY ALLEVIATION
IN THIS AREA
FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS NOW.



Difficulties/dilemmas frequently encountered in M&E systems of development programmes:

- too much emphasis on performance monitoring (activity and results) compared to outcome monitoring (effects & impact).
- too ambitious in amount of information to be collected: too many indicators (more than 20 needs questioning!)
 - ➔ too much information collected ➔ “data cemetery” ➔ lots of lengthy reports.... but loss of sight for essential information....
- too demanding collection methods: ambition to be precise...
 - ➔ *it is often better to be approximately right than precisely wrong!*
- M&E is (perceived as) something very complex, can only be handled by M&E specialists ➔ M&E tends to be “delegated”...
- Lack of active involvement of beneficiaries (clients) in M&E; beneficiaries are only informants.

➔ Beneficiary Assessment intends to address these dilemmas !

2. Concept and characteristics of BA

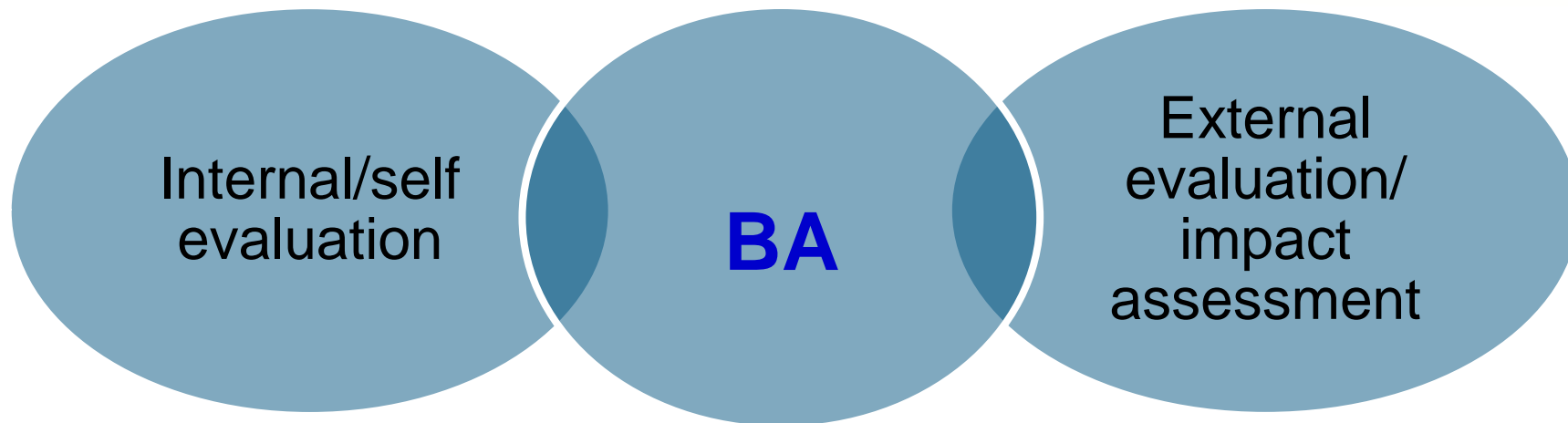
Origin: World Bank (i.e. Lawrence Salmen – BA an approach described):

- BA = qualitative method of evaluation using systematic consultation of project beneficiaries to investigate their perceptions...(ref. social science research)...
- BA complement quantitative surveys / traditional data collection methods

Adaptation to above BA:

- Beyond consultation: adding element of “peer-review” to assess effects/impact of development programmes

Evaluation modalities and relation to BA

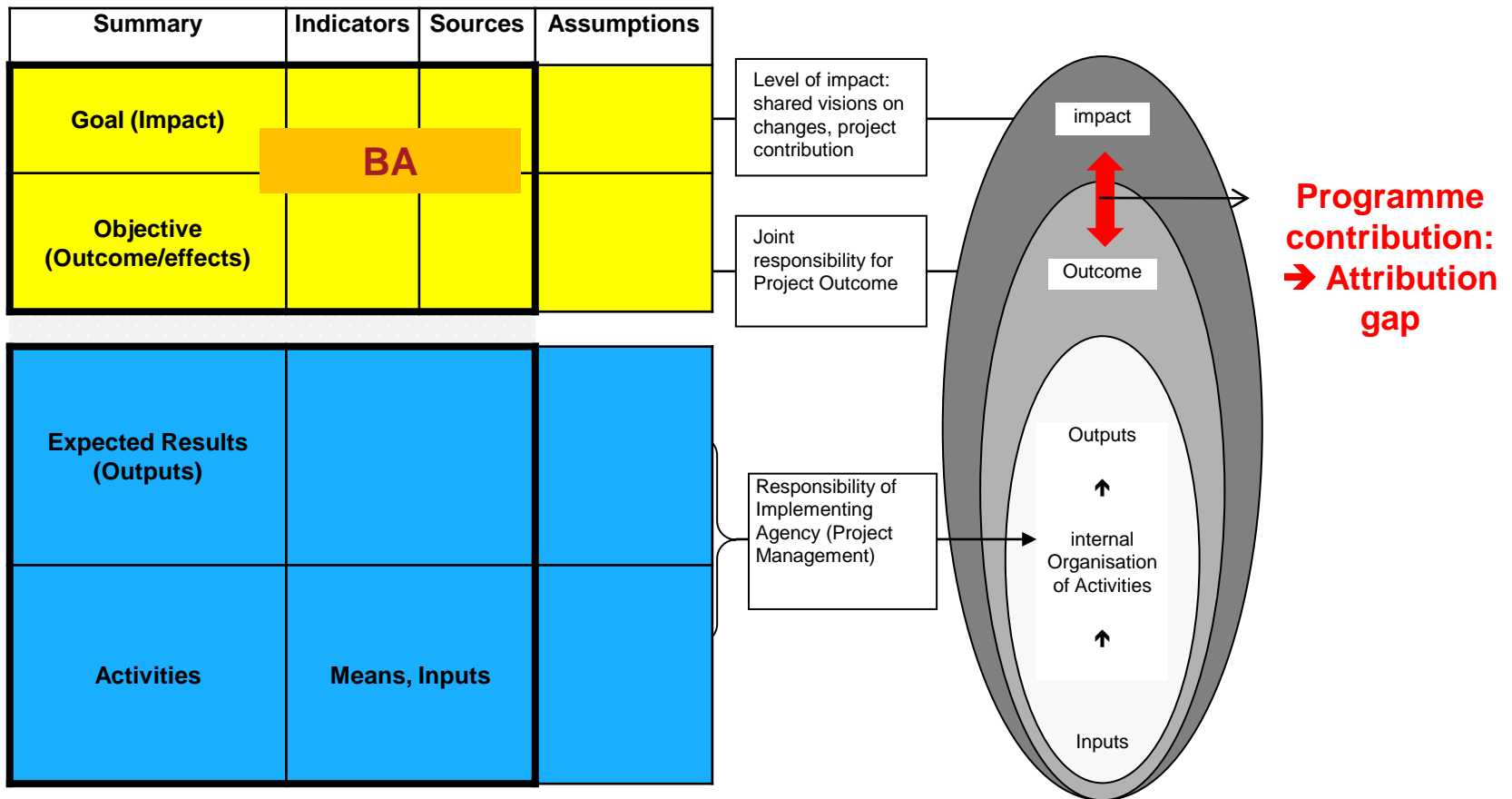


insider view	Beneficiaries/clients views	outsider view
accountability: inwards/self	upward (donor) & downward (beneficiaries) accountability	upward accountability (funds, outcomes) mostly to donor
process	process	(short) exercise
bottom up	bottom up	top down
more bias	less bias? positive bias? perceived objectivity	less bias (?) perceived objectivity

Principles of BA (adapted for impact assessment)

- Participative, based on peer-review principle (e.g. “farmers assess farmers” ...)
- Facilitated process: external facilitators; project staff is “absent” in field phase to avoid bias as much as possible
- Emphasis on qualitative assessment: What changes → Why?
- **Perceptions and views more important than precise data** (ref. “... *be approximately right*”.)
- Based on knowledge and experiences of local actors
- PRA methods; triangulation important in analysis

Level of assessment



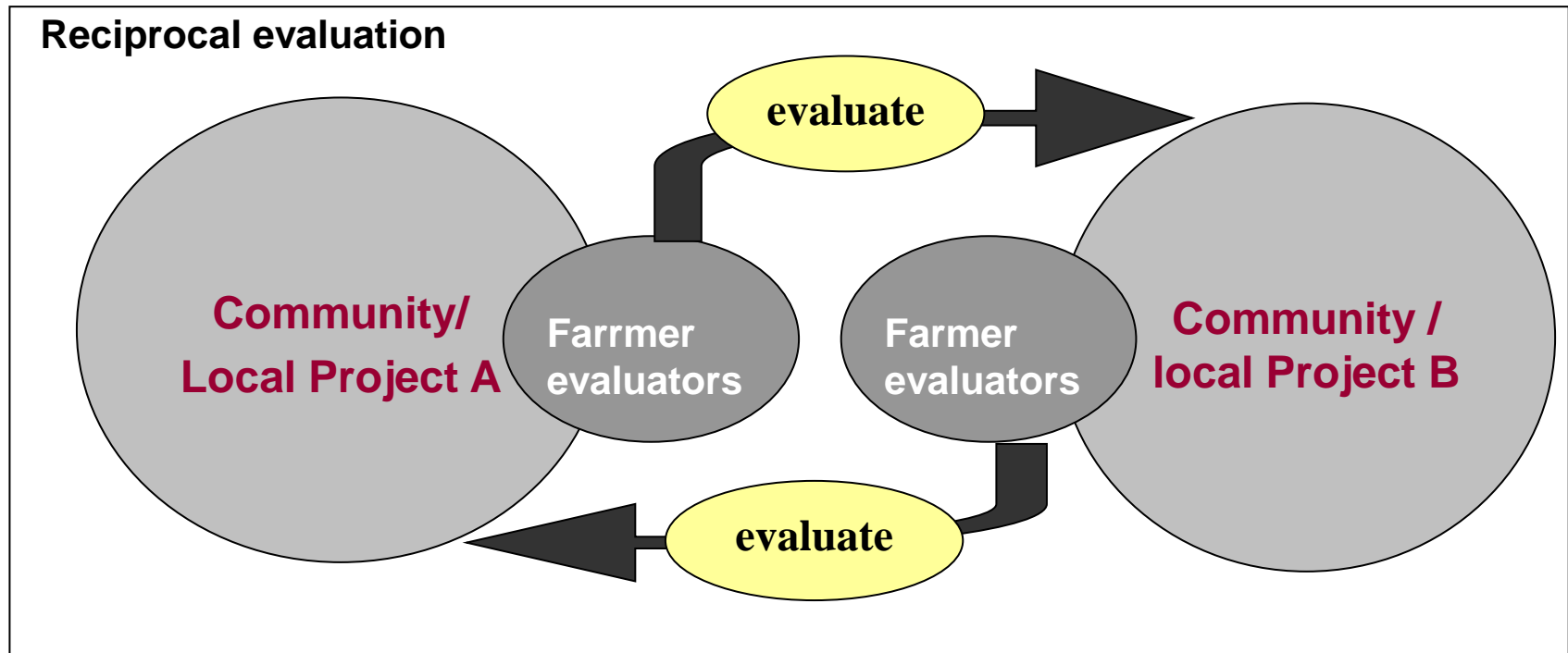
Process and actors in BA

What (Steps)	Who / What (Role of actors)
1. Planning (Selection of actors and local projects to evaluate)	Implementing organization / Project staff
2. Training & Validation of method & tools	Implementing org. / Project staff: training of evaluators and process facilitators
3. Implementation (field phase)	1) Evaluators, 2) Evaluated HH, communities...(target group), 3) Facilitators
4. Analysis	Facilitators
5. Validation of results	Facilitators, conducting workshop with representatives of target groups
6. Documentation & systematisation	Facilitators
7. Presentation of results & dissemination	Programme

Duration of process: 4-6 months

Scheme for implementation (field phase)

- Mutual evaluation between farmers (municipal representatives) through reciprocal (A ↔ B) or „rotational“ (A → B → C... → A) visits of local projects



- Level of evaluation (rural communities):
 1. individual farm families (in-depths discussions) followed by:
 2. (focus) group discussion of results at communal level

3. Examples of BA applied

A) PASOLAC

Programme for sustainable agriculture in the hillsides of Central America

Regional Programme SDC 1992-2007: Nicaragua → El Salvador + Honduras

Focus: Sustainable agriculture on hillsides



Soil conservation in hillsides, El Salvador

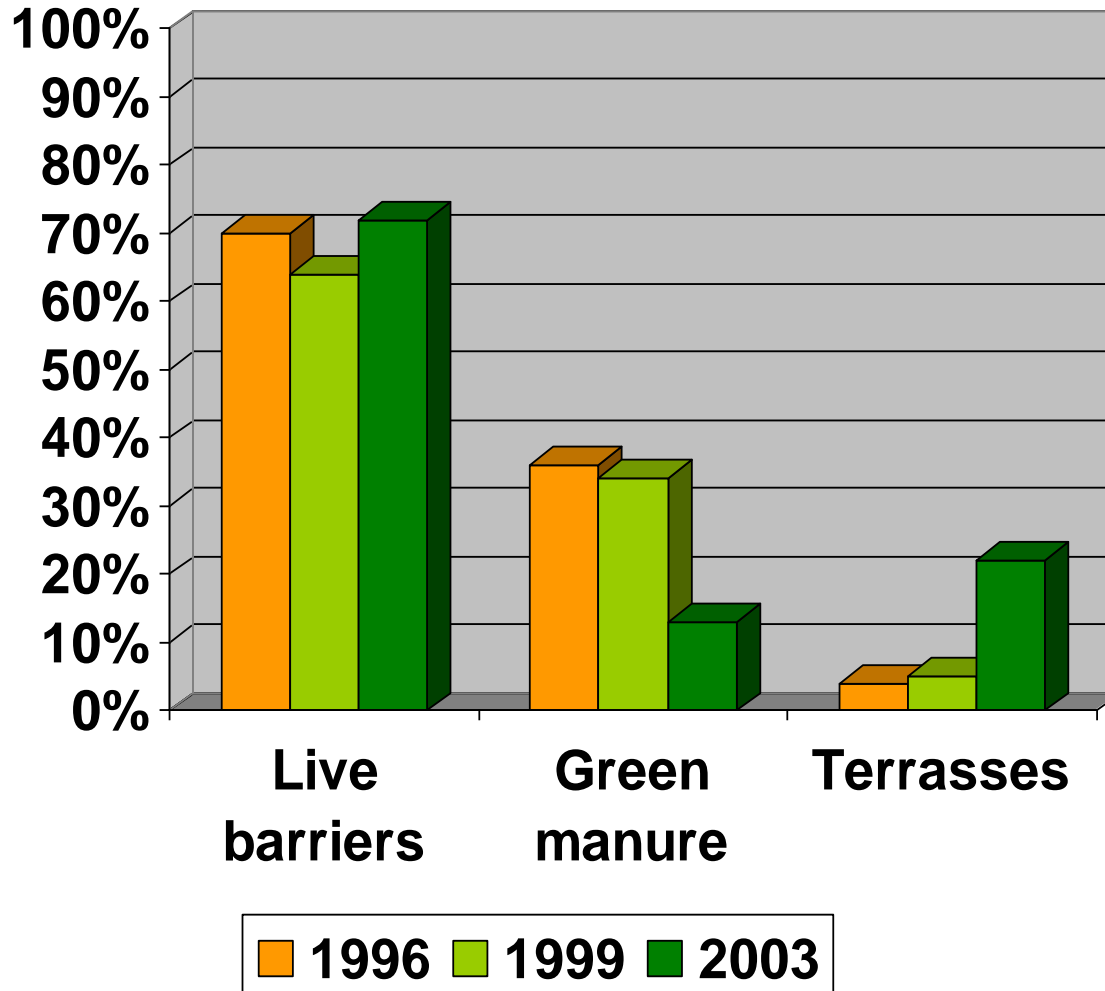
A) PASOLAC (cont.)



- Collaboration with > 50 implementing organizations (NGOs, Univ. farmer organizations, communities)
- Objective of BA: Evaluation of **Programme impact** (per phase: 1996 – 1999 – 2003 – ex post foreseen)
- Starting point: Logframe → Indicators of Goal and Purpose → **„Translation“ of indicators in meaningful questions for BA.**
- Process:
 - Implementation of BA parallel in 3 countries
 - Evaluation of 8-10 local projects per country
- Emphasis on adoption and effects of soil and water conservation (SWC) practices (→ Impact = „Adoption x Effects of SWC practices“)

Results BA PASOLAC

Adoption of SWC practices (Nicaragua, n=53-73)



Some effects of SWC practices in hillsides:

- + Reduced erosion (ex. reduced damage after Hurrican Mitch)
- + Increased soil moisture and soil fertility → higher yields
- + Increased food security (*“We are eating more often and better”*)
- + Increased income (only if access to markets)
- + Diversification and intensification of production → increased employment and reduced migration
- in some cases: increased costs, more labour input required → reduced adoption

Note: In consecutive BA's, more emphasis was placed to obtain quantitative data on the above mentioned effects.

B) ATICA (Programme Agua Tierra Campesina, Bolivia)

- Programme SDC 1999-2007 (2 phases → then foundation ATICA in 2008)
- Focus: Improvement of agricultural production and mgt. of natural resources in the inter-andean valleys of Bolivia → Reduction of poverty in rural areas).
- Approach: Demand-oriented / client (farmer) oriented approach for planning and implementation within existing framework of decentralisation:
 - *Qualified Demand Approach as added value to municipal planning process.*
- Collaboration:
 - 1) Farmer organisations
 - 2) Municipal governments and
 - 3) Service providers.
- Objective of BA: Evaluation of impact for 2 phases
- Starting point (≠ PASOLAC): **Impact hypothesises (6) & - indicators**
 - „Translation” into questions for BA.

B) ATICA (Programa Agua Tierra Campesina, Bolivia)



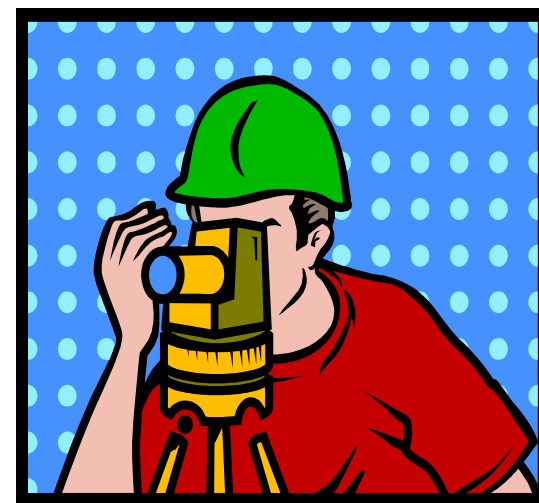
- Process:
 - Impact evaluation of 12 (2002) resp. 16 (2006) local projects
 - BA applied at three levels:



Farmers: Ok



Municipal Government;: ok

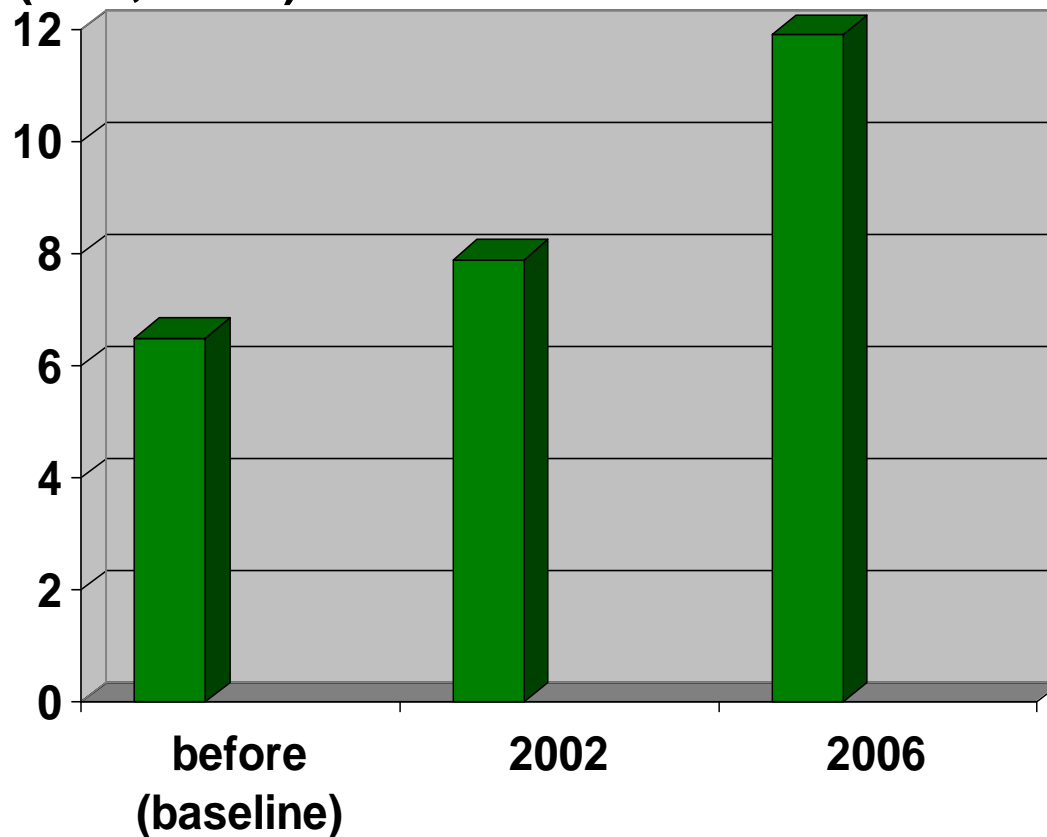


Service providers: **No !**

Results BA ATICA

Yield potatoes

(t/ha; n=12)

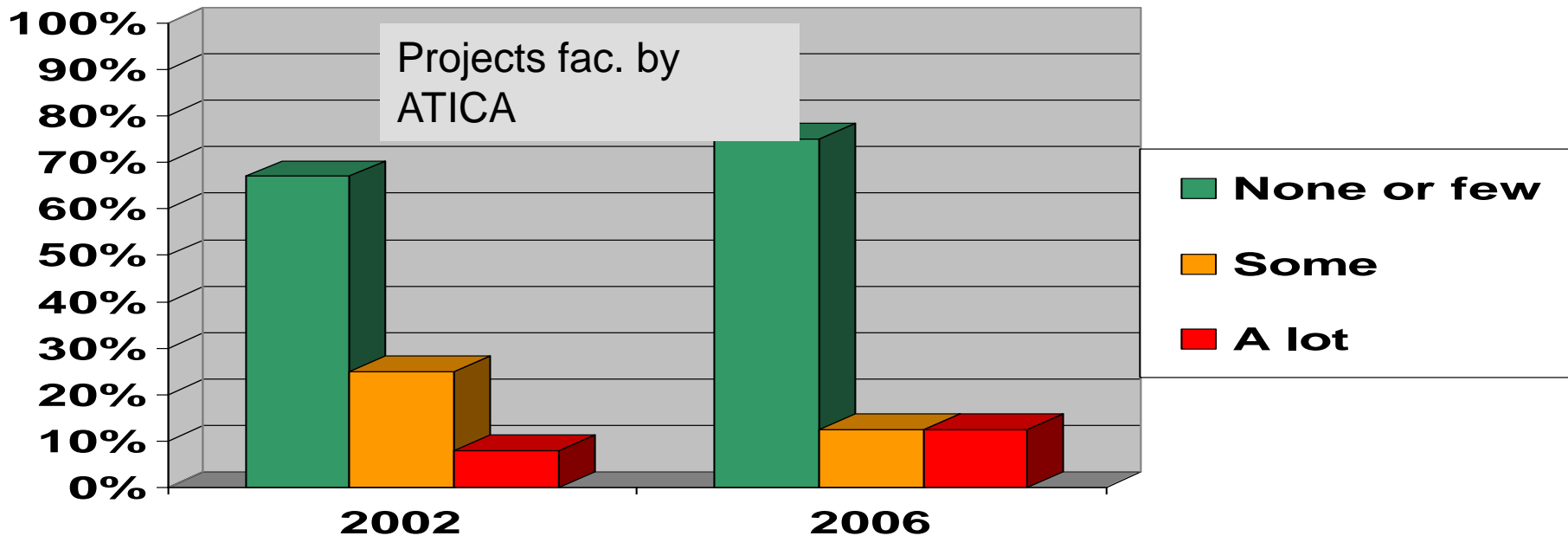


“Before I had barely enough potatoes for my family, but life has changed, now as we get money from selling some of the potatoes”

*(Justino Quezada,
Challaque Bajo,
Sacambamba.)*

Results BA ATICA (cont.)

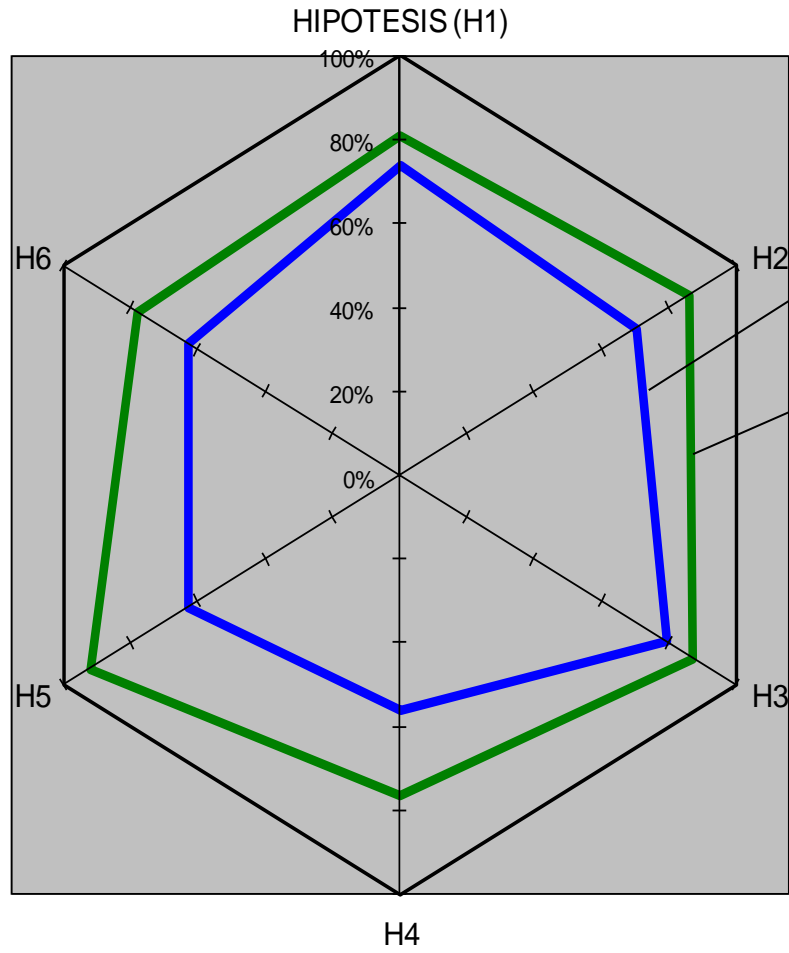
Satisfaction of farmers: Incidence of serious mistakes in projects (n=12-16)



“the progress made is good, but they have planned to place the water reservoir where my cows have to pass.”

Don Damian Soliz, Herto Mayu, Villa Serrano

Results BA ATICA (cont): Spiderweb for Impact hypotheses



H1 – H6 = Impact Hypothesis
ATICA

2002

2006

C) Push-Pull Programme, ICIPE/Kenya

- Research Programme for biological control of stemborer and striga weed in maize-based cropping systems.
- Started in 1993, dissemination in 1997.
- 25'000 farmers are reported to have adopted technology until 2009.
- Main focus: enhanced food security of rural communities in Eastern Africa.



Push-Pull Programme, ICIPE/Kenya (cont.)

- Objective of BA : Evaluation of impact of Programme in Western Kenya and Eastern Uganda
- Starting point: Very general log frame, few indicators.... → need to formulate key questions related to:
 - Factors explaining adoption of technology
 - Farmer adaptations of technology
 - Effects and impact
 - Contribution of research and extension to adoption
 - Up-scaling and policy implications
- → „Translation” of key questions into assessment framework for BA.
- Process:
 1. semi-structured interviews (dialogue) conducted by trained farmer evaluators, conducted at individual (144) farm families... followed by
 2. (focus) group discussions community level

Results BA ICIPE/Kenya (1)

Effects on yields:

Produce	Yield		% change
	Before using PPT	Now using PPT	
Maize grain long rains (t/ha)	1.4	4.9	+238
Maize grain short rains (t/ha)	0.9	3.7	+311
Fodder (No. of bundles/ha)	(150)	1030	(+586)
Milk (litre/day/cow)	1.5	3.8	+153

Results BA ICipe/Kenya (2)

Impact on livelihood related aspects:

Aspect	Score ^a
Availability of food	4.4
Surplus of production for selling	4.3
Health of family members	4.2
Income due to PPT	4.2
Workload:	
men	3.8
women	3.5
Less migration (people stay farming)	4.0
Education of children	4.2
Knowledge and skills	4.5
Roles and position in village:	
men	4.4
women	4.3

^a Rating scale 1-5:

1=much worse, 2=worse, 3=same/unchanged, 4=better, 5=much better.

Results BA ICIPE/Kenya (2)

Use of **additional income** by families

Use of additional income due to PPT	%
Paying school fees	82
Buying basic household items for family	31
House improvement	22
Buying other food stuff	20
Purchase of livestock and its drugs	15
Paying hospital bills	8
Buying inputs and farm tools	6
Investment in small business	5

Information substantiated by farmers' quotes

Aspect	Quote
Food security	<p><i>“I am a widow and my push pull farm has been my husband as it provides all my needs; I am now food secured and able to take care of my grand children”.</i></p> <p><i>Abigael Anyango, Eshirali Village, Butere district, Kenya.</i></p>
Income	<p>“At least I can nowadays even get surplus maize to sell and get additional income for other household needs” –<i>Margaret Onyach-Kiueru village Rongo district- Kenya</i></p>
Migration	<p>“PPT has made me to quit masonry and concentrate on PPT due to its very promising economic returns” <i>James Oduya-Min Arot Village –Suba District-Kenya.</i></p>
Paying for education	<p>“Paying school fees for my children is not a problem to me nowadays just because of Push-Pull Technology”</p> <p><i>George Ojiambo, Buroboi village, Busia district.</i></p>
Housing	<p>“Due to PPT, I can now boast of an improved permanent house”</p> <p><i>Mary Anyama, Min Arot Village, Suba district, Kenya</i></p>
Social/ community well-being	<p>“Theft cases have reduced because everybody has enough to feed on”</p> <p><i>Sub-chief, Ginga sub location.</i></p>

4. Appreciation of BA: Advantages

Process:

- Relatively simple and participative method, flexible application
 - Close to reality, captures field situation
 - Absence of project during field phase = smaller risk of (positive) bias
 - More than just assessment/evaluation:
 - Capacity-building and empowerment of local actors
 - Exchange of knowledge, experiences, seeds, ...
- } = major added value !

Results:

- Generation of valuable and authentic/genuine information, accurate information based on perceptions. → Views of local actors is important for the interpretation of other existing data.
- Allows to monitor & compare trends over a longer period (e.g. progress of programme per phase)

Appreciation of BA: Disadvantages / limitations

Process:

- Requires an environment of trust (but so does any evaluation....).
- High demand for planning and preparation (training, coordination, logistics)
- High quality facilitation of process is a must
- Limited capacity of farmers as evaluators → adjustments of methods to generate and capture information (e.g. “speaking maps”)
- Time consuming (esp. for local actors)

Results:

- Limitations in terms of obtaining reliable information on complex aspects, e.g. household income) → necessity for complementary studies
- Comparability with baseline survey data not always assured (if different methods, indicators etc. are applied)
- Risk of positive bias, observer dependency....

"What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning." (Uncertainty Principle, Heisenberg)

And how about the costs?

Cost of BA (without time of project staff for planning, coordination, etc.):

- PASOLAC (90's): 8'000 – 12'000 US\$ /country (without project costs prep.)
- ATICA (2002): 16'000 US \$ (without project costs for preparation)
- ICIPE (2009): 45'000 US \$ (with external facilitation)

For comparison:

- BA World Bank (90's): about 40'000 US \$ (Process of 4-6 months)
- External evaluation SDC: 25'000 – 50'000 CHF (without time of project/SDC staff for preparation)
- Fully-fledged impact assessment of a sizeable programme: 200'000 – 500'000 CHF)

5. Considerations for application of BA in SDC

Usefulness / use of results:

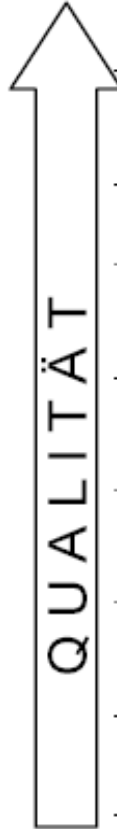
- a) Allows outcome/impact assessment based on recall method, i.e. **perceptions of target group** → strength where there is little M&E information available.
- b) Focus on qualitative assessment , explaining factors adoption and effects → focus on **why and how** (but less on “how much”).
- c) Use of results: assessment, planning, funding....
- d) Case ICIPE: Scientific literature (view of researchers) vs. “simple” impact assessment (view of target group) → diverse target audience (readers)

Limitations:

- a) see slide before
- b) In addition: is not complying with principles of Rigorous Impact Evaluation (RIE), see last category in following slide.

DESIGN		Vorher-Daten t_1 (Baseline)	Maß-nahme X	Nachher-Daten t_2 (Survey)
Experimentelle Versuchsanordnung:				
(1)	Kontrollgruppen-Design	ZG ₁ KG ₁	X -	ZG ₂ KG ₂
Quasi-experimentelle Versuchsanordnung:				
(2)	Vortest-Nachtest mit Vergleichsgruppen-Design	ZG ₁ VG ₁	X -	ZG ₂ VG ₂
(3)	„verspätetes“ Vergleichsgruppen-Design		X - X -	ZG ₁ VG ₂ ZG ₂ VG ₂
(4)	Vortest-Nachtest mit Nachtest Vergleichsgruppen-Design	ZG ₁	X -	ZG ₂ VG ₂
(5)	nur-Nachtest-Design mit Vergleichsgruppen		X -	ZG ₂ VG ₂
Vorexperimentelle Versuchsanordnung:				
(a)	Ein-Gruppen-Vortest-Nachtest-Design	ZG ₁	X	ZG ₂
(b)	Ein-Gruppen-Nachtest-Design		X	ZG ₂

ZG: Zielgruppe, KG: randomisierte Kontrollgruppe, VG: nicht-randomisierte Vergleichsgruppe, t: Zeitpunkt



What could be reduced? What not? (core elements):

1. Core elements (“must”):

- Peer review mechanism (“brand” of adapted BA’s as shown before...)
- External facilitation (i.e. project “absent” during evaluation phase)
- Allocation of resources/time for a thorough preparation
- Proper/timely information to all actors on purpose and nature of BA
- Feedback of results, including (or above all) to target group

2. What could be reduced:

- Reduced No. of evaluators (peers) = less investment in training, less sources of error,...

Complementarities of BA with other types of evaluation:

- ➔ Choice/mix of evaluation methods depends of objectives of evaluation
 - ➔ There is no single method which can cover all aspects: impact/outcome, efficiency, relevance, project approach, sustainability, institutionalization, empowerment....
1. BA can **substitute** an external evaluation, especially end of project if focus is on aspects like: outcomes/effects as perceived by target group, institutionalization of approach, sustainability, empowerment...
 2. BA can **complement** an external evaluation e.g. providing elements for planning next phases (focus on effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, approach....). But: costs!

Thank you !

