

Beneficiary Assessment – a participative approach for impact assessment



Input for Learning Event SDC

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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

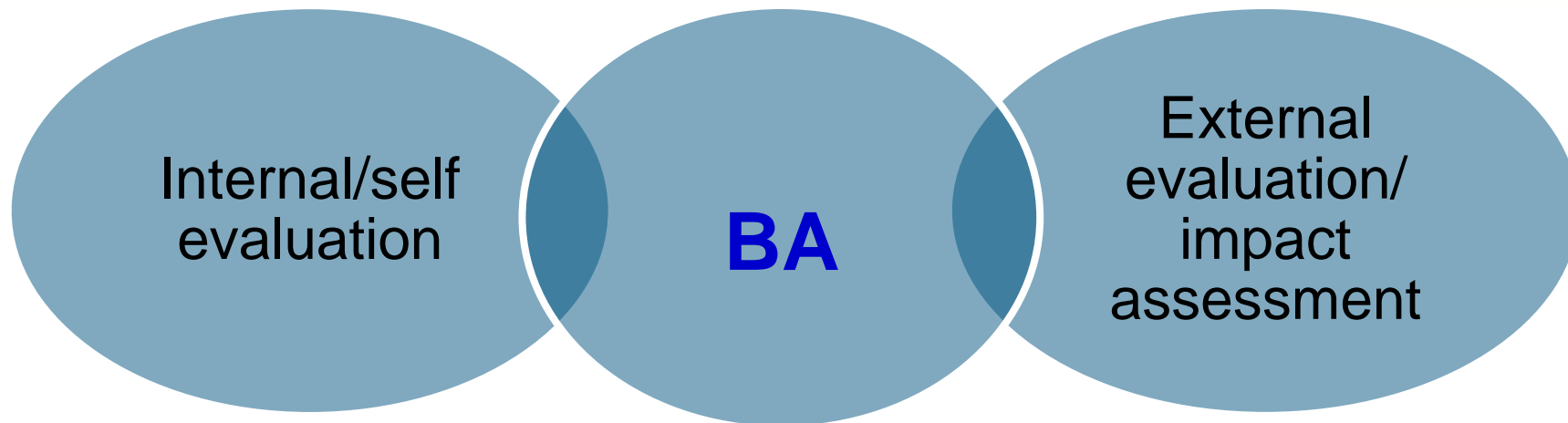
Origin: World Bank (i.e. Lawrence Salmen – BA an approach described):

- 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:

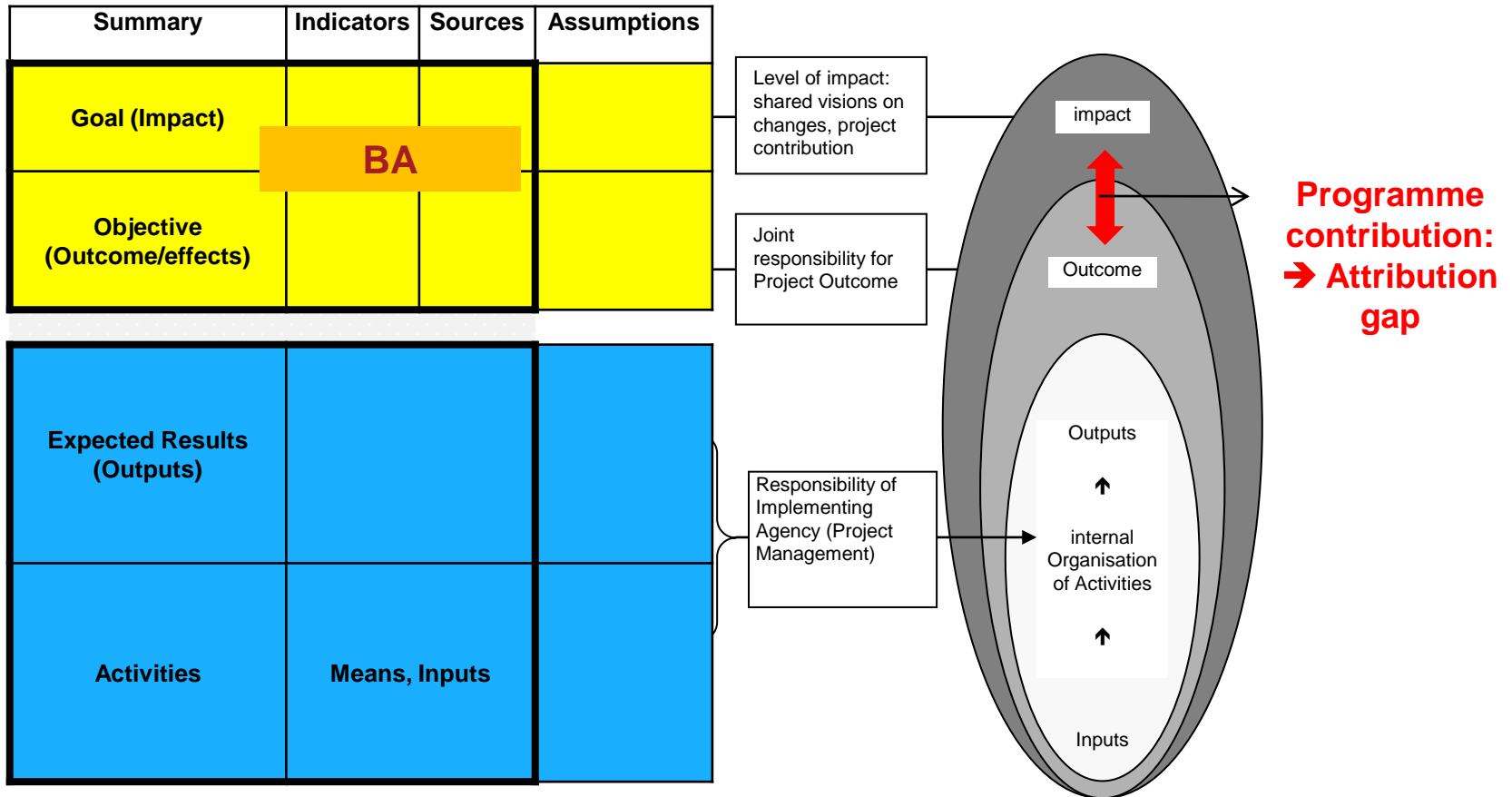
- Beyond consultation: adding element of “peer-review” to assess effects/impact of development programmes

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

Level of assessment

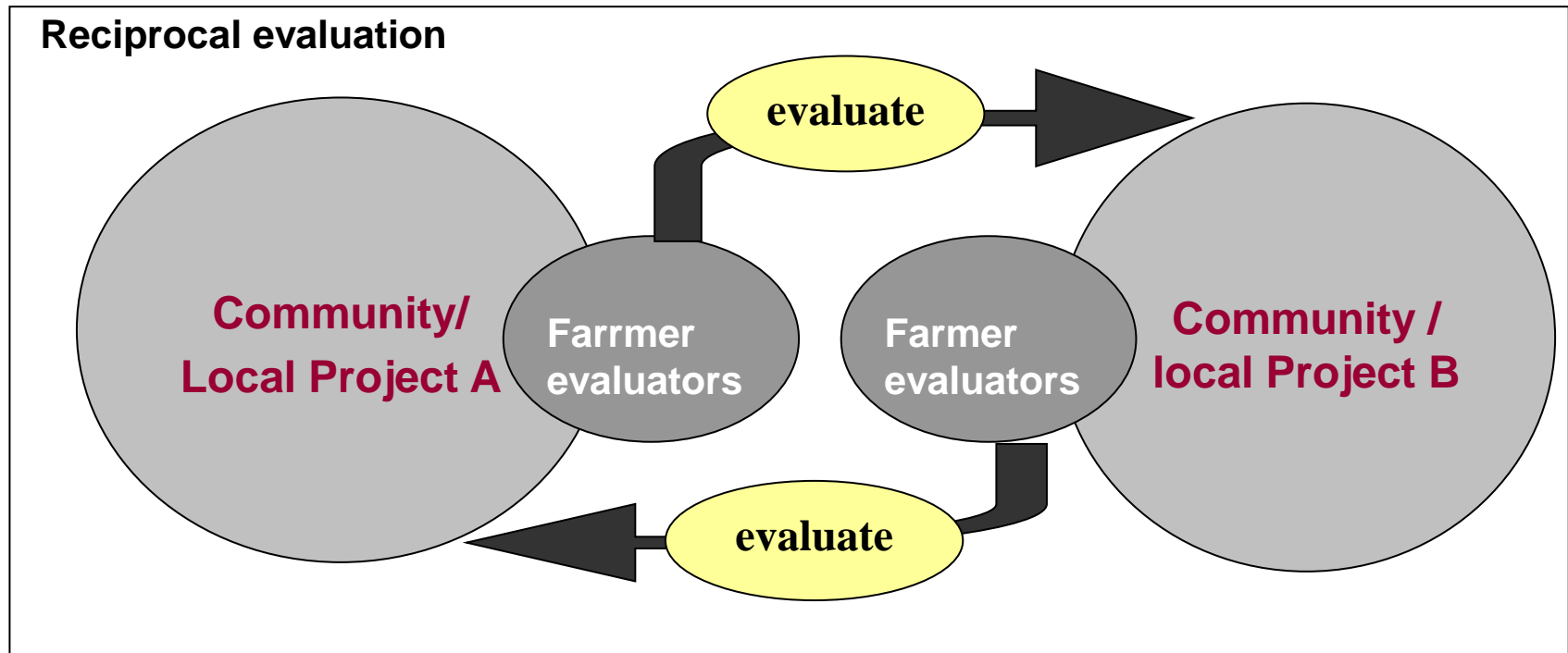


Principles of BA (adapted for impact assessment)

- 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

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

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

3. Example 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: **Impact hypothesises (6) & - indicators**
 - „Translation” into questions for BA.

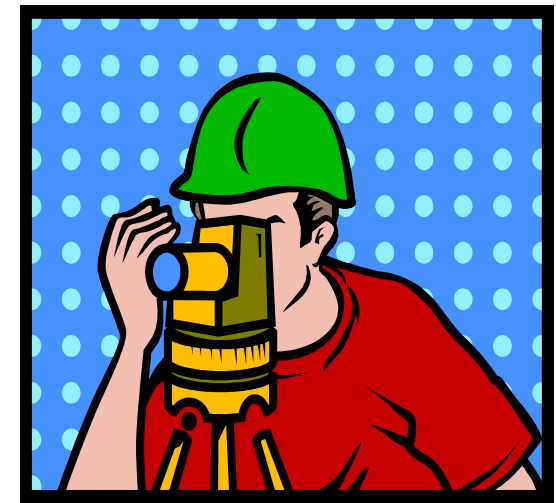
- Process:
 - Impact evaluation of 12 (2002) resp. 16 (2006) local projects
 - BA applied at three levels:



Farmers: Ok



Municipal Government;: ok

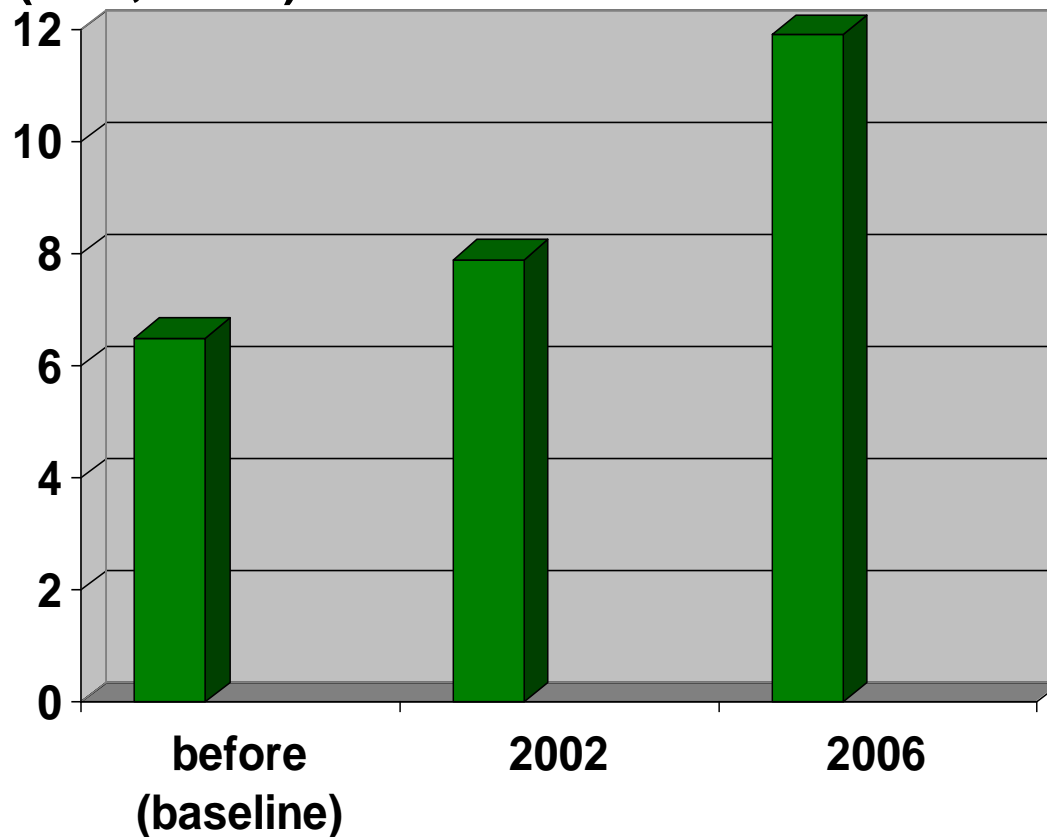


Service providers: **No !**

Results BA ATICA

Yield potatoes

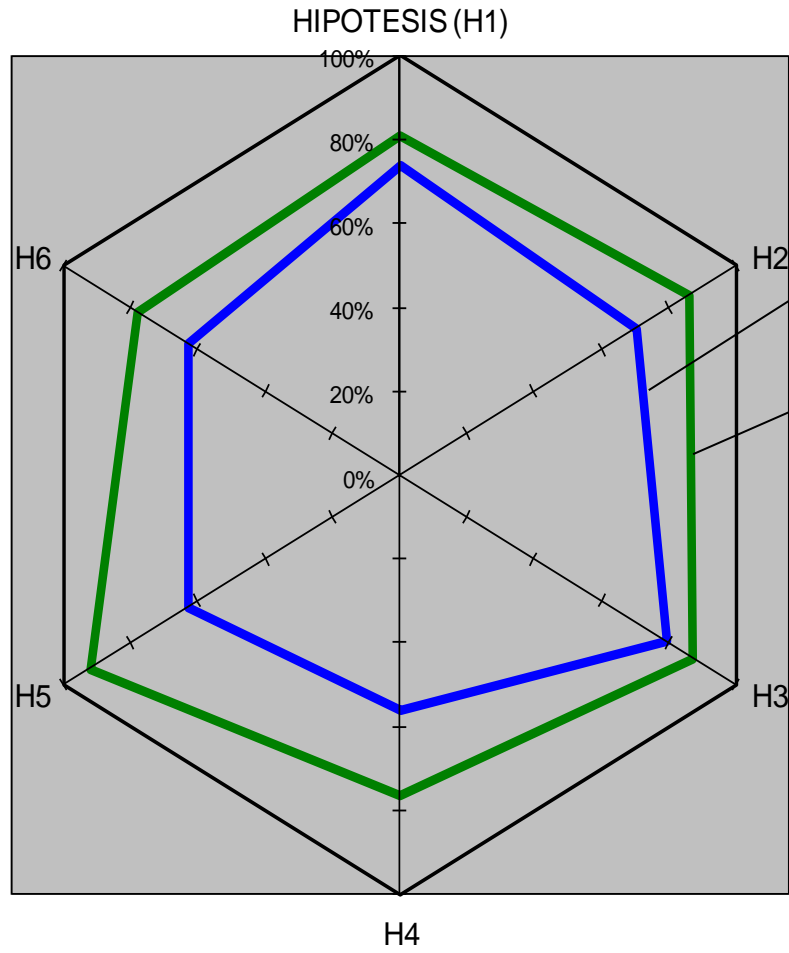
(t/ha; n=12)



“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): Spiderweb for Impact hypotheses



**H1 – H6 = Impact Hypothesis
ATICA**

2002

2006

Example: 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...
 2. ... followed by (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 1=much worse, 2=worse, 3=same/unchanged, 4=better, 5=much better.

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><i>"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</p>
Migration	<p><i>"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.</p>
Paying for education	<p><i>"Paying school fees for my children is not a problem to me nowadays just because of Push-Pull Technology"</i></p> <p><i>George Ojiambo, Buroboi village, Busia district.</i></p>
Housing	<p><i>"Due to PPT, I can now boast of an improved permanent house"</i></p> <p><i>Mary Anyama, Min Arot Village, Suba district, Kenya</i></p>
Social/ community well-being	<p><i>"Theft cases have reduced because everybody has enough to feed on"</i></p> <p><i>Sub-chief, Ginga sub location.</i></p>

4. Appreciation of BA: Advantages

Process:

- Relatively simple and participative method
 - 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, ...
- } = 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”)

Results:

- Limitations in terms of obtaining reliable information on complex aspects, e.g. household income) → necessity for complementary studies
- 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?

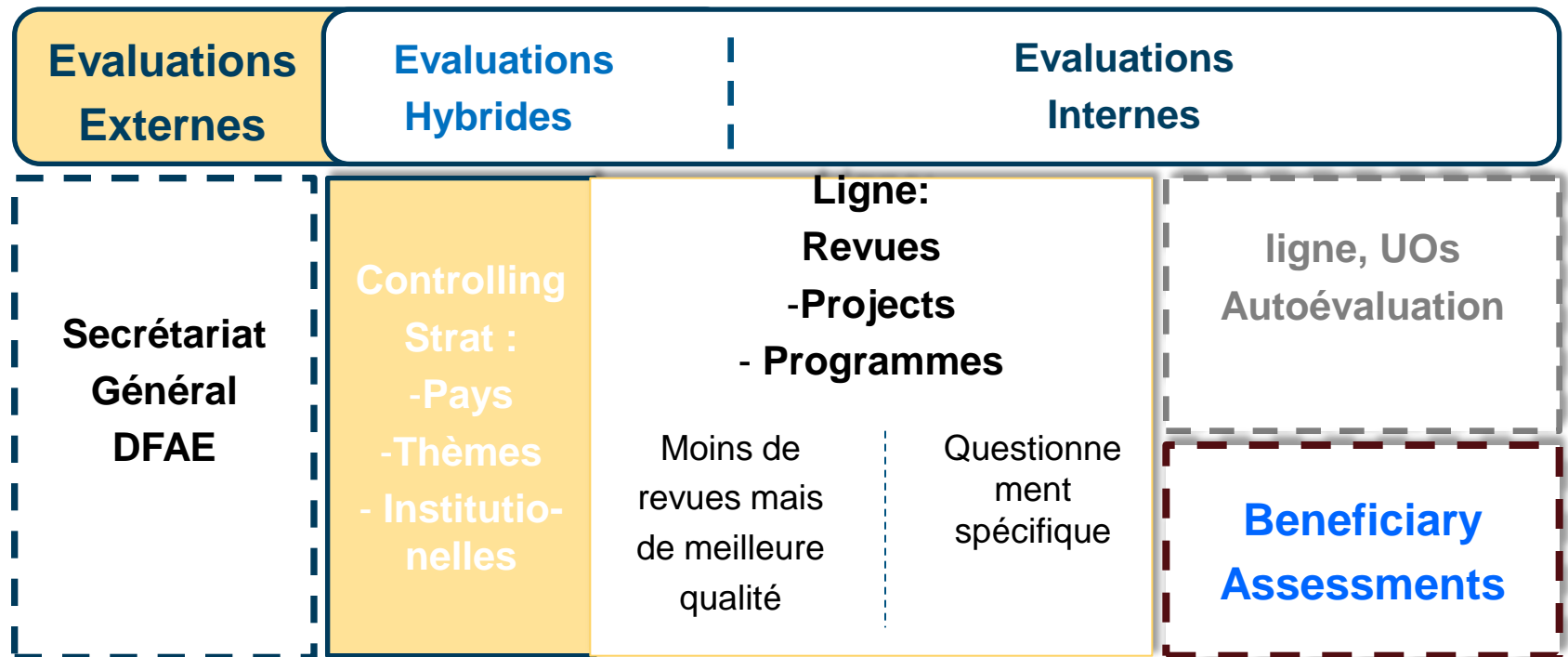
Cost of BA (without time of project staff for planning, coordination, etc.):

- ATICA (2002): 16'000 US \$ (without project costs for preparation)
- ICIPE (2009): 100'000 US \$ (with external facilitation)

In comparison to:

- 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 BA application in SDC



critères
CAD

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

Considerations for application BA in SDC



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 !



Website www.poverty-wellbeing.net

Beneficiary Assessment (new sub-section):

http://www.poverty-wellbeing.net/en/Home/Addressing_Poverty_in_Practice/Beneficiary_Assessment_BA