

Sustaining Climate Action

Issues in Verifying Post-Project Impacts in Climate Change Mitigation Projects



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\$5 trillion spent on foreign aid since 1945
\$137 billion spent in 2014 *alone* on development projects



Fewer than 1% of all projects have been evaluated for sustained impacts

1. *Impact*: The **probability** of continued long-term benefits

OECD-DAC, 1991

Final/ Terminal Evaluation:

“The systematic and objective assessment of [a]...**completed project** or programme, its design, implementation and results.... **to determine** the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, **impact and [projected] sustainability.**” (OECD-DAC, 1991)

2. *Sustainability*: The **continuation of benefits** from a development **intervention after** major development assistance has been completed.

OECD-DAC, 1991

(Ex-) post project Evaluation:

“Ex-post evaluation is generally conducted three years after the project completion with the emphasis on the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.”

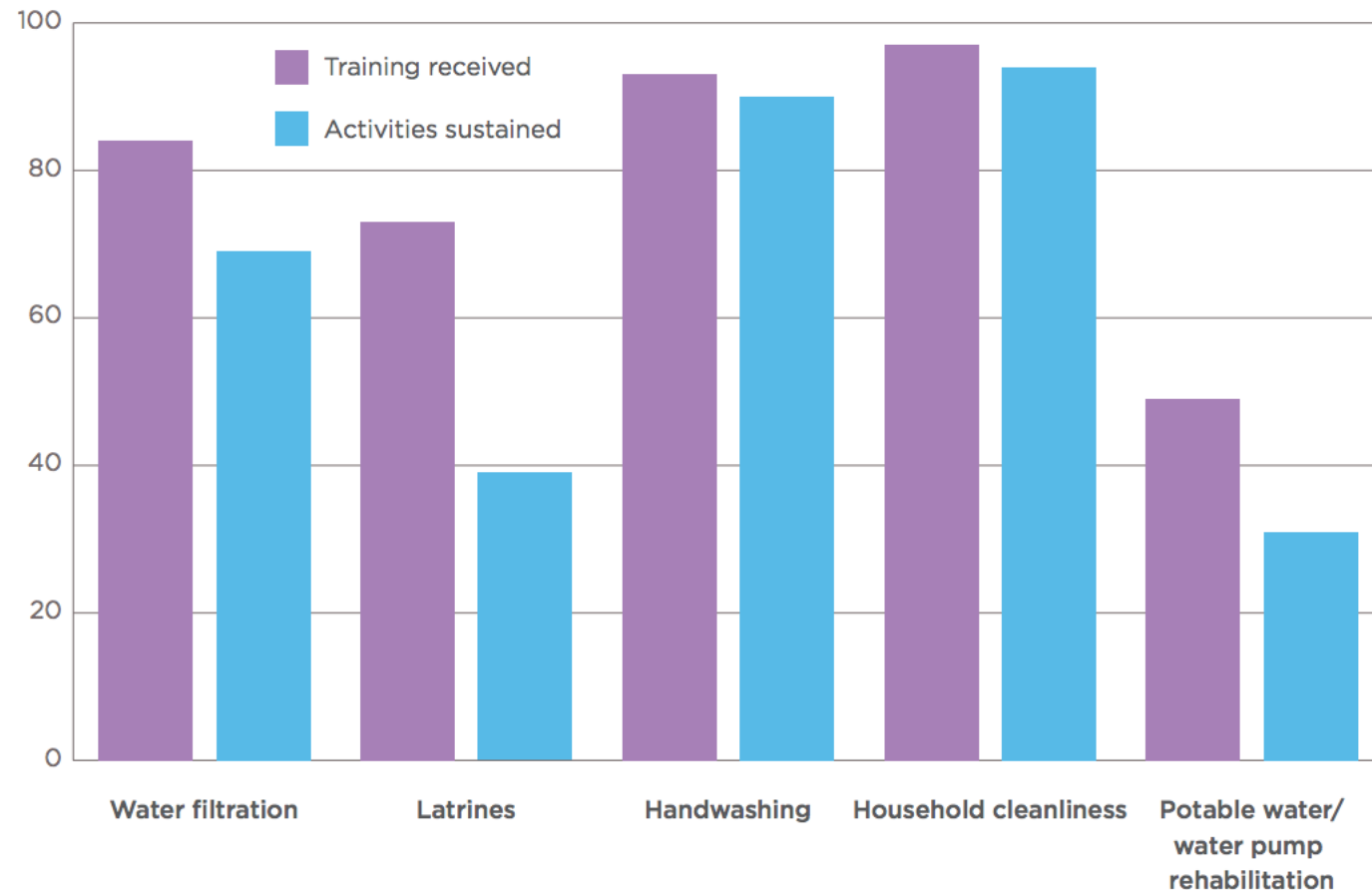
JICA (Japanese International Cooperation Agency)



Sustained Impacts: An Example from Hygiene/ Water

Some falloff of hygiene/ water outcomes but mostly lower by <20%

Figure 9: Comparison of Reported Hygiene/Water Training Received and Activities Sustained



Two Key Questions

1. How do evaluators measure the sustainability of climate change mitigation projects?
2. Is there a correlation between projected and actual sustainability?

Sample from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF)

1372 total project pool

53 post-completion verification reports (4%)

17 CCM (1%)

Methodology

- ▶ Criteria:
 - ▶ Identify Conditions for Sustainability
 - ▶ Resources
 - ▶ Partnerships and Local Ownership
 - ▶ Capacity Development
 - ▶ Assess M&E
 - ▶ Transparent Benchmarks & Indicators
 - ▶ Contribution vs. Attribution claimed
- ▶ Projects were closed: 1999-2015 timeframe
- ▶ Evidence of ex-post project sustainability evaluation methods, including fieldwork or desk research

Note: Value of GEF CCM programs evaluated= \$195.5 million

Capturing full results? Terminal evaluations \neq ex post sustainability evaluations



Uzbekistan Public Buildings 2013
GEF 3624



Uzbekistan Low-Carbon Rural Housing ongoing
GEF 6913

Findings: How did evaluators measure sustainability?

- ▶ “Industry standard” 4-pt scale is not an effective measure
- ▶ 15 of 17 reports were Terminal Evaluations that assessed likelihood, cover pre-cursors for post-project evaluation and 2 were Midterm
- ▶ **Some anecdotal reporting:** In two reports, good post-project *reporting* of Resources & Ownership allocated to the sector claims on 3 years ex-post, “**The [Indian] Government Allocated Rs. 53.15 Million for the SHP Program during the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)**” and “**About 65 percent of the small Hydro electromechanical Equipment is sourced locally.**” (India, GEF 386)
- ▶ *However*, project pool lacks sufficient post-project data and no access to some data

Result

1372 total project pool

53 post-completion verification reports (4%)

17 CCM (1%)

0 post project sustained impact evaluations

Findings: Projected and actual sustainability

- ▶ Frequent over-attribution of replication, market transformation results to projects and extrapolation from a small sample
 - ▶ “A significant number of farmers... of an estimated 2,312 farmers who previously had had no electricity” saw their **productivity and incomes increase** as a result of their adoption of productive investments (e.g. photovoltaic-energy water-pumping systems and improved farming practices). A **rough preliminary estimate, based on an evaluation of three beneficiary farms**, shows that in these cases average on-farm increases in income more than doubled (rising by 139%).” (Mexico GEF 643)
- ▶ Need clarity on definition of sustainability, timeframes, including transparency on how data linked to project, when and how collected from whom
 - ▶ “Outcomes of most of the GEF projects are sustained during the post-completion period.” (GEF Annual Performance Report, 2017)
- ▶ Current M&E activities do not provide a robust picture of sustainability

Evaluating Greenhouse Gas Reductions (CO₂e)



Energy Efficient Buildings in
Kazakhstan 2015
GEF 3758



Residential Buildings EE
Russia 2005
GEF 292

Recommendations: Fostering Sustainable Evaluations

- ▶ Apply common, transparent methods for evaluating post-project sustainability and share data openly
- ▶ Evaluate assumptions about “sustainability” of infrastructure, market uptake, training, replication and duration of expected sustainability?
- ▶ Differentiate between static and dynamic sustainability
- ▶ Conduct a study to assess efficacy and /or test alternatives to the 4-point scale

Recommendations: Evaluation Procedures

- ▶ Learn from other development sectors and from climate finance projects with **independently verified emissions**, such as Clean Development Mechanism projects!
- ▶ **Budget for Post-Project Evaluations** and project data repositories to retain data in-country at terminal evaluation for post-project return and country-level learning
- ▶ Include **evaluability** (control groups, sampling sizes and sites selected by evaluability criteria) in the assessment of project design and flag **co-benefits**
- ▶ Clarify methods needed for **contribution vs attribution claims**, and consider de-coupling direct and indirect impacts
- ▶ Align CCM project M&E with support for **country reporting to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement**

The Paris Agreement: a challenge and an opportunity

“...to provide a *clear understanding* of climate change action.”

