Information needs and gaps for assessing progress on adaptation

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What we need information about

- Climate impacts and vulnerability to climate.
- Impact evaluation – assessing which adaptation interventions work and which do not.
  - Ex ante versus ex post evaluation
  - Existence of information, technological tools that help to address adaptation problems.
  - Awareness of these tools and how to apply them.
  - Institutional processes required to implement these tools. Process evaluation.
  - Evidence of changes in behavior and/or improvement in livelihoods. Impact evaluation.

What are the questions which the information should help to answer?

- What impacts are *caused* by climate?
- What impacts are *caused* by an adaptation intervention?
- What is the impact for different types of people? Under different environmental and policy conditions?
- Why is there an impact or no impact?
- What are the lessons for scaling up?
- What is the impact at different scales?
- What is the impact of all interventions within a sector, i.e. what are the interactions?

What affects whether the information helps to answer the questions?

- The counterfactual.
- The measures of impacts.
- The population within which the impacts are evaluated.
- Type of data
  - Aggregate statistics – widely available.
    - What is being aggregated?
    - Usefulness in discriminating causes is limited.
  - Micro-level data – scarce.
    - Can be extremely useful in discriminating causes.
    - Example: World Bank LSMS surveys.
- Quality of data

Gaps

- Political will to insist on evidence – based policy.
- Political will to allocate the necessary resources.
- Institutional incentives to conduct impact assessment and incorporate results into policy.
- Institutional incentives to adopt a learning approach – mistakes are good.

Gaps

- Institutionalization of impact evaluation. It needs to be part of the planning. Policy makers and evaluators need to work together.
- Policy makers should have statistical skills.
- Institutional capacity and human capital needed for evidence – based policy should be developed within all countries - not coming from outside.
- Data collection and quality.

Recommendations

- Establish culture of evidence – based policy and of learning through mistakes.
- Allocate the necessary resources.
- Give policy makers and those responsible for data collection and analysis incentives to plan and work together – plan data collection around need to evaluate individual policies and clusters of policies.
- Routinely make original data available, not just aggregates.

IRI

- Experience with projects designed to improve management of climate risks in health, agriculture, food security and water sectors.
- Map room.
    - Health
    - Food security
    - Fire control
- Ex post impact evaluations should begin to yield results within a few years.
- www.iri.columbia.edu