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# The good , bad and ugly ... and the exciting !



- Discuss some issues and experiences around undertaking low budget evaluations
- Draw attention to Bamberger's paper
- Starting from the ground floor in Development evaluation work viz the Rolls Royce (ADB)



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- Bamberger – basically says
- “low budget evaluations have inherent bias to positive results due to time& budget constraints & poor design”
- Use international examples to illustrate but confident we can think of plenty WA examples  
!!!!



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# Typical factors fostering positive bias – note issues you’ve faced !

- Budget/time constraints – esp field work incl planning , deadlines for reports, last minute evaluations, timing clashes (heaps of reasons)
- Data constraints – rely on secondary data/recall since none or minimal baseline- quality, targeting of info and people – bias to the mainstream and accessible people
- Monitoring data – skewed , unreliable, diff focus
- Recall – esp if sensitive
- Institutional inertia/political pressure- targetting of the “known people”
- Poor contracting – TORS, ignore non beneficiaries, no breadth in key informants, no QA on proposed methodology

# Solomon Islands and Uganda contexts



- participatory evaluations (build team capacity),
- baseline issues,
- end of project
- short time frames

# challenges which magnify problems – reduce your time



Hot desking- viruses

Where have the team gone ??

Morning tea and Lunchtime  
RULE OK !!



Transport for how  
many ? Timeliness



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# Physical infrastructure !





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# Language(s) barriers





# Expect the unexpected



Floods , opportunities  
arise

“I want 10 people who  
speak english”

You've kept us waiting for 3  
hours in the cold !

We want to interview the  
children sponsored by the  
program





# Stakeholders – who is invited ?

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# Working context – how would you deal with these ?



- Who is part of the team and for how long? What skills and quality trade offs ?
- Timing can be difficult – when is the right time ?
- No time lag – it all happens NOW !



# Ambitious TORs – low budget and resources – do we get enough traction or are we stranded ?



Example TORs – what is really wanted ?

Often confusion over TORs – high expectations (time allocated & realism – quantity vs quality





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- Any ideas or experience of above or other constraints mentioned by Bamberger ? – share



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# Weakest impact design

- Post intervention - No baseline nor comparison group
- Typically low budget & short time frames in the field
- But with caveats can provide some insight into project effects



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# Poor methodology - so strengthen design



- Program theory- causality
- Mixed method approach- triangulate
- Reconstruct baseline ie creative use PRA tools (timelines, 10 seed, historical transects, timelines, impact diagrams etc) use secondary data,
- Alternatives to counterfactual – concept mapping, Program theory of Change et al



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# Construct a program logic – some causality





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# Social Inquiry- mixed methods



Triangulation - Participatory ranking (Ten Seed) ,  
Semi Structured Interview, Most Significant  
Change, document review

In Solomons used a Household survey but ....



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# Reconstructing the baseline



# Manage cost & time constraints and ensure minimum

## methodological rigour , reduce bias



- Simplify design – eliminate baseline /comparison group
- use threats to validity checklist
- Clarify need to know vs nice to know info for client – reduce disaggregation
- Creative use of secondary data ie school & health attendance records for road impact, regional sale prices
- Determine required sample size – lower power test ? sample size, efficiency of sample design
- Reduce costs surveys – observation group vs individual interviews, self administered questionnaires



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# Assessing qualitative evals

- **Confirmability** *Are the conclusions drawn from the available evidence, and is the research relatively free of researcher bias?*
- **Reliability** *Is the process of the study consistent, coherent and reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods? If emergent designs are used are the processes through which the design evolves clearly documented?*
- **Credibility** *Are the findings credible to the people studied and to readers, and do we have an authentic portrait of what we are studying*
- **Transferability** *Do the conclusions fit other contexts and how widely can they be generalized?*
- **Utilization** *How useful were the findings to clients, researchers and the communities studied?*



# Use simple participatory tools which are easy to understand and access by stakeholder groups





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# Participatory approaches



Deliver benefit or  
provide feedback

Consultation fatigue





# Evaluation Summit



Highly  
participatory

Stakeholders &  
community have clear  
direction – don't need the  
final report !





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**Think of a evaluation plan as a well designed car**



**That's going to get you to  
the final destination**

**But ....**



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**things rarely go to plan,**



**You'll get there if you know where you are heading and can adapt.....ENJOY**

# Development evaluation - the rewards



Exciting travel + the human factor

