



Setting up to measure impact in development programs: some reflections from the field

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Why we measure pre- and post intervention...

- Baseline surveys are carried out to compare the situation before intervention with the situation afterwards
- Community acts as its own control - constituting a basic form of *quasi-experimental* design
- Enables judgement about the plausible contribution of the intervention



Assumptions...

- Project design is relevant to community needs
- The intervention will lead to change
- Selected indicators will detect this change
- Level of change is of a scale that can be measured
- Effects of the intervention can somehow be isolated



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And what about survey tools...

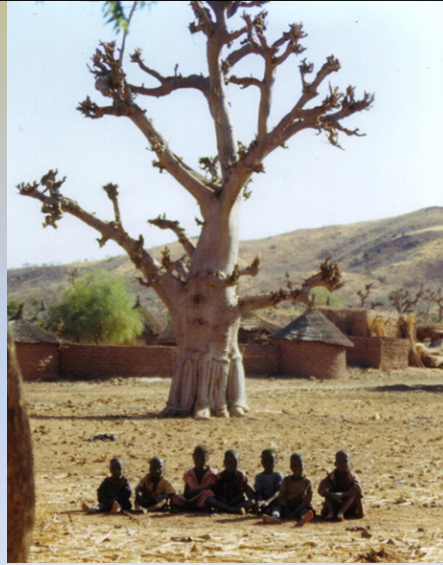
- Use of broad scale surveys:
 - A highly adaptive process
 - Has to be carefully managed
 - Has implications for data quality



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Stories from the field...

- Other major events occur
- Competition for personnel and logistics
- Crucial local expertise not available
- Politics (unrelated) undermine ownership
- Rigorously calculated sample size not possible
- Random selection not possible



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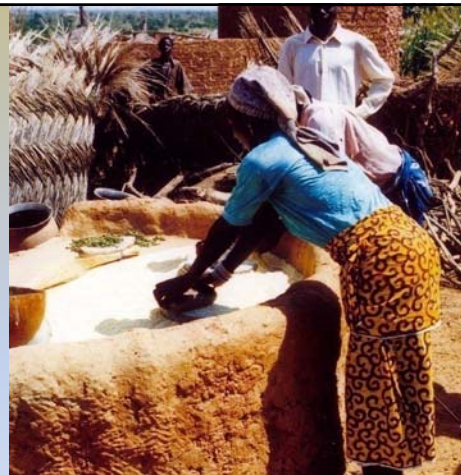
Even the best laid plans...

Despite

- translation of the survey
- training and supervision
- piloting

there are inconsistencies in the work and in the data

- Despite the constraints, a useful dataset obtained, report published, job done!



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Real or artefact...

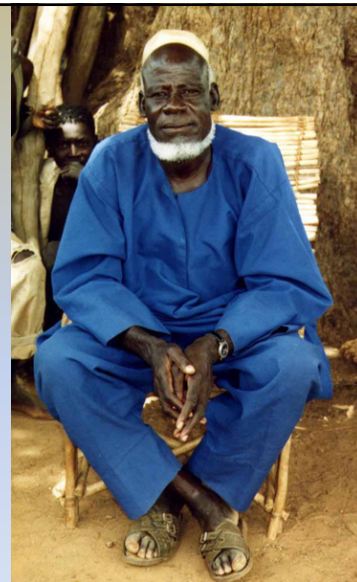
- Evaluation of a safe motherhood project
- Survey included intensely personal questions
- A 27% drop in mothers' awareness that STDs are transmitted by sexual intercourse
- HH survey enumerators selected from year 12 high school students



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Mirages in the data...

- *“...the [quantitative] measurement process possesses an artificial ... sense of precision and accuracy...[and] ...the connection between measures developed ... [and] concepts they are supposed to be revealing is assumed, rather than real.” (Bryman 2004)*



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Concluding thoughts...

- Assumptions underlie the quasi-experimental design
- Significant limitations
- Vulnerable to quality issues
- Observations of this kind are usually absent in evaluation reports
- Funders remain largely unaware
- Reflect on methodology and tools, and highlight learnings



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Thank you

How can innovative technologies be used to improve the quality of data collected?

Francois Tsafack, Anueja Gopalakrishnan



Context

For decades, World Vision and other NGOs, have contributed significantly to cater to the physical, social and economic well-being of individuals and communities in the developing countries.

These NGOs are battling to gather evidence from rural areas where the information is crucial improving on issues such as Nutrition, literacy, water and sanitation, as well demonstrate the effectiveness of programs.

Evidence gathering (surveys, monitoring) is mostly pen & paper based.



Exploring new ideas

Faced with all the challenges to gather reliable evidence from the field, we started exploring

- the viability of introducing smart technology as a data collection tool
- its potential to enhance data quality,
- Its potential to reduce data processing costs,
- and shorten the turnaround time between field interviewing and access to data for analysis



Why new technologies?

- Access to accurate data that provides a true reflection of a community's needs is a factor that limits many communities from achieving their full development potential.
- Providing communities with the capacity to collect, understand, represent, and share information concerning their community, allows them to become more independent in achieving and sustaining their future development.
- NGO need to demonstrate effectiveness of community intervention programs
- Limited resources (time, staff & funds)
- Crucial need for quality, reliability, validity and integrity of field data



Existing data collection tools

- Traditional
 - Pen & Paper
 - Voice/video recording devices
- New (and newish)
 - Laptops
 - Personal Digital Assistant devices (PDAs)
 - Mobile phones (with or without GPS capability)
 - GPS devices

Pen & Paper vs SMAP Suite

Pen & paper	Mobile phones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost in logistics (hiring enumerators, data entry clerks, printing hundreds of forms etc) • Requires 2-3 days to train enumerators • Required data entry after surveys are completed • High potential for lost of completed forms, data entry errors • Extra time for data cleaning leading to delayed data analysis • Expected long overdue reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster access to better quality data • Greatly reduces the number of enumerators • Requires 1 day to train enumerators • Eliminate need for data entry clerks (which introduces error to the data) • Promotes local use of data • Can reduce risk of breach of confidentiality • Environmentally friendly • Readily geocoded to enable information to be mapped

SMAP Suite

The mobile application has been developed by WV Australia in partnership with IBM and RMIT University students.

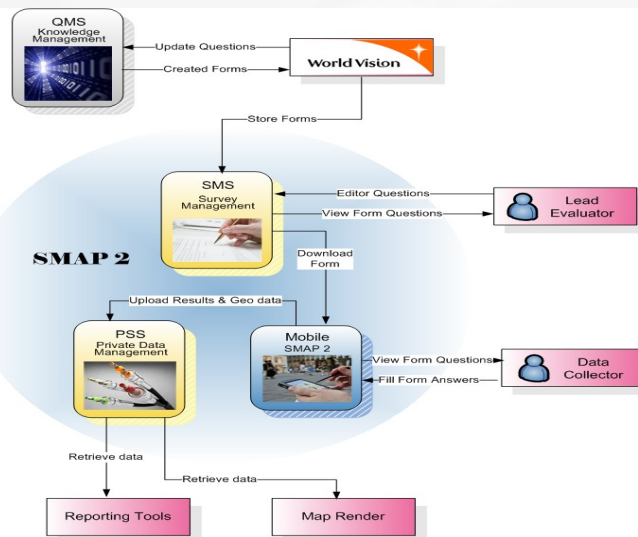
The program's first project in semester 1, 2008 was an R&D project which developed a demonstration of a mobile phone based software solution for data collection, navigation and the recording of maps.

The second project in semester 2, 2008. The primary outcome was a mobile phone application that could be used to record a survey and upload the results to a cloud based server.

The third project in semester 1, 2009 made the system production ready, added support for the Khmer language, provided a data extraction function and enhanced the survey management capability.



SMAP Suite



SMAP Suite

It is a system which automates the process of conducting surveys and collecting and managing data electronically, will save the organization a considerable amount of time and funds.

The system will allow field staff and researchers

- to collect and immediately transfer information
- access real-time data for analysis and quick decision making rather than wait for months
- ensure quality and integrity of data, and the ability to access data in real time



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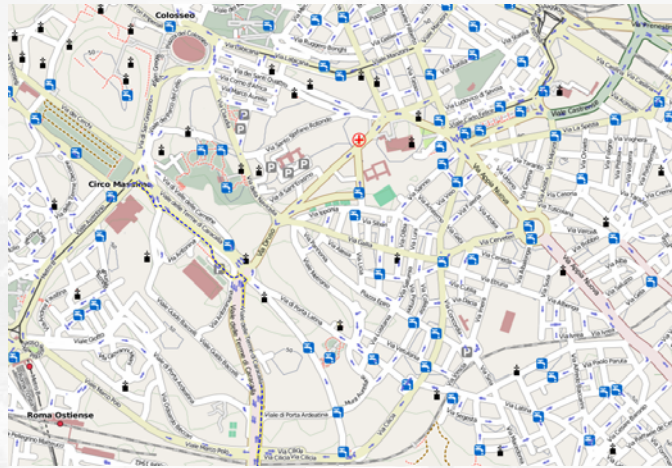
SMAP Suite

This system uses the GPS facilities for collecting and analysing real-time data tagged with geographical locations could play a vital role

- in mapping intervention areas,
- Identification of and targeted assistance to vulnerable individuals/HHs or high risk groups.



OpenStreetMap



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Field Testing



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Field Test



Field testing and challenges

Cambodia: the baseline survey of a nutrition project

Scripting Khmer a major challenge

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ល + ី → លើ

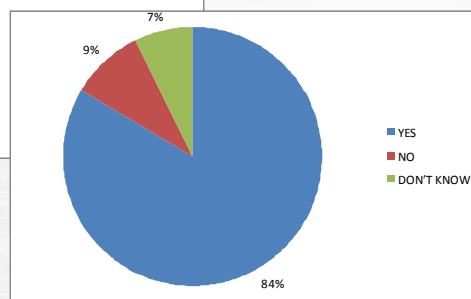
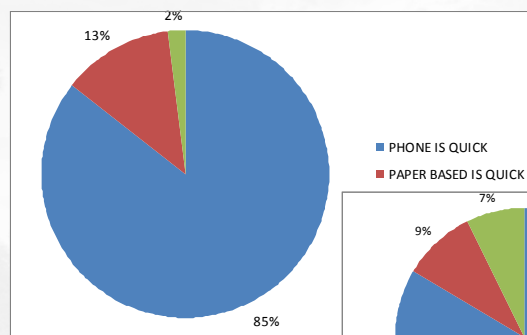
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Malawi: the evaluation survey of a HIV/AIDS project.

End Users Acceptance

- Comparison to Paper Surveys
 - Immediate Access to Data
 - No Need for Data Entry
- Positive Feedback from World Vision
- Interviewee Feedback

Interviewee Feedback N=200+ HHs

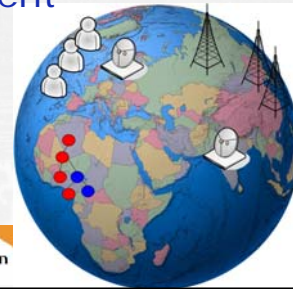


Use Again

Future Possibilities

The System can be used for

- Collecting project monitoring data
- Service delivery such as Home-based Care
- Natural resources management
- Etc.



Acknowledgements

- **Astrid Bauers** – Project Manager, RMIT
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- **Brett Henderson** – Creator of OSMOSIS
- **World Vision Australia, Cambodia, and Malawi staff** – Client
- **SMAP 1,2&3 Teams** – Developers



Acknowledgements: SMAP3 Team



Questions and Discussion

Thank You!



References

- <http://smap-suite.googlecode.com>
- <http://www.openstreetmap.org>
- Project Proposal by Neil Penman, IBM
- SMAP 2 Documentation, Your Software, RMIT
- SMAP 3 Documentation, Your Software, RMIT
- OSMOSIS by Brett Henderson
- <http://forum.nokia.com/java>

Mobile phone systems

- RapidSMS by UNICEF (2008)
- Mobile Researcher by Clyral (2008)
- FrontlineSMS by Kiwanja (2009)
- EpiSurveyor by Data Dyne
- Epi Handy by Makerere University
- Nokia Data gathering by Nokia
- SMAP Suite by WV, IMB & RMIT

SMAP Suite vs others

The main difference

- SMAP offer remote survey creation and management (SMAP). Other systems offer no or limited capability for field staff to remotely create new or customised existing surveys and upload surveys in file format after completion to a central repository for analysis



Evaluation and the value of faith in development



Faith is a motivation for aid agencies

- Faith agencies
 - › Single denominations/churches
 - › Non-denominational
 - › Non-Christian
- Secular but with faith origins
 - › Oxfam, Childfund
- Sectoral and faith
 - › Eyesight, leprosy



World Vision

- International
- Christian
- Multi-dimensional: development, emergency, advocacy
- Shift from orphanages to complex programs



Evaluation research questions

- How does faith inform our theory of development
- How does faith affect WV as an agency in its internal workings
- How does faith affect how we conduct or program our interventions
- Building up an evidence base



Existing evidence and research

- Bornstein study on WV Zimbabwe
 - › Faith made a difference
 - Neither good nor bad
- Birmingham University Religion and Development Research Program
- World Bank
- INTRAC
- Intentionality of any agency objectives



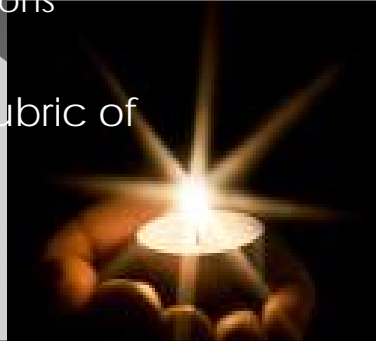
Gathering evidence

- Interviews
 - › Community
 - Small groups, volunteers
 - Community leaders
 - Religious leaders
 - › Partners
 - › Staff
 - National office
 - Project staff



Interpretations

- Identity
 - › Brings together – same religion
 - Can be performance related measures
 - › Commonality across religions
- Emergence of Hope
- Worldview/Faith as the rubric of development



Future research

- Worldview as a driver
- 'helplessness' and the opposite of hope
- Faith, religion and development
- Links to poverty
- Academic input

