Exploring and developing effective evaluative approaches for evidencing the contribution of CCAFS climate data and tools towards development outcomes

Kornelia Rassmann, Tonya Schuetz, Philip Thornton, Laura Cramer

Introduction

Do CCAFS' climate data and tools contribute to development outcomes?

The production of International Public Goods (IPGs) – such as high quality, easy to use climate data and tools – is part of CGIAR CCAFS' delivery promise. With CCAFS' transition to a results-based management approach there is an increased focus on achieving development outcomes. Hence, resources have to be balanced between i) IPG development, maintenance & support, ii) programs aiming to deliver development outcomes employing these IPGs, and iii) monitoring and evaluation efforts to assess such programs.

The Evaluation

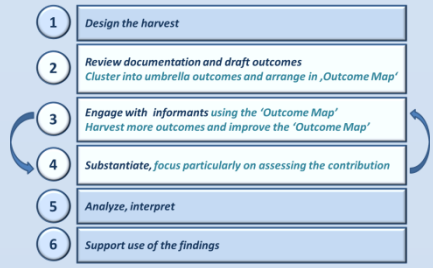
Assess the development effectiveness of CCAFS research outputs with respect to three selected CCAFS climate data/tools*

Particular challenges were:

- IPGs are used widely and randomly and their uptake is partly **beyond CCAFS control and knowledge;**
- The use of IPGs is often only **one among many contributions** to development outcomes; and
- Research outputs and outcomes resulting from the use of IPGs often play only an **indirect role** for more downstream / 'impact-near' results.

The Approach

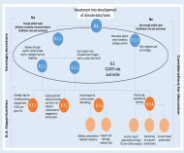
The evaluation used **Outcome Harvesting (OH),** a utilization-focused and very participatory method involving six steps (Wilson-Grau & Britt, 2013). We adapted steps 2 to 4 to include elements from Impact Pathway thinking (Douthwaite *et al.*, 2008) and Contribution Analysis (Mayne, 2008).



Key Messages

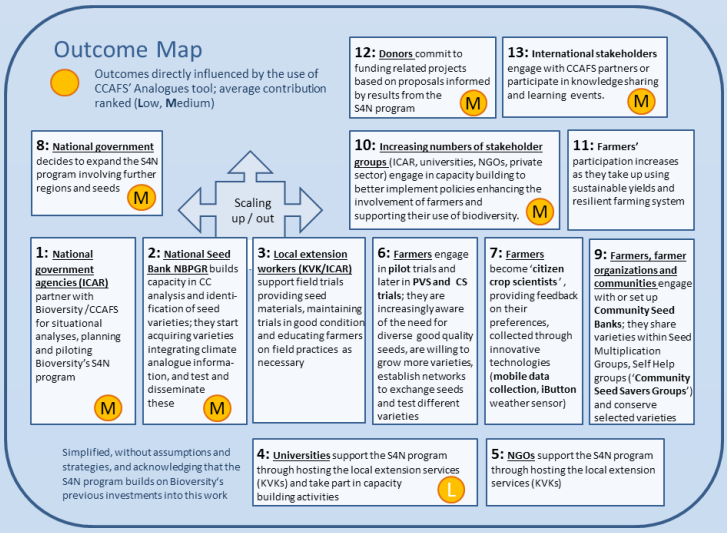
Methodology: OH approach unearthed outcomes in various projects, helped to assess CCAFS climate products' contribution; Impact-Pathway-OH allowed us to untangle the Analogues tool contribution to a specific, large-scale national program (see example).

Evidence: Over 100 outcome leads, 45 survey cases analyzed; 30 cases researched further; 14 developed into SMART outcomes; 1 comprehensive outcome story; 1 Impact-Pathway related OH study (see example).



Recommended discussion points: Value added of investment into climate products in context of outcome delivery promise; random/wide vs narrow targeting; grass-roots vs policy work; with range of opportunities (strategic dissemination, communication, MEL, mechanism for mainstreaming CC).

Example: 'Seeds for Needs' program India



*CCAFS' climate products

CCAFS' Climate-Portal (http://www.ccafs-climate.org) housing global datasets of climate change projections for climate change impact assessment, downscaled from several methodologies

MarkSimGCM (http://gisweb.ciat.cgiar.org/MarkSimGCM) simulating current and future daily weather data specifically designed for use in the tropics, including rainfall, maximum and minimum temperatures and solar radiation

Climate Analogues (https://ccafs.cgiar.org/tool-climate-analogue-tool) allowing identification and mapping of sites with statistically similar climates across space & time

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Acronyms: Climate Change (CC); Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL); Outcome Harvesting (OH); Seeds for Needs (S4N)

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Look out for report on https://ccafs.cgiar.org
Contact: Philip Thornton p.thornton@cgiar.org

CGIAR RESEARCH PROGRAM ON Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security — CCAFS

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