

Introduction

Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis (PIPA) is a practical planning and evaluation approach developed for use with complex research-for-development. PIPA begins with a participatory workshop where stakeholders make explicit their project's impact pathways that is the assumptions and hypotheses about how their project will achieve an impact.

PIPA improves evaluation by allowing managers and staff to formalize their project's impact pathways and to monitor progress, encouraging reflection, learning and adjustment along the way.

Impact logic model

After the workshop, participants may wish to go one step further and describe how changes described in the outcomes logic model might eventually lead to social, economic and environmental impacts. In this case, we (the facilitators) use workshop outputs to construct a first draft of an *impact logic model* (see example below). An impact narrative should also be written explaining the underlying logic, assumptions and networks involved.

Steps in the PIPA Workshop

Construction of Problem Trees



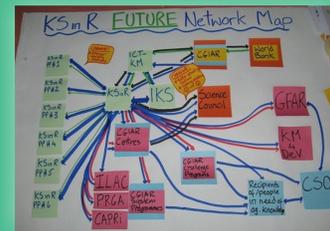
Participants begin by clarifying the cause-and effect logic of their projects by drawing a problem tree that begins with identification of problems the project could *potentially* address and ends with problems that the project will *directly* address. When working with several projects from the same program, presentations of problem trees help participants better understand each others' aims, a prerequisite for successful programmatic integration.

Visioning

Participants describe a vision of project success two or more years in the future in terms of who is doing what differently, how project outputs will scaled out, and who will be benefit.

Developing a network perspective

PIPA balances the cause-and-effect logic of the problem tree with a network perspective, in which impact results from interactions between actors in an 'innovation system'. These interactions are modelled by drawing network maps showing important relationships between actors. Participants draw a 'now' network map, showing current key relationships between stakeholders, and a 'future' network map showing how stakeholders need to link together to achieve the project's vision.



Participants then devise strategies to bring these changes about. The influence and attitude of actors is explicitly considered.

Defining the outcomes logic model

The two descriptions of a project's impact pathways are integrated in the *outcomes logic model*. This model describes in table format (see Table 1) how stakeholders (i.e. next users, end users, politically-important actors and project implementers) should act differently if the project is to achieve its vision. Each row describes changes in a particular actor's knowledge, attitude, skills (KAS) and practice, and strategies to bring these changes about. The strategies include research to develop project outputs with next users and end users who subsequently employ them.

Table 1.

Actor (or group of actors who are expected to change in the same way)	Change in practice required to achieve the project's vision	Change in KAS ¹ required to support this change	Project strategies ² to bring about these changes in KAS and

¹ Knowledge, Attitude and Skills
² Project strategies include developing project outputs (knowledge, technology, etc.) with stakeholders, capacity building, communication, political lobbying, etc.

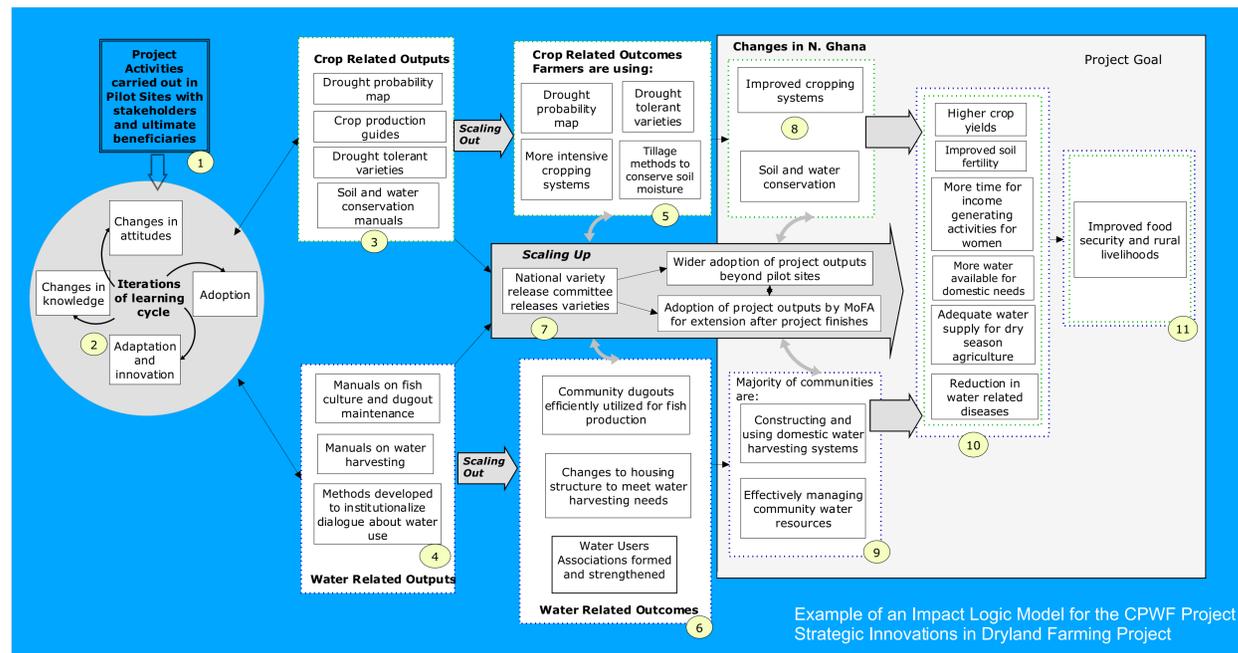
Conclusions

Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis (PIPA) is an approach that involves the participatory generation of impact pathways and their subsequent use in evaluation and learning. We encourage readers to experiment with PIPA and contribute to its development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

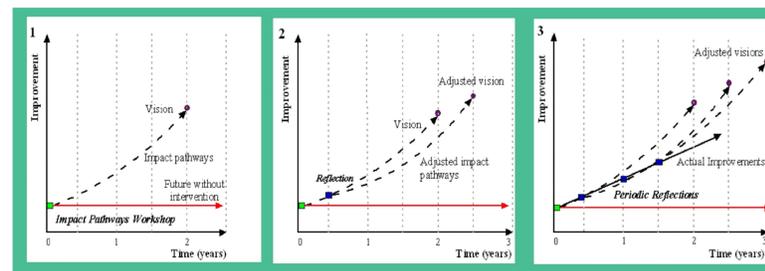
The figure below explains how the reflection process works.

- During the PIPA workshop, participants develop a vision for their project and describe impact pathways (in the form of an outcomes logic model) to achieve that vision. The project then implements strategies, which lead to changes in knowledge, attitudes and skills (KAS) and practice of the participants involved.
- A workshop is held six months later to reflect on progress. The vision is changed to some extent, based on what has been learnt, the outcomes logic model is revised where necessary and corresponding changes are made to project activities.
- The process continues. The project never achieves its vision (visions are generally used to motivate and stretch), but it does make real improvements.



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PIPA Resources

More information on all aspects of PIPA, including an on-line manual, can be found at <http://impactpathways.pbwiki.com>

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