Katalyst’s Experience of Using Mixed Methods in Measuring Results

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About Katalyst: Project’s Overall Goal

To increase the income of poor men and women, thereby contributing to sustainable poverty reduction in Bangladesh.
# About Katalyst: Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>SDC, DFID, SIDA</td>
<td>SDC, DFID, CIDA, EKN</td>
<td>SDC, DFID, DANIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Innovating, testing and proving the methodology</td>
<td>Reaching greater scale in sectors</td>
<td>Delivering Systemic change in sectors and capitalizing the learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget (in CHF)</td>
<td>32.6 Million</td>
<td>50.6 Million</td>
<td>32 Million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Katalyst is designed to effect large scale changes through its interventions in terms of:

- Benefitting number of farmers and their income
- Sector level systemic changes

At the farmers level:

**Achievements Phase 1 – Phase 3**

- 4.75 Million Farmers & SMEs
  - (374,000 Female beneficiaries)
- USD 729 Million Additional income

**Achievements Phase 3**

- 1.65 Million Farmers
  - (229,000 Female beneficiaries)
- USD 294 Million Net Additional Income

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Katalyst’s Result Measurement: Why and How We Do It

**Purpose**
MRM results are used for “proving, improving and informing”

**Resource**
- Dedicated Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM) team
- Sizeable budget allocated to MRM
  (CHF 854 thousand of CHF 32 million)

**Methodologies Used**
- Quantitative
- Qualitative
- Mixed method

**Validation of Robustness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DCED Audits Score</th>
<th>Must</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scores**
- Must: 96
- Recommended: 89
The Three Methods of Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods

- **Quantitative Research**
  
  "emphasizes on objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys ... and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon" (Babbie, Earl R. The Practice of Social Research)

- **Qualitative Research**
  
  "is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research" (E. DeFranzo, Susan, What’s the difference between qualitative and quantitative research?)

- **Mixed Methods**
  
  "represents research that involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon" (Leech N, Onwuegbuzie A, (2008))
# Tools Used for Each Method and Their Uses in Katalyst

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Mixed Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative sample surveys with closed-ended questions or given answer options to choose from</td>
<td>In-depth interviews (IDIs) with open-ended answers, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation, opinion surveys, case studies</td>
<td>Combining the tools from both quantitative and qualitative methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major uses:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major uses:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major uses:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For verifying the causal link between interventions and outcome</td>
<td>Exploring the reasons behind changes, such as changes in practice or behaviour at farmer and service provider levels</td>
<td>Planning the attribution strategy and measuring the impact of interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For poverty profiling using Progress Out of Poverty Index (PPI)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attribution of Indirect beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Measuring Systemic Change at the sector level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mixed Methods Used at Various Stages of an Intervention

At the designing stage

*MRM Plan*

Qualitative and Quantitative indicators

At the monitoring stage

*Field level*

Observation and Feedback

At the evaluation stage

*Service Provider level*

Assessment covered through semi-structured interviews

*Farmer level assessment*

covered through both quantitative and qualitative impact indicators
Example of Mixed Methods at Intervention Level

Name of intervention: *Increasing awareness & availability of quality vegetable seeds in chars*

Partner: Lal Teer Seed Limited

**Description of intervention:**
- Chars (river islands): poverty higher than national average
- Quality seed reach to farmers is very low
- Demand stimulation activities with farmers
- Increasing availability of quality seeds through local retailers

**Year of Implementation:** 2014-15

**Outcome attributed from this intervention:**
- Benefit Outreach: **30,750**
- Income: **BDT145 million (USD 1.7 million)**
Using Mixed Methods: Design

Impact Logic

- Impact – Poverty Reduction
- Outcome – Additional Income, Benefit Outreach
- Output – Access Outreach, Usage Outreach
- Activity Results
- Activity

Results Chain

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**Snapshot of MRM Plan: Seed Intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Impact Chain (Change that we want to see)</th>
<th>Indicators (How the change is measureable) - Quantitative</th>
<th>Indicators (How the change is measureable) - Qualitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Reduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction of poverty to rural households</td>
<td>Cumulative change in income of direct and indirect farmers</td>
<td>NIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative net nominal income</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Cumulative Additional Income of Farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Income</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Indirect farmers increased net nominal incomes due to sell of vegetables produce from quality seeds</td>
<td>Net nominal income per season per farmer</td>
<td>Reason for change in income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Increased net nominal income for direct farmers due to sell of vegetables produce from quality seeds</td>
<td>Net nominal income per season per farmer</td>
<td>Reason for change in income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Outreach</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Indirect farmers benefitted from using quality vegetables seeds</td>
<td>No of indirectly benefitted farmers, Change in yield</td>
<td>change in potential loss, change in production, change in cost of production, Reason for change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Farmers benefitted from using quality seeds</td>
<td>No of benefitted farmers, Change in yield</td>
<td>change in potential loss, change in production, change in cost of production, Reason for change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact Assessment: Seed Intervention

Both Qualitative and Quantitative Questions

At farmer level assessment

Quantitative question examples:
• Yield, price per unit, sales volume, input cost

Qualitative question examples:
• How did you benefit, why did you not benefit?

At service provider level assessment

Quantitative question examples:
• Sales volume, customer base size, increase in sales of particular brands

Qualitative question examples:
• Reason for change in sales volume

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More Uses of Mixed Methods

For attributing the impacts on **Indirect beneficiary**

To further validate the causal link between intervention activities and indirect benefit

When does an intervention attribute Indirect beneficiaries?

In case of tangible inputs/techniques, e.g. seed, fingerlings

When does an intervention not attribute Indirect beneficiaries?

In case of intangible inputs, e.g. information/knowledge
Common Challenges in Using Mixed Methods

- Cost & Resources
- Quality

Balance of the Three

Time
Cost & Resources: How Katalyst Overcame Challenges?

- **Inadequate budget allocation to M&E**
  - Solution: Katalyst was given enough budget for M&E

- **Monitoring interventions**
  - (number of interventions, geography)
  - Solution: Dedicated MRM team with both central and field level consultants

- **Challenges in designing and conducting impact assessments plans**
  - Interventions of similar nature have common assessment plans (Provided they are in the same regions)
  - When past data and trend are available, first, validation is done. Unnecessary impact assessments are avoided

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Quality: How Katalyst Overcame Challenges?

**Capacity of internal staff**
- Katalyst built capacity of its staff and partners
- Trained and engaged an internal dedicated staff for qualitative research methodology

**Finding the right organization**
- Partnership with research organization i.e. engaged Nielsen to undertake the complex studies (training enumerators for 3 days, pilot surveys, supervise at the field level)
- Engaged local and international experts to design and pilot the mixed methodology studies (Katalyst staff tagged along with the experts to learn and apply the methodology)

**Validity and robustness**
- Built capacity of facilitating partners
- Relative autonomy of MRM unit
**Time: How Katalyst Overcame Challenges?**

- **Challenge:** Time-consuming
  - **Solution:** Timing and design of assessments planned ahead
    - *At the intervention designing stage - MRM plan*

- **Challenge:** Project duration
  - **Solution:** Assessments are timed well in advance before reporting periods

- **Challenge:** Reporting cycles
  - **Solution:** Large sample assessments are almost always outsourced
    - Results of some interventions are extrapolated for similar interventions
      - *A small sample is surveyed for validation*
Takeaway/Lessons

The purpose of research should guide the method and not vice versa

**Proving** (Evaluation) v/s **improving** (internal learning/monitoring)

Consider degree of **validity** and **reliability** required for assessment

Sometimes, **embedding certain elements** of quantitative methods in a qualitative research and vice versa could add great value to it

Method of research often needs to be adapted to the programme and not be taken straight off the shelf

New assessment or builds on older assessments / similar intervention assessments, sometimes designing a new methodology is unnecessary
Thank You