

Impact evaluations, policy-relevance and influence: what is 3ie learning?



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27 November 2014
Africa Evidence Network Colloquium
Johannesburg, South Africa

What is 3ie?



- Founded to address findings of a major report on the use of evidence in development
- We fund the production of high-quality experimental and quasi-experimental impact evaluations and systematic reviews
- International grant-making NGO
 - 135 IEs, 30 SRs, 10 replications in 117 L&MICs
- What works, how, when, why and what cost

Policy relevance and impact



3ie funds the production of evidence that can improve the effectiveness of development policies and programmes

Must be policy relevant

We expect policy influence and impact on policy and programming

3ie's ToC for policy influence



3ie funds high-quality policy relevant studies

3ie encourages researchers to engage with key stakeholders

Uptake of study findings and improved policies and practice

ASSUMPTIONS

Applications

- Ask policy relevant question(s)
- Have potential for policy impact
- Study team has experience in policy influence

ASSUMPTIONS

Researchers

- Committed
- Understand how policy influence happens
- Have the tools and resources to invest in policy engagement

ASSUMPTIONS

Study

- Makes policy-relevant recommendations
- Answers what works and why
- Proposes feasible solutions
- Had ongoing engagement

What we measure as impact



Expand successful programmes	Close unsuccessful programmes	Change policy or programme design
4	2	6

Inform discussions of policy or programme	Inform design of other programmes	Resulted in improved culture of use of evidence
8	5	2

Our early approach



- Let researchers decide what to evaluate
- Rely on grant application
 - Explain policy relevance
- All grantees are required to complete a policy influence plan at the beginning of the study
- 3ie would monitor the PIP implementation through progress reports



Early assumptions

- Policy relevant research questions
- Researchers could and would engage
- Application process, PIPs and reporting process were effective means for achieving policy relevance and impact objectives



What we learned

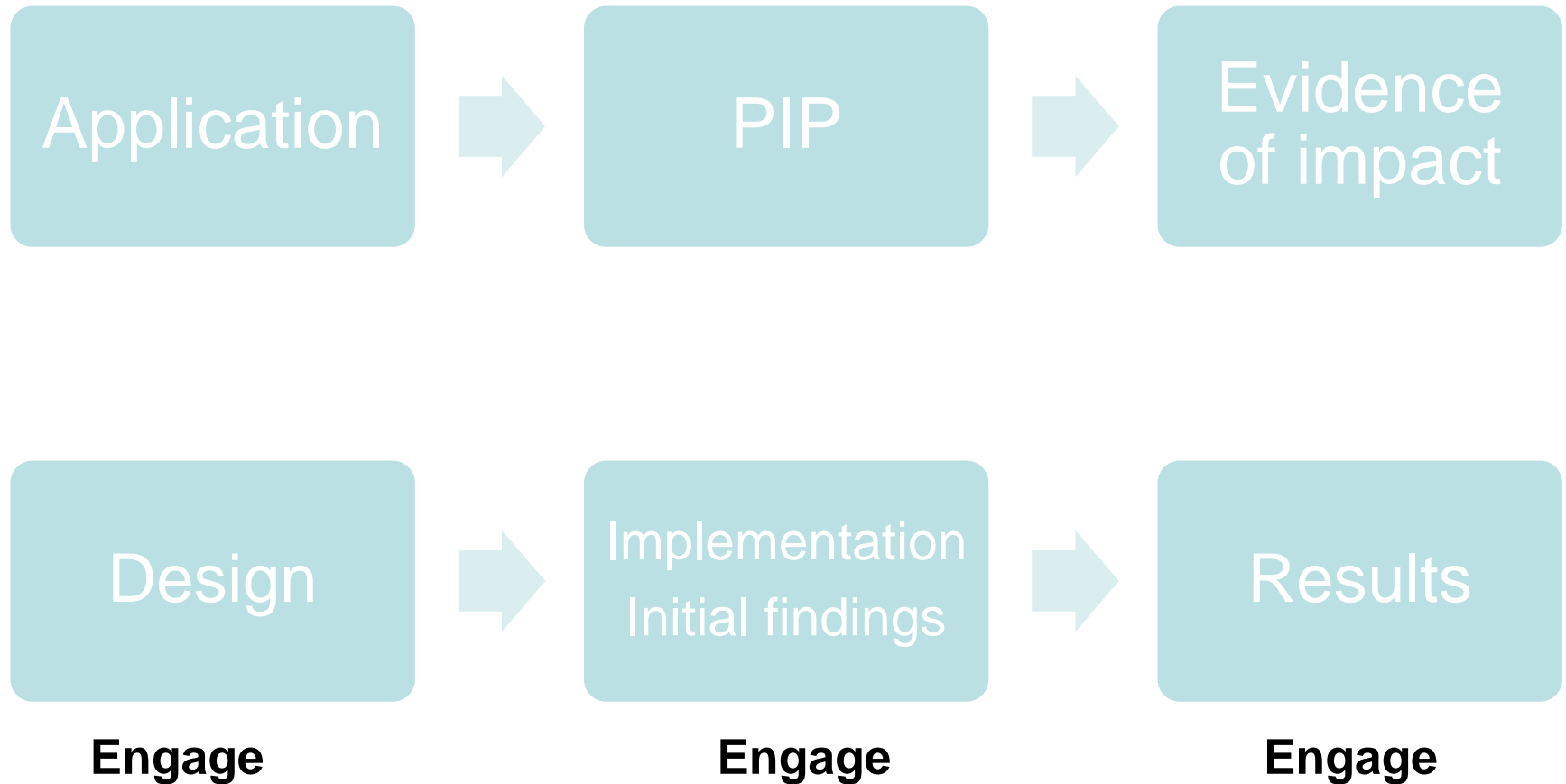
- Questions often not designed to be very relevant and useful
- Researchers did not engage stakeholders in design
- Engagement was very variable
- PIP approach had numerous limitations
- The 3ie approach was not based on evidence
- Our monitoring data reinforced the obvious

What we did



We moved to
integrating
evidence-based
research
communication
and uptake
approaches

Before and after



Improved relevance and uptake



- Revised application requirements
- Preparation grant phase
- Inception workshop sessions
- Customised PIP templates
- Engage directly with grantees

Why preparation phase is key



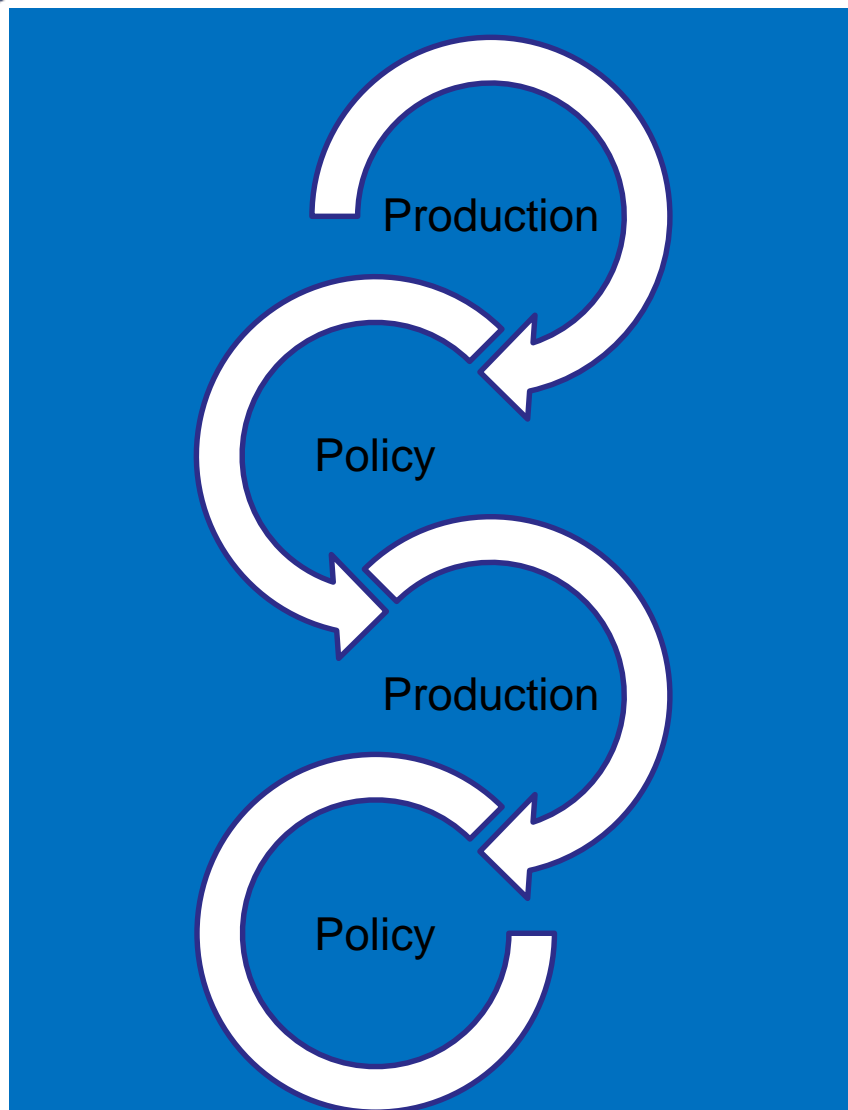
- At least one visit
- Proof of engagement with implementing agency through a workshop
- Capacity building
- Engage in design
- Chance to make stakeholders for engagement
- Form or strengthen key relationships

Capacity-building element in preparation phase

Challenge as a bridge-building exercise



Engagement as a virtuous cycle

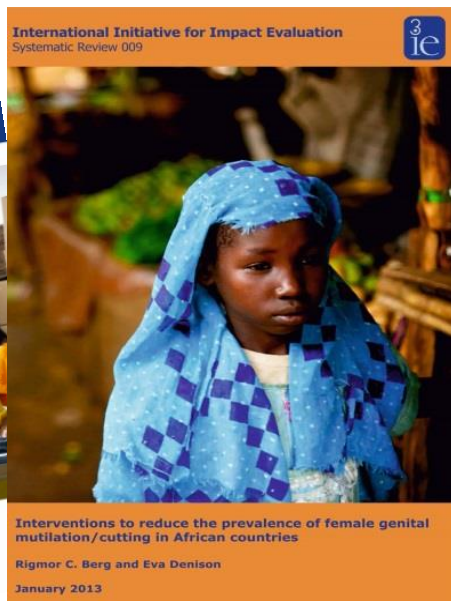


Establishing a virtuous cycle

between the production of policy-informed research

and evidence-informed policymaking

Improves uptake and use



Thank you

www.3ieimpact.org

