

# USING BASELINE DATA FOR POLICY ADVOCACY ~ an introduction

Widjajanti Isdijoso  
The SMERU Research Institute

Training Material for ToT  
“Bridging Research and Policy through Evidence-based  
Policy Advocacy”

Jakarta – 11 May 2009

# Objectives

## ▶ Part 1:

- Increase awareness on the importance of baseline assessment in policy advocacy
- Increase understanding on the uses of baseline data/information in policy research and advocacy

## ▶ Part 2:

- Increase understanding on alternatives design and conduct of baseline assessment

# Please share your experience in conducting baseline study/assessment

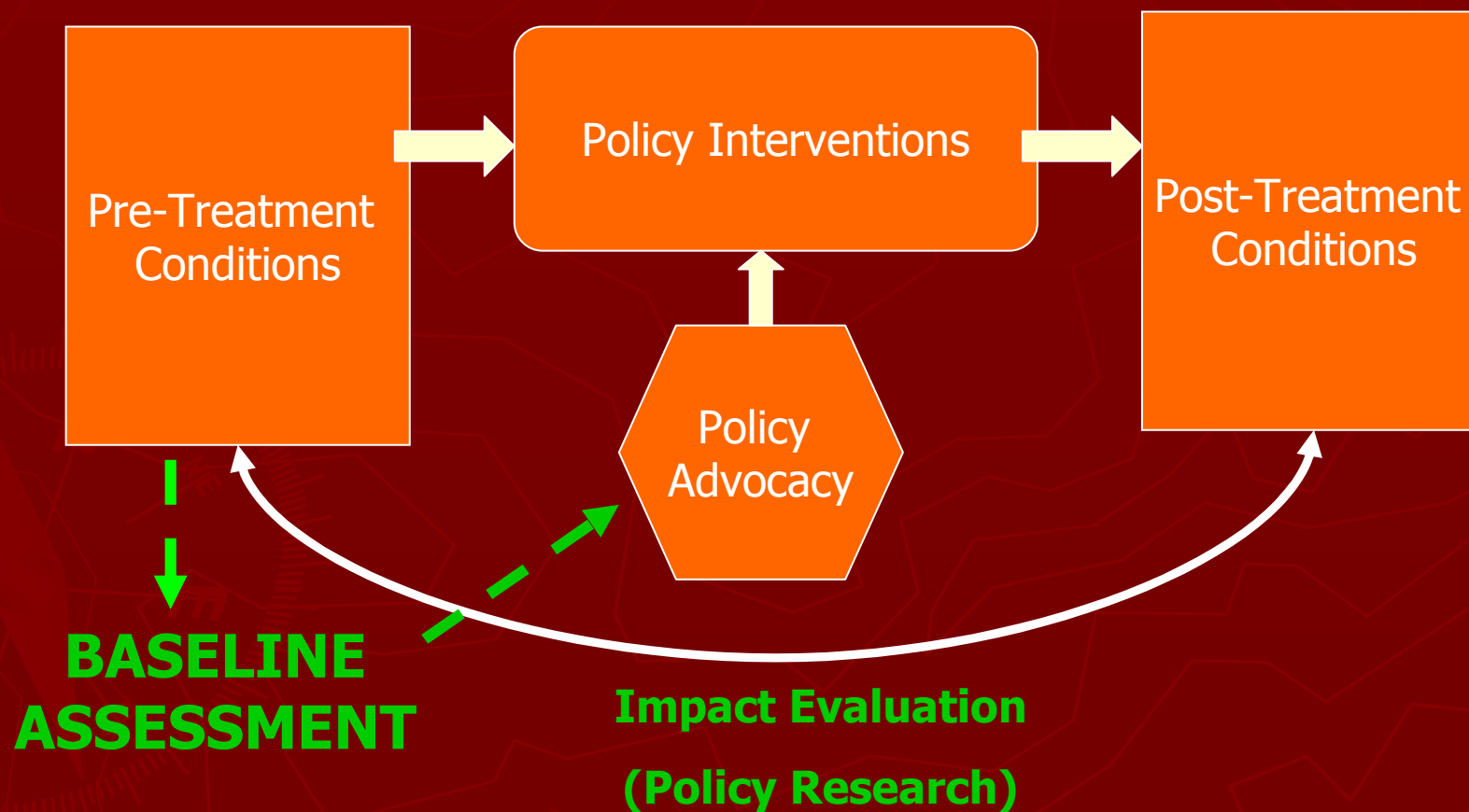
Briefly explain:

- ▶ Your advocacy focus
- ▶ Issues that have been explored in your baseline assessment

# Part 1



# Policy Advocacy Framework



# Baseline - Definition

## ▶ Baseline:

- an imaginary line or standard by which things are measured or compared;
- a basis for comparison;
- a reference point against which other things can be evaluated.

## ▶ Baseline assessment:

A systematic effort to collect data about the condition or characteristics of a population before a programme or a policy intervention is set up. This data can then be monitored from time to time in order to see what has changed, as part of a monitoring and evaluation system

# Why Baseline Assessment is Important?

“Many advocacy initiatives begin with the genuine interest and passion of one or two individuals recognizing a need. However, for advocacy work to be sustained, a larger impetus is often needed. Therefore **after the initial need is identified, it is worth spending some time verifying the extent of the need and even conducting a thorough baseline assessment.** This will form a solid foundation for the initiative and may be used later to assess the progress of the work. The verification may also ascertain how many community partners are willing to invest time and energy in supporting the campaign. Without this investment the advocacy work may become hollow and paper-based, rather than having the backing of a stronger ground-swell of many people or organizations”

(Child Advocacy Project Leaflet)

# The Use of Baseline Data

## 1. Advocacy design

- ▶ Understanding the needs, priorities and interest of the constituents

## 2. Enhance credibility

- ▶ Demonstrate the importance it places to listening to the people
- ▶ Substantiate advocacy action – realistic and representative policy demands (data/evidence-based)

## 3. Impact monitoring and evaluation



# Baseline for Impact Evaluation

*"... without some sort of baseline, it is not really possible to assess impact."*

*"... unless detailed and continuous M&E takes place at [programme and project] level, it will be impossible to build up the body of knowledge which is necessary to understand the wider outcomes."*

- ▶ Measuring change requires understanding of the starting point from which change is measured
- ▶ This includes all areas in which potential impact is anticipated (those related to wider contextual issues)
- ▶ Impact assessment needs to be built into processes from the beginning stage if it is to be undertaken meaningfully
- ▶ Most impact assessment suffers from the lack of baseline data
- ▶ Measures can be taken to try to recover baseline, but these are difficult and inevitably weak

(Souter, David)

# Data to be Included in Baseline Assessment

- ▶ In principle consist of:
  - Data for advocacy design ~ mapping of problems, priorities, stakeholders
  - Data for M&E ~ institutional setting, behavioral attitudes, measurable relevant indicators
- ▶ Depend on the objective and nature of the policy advocacy
- ▶ Depend on M&E design

# When to Conduct Baseline Assessment

- ▶ Before Policy/Program implementation:
  - Before advocacy design ~ help in divining strategy/design
  - After advocacy design ~ more focus on baseline for impact evaluation
  - Before and after advocacy design
- ▶ After/During policy/program implementation:
  - Based on secondary data
  - Historical analysis, document review, media research
  - Based on recollection of information ~ problematic and weak

# Examples (1)

## The Needs Assessment of 'Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization (ACSM) for TB Prevention':

- Who are the **audiences**?
- What are **behavioral goals** to be addressed?
- What are the **barriers**?
- What are your **past experiences and current activities**?
- Who are the **stakeholders** and what are the **assets**?

# Examples (2)

Baseline study for 'Empowering Rural Areas through Community e-Centers (CeC)' in Bangladesh:

- Review ongoing CeC tele-centers
- Identify challenges encountered by CeC initiatives and the lessons learned
- Assess community readiness in setting up the pilot CeCs
- Make set of recommendation for pilot CeCs

# Examples (3)

## Baseline study for 'PNPM Generasi and PKH (Conditional Cash Transfer':

- Document the baseline condition of the health of pregnant women during pregnancy, during and after delivery, and the health of under-five years old childrens; and primary school and junior high school education
- Understand underlying causes and factors that affect use and provision of services conditioned by CCT and are likely to influence project implementation and outcomes

# Examples (4)

Baseline Assessment of 'UN Regional Task Force on Injecting Drug Use and HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific' - Indonesia:

- National program supports
- Barriers to scale up
- Existing program implementation

# Part 2





# What is your problem in conducting baseline assessment?

Briefly explain the most challenging task/problem that you has encountered and whether it has been resolved or not

# Factors to be Considered before Designing Baseline Assessment

- ▶ Data needed for advocacy design
- ▶ Data needed by policy/decision makers
- ▶ Time and cost
- ▶ Human resource and skills in design, data collection and analysis
- ▶ Availability of secondary data
- ▶ Local context ~ norms, sensitivity of issue

# Steps in Performing Baseline Assessment

1. Determine purpose and objective
2. Identify and organize research team
3. Select data collection method(s)
4. Identify data topics and questions
5. Design data collection tool(s)
6. Pretest and finalize tool
7. Determine sample size and select sample
8. Organize logistics and work plan
9. Conduct data collection activity
10. Analyze data
11. Prepare final report
12. Evaluate the process

# Alternative Methods of Analysis

## Qualitative

- ▶ Inform and illuminate quantitative studies by contributing to the design of structured instrument, assessing the fairness of comparisons or unpacking variations within aggregated data
- ▶ An efficient means of examining certain types of public realm factors that are difficult, costly or impossible to quantify

## Quantitative

- ▶ Produce objective, transferable and dependable results
- ▶ Translate goals into measurable standards and then monitor performance indicators over time

# Data Collection Tools (1)

1. Ethnography ~ in-depth study of the culture
2. Observation ~ participant observer, external observer
3. Interviews:
  - ▶ In-depth interviews ~ respondent, key resource person
  - ▶ Semi-structured
  - ▶ Structured ~ with open or close questions

# Data Collection Tools (2)

## 4. Group discussion:

- ▶ Collective interview
- ▶ Using specific tools ~ e.g. problem tree, cause & effect, priority problem
- ▶ Participant: homogenous, multi-stakeholders

## 5. Secondary data:

- ▶ Sources: statistics office, government department, NGOs, media, etc.
- ▶ Factor to be considers: representativeness, quality (collection method, potential bias, etc.)

## 6. Document/Literature review

## 7. Media research

# Sampling Framework

- ▶ Census ~ data collected from all members of population
- ▶ Sample survey:
  - Random, stratified sampling ~ depends on population characteristic
  - Representative of the population
- ▶ Case study ~ purposive sampling

**THANK YOU**