Measuring the impact of capacity building
“Capacity building ... involves individual and organisational learning which builds social capital and trust, develops knowledge, skills and attitudes and when successful creates an organisational culture which enables organisations to set objectives, achieve results, solve problems and create adaptive procedures which enable it to survive in the long term.”

DFID, London  Research Strategy 2008
Darwin Projects may address issues in the following areas:

- institutional capacity building
- training
- research
- work to implement the Biodiversity Convention
- environmental education or awareness
Measuring success

1) Need to have a clear purpose at the beginning
are we building specific skills among individuals?
is it the specific capacity within an organization?
or is it to build the capacity of an institution to be independent?
2) What do we measure?

Quantitative:
   e.g. numbers of people or institutions

Qualitative:
   e.g. application of new knowledge, uptake of new policies

A combination
3) Who pays?

*Impact assessment should be seen as an investment that can add genuine value, rather than a burdensome cost*

Hailey et al., 2005
The Tropical Biology Association’s experience: from theory to practice
Capacity building is more than just training

People who have been trained need to be able to apply their new skills

► Resources
► Institutional environment
► Networks & information
The TBA’s approach

► tailor-made training workshops and field courses

► follow-up support to enhance training impact

► research and conservation projects

► create links between north-south researchers and practitioners
TBA’s Darwin funded projects

► Darwin Field Courses in Tropical Biology

► Darwin African Research Fellowship

► Combating Invasive Alien Plants Threatening the East Usambara Mountains
Field courses

► Hands-on field training
► Up to date concepts in ecology and conservation
► Experience in project design
► From text book to reality

For early career conservation scientists and practitioners
TBA’s unique approach

African (or Asian) and European participants attend in equal numbers.

There are at least 14 nationalities on each course.
specialist training programme

Tailor-made practical training workshops on specific topics

Followed by application of new skills

For conservation scientists or managers
Training trainers

TBA invites experts from host country and UK to teach

Good way to share teaching expertise and learn new approaches
TBA Follow-up support

- Network, advice & mentorship
  97% contact rate with Africans since 1994

- Grants & support for follow-up projects

- Internet Resource Centre
  Funding data-base: 1,300 registered
  Online bulletin board: 13,500 hits annually

- Field guides and training manuals
Linking training with research

Existing research programmes

Training Workshop

project

proposal

New programmes

Training Workshop

project

proposal

Follow-up support

© Rosie Trevelyan, 2009
### TBA’s approach to measuring impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Short term:    | Outputs        | • No. of trainees/courses  
                 |                 | • Quality of the training                                                |
| Medium term:   | Outcomes       | • Use of new capacity  
                 |                 | • Where trainees go                                                      |
| Long term:     | Impact         | • Change in behaviour  
                 |                 | • Improved conservation                                                  |

© Tropical Biology Association
Assessing the “need” for capacity building

- it means activities are relevant
- it increases chances that new ideas will be applied afterwards
- it creates ownership

e.g. in 2009, TBA received +300 applicants from Africa for 34 course places

BUT it isn’t just about numbers, knowing demand is important:
Monitoring how trainees use their skills

95% of African trainees work in conservation after their courses (97% contact rate)
People not numbers: changing behaviour
People not numbers: feedback received in 2009


Tiwonge Nzumara (Malawi 2006) “I am eternally grateful to TBA for its support that .. will be a priceless resource to me for the rest of my career”

Edward Ezekial (Invasive Plants, 2007) “I am looking forward for a long collaboration with TBA”

Yessoufou Kowiyou (Benin, 2002) “I work at the Ministry of Environment, the highest decision-making organ in Benin on environmental matters
Monitoring how resources are used:

TBA’s website on invasive plants is still being used after the Darwin has project ended.
TBA alumni groups: longer term impact

- Benin
- Rwanda
- Madagascar
- Kenya
- Uganda
- Sudan
- Cameroon
- Nigeria
- Ghana
- Tanzania
- Malawi
- Ethiopia
- Sierra Leone

Being an alumnus of TBA has opened up my world to different opportunities and changed my life and perspective of looking at things.

M. Owuor Kenya