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Measuring the impact of capacity building




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"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:

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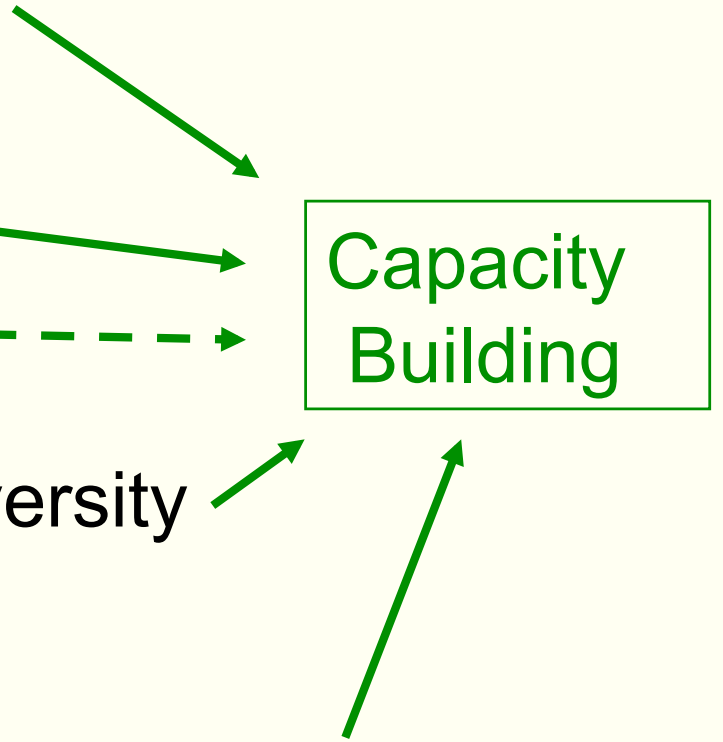
- institutional capacity building
- training
- research
- work to implement the Biodiversity Convention
- environmental education or awareness



Measuring success

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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?

Measuring success

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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

Measuring success

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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

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The Tropical Biology Association's experience: from theory to practice

Capacity building is more than just training

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

- Resources
- Institutional environment
- Networks & information

The TBA's approach

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- 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

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- Darwin Field Courses in Tropical Biology
- Darwin African Research Fellowship
- Combating Invasive Alien Plants Threatening the East Usambara Mountains

DARWIN INITIATIVE

Field courses

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- 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

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

There are at least 14 nationalities on each course

specialist training programme

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- Tailor-made practical training workshops on specific topics
- Followed by application of new skills

For conservation scientists or managers

Training trainers

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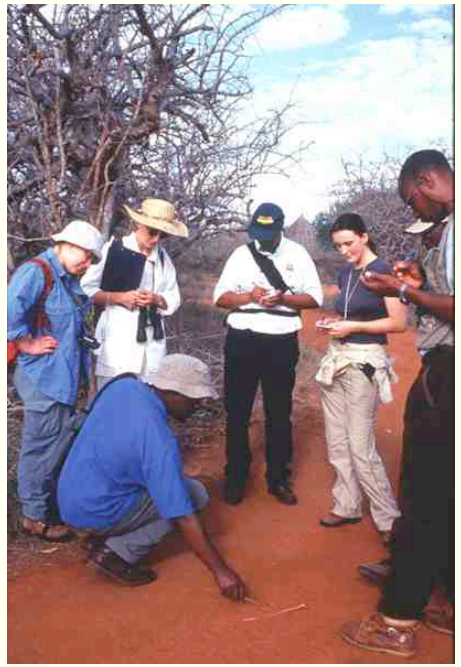
TBA invites experts from host country and UK to teach

Good way to share teaching expertise and learn new approaches



TBA Follow-up support

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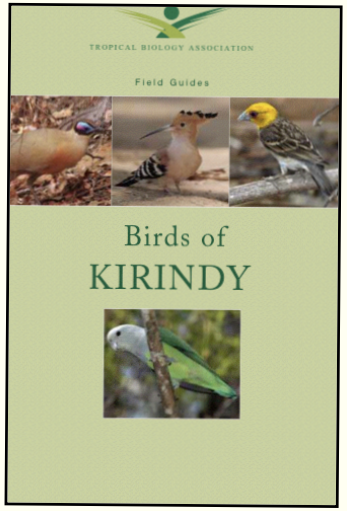
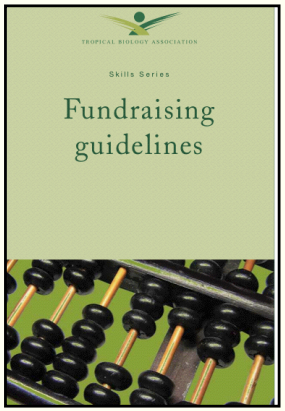


- Network, advice & mentorship
  97% contact rate with Africans since 1994
- Grants & support for follow-up projects
- Internet Resource Centre
  Funding data-base: 1,300 registered
  Online bulletin board: 13,500 hits annually
- Field guides and training manuals



Linking training with research

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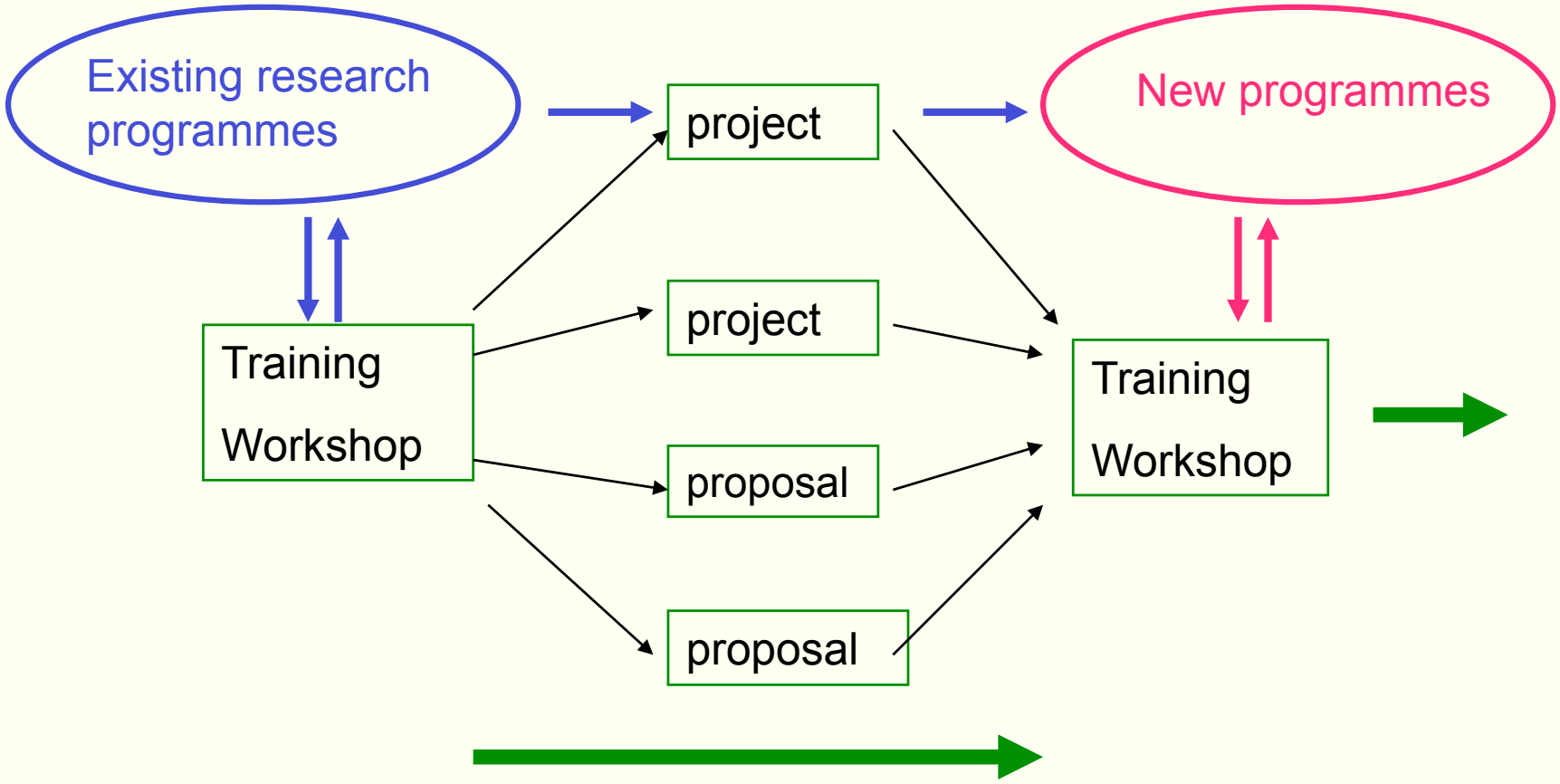

TBA's approach to measuring impact

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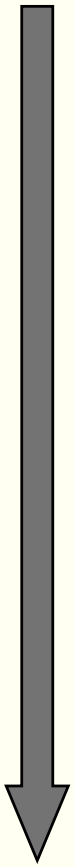

Short term:	**Outputs**	• **No. of trainees/ courses** • **Quality of the training**
Medium term:	**Outcomes**	• **Use of new capacity** • **Where trainees go**
Long term:	**Impact**	• **Change in behaviour** • **Improved conservation**

Assessing the “need” for capacity building

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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:

- it means activities are relevant

- it increases chances that new ideas will be applied afterwards

- it creates ownership

Monitoring how trainees use their skills

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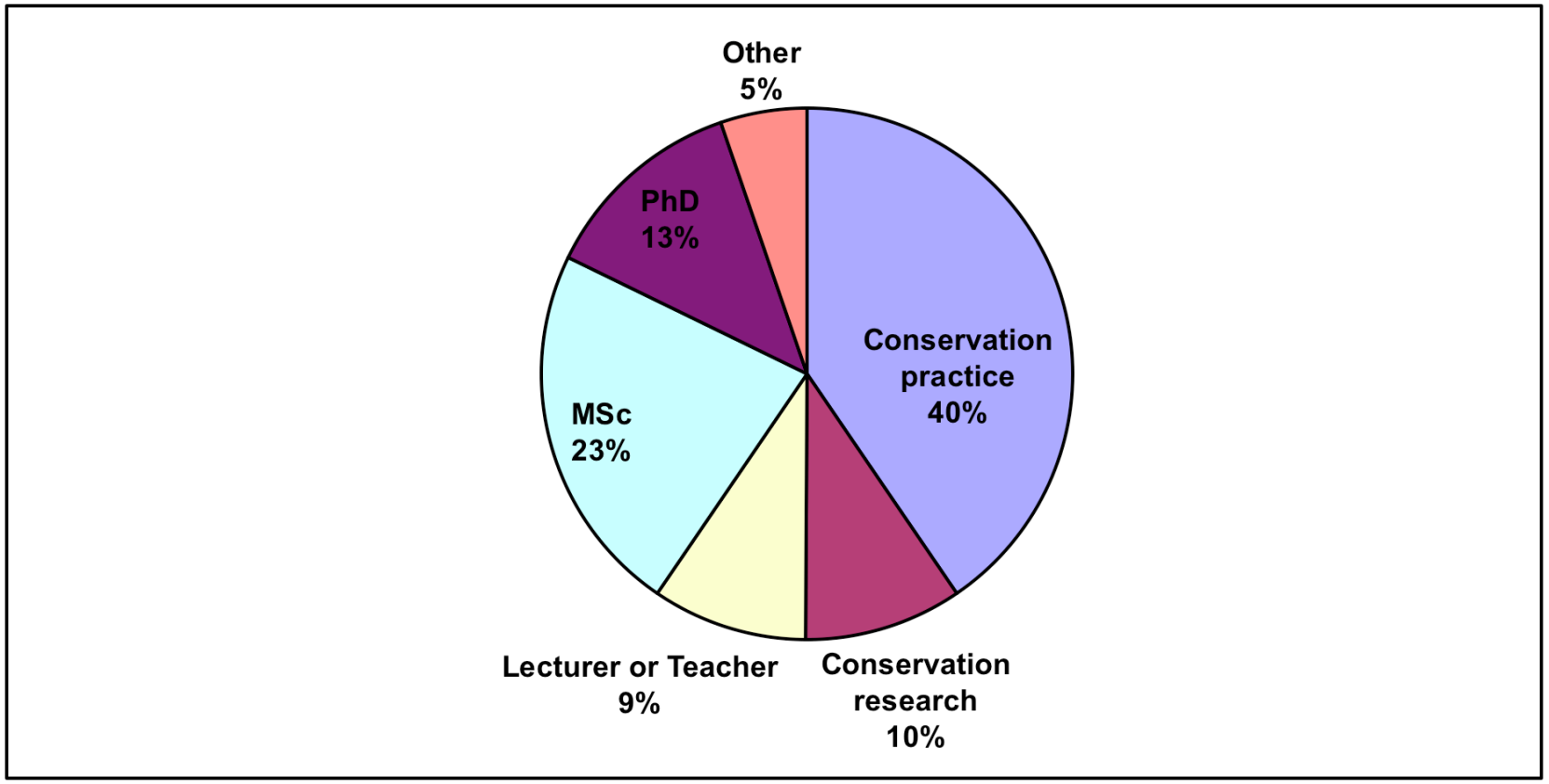

95% of African trainees work in conservation after their courses (97% contact rate)

People not numbers: changing behaviour

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People not numbers: feedback received in 2009

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Mao Angua Amis (Uganda 2003) Recognised as an upcoming conservation leader (African Conservation Telegraph (2008), Vol 3(1).

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:

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TBA's website on invasive plants is still being used after the Darwin has project ended

TBA alumni groups: longer term impact

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- 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