



LEARNING FROM RURAL CLIENTS

A Learning Lab Workshop

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Including farmer voice in Monitoring & Evaluation



Rory Fenton, ALINe

This presentation

- What convinced me
- 2 good efforts at getting Farmer Voice into M&E
- 1 ongoing potential success
- Insights

My own journey...



Monitoring and evaluation

- The idea
 - M&E should tell us what our impact was, why and how we can get better
- The problem
 - Can't always be sure what our impact(s) will be: **especially where that impact might be negative**
 - Traditional baseline/endline studies won't work with iterative products
 - Measuring impact is often too late; and too slow
- The conclusion
 - In a complex intervention we have to be guided by the farmer. And guided often.

Mobile data in a quasi-experimental study

- East Africa
- Mobile extension to 200,000 farmers
- Nationally available, RCT not appropriate but we had to measure impact
- Need to find representative control group
 - those who signed up to service but didn't use it, matched using profile data

Mobile data in a quasi-experimental study

- Mobile data analysis reveals different behaviours for different groups of farmer
 - Women over 40 access market price information
 - Men over 40 access weather forecasts
 - Younger men and women more interested in agronomy

Mobile data and Farmer Voice in a quasi-experimental study

- Phone survey with 500 farmers showed us:
 - Incomes in treatment had increased relative to control
 - ... but yields were unchanged...
 - ... and prices were no higher
- Luckily we'd been involved with this project before
 - Weather? Market prices? They wanted to grow new crops: **an unexpected impact**
- Incorporating a question on growing new crops showed that this was driving the income increase
- **Farmer Voice adds to, rather than detracts from, rigour**

Mobile data and Farmer Voice in a qualitative study

- Initiative linking agribusinesses to smallholder farmers in East Africa and training SHF to use mobile money
- Innovative products in a complex system
- Quantitative measure of livelihood impact not possible
- However, possible to use mobile data to infer behaviour change and measure impact on mobile financial behaviour
 - Comparing mobile financial behaviour before and after training
- Use of MFS increased but what did smallholders think?
- In-depth interviews with 80 smallholders at 4 agribusinesses

Mobile data and Farmer Voice in a qualitative study

- Farmers were indeed using mobile money... but reluctantly
- Strong disconnected between how agribusiness saw the product and how the farmers did
- Getting Farmer Voice helped us qualify the success seen in the data
- If only Voice had been included from the start of the project!

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

- Ongoing M&E for grant in 6 countries to develop mAgri products for smallholders
- Not the first time we've worked on something like this...
- Lesson: M&E system should be
 - Frequent
 - Actionable
 - Facilitate human-centred design

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

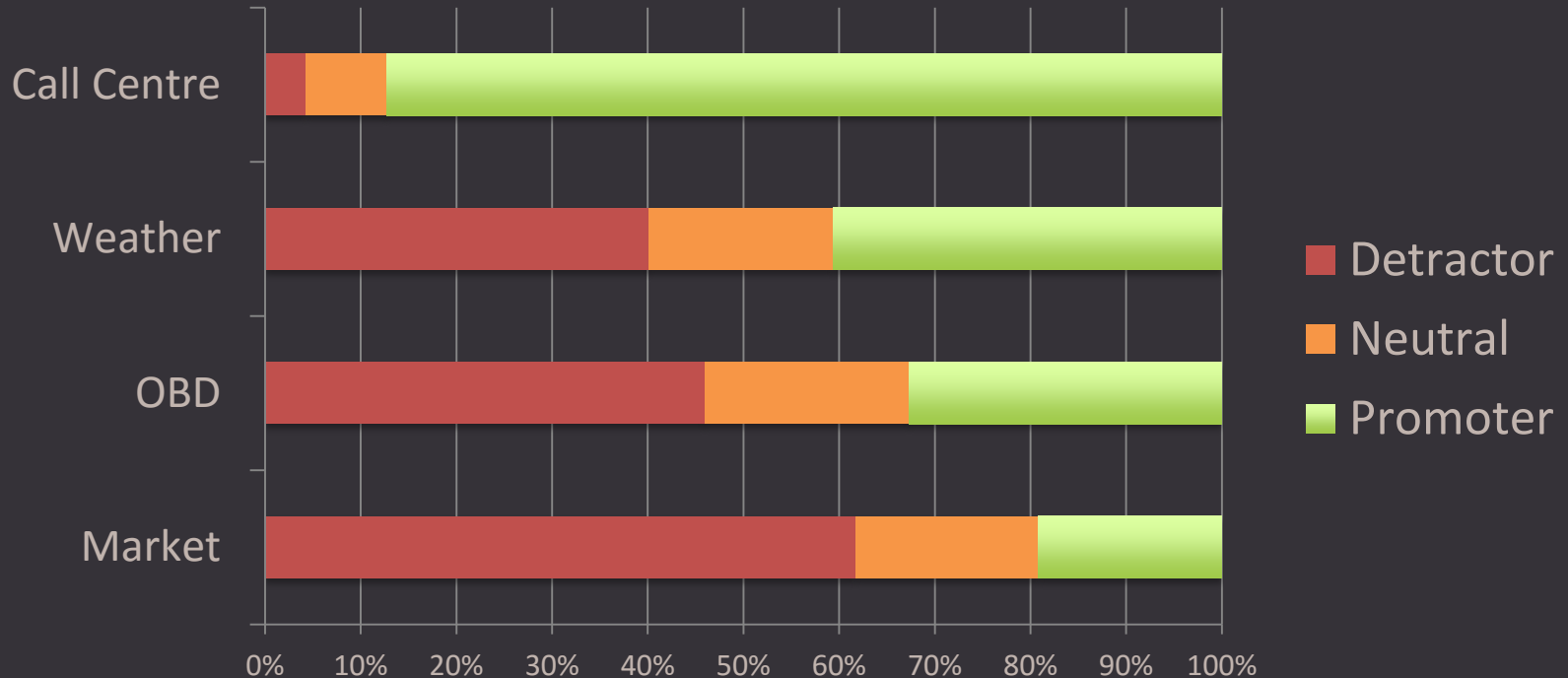
- 2 Outcomes Surveys
 - 500 by phone
 - 25-50 in person
- Quarterly case studies
 - Farmers tell us how they use the product
- HCD
- Rapid Feedback Survey
 - Every quarter
 - 1,000 farmers
 - Understanding, relevance and likelihood to use
 - 2 questions from User Experience research

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

- This September
- High initial uptake but very few re-subscriptions
- User Experience fieldwork suggested users didn't know how to resubscribe, or even that they had to

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

How easy or difficult was the information to understand?

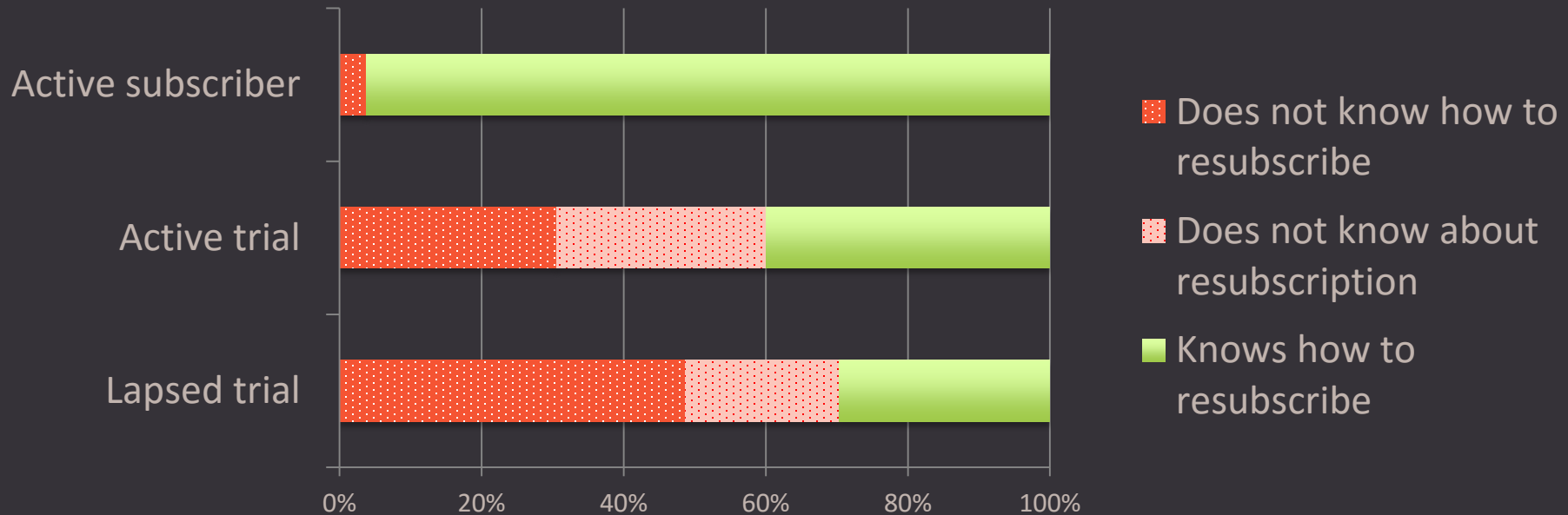


Action: review weather and market SMS formats. Conduct field experiments with voice SMS

Outcome: simplified weather and market SMS formats

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

Do you know that you have to resubscribe? Do you know how to?



Action: explore either better training or auto-subscription

Outcome: TBD

Combining M&E with agile product innovation

- Tailored to each grant: mobile money agents interviewed too
- Operators like it!
 - No, really
 - We asked for 200 surveys/quarter, they're doing 1,000

Insights

- Baseline and endline don't cut it for innovative products: rapid ongoing feedback needed
- M&E should collaborate with other sources of Voice
- Client Voice needn't mean a loss of rigour
- Client Voice essential to product ultimate success
- **In a complex intervention we have to be guided by the farmer. And guided often.**
- **We're still working out the best way to do this.**

Thank you