



International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

# Challenges and Opportunities in the Generation and Use of Evidence in Decision-Making

**Emmanuel Jimenez**  
Executive Director, 3ie

**Discussion Panel: Generation of Evidence for Public Policies**  
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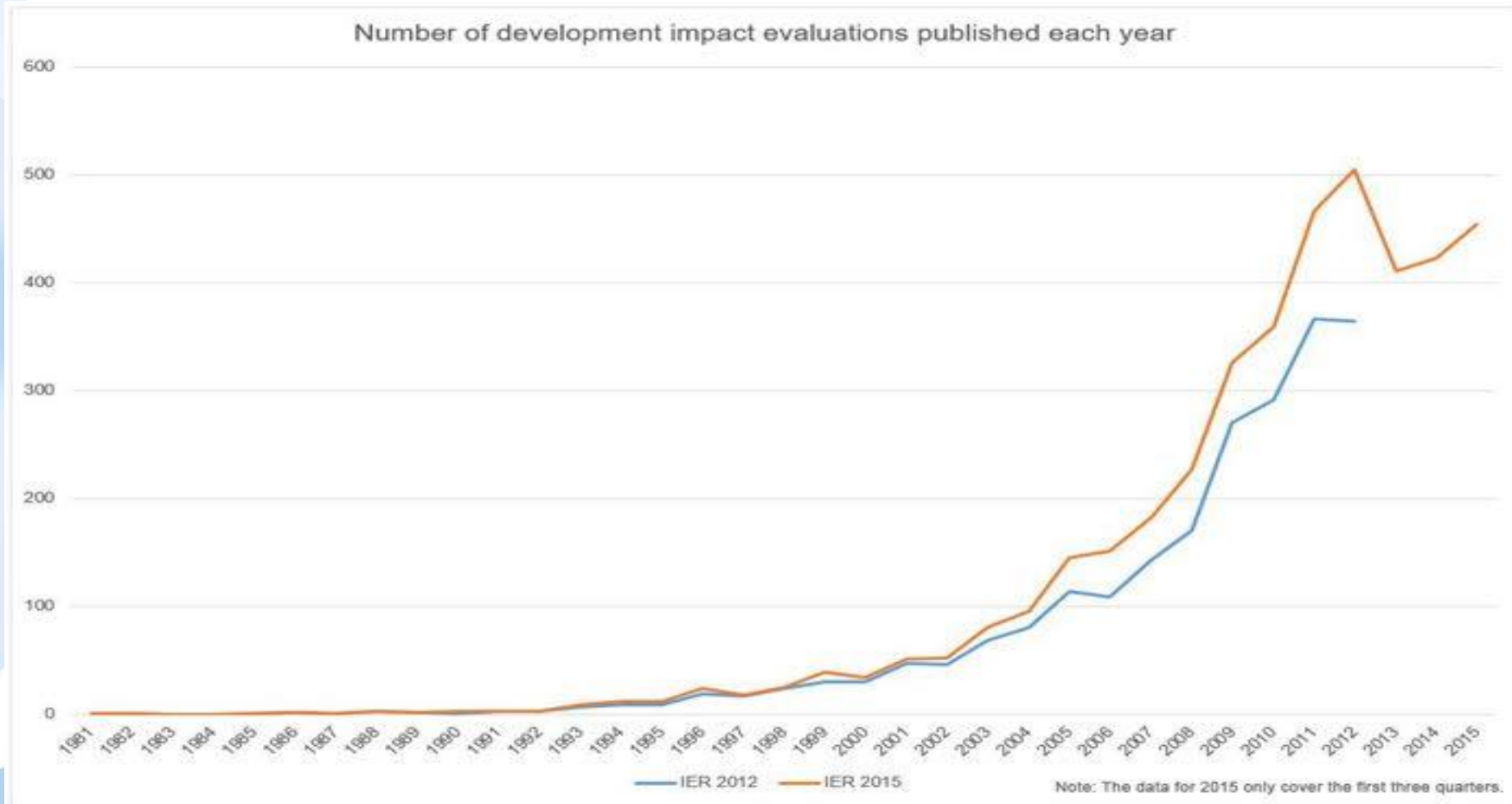
# Who we are & what we do

**3ie** is a member-based international NGO promoting evidence-informed development policies and programmes.

- **Grant maker and standard setter** for policy-relevant impact evaluations, systematic reviews, evidence gap maps, evidence syntheses and replication studies focussed on low- and middle-income countries
- **Convener** of forums to build a culture of evaluation, capacity to undertake impact evaluations and reviews and commitment to evidence-informed decision-making
- **Producer** of knowledge products for policymakers, programme managers, researchers, civil society, the media and donors

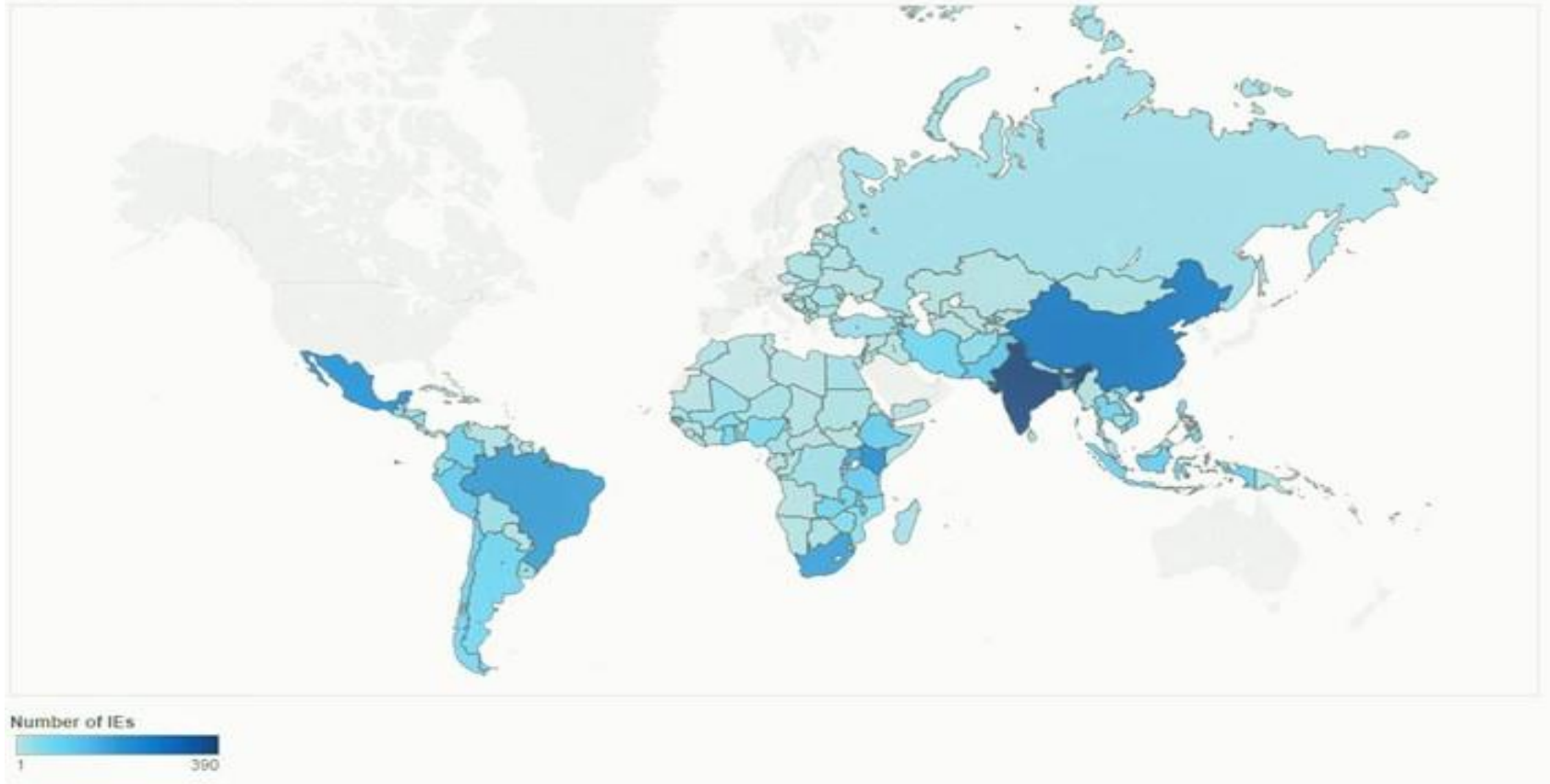


# Shifting Evidence Gaps: Number of IEs have grown dramatically



# But Uneven Geographic and Thematic Coverage

Impact Evaluations by Country

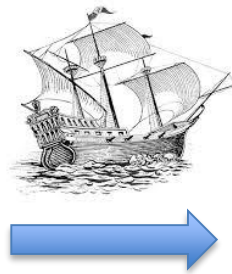


Source: Cameron et. al 2015

**Most are in Health, Education, SP, Agriculture**  
**Many don't address distributional issues**

# Usage gap: a persistent perception

Some great examples of where results are used:



BUT

47%



# Why do the challenges persist? Quality evidence is key but attribution is hard

Methodological difficulty of evaluating certain interventions

- Chunky: large-scale interventions that have no control groups and that can't be piloted.
- Complex: interventions that are difficult to implement; and that have multiple pathways and long causal chain to outcomes (eg governance, public finance policy)



Innovating on methods: evaluating behavior; using experimental with modelling; quasi-experimental; quantitative and qualitative.

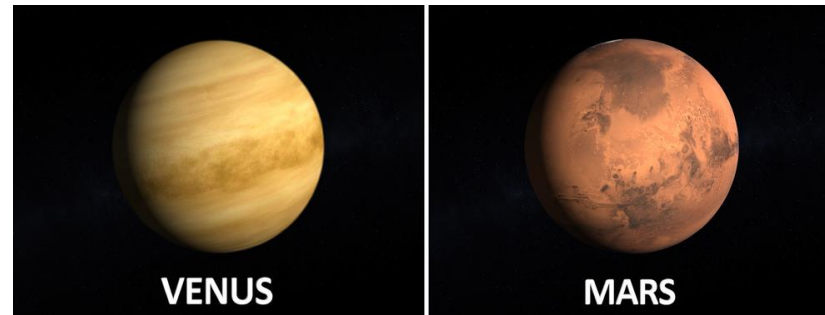
# Why do the challenges persist?

## Complexity of many policy decisions



- Understand nature of decision-making and identify key influencers;
- Understanding their incentives;
- Build capacity to understand or approach evidence;
- Public transparency

# Why do the challenges persist? Different incentives of evidence producers (researchers) and users (policy makers)



## Align incentives

- **Engage:** Early and sustained interaction between researchers and policy makers; independence?
- **Build** capacity to demand good IE in implementing agencies
- **Communicate well:** bring in professionals, synthesize
- **Timeliness:** Program so that results when decision makers need, not when researchers publish



# In sum

- **Despite good progress there are gaps in knowledge and use of that evidence base in decision-making**
- **In 3ie's experience, most promising to:**
  - Innovate on methods
  - Understand better how decisions are made and tailor approach accordingly
  - Improve alignment of evidence producers and users

# Thank you



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