Measuring the tricky things

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There are **two fundamental challenges** in **measuring** your impact in behaviour change.
Challenge 1: Are you measuring what you think you’re measuring?
Example: An NGO in Hong Kong is conducting a baseline survey to assess the level of interest in illegal wildlife products. They include the following questions:

1. Have you ever bought ivory products?
2. Do you intend to buy rhino horn?
Challenge 2: Are you causing what you think you’re causing?
Example: A local NGO in Japan asks 500 people if they would like to participate in a workshop about the harm illegal wildlife.

About 240 people join for a program that lasts 1 hour and focuses on the threat that illegal wildlife trade poses to the survival of the species.

After the program, the NGO elicits attitudes from the 240 people who joined and the 260 people who did not.

The number of people who indicate they intend to purchase illegal wildlife trade is lower in the program group.
Goal of this session

Provide a deep dive on measurement to give you the tools to lead projects and teams that use rigorous methods.
Challenge 1: Are you measuring what you think you’re measuring?
Measurement

Measuring the outcome of an intervention is tricky for two main reasons:

First, it may be logistically impossible to directly observe the behaviour, for instance because it is illegal or simply not observable ex-post.

Second, it might be hard to rely on interview or self-reported data – for example, if it is culturally sensitive.
7 strategies for measuring tricky things
Strategy 1

Audit studies using “mystery shoppers”
Strategy 2

Online and Administrative Sources
Strategy 3
Observational Data
Strategy 4

Measuring social norms
using incentivized Vignette Studies
Strategy 5
Measuring illicit behaviors using **unmatched count** techniques
Strategy 6
Measuring illicit preferences using computerized data collection and privacy
Strategy 7
Measuring implicit attitudes
using implicit the association test
Challenge 2: Are you causing what you think you’re causing?
When evaluating the success of an intervention, we want to know that it causes behavioral change—not just that it is correlated with it.

To establish whether an intervention causes behavioral change, we must imagine what happened if the intervention had never taken place.
Simple before-and-after (pre/post) comparison

Exposed to intervention | Not exposed to intervention

Before

After
Participant non-participant comparison

Exposed to intervention

Before

After

Not exposed to intervention
Difference-in-difference comparison

Exposed to intervention

Not exposed to intervention

Before

After
Randomized control trial

Before

Exposed to intervention

Not exposed to intervention

After
7 steps for running a randomized trial
Step 1

Select the **target group** you want to work with
Step 2

Collect basic **data** on your population
Step 3

Select the **unit** of randomization
Step 4

Conduct your **power** analysis
Step 5

Assign each unit \textit{at random} to either the treatment or the control group work with
Step 6

Implement the **intervention** only for the unit in the treatment group
Step 7

Compare the *average score* on the *variable of interest* in the treatment and control groups.
Thank you!