

# Do NGO staff listen to farmers? If they do, do they hear them? If they hear them, do they act on what they hear?

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## *Farmers' voice – Means to an end or an end in itself?*

NGO Motivations – multiple and varied (Practical “delivery” -> empowerment)

Theory of change crucial – implicit/explicit

NGO financing structure – multiple and varied this is very important because level of restricted income will determine level of influence of donors which will dictate indicators of performance which will dictate staff behaviour.

Influence of donors very important.

Power relations

Donor -> NGO (Donor) -> Recipient

Farmers are not “customers” because they do not pay for services received (may pay for products “in kind” or “in credit”) cf Australia research levy

### **Restricted income**

What are indicators of success in donor terms?

- **Money spent**  
Money spent according to budget, no fraud, accurate and timely reports  
No incentive to save money or do things more efficiently
- **Outputs completed**  
Tangible outputs, wells dug, groups set up

Qualitative outputs rarely stated

Outcomes from evaluation but then it is too late

More attention to qualitative achievements in terms of changed farmer behaviour, e.g. women speaking in meetings, during evaluation.

### **Unrestricted income**

More innovation possible but not sure it happens

### **Issues around staff and cultural attitudes**

FA spends a lot of time in re-orientating attitudes of technical staff to ensure they show proper respect to farmers, esp. women, and more than just respect adapt project implementation to their perceived and sometimes real needs.

Weak performance management in NGOs (and other organisations).

FA piloted balanced scorecard.