

# Generating Wellbeing is a Must, Not an Option



Yaddy Ruiz  
Social Worker  
Andrés Amaya  
Environmental engineer  
Colombia



# Environments in which infrastructure projects are developed in Colombia



- Rural areas
- State abandonment
- Limited or absent social investment
- Areas of armed conflict with territorial control Growth of environmental discourse against infrastructure projects
- Marginalized populations in vulnerable conditions
- The projects emerge as the primary stakeholder in addressing unmet basic needs
- Outdated and disjointed official information

The environmental authority regulates the EEA (Environmental Economic Assessment)

There's a imbalance in recognizing economic impacts versus positive impacts or benefits



Colombia is in the stage of energy transition.

Without proactive social investment, projects cannot proceed.

# What is recognized in Colombia as a benefit in environmental economic evaluation?

- Productive linkages
- Generation of local employment
- Voluntary socio-environmental investments in the influence area

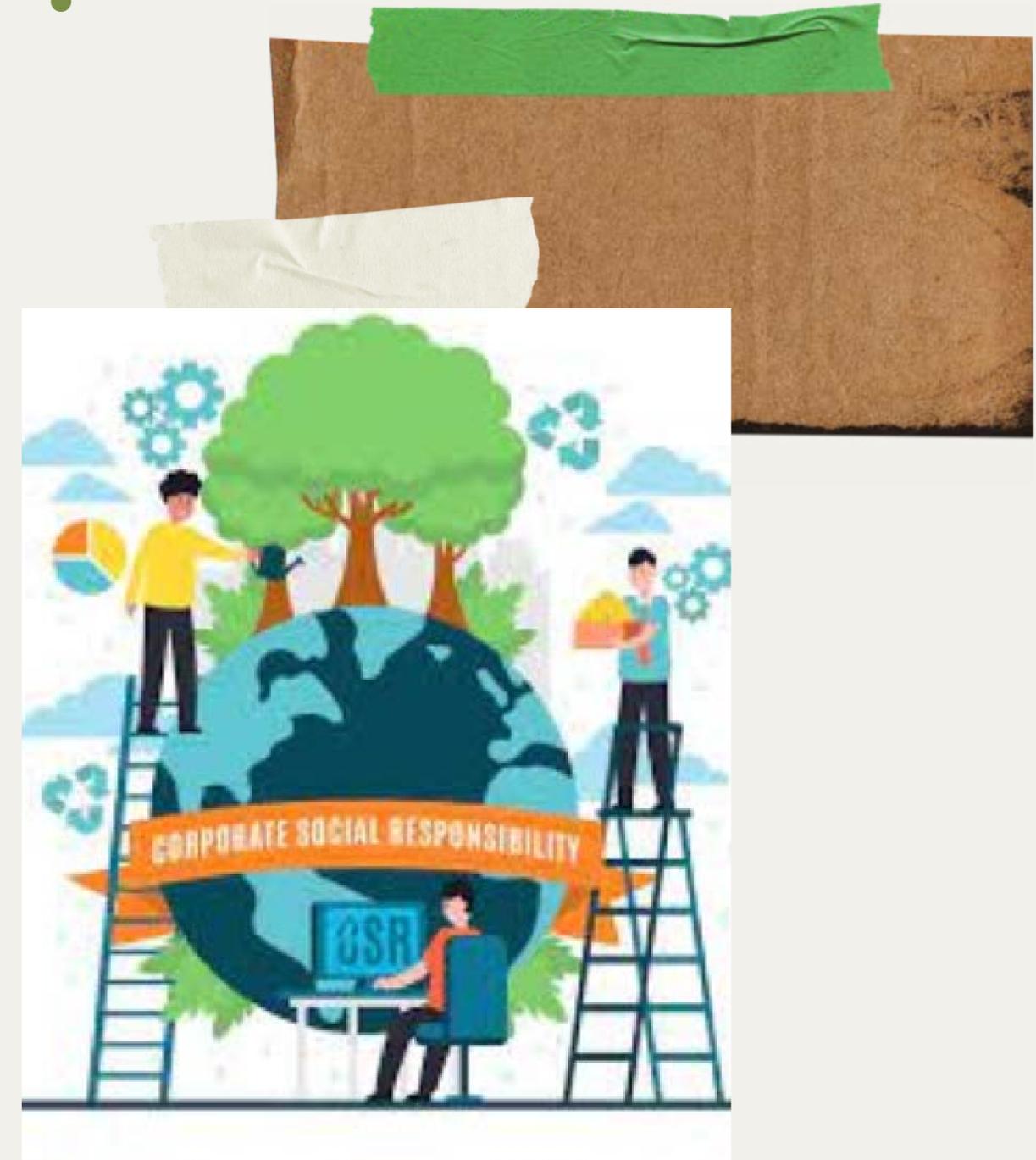


## To demonstrate:

- Improvements in the socio-environmental baseline
- Generation of value or welfare gain for society
- They are part of the environmental assessment chapter

# What have we done?

- Demonstrate that projects generate benefits in advance (in early stages) before operation. Generally, these investments to obtain 'social license' or 'social viability' are not quantified or estimated to evidence that welfare gain is generated for the communities in the influence area.
- Insist on the recognition of benefits in the environmental economic evaluation, given that in Colombia the Environmental Authority does not recognize positive impacts.



# ¿What have we done?



- Objective environmental assessment, from the perspective of critical scenarios.
- Highlighting the positive impacts and including them as benefits.
- Promote voluntary investments in productive linkages or the inclusion of communities in value chains, aiming to build local capacities and generate local income.

# Obstacles

The environmental economic assessment needs to be integrated with ecosystem services.

01

Definition of socio-environmental investment lines that generate value and profit for society. Projects are not the 'petty cash' of territories

02

How to quantify and demonstrate that value is generated? What are the acceptable and indisputable indicators? For example: How is health improved?

03

Lack of baseline information to evidence positive changes with the voluntary investments made by project promoters.

04

Environmental economic assessment is part of the environmental evaluation; it is not the core and should not be.

05

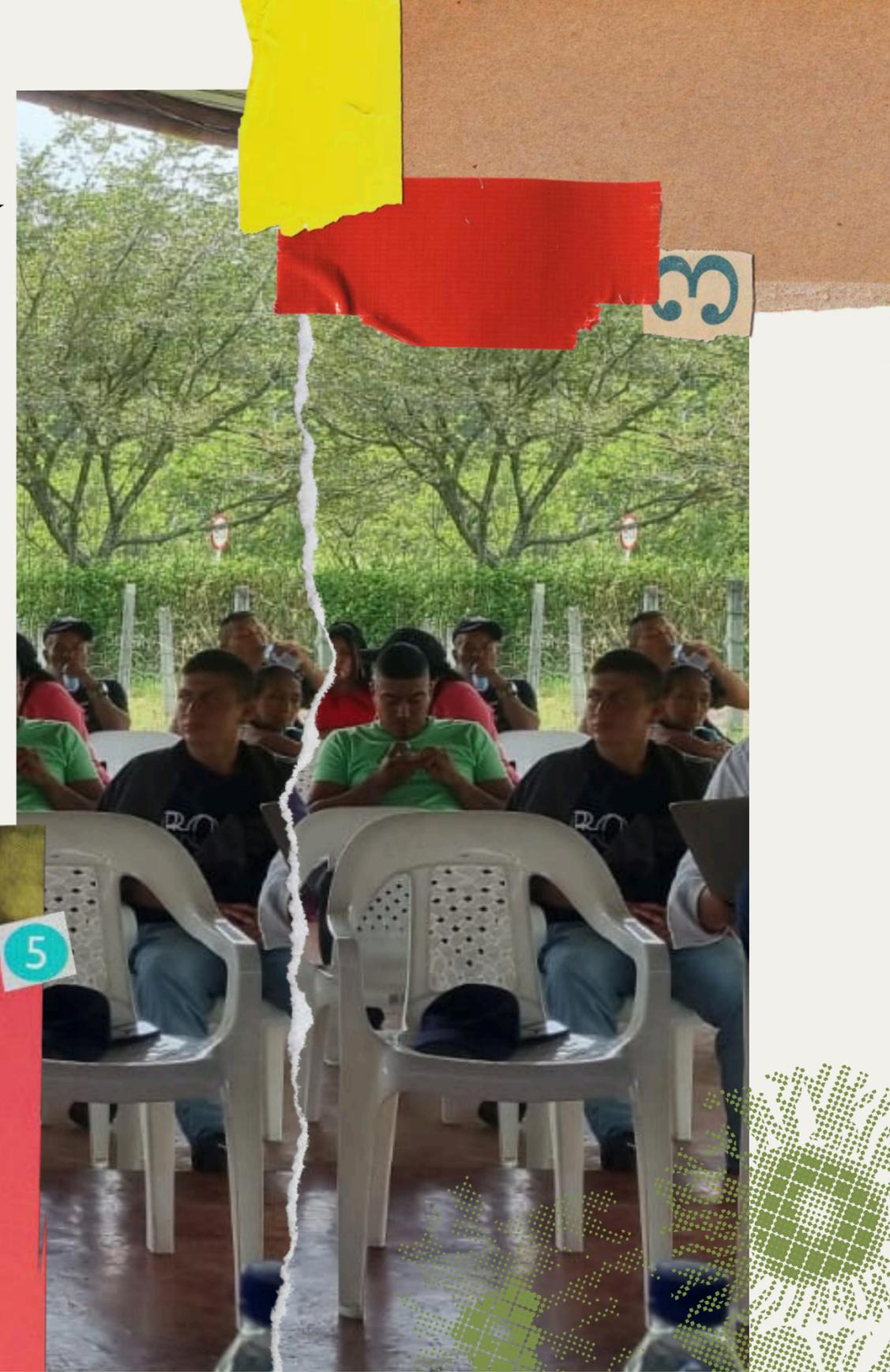
It is not enough to 'control and manage the impacts'; projects must contribute to the development of territories and must generate welfare for the population in the influence area.



# Conclusions:



- Improve baseline studies on the topics defined as potential benefits.
- Conduct specialized studies to demonstrate improvements resulting from long-term voluntary socio-environmental investments.
- At INGETEC, we rigorously evaluate projects so that the balance is ultimately positive. It is not enough to control the impacts; project promoters must contribute to improving territories and recognize that most of the time they are the communities only opportunity.



# Let's continue the conversation!

Post questions and comments in the IAIA24 app.

**How to generate well-being in vulnerable territories  
that are opposed to infrastructure projects?**



The key question to address is



**#iaia24**