

Social Experimentation in Action

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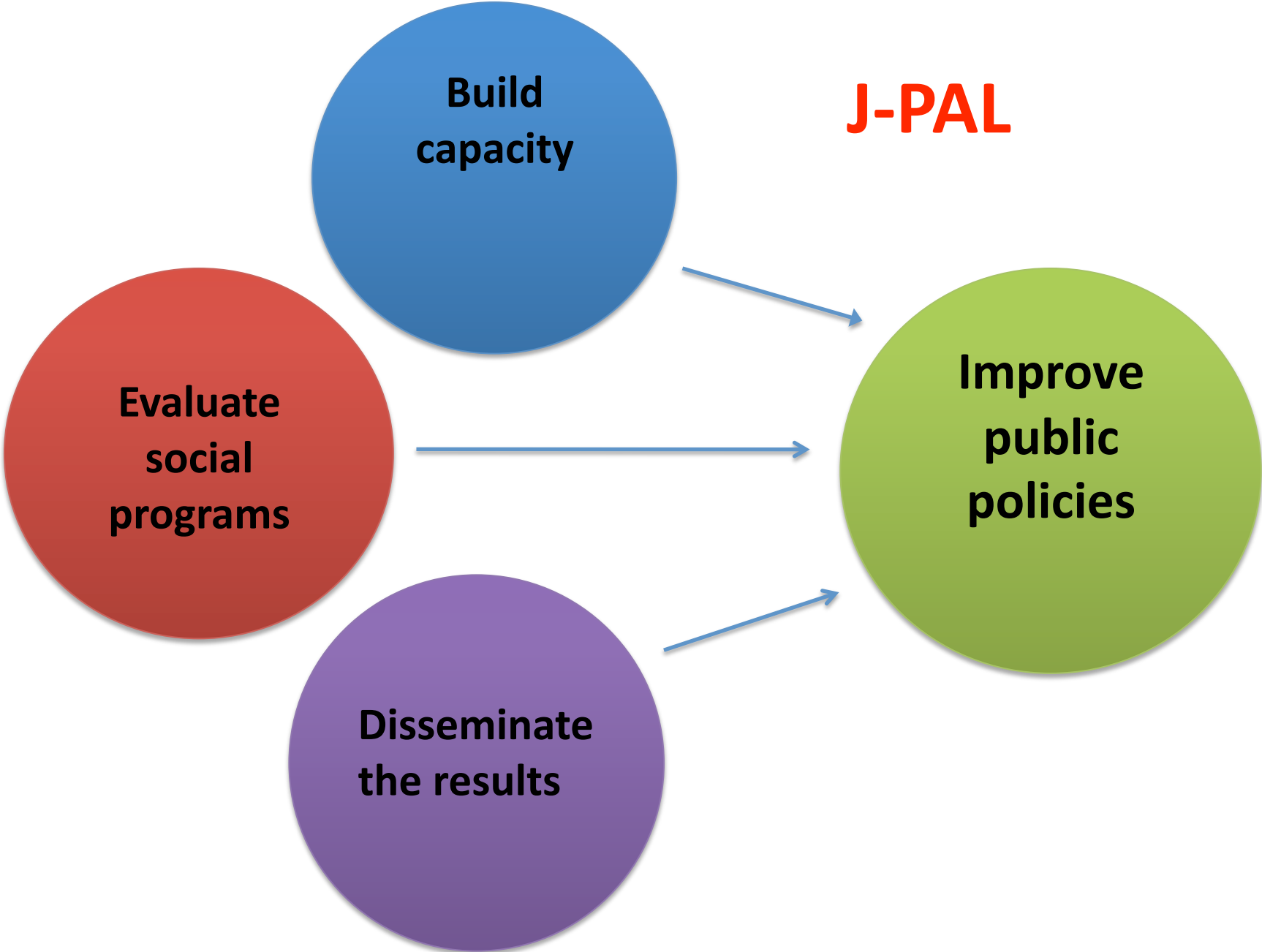
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J-PAL: Jameel Poverty Action Lab

- A network of researchers at universities around the world
- Focused on randomized evaluations
- Founded in 2003 by Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee, MIT Professors of Economics



J-PAL



J-PAL today: 5 offices & 56 affiliates



Why randomized evaluations ?

- Rigor: producing clear results, easy to communicate
- Lesson learning: finding the most effective program to achieve a policy goal
- Accountability: giving donors and policy makers evidence to select better programs



Improve public policies

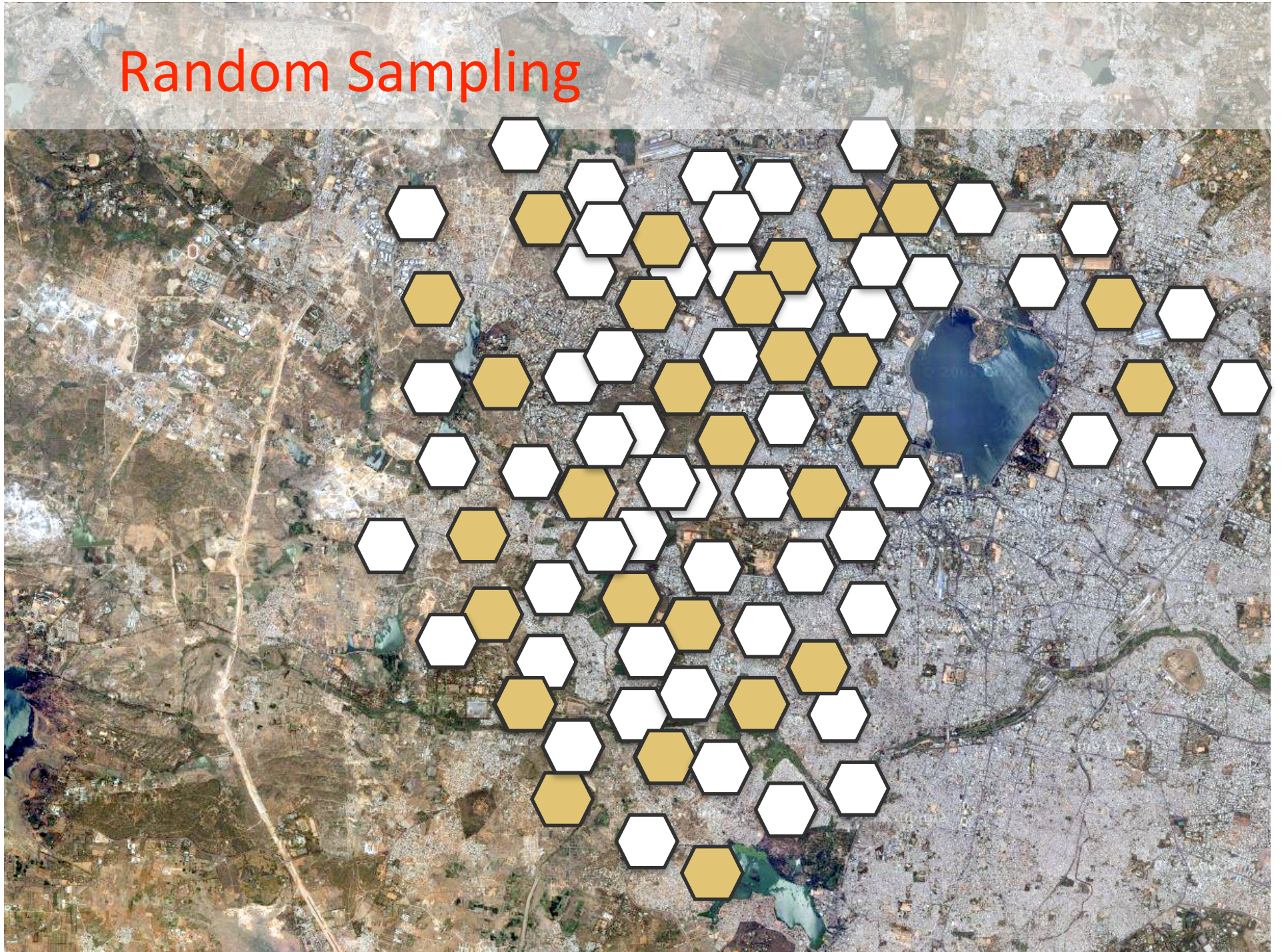
How impact differs from process?

- When we answer a process question, we need to describe what happened.
- When we answer an impact question, we need to compare what happened to what would have happened without the program

How determine the "impact" ?

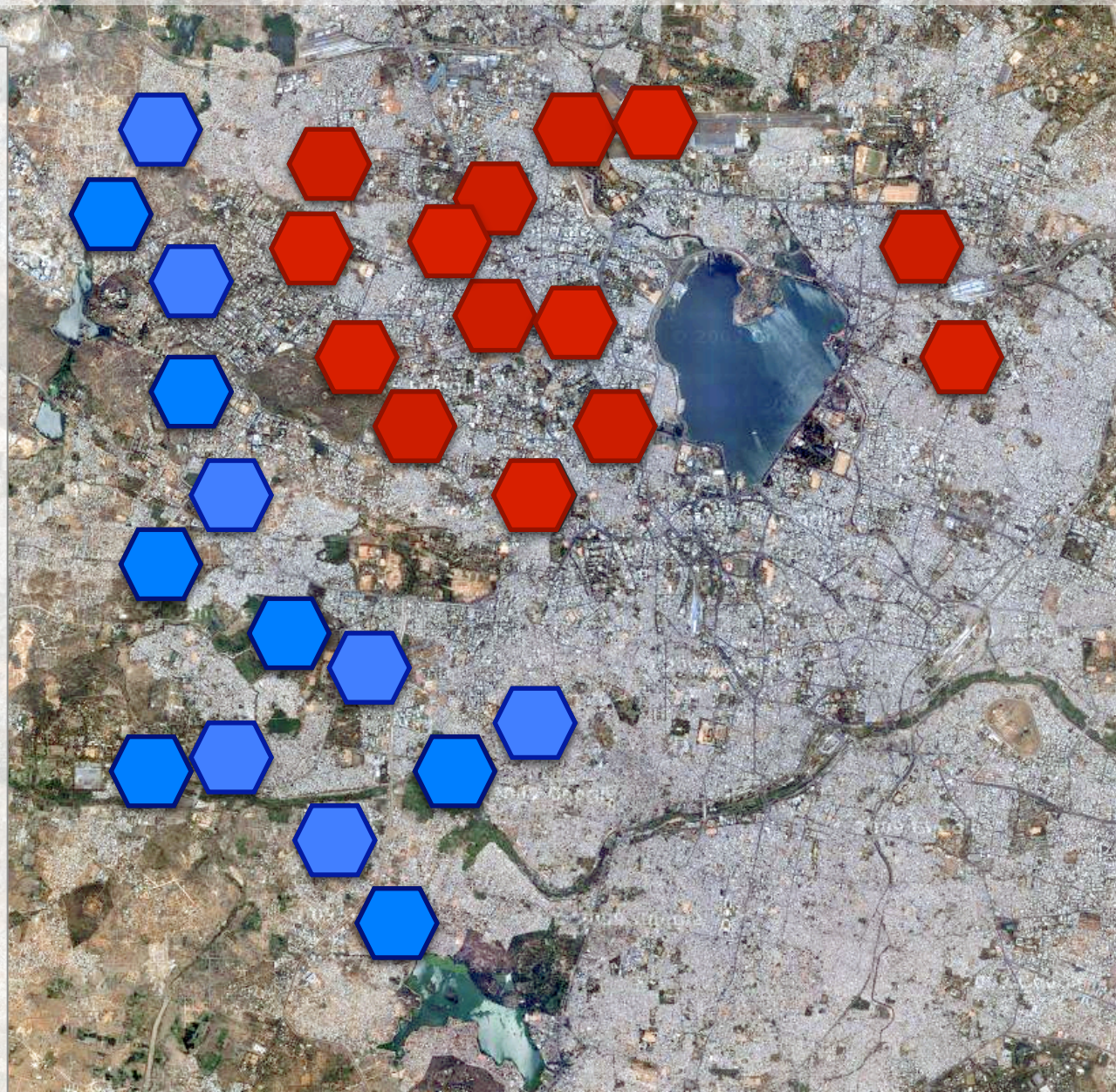
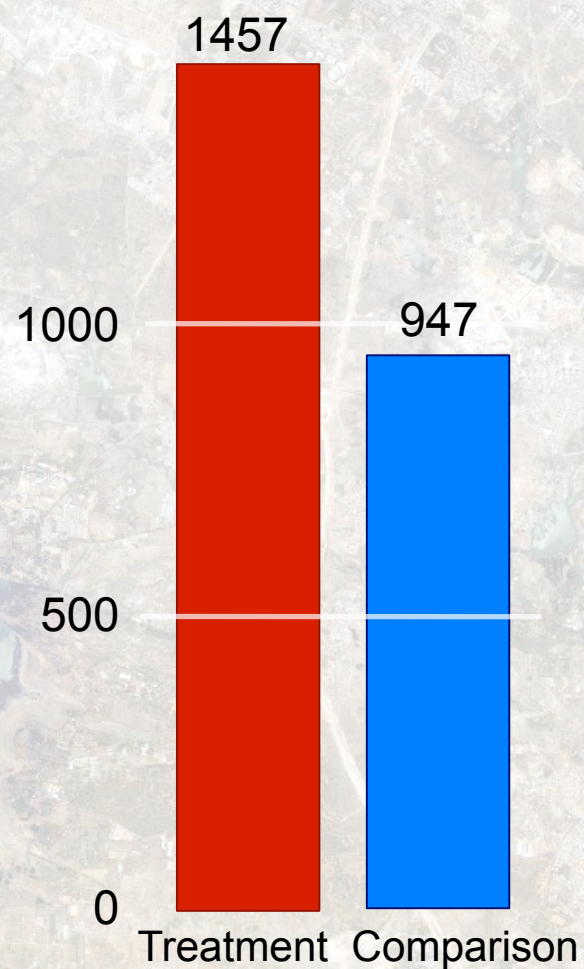
- What would have happened in the absence of the program?
- Take the difference between
 - what happened (with the program) ...and
 - what would have happened (without the program)
 - = IMPACT of the program

Random Sampling



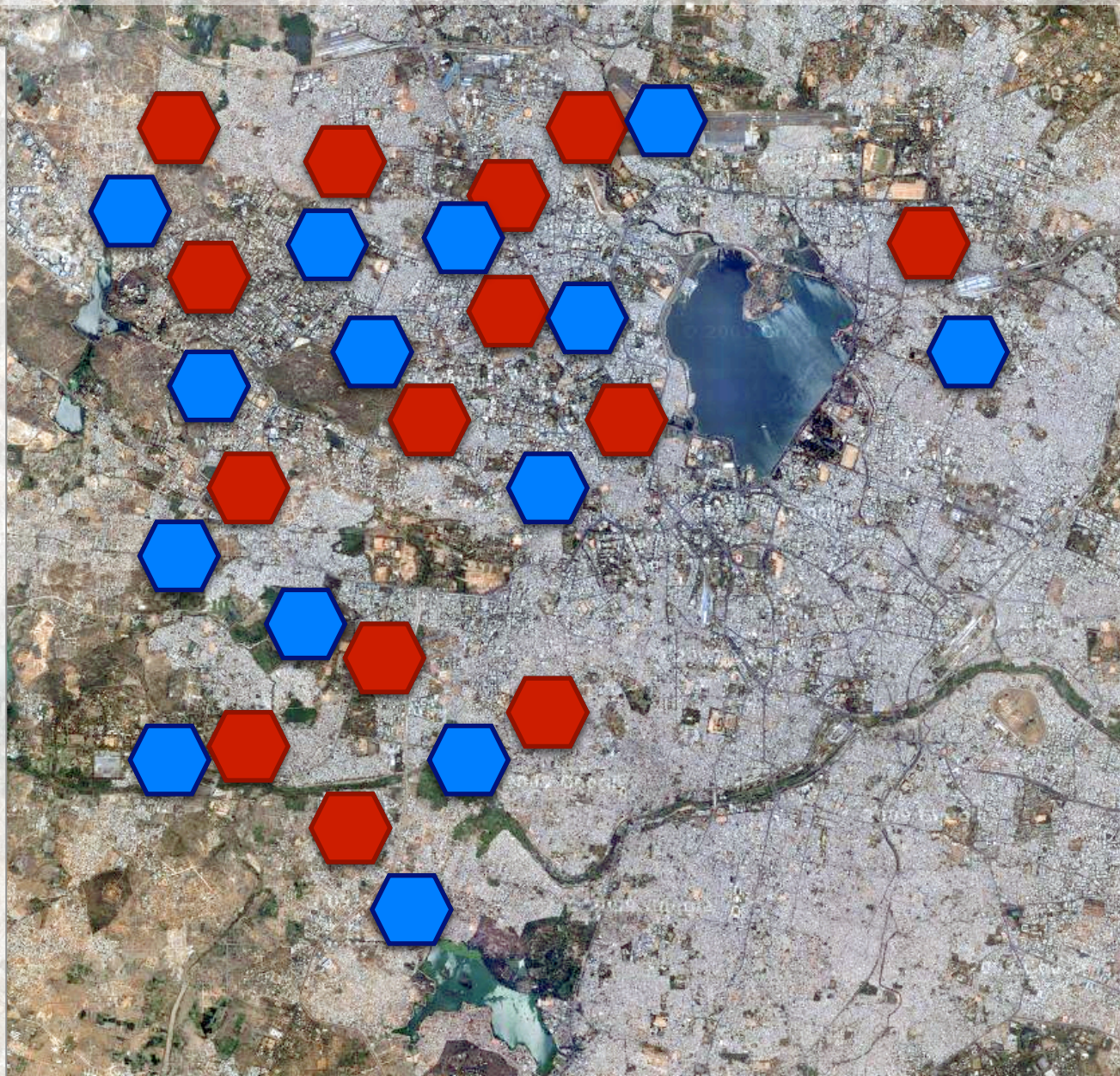
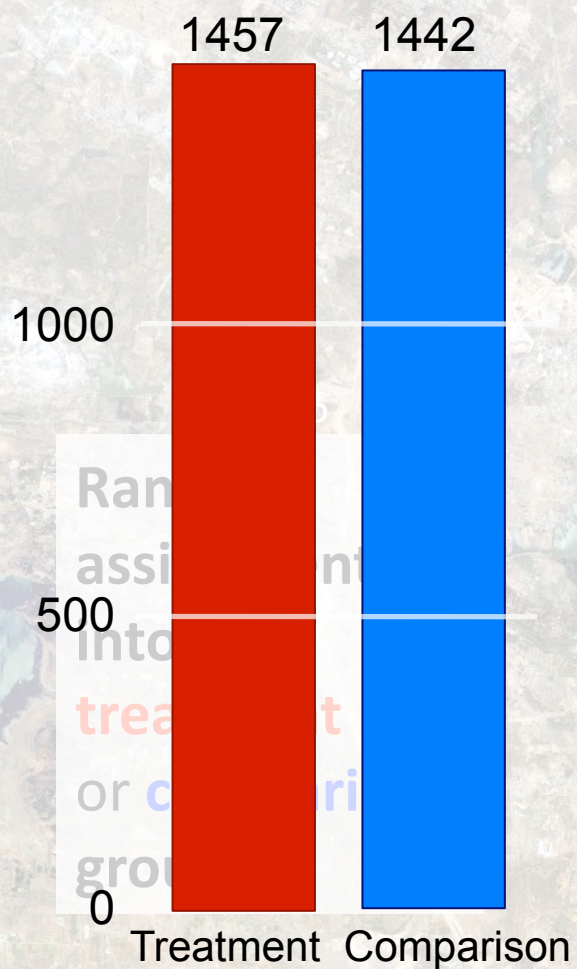
Non-random assignment into two groups

Average test scores

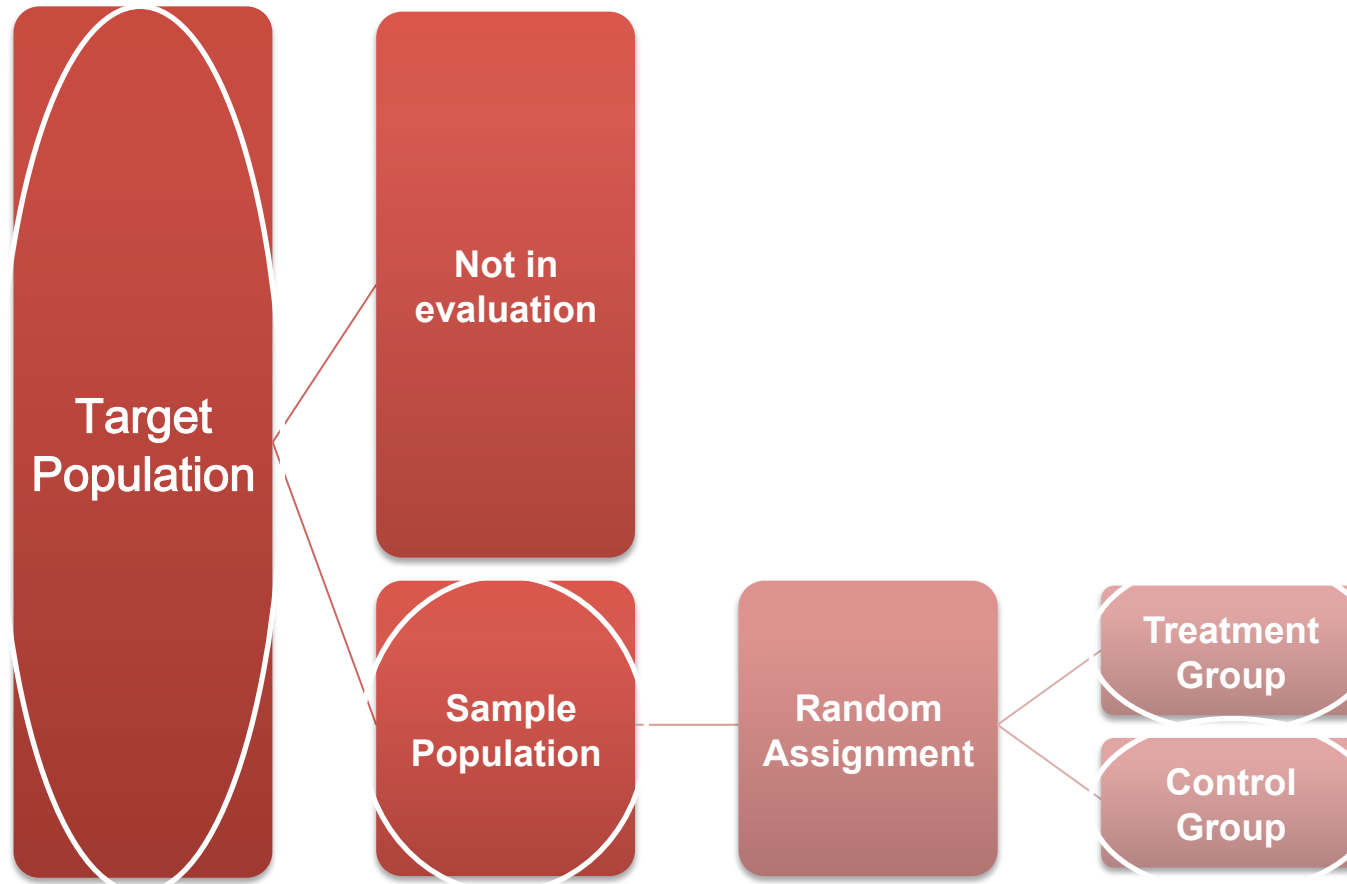


Random assignment into two groups

Average test scores



Basic set up of a randomized evaluation



Evaluations around the world

- 267 randomized evaluations in 45 countries
- 103 are completed and 164 ongoing

