

The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

The Importance of Good Evidence and Appropriate Indicators



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Objective of the Session

- To discuss:
 - What is an indicator?
 - SMART indicators
 - Why do we need evidence?
 - Demonstrating progress and means of verification – providing evidence for your claims
- Group Exercise
- Other Resources

Indicators

- Demonstrate progress towards project Outcome and Outputs
- Need to be evidenced when reporting – ‘Means of Verification’
- Strong indicators should be SMART

Pop quiz!

We talk about “SMART” indicators – but what does “SMART” stand for?

In pairs or small groups of 3, you have 45 seconds to write down what each letter stands for!



SMART

SMART Indicators

S – Specific

M – Measurable

A – Achievable (*Attributable*)

R – Relevant (*Realistic*)

T - Time-bound



SMART Indicators

Starting point: Deforestation reduced in Uganda

S - Specific

Deforestation rates in Uganda decrease by 75%

M - Measurable

Deforestation rates (measured using satellite imagery) in Uganda decrease by 75% from an established baseline

A - Achievable

Deforestation rates in the project area decrease by 15% from an established baseline

R – Relevant

Ask yourself – does this indicator reflect progress towards the stated Outcome?

T - Time-bound

Deforestation rates in the project area decrease by 15% from an established baseline by project end

Don't forget baselines and targets!

Why do we need evidence?

- **Progress reporting and accountability** to show funds are being used appropriately
- **Demonstrate effectiveness** to justify continued support from communities, donors, policy-makers etc.
- **Evidence-based learning** from experience in order to develop and apply good practice
- **Share experiences** with the wider conservation community
- **Evidence-based policy** - use the results to influence policy reform

*“Learning is experience.
Everything else is just
information”*

Albert Einstein

Demonstrating Progress

- **Means of Verification** – this is how you will evidence achievement of (or progress towards) an indicator
- Consider both primary and secondary data
 - Is this data available from somewhere else?
 - Is this data reliable/objective?
 - If you need to collect data – who will do this/when should you do it/how much will it cost?
- Will these data show Outputs/Outcomes have been met?
- Is the evidence independent and objective?

Where could we do better?

Output

Increased public awareness of the impact of IWT in the region and the potential benefits of alternative livelihoods

Indicators

- Number of conferences and workshops organised
- Increased media coverage
- Changes in attitudes to IWT and IWT products

Means of Verification

- Project reports
- Outcome evaluation surveys conducted in final year of project

Indicators and Evidence: Key Considerations

In your applications, please consider that...

- **Indicators must be relevant to the result they are measuring** – make sure your indicators actually demonstrate achievement towards stated results.
- **Evidence and Indicators should be linked** – we often see applications where sources of evidence are put down that bear little resemblance to the information needed to verify progress against an indicator

Indicators and Evidence: Key Considerations

- **Indicators are not activity outputs.** They need to be independently or objectively verifiable and linked not to activities, but to the results (i.e. Output or Outcome).
Unsubstantiated claims are not acceptable “*we think that this progress is adequate*” 😞 ✘
- **You have to show how can you evidence the changes your immediate results will achieve** - Outcomes and Impacts – what has changed and how in terms of IWT and sustainable development?

Group Exercise

2 stages to this group exercise – ‘filling in’ the “Indicator” and “Means of Verification” columns of the logframe

Stage 1

- Sort out the indicators from the ‘Means of Verification’ (MoV)
- Are indicators at Output or Outcome level?
- Map onto relevant part of your logframe (rearrange back from ToC format to logframe format)
- Are indicators SMART? Consider how they could be improved. **Identify at least one example to feed back to the plenary.**

Group Exercise

Stage 2

- Take the 'MoV' identified in step 1 and match to the corresponding indicator.
- Discuss the MoV – carry out an evidence assessment:
 - Is it feasible?
 - Will it produce high quality evidence?
 - Is it relevant to the indicator?
 - Is it sufficient?
 - If MoV are not appropriate or feasible, discuss more robust alternative(s)
- Would alternative indicator wording be more appropriate to reflect the result/realistic likelihood that evidence may be collected?

Other resources

With your project teams, consider the other exercises:

- Carry out a **SMART assessment** of your proposal's indicators
- Consider developing an **M&E plan** (using template on final page)
- Evidence collection: how/when/who?