

## The Darwin Initiative



### Communicating and Capturing Contribution to Poverty Alleviation



## Purpose of the session



- Introduce the concept of official development assistance
- Outline the criteria used to assess the suitability of projects for ODA funding
- Provide examples from applications
- Emphasise the importance of establishing robust systems for evidence collection

## Official Development Assistance



Finance where the main objective is to support economic development and welfare of developing countries

- All Darwin funding is ODA funding
- Projects are assessed for ODA eligibility at Stage One
- ...and also at Stage 2



## Global Goals for Sustainable Development



- Agreed in September 2015
- Provides the framework for aid until 2030
- Environment a much stronger focus than MDGs
- A useful frame of reference for considering poverty impacts



## ODA funding: who is eligible?



Will the project contribute to one or more of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs) in an **eligible** developing country in a substantive way?

UMICs can receive funding but must be able to demonstrate at least one of the following:

- advancing knowledge, evidence and impact in other least developed or low income countries
- delivering global public goods benefits, for example, advancing our understanding of local - global impacts, strengthening understanding of global dimensions of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction
- making serious and unique research advancements on a critical issue as a result of specific circumstances of the middle income country, that could not be made elsewhere

## Assessing ODA suitability



- Have beneficiaries been identified and numbers defined?
- Have benefits for people been clearly identified?
- Is it clear how the project will measure these benefits?
- Does the application consider gender issues?
- Is the project likely to reach a sustainable end point?
- Are there sufficient skills and expertise to deliver?



## M&E is vital for ODA



- A key requirement of ODA assessments is the presence of at least 1 SMART outcome indicator to measure development benefits
- Need to define baseline conditions & targets
- Applications must demonstrate how they will measure their progress and impact through appropriate means of verification

In short, indicators should be **SMART** – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound

## Common issues that reduce scores



- Country
- # of beneficiaries unclear 'communities' vs HH or individuals or national scale for policy
- What the benefits will be unclear i.e. income not always appropriate
- Problems not adequately addressed by solutions i.e. ecotourism in v remote areas

### Examples:

- Beneficiaries not identified beyond "local residents" no indication of population
- Project will "bring substantial local benefits" - what this means, for whom is not explained
- Project does not identify how it will attract more tourists to the islands

## Common issues that reduce scores cont.



- Lack of market analysis e.g. handicrafts, produce etc.
  - 'Alternative livelihoods' with no explanation
  - Poverty as an add-on vs integrated
  - VFM – no. of people to benefit & scale of benefit
  - Gender – can't just say 'and women'
- Examples:
- Potential value chain not yet assessed so unclear if market will support the targeted number of beneficiaries
  - Project to provide alternative incomes related to eco tourism but specific enterprise opportunities not identified
  - Training 9 farmers at nearly £8,000/ farmer does not appear to be good value for money
  - Gender only mentioned in terms of minimum number of women attending workshops

## Common issues that reduce scores cont.



- Lack of social science on team
- Low % of time allocated to key experts
- Many team members 'tbc'
- Logframe issues
  - Indicators not SMART
  - Unmeasurable indicators
  - Proposed benefits unmeasurable in the timescale
  - Weak assumptions
  - Zero baselines – risky
  - Targets with no baselines – how can you predict a change with no baseline?

## ODA – so what?



- Experience has shown that applications gaining high ODA scores go on to become high performing
- A poor ODA score may lead to caveats
- A very poor ODA score may be a deciding factor, but would not normally be the main factor to deny funding



## Questions?

