

# Darwin Initiative Stage 2 Workshop



## Welcome back!

# The Importance of Good Evidence and Appropriate Indicators



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



**UKaid**  
from the British people

# 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



- Are a critical element of your monitoring plan and help you know if you're on track or not or if things need to be adjusted
- Demonstrate progress towards project Outcome and Outputs
- Strong indicators should be 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!***

# Steps in defining an indicator



Process	Education	Agriculture
	<b>Outcome</b> – The education system in the southeastern province provides higher-quality and equitable education.	<b>Outcome</b> – The rural, agrarian population in province X has improved their income-earning potential.
<b>Step 1:</b> Determine the basic indicator—what is to be measured?	More and better-educated students graduate.	Rice yields of small farmers increased.
<b>Step 2:</b> Decide on the quantity—how much (increase/decrease)?	The number of graduates increased <b>from 10,000 to 25,000</b> .	Rice yields of at least <b>1,000 small farmers (owning 3 hectares or less)</b> increased by at least <b>30% from 5 tons to 6.5 tons</b> .
<b>Step 3:</b> Describe the quality—what kind of change?	The number of graduates <b>(55% female and 45% male) passing national standard examination from lower-income families (\$5,000 per annum) in the southeastern province</b> increased from 10,000 to 25,000.	Rice yields of at least 1,000 small farmers (owning 3 hectares or less) increased by 30% from 5 tons to 6.5 tons <b>while maintaining the same quality (average weight of grain) as in 2004</b> .
<b>Step 4:</b> Add the time frame—by when?	The number of graduates (55% female and 45% male) passing national standard examination from lower-income families (\$5,000 per annum) in the southeastern province increased from 10,000 to 25,000 <b>per annum starting in year 4 of project implementation</b> .	Rice yields of at least 1,000 small farmers (owning 3 hectares or less) increased by 30% from 5 tons to 6.5 tons <b>annually, starting 2007</b> , while maintaining the same quality (average weight of grain) as in 2004.

# 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 so they can learn from your work
- **Evidence-based policy** - use the results to influence policy reform



*"Learning is experience.  
Everything else is just  
information"*

Albert Einstein

# Demonstrating Progress



We could spend all our M&E budget surveying 1000 households over 3 months...



or we could get the data we need from this reliable government report ... over tea and cakes!!





# Where could we do better?



## **Output**

Increased public awareness of the importance of improved marine protected area (MPA) management to fisheries and the potential benefits of alternative livelihoods

## **Indicators**

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

## **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”* ☹️ ❌

# Group Exercise



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

## Stage 1 - Indicators

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

# Group Exercise



## Stage 2 - MoV

- 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 (details included in the handout shared).

- 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?

# Thank you!



## Any final questions?



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