



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Darwin Initiative

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

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v.1.0

1 Monitoring

Effective monitoring is critical for good project management. It supports informed and timely decision making, ongoing learning and accountability for achieving results.

Better monitoring leads to improved outcomes for beneficiaries by ensuring that project teams make well informed management decisions based on good quality information about project performance.

1.1 What is monitoring and what does it cover?

Project monitoring is the routine collection, analysis and use of information about project progress and results being achieved. Effective project management requires monitoring of the different aspects of each individual project, including:

- **Results monitoring** (Outputs, Outcome and Impact) whether the project is on track against intended milestones and targets, and any unintended consequences (positive or negative).
- **Activities monitoring** (processes) tracks the use of funding and resources into how activities are delivered and whether they occur according to a pre-defined work plan.
- **Compliance monitoring** ensures delivery is in accordance with local, national government laws, within donor requirements and to ethical standards.
- **Situation/context monitoring** examines the project's operating environment, monitoring risks and assumptions, as well as political and institutional factors that may influence project progress.
- **Financial monitoring** tracks the use of input funds for activities and Outputs, with attention paid to accurate forecasting of costs and budget monitoring, clear and audited accounting procedures, and adequate safeguards to prevent fraud and corruption.
- **Organisational monitoring** covers the internal capacity of institutions involved with the project and partners to utilise and manage the project funds, undertake activities and delivery expected results.

Monitoring should be systematic, based on a predefined plan that meets the needs of stakeholders to make well-informed management decisions.

This guidance focuses on Results Monitoring through the logical framework, or logframe.

2 Guidance on the logical framework (“logframe”)

Logical frameworks or logframes, (also known as Results Frameworks) inform decision-making including identifying options and risks, designing the project, monitoring and evaluation.

Logframes are the essential for reporting results from the project level to Darwin Initiative's programme level and beyond to national and international reporting. At the project level, in addition to results collection, logframes help us to:

- **Monitor programme performance**, identifying where we are, quantifying the results regularly to determine whether or not we are on track to deliver our intended outcomes and impact.

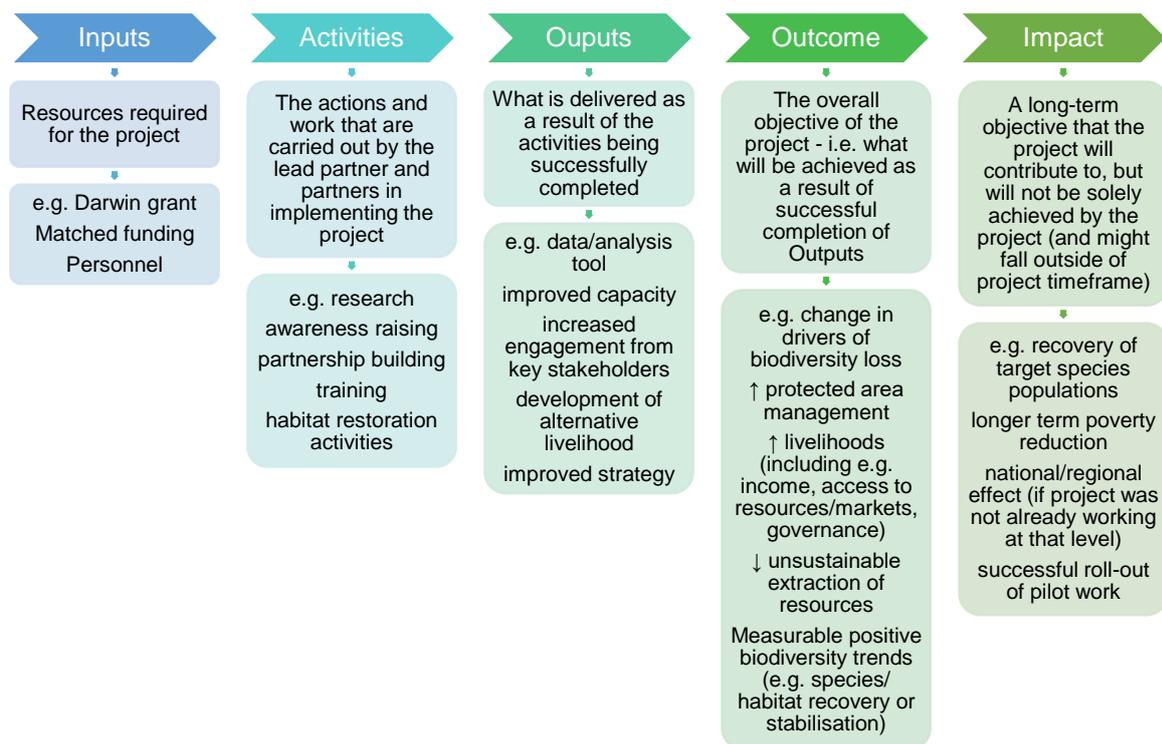
- Carry out **Annual Report Reviews** (see [Reporting Information Note](#)), which are based on an assessment of Annual Reports and reported progress against the logframe, to assess performance and make recommendations to strengthen performance.
- Carry out **Final Report Reviews** (see [Reporting Information Note](#)), similar to the Annual Report Reviews, which occur at project completion and are based on an assessment against the logframe to compare planned and achieved results.
- Support **evaluation**, as evaluators can use logframes to identify lessons learnt to inform future project design to strengthen the likelihood of success.

2.1 Developing a pathway to impact

We want the Darwin Initiative to make a real difference on the ground to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, through practical action. This means that it is important that we can measure the effect of the projects we fund and that we can learn from what works where and what does not so that this can be adapted and applied elsewhere to scale our impact.

A logframe is an expression of the ‘results chain’. That is, a logical and linear relationship between the processes (inputs and activities) and the results (Outputs, Outcome and Impact), see Figure 1.

Figure 1: An example of a results chain



2.2 Guidance on how to fill in the logical framework

Before you develop your logframe it may be useful to consider and discuss with your project partners and stakeholders the following questions about your intended project:

- What is the project trying to achieve?
- How will it achieve its objectives? What activities will be carried out?
- What resources, people, and equipment will you need?
- What potential problems or risks may affect your delivery?
- How can you mitigate any potential problems or risks?
- How will the progress and ultimate success of the project be measured?

2.3 Impact

The Impact Statement is a shared vision of your project's **long-term objective**, as a contribution to a wider advance on, for example, conservation and poverty reduction. Note that the Impact:

- will **not be achieved solely** by the proposed project
- will be achieved **outside of the timeframe** of the proposed project

There should be a **single Impact Statement**.

2.4 Outcome

The Outcome Statement is a project's objective; what overall **change do you expect** to achieve as a result of this project?

There can only be one Outcome for a project which should identify **what will change**, and **who will benefit**. There should be a clear link between the Outcome and the Impact.

2.5 Outputs

Outputs are the specific, **direct deliverables of the project**; they are tangible results from the completion of more than one activity. Their delivery is totally **attributable to your project**; they would not happen without your project.

Outputs will provide the conditions necessary to achieve your intended Outcome; **if the Outputs are achieved (and outlined assumptions hold true) then the logic is that the Outcome will also be achieved**. The logic of the chain from Output to Outcome therefore needs to be clear.

Most projects will have **three or four Outputs** in order to achieve the intended Outcome. More than five Outputs for a Darwin Initiative project is likely to be excessively complex, so should be avoided.

It is important not to consider or confuse activities (inputs) as Outputs, for example the number of participants in a workshop is an input, the Output might be what those participants are now capable of as a result, e.g. higher quality practices, secure new funding, train communities etc.

2.6 Indicators

Indicators are the tools and mechanisms you will use to measure the changes your project is making. Indicators should be useful for project planning, monitoring and external reporting. They should allow you to quantify and demonstrate what you have achieved and when.

The Darwin Initiative strongly encourages the use of **SMART indicators**. That is:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant, and
- Time-bound

Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative, and typically between 2 to 4 indicators are used to inform you if an Output or Outcome will or has been delivered. We do not ask for indicators at the Activity or Impact level.

The means of verification are the sources of evidence (databases, surveys, reports etc.) you will use to track and demonstrate achievement of your indicators. There is no need to include means of verification in the drafting of a SMART indicator.

Key tips when selecting indicators:

- Where possible **use standardised indicators**, as these will have established methodologies to help you in their collection.
- Use your experience from other projects and **adapt indicators** accordingly.
- Keep your indicator as **straightforward** as possible.
- Do not try to measure multiple elements within an indicator or combine indicators within one indicator. An indicator should only be **measuring one part of the intervention**.
- Make sure your indicators can be **measured objectively**.
- Make sure you are clear on your **means of verification** of the indicators.

Some indicators may not be achieved until in the closing stages of your project. It is therefore advisable to break these indicators down into annual milestones so that project progress can be assessed at regular intervals according to the timing of activities, not just at project end.

Milestones should be accumulative, each year adds to the previous year, and use absolute numbers rather than percentages/proportions.

As part of the Annual Report Review cycle, it is possible to revisit milestones and indicators to adjust them if it is justified and accepted via the Change Request process.

It is also important to consider the reporting timeframes of indicators if you are using data sources that are external to your project and differ from the standard timeframe.

2.6.1 Means of verification

Before finalising your logframe, assess your means of verification in terms of its quality i.e. **validity**, **reliability**, and **availability**:

- ✓ Specify the **data sources** i.e. do not just the organisation but give the specific data collection method as well e.g. a survey / report.
- ✓ **Frequency** should be clear and consistent with milestones and targets.
- ✓ Provide availability of **disaggregated** data as required.
- ✓ Data collection and reporting **responsibilities** are clearly specified.

2.7 Activities

Activities do not need indicators; their completion should be sufficient. Only summarised main activities are required. These should be numbered against the Output that they relate to.

2.8 Understanding important assumptions and managing risks

Project achievements will often **dependent on external conditions** outside the control of the project. Project design should **identify**, **reflect** and **monitor** these risks and assumptions.

Output risks and assumptions are more likely to be within the project's context to mitigate than higher level Outcome risks and assumptions.

If the external context or situation evolves, the project's approach may need to be changed.

2.9 Logframe Checklist

- ✓ Is the results chain clear and logical?
- ✓ Do the Outcome indicators measure what will change and who will benefit?
- ✓ Do the Output indicators measure the tangible results of your activities that will be delivered by the project?
- ✓ Are all indicators relevant to the results chain?
- ✓ Are all indicators clearly defined and measurable (SMART)?
- ✓ Have you considered using standard indicators / best practice indicators / learning from other projects?

3 Logframe Summary

1. If your **Activities** are delivered as planned, then the tangible results of your activities that will be delivered at the **Output** level.
2. If your **Outputs** are delivered, and the **Assumptions** that you have made hold true or risks effectively mitigated, then the change that you are targeting at the **Outcome** level should occur.
3. If the **Outcome** is delivered, and the **Assumptions** that you have made hold true, then the project will contribute to the ultimate result (**Impact**) that you hope will be achieved.

Figure 2: Logframe elements

	Project Summary	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Impact	The ultimate result to which the programme contributes			
Outcome	The change that occurs if the project Outputs are achieved; the primary purpose of the project	Quantitative ways of measuring and qualitative ways of judging progress towards the project's Outcome.	Sources of information and methods used to verify progress against the indicators	External factors and conditions necessary to meet the project impact from being achieved
Outputs	The specific, direct deliverables produced by undertaking project activities	Quantitative ways of measuring and qualitative ways of judging progress towards the Outputs.	Sources of information and methods used to verify progress against the indicators	External factors and conditions necessary to meet the Outcome or which prevent the outcome from being achieved
Activities	The specific tasks to be carried out in order to produce the expected Outputs			

4 Darwin Initiative Indicators

To enable your results at the project level aggregate upwards and enable the Darwin Initiative to monitor and report results at the programme level, we need to, where possible and appropriate, utilise indicators capable of being added together.

All projects are expected to report indicators disaggregated by gender.

Work is currently being conducted on programme level indicators, and we expect to publish these later in the summer of 2021.

We are likely to adopt an approach that will require each project to incorporate and report on a minimum number of Darwin Initiative core indicators. Beyond these core indicators, we hope to provide a longer list of standardised indicators with approved methodologies as a resource for projects to select from where appropriate.

If no appropriate indicators are available within these lists, then projects can develop their own project-specific indicators.

In the interim, we would encourage the consideration if your project could contribute to the following indicators, whilst adhering to the approach set out in Section 2.6:

International Climate Finance (ICF) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) including:

[KPI 1: Number of people supported to better adapt to the effects of climate change as a result of ICF](#)

[KPI 4: Number of people whose resilience has been improved as a result of ICF](#)

[KPI 6: Net change in greenhouse gas emissions \(tCO₂e\) – tonnes of GHG emissions reduced or avoided as a result of ICF](#)

[KPI 8: Number of hectares where deforestation has been avoided through ICF support](#)

[KPI 10: Value of ecosystem services generated or protected as a result of ICF support](#)

[KPI 15: Extent to which ICF intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change](#)

[KPI 17: Hectares of land that have received sustainable land management practices as a result of ICF](#)

Any recognised biodiversity or poverty related indicator from **national level monitoring frameworks**, related to for example:

- National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)
- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)

Any recognised indicator from **international monitoring** efforts under the following Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), please consider the indicators under draft [Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#).
- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Please **indicate (at least in footnotes or references) the source (NBSAP, CBD, ICF etc.) of any standardised indicators** in your logframe as this helps strengthen the understanding of the contribution that your project will be making to agreements, strategies, or wider objectives.

5 Other resources

This is not intended to be a fully developed resource for undertaking project level monitoring and evaluation. There are numerous resources available that provide useful step-by-step instructions for developing project level monitoring and evaluation systems including handy toolkits. Whilst some of these use different terminology for the components of a logframe, the principles remain the same. Some of useful resources include:

- [Darwin Initiative Logframe Information Note](#)
- [FCDO How to Note: guidance on using the revised Logical Framework](#)
- [FCDO: Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in International Development](#)
- [The Magenta Book: HM Treasury guidance on what to consider when designing an evaluation](#)
- [Better Evaluation - https://betterevaluation.org/](https://betterevaluation.org/)

6 Example Logframe

This is a worked example of a fictitious Darwin project. The measures and indicators are meaningless but demonstrate how you might develop a logframe for your project. You may also find it helpful to refer to the logframes for existing projects: <https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project-search/>

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification/Source	Important Assumptions
Impact: Agriculture is managed sustainably at the national level with resultant increases in biodiversity and welfare of people			
Outcome: Roll-out of sustainable agriculture and micro-enterprises in 7th District resulting in increased access to food during the hungry months for 12,000 people, reduced land clearance for agriculture and increased biodiversity.	0.1 12,000 people in 7th District (sample = n) report a 50% reduction in number of days they go hungry during the dry season from a baseline of 15 per month (2018) to 7 per month by 2023. 0.2 Micro-enterprises registered in 7th District during 2019-2023 record an average income of £17 per person per month (against national average of £4 per month) with 50% headed by women 0.3 Botanical and invertebrate diversity in project areas (particularly pollinator species) shows an increase of at least 10% annually from baseline (to be established in the first year) 0.4 Agricultural productivity increases from a baseline of 3 tonnes per hectare in 2019 to 4 tonnes per hectare in 2023. 0.5 Land cleared for agriculture slows from 200 hectares per year in 2019 to 20 hectares per year in 2023	0.1 Household survey reports for 2019, 2021 and 2023 0.2a Local Government registrations of new enterprises in 2019, 2021 and 2023 0.2b Survey of enterprise income generation in 2019, 2021 and 2023 0.3 Quarterly botanical and invertebrate surveys carried out in fixed sample plots on field margins. 0.4 Survey of agricultural productivity in 2019, 2021 and 2023. 0.5 Satellite imagery of District 19 in 2019 and 2023.	Enterprises continue to be registered by the Local Government and records remain open to scrutiny Increases in agricultural productivity does not correlate with a decrease in price for agricultural commodities in 7th District Satellite imagery remains free to non-profit organisations Reduced pesticide use and improved field margin management lead to an increase in beneficial invertebrate populations
Outputs: 1. Training and capacity building provided for small holders on microenterprise	1.1 1,000 small holders (40% women) attend 3-day training course in sustainable agriculture (200 in year 1, 400 in year 2, 400 in year 3) 1.2 50 agricultural extension workers attend 1-week training course in sustainable agriculture	1.1 Training course attendance certificates 1.2 Training course attendance certificates	Up to 90% of Agricultural extension workers are able to attend training courses Small-holders continue to apply 5-to-1 training distribution to other small-holders

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification/Source	Important Assumptions
generation and sustainable agriculture	1.3 By year 2, 2,000 small-holders apply sustainable agricultural practice including reduced pesticide use (# of litres of pesticide applied pa – 22 litres per smallholder in 2019, 5 per smallholder in 2023)	1.3 Local government records of pesticide distribution in 7th District in 2019, 2021 and 2023	
2. Communities are trained in the maintenance of field margins for biodiversity benefits	2.1 50 agricultural extension workers and 20 teachers (at least 50% women) attend 2-day training course on managing field margins and the benefits of pollination 2.2 50% of community members report increased awareness of benefits of pollinators and potential harm of insecticides by project end against year 1 baseline (to be established)	2.1 Training course attendance certificates; surveys before and after training demonstrating a change in perception on the value of non-productive land on agricultural margins 2.2 Community perceptions surveys	
3. Microenterprises established with seed-funding under a VSLA model	3.1 Business plans for microenterprises submitted to local government for approval (20 in year 1, 20 in year 2, 20 in year 3) with 50% female membership and an average membership of 4 people each 3.2 Microenterprises registered to trade in 7th District (20 in year 1, 20 in year 2, 20 in year 3).	3.1 Project reports on business plans submitted 3.2 Local government registration from Commerce Division in 2019, 2021 and 2023	Cost of registration of microenterprises remains at a rate of 15 dollars per registration Small holders see value of participating in VSLA scheme Commerce Division continues to report annually on the number of microenterprises registered (new and recurring)
4. Research outputs developed and shared with target audiences (local government, small holders and international development community)	4.1 Journal article on application of sustainable agriculture and its effect on yield by year 2 submitted to open access journal 4.2 Workshop hosted by Ministry of Agriculture on applying sustainable agricultural practice in 7th District 4.3 Policy brief downloaded from project website at least 200 times in year 2 4.4 Pop up survey of who is downloading document shows breakdown of practitioners, policy makers, researchers etc.	4.1 Journal confirmation email 4.2 Workshop proceedings 4.3 Google analytics for year 2. 4.4 Pop up survey results	Government remains committed to co-hosting research outputs of project

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification/Source	Important Assumptions
<p>5. Local Government in 7th District adopts the training course developed by Darwin project as standard for all new agriculture extension workers</p>	<p>5.1 Training manual developed for training course is incorporated into Agriculture Extension worker manual by end of year 2</p> <p>5.2 All new intake extension workers undertake sustainable agriculture training as standard</p>	<p>5.1 Agriculture Extension worker manual and letter of support from Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>5.2 Training records of new extension workers</p>	<p>New extension workers are employed within the 3-year project to test suitability of training materials</p> <p>Local Government deem training course to be of sufficient quality, and applicability, to roll it out more widely</p>
<p>Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>1.1</p> <p>1.2</p> <p>1.3 etc.</p>			