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MEASURING IMPACT FY14 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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MEASURING IMPACT

CONTRACT INFORMATION

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AM	Adaptive Management
BDRF	Biodiversity & Development Research Framework
B+WISER	Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy & Ecosystem Resilience
CAFEC	Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategies
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CLA	Collaborating Learning and Adapting
COP	Chief Of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representatives
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DO	Development Objective
E3/FAB	Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and the Environment/Office of Forestry and Biodiversity
ECO	Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach
ECOFISH	Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries
EI	Environmental Incentives
EMOS	Environmental Management for the Oil Sector
FCCA	Forest, Climate and Communities Alliance
FSNs	Foreign Service Nationals
FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Global Climate Change
ICAA	The Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IR	Intermediate Result
LER	Learning, Evaluation, and Research
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MI	Measuring Impact
MSI	Management System International
OEECC	Office of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAPA	Participating Agency Program Agreement
POC	Point of Contact
PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
PRM	Program Resource Management
RAWG	Research Agenda Working Group
REPLACE	Restoring the Environment through Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems
RFP	Request For Proposal
RM Portal	Natural Resources and Development Portal
SAR	South American Regional Office
SCAEMPS	Strengthening Central Africa Environmental Management and Policy Support
SCAPES	Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TDY	Temporary Duty
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

I. INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE MEASURING IMPACT PROJECT

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its partners see biodiversity as a critical component supporting human wellbeing and other important development goals. While biodiversity conservation is a priority in its own right, it is also important that development professionals and decision-makers across the Agency understand the role of biodiversity in supporting crucial ecosystem services that underpin other development priorities such as food security, water provision, adaptation to climate change, and mitigation of threats to human health. MI will test theories of change that link actions to improved development outcomes in biodiversity and human wellbeing.

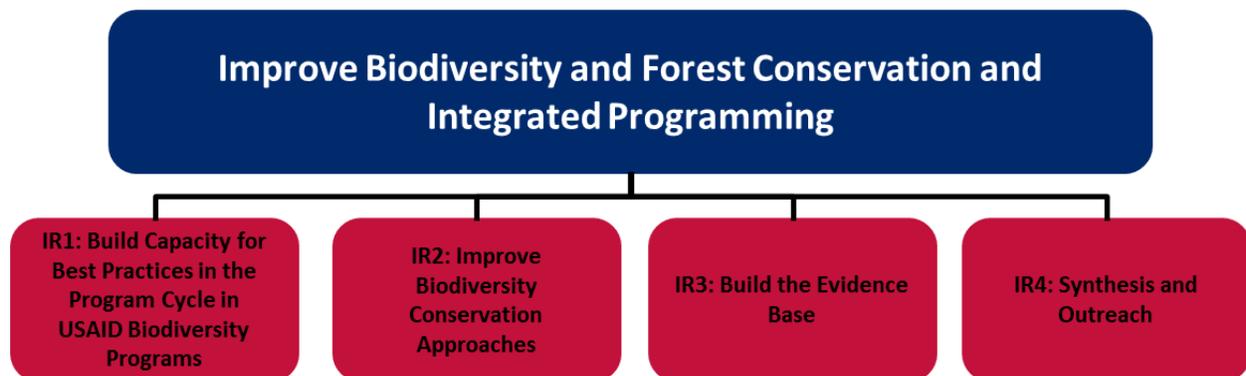


Figure 1: Structure of the MI Goal and Intermediate Results

The ultimate goal of the Measuring Impact (MI) project is to create more effective biodiversity, forest and integrated conservation around the world in service of both enhanced biodiversity conservation and human wellbeing. Four intermediate results (IRs) have been defined to achieve the MI project goal. These IRs will clarify the strategies that will be employed and clarify the MI project's theory of change through improved knowledge, evidence-based programming and adaptive management. Staff of USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment, Forestry and Biodiversity Office and selected USAID missions will be equipped with knowledge and tools through research, evaluations, technical assistance and sharing of lessons learned.

In July 2014 USAID launched its first-ever Biodiversity Policy, reinvigorating the Agency's commitment to conservation for sustainable, resilient development. The Policy's two goals, to conserve biodiversity in priority places and to integrate biodiversity as an essential component of human development, are supported by seven objectives and a strategy to allocate resources to a set of Tier 1 countries that feature high priority biodiversity and ecosystems. The Policy emphasizes the use of best practices in project design and use of evidence to support improved programs; addressing the threats and drivers of biodiversity loss, especially wildlife trafficking; and integrating biodiversity and other development sectors for improved outcomes.

MI will help USAID advance its leadership in developing and implementing evidence-based programs that improve conservation outcomes and human wellbeing by building the capacity of the Agency to design and learn from biodiversity programs and by enhancing the evidence base that informs programming decisions.

II. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In Fiscal Year (FY) 14, Measuring Impact (MI) continued Mission support and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) trainings, developed the foundation for the Cross-Mission Learning Program, redefined the strategy for Intermediate Result (IR) 3, established a valuable relationship with the Policy, Planning, and Learning Bureau (PPL), and completed the staffing plan defined in the FY14 Work Plan. FY14 highlights include:

1. Providing technical assistance (TA) and training to eight Missions, Bureau of Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment, Forestry and Biodiversity Office (E3/FAB), Global Climate Change, three Regional Bureaus and other USAID counterparts.
2. Redefining the strategic approach of IR2 to focus on creating a “learning program” around biodiversity programming within USAID with the goal of systematically learning from selected USAID conservation actions to determine the conditions under which a conservation approach is likely to be more effective, and why.
3. Finalizing the Biodiversity and Development Research Framework (BDRF).
4. In conjunction with PPL, developing a language crosswalk between the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation and the USAID Program Cycle terminology, piloting Miradi software in select Missions, developing three guidance documents relating to USAID’s Biodiversity Policy and Program Cycle, and assisting in the development of the Cross-Mission Learning Program.
5. Completing the MI staffing plan with the hires of a Senior Learning and Evaluation Specialist, a Learning Technical Specialist, a Senior Biodiversity Research Lead, an Adaptive Management (AM) Specialist and a Deputy Chief of Party (COP).

IR1: BUILD CAPACITY FOR BEST PRACTICES IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE IN USAID BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMS

IR1 made notable progress in FY14 in advancing its collaboration and work with Missions. IR1 provided technical assistance (TA) and trainings to eight Missions in FY14, covering topics as they relate to monitoring frameworks to assess program effectiveness, performance and impact evaluations, and systems for collecting and analyzing data. Additionally, IR1 performed a lessons learned analysis of the initial round of technical assistance that was provided in late FY13 and early FY14, presenting analysis and conclusions across five Missions as they relate to project design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and learning and adapting. These findings informed MI's planning with focal Missions during FY14 and was particularly informative in refining the focus of TA around situation models, theories of change (TOCs), and indicators and in helping MI and E3/FAB understand how to align technical assistance with entry points in the Program Cycle. IR1 also provided five briefings and review sessions disseminating results and findings from its work with Missions to three Regional Bureaus and USAID's Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL). IR1 facilitated conversations with PPL and E3/FAB to establish the conceptual foundation for the three guidance documents that were developed in IR4 to support implementation of best practices in the Program Cycle. Lastly, IR1 captured its work with Missions in a cost-benefit analysis in order to inform MI learning and provide inputs to the FY15 planning process.

The IR1 report is structured around MI's delivery of training and technical assistance; an analysis of work in Missions to inform progress tracking and future planning, including briefings during FY14 and development of a cost-benefit analysis; and a brief overview of MI's work in four focal Missions during FY14. Major deliverables for the year are discussed throughout. They are the analysis of lessons learned in Missions; delivery of TA to focal Missions; Mission review sessions; the Library of Mission-Derived products; and Adaptive Management Training.

PROVIDE TRAINING AND ONGOING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION (ACTIVITY 1.3)

IR1 worked with eight Missions during FY14, providing input on and influencing two Project Appraisal Documents (PADs) and 52 mechanisms via "in-service" trainings, and in-person and remote TA. IR trainings covered various topics as they relate to the best practices and tools to implement the USAID Program Cycle, and more broadly, adaptive management principles and tools. The TA provided by IR1 to Missions, the E3/FAB and the broader USAID audience, such as Global Climate Change, focused the following main themes:



8 Missions visited
2 PADs influenced
52 mechanisms influenced

- Refining or constructing a theory of change,
- Defining strategies and compiling a results chain,
- Designing or enhancing a M&E framework or Performance Management Plan (PMP),
- Testing established logic at the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), PAD or activity level, and
- Ensuring alignment across these three planning scales

In total, IR1 delivered eight week-long site visits to MI focal Missions, including the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) (two visits), Ecuador, Uganda, the Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA), Indonesia, the Philippines and Mozambique. Table 1 summarizes the type of training and technical assistance provided to each of the eight focal Missions.

In addition to training and technical assistance offered to staff of the MI focal Missions, IR1 coordinated design and delivery of adaptive management training for staff of E3/FAB (January 2014); Regional Bureaus and the Office of Global Climate Change (April 2014); and PPL (multiple informal occasions). These trainings are described in detail in section 4.2 of this report.

MI and E3/FAB recognize that the current state of biodiversity programming in USAID is shaped by the broader context in which the environment staff are working. The Program Cycle, a key reform of USAID, has initiated a significant change across the Agency by strengthening policies and procedures for project design and implementation, M&E, and learning and adapting. The Program Cycle and Biodiversity Code serve as the policy framework for MI's technical assistance, "creating a common set of processes that hinge on active project management with constant assessment of activities, and builds in planning strategies that allow projects to adjust in response to new learning or contextual changes."¹

As staff and operating units transition to using the Program Cycle and implementing these new best practices, there are real constraints on time, personnel changes and the volume of new information that will impact the pace of uptake and application across Missions. In turn, this affects the Missions' ability to work with MI. MI is working with Missions to overcome barriers to learning and adapting by providing hands-on TA and training to increase staff knowledge and capacity to implement the Program Cycle, while also working in close partnership with E3/FAB and PPL to improve policies, processes and systems, develop tools and guidance, and strengthen an emerging organizational culture that values learning.

¹ From the 2014 USAID Program Cycle Learning Guide

Table 1: Technical Assistance Provided to Missions in FY14

SUMMARY OF FY14 MISSION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Indonesia

- Reviewed and provided guidance on conceptual model for design of marine investment within Environment PAD
- Commented on and met with research team to discuss a draft of a conceptual model for case study research that FAB point of contact (POC) is leading on marine governance that will have relevance to the Indonesia and Philippines missions
- Facilitated virtual presentation on project design /situation analysis for PAD Marine Program
- Provided technical assistance on project design using a conceptual model for the PAD Forestry Program
- Provided three days of in-person technical assistance on project design using a conceptual model for the PAD Marine Program
- Drafted M&E guidelines using TOCs for PAD Marine request for proposal (RFP)
- Drafted guidelines and criteria for the Mission to evaluate TOCs in the proposals received
- Provided follow up comments on marine mechanism design

CARPE

- Prepared and facilitated a one week workshop amongst USAID/CARPE and implementing partners
- Reviewed and analyzed strategic documents, drew out common approaches, threats, and conservation targets
- Drafted USG-aligned conceptual model for conservation in Central Africa
- Compiled draft results chains with gender integration for priority CARPE III strategies under CAFEC
- Provided support to the M&E technical working group comprised of USAID/CARPE and implementing partner
- Provided technical assistance to the implementing partners' working group in drafting indicators for the Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC) project
- Participated in the CARPE Partners Meeting in Washington, DC and gave an overview of the outcomes of the Dec 2013 CAFEC workshop
- Worked with the implementing partners' working group and USAID staff to revise and finalize the CAFEC work plan template
- Developed and initiated a process for revising the TOCs for eight CAFEC actions
- Continued technical assistance to the implementing partners' working group in drafting indicators for the CAFEC project
- Provided detailed comments on CARPE management team's feedback on the CAFEC work plan template and draft indicators
- Planned agenda and logistics for the Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support (EMAPS) Strategic Planning Workshop with CARPE management team
- Developed a draft memorandum of understanding and work plan for MI engagement with CARPE
- Organized and led a one-day in-person meeting in Kinshasa with CAFEC Chiefs of Party (COP) and CARPE management team to finalize results chains (March 14)
- Reviewed CAFEC partner proposals and synthesized actions into meaningful units for theory of change approach
- Organized and led a one-week Theory of Change workshop for EMAPS partners in Kinshasa (March 17-20)
- Developed draft templates for EMAPS work plan and M&E plan
- Engaged Strengthening Central Africa Environmental Management and Policy Support (SCAEMPS) lead partner in ongoing planning and coordination for EMAPS
- Met with CARPE Management Team to discuss options for MI engagement in the short and medium term
- Facilitated the online review of the TOCs behind the CAFEC strategies with COPs
- Wrote-up and disseminated EMAPS workshop results
- Reviewed and provided feedback on SCAEMPS indicators; Worked with SCAEMPS COP to align their work planning and M&E planning processes and deliverables with TOC approach and CAFEC plans
- Completed a second round of review for SCAEMPS indicators
- Updated all eight CAFEC TOCs with final indicators
- Developed a draft one-page guidance on using the theory of change approach to setting up a performance evaluation
- Provided ongoing work developing CARPE-specific scenarios (learning questions, evaluation setup, and key considerations) for impact evaluations
- Provided input to CAFEC results chains and indicators
- Provided input on developing CARPE-specific scenarios (learning questions, evaluation setup, and key considerations) for an impact evaluation

SUMMARY OF FY14 MISSION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

ICAA

- Reviewed with partners their contribution and participation to each activity and result in their TOCs and identified their intervention scale.
- Validated information with ICAA Contracting Officer's Representatives (COR) and cleaned and prepared data to do a gap analysis.
- Conducted a gap analysis on the strategies implemented by ICAA partners, identifying who is doing what, where and at which intervention scale, where there are opportunities for cross-project learning or better synergies and where there are gaps in the intervention theory of change.
- Refined TOCs and developed a draft conceptual model for the ICAA program.
- Prepared, and facilitated a workshop with USAID ICAA staff and implementing partners to identify key questions to guide the ICAA II midterm evaluation
- Developed a roadmap and work plan to collect needed information for a future post-ICAA II strategic planning process
- Provided feedback on evaluation design
- Reviewed and commented on midterm evaluation scope of work
- Consulted with Management System International (MSI), the third party evaluator, to clarifying information on ICAA's results chains and their relation with ICAA result framework.
- Developed terms of reference for local contractors to support Mission in gathering key information and evidence for ICAA III design
- Supported MSI in developing an understanding of ICAA's Result Chains
- Revised evaluation terms of reference
- Contacted Tropical Andes Alliance to explore interest in mid-term evaluation
- Followed up with Armando Valdes on the information gathering process for ICAA III design

Nepal

- Reviewed and provided comment on latest draft of Natural Resource Management concept paper for PAD
- Reviewed and commented on M&E plan review for Hariyo Ban Work Plan activity two
- Prepared for and deliver two webinars to update Hariyo Ban M&E Plan
- Facilitated three virtual technical assistance sessions for the Hariyo Ban activity to review and comment on M&E plan

Philippines

- Reviewed and commented on Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy & Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER) TOCs report
- Revised a two-page mission profile from the Philippines Mission Packet for FAB POC to share with the Philippines Mission
- Reviewed and commented on Improving B+WISER biological baseline survey
- Facilitated virtual meeting with Mission to develop proposed work plan activities for 2014
- Prepared and delivered two webinars on TOCs for Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries (ECOFISH) project teams
- Conducted in-person meeting with ECOFISH to develop TOCs
- Prepared presentation and materials for two day workshop with B+WISER project team to inform the project M&E Plan
- Held two-day in-person meetings and virtual follow-up with ECOFISH and B+WISER project teams to develop TOCs for nine and eleven interventions, respectively
- Held in-person meetings and virtual follow up with Mission Environment Office and FAB to design University Mentoring Program mechanism to support ECOFISH research and monitoring
- Reviewed ECOFISH TOCs in Miradi. Provided written recommendations and comments. Set up webinar to meet with ECOFISH staff to discuss recommendations and comments on TOCs.
- Reviewed and provided recommendations on B+WISER TOCs, and held webinar with B+WISER staff to discuss recommendations and questions
- Facilitated two separate webinars – one with Mission, ECOFISH team and FAB, the other with Mission and B+WISER team – to review TOCs. After webinars, compiled recommendations from MI participants to provide additional recommendations to Mission, ECOFISH and B+WISER teams, and FAB counterparts.

SUMMARY OF FY14 MISSION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinitiated discussion and consultation with Mozambique Mission to identify needs and opportunities to work with Mission and partners• Prepared for first site visit to Mission to work with partners on the conceptualization and design of two new activities in Gorongosa and Niassa Protected Areas (workshop agenda, power point presentations and timeline)• Met with partners to discuss methodology and workshop expected results in preparation for first site visit.• Provided training/planning workshop for Mission team and two main partners to develop a new mechanism proposal for their sites.• Provided feedback to new mechanism on Miradi troubleshooting
Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted an online discussion on specific technical assistance needs for improving the Sustainable Coast and Forests strategic plan²
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed and provided feedback on the implementing partner's revised PMP for the Environmental Management for the Oil Sector (EMOS) activity• Reviewed and provided feedback on the implementing partner's revised PMP for the Tourism for Biodiversity activity• Developed a draft stock taking presentation

² USAID suspended activities in Ecuador in the first quarter of FY14.

ANALYSIS OF LESSONS LEARNED ACROSS MISSIONS

The “FY13 Analysis of Five Missions: Implementation of the USAID Program Cycle in Biodiversity Programming” Report (deliverable 1.1.B) was completed in FY14 and is a synthesis of observations from training and technical assistance across the MI Focal Missions that guided planning and priority setting for FY14 and laid a foundation for development of the Adaptive Management Checklist (planned FY15 product 1.1.2). MI’s observations are organized around the core programmatic components of the USAID Program Cycle and include identification of common Mission needs in Design and Implementation, M&E, and Learning and Adapting (see Table 2).

Table 2: Summary Analysis for Lessons Learned in Biodiversity Programming across Five USAID Missions

DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION	MONITORING & EVALUATION	LEARNING & ADAPTING
1. Limited emphasis placed on preliminary situation analysis	1. Lack of understanding of when and where to use select monitoring methods	1. Missions are not aware of or are not using the tools and resources available to them through Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA)
2. Underutilization of assessment opportunities	2. Lack of understanding of the relationship between indicators for M&E	2. No explicit learning agendas
3. Inconsistent process for determining geographic priorities	3. Incomplete understanding of the Evaluation Policy	3. Missed opportunities to generate new knowledge
4. Insufficient process for determining focal biodiversity conservation features	4. Standard Foreign Assistance indicators are misunderstood and misused	4. Learning is not explicitly linked to development hypotheses or TOCs
5. Incomplete threat analysis	5. M&E not linked to TOCs	5. Lack of experience adapting based on new knowledge
6. Little analysis of the root causes or drivers of threats to biodiversity	6. M&E across scales not linked	6. Underutilization of the procurement process to support Mission needs in CLA
7. Theory of change approach not fully embraced	7. M&E not serving to truly gauge outcomes/impact or to learn	7. Evolutionary acquisition is a new concept and Missions’ options are not fully understood
8. Transitioning from design to planning is inconsistent and incomplete		
9. The “strategy” is not evident in strategic planning		

In addition to identifying Missions needs and the challenges they face in implementing the Program Cycle, the analysis refined MI’s and E3/FAB’s understanding of the most effective entry point for assistance and helped establish a longer term vision for what can and needs to be accomplished during the life of MI so that Missions will continue to use these practices into the future. MI and E3/FAB identified a set of four enabling conditions that need to be in place for best practices in implementing the Program Cycle to be successfully adopted; the *Analysis of Five Missions* presents those enabling conditions and describes challenges to achieving them, helping MI and E3/FAB understand where to allocate effort during FY14 and beyond.

The *Analysis of Five Missions* was cleared as an internal document for the Forestry and Biodiversity Office and was used extensively by the full MI staff and Activity Managers during the FY15 planning retreat to assess progress to date and identify priorities for the coming year.

BRIEFINGS AND REVIEW SESSIONS

BRIEFINGS ON ANALYSES (DELIVERABLE 1.1C)

Through a series of briefings organized and facilitated by E3/FAB, MI presented key findings of the *Analysis of Five Missions* and updates on progress by region through six briefings to key decision makers from PPL, Regional Bureau for Africa, Regional Bureau for Asia, Regional Bureau for Latin American and the Caribbean, Office of Global Climate Change (GCC), Office of Land Tenure and Resources Management (LTRM), and Forestry and Biodiversity Office. The purpose of the briefings was to (1) describe MI's experience working with the environment sector to implement the Program Cycle and comply with Agency policies at the Mission level, and (2) define opportunities for MI, PPL and the Regional Bureaus to work together to provide added-value support to the Missions.

QUARTERLY REVIEW SESSIONS (DELIVERABLE 1.3.C)

Quarterly review sessions were completed by MI during FY14 on October 12, 2013; January 2, 2014; March 20, 2014; and the final on September 8, 2014. The purpose of the quarterly review sessions was to bring together points of contact for each Mission from E3/FAB and MI to assess collective progress and identify challenges and opportunities to address across each Mission.

Table 3: Quarterly Review Sessions and Key Topics

Quarter	Date Delivered	Key Topics
Q1	10/16/2013	The October session focused on bringing all E3/FAB Points of Contact to a common point of understanding of technical assistance provided during the first round of MI Mission visits and soliciting their feedback on next steps, best messages and modes for communicating back to Missions, and planning for FY14. The session resulted in refinement of the <i>Analysis of Five Missions</i> and an agreed process for developing AM work plans with Missions.
Q2	01/02/2014	The January session focused on USAID's definition of AM and the core concepts of the CLA approach. This session resulted in a series of discussions both internal to the IR1 team and with Missions and PPL on how best to build CLA priorities into the work we are already doing with Missions and to inform our future dialogue and planning.
Q3	03/20/2013	The March session entailed mapping and discussing MI's technical assistance and training provided to seven Missions at various scales in the Program Cycle and considering some preliminary enabling conditions for CLA. This session led to the identification of two key leverage points where MI can focus effort to help Missions overcome barriers to learning and adapting: (1) procurement process and (2) Mission learning plans.
Q4	09/08/2014	The September 2014 quarterly review was used to introduce the Points of Contact to the concept of a cost-benefit analysis as a tool to consider the relative return on investment across focal Missions. It was also used to gather feedback from the Points of Contact to inform strategic planning for FY15.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF FAB/MI INVESTMENTS IN FOCAL MISSIONS

Based on its work with Missions in FY14, IR1 conducted a retrospective analysis of the outcomes of TA and training provided during FY14, as well as the lessons learned from Missions, to create the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The CBA was not planned as a deliverable for FY14. It is presented here because it provides the most up-to-date and comprehensive summary of USAID's and MI's understanding of progress in implementing best practices in the Program Cycle through MI.

The CBA was designed to (1) systematically evaluate progress made in FY14 focal Missions, (2) assess FY15 objectives for each Mission work plan and define key leverage points to advance best practices in the Program Cycle, and (3) identify and prioritize future investments of MI and E3/FAB that will contribute to enhancing the enabling conditions to mainstream best practices in the Program Cycle throughout all biodiversity programming in USAID.

The CBA exercise was structured as a rapid assessment with inputs from the IR1 Regional Leads, AM Technical Advisor, and a subset of FAB POCs for each Focal Mission. In an effort to standardize and systematize the assessment process, the CBA included a set of key factors, an evaluation criteria, and a scorecard that were completed through a consultative process between MI Regional Leads, IR1 Lead, and E3/FAB. Findings from each Mission were rolled up into a summary analysis, allowing MI and FAB to compare information across Missions. A summary of Key Achievements for FY14 is described below in the context of:

- Critical Factors: Key results for building AM capacity in Focal Missions
- Enabling Conditions: Limiting or contributing factors to IR1 progress in each Mission
- Cost Effectiveness: Burn rate verses progress across each Mission

CRITICAL FACTORS

Missions were scored on a scale of zero-to-five indicating their progress towards the following key results: (1) awareness of and desire for support in AM, (2) use and application of the situation model, theory of change, and indicator tools and guidance provided by MI/FAB in project designs; (3) enhancement of business processes to support application of AM throughout implementation of the PAD or mechanism; and (4) enhancement of learning and use of evidence throughout implementation of the Program Cycle. When combined, these four key results define each Mission's advancement towards implementing best practices in the Program Cycle (Table 4).

Table 4: Key Results for Building AM Capacity in Focal Missions

	Scale	ICAA	CARPE	Uganda	Mozambique	Indonesia	Nepal	Philippines	Average
1 Aware of and want support in AM	0 to 5	5	4	3	3	5	3	5	4
2 Use and application of the tools	0 to 5	3	5	4	3	5	4	5	4
3 Enhanced business process	0 to 5	2	4	2	3	5	0	2	3
4 Enhanced learning and use of evidence	0 to 5	2	1	0	0	2	1	3	1
Total (20 possible)	(0-20)	12	14	9	9	17	8	15	12

Key Observations

- CARPE, Indonesia, and the Philippines have established a strong foundation from which to build appropriate business process to support best practices in the Program Cycle. This foundation will serve as a starting point to define and test best practices for learning in FY15.
- The greatest progress made across focal Missions in FY14 was in the first two key results of the MI results chain: focal Missions aware of and want support in AM, demonstrated by developing a vision and commitment for AM practices (Factor 1), and use and application of AM tools for

project design and M&E frameworks (Factor 2). Less progress was made towards enhancing business processes (Factor 3) and enhanced use of learning and evidence (Factor 4); however efforts in FY14 laid the foundation for Missions to begin to adopt at least one new process in FY15. This finding underscores the need for E3/FAB to set an expectation of long-term investment in focal Missions to allow for sufficient time for USAID staff to both learn and operationalize best practice in the Program Cycle. Supporting focal Missions in project design and M&E without addressing business processes will undermine achievement of the ultimate goal.

- For Factor 4 in the MI results chain, enhanced learning and use of evidence, in most cases, Missions are working with MI to set up an initial framework for systematic learning and adapting. Currently, systems do not exist and Mission staff are not able to clearly define and extract lessons learned from a single mechanism, much less across multiple mechanisms in a PAD, or USAID investments made towards a particular Development Objective (DO) under a CDCS. This finding highlights the need for E3/FAB and MI to allocate resources to define best practices for linking M&E in two critical ways to better communicate effectiveness and impact in biodiversity programming: (a) across sites, landscapes and regional scales, and (b) roll up from the mechanism, to PAD to CDCS levels.

ENABLING CONDITIONS

As shown in Table 5, the enabling conditions most relevant to IR1 progress in building AM capacity across focal Missions in FY14 included four factors: (1) Mission bandwidth to advance the joint AM work plan under MI; (2) complexity, management and communications across focal Mission staff and implementing partners; (3) Mission- or Agency-wide timelines and scheduling, most importantly, procurement and policy decisions with direct implications on focal Mission progress; and (4) MI investments in training and TA diverted to implementing partners instead of or in addition to USAID staff.

Table 5: Limiting or contributing factors to IR1 progress in each Mission

		Scale	ICAA	CARPE	Uganda	Mozambique	Indonesia	Nepal	Philippines	Sum
1	Mission bandwidth to advance work plan	Y=1, N=0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
2	Complexity, Management & Communications	Y=1, N=0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
3	Timeline and scheduling (including delays due to policy or procurement decisions)	Y=1, N=0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
4	Investments diverted to implementing partners	Y=1, N=0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Total (4 possible)		(0-4)	2	3	3	3	0	1	1	N/A

Key Observations

- Mission bandwidth is an ongoing challenge across every focal Mission, however it was a *limiting* factor particularly for Mozambique, Uganda and Nepal, slowing or halting progress towards completing the joint AM work plan. In each case, environment offices were understaffed or experiencing a turnover of 50% or more of their standard levels of staffing. In contrast, bandwidth was not an issue in the Philippines and Indonesia where environment offices are appropriately staffed and comprise a mix of foreign service nationals (FSNs) and host country nationals perhaps providing a more stable environment during staff transitions and *contributing* to their success in FY14.
- Regional-scale or multi-country initiatives such as CARPE and ICAA require significant investments in planning, coordination and the development of systems to support learning. MI's general finding is that these regional initiatives do not allocate sufficient time and resources to address the level of complexity required for USAID investments in landscape-based approaches

and the corresponding management and communication needs. Confusion exists over the roles, responsibilities and expectations amongst the many partners and USAID staff regarding who is responsible for key functions of learning and adapting, leading to higher transactional costs of E3/FAB and MI engagement.

- Agency-wide policy decisions and procurement processes play a significant role in setting Mission priorities, and often predetermine timelines and schedules for new project designs or reporting Mission progress. For instance in FY14 Uganda biodiversity funds were withdrawn from an existing mechanism that MI was engaged with due to conflict with the host country government and resulting policy decisions made in Washington. In the case of Mozambique, the procurement process was delayed by ten months, pushing back MI's support to later in the year.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

The last variable reviewed in the CBA exercise for FY14 progress was the cost effectiveness of MI/FAB investment across each Mission. The preliminary analysis was conducted by comparing the FY14 Burn Rate (projected versus expended level of effort per focal Mission) with the completion rate of Mission AM work plans as demonstrated in Table 6. It should be noted that MI and E3/FAB developed the projected FY14 spending per Mission with a very limited set of reliable information.

Table 6: Burn rate versus progress across each Mission

	Unit	ICAA	CARPE	Uganda	Mozambique	Indonesia	Nepal	Philippines	Mean
1 FY14 Burn Rate	%	76%	163%	44%	110%	87%	94%	115%	99%
2 Completion Rate of Mission Work Plans	%	90%	90%	35%	85%	100%	75%	100%	83%

Key Observations

- MI and E3/FAB were successful in completing tasks identified in the seven focal Mission AM work plans in FY14, achieving a cumulative 83% completion rate. This contributed to significant progress in for these Missions in implementing best practices in the Program Cycle. Indonesia, Philippines, and CARPE stood out as making the best progress against planned work during FY14, helping to inform MI's planning for FY15 for these Missions. Due to delays beyond the control of MI, E3/FAB or the Mission control, progress slowed in Mozambique, Nepal, Uganda and ICAA. This finding does not undermine the potential for progress in any one Mission for FY15; it underscores the need for MI and E3/FAB to be flexible, agile, and opportunistic in providing support to Missions, ensuring added value and demand-driven services.
- The combined totals for all seven Missions indicate that as a group they were able to absorb 99% of the TA and training that MI and E3/FAB offered in FY14, with a projected 25% increase in level of effort across Mission AM work plans for FY15, including the addition of four new operating units to work with MI. This indicates a growing demand and appetite for the types of technical assistance and training provided through MI and E3/FAB.

SELECT MISSION OVERVIEWS FOR FY14

Four brief overviews of MI support to Missions follow. These more in-depth summaries show the application of technical assistance to build capacity for best practices in implementing the Program Cycle and present a picture of the outcomes of one year of the investment by USAID in building this capacity. These summaries were developed for the four Missions that received a significant investment of time by MI and that showed strong achievement against their work plans (Table 6).

MI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING IN CARPE

MI's two site visits to the CARPE Regional Program in FY14 uncovered both challenges and opportunities that the MI team will continue to address in FY15 and beyond. Due to the timing of MI's initial site visit in FY13 and the status of the Mission's procurement process, prospective planning for Phase III of CARPE as an entry point for MI was not possible. As such, MI's involvement in CARPE started during the post-award phase – in December 2013 for CAFEC Landscape Programs and in March 2014 for the EMAPS main mechanism: SCAEMPS. MI's engagement with CARPE has been enhanced by having the opportunity for direct engagement with implementing partners and coordinated planning for cross-landscape learning.

These factors informed the FY14 Mission Work Plan for CARPE, providing several opportunities for MI to support the CARPE Management Team in reaching their adaptive management goals. The most immediate opportunity was to work with CARPE Management Team, CAFEC implementing partners, and other partners to use a situation model to conceptualize the region's conservation issues and define CARPE's role relative to other agencies in broader US Government conservation investments in the Congo Basin. MI also worked with CARPE partners to apply the results chain / TOC tool to distill the numerous and at-times disjointed activities planned across all CAFEC Landscape programs and partners into eight interventions, each with a clear TOC and common indicators for key results. As a result CAFEC partners' have developed monitoring plans for CARPE III that are both strategic and coordinated and will allow CARPE Management Team to assess annual performance and evaluate and report on the entire project more effectively.

MI also facilitated the use of results chains / TOCs with CARPE partners to clarify and articulate the purpose of the EMAPS project and how it supports the eight landscape-level CAFEC interventions. This process allowed EMAPS partners (including SCAEMPS) to clarify their roles and specific contributions to the overall purpose of EMAPS. Like CAFEC partners, the SCAEMPS implementing partner also used TOCs to identify strategic indicators for monitoring the anticipated results of their interventions. Taken together, the work that CARPE and the implementing partners did with MI also supported a move towards compliance with the revisions to the Biodiversity Code by this major portion of USAID's investment in conservation.

As described above, MI's entry point to help CARPE adopt improved adaptive management practices was to work directly with implementing partners and the CARPE Management Team to clarify the links between planned interventions and improved biodiversity, and to identify a focused and common suite of indicators that would support greater coordination across Landscapes. Outcomes include:

- CAFEC and SCAEMPS Work Plan structure that was originally organized by IRs and sub-IRs in the RFA is now organized by IRs and interventions
- CAFEC and SCAEMPS Work Plans are cross-referenced to operationalize the linkages made between the two projects in the TOC diagrams
- CAFEC and SCAEMPS M&E Plans include common indicators organized by interventions
- CAFEC Reporting Template was augmented to include a Lessons Learned section that requires implementing partners to reflect on how they tested the logic of the results chains / TOCs.

Combined, these measures represent enhancements in the Mission's business processes to support adaptive management. MI, E3/FAB and the CARPE Mission accomplished 90% of activities and tasks defined in the FY14 Work Plan.

MI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING IN INDONESIA

Indonesia represents one of USAID's largest investments in Environment programming. In the CDCS for 2014-2018, biodiversity is represented under Development Objective 3: *Global Development Priorities of Mutual Interest Advanced*. Specifically, IR 3.2 under DO3 focuses on: *Marine & Terrestrial Biodiversity Conserved*, and is integrated with climate change under IR3.3: *Climate Change Mitigation & Resilience to Support a Green Economy Strengthened*. Under the new Environment PAD, approved to begin with the CDCS in FY14, all new mechanisms will be organized under three subprograms: Forestry and Land Use Management, Marine and Fisheries Resource Management, and Renewable Resources Management for Clean Energy. Within this framework, the entry point for MI has been to support the Environment Office in the design of new mechanisms in the forestry and marine subprograms and planning for their respective evaluations.

The Environment Office is relatively new, and many staff have had limited experience, capacity or bandwidth to support adaptive management. Mission aspirations to systematically learn from and adapt their Environment activities are also hindered by a lack of systems or processes for project design, monitoring and evaluation. The Mission also lacks software systems for diagramming and documenting proposed designs as well as systems to store and analyze monitoring data and evaluation results. This, in turn, has limited the Indonesia Mission's ability to systematically access and use these results to adapt existing mechanisms or design new ones.

These factors informed the FY14 MI Mission Work Plan for Indonesia, providing several opportunities for MI to support the Environment Office. The most immediate opportunity was to coach forestry and marine subprogram teams to use a situation model tool to design new forestry and marine mechanisms under the Environment PAD. This support resulted in a situation model for each subprogram that included the following features and was used to identify and prioritize interventions for two new USAID mechanisms to be procured in FY15:

- Specified biodiversity and human wellbeing focal interests within a geographic area of concern for each subprogram
- Identified and ranked critical pressures (direct threats) that are degrading the viability of the biodiversity focal interests within the geographic area
- Mapped the causal relationships between various drivers that are assumed to be contributing to these critical pressures
- Diagrammed other existing USAID mechanisms and USG investments that work within the same geographic area and that will impact the drivers and pressures identified in the situation model

MI's work with the Mission overall resulted in critical enhancements in the Missions business processes to support the uptake of adaptive management, including:

- Inclusion of a situation model in the RFPs for both the forestry mechanism and marine mechanism
- Training on evaluating TOC logic to inform performance evaluations
- Developing proposal evaluation criteria for adaptive management
- Training in use and application of tools for the Program Office
- Training for a Miradi super user within the Mission

MI, E3/FAB and the Indonesia Mission accomplished 100% of activities and tasks defined in the FY14 Work Plan.

MI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, the Mission CDCS is approved for 2012-2016 and the Mission designed more than 40 new Mechanisms that all began implementation in 2012 along with the start of the CDCS. Biodiversity is represented at the Development Objective level – DO3: *Environmental Resilience Improved*. More specifically Sub-IR 3.2.1 under DO3 focuses on: *Biodiversity Conservation and Management Strengthened*. Interventions by the Environment Program under the Office of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change (OEECC) are directed at strengthening government capacity to manage forests, protected areas and coastal zones from “ridge to reef.” The Environment Program consists of nine Mechanisms - five Forestry & Biodiversity and four Coastal and Marine. Within this framework, the entry point for MI since the initial Mission visit in August 2013 has been support to the Environment Program and implementing partners of two existing major mechanisms, ECOFISH and B+WISER, as pilots for advancing capacity and systems within the Mission for adaptive management.

This Mission presents several opportunities for establishing robust adaptive management practices. Staff are eager to improve monitoring, evaluation and learning across Mission programs, and there is high-level support in the Mission for improving staff capacity and systems to achieve this. In addition, there is already an exceptionally strong foundation of FSN capacity in the OEECC and the Program Resource Management (PRM) Office upon which to build.

These factors informed the FY14 Mission Work Plan for the Philippines. The most immediate opportunity was to coach the ECOFISH and B+WISER teams to use a TOC tool to diagram their assumptions about how the interventions they implement will lead to conservation impact, and to use this TOC approach to select indicators for monitoring that will form the basis for robust performance evaluations of these mechanisms.

This support from MI resulted in TOCs for ECOFISH and B+WISER interventions that begin to:

- Define how each team assumes an intervention will contribute to reducing pressures to conserve biodiversity focal interests
- Focus on the achievement of results, not the execution of activities
- Are composed of assumptions that can be tested
- Define measurable outcomes that help teams be realistic about the time required to achieve expected results
- Define common indicators that can be monitored across sites to enhance learning and adaptive management

The TOC tool was also used by the Mission and E3/FAB to define the assumptions, activities and anticipated results for a new mechanism that will build institutional capacity for Philippine universities to support coastal and marine conservation at ECOFISH sites.

As described above, MI's entry point with the Philippines was at the post-award stage for the ECOFISH and B+WISER mechanisms. In order for MI to help the Mission and implementing partners do good adaptive management, the logical next step was for MI, the Mission and IPs to begin use *Miradi* software to operationalize project design, monitoring and evaluation concepts and tools. Environment Program and PRM staff were trained to use a situation model tool and *Miradi* to complete a retrospective situation analysis for the ECOFISH and B+WISER mechanisms. At the same time Mission staff and IPs were also trained to use *Miradi* to develop TOCs, outcomes and indicators and to systematically record monitoring results that would support adaptive management and learning over time.

Overall, MI, E3/FAB and the Philippines Mission accomplished 100% of activities and tasks defined in the FY14 Work Plan.

MI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING IN NEPAL

At USAID Nepal, MI provides technical support to a three-person Environment Team within the Social, Environmental and Economic Development Office. The Environment Team currently manages the ongoing Hariyo Ban Program, a five-year program that started in August 2011, with objectives to reduce threats to biodiversity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and increase adaptation to the impacts of climate change. Concurrently, the Team is also designing a new Natural Resources Management Project that will contribute to the achievement of DO2 *Inclusive and sustainable economic growth* in the recently-approved CDCS. The purpose of the Natural Resources Management Project corresponds specifically to IR2.3: *Quantity and quality of natural resources improved*.

Within this framework, the entry point for MI since the initial Mission visit in June 2013 has been support to the Environment Team to improve design, M&E at the mechanism and the PAD levels. Although the Mission has engaged technical and program staff that are eager to improve adaptive management practices, they lack the necessary processes and systems for using monitoring and evaluation to adapt existing mechanisms or design new ones.

These factors informed the FY14 Mission Work Plan for Nepal. The most immediate opportunity was to coach the Environment Team, along with the Program Office and other technical offices at the Mission to use a situation model tool to design the new Natural Resources Management Project, with the preliminary results being used to inform the concept paper for the Project and then a more detailed situation analysis used to draft the Natural Resources Management PAD. This robust problem analysis was used to identify and prioritize potential interventions, including climate adaptation interventions designed to reduce the critical pressures and stresses on biodiversity. These results were compiled into six major intervention components of the Natural Resources Management Project.

In order for MI to help the Mission do good adaptive management, the logical next step was to coach the Environment Team and Program Office to use a TOC tool to illustrate assumptions about how these six major interventions in the Natural Resources Management Project would reduce critical pressures and improve the viability of biodiversity interests, and ultimately human wellbeing, in the geographic area of concern. The resulting TOCs were used to develop the log frame for the Natural Resources Management Project. For the existing Hariyo Ban project, MI helped the Mission and implementing partners to improve adaptive management of this mechanism by coaching them to refine their TOCs and to use these TOCs to update their M&E plan and learning agenda.

Overall, MI, E3/FAB and the Mission achieved 75% of the activities and tasks defined in the FY14 work plan.

KEY PRODUCTS

- Six Mission Work Plans and associated technical assistance (Deliverable 1.1.A)
- Analysis of Lessons Learned Across Missions (Deliverable 1.1.B)
- Briefings on Analyses (Deliverable 1.1.C)
- Trip Reports (Deliverable 1.2.A)
- Library of Mission-Derived Products (Deliverable 1.3.A) (transferred to IR4 for completion during FY15)
- Adaptive Management Training (Deliverable 1.3.B)
- Four Mission Review Sessions (Deliverable 1.3.C)

IR2: IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION APPROACHES

FY14 marked a pivotal turning point for IR2 most notably due to a change in the IR's strategic direction and in completion of two key hires (IR2 Lead and Technical Analyst). A big success of IR2 was the progress in developing a systematic effort to capture and share learning across Missions on TOCs for priority conservation interventions, called the Cross-Mission Learning Program (Learning Program). This success is highlighted by gaining agreement on the overall vision and draft framework for the Learning Program as well as on the initial three conservation interventions that will be its focus. Additionally, IR2 brought to near completion the outstanding evaluations and lessons learned for the three E3/FAB mechanisms: the Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) project, the United States Forest Service (USFS) Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA), and the Forest, Climate and Communities Alliance (FCCA) project.

IR2 STRATEGIC APPROACH

IR2 significantly reoriented its strategic approach during FY14 to focus on creating a “learning program” around biodiversity programming within USAID with the goal of systematically learning from selected USAID conservation actions to determine the conditions under which a conservation approach is likely to be more effective, and why.

During FY14, IR2 focused on:

- Developing the Learning Program,
- Assessing Tier 1 Mission actions and selecting three conservation interventions for the Learning Program,
- Developing a Summary of Findings for Sustainable Livelihoods (a selected intervention), and
- Completing the SCAPES and PAPA performance evaluations and FCCA lessons learned

LEARNING PROGRAM (ACTIVITY 2.1 – 2.3)

With the addition of new staff in Q2, the Learning Program began to take shape in FY14, exemplified by 1) selecting initial conservation interventions for cross-Mission learning, 2) developing a draft Learning Program framework and 3) providing Mission site visit support in which IR2 introduced the Learning Program.

SELECTED CONSERVATION INTERVENTIONS

MI identified the initial three conservation interventions that will be the focus of the Learning Program. The process entailed applying a set of *a priori* criteria developed jointly with E3/FAB to the eight most common “potential TOCs” (conservation interventions and their related TOC factors) that emerged through the inventorying of biodiversity programming in Tier 1 and MI-focal Missions. The initial interventions selected for the Learning Program are:

- Sustainable Livelihoods,
- Compliance and Enforcement, and
- Laws, Policies, and Regulations.

A product definition was created and approved for a synthesis of findings for sustainable livelihoods. The purpose of the synthesis of findings is for MI and E3/FAB to better understand the “what”, “who”, and “how” of a potential cross-Mission learning activity around the effectiveness of sustainable livelihoods interventions linked to biodiversity conservation. It will include: (1) the specific TOC(s) related to sustainable livelihoods of possible relevance to Missions, (2) synthesis of evidence from available USAID documents supporting these TOC(s), (3) identification of evidence gaps, (4) possible learning questions and approaches, and (5) possible participants in a learning group.

LEARNING PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

IR2 developed a draft Framework for the MI Cross-Mission Learning Program, a document to establish the shared vision between E3/FAB and MI for the Learning Program, identify the processes and tools needed to implement it, and define the specific tasks that need to be done and what personnel would ideally be responsible for completing those tasks.

IR2 hosted a meeting with E3/FAB in which it shared elements of and the thinking behind the draft framework, and is now focused on finalizing that document and moving towards launch of the Learning Program.

To inform its development of the Learning Program framework, IR2 conducted research on principles of organizational learning and is completing a Summary and Analysis of Different Learning Approaches that will summarize previous USAID-supported learning network efforts, provide recommendations for structure and development of the Learning Program, and provide a focal graphic that summarizes recommendations for the structure of learning networks.

MISSION SITE VISIT SUPPORT

IR2 accompanied IR1 and supported its work on site visits during FY14 to Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines. It used these opportunities for direct Mission engagement to introduce the Cross-Mission Learning Program to Mission staff and to solicit input into its development. Two products were developed and used on the Mission site visits to introduce the Learning Program – a PowerPoint slide deck and a one-page program overview. The slide deck introduced high-level concepts surrounding the Learning Program such as USAID context relating to learning efforts, the need and purpose of a learning program, ways in which Missions can participate, and the Learning Program's anticipated results and potential products. The slide deck proved to be valuable by the conversations and thinking that it sparked with Missions on how they see it working on-the-ground given their experience and expertise. The one-page overview provided a high level overview of the content discussed in the slide deck.

EVALUATIONS (ACTIVITY 2.6)

IR2 brought to near completion the outstanding evaluations and lessons learned for the three E3/FAB mechanisms: the PAPA, FCCA, and SCAPES project.

PAPA

This evaluation was completed in FY14. The goal of the evaluation was to determine to what extent the USFS PAPA is being used and performing towards its intended objectives, and to provide recommendations that increase overall PAPA effectiveness. Four questions were defined as the priority focus of the PAPA Evaluation. The findings and conclusions of the evaluation were structured around these questions.

- How is the PAPA being used?
- What do PAPA buy-ins look like up close?
- What is the quality and how effective is the T/A provided under the PAPA?
- What is the USFS International Program's performance in managing the PAPA?

The PAPA Evaluation Report was approved by the IR2 Activity Manager and the COR in Q2 FY14. The report is awaiting final E3/FAB approval. Prior to submission, the report was reviewed by staff from USAID and the United States Forest Service International Program (USFS-IP), and PAPA stakeholders were given a chance to provide feedback during and after a presentation in March.

FCCA

MI completed a final draft of the Lessons Learned analysis of the FCCA project implemented by Rainforest Alliance in Honduras and Ghana in Q2 FY14. The Lessons Learned analysis was undertaken by MI to better define FCCA's implicit assumptions about how project interventions would result in achievement of anticipated outcomes at each project site. MI provided a detailed summary of lessons learned, organized by FCCA project component and ultimate purpose. Several lessons were identified for each component of the project, and several held true for FCCA overall.

SCAPES

MI nearly completed the Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems SCAPES evaluation in FY14. The draft evaluation report was submitted to MI and USAID during Q4 FY14 and is expected to be finalized early in FY15.

The SCAPES evaluation focuses on three key evaluation questions.

- To what extent were the SCAPES Key Principles (threats-based approach, sustainability, scaling up and AM) and gender applied in the design and implementation of SCAPES projects and what evidence exists that they contributed to conservation successes?
- To what extent have SCAPES projects achieved success in overcoming the limiting factors identified through the Limiting Factors Analysis?
- Using seven TOCs, what evidence exists that the implementation of key SCAPES strategies has led to successful conservation outcomes?

After conducting interviews with various candidates and consulting with USAID, MI hired two SCAPES evaluators, Matthew Erdman and John Pielemeier. The evaluators developed a questionnaire and interview guide that was used to conduct remote interviews with key informants for each of the nine SCAPES landscapes. The evaluators' initial findings were presented to MI staff and USAID, and subsequently to USAID and implementing partners in Q2 FY14. The SCAPES evaluators presented their initial findings on the evidence collected under the seven retrospective TOCs that MI developed with implementing partners during the design phase of the SCAPES evaluation (FY13). Agreements Officers' Representatives and MI staff gave feedback and recommendations to the evaluators. The evaluators then presented and discussed these initial findings with USAID and staff of the four implementing partner organizations during the SCAPES Annual Meeting.

E3/FAB MONITORING AND EVALUATION AGENDA

MI developed the 2012-2017 Monitoring and Evaluation Agenda (M&E Agenda) in Q1 FY14, which at the time, was intended to be a dynamic document that would be updated annually and revised during the life of MI. However, it was agreed with E3/FAB that an M&E Agenda Progress Report would be of more use than a revised M&E Agenda given the reorientation of IR2's strategic approach, and evolution of thinking on the value of MI conducting retrospective evaluations and the M&E Agenda being a roadmap for MI to institutionalize M&E. The M&E Agenda Progress Report, to be completed in Q1 FY15, will give an update on progress made over FY14 as well as activities planned for FY15 for advancing the M&E Agenda.

CROSS-IR WORK

IR2 collaborated with all other MI IRs in FY14, creating strong integration of MI's work.

IRs1 and 2 collaborated on several occasions throughout FY14, most commonly in relation to IR1's work with Missions. IR2 contributed TA in the development of a prototype tool that uses CARPE's TOC structure to frame progress reviews of its implementing partners; the Partners-Progress Assessments and Indicator Database. Additionally, IR2 helped to develop Mission work plans and provide general Mission support, both on site and virtually, with an initial focus on the Philippines, Nepal, Indonesia, and as previously mentioned, CARPE.

IR2 also attended three site visits to the Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines Missions in FY14 where they provided support to IR1 and introduced the Cross-Mission Learning Program. A CARPE site visit is planned for Q1 FY15, which IR2 will attend with IR1 to refine the thinking of MI's planned work with the CARPE partners.

IRs 2 and 3 worked together during FY14 to shape the coordination and integration of MI research and the Learning Program. Some specific examples of the collaboration between the two IRs include:

- A proposed approach for identifying and prioritizing research questions around TOCs for the selected interventions of the Learning Program,
- A concept note for a research project on the effectiveness of community enforcement on reducing wildlife poaching, and
- A literature search on USAID's Natural Resources and Development Portal (RM Portal) and Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) for sustainable livelihoods interventions.

Lastly, **IRs 2 and 4** collaborated on the development of the MI communications strategy and the approaches to integrate Global Climate Change into biodiversity programming.

KEY PRODUCTS:

- Product definition for Framework for the Learning Program (Deliverable 2.1.A)
- Selection of Conservation Interventions for the MI Cross-Mission Learning Program Report (combined Deliverables 2.2.A & 2.2.B)
- Product definition for Summary of Findings: Potential Cross-Mission Learning Agenda on the Effectiveness of Sustainable Livelihoods Interventions (Deliverable 2.3.A)
- Product definition for Technical Analysis: Summary & Analysis of Different Learning Approaches (Deliverable 2.4.A)
- PAPA Final Evaluation Report (Deliverable 2.6.A)
- FCCA Lessons Learned final draft (Deliverable 2.6.A)
- PAPA Evaluation Report (Deliverable 2.6.A) and de-briefing presentation
- SCAPES Evaluation work plan, questionnaire, interview guide, and site visit (interim products under Deliverable 2.6.A)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS:

- Guided USAID summer intern's research towards Deliverable 2.3.A
- IR2 review of MI's third-party-reviewer's results on the MI PMP Indicator #4, Quality of MI Evaluation Design.

IR3: BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE

FY14 marked a significant development for IR3 with the most notable successes including the hiring of the new IR3 Lead, Dr. Andres Gomez, redefining the IR3 strategic approach, receiving final approval and clearance of the BDRF, and defining and implementing four additional research activities.

IR3 STRATEGIC APPROACH

MI's IR3 is designed to build the evidence base to inform more effective conservation programs at USAID and to support integration of biodiversity with other sectors to achieve good development outcomes. Five areas of focus, and their relative prioritization, were identified by the IR3 staff and Activity Manager, and agreed to during the MI Strategic Planning Retreat in September 2014. The redefined IR3 strategy comprises these areas of focus and new Milestones to be implemented in FY15 and through the life of project. Priority focal areas include:

1. Identifying and addressing evidence gaps in selected TOCs and
2. Articulating integration pathways between biodiversity and food security and biodiversity and health

IR3 also identified three secondary priorities:

3. Filling evidence gaps in other selected topics,
4. Developing a strategy for building USAID capacity to generate, use and share evidence in biodiversity programs, and
5. Contributing to dissemination of the BDRF

During FY14, IR3 finalized the BDRF in order to set an Agency-wide framework for research on biodiversity, implemented high priority research activities, and coordinated with IR2 on the ways to identify evidence gaps in priority TOCs.

BIODIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK (ACTIVITY 3.0)

In FY14, MI finalized the BDRF; a framework to generate research that will strengthen the evidence base needed for effective biodiversity conservation and improve the Agency's capability to effectively integrate biodiversity conservation with other development sectors. The BDRF has wide-ranging applicability to the work of USAID's bureaus and missions, as well as partners in the biodiversity and development community, and can be referred to as a guidance tool to identify priority research topics. In partnership with outside organizations, the BDRF can also be an instrument with which to promote critical thinking about key issues and questions within USAID and its broader partnerships, as well as build capacity in identifying research questions and methodologies. As research findings accrue, the BDRF can contribute toward the development of a body of data, evidence, and knowledge to inform USAID and partners' biodiversity and integrated programs. Finally, the BDRF provides a wealth of information on key themes and topics that can be tailored to specific approaches, types of programs, and stages in the Program Cycle.

The BDRF was disseminated to key audiences in FY14, but first underwent several iterations in order to engage and incorporate the valuable perspectives of different stakeholders, and to ensure alignment with the final version of the USAID Biodiversity Policy released in July 2014. To focus and streamline feedback, MI facilitated several meetings and used an online questionnaire to gather input from the IR3 Activity Manager, MI management team, RAWG, Missions and other USAID offices. Anila Jacob, IR3's Senior Research Specialist, presented an overview of the BDRF at a meeting with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in London. The presentation was well received and helped CIFOR and IIED to better understand USAID's research priorities related to biodiversity conservation and development. The final draft of the BDRF was submitted and approved by Cynthia Gill and E3/FAB in Q4 FY14.

Prior to finalization of the BDRF, IR3 staff performed and completed analyses of its research components using relational databases, word frequency analyses, and word cloud analyses. MI then cross-referenced the BDRF research questions with published literature and created reference libraries to be used in the IR3 strategy. From this work, IR3 staff began work on a list of potential research topics outside the BDRF to be considered for implementation in early FY15. Staff developed and presented a draft protocol for identifying priority research questions in the BDRF and for identifying priority research questions for MI's priority TOCs.

NEW RESEARCH ACTIVITIES (ACTIVITY 3.1 – 3.3)

During FY14, MI focused on defining and implementing research on topics that were identified as relevant to the high-priority thematic areas in the FY14 Work Plan, aligned with the USAID Biodiversity Policy and the BDRF, and are of appropriate strategic value to USAID.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN ANTI-POACHING AND ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES

The MI team met with the E3/FAB Office to determine the specific focus of the research activity: the conditions under which community ranger programs are effective in reducing poaching. IR3 staff conducted a background literature search and completed a first draft of a concept note for the wildlife trafficking research activity, focusing on factors that contribute to the success of community guard programs in combating wildlife poaching.

This draft was reviewed internally by the MI team and was submitted to the Activity Manager for review in Q1 FY14. Following a meeting with IR2 staff and the IR2 and IR3 Activity Managers, it was decided to revise this draft based on a broadening of the activity to include community engagement in anti-poaching activities. The IR3 team determined that this research activity will be conducted using case study methodology in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) during FY15.

A brainstorming session was held in Q3 of FY14 with Dr. David Wilkie from WCS and MI staff to discuss the community engagement research activity. A product definition for the research was developed in collaboration with WCS and shared with E3/FAB. Following this, a statement of work (SOW) for the WCS subcontract was produced, reviewed and approved by the COR in early FY15.

CARPE CONSTITUENCY BUILDING

The IR3 team, in consultation with the COP and Activity Manager, determined that a research activity for FY14 would focus on constituency building in the CARPE region. Discussions were held with Vinaya Swaminathan, the IR1 CARPE point of contact, and the IR3 Activity Manager to determine the scope of this research activity. It was decided that the activity would be limited to a review of relevant CARPE Phase II and III documents related to constituency building activities already implemented by CARPE partners, a summary of data from the Demographic and Health Survey from CARPE landscapes, and a global literature review to better understand best practices in constituency building. The MI trip report from the recent CARPE mission visit provided guidance to the IR3 team in defining this research topic.

The IR3 team completed background research and reviewed CARPE documents to inform the product definition for this research activity. The product definition for the CARPE research activity was developed and revised based on internal review by ICF and IR1 staff, and was approved by the Activity Manager in Q4. The IR3 team started implementation of this activity by reviewing relevant background documents and developing a SOW for a literature review focused on constituency building in support of biodiversity conservation. IR3 identified a subcontractor and is currently in the process of drafting a contract.

GENDER RESEARCH ACTIVITY

IR3 staff held discussions with Craig Leisher, a senior social scientist at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the primary investigator in this project, to inform the product definition, timeline, intellectual property issues, and SOW for a research activity focused on gender and natural resources governance. Several recent studies have highlighted the conservation and social benefits of empowering women in natural resource governance. Yet these findings may not be generalizable to all contexts. Therefore, an assessment of existing evidence of how and under what circumstances, gender influences the management and conservation of biodiversity resources is needed. IR3 is partnering with TNC to research the interrelationships between gender, governance, and biodiversity conservation. A product

definition and timeline for a gender and natural resources governance research activity was developed with TNC, and the contract with TNC is expected to be finalized in Q1 FY15.

ICF staff also participated in the gender working group and drafted gender related IR3 activities, milestones, and deliverables for FY15.

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

IR3 contributed to a systematic review of alternative livelihood approaches that is being led by CIFOR and IIED. Anila Jacob from the MI Research team accompanied the IR3 Activity Manager to attend meetings in London with the IIED, CIFOR, TNC, and the Zoological Society of London to participate in the kick-off meeting for a systematic review of alternative livelihood approaches for biodiversity conservation and discuss new MI research activities and opportunities for collaboration. At this meeting, it was determined that MI could contribute to this systematic review by searching relevant USAID databases for Agency documents that met the inclusion criteria for the review. A product definition was developed and approved by the Activity Manager; upon approval, MI staff worked with USAID's knowledge management staff to conduct searches of the DEC and RM Portal for USAID programmatic documents that met the inclusion criteria established by IIED. A final list of 53 documents was forwarded to IIED for further review. MI also plans to review the draft of the systematic review, which is anticipated to be ready in Q2 FY15.

GEOSPATIAL MONITORING AND REMOTE SENSING PRODUCTS (ACTIVITY 3.3)

IR3 staff partnered with NASA and Sigma Space to complete the Biodiversity Monitoring Report. This report explores the use of GeoCenter, SERVIR, NASA/University of Maryland, United States Geological Survey and other mission- or country-specific institutions and datasets for monitoring biodiversity and development outcomes in priority ecoregions. At the request of the Activity Manager, MI staff developed a brief that summarizes key points in the Report for Missions. This activity is currently on hold until FY15 in order for MI and USAID to discuss the most strategic way to present the brief to Missions.

Stemming from the work done in the Biodiversity Monitoring Report, the Remote Sensing Options Paper (Options Paper) examined the applicability of these data to answer key questions in the BDRF. During Q1 FY14, the IR3 team held discussions with Sigma Space and the remote sensing team at ICF International to develop research ideas for the Options Paper. However, upon review of the strategic alignment of this paper with the work of IR3 and the needs of the Agency, it was decided to drop this deliverable from the MI work plan.

LINKAGES WITH MI IR2

During Q4 FY14, IR3 staff worked closely with IR2 staff and Activity Managers to better articulate the linkages between the two IRs and to identify opportunities for collaboration. In the IR3 FY15 work plan, Milestone 3.1 demonstrates this linkage: at least one key evidence gap in 2 selected TOCs (sustainable livelihoods and compliance and enforcement) will be identified and a strategy for addressing it will be designed and implemented. In FY15 IR3 and IR2 will work to collaboratively identify and prioritize research needs to enhance the evidence base in these selected TOCs, as well as collaborate on a survey of the metrics used in combatting wildlife trafficking.

KEY PRODUCTS:

- First draft of the BDRF and Questionnaire for soliciting input (Deliverable 3.0.A)
- Review Process of BDRF Implemented and Documented (Deliverable 3.0.B)
- Third draft of the BDRF (Deliverable 3.0.C)
- Memo: Proposed MI Research Protocol (interim product under Deliverable 3.1.A)
- Biodiversity Monitoring Report (Deliverable 3.3.A)
- Product definition for the community engagement research activity (Deliverable 3.3.C)
- Product definition for the alternative livelihoods research activity (Deliverable 3.3.D)
- List of relevant USAID documents that met criteria established by IIED for the systematic review of alternative livelihood approaches to biodiversity conservation (Deliverable 3.3.D)

IR4: SYNTHESIS & OUTREACH

In FY14, IR4 was able to move forward MI's synthesis and outreach efforts, largely due to the hire of MI's AM specialist, Cristy Garris, and a collaborative relationship established between MI and PPL. Additionally, IR4 collaborated on the delivery of several AM trainings with IR1, developed AM tools and guidance to support implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and USAID Program Cycle, supported the Biodiversity Handbook update, produced several communications products including the MI Communications Strategy, and finalized the Biodiversity and Development Integration Report.

MI COLLABORATION WITH PPL (ACTIVITY 4.1)

Significant progress was made this FY in establishing and advancing a working relationship with PPL. In December 2013, E3/FAB and MI organized a day-long workshop with PPL to identify areas of common interest, flag issues for follow up, and plan collaboration for the coming year. The resulting PPL /MI Work Plan (Deliverable 4.1.A) was agreed to and used throughout the year to set expectations and frame our collaboration. Activities in the work plan include:

- Development of a language crosswalk (“the Rosetta Stone”) between the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation and USAID Program Cycle terminology;
- Piloting Miradi software at four USAID Missions;
- Collaboration on development of three guidance documents to support implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and best practices in implementing the Program Cycle (Discussed in Activity 4.3-4.5 section);
- Consultation on development of a Cross-Mission learning program; and
- Contributing materials to Learning Lab and ProgramNet (Delayed to FY15).

LANGUAGE CROSSWALK

While developing the plan for the Miradi pilot in collaboration with PPL, MI identified the need to develop a USAID language pack for the software program. In consultation with E3/FAB and PPL, MI did a crosswalk of both concepts and terms used in the Open Standards and in the Program Cycle to identify gaps and ensure Mission staff were given clear guidance consistent with Agency policy during the Miradi pilot. In Q3, MI completed a “Rosetta Stone” language crosswalk between the two terminologies that served as the basis for modifications made to the Miradi software program. The resulting language pack translates the standard Miradi terminology to the USAID Program Cycle terminology. The USAID language pack is made available at the time of installation for USAID staff.

MIRADI

Miradi software is used by many E3/FAB implementing partners and has been used by MI for demonstration purposes throughout our engagement with the MI focal Missions. During the first year of MI, Mission staff expressed interest in obtaining Miradi for use beyond direct temporary duty (TDY) with MI and E3/FAB. During FY14, the IR4 Activity Manager worked closely with MI staff to seek Agency approval for and to implement a pilot test of Miradi.

USAID's Chief Information Officer approved the pilot in the second quarter of FY14, and IR4 worked with IR1 to identify four Missions that had sufficient interest and capacity to participate in the pilot. The Missions approved for the pilot are: Philippines, Indonesia, Uganda, and the South America Regional Office. The pilot has progressed at a different pace for each Mission based on current MI direct support through IR1 and the timing of the Miradi license approvals, with South American Regional Office (SAR) being approved for the pilot in August of this year.

Through MI's direct work with Missions under IR1, Miradi training was provided during site visits to the Philippines and Indonesia offices in Q4. Environment Office staff were the primary recipients of the training, but relevant cross-sector and Program Office staff were also included at both locations. Super-users for Miradi were identified among the trained staff at both Missions. These super-users demonstrated competency in both the application of best practices in implementing the Program Cycle and with using Miradi software. These super-users have agreed to provide training for additional Mission staff and ongoing support for the use of Miradi to develop new PADs, projects and mechanisms. During

the site visit to the Philippines, partners from the B+WISER and ECOFISH projects were also introduced to Miradi for use in their project work.

Miradi training and support was provided to Uganda Mission Environment Office staff and identified cross-sector staff as part of the ongoing Mission support in IR1 throughout the FY. Miradi was used to update project designs for the Tourism for Business and EMOS projects. Due to turnover at the Uganda Mission in late FY14, training efforts and continued support through the pilot may need to be replicated for new hires in FY15 to ensure continued use of the Miradi software for applying best practices in implementing the Program Cycle. Without additional training and support for new hires in FY15, success for the Miradi pilot at the Uganda Mission may be diminished.

Prior to the approval of SAR for the pilot, Miradi was used during a Mission visit in July. That visit included some introductory training and uses that stimulated interest in Miradi from the SAR team, which later led to E3/FAB approving the fourth pilot license for that Mission. Upon approval, the MI produced installation package with download instructions for both Miradi software and the USAID language pack were provided to key staff at SAR. Follow-up training and support for the Miradi pilot at SAR will be coordinated through IR4 with Mission support provided by IR1 in FY15. Where necessary, third party training and technical assistance for the use of Miradi may be utilized when direct MI support is not feasible.

During the planning for the Miradi pilot, PPL expressed interest in testing the conceptual and software approaches that MI is using in a non-environment program. PPL noted that the approaches used by MI – grounded in the Open Standards and consistent with the Program Cycle – could usefully address some gaps in current USAID practice, including lack of clear guidance on conducting situation analyses and difficulty linking situation analyses to logframes and results frameworks. PPL proposed an in-depth exploration of the applicability of some of these approaches to a Food Security program in Uganda and to a non-environment program in the Philippines. PPL's Office of Strategic Program Planning staff conducted the non-environment pilot in Uganda during a September 2014 TDY. MI and E3/FAB participated in the planning for that TDY, but did not participate at the Mission in person. The Philippines non-environment pilot will be planned early in FY15. At PPL's invitation, MI engaged staff of the Office of Science and Technology (USAID Global Development Lab) to inform their thinking on how Miradi and the planning approaches MI is using with biodiversity programs might align with the Agency's Futures Planning initiatives.

To ensure coordination between planning for the Miradi pilot in Missions, identification of training and support needs, and E3/FAB expectations, MI has held bi-weekly coordination meetings to track progress and solve problems throughout implementation of the Miradi pilots. Furthermore, MI coordinated outreach to Mission staff to avoid redundancy and confusion, and also provided briefings and working sessions on use of Miradi to PPL staff. A project tracking sheet was developed to track and record progress for the Miradi pilot at each of the four missions and at USAID Washington (USAID/W). This tracking sheet was reviewed and updated during monthly meetings and will serve as a baseline for an upcoming needs assessment in early FY15. That needs assessment will review progress at each Mission and help define next steps in implementing the Miradi pilot throughout FY15.

For the E3/FAB technical office, two Miradi introductory trainings were held in Q4 FY14 in Washington aimed to establish basic user understanding and competency for the software program. Two separate training modules were developed specifically for this training effort. Module I included an introduction to the software and its features, situation analysis, threat assessment and ratings, and developing situation models. Module II included the development of result chains, assignment of outcomes and indicators, as well as the planning and reporting features available in Miradi. The training was well received by USAID/W staff and additional offerings of Module I and Module II are planned for Q1 FY15. MI trained a total of twelve individuals from E3/FAB, PPL, and the USAID Global Development Lab. with most participants attending both sessions.

Additional training in Miradi will be provided to USAID/W staff in Q1 and Q2 FY15, and the Miradi pilot at the four Missions will continue through the provision of MI TA. The training needs assessment planned for Q1 FY15 and a progress tracking report are being prepared to communicate progress for the Miradi pilot. A final report of the Miradi pilot will be prepared mid-FY15 including observations, analysis of lessons learned, and recommendations for further action regarding the uptake and use of Miradi for biodiversity and integrated programming at USAID.

PPL-MI LEARNING

MI launched its learning program late in the second quarter of FY14, including planning the learning framework that will inform the Cross-Mission Learning Program; taking an inventory of TOCs commonly used in USAID biodiversity programs; and working with staff of E3/FAB to identify three priority topics to serve as the starting point for the Cross-Mission Learning Program. Given the interest of PPL's Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research (LER) in advancing learning as a part of USAID's practice of development, MI communicated regularly with staff of PPL/LER during the third quarter of FY14. PPL/LER staff were introduced to MI's initial thinking on the learning program and participated in a meeting facilitated by MI to get feedback from USAID, particularly E3/FAB, on the proposed learning approach.

Staffing changes in PPL/LER during the fourth quarter of FY14 slowed progress in this collaboration. MI's primary contact in PPL/LER moved to another Bureau, and a replacement liaison to MI has yet to be identified. Reinvigorating this relationship early in FY15 is a focus of IR4 and IR2.

PROGRAM NET/LEARNING LAB CONTENT

By the middle of FY14 MI and the IR4 Activity Manager had determined that contributing significant material to ProgramNet and the Learning Lab was premature for this FY. However, MI did work with staff of PPL/LER to better understand the functionality of these platforms and the most effective ways to use them. MI facilitated a meeting with the Activity Managers for IRs 2 and 3 and the coordinator of the Learning Lab site, Monica Matts, to explore development and moderating of a collaborate workspace on Learning Lab. MI and E3/FAB learned of the requirements for creating such a working group and of the existing Agency guidelines for moderating them. Further development of the collaborative working group is planned for FY15 as the Collaborative Learning Groups around compliance and enforcement and around sustainable livelihoods are launched by IR2.

MI was also invited to participate in a panel organized by the Knowledge Management Reference Group. This working group is managed by the M Bureau and brings together USAID staff and partners that are interested in knowledge management and learning at USAID. The MI COP was invited to give a presentation to the knowledge management Reference Group highlight MI's approach to learning. Other panelists included representatives of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning project in Uganda and of the Leveraging Economic Opportunities project. The meeting was held in Q3 FY14, attended by about 10 people in Washington and webcast through AIDConnect.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT TRAININGS (ACTIVITY 4.2):

In coordination with IR1, MI provided four trainings on implementing best practices in the USAID Program Cycle to USAID/W staff and implementing partners including PPL, Global Climate Change and three Regional Bureaus. Participants were introduced to tools and approaches that are tailored to forestry and biodiversity programs (but that are also applicable for use in other sectors, especially for integrated programming) and that will strengthen implementation of the Program Cycle. The approaches taught to participants are the same used by MI to support forestry and biodiversity programs in MI focal Missions. While staff in focal Missions are being trained by MI to use these approaches in their daily work, DC-based staff of USAID are being trained to understand the approaches and their value, communicate with Missions that are using these approaches, and eventually facilitate planning processes based on these approaches.

Following the launch of the Biodiversity Policy in August 2013, E3/FAB requested a training seminar for the Restoring the Environment through Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems (REPLACE) contractors to introduce the Biodiversity Policy, the updates to the Biodiversity Code, and how situation models, TOCs, and indicators can be used to comply with these new requirements.

During all trainings, MI staff circulated a feedback form to collect participants' satisfaction ratings with aspects of the workshop, solicit recommendations for improvement and determine best practices. Workshops were consistently rated high, above four on a five-point scale. Lessons learned were harvested and shared among MI trainers to improve future trainings. USAID/W staff participants found the training to be useful and appreciated the exposure to the tools and approaches being advanced through MI. In the evaluation forms, staff noted that the tools and best practices covered will help Mission staff and project planners better organize their thinking. Staff participants also noted that training pace was too fast and they would have benefited from more knowledge of AM in the USAID context, as well as a structured case study approach to the training sessions. In a similar manner, the REPLACE contractors found the training to be useful as an introduction to the new Biodiversity Policy requirements and best practices for implementing the Program Cycle, but noted that they could have benefited from a longer training with more examples, longer individual segments and additional time for breakout sessions.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND GUIDANCE (ACTIVITY 4.3)

During FY14, MI produced three draft guidance documents that support implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and the Program Cycle in biodiversity programs. The topics covered in the draft guides are: use of situation analyses, use of TOCs, and selection and refinement of outcomes and indicators. Taken together, these three guidance documents respond to three core needs identified by E3/FAB and MI during the first year of provision of technical assistance to Missions through IR1. These topics are priorities of the Biodiversity Policy and revisions to the Biodiversity Code, and they align well to steps in the Program Cycle identified by PPL as in need of more sector-specific guidance. These guidance documents complement the recently updated Biodiversity Handbook (Activity 4.5), which was completed with responses to comments by E3/FAB and PPL in Q2 FY14.

MI produced and received E3/FAB approval for product definitions and outlines for the three guidance documents. During the drafting stage for each document, MI had extensive discussions with USAID (E3/FAB and PPL) on how to orient the products to best reflect the relationships among TOCs, log frames, results frameworks and situation models. These consultations included preparation of PowerPoint presentations to guide the discussion with PPL about alignment of concepts and use of terms and facilitation of several technical meetings between MI, E3/FAB, and PPL to advance common understanding of the purpose and technical details of the documents. The final draft of the situation model guidance is currently being prepared for approval by the IR4 Activity Manager. The first full draft of the text of the TOCs guide is being prepared early in the first quarter of FY15. Two drafts of the indicators guidance (see below 4.4) have been submitted to the Activity Manager. Based on his feedback and the evolving understanding across MI and E3/FAB on how to align these three guidance documents, the indicator guidance has been slightly rescoped based on feedback from the Activity Manager and MI technical staff.

Due to a more extensive collaboration with PPL than initially anticipated, production of final drafts is requiring more time than allocated in the FY14 MI work plan. However, E3/FAB and MI agree that the collaboration with PPL will ultimately shorten the review and revision process and will likely give the documents better durability and wider applicability in USAID.

INDICATOR GUIDANCE (ACTIVITY 4.4)

MI worked with the IR4 Activity Manager to identify the scope and project plan for the development of a guidance document on the use of indicators in USAID biodiversity programs. The IR4 Activity Manager provided MI with a library of documents that are informing the development of this guidance. Staff of MI co-developed a product definition and outline for the indicator guidance which was shared with MI Activity Managers at a FAB/MI Monthly Meeting in March 2014 and approved for production shortly thereafter.

As described above in Activity 4.3, in response to review feedback and emerging external factors affecting standard foreign assistance indicators, a decision was made in September 2014 to alter the content and overarching objective of the guide. With approval from the Activity Manager, the third draft of the indicator guidance is currently being adapted for a broader scope than previously anticipated, providing expanded sector-oriented guidance on how good outcome definitions and indicator selection set the stage for robust monitoring and evaluation. A follow-up draft is anticipated by December 2014, with final edits and delivery anticipated in Q2 of FY15.

BIODIVERSITY HANDBOOK SUPPORT (ACTIVITY 4.5)

Early in FY14 MI delivered an updated version of the Biodiversity Handbook for final review by E3/FAB and subsequent review by PPL. During the first quarter of FY14, MI and Diane Russell of USAID worked with PPL/LER to revise Chapter 2 of the Biodiversity Handbook to better integrate the Agency's Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting approach, and to ensure proper alignment with the recent revisions to the Automated Directive System. The Biodiversity Handbook, as well as the above mentioned MI produced guides, and associated training of USAID and partner staff are envisioned as a complementary suite of products and services that will support implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in the environment sector.

MI COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (ACTIVITY 4.6)

MI hired a communications consultant in Q2 FY14 to develop a Communications Strategy (Deliverable 4.6.A) based on the Communications Framework developed in FY13. The Communications Strategy includes a vision and goals statement, an audience analysis, and an implementation plan to effectively reach audiences key to incorporate best practices in AM into USAID's environment programs and improving the effectiveness of USAID conservation interventions.

To develop the Communications Strategy, the consultant along with MI staff conducted interviews with key USAID, MI, and Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach (ECO) staff to gather data on key audiences, barriers to engaging audiences, communications needs and expectations, communications ideas; and, in ECO's case, to better understand ECO's plans and how MI's communications strategy can best work with their plan. The consultant and MI staff met with communications and knowledge management staff with responsibilities for communications in the E3 Bureau, the RM Portal, and PPL/LER. Additionally, the consultant researched USAID communications channels and resources, internal communications strategies, techniques and tools, and existing research materials. The Communications Strategy was submitted to the IR4 Activity Manager in Q4 FY14 and is informing both work planning and staffing decisions for MI's ongoing work. MI is working with the E3/FAB CKM coordinator to ensure that MI communications planning is consistent with the Office's messaging, priorities and practices.

With the assistance of the IR3 Activity Manager, MI also established a working relationship with staff of the ECO mechanism during FY14. MI, ECO, and the ECO Activity Managers held a collaborative meeting to share basic project information and lay the foundation for further work together. MI subsequently met with ECO staff in development of the MI Communications Strategy.

BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION REPORT & CASE STUDIES (ACTIVITY 4.7)

During FY14, the Biodiversity and Development Integration Report (Deliverable 4.7.A) was produced and finalized. The Integration Report informs USAID's implementation of the Biodiversity Policy by providing an overview of the state of integration by actors at the international policy, national policy, and project/program implementation level, with a focus on how biodiversity conservation goals and programs are being integrated with the health, food security, climate change and economic growth sectors. In

preparing the report, MI conducted a literature review and set of key informant interviews, presented a briefing on the report to E3/FAB, GCC, and the Office of Land Tenure (December 19 2014), incorporated comments from multiple rounds of technical reviews, received final approval from USAID, and submitted the Report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse, the first MI product to do so thus far. The case studies (Deliverable 4.7.B) listed in the FY14 MI Work Plan were incorporated into the overall Biodiversity Integration Report and have been eliminated as a stand-alone deliverable by the Activity Manager.

During FY14 MI and E3/FAB identified integration of biodiversity programs with climate change programs as a priority for MI attention. MI delivered two workshops on integrating climate change considerations into situation models and theory of change tools. The first workshop was with USAID Regional Bureaus and the Office of GCC, which covered the basics of the tool. The second workshop with GCC on built on the topics from the first workshop but was focused on integrating climate change consideration more specifically into the use of these tools.

Subsequent to the workshops, MI joined the existing GCC-Biodiversity working group, coordinated by Olaf Zerbock, and attended two working group meetings. The initial task of this working group has been to develop a common understanding of priority needs and potential activities to be implemented with MI's participation. In response, MI has prepared a memo that requests approval from E3/FAB to include specific activities to be carried out with the working group as part of the FY15 MI work plan and budget.

MI has also provided technical assistance to several MI focal Missions that have included integrating climate change considerations into their situation models and TOCs for use at various points in the Program Cycle. We anticipate that this experience will be used as examples to draw from for materials we develop with the GCC-Biodiversity working group.

COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS AND LEARNING (ACTIVITIES 4.8 AND 4.9)

The communication products and learning planned for Activities in 4.8 were largely derivative products of technical documents prepared by IRs 2 and 3. The factsheets for priority TOCs have been moved to FY15, as these communication materials will result from the final products from IR2 currently anticipated for delivery in FY15. E3/FAB and MI recommended that preparation of summary versions of the FCCA and PAPA evaluations was not necessary. Similarly for IR3 (Activity 4.9), communication products have been shifted to delivery in FY15 and FY16 in support of the anticipated research and learning under MI IR3.

KEY PRODUCTS:

- PPL/MI Work Plan (Deliverable 4.1.A)
- Five Best Practices in the USAID Program Cycle Trainings (Deliverable 4.2.A)
- Advanced drafts of two environment-sector specific guidance documents; product definition and outline for third guidance document (Deliverables 4.3.A and 4.4.A)
- MI Communications Strategy Document (Deliverable 4.6.A)
- Biodiversity and Development Integration Report (Deliverable 4.7.A)

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS

- Miradi/MiradiShare memo
- Miradi Training workshops for E3/FAB staff
- PPL/MI workshops

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

During FY14, MI progressed its project management and administration efforts significantly. A large success of the project management and administration stream of MI was the completion of its staffing plan, which included hiring a Senior Learning and Evaluation Specialist, a learning technical specialist, a senior biodiversity research, an AM specialist and a deputy chief of party. MI also moved its internal monitoring and evaluation efforts, launching PMP indicator #4 (Quality of MI Evaluation Design) and the MI Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Lastly, the MI Team facilitated a successful FY15 Strategic Planning Retreat by leading the internal team and E3/FAB through a series of working sessions that will be leveraged to develop the FY15 Work Plan.

STAFFING

MI filled all vacant positions as specified in the FY14 Work Plan and depicted in yellow text in Figure 2.

Senior Learning and Evaluation Specialist (IR2 Lead): Tess Present was hired by Environmental Incentives (EI) to lead IR2 efforts and officially began work in February 2014. Tess's responsibilities include providing vision and guidance to IR2 staff; providing technical leadership on the development of approach to identify, test, and build learning around a set of common TOCs used in USAID's biodiversity programming; and leading MI's conversation with USAID about work in IR2.

Learning Technical Specialist (IR2 Contributor): Shawn Peabody was hired by EI and began work in March 2014. His work has mainly focused on the development of the Learning Program. During FY14, Shawn made significant contributions to the success of IR2 Activity 2.2, Select and Describe TOCs for Priority Conservation Strategies and Activity 2.3, Assess Available Evidence on Priority TOCs as described in the FY14 Work Plan.

Senior Biodiversity Researcher (IR3 Lead): Andrés Gómez was hired by ICF and joined MI in Q3 FY14. Andrés is responsible for leading IR3 efforts and providing technical input to research projects launched in FY14 and beyond. Andrés joined MI from a research position at the American Museum of Natural History. His research interests include studying the consequences of land use change for biodiversity and human health, reviewing the evidence base for the negative health effects of illegal wildlife trade, and analyzing the human dimensions of conservation.

AM Outreach Specialist (IR4 Contributor): Foundations of Success hired Cristy Garris for this position in Q3 FY14. Christy is primarily dedicated to the Synthesis and Outreach work of MI. Her role is to bridge IR1 and IR2's technical work at the Mission and cross-Mission levels with tools and materials for broader use by USAID, particularly with a view to work with PPL.

Deputy Chief of Party (IR0 Lead): EI hired Caroline Cook to fill this position. Caroline's most recent position before joining the MI Team was the Deputy Director of the World Wildlife Fund's Coastal East Africa Program. She has extensive experience developing and managing field conservation programs, and working with the USAID Missions in Mozambique and Tanzania. Caroline's primary responsibilities are to oversee MI's product quality assurance and delivery, monitoring and evaluation plan, and PMP tracking and project reporting.

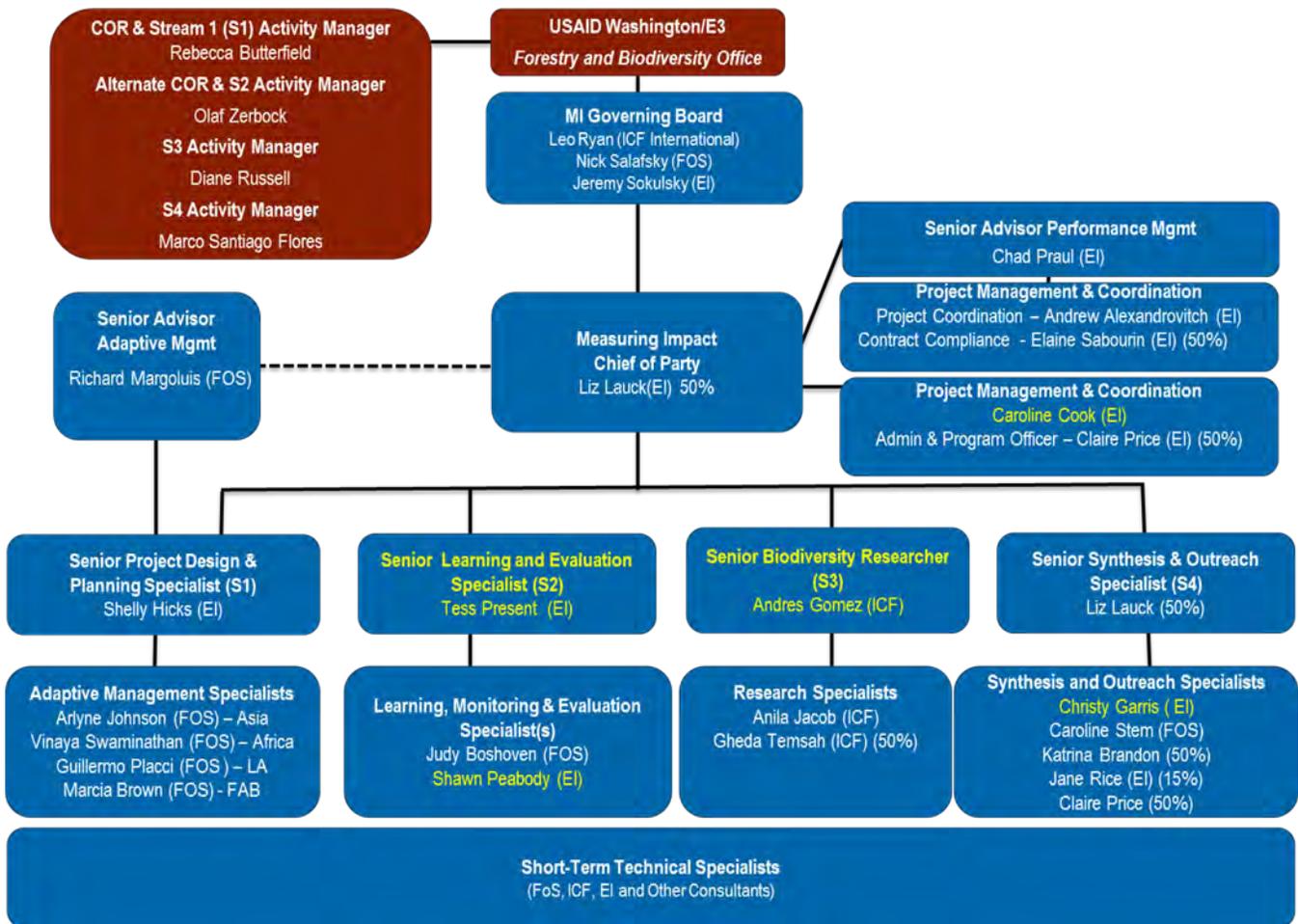


Figure 2: MI team organizational structure. Yellow text designates positions filled in FY14.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In FY14, MI made significant progress in moving forward its internal monitoring and evaluation efforts. MI provided initial results for PMP Indicator #4, Quality of MI Evaluation Design, which is the first outcome indicator for which MI has reported. MI also made the decision not to move forward with Indicator 8, Change in Perceived Value of Biodiversity Programming to USAID. Of the seven remaining PMP indicators, the only one on which MI did not report in FY14 was Indicator 5, Number of Key Operational Processes Enhanced to Promote the Application of AM at the Institutional Level. Lastly, MI moved forward efforts to create an internal M&E Plan that aligns with the revised MI strategy defined in FY14.

QUALITY OF MI EVALUATION DESIGN (PMP INDICATOR 4)

MI rolled out PMP Indicator #4, Quality of MI Evaluation Design, in FY14. To implement the indicator, MI created a Review Charge for Determining the Quality of Biodiversity Program Evaluation Design (Review Charge) which provides a set of criteria for assessing the quality of MI evaluation design and guides MI's third-party peer reviewer to assess evaluation SOWs. The criteria put forth in the Review Charge incorporates the most critical factors and key principles from the USAID document, *Evaluation Scope of Work Checklist*, and synthesizes it into nine assessment categories. The assessment categories can be analyzed at three levels of priority (high, medium, additional), and three groups of overarching categories including background, methods and approach, and resources and schedule.

MI utilized a third-party peer reviewer to assess 20 SOWs in order to establish a baseline, and review the three evaluation SOWs developed by MI³ in conjunction with three non-MI SOWs that were used as a comparison group. In order to establish a baseline for this indicator, MI identified a baseline pool of 28 eligible SOWs and then used a random number generator to select half of the baseline SOWs developed before and the other half after the implementation of the USAID Evaluation Policy (January 2011). In total, the reviewer assessed 20 SOWs for the baseline which in order to be considered for the baseline pool had to:

- Have no engagement from MI,
- Be linked to a USAID evaluation,
- Be related to biodiversity,
- Have been developed in the last ten years, and
- Be a performance evaluation.

The results from this indicator are described in detail in the Learning and Adapting section of this report.

PERCEIVED VALUE OF BIODIVERSITY (PMP INDICATOR 8)

An interview guide for PMP Indicator #8 (Change in Perceived Value of Biodiversity Programming to USAID) was produced by MI and finalized with E3/FAB during FY14. The interview guide included a pre- and post-survey analysis plan as well as guidance for interviewers. However, MI and E3/FAB came to agreement that the survey would not yield statistically significant results given the small population universe and frequent relocation of potential interviewees. Thus, MI ultimately decided not to move forward with PMP Indicator #8.

MI MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

MI made significant progress in developing a project-level M&E plan, exemplified by the creation of IR-specific results chains for all IRs. Once finalized, the M&E plan will be reflective of the revised MI strategy as it is based on the FY14 results chain and indicative of progress towards achieving MI's strategic goals. Furthermore, the M&E plan will inform revisions to the PMP that are necessitated by the new strategic direction of the project and by MI's overall M&E needs. In order to facilitate the development of the M&E plan, a small working group was formed that was led by Richard Margoluis with contributions from Marcia Brown, Andrew Alexandrovich and IR leads.

³ The three SOWs designed by MI include the performance evaluation of the SCAPES project and the USFS PAPA, and a lessons learned analysis of the FCCA project.

FY15 STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

The FY15 Strategic Planning Retreat was held during September 2014 in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The retreat followed a similar structure to the FY13 retreat with the first two days focusing on internal MI Team planning, and integrating the E3/FAB team for the last two days. The goal of the retreat was to develop the core elements of an MI long-term strategic plan that reflects agreement on life of project goal and strategies, project goals by IR, and a foundation for strategic planning for FY15.

Objective 1: Learn and apply learning from the first 18 months of project implementation

Objective 2: Confirm Life of Project goal and objectives to ensure they are ambitious but feasible

Objective 3: Get 70% agreement with FAB on products and activities for the FY15 work plan

Objective 4: Effectively address and plan for cross-IR engagement and products

Objective 5: Build cohesion across the MI team

MI and E3/FAB accomplished all objectives set for the week and resolved outstanding questions, enabling MI to plan strategically for the upcoming year. Key topics included implications from the new Biodiversity Policy, the need to better define and eliminate products early in the conceptualization phase that will not contribute to success of MI's strategy, MI's role in E3/FAB communications, and continuing cross-IR coordination. Table 7 outlines key decisions from the retreat.

Table 7: FY15 Strategic Planning Retreat Key Decisions and Agreement on Proposed FY15 Work Plan

	Key Decisions	FY15 Work Plan Agreement
IR1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation with other Tier 1 Missions • Increase E3/FAB's leadership in training by taking a cooperative teaching role on Mission visits • Improve AM uptake via opportunities in procurement process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% agreement from AM
IR2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Learning Program beyond focal Missions to any Missions who want to participate • Work with IR1 to develop and test tools for cross-Landscape learning in CARPE, then scale up to apply to the entire Learning Program • Take direction from Missions on the level at which they desire to engage implementing partners in the Learning Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80-85% agreement from AM
IR3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on synthesizing existing research, rather than conducting primary research • Work closely with IR1 to gather relevant and data by participating in Mission site visits • Partner with relevant USAID counterparts to co-host workshop's and trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60-80% agreement from AM
IR4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include tool development (e.g. situations models, indicators, and TOCs) under IR4 rather than IR1 • Develop training modules that target FSNs to promote sustainability of lessons learned from MI within Missions • Determine the best approach and roles for collaboration with ECO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% agreement from AM

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

MI put in place systems and tools to manage project budget and coordinate the efforts across the project and within IRs. First, a Budget Versus Actual Tool was developed and rolled out that provides a burn rate analysis and enables IR leads to understand where project management decisions or communications are needed. However, after piloting the tool during Q4 FY14, MI found the need for data that indicates the total spent in relation to amount budgeted in a more precise manner than the current Budget vs. Actual Tool was able to provide. MI will leverage this learning into the next version of the Budget vs. Actual Tool. Additionally, MI revised the way in which it plans its efforts on a monthly basis. The new system for monthly planning and coordination is managed by the new Deputy COP and better integrates all members and organizations of the MI Team.

KEY PRODUCTS

- FY14 Work Plan and Budget (Deliverable 0.1.A)
- Monthly Coordination meetings (Deliverable 0.1.B)
- Strategy and Planning Retreat (Deliverable 0.1.C)
- Budget vs. Actual Report (Deliverable 0.2.A)
- Pipeline Analysis (Deliverable 0.2.B)
- Quarterly Performance and PMP Reports (Deliverable 0.3.A)
- PMP Review or Revision (Deliverable 0.4.B)
- Fully staffed project team (Deliverable 0.5.A)
- Pre-Audit Compliance Review Report and Management Action Plan (Deliverable 0.6.A)
- Product Development Process and tools (Deliverable 0.7.A)
- Monthly Invoices (Deliverable 0.9.A)
- Fully functioning MI project office (Deliverable 0.9.B)

III. LEARNING AND ADAPTING

The MI Performance Management Plan (PMP) defines the management processes to monitor, analyze and evaluate achievement of the project's goal and objectives. The PMP provides an overview of the project and a theory of change that spells out the underlying logic in the project design. The PMP also defines a set of indicators and describes them in detail, including data collection, reporting and quality assessment methods. The Measuring Impact (MI) Results Chain depicted in Figure 3 is included in the PMP and was the basis for MI's work in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. The results chain shows relationships between actions performed and eventual outcomes, and depicts strategies and actions as yellow shapes, Intermediate Results (IR) and sub-IRs as blue boxes, outcomes in the green box on the right side, and PMP indicators as purple shapes.

In Q1 FY14, the MI results chain was revised to reflect the rescoping of the project that was done during the strategic planning retreat in September 2013 and during development of the FY14 Work Plan. The results chain was further updated in September 2014 and this will be included and reported against in next year's report. This updated results chain is included in the FY15 Work Plan.

MI has not yet updated its PMP and associated indicators with the revised results chain, and thus is reporting against indicators identified in the approved PMP and FY13 results chain. A priority of FY15 is for MI to update its PMP so that it is reflective of the current MI strategy and provides data that is most useful in reflecting on MI's successes.

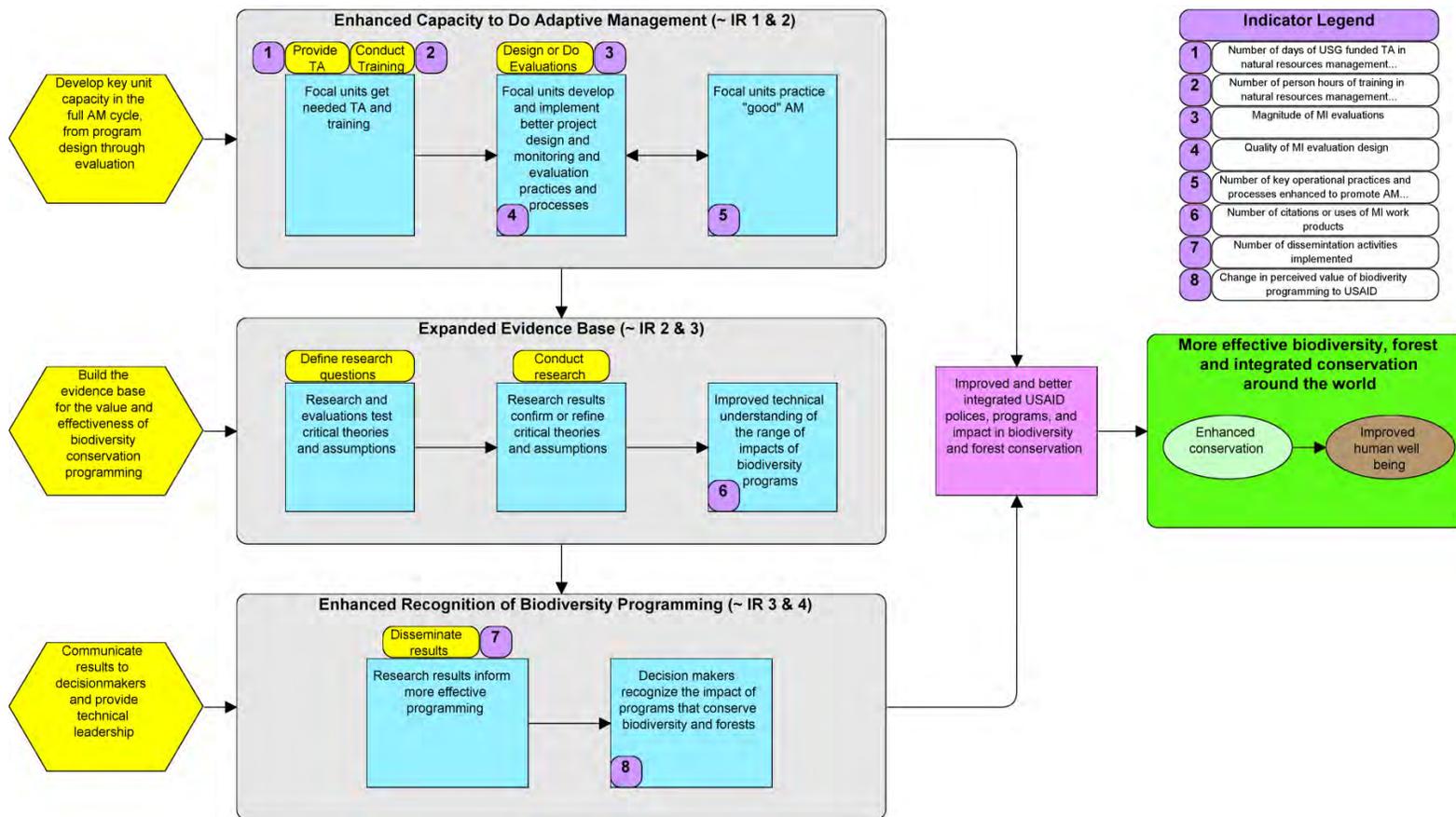


Figure 3: MI FY13 Results Chain

MONITORING RESULTS

The PMP defined the following indicators and associated targets for each year of the project as well as life of project.

Table 8: Indicator and Target Summary Table with FY13 and FY14 Totals

Indicator Number	Indicator	Annual and Life of Project Targets						FY13 Totals	FY14 Totals	LOP Totals
		FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total			
Enhance Capacity to Do Adaptive Management										
#1	Number of days of United States Government (USG)-funded Technical Assistance (TA) in natural resources management and/or biodiversity provided to counterparts or stakeholders	300	1,800	1,700	1,900	1,200	6,900	520.94	915.62	1,436.56
#2	Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	800	1,600	1,800	1,800	1,200	7,200	428	4,384	4,812
#3	Magnitude of MI evaluations	\$75k	\$975k	\$850k	\$700k	\$700k	\$3.3M	\$167,396	\$255,477	\$422,873
#4	Quality of MI evaluation design						20% exclusive 15% shared 5% reviewer <1% no engage	N/A	45% increase from baseline	45% increase from baseline
#5	Number of key operational practices and processes enhanced to promote the application of Adaptive Management (AM) at the institutional level						TBD	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enhance Recognition of Biodiversity Importance										
#6	Number of dissemination activities implemented	10	20	30	40	30	130	4	25	29
#7	Number of citations or uses of MI work products	50	200	400	500	500	1,650	0	0	0
#8	Change in perceived value of biodiversity programming to United States Agency for International Development (USAID)			10% Change		25% Change		N/A	N/A	N/A

TESTING ASSUMPTIONS

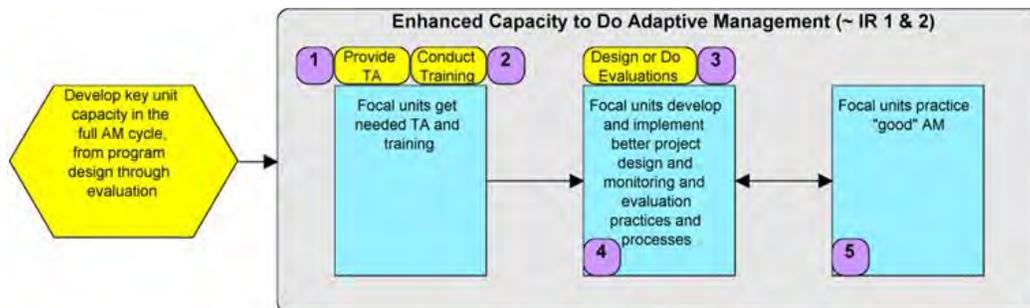
MI THEORY OF CHANGE

The goal of MI is to achieve more effective biodiversity, forest and integrated conservation around the world. To realize this goal, MI has defined three strategies, with key assumptions, to define progress towards reaching MI's goal of more effective conservation, including (1) build focal unit capacity in the full AM cycle, from program design through evaluation; (2) build the evidence base for the value and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation and integrated programming; and (3) communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership. Collectively, these strategies will result in improved and better integrated USAID policies, programs and impact in biodiversity and forest conservation. The indicators listed in Table 8 are drawn from the FY13 Results Chain (Figure 3), and are intended to monitor progress and incremental steps towards achieving the ultimate project goal of more effective conservation. The indicators and the results chain will also help Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and the Environment/Office of Forestry and Biodiversity (E3/FAB) and the MI team to test core assumptions, and adapt to a changing environment as described in the following section.

STRATEGY ONE – DEVELOP KEY UNIT CAPACITY IN THE FULL ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Strategy one declares that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to develop key unit capacity in the full AM cycle, from program design through evaluation, focal units will:

- Get TA and training,
- Develop and implement better project design and monitoring and evaluation practices and processes, and
- Practice good AM.



INDICATOR 1 – NUMBER OF DAYS OF USG-FUNDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND/OR BIODIVERSITY PROVIDED TO COUNTERPARTS OR STAKEHOLDERS

MI provided 916 days of TA in FY14, which is a 75% increase from FY13; however, did not meet the FY14 target of 1,800 days of USG-funded TA. IRs 1 and 3 provided the majority of TA in FY14, each providing approximately 65% and 25% of the total TA, respectively. The remaining 10% of TA provided in FY14 was delivered by IRs 2 and 4.

Of the total 916 days of TA, approximately 55% was provided to E3/FAB and the remaining 45% to Missions. TA provided to Missions centered on three main types of assistance including:

1. Project conceptualization, design, monitoring and evaluation
2. AM practices and processes, and
3. Evaluation design.

While there was some overlap in the types of assistance between TA provided to E3/FAB and to Missions. However, generally speaking, the types of assistance provided to E3/FAB differed from TA provided to Missions and centered on six different types of assistance.

1. AM Practices and Processes
2. AM Systems
3. Development of Research Options
4. Implementation of Research Activities
5. Evaluation Design
6. Knowledge Management and Research Communications, and Project Design

The majority of TA provided to E3/FAB was in support of AM Practices and Processes, and AM Systems, accounting for approximately 45% of the total TA. Furthermore, MI provided a significant amount of TA to E3/FAB in service of research, providing approximately 20% of total TA towards Development of Research Options, and approximately 25% towards Implementation of Research Activities. Lastly, MI provided approximately 10% of its total TA to E3/FAB in service of Evaluation Design support.

Table 9: Summary of TA provided to Missions and E3/FAB

Type of Assistance	Total Days of TA
TA provided to Missions	386
Madagascar	2
Caribbean Marine	2
Philippines	60
Uganda	13
Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE)	162
Ecuador	12
The Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA)	31
Indonesia	42
Mozambique	30
Nepal	32
TA provided to E3/FAB	530
AM Practices and Processes	151
AM Systems	81
Development of Research Options	113
Implementation of Research Activities	132
Evaluation Design	52
Knowledge Management and Research Communications, and Project Design	1
Total	916

INDICATOR 2 – NUMBER OF PERSON HOURS OF TRAINING IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND/OR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION SUPPORTED BY USG ASSISTANCE

MI far exceeded the FY14 target of 1,600 hours, hosting 21 trainings that were attended by 400 participants from eight focal missions, E3/FAB, and other USAID counterparts, and totaling in 4,384 person-hours of training. Of the 4,384 person-hours of training provided, 47% of the hours were for female participants while the other 53% were for male participants. Additionally, 78% of training was provided to the CARPE, Uganda, ICAA, Ecuador, Philippines, Mozambique, Indonesia and Nepal missions, while the other 22% of training was provided to E3/FAB and USAID staff from Global Climate Change, and the Latin America and Caribbean, Asia and Africa Regional Bureaus. Technical assistance and training delivered through MI in FY14 focused on the following themes and is captured in Table 10:



- Project conceptualization and design
- Performance monitoring design
- Evaluation design
- Project implementation
- Performance monitoring implementation
- Evaluation implementation
- Systematic Learning and Adapting

Table 10: Trainings provided in FY14, indicating the focal units that received training by thematic area.

	Project Conceptualization & Design	Performance Monitoring Design	Evaluation Design	Project Implementation	Performance Monitoring Implementation	Evaluation Implementation	Systematic Learning & Adapting
CARPE	X	X	X	X			
Ecuador	X	X					
E3/FAB	X	X	X				
ICAA	X	X	X				X
Mozambique	X	X					
Indonesia	X	X					
Nepal	X	X					
Philippines	X	X		X	X		X
Uganda	X	X					

TA and training provided through MI focused on the following seven themes and corresponding training modules:

Project Conceptualization and Design

Through TA and training provided through MI, Mission staff are learning how to develop and use situation models to identify conservation focal interests, threats, and drivers, resulting in clearly defined causal relationships amongst critical factors and the identification of potential development pathways. Mission staff are further trained on how to use results chains to clearly define theories of change (TOCs), and associated outputs, outcomes and goals. Consistent with the Program Cycle guidance, MI is helping USAID staff to convert TOCs into clear plans of action, ensuring a clear transition from project design to planning monitoring and evaluation efforts. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Project scope and purpose
- Targets and viability
- Threats and drivers
- Intervention selection
- TOCs

Performance Monitoring Design

Mission staff are learning how to use sound TOCs to select indicators and methods to assess program effectiveness. In this context, MI is working with Missions to better understand the relationship between indicators for both monitoring and evaluation purposes, including the need to prioritize and sequence indicators for monitoring performance, and to analyze a combination of indicators to define conditions for likely success and impact. Linking monitoring efforts to key outcomes in TOCs provides: (1) the foundation to assess program effectiveness, (2) the basis for robust performance evaluations, (3) a framework to identify and narrow priority questions to test the relationship between two variables in an impact evaluation, and (4) organized data and information in a way to service learning and adapting needs for the Agency. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Indicator selection
- Defining outcomes, outputs and goals
- Monitoring methods
- Defining and planning for baselines

Evaluation Design

MI is helping Missions to better understand and comply with the Evaluation Policy. This includes: (1) interpreting the policy for Mission staff to inform decisions and investments towards performance or impact evaluations, and (2) leveraging TOCs to identify and prioritize evaluation questions, define methods, and analyze the cost/benefits of priority questions to inform the evaluation design. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Intro to USAID Evaluation Policy
- Conceptualize evaluation approach and design
- Develop evaluation scope of work
- Defining and planning for baselines

Project Implementation

In the context of USAID, project implementation spans numerous business practices and processes where Mission staff interface with Washington and with implementing partners. With MI's assistance, Missions are learning to align the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) design process more closely with the procurement process for new mechanisms, leverage the procurement process to more effectively institutionalize monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, and appropriately planning and budgeting for M&E functions both within the Mission and across portfolios. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Best practice for project design to inform procurement process
- Reviewing, evaluating and scoring TOCs

Performance Monitoring Implementation

With MI's assistance, Missions are working to upgrade their systems to better manage, collect, store and analyze performance data. This entails articulating roles and responsibilities and setting new expectations for both USAID staff and implementing partners in their shared role to assess program effectiveness, at a minimum requiring a systematized monitoring and reporting system from implementing partner to inform the Mission's monitoring, evaluation and learning needs. In support of these efforts, E3/FAB, Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) and MI are test piloting the Miradi Software in four Missions to strengthen the monitoring function and flow of data and communication between implementing partners and USAID staff. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Linking M&E across scales
- Best practice for systematic reporting across M&E, work planning and reporting
- Best practice for capturing, storing and analyzing results
- Best practice for facilitating implementing partner annual program effectiveness workshop
- Test pilot new Miradi software to support monitoring, learning and adapting

Evaluation Implementation

Evaluations in focal Missions are conducted by third parties, thus MI's primary role is to help Mission staff fully understand the results of evaluations and to draw out lessons learned to inform project modifications or design of new mechanisms. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Analyze evaluation results to inform decision making and project designs

Systematic Learning and Adapting

Changes brought about by the Program Cycle and the Evaluation Policy requires all Missions to report on the effectiveness and impact of USAID investments at three levels: mechanism, PAD, and Country Development Cooperation Strategy. To do this, MI is working with focal Missions to: develop learning portfolios on priority TOCs; assist USAID and implementing partners to enhance the use of evidence and learning through the Program Cycle; and assist in better informing the Mission Portfolio Review, a critical juncture for evaluating progress, impact and decision making. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Developing learning portfolios
- Using data to improve projects
- Best practices for conducting portfolio reviews

INDICATOR 3 – MAGNITUDE OF MI EVALUATIONS

MI logged \$255,477 towards evaluation magnitude in FY14, which falls below the FY14 target of \$975,000 set forth in the PMP. However, the gap between MI evaluation magnitude and the targeted amount is expected considering the rescoping of IR2 to focus less on doing evaluations and more on creating a Cross-Mission Learning Program. All of the evaluation magnitude logged in FY14 was in service of evaluations and lessons learned analyses of the three priority E3/FAB projects – Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES), Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA) and Forest, Climate and Communities Alliance (FCCA) – all of which were exclusively designed by MI. In summary, the magnitude for each priority evaluation is as follows.

- \$215,181 towards SCAPES
- \$26,360 towards PAPA
- \$13,936 towards FCCA

Considering that MI is no longer focusing on conducting evaluations, paired with the fact that the PAPA evaluation is complete, the SCAPES evaluation is near closing, and the FCCA is in its final draft, MI expects to log minimal data for this indicator in FY15 and going forward. MI’s recommendation is to drop this indicator as it updates its PMP in FY15 because it is no longer indicative of MI’s success in achieving its goals.

INDICATOR 4 – QUALITY OF MI EVALUATION DESIGN

During FY14, MI’s third-party reviewer assessed evaluation scopes of work (SOWs), which can be categorized in three groups – MI SOWs, comparison group SOWs and baseline SOWs. All three evaluation SOWs that MI has designed were reviewed, including the SCAPES and PAPA performance evaluations, and the FCCA lessons learned analysis. Concurrently, three SOWs that were not designed by MI were assessed to serve as a comparison group to SCAPES, PAPA and FCCA. Prior to the MI and comparison group assessments, MI assessed 20 of the 28 SOWs that it identified on USAID’s Development Experience Clearinghouse as eligible to be baseline SOWs. Half of the baseline SOWs that were assessed were created before and the other half were created after the release of the USAID Evaluation Policy (January 2011).

Mean Differences

+0.968 (MI vs. Baseline)

+0.277 (MI vs. Comparison)

+0.878 (MI vs. Baseline+Comparison)

MI SOWs had a higher mean rating than both baseline and comparison SOWs. Specifically, MI SOWs’ mean rating was 0.968 higher than baseline SOW ratings, 0.277 higher than comparison SOWs, and 0.878 higher than combined baseline and comparison SOW ratings. The mean rating for MI SOWs was 3.11, which is a 45% increase from baseline SOWs, a 10% increase from comparison SOWs, and a 39% increase from the combined ratings of comparison and baseline SOWs.

Figure 4: SOW Assessment Results

SOW Group	Sample Size	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation	Confidence Interval ⁴
MI	3	3.110	.2816	±0.32
Comparison Group	3	2.833	.3786	±0.43
Baseline	20	2.142	.3755	±0.16
Baseline + Comparison	23	2.232	.4377	±0.18

⁴ Confidence interval is based on 95% confidence level. For instance, MI SOWs have a sample size of three, a mean rating of 3.11 and a standard deviation of .2816. Given this data, we have a confidence interval of ±0.32, thus we can be 95% certain that the mean of an MI SOW will fall within the range of 2.79 to 3.43.

INDICATOR 5 – NUMBER OF KEY OPERATIONAL PRACTICES AND PROCESSES ENHANCED TO PROMOTE THE APPLICATION OF AM AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

This indicator is projected to begin to collect and report on results in FY15. A framework for institutionalizing AM will be created and refined in partnership with E3/FAB and Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning PPL, putting in place a road map for institutionalizing AM in the environment sector of USAID and across Missions. The AM Framework and supporting criteria will ensure MI and E3/FAB are building upon existing platforms to operationalize AM, and to establish baselines for which to evaluate progress towards integrating AM into core practices and business processes.

LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY ONE

The most significant progress in FY14 was made towards the first two results in strategy one: *focal units get needed TA and training, and focal units develop and implement better project design and monitoring and evaluation practices and processes*. Findings that will inform MI's approach moving forward include:

- MI found that the TA it provides to focal units can be grouped into four main types: (1) Monitoring Frameworks to Assess Program Effectiveness, (2) Performance Evaluations, (3) Impact Evaluations, and (4) Systems for Collecting and Analyzing Data.
 - The first three types of TA listed are specific to the PAD and Activity levels of the USAID Program Cycle. The last type of TA listed is applicable across all levels of the USAID Program Cycle
 - Within the Monitoring Frameworks to Assess Program Effectiveness type of TA, certain activities apply to both the PAD and Mechanism levels, and certain activities only apply at one level and not the other. For instance, MI is able to provide TA to Missions at both PAD and Mechanism levels to develop and refine TOC, results chains, custom and standard indicators, and monitoring plans. However, MI is only able to provide TA to Missions at the PAD level to integrate TOCs with log frames, and identify priority learning questions and key information needs for project design through the use of conceptual models. Moreover, MI is only able to provide TA to Missions at the Mechanism level to standardize indicators and methods across project sites, landscapes and partners.
- MI suspects that the TA provided in FY14 is not accurately captured due to the lack of a clear vision for what constitutes as TA and the ability to track staff time directly to TA by focal unit. For instance, it is unclear whether time spent preparing for a week long workshop counts as TA or only the time that MI spends delivering the workshop, or to what extent MI's time guiding E3/FAB in the development of research questions for the BDRF can be counted as TA. This finding will be leveraged by MI in FY15 to improve tracking of this indicator, specifically by:
 - Creating a project-wide understanding of what counts as TA and what does not, such as preparation for workshops or meetings in which MI will guide USAID and its counterparts through the development of discrete products linked to scopes of work;
 - Using the opportunity to create a new PMP as a platform to rethink how this indicator can best represent the value of TA provided by MI; and
 - Tracking time at a more granular level that will more accurately capture TA provided by MI to missions and other focal units.

- Of the three overarching categories used to assess evaluation SOWs – Background, Methods and Approach, and Resources and Schedule – MI scored highest in the Resources and Schedule, and Methods and Approach categories, both having a mean rating of 3.11, and lowest in the Background category with a mean rating of 2.67. If MI pursues more evaluations, it will draw upon its successes around the components of the Resources and Schedule, and Methods and Approach categories which include Level of Effort/Budget, Deliverables and Timeline, Team Composition, Methods and Analysis, Evaluation Questions, and Development Hypothesis. Similarly, MI will focus more on providing sufficient information on the components of the Background category which includes Existing Information, Purpose and Use and other general information about the Activity, Project or Program being evaluated.
- A positive correlation was seen between the quality of evaluation scopes of work, and the evaluation magnitude and days of evaluation design TA provided by MI (see Figure 5). From this finding, it can be assumed that if MI does more evaluations going forward, it should focus its efforts on providing TA and managing evaluation consultants in order to optimize the quality of evaluations designed by E3/FAB.

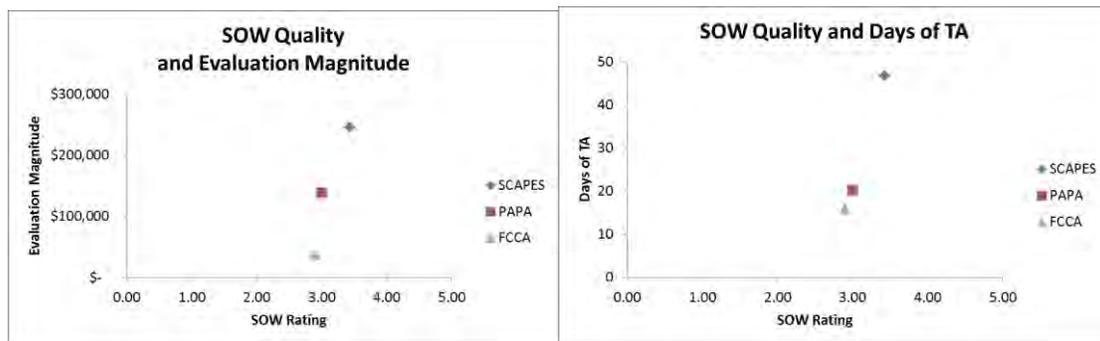
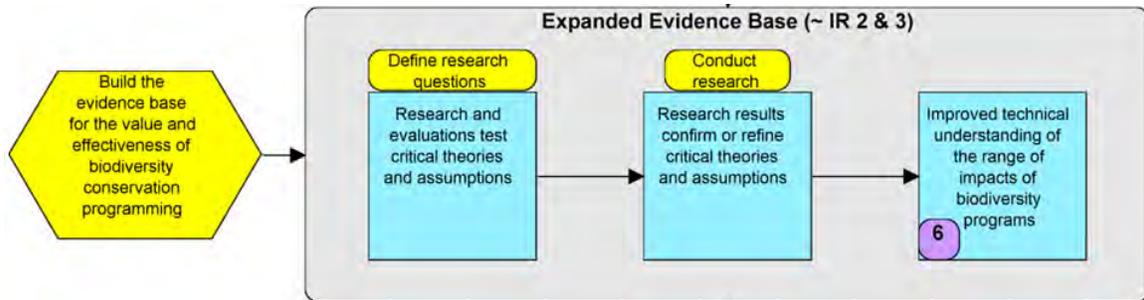


Figure 5: Correlation between SOW quality, and evaluation magnitude and days of TA

STRATEGY TWO – BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR THE VALUE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROGRAMMING

Strategy two reasons that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to build the evidence base for the value and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation programming:

- Research and evaluations will test critical theories and assumptions,
- Research and results will confirm or refine critical theories and assumptions, and
- Technical understanding of the range of impacts of biodiversity programming will be improved.



INDICATOR 6 – NUMBER OF DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Every MI IR carried out dissemination activities in FY14, totaling 25 which exceeded the PMP target of 20 for FY14. Furthermore, MI's FY14 dissemination activities increased the life of project total to 29, which is just short of the combined FY13 and FY14 target of 30.

Most notably, IR1 was responsible for a total of seventeen in the form of verbal presentations, postings and active circulation. Fifteen of IR1's dissemination activities were delivered to USAID and surrounded various topics including USAID's Collaborating, Learning and Adapting's core concepts and tools, Mission debriefs with PPL and Mission Packets. IR1's external dissemination activities included presentations of the USAID Biodiversity Policy, Program Cycle, and AM tools for implementing best practices in the Program Cycle.

IR2 completed a total of 5 dissemination activities in FY14, all in the form of verbal presentation and of which all but one were delivered to USAID. Topics included the Learning Program vision, draft framework and TOC prioritization exercise, and Biodiversity Inventory results. Additionally, MI disseminated the initial findings of the SCAPES performance evaluation to USAID and an external audience.

Lastly, IRs 3 and 4 delivered a combined total of three dissemination activities, all in the form of verbal presentations. IR3 presented the BDRF, once in Q2 and once in Q3, to CIFOR and IIED. IR4 also verbally presented the AM approaches and tools used by MI to PPL.

LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY TWO

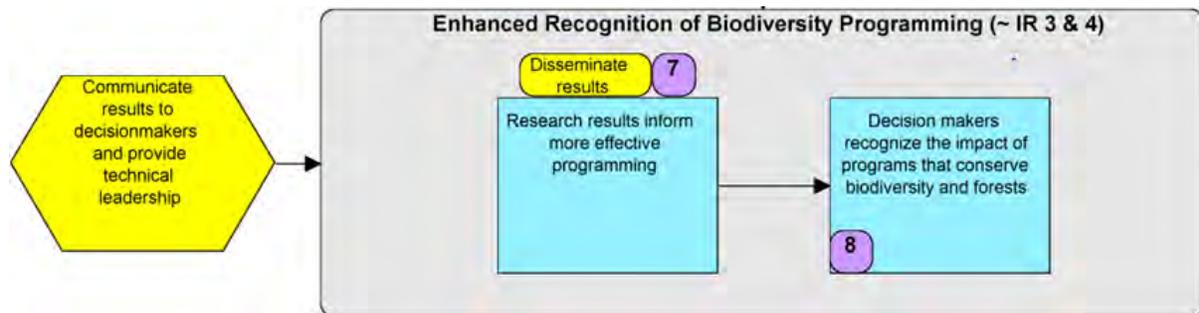
MI achieved critical milestones in FY14 advancing towards the first result within strategy two – *research and evaluations test critical theories and assumptions*. Specifically, research questions were defined by the IR3 team and evaluations were designed by the IR2 team. Findings that will inform MI’s approach in the future include:

- By applying a set of *a priori* criteria developed jointly with E3/FAB to the set of eight most common “potential TOCs” (conservation interventions and their related TOC factors) that emerged through the inventorying of biodiversity programming in Tier 1 and MI-focal Missions, MI discovered the initial three conservation interventions that will be the focus of the Learning Program: Sustainable Livelihoods, Compliance and Enforcement, and Laws, Policies and Regulations. MI will use this understanding to create a synthesis of findings for each intervention that identifies evidence gaps, and possible questions, approaches and participants for the learning group.
- The BDRF will include various questions that contribute to the success of its objectives to (1) support enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation, (2) reduce priority drivers and threats to biodiversity, and (3) integrate conservation and development for improved biodiversity and development outcomes.
- MI identified new priority areas for generating new knowledge in FY14 that will be pursued in FY15 and throughout the life of project:
 - Identifying and addressing evidence gaps in two selected TOCs (Sustainable Livelihoods and Compliance and Enforcement),
 - Articulating integration pathways between biodiversity conservation and global health, food security and other sectors, and
 - Filling evidence gaps in other selected topics, including constituency building

STRATEGY THREE – COMMUNICATE RESULTS TO DECISION MAKERS AND PROVIDE TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

Strategy three reasons that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership:

- Research results will inform more effective programming and
- Decision makers will recognize the impact of programs that conserve biodiversity and forests.



INDICATOR 7 – NUMBER OF CITATIONS OR USES OF MI WORK PRODUCTS

There were no known citations or uses of MI work products in FY14. This can be directly correlated to the fact that FY14 was the year in which MI moved out of the conceptualization phase and into production. With production increasing, a fully staffed team and an increasing number of dissemination activities, it is expected that MI will begin to see citations of its work in FY15.

INDICATOR 8 – CHANGE IN PERCEIVED VALUE OF BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING TO USAID

MI made the decision in Q2 FY14 to not move forward with Indicator 8. The MI team finalized and vetted an interview guide for the indicator with E3/FAB, which included a pre- and post-survey analysis plan as well as guidance for interviewers. The reason for deciding to not move forward with the indicator was that it was determined that the survey would not achieve statistical significance given the small population and moving nature of potential interviewees.

LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY THREE

Activity three – *communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership* – will not come fully into effect until FY15. MI defined research priorities and increased dissemination activities in FY14, which will eventually lead to its work being cited and in turn, will inform the integration of biodiversity in development programming. Furthermore, since FY14 marked a turning point for MI from conceptualization to production, it is expected that dissemination of MI's work will continue to increase throughout FY15, which will also result in more citations.