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# MEASURING IMPACT Q1-Q2 FY16 SEMI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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# MEASURING IMPACT

## CONTRACT INFORMATION

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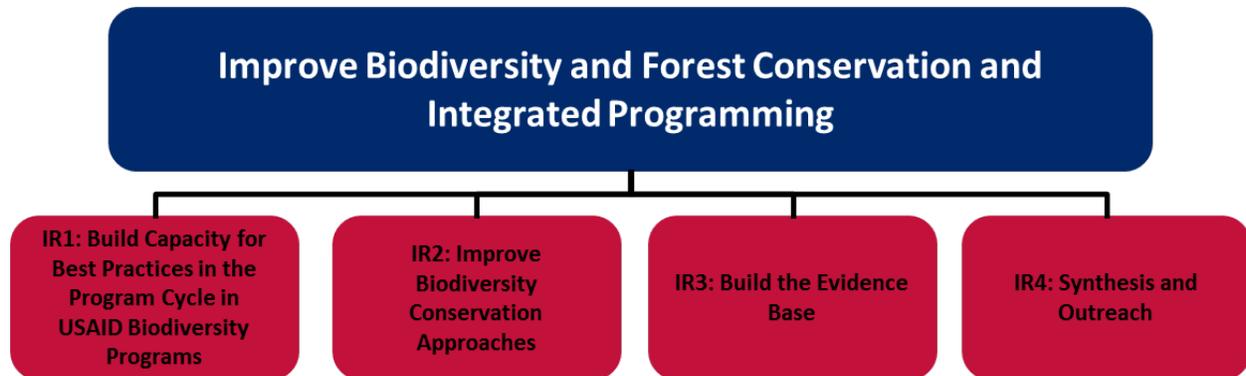
## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

A&A	Acquisition and Assistance
ADS	Automated Directives System
BCN	Biodiversity Conservation Network
BDRA	Biodiversity & Development Research Agenda
BRIDGE	Biodiversity Results and Integrated Development Gains Enhanced
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CLA	collaborating, learning, and adapting
CLG	Collaborative Learning Group
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CWC	Combating Wildlife Crime
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
E3	Bureau of Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment
ECO	Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach
ECOFISH	Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries
FAB	Office of Forestry and Biodiversity
FY	fiscal year
GCC	Global Climate Change
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
INTERPOL	International Police Organization
IR	Intermediate Result
IUU	illegal, unreported, and unregulated
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean
LEARN	Learning and Knowledge Management
LOP	life of project
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
ME&L	monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MI	Measuring Impact
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OAA	Office for Acquisition and Assistance
PAD	project appraisal document
PHE	population, health, and environment
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning
RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia
ROUTES	Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species
SAR	South American Regional Office
SOW	scope of work
SPP	Office for Strategic and Program Planning
TA	technical assistance
TDY	temporary duty
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

## I. INTRODUCTION

### OVERVIEW OF THE MEASURING IMPACT PROJECT

The 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. Measuring Impact (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 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 (E3), Forestry and Biodiversity Office (FAB) and selected USAID missions will be equipped with knowledge and tools through research, evaluations, technical assistance (TA), 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 I countries that feature high priority biodiversity and ecosystems. The Policy emphasizes the use of best practices in project design and the 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<sup>1</sup>

In the first half of fiscal year (FY) 2016, MI continued Mission support and USAID trainings, launched the Cross-Mission Learning Program, initiated research into key areas of interest to E3/FAB, and completed key learning materials to inform best practices in the Program Cycle. Q1-Q2 FY16 highlights include:

1. Providing TA and training to nine Missions and E3/FAB.
2. Following the launch of the Learning Agenda, working with the E3/FAB Office and Missions to further refine theories of change for common strategic approaches, identify evidence gaps that can be filled through the Learning Program, and develop Collaborative Learning Groups (CLGs) that define and pursue Learning Agendas.
3. Conducting the first evidence generation temporary duty (TDY) to the Peru Mission to provide TA in the selection and framing of research questions, and developing scopes of work to procure research activities to answer them.
4. Receiving recognition for project accomplishments by winning a collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) video contest and contributing to E3/FAB training, including a three-day coaches training and the development of six learning modules. Initiating dissemination activities targeted at audiences in USAID, including supporting the development of and populating the E3/FAB Gateway and providing support to cross-IR communications.
5. Completing the MI staffing plan with the hires of a Synthesis and Outreach Specialist, Contracts Compliance Specialist, a Project Coordinator, and a Research Specialist.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detailed updates for every output in the FY16 MI Work plan, see the [Output Tracking Table](#).

## **IRI: BUILD CAPACITY FOR BEST PRACTICES IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE IN USAID BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMS**

Building from significant progress in FY15, IRI worked to continue strengthening the enabling conditions that support best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in focal Missions and E3/FAB during the first half of FY16. Specific highlights of IRI's work in Q1 and Q2 include:

- Use of geospatial data and analysis to inform the design and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (ME&L) priorities for the South American Regional (SAR) biodiversity program. This effort resulted in the first USAID ME&L plan for biodiversity programming.
- Generation of evidence through applying a theory-of-change approach to two midterm performance evaluations in the Philippines. This effort constitutes the first evaluations commissions by USAID to test assumptions defined in an activity theory of change and to begin to assess the effectiveness of strategic approaches to conserve marine and terrestrial ecosystems.
- Applying new knowledge and evidence to adaptively manage biodiversity programming in Uganda as a result of two midterm Learning Reviews. The learning reviews were designed by E3/FAB and MI and in collaboration with the Program Office.

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY16 Annual Work Plan, and details regarding IRI engagement with E3/FAB, focal Missions and key partner offices over FY16.

### **ACTION 1.1.1 – PLANNING, PRIORITY SETTING, AND DOCUMENTING PROGRESS ACROSS FOCAL MISSIONS**

#### **MISSION WORK PLANS (OUTPUT 1.1.1.A)**

Through effective planning and priority setting, MI, E3/FAB, and Mission staff identify key leverage points in the Program Cycle to apply adaptive management tools and enhance business processes that result in increased learning and use of evidence. Time and resource investments made on behalf of E3/FAB, MI, and Mission staff toward achieving this shared goal are detailed in individual focal Mission work plans, including Mission-specific objectives, tasks for training and TA, and articulation of clear roles and responsibilities.

Upon completion of Q2 FY16, MI has continued engagement and active planning and priority setting with nine of the eleven focal Missions, including seven bilateral Missions (Nepal, Philippines, Indonesia, Peru, Vietnam, Madagascar, and Uganda)<sup>2</sup> and two regional initiatives (SAR and the Regional Development Mission for Asia [RDMA]). Through this process, MI found opportunities to draw upon the expertise of IRs 2, 3, and 4 to add value to MI's work across and within focal Missions. Examples of this cross-IR collaboration include:

1. Applying the conservation enterprises learning agenda and discussion guide developed by IR2 to inform the Uganda Learning Review, meanwhile collecting information to inform the conservation enterprises body of knowledge.
2. Leveraging the research expertise and capacity of IR3 to refine research questions and develop scopes of work to commission further analysis to inform the SAR project appraisal document (PAD) and operationalize the project ME&L plan.
3. Synthesized learning from IRI's work across focal Missions to inform IR4 case examples of applying theories of change to implement the Program Cycle in biodiversity programming for distribution across the Agency.

During this period, MI delivered eleven in-person workshops across focal Missions and Washington, augmented by ongoing virtual support around the various stages<sup>3</sup> identified in the Program Cycle. IRI's TA and training for Q1 and Q2 spans Agency policy and strategies, Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), project design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and learning and adapting. MI's work with the focal Missions resulted in the co-production of technical products to meet requirements of these stages in the Program Cycle,

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<sup>2</sup> MI support to two additional Missions, the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) and Mozambique, is on hold for FY16 until MI receives further requests for TA and training.

<sup>3</sup> MI is using "stage" to describe the various levels of engagement in the Program Cycle.

including PADs and project ME&L plans, activity scopes of work, activity work plans and ME&L plans, and evaluation scopes of work (SOWs) (see Table I for details).

<b>MI TA &amp; TRAINING DELIVERED TO FOCAL MISSIONS IN Q1-2 FY16</b>									
<b>Program Cycle Stage:</b>	Agency Policy & Strategies	CDCS	Project Design & Implementation				M&E		Learning & Adapting
<b>Products &amp; Processes:</b>	ADS, BD, GCC, Evaluation, etc.	118/119, Analysis	PAD ME&L Plan	A&A	Activity SOW	Flexible Contracts	Activity LOP M&E Plan	Evaluation SOW	Portfolio Review, Learning Initiatives
<b>SAR</b>	X		X	X					
<b>Peru</b>	X		X	X					
<b>RDMA</b>	X						X		
<b>Philippines</b>	X							X	
<b>Indonesia</b>	X					X	X	X	
<b>Vietnam</b>	X				X				
<b>Nepal</b>	X					X			
<b>CARPE</b>									
<b>Uganda</b>	X	X					X		X
<b>Mozambique</b>									
<b>Madagascar</b>	X		X			X			
<b>E3/FAB</b>	X						X		

Table I: Delivery of Technical Assistance & Training to Focal Missions in Q1-2 FY16

#### **QUARTERLY REVIEW SESSIONS (OUTPUT I.1.1.B)**

Quarterly review sessions between MI Regional Leads and E3/FAB points of contact serve as reflection points throughout the year to discuss and plan around priority issues. In the first half of FY16, the IRI team developed and led two successful quarterly review sessions with USAID.

The first quarterly review session was held on November 5 and was attended by staff from E3/FAB, E3/Global Climate Change/Sustainable Landscapes (GCC/SL), and the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Bureau. During this review session, the participants sought to (1) understand and brainstorm solutions for how the procurement process often creates barriers for USAID and partners to implement best practices in the Program Cycle, (2) identify modalities of transitioning elements of the PAD into the design process of a new activity, and (3) prioritize guidance and tools to support Missions through this process. There was consensus amongst the group that the management approach section of standard procurement instruments presents an opportunity for Missions to request from applicants an adaptive management approach supported by the appropriate skills, staffing structure and budget.

The GCC/Adaptation After-Action Review served as the second quarterly review session held on January 13 and was attended by staff from E3/FAB, E3/GCC/SL, E3/GCC/Adaptation and MI. This review explored lessons learned from the application of situation models and results chain tools to a purely GCC/Adaptation funded project in Peru. During the meeting, the team outlined the process they underwent with the Mission in preparation and execution of the PAD Workshop in October 2015, including development of a situation model, selecting strategies, depicting theories of change in results chains, development of learning questions, and defining outcomes and indicators for the project ME&L plan. As a result of the collaboration with GCC/Adaptation, the technical office provided two endorsements for continued application of these tools in the context of GCC/Adaptation programs, stating that (1) the situation model helped the team brainstorm and then winnow the universe of potential adaptation strategies, and (2) results chains and custom indicators can put the Mission in a position to test key assumptions through their project ME&L approach.

### **ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT (OUTPUT 1.1.1.C)**

This deliverable is a summary of the uptake of best practices in the Program Cycle across the 11 focal Missions, and will be completed at the beginning of Q4 FY16 to inform the following year work planning process.

### **IRI OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION MEMO (OUTPUT 1.1.1.D)**

This year IRI increased their effort to engage key USAID staff from the Program Office, Contracting Office, and Front Office in each focal Mission. MI has learned it is critical that staff in these offices are aware of the requirements of the Biodiversity Policy and understand the utility of situation models and results chains in implementing best practices in the Program Cycle. Development and delivery of this Outreach and Communications memo has been delayed and will be delivered once E3/FAB, the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL), and MI have resolved questions pertaining to the selection and use of indicators at various scales and procurement approaches supportive of biodiversity programming. The resolution of these issues will refine the key messages and strategies required to communicate with the target audiences across Missions.

### **ACTION 1.1.2 – SOUTH AMERICA REGIONAL PROGRAM (SAR)**

The IRI team, led by Marcia Brown and Armando Valdes-Velasquez, held a learning workshop for the SAR Program in Santarem, Brazil on October 19-23 to create a learning approach for the natural resource management- and GCC-focused regional PAD. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Rebecca Butterfield and Marco Flores from E3/FAB, Mark Higgins from GeoCenter, Evan Notman, Juliann Aukema, and Liza Cushion from E3/GCC, and Ana Villegas from the LAC Bureau. The SAR PAD and project ME&L plan are in service of USAID's Environment Vision for the Amazon Basin, developed in 2014 with inputs from three bilateral Missions. The purpose of the October workshop was to translate the results chains and associated indicators developed to date into effective performance monitoring and reporting and robust evaluations that contribute to both SAR Mission and Amazon-wide learning and adaptive management. This notable workshop was the first that built upon situation models and results chains to formulate a project ME&L plan. Outputs of this workshop included (1) management effectiveness questions to test assumptions identified in the results chains, (2) an evaluation approach and priorities to assess a reduction in threats to biodiversity focal interests, (3) the identification of information gaps that could be filled through further analysis of existing data, (4) outcome statements and indicators for all strategic approaches, and (5) components of an Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) plan informed by and structured to manage the learning process. The SAR ME&L Plan was completed in December and represents a significant achievement for E3/FAB and the SAR team.

### **ACTION 1.1.3 – PERU BILATERAL**

In the first quarter of FY16, the IRI team, led by consultant Armando Valdes-Velasquez, held several small working sessions with the Peru Mission to support the Mission's sustainable landscapes and biodiversity project. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Rebecca Butterfield and Marco Flores from E3/FAB, Mark Higgins and Michael Wissner from GeoCenter, and Jonathan Cook, Evan Notman, and Liza Cushion from E3/GCC. These small sessions culminated in the development of a draft project ME&L plan. This ME&L plan is closely aligned with and informed by USAID's Environment Vision for the Amazon Basin.

In the same quarter, the IRI team, led by Judy Boshoven, facilitated a climate adaptation PAD workshop on October 26-30 in Lima to improve project design and M&E as part of the USAID Program Cycle by providing training for the USAID Peru Mission to develop and use a situation model and results chains to design the Climate Adaptation Project. This workshop resulted in the development of a high-level situation model and prioritized interventions, results chains representing theories of change for high-priority interventions, and an outline of the ME&L approach for the GCC/Adaptation PAD.

### **ACTION 1.1.4 – REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MISSION FOR ASIA (USAID/RDMA)**

The IRI team, led by Richard Margoluis and Arlyne Johnson, facilitated a design workshop with RDMA for the Oceans activity on January 18-22 and 25-27 in Bangkok, Thailand. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Hannah Fairbank and Heidi Schuttenberg from E3/FAB. This workshop supported activity design and M&E, and as part of the USAID Program Cycle, aligned the activity ME&L plan to inform USAID/RDMA's learning priorities and track progress toward achieving the project purpose. The sessions provided training and technical support for USAID/RDMA and the Oceans implementing partners to (1) develop a situation model that details the relationships between numerous factors impacting biodiversity conservation, (2) depict theories of change in results chains, and

(3) use the RCs to structure and strengthen the Oceans work plan and focus the ME&L plan. These outputs were used to define a shared vision of the Oceans activity between the implementing partners and USAID, strengthening management, M&E, and communication for the activity.

### **ACTION 1.1.5 – PHILIPPINES BILATERAL**

During this period, MI provided TA to the USAID/Philippines Office of Energy, Environment, and Climate Change and Program Office staff and implementing partners to design the mid-term performance evaluations for the Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries (ECOFISH) and Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER) activities using a theory-of-change approach in alignment with the USAID Biodiversity Policy and Evaluation Policy. IRI was supported by USAID staff Barbara Best and Heidi Schuttenberg of E3/FAB and Nancy Ebuenga of the Philippines Program Office. MI guided the teams to develop and use result chains as the framework for identifying the evaluation questions to be assessed in each midterm performance evaluation. MI also provided input on the Mission's SOW for each evaluation and oriented teams on how to implement a theory-of-change approach to evaluation. MI then reviewed the draft midterm performance evaluation reports and discussed findings, recommendations, and lessons learned with the E3/FAB Activity Manager, the Mission contracting officer representative (COR) for the Activity, the Program Office COR for the evaluation, and the evaluation team leader.

### **ACTION 1.1.6 – INDONESIA BILATERAL**

In Q2, IRI staff worked with the E3/FAB Office and USAID/Indonesia to design and prepare for a two-week in-person workshop and hands-on training for May 2016. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Barbara Best and Alicia Grimes of E3/FAB and Evan Notman from E3/GCC. The purpose of the workshop is to assist USAID and the implementing partner to kick off the Sustainable Ecosystems Advanced (SEA) biodiversity activity, one of two biodiversity-funded activities commissioned to implement the biodiversity-focused PAD. Concurrent with the start-up of the biodiversity activity, MI is facilitating a series of consultations with the technical and program offices to define evaluation approaches and options within the context of the USAID Evaluation Policy to assess impact over time. During the anticipated May workshop in Indonesia, the E3/FAB Office and IRI staff will work closely with the Mission-wide M&E mechanism to introduce the results chain tool and its application to evaluation design.

### **ACTION 1.1.7 – NEPAL BILATERAL**

In Q2, engagement with USAID/Nepal was reignited through a series of consultations and virtual working sessions. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Olaf Zerbock of E3/FAB, Richard Volk of the Water Office, and Jonathan Cook from E3/GCC. Through this process, MI developed and delivered illustrative procurement language and a proposed activity start-up timeline and corresponding deliverables, both tailored to the needs of the Program for Aquatic Natural Resource Improvement (PANI) activity. An in-person workshop is confirmed for June 2016, which will provide TA and training for USAID/Nepal technical and program office staff and the implementing partner on the use and application of results chains for activity design, work planning, and M&E. Similar to Indonesia, during the anticipated June workshop in Nepal the E3/FAB Office and IRI staff will work closely with the Mission-wide M&E mechanism to introduce them to results chains and their applicability to evaluation design.

### **ACTION 1.1.8 – VIETNAM BILATERAL**

Throughout November and December, Vinaya Swaminathan led a series of virtual working sessions for USAID/Vietnam. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Hannah Fairbank and Gheeta Uhl of E3/FAB. MI's engagement in Vietnam was structured to test pilot the "MI Light Touch" approach to applying the situation model and results chain tools, a joint IRI-IR4 product (Action 4.3.4). The purpose of MI's support was to co-facilitate a design process for a new biodiversity activity with inputs from the technical office, E3/FAB, and the GCC team. The E3/FAB point of contact, Hannah Fairbank, directed the application of these tools to meet the Mission's needs. Through this process, the team agreed upon the geographic scope, a set of biodiversity focal interests, and a prioritized list of threats, and arrived at a general understanding of the underlying drivers to biodiversity loss. The outputs of the process included a situation model, a snapshot of the context within which the new biodiversity activity will take place, assisting the Mission with prioritizing potential strategic approaches, and communicating the rationale and role of this activity to external audiences.

## **ACTION 1.1.9 – CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (CARPE)**

The CARPE Program has not requested MI support for this period.

## **ACTION 1.1.10 – UGANDA BILATERAL**

The Uganda Mission requested assistance from MI to conduct a learning review of the conservation enterprises strategic approach implemented through the USAID Uganda Biodiversity Program. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Sara Carlson, Nathan Gregory, Hadas Kushnir, Nitin Sekar, and Gheeta Uhl of E3/FAB. In December 2015, IRI, represented by Vinaya Swaminathan and Judy Boshoven, traveled to Uganda to conduct this review, the first of its kind in biodiversity programming. MI facilitated this highly participatory learning review in collaboration with the implementing partners, E3/FAB, the USAID Uganda Environment Office and Program Office, and the Mission-wide Learning Contract.

The learning review assessed the effectiveness of conservation enterprises to date and the learning potential of the mechanism using a theory-of-change approach and results chain tool developed by MI. The theory-of-change approach was used to (1) establish clear learning questions, (2) analyze existing monitoring data and qualitative information on those learning questions, (3) understand the context within which results were achieved or not achieved, and (4) consider the implications of these findings for adaptation and for future efforts in conservation enterprises implementation and monitoring.

Outputs of this process include a workshop agenda, an illustrative scope of work for future learning reviews, a PowerPoint and webinar presenting the findings of the review to USAID/Uganda, and a final report. The report summarizes the approach, outlines the main learning questions, presents findings, highlights information needs, and summarizes recommendations. The findings from the review will be used to: (1) inform future Uganda Biodiversity Program implementation, (2) inform African Wildlife Foundation's case study on conservation enterprises and work with partners, (3) enhance ME&L for the Uganda Biodiversity Program and future biodiversity programming on conservation enterprises approaches, (4) demonstrate a learning review process for other models or activities, and (5) contribute to learning on conservation enterprises approaches.

## **ACTION 1.1.11 – MADAGASCAR BILATERAL**

In Q2, Vinaya Swaminathan facilitated a series of virtual working sessions to assist Madagascar in completing the biodiversity-focused PAD and project ME&L plan. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff member Olaf Zerbock of E3/FAB. This included updating the project situation model and the project theory of change, along with defining illustrative outcome statements and indicators. Following approval of the PAD, Madagascar will quickly pivot to activity design, procurement, and start-up. In Q3 MI is poised to provide Madagascar with illustrative procurement language and a proposed activity start-up timeline and corresponding deliverables, both tailored to the context of Madagascar. An in-person workshop is planned for Q1 FY17 to support the launch of two new activities to implement the project.

## **ACTION 1.1.12 – MOZAMBIQUE BILATERAL**

The Mozambique Mission has not requested MI support for this period.

## **ACTION 1.1.13 – AGENCY-WIDE SUPPORT**

Based on a United States government (USG) inter-Agency task force established by the White House, E3/FAB requested the support of MI on the intersection of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and human trafficking. In the first half of FY16, IRI coordinated and planned workshops to explore both (1) the intersection between IUU fishing and human trafficking and (2) IUU fishing alone. Through these workshops, IRI led the development of situation models to define both problems and accurately map how each agency is addressing the issues.

For IUU fishing and human trafficking, IRI coordinated a workshop on November 24 to develop a shared analytical framework to support interagency coordination in combating forced labor on fishing vessels. IRI was supported by

USAID/Washington staff Heidi Schuttenberg and Barbara Best of E3/FAB; Bama Athreya, Marina Colby, and Rebecca Eastwick-Haskell from the Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance; Tegan Hare from PPL; and Catherine Bollinger from the Asia Bureau. The workshop was attended by staff from USAID, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of the Interior, the Department of State, the Department of Labor, and official representatives from the White House. During the workshop, participants applied tools that support interagency strategic planning to develop a shared situation model, explore coordinated USG efforts in Southeast Asia, and identify key questions about the causal relationships between these issues and the efficacy of different approaches for addressing them.

For IUU fishing only, IRI coordinated a December 15 workshop on building capacities to combat IUU fishing in collaboration with the private sector. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Heidi Schuttenberg and Barbara Best of E3/FAB. The workshop was attended by staff from Bumblebee Tuna, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, Fishwise, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, NOAA, Oceana, Pew Charitable Trusts, Rare, the Smithsonian, The Nature Conservancy, the US Coast Guard, the University of Rhode Island, USAID, Walmart, the World Bank, and the World Wildlife Fund. The workshop focused on the drivers that influence IUU fishing, and participants of the workshop developed and refined a framework to facilitate strategic and coordinated capacity building efforts. The discussions from the workshop were used to inform the implementation of Recommendation 6 of the National Action Plan to Combat IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud: International Capacity Building.

In addition to supporting IUU fishing, IRI coordinated a series of half-day working sessions around the Lacey Act, a U.S. law banning trade in illegal plants and wildlife. IRI was supported by USAID/Washington staff Rebecca Butterfield, Ana Villegas from the LAC Bureau, and Alicia Grimes of E3/FAB. This planning process is focusing on developing a common understanding of the problem of global illegal logging and associated trade through the development of a situation model, defining priority interventions to respond to this problem, and developing theories of change for those interventions. E3/FAB has created a core team that includes representatives from the State Department, the US Forest Service, the Department of Justice, and E3/FAB. Specific working sessions have also included representatives from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, the Department of Agriculture, INTERPOL, the US Trade Representative, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the World Resources Institute. To date, MI staff have worked with participants to develop and vet a draft situation model, brainstorm and prioritize interventions, and develop results chains for three interventions.

## **ACTION I.1.14 – OTHER TIER-1 AND TIER-2 MISSIONS**

A portion of effort identified for this category has been allocated to support efforts in Nepal for Q3-4. No additional Missions have been prioritized for IRI engagement at this time.

### **KEY OUTPUTS**

- Technical Assistance and Training to Nine Focal Missions (see Table I) (I.1.1.A)
- Six Mission TDYs and Eleven In-Person Workshops in Indonesia, Peru, RDMA, SAR, and Uganda (I.1.1.A)
- Two Quarterly Review Sessions (I.1.1.B)

## **IR2: IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION APPROACHES**

Following the launch of the Learning Program in FY15 with the Conservation Enterprises CLG and the identification of a second learning topic, Combating Wildlife Crime (CWC) Enforcement Capacity Building, IR2 staff made significant progress promoting learning across Missions. IR2 staff worked with the E3/FAB Office and Missions to further refine theories of change for common strategic approaches, identify evidence gaps that can be filled through the Learning Program, and develop CLGs that define and pursue Learning Agendas. Highlights for FY16 Q1-Q2 include:

- Completing a rollout of the CWC Toolkit in October and witnessing a rapid uptake by Missions and Agency partners.
- Facilitating two sessions on cross-Mission learning at the February 2016 Environment Officers Conference.
- Producing near-final drafts of several FY16 deliverables that provide the foundation for a focused effort to engage the CLGs in Q3-Q4.
- Providing technical support to the development of an ME&L plan for USAID's Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) project.

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY16 annual work plan and details regarding IR2 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices over FY16.

### **ACTION 2.1.1 – IDENTIFY PIPELINE OF TOPICS FOR CROSS-MISSION LEARNING**

#### **MEMO: THIRD LEARNING TOPIC (OUTPUT 2.1.1)**

IR2 will consult with E3/FAB to decide on the third topic for cross-Mission learning by the end of Q3.

### **ACTION 2.1.2 – ASSESS E3/FAB CAPACITY FOR POST-MI ROLE**

#### **MEMO: CAPACITY-NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE POST-MI LEARNING PROGRAM (OUTPUT 2.1.2)**

This Memo will be delivered at the end of FY16 and will be informed by the progress of the CLGs through FY16.

### **ACTION 2.1.3 – SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING TOOLS**

#### **CWC TOOLKIT SUPPORT (OUTPUT 2.1.3.A)**

The CWC Toolkit was formally approved by the E3/FAB Director and was circulated for Mission use in October. The Toolkit is currently in use by Missions, implementing partners, and other USG agencies. The Toolkit was put to use quickly as a conceptual framework to support E3/FAB and TRAFFIC as they develop an ME&L plan for ROUTES.

#### **ROUTES SUPPORT (NEW OUTPUT 2.1.3.B)**

ROUTES is an E3/FAB activity led by implementing partner TRAFFIC and is focused on disrupting wildlife trafficking transportation options. IR2 assisted the ROUTES ME&L team in defining the process for development of indicators for their ME&L plan, which includes developing results chains to depict the theories of change for their five strategic approaches and their overall integrated approach, identifying key results along each results chain, and defining outcome statements and indicators for all key results. IR2 then worked with the ROUTES ME&L team to develop the full suite of results chains and identify candidate indicators from the CWC Toolkit for consideration for key results along all results chains. A virtual presentation was made to a subset of ROUTES partners to explain the process of indicator development in late January. Further progress on the ME&L plan was then delayed due to ROUTES leadership changes. IR2 has recently been reengaged to support further development of the ROUTES ME&L plan.

### **ACTION 2.2.1 – COMPLETE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING**

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING (OUTPUT 2.2.1)**

During FY15, CWC Enforcement Capacity Building emerged as a priority topic for cross-Mission learning through the CWC Toolkit development process and discussions with Missions. During FY16, IR2 will complete a Summary of Findings which will include: (1) the theory of change (building on the theory of change developed through the CWC Toolkit development process in FY15); (2) a synthesis of evidence supporting the theory of change found in

available documents; (3) identification of gaps in evidence found in available documents; and (4) possible learning questions and approaches.

In Q1 and Q2 FY16, the IR2 team completed the search and synthesis of evidence, which included grey literature (USAID documents<sup>4</sup> and key reports from non-academic sources) and peer-reviewed literature related to the theory of change. The IR2 team developed and obtained approval for a product definition, worked with IR3 to develop a search and data capture protocol, and performed an extensive search of grey and peer literature. Over 200 documents were reviewed and analyzed, including literature from key areas outside the conservation sector such as democracy and governance and law enforcement. IR2 staff are currently working to produce a draft for E3/FAB review and anticipate delivery to the IR2 Activity Manager in April.

## **ACTION 2.2.2 - COMPLETE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR THIRD THEORY OF CHANGE**

IR2 will consult with E3/FAB to decide on the pursuit of a third topic for cross-Mission learning at the end of Q3.

## **ACTION 2.3.1 – COMPLETE CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES LEARNING AGENDA**

### **FINAL CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES LEARNING AGENDA (OUTPUT 2.3.1)**

In FY16, IR2 built upon successful engagement with Missions around conservation enterprises that began in FY15. IR2 worked to finalize the Learning Agenda in FY16, building from a draft Agenda developed in Q4 FY15–Q1 FY16, refined through discussion with participants in the Conservation Enterprises learning session at the Environment Officers Conference, and submitted for approval in March. The final Learning Agenda includes: (1) the theory of change, vetted and refined by the CLG; (2) priority learning questions related to the theory of change; (3) envisioned learning activities; and (4) resulting products.

## **ACTION 2.3.2 – COMPLETE CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING LEARNING AGENDA**

### **PROPOSED AND FINAL CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING LEARNING AGENDAS (OUTPUTS 2.3.2.A-B)**

In Q1, IR2 developed draft Learning Agenda questions in order to inform the CWC Enforcement Capacity Building Summary of Findings (2.2.1) research. The team conducted key informant interviews with potential Learning Group members in January to solicit input on draft learning questions. Eleven key informants were identified in consultation with E3/FAB, representing three bilateral Missions, two regional Missions, the Africa Bureau, and E3/FAB. Following input from the completed interviews and from the draft Summary of Findings, the IR2 team revised the Learning Agenda questions. These questions were presented to E3/FAB and participants at the February 2016 Environment Officers Conference during an IR2-led session to present, vet, and gather feedback on final questions for the Learning Agenda. A synthesis of key informant interviews and outcomes from the Conference session was completed and delivered to E3/FAB. In late March, the IR2 team discussed proposed revisions to the results chain and revisions to learning agenda questions with the IR2 Activity Manager and E3/FAB. Input from this discussion, key informant interviews, and the Environment Officers Conference will be reflected in the proposed Learning Agenda (2.3.2.A).

## **ACTION 2.4.1 – ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS: CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES LEARNING GROUP (OUTPUTS 2.4.1.A-F)**

The planned virtual meeting to review the draft Learning Agenda (2.4.1.A) was delayed pending discussion of the Learning Agenda at the Environment Officers Conference. However, in completing the Learning Agenda, IR2 outlined topics for conservation enterprises newsletters (2.4.1.E) and evidence webinars (2.4.1.D), and developed an annotated bibliography of key Summary of Findings documents.

One learning product for eventual dissemination to the CLG will be an examination of the evidence presented in the 2015 International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) systematic review of alternative livelihood projects relative to the theory of change for conservation enterprises. An approvable draft of this product (which is a proposed addition to IR2 FY16 work plan, Output 2.6.1.D) was submitted to the Activity Manager in late March.

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<sup>4</sup> Review of the USAID literature completed in Q4 FY15 was integrated with the broader grey literature.

Comments received from the Activity Manager and COR reviews have been incorporated and are now under final review.

Working closely with E3/FAB, IR2 facilitated a one-hour session at the Environment Officers Conference (Output 2.4.1.B) in order to expose participating Environment Officers to the Cross-Mission Learning Program, solicit their input into the Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda, and catalyze their engagement in the CLG. In preparation for this conference, the IR2 team worked with E3/FAB to develop an agenda and materials for the session. During the session, IR2 solicited feedback on the Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda and proposed learning questions and activities, presented and socialized the online platform, invited participants' involvement, and built a sense of community for further engagement in the CLGs. The IR2 team developed a draft summary memo on the session's participation, outputs, and follow-up actions and delivered it to the IR2 Activity Manager in March.

### **ACTION 2.4.2 – ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS: CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING LEARNING GROUP (OUTPUTS 2.4.2.A-D)**

The main focus for engaging participants for the upcoming CWC Enforcement Capacity Building Learning Group was the Environment Officers Conference in February (Output 2.4.2.B). Similar to the Conservation Enterprises session, IR2 worked with E3/FAB to develop an agenda and materials for the session, which was designed to catalyze engagement in the CLG. The IR2 team then facilitated a one-hour session to introduce participating Environment Officers to the Cross-Mission Learning Program, solicit their input on the CWC Enforcement Capacity Building results chain and Learning Agenda, and present and socialize the online platform. The IR2 team developed a draft summary memo on the session's participation, outputs, and follow-up actions and delivered it to the IR2 Activity Manager in March. Findings from the Conference session will be used to revise the draft learning questions, the draft results chain, and possible learning activities for the CLG in the second half of the fiscal year. Further engagement actions will be taken in the second half of FY16 following the finalization of the CWC Learning Agenda.

### **ACTION 2.4.3 – ENGAGE THIRD LEARNING GROUP**

IR2 will consult with E3/FAB to decide on a third topic for cross-Mission learning by the end of Q3.

### **ACTION 2.4.4 – PROVIDE BILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

#### **TANZANIA NRM LEARNING AGENDA DEVELOPMENT (OUTPUT 2.4.4.A)**

In FY15, USAID/Tanzania indicated their potential interest in IR2's assistance in developing a Learning Agenda for their natural resource management portfolio. In February 2016, MI contacted the Tanzania Mission regarding potential activities around natural resource management learning needs. The Mission expressed interest in moving forward with MI's assistance, and directed MI to work with the Promoting Tanzania's Environment, Conservation and Tourism (PROTECT) program's implementing partner, Engility. MI contacted the PROTECT Chief of Party and discussions about potential involvement of MI are ongoing.

#### **OTHER BILATERAL SUPPORT (FORMERLY SOUTH AFRICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE SUPPORT) (REVISED OUTPUT 2.4.4.B)**

South Africa Regional Conference support was modified upon request of the IR2 Activity Manager. IR2 has proposed that this output be renamed "Other Bilateral Support" to accommodate as yet unknown possible Mission requests for IR2 support.

### **ACTION 2.5.1 – DEVELOP ONLINE PLATFORM**

Major progress was made in FY16 to develop the vision for the Cross-Mission Learning Program online platform. The platform will serve as a collaborative tool for USAID staff to capture institutional knowledge and share lessons on common biodiversity strategic approaches. The online platform will be part of the Natural Resource and Development Portal (RM Portal) and is being developed in coordination with the E3/FAB Communications and Knowledge Management Working Group.

#### **CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES CLG SITE (OUTPUT 2.5.1.A)**

IR2 received feedback from E3/FAB on the initial site design in October, implemented the feedback into the site design, and sent the revised design to E3/FAB for final approval. Site design approval was received in December 2015,

and IR2 directed Ferguson Lynch to begin the site development. The IR2 team gathered and uploaded content to the site, including the Conservation Enterprises Summary of Findings Brief, results chains, situation models, and other key documents. Site content was submitted for approval to the IR2 Activity Manager on February 8. The IR2 Activity Manager provided feedback on the content and layout of the site on March 21. This feedback has been incorporated and the site is now ready for review by the E3/FAB Communications and Knowledge Management working group.

#### **CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING CLG SITE (OUTPUT 2.5.1.B)**

Development of the CWC Enforcement Capacity building CLG site is on hold pending completion of the CWC Summary of Findings and Learning Agenda. However, the layout and content of the CWC Enforcement Capacity Building CLG site will be heavily informed by the final approved version of the Conservation Enterprises site. The site's pages have been drafted to the extent possible with these informing products outstanding. IR2 has begun to develop potential content for the site, including identifying an initial set of resources and developing summaries of the resources' content.

#### **FINISHED TEMPLATES FOR CLG SITE FOR THIRD THEORY OF CHANGE (OUTPUT 2.5.1.C)**

IR2 will consult with E3/FAB to decide on a third topic for cross-Mission learning by the end of Q3.

### **ACTION 2.6.1 – PROVIDE EVIDENCE: CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES**

In order to assess evidence and develop information for USAID to consider in using a conservation enterprise strategic approach, during FY15 MI initiated a follow-up study on the USAID-supported Biodiversity Conservation Network (BCN) program, which was implemented during the 1990s. A Phase I report was submitted to E3/FAB in May 2015 and included a proposal for a more in-depth assessment of the longer-term outcomes of BCN (Phase 2). E3/FAB decided not to pursue BCN Phase 2 as proposed but rather to expand a further study to include assessment of outcomes of other USAID-supported conservation enterprise projects in addition to BCN (Outputs 2.6.1.B-C).

#### **BCN PHASE I REVISED FINAL REPORT (OUTPUT 2.6.1.A)**

The initial BCN Phase I study focused on three main objectives that related to BCN's original theory of change about enterprise-based strategies linked to conservation, and which were related to the needs of MI's cross-Mission learning efforts. The report summarized the current status of and contacts for the original BCN projects, the tools and protocols used to conduct interviews and analyze findings, and the results of interviews and conclusions of an initial analysis. The report is in the process of final editing and formatting for formal submission to the Activity Manager in early Q3.

#### **RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF USAID-SUPPORTED CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES (OUTPUT 2.6.1.B)**

Following E3/FAB's decision not to pursue BCN Phase 2 as originally envisioned, IR2 alternatively worked to expand a study to include assessment of outcomes of other USAID-supported conservation enterprise projects in addition to BCN. The retrospective analysis of USAID-supported conservation enterprises is directed toward addressing Learning Agenda questions and is a comprehensive synthesis of evidence and lessons learned from multiple sources, including project documents, key informant interviews, and CLG discussions.

The IR2 team produced a first draft of the Retrospective Analysis proposal in November, and received and responded to two rounds of IR2 Activity Manager comments through February. Following revisions to the proposal, a revised product definition was produced, resubmitted to the Activity Manager, and revised following Activity Manager feedback. A final draft of the Retrospective Analysis product definition was submitted to the Activity Manager in early April. Findings from this analysis will inform material and discussion for the Conservation Enterprises CLG.

#### **ANALYSIS OF ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES (OUTPUT 2.6.1.C)**

Interviews with potential members of the Conservation Enterprises CLG in FY15 indicated great Mission interest in having a synthesis of lessons learned about the importance of various enabling conditions for successful conservation enterprises. During the first half of FY16, IR2 developed and submitted a product definition proposal, received comments from the Activity Manager on March 23, and revised the product definition for final approval by the Activity Manager in April. The IR2 team performed a search for relevant literature, identified twenty key resources, and created a data capture sheet. The team is currently reviewing the identified key resources and recording data for eventual analysis.

### **IIED SYNTHESIS (OUTPUT 2.6.1.D)**

The publication of the IIED systematic review examining evidence for the effectiveness of alternative livelihood activities (including conservation enterprises) in November 2015 offered an opportunity to mine and leverage its findings and those in its cited reference documents for evidence related to the Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda. A short brief was developed to contribute to the evidence base for the underlying assumptions of the theory of change that frames that Learning Agenda and will provide an additional resource for the Conservation Enterprises CLG. An initial draft was submitted for review by the IR2 Activity Manager in early March. Subsequent revised drafts have been developed with E3/FAB input; the IR2 Activity Manager and COR approved the final draft on April 28 2016.

## **ACTION 2.6.2 – PROVIDE EVIDENCE: CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING**

### **ANALYSIS OF ONE COMPONENT OF CWC ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING LEARNING AGENDA (OUTPUT 2.6.2)**

This action will be implemented later in the year following the finalization and launch of the CWC Enforcement Capacity Building Learning Agenda and CLG.

## **ACTION 2.7.1 –TRACK MISSION ENGAGEMENT**

### **SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF MISSION ENGAGEMENT IN FY16 (OUTPUT 2.7.1)**

The IR2 Mission Engagement Log, launched in FY14, has been consistently updated through the first half of FY16. The Log is housed online and a link has been provided to E3/FAB to allow their ongoing review. The Log tracks Mission engagement in the Learning Program through a number of "portals" and captures quantitative metrics and provides a qualitative assessment of the results of Mission engagement. A summary of Mission engagement will be produced and submitted to E3/FAB at the end of FY16.

## **KEY OUTPUTS**

- Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit versions 1.0 and 1.1 (2.1.3.A)
- Working Sessions and Technical Assistance for Development of ROUTES Results Chains and Indicators (2.1.3.B)
- Approvable Draft of Final Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda (2.3.1)
- Environment Officer's Conference Sessions (2.4.1.B, 2.4.2.B)
- Approvable Draft of Conservation Enterprises Site Build with content needed for CLG launch (2.5.1.A)
- Mission Engagement Log (2.7.1)

## **IR3: BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE**

In FY16, IR3 became fully staffed with the hiring of Dr. Natalie Dubois, formerly of Defenders of Wildlife, for the position of Research Specialist, and with the transition of Claire Price to Research Associate with 30 percent of her time allocated to IR3. With a full staff, IR3 was able to realize significant achievements in the first two quarters of FY16, including:

1. Conducting IR3's first TDY to the Peru Mission to provide TA in the selection and framing of research questions, and developing scopes of work to procure research activities to answer them.
2. Finalizing the gender and biodiversity governance systematic review and Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda (BDRA) stand-alone products, and making significant progress in completing and disseminating other IR3 FY15 research products while advancing additional activities in the FY16 work plan.

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY16 annual work plan, and details regarding IR3 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices over FY16.

### **ACTION 3.1.1 – BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE: CONSERVATION EFFECTIVENESS**

In FY16, IR3 will continue its efforts to build the evidence base to inform more effective conservation programs at USAID by supporting IR2 research activities for summaries of findings and other evidence generation efforts. In Q1, IR3 provided support and advice to IR2 on developing and implementing research protocols for the CWC Enforcement Capacity Building synthesis of findings (Output 2.2.1). Progress on this output is described in the IR2 section of this report.

### **ACTION 3.1.2 – REVIEW EMERGING CONSERVATION APPROACHES**

#### **RESEARCH BRIEF: NEW AND EMERGING APPROACHES IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (OUTPUT 3.1.2)**

To complement the Biodiversity Handbook and to build E3/FAB's evidence base around innovation in conservation science and practice, IR3 is working to identify and synthesize information about new and emerging approaches in biodiversity conservation. In the first half of FY16, IR3 progressed on this deliverable by completing a product definition, conducting a database analysis, and conducting interviews with conservation experts. The product definition was approved by the IR3 Activity Manager in January. The database analysis consisted of a survey of the conservation literature in the last 10 years. Specific steps included: (1) creating a bibliographic database, (2) developing a software tool for analysis, (3) surveying article titles, abstracts, and keywords in the database, (4) analyzing temporal frequency trends, and (5) reviewing journal tables of contents and selected full-text articles. Additionally, IR3 has reached out to conservation experts across several institutions, and has carried out interviews to complement the analysis of the literature. IR3 will compile knowledge gathered through the database analysis and expert opinion review in the second half of FY16 in a brief. This brief will highlight the main emerging approaches identified as well as potential avenues for application of these approaches in the USAID context, including conceptual paradigms, tools, and methods.

### **ACTION 3.2.1 – FOOD SECURITY WORKING GROUP RESEARCH PRIORITIZATION**

#### **THE ROLE OF NUTRITION IN FEED THE FUTURE AND FOOD FOR PEACE (REVISED OUTPUT 3.2.1)**

The role of IR3 in Food Security Working Group research shifted in FY16 following close discussions with the working group and with the IR3 Activity Manager. IR3 was originally asked to design a standardized research prioritization protocol, however, the Working Group determined that this product was no longer necessary and it will be proposed to be modified in the MI work plan memo.

In order to advance E3/FAB's understanding of the current work on, and potential avenues for, integration with other sectors, IR3 worked closely with the Food Security Working Group and key stakeholders to identify a nutrition expert from ICF International. An expert was identified in Q2. This individual provided a compilation of existing USAID resources around nutrition that were shared with the Group's meeting on March 9, 2016. The IR3 Activity Manager decided to drop the presentation by the ICF expert. No further action is expected under this output.

## **ACTION 3.2.2 - BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE AROUND FOOD SECURITY INTEGRATION**

### **FOOD SECURITY INTEGRATION RESEARCH PROJECT (OUTPUT 3.2.2.A)**

In Q4 FY15, E3/FAB's Food Security Working Group made the decision to continue IR3's involvement in research activities around food security and nutrition by undertaking a research project to be chosen using the research prioritization protocol (Action 3.2.1). In March 2016, E3/FAB chose climate-smart agriculture as the topic for this activity. In April 2016, a focus on pollinators and climate change was suggested. Andrés Gómez will work with members of the Food Security Integration working group, including Sara Carlson from E3/FAB and Marit Wilkerson (USAID Climate Change Advisor), to define a scope for this activity. The completion of this output may be moved to the FY17 MI work plan.

### **THE ROLE OF WILD FISHERIES IN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION BRIEFING BOOK (OUTPUT 3.2.2.B)**

In FY15, IR3 developed a draft briefing book on the importance of wild fisheries for food security and nutrition. This briefing book includes an overview of the contributions of wild fisheries to development, syntheses focused on nine Feed the Future countries, two case studies of integrated fisheries management, and an analysis of fish consumption patterns using Demographic and Health Survey data. IR3 worked in Q1 and Q2 of FY16 to finalize the briefing book's content and formatting. The IR3 team made several rounds of revisions to the briefing book following USAID comments, sending revised drafts on November 16, December 18, and March 9, 17, 25, and 30. Once comments and new suggestions for input were received, IR3 worked to incorporate comments, secure permissions to copyrighted materials, and carefully document all changes for the Activity Managers. Additionally, upon recommendation and assistance from MI's communications team, IR3 developed a PowerPoint as well as a print version of the briefing book. The PowerPoint version is expected to be a key resource for USAID staff to easily share the wealth of information contained in the briefing book. Final approval was received from E3/FAB on this output on April 11.

## **ACTION 3.2.3 - BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE AROUND GLOBAL HEALTH INTEGRATION**

### **POPULATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENT EVIDENCE SCOPING (OUTPUT 3.2.3)**

To advance MI's goal of building the evidence base around biodiversity integration, and to continue IR3's interactions with E3/FAB's Global Health Working Group, IR3 began work on a scoping activity around evidence for population, health, and environment (PHE) programs' impact on biodiversity. This topic was selected as one of interest by the Working Group and one which has an entry point for biodiversity integration. The PHE approach aims at generating benefits outside of the health sector, including positive biodiversity conservation impacts. A recent analysis concluded that, overall, there is weak evidence documenting the environmental outcomes of PHE investments. Additionally, although there are many proposed pathways theorized to lead to mutual benefits, many are still unsupported by the evidence or remain untested. However, beyond their success in producing health outcomes, the PHE approach has been successful in building constituencies, empowering women and youth, and increasing goodwill toward environment initiatives. PHE therefore provides one clear avenue for integration with the health sector, as well as opportunities for efforts to identify its strengths and weaknesses with respect to achieving environmental objectives.

In FY16, IR3 met with the Global Health Working Group to clarify expectations and timeline around the product, and developed a product definition following consultation with the group and with the IR3 Activity Manager. The product definition was submitted to E3/FAB for approval on March 14. The product is anticipated to (1) synthesize the pathways that are assumed to link PHE to biodiversity targets, (2) summarize and analyze the biodiversity indicators used in PHE projects, and (3) summarize assumptions and enabling conditions for success. Additionally, IR3 conducted a search of existing literature and evidence around PHE impacts on biodiversity and conservation, and compiled a database of peer-reviewed and grey literature gleaned from website and database searches and key document references. IR3 will continue this research in the second semester of FY16 and will synthesize evidence in a 5-10 page internal report.

### **ACTION 3.3.1 – FY15 RESEARCH PRODUCTS SUBMITTED, REVISED, AND PUBLISHED**

In FY16, IR3 finalized the internal MI and external USAID feedback of several research products initiated in FY15 and prepared manuscripts of reports for submission in peer-reviewed journals. IR3 also collaborated with IR4 to provide final production, layout, and copyediting support as well as work with the Communications and Knowledge Management Team staff of E3/FAB to determine the most effective communications channels and outlets for the evidence that is captured in these products.

#### **RESEARCH PAPER, NON-TECHNICAL BRIEF, AND SUITE OF COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS: ASSESSING THE STATUS OF EVIDENCE: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION GOALS (OUTPUT 3.3.1.A-B)**

In FY15, IR3 and the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History conducted a comprehensive review of stakeholder engagement efforts in support of biodiversity conservation goals and developed a non-technical brief based on that research as a dissemination product.

For the research paper (3.3.1.A), the research team worked in Q1 to identify potential journals for submission and to edit the research report for submission. In Q2, through this review process, the research team conducted a new analysis and edited the manuscript to incorporate this new information. The IR3 lead, Dr. Andrés Gómez, met with Museum staff on February 11 to discuss the finalization of the research paper and brief. The Museum completed the analysis and shared with IR3 a first draft of the revised manuscript April 12 2016. IR3 and the research team are working on final revisions before submission to the target journal, *Biological Conservation*.

The non-technical brief (3.3.1.B) underwent a round of revisions in Q1, and the team sent a revised draft to the IR3 Activity Manager on December 1. The team received comments in January, worked to address the comments with input from the IR4 communications team, and sent an approvable draft of the brief to the IR3 Activity Manager on March 11. The Brief was approved and sent for final layout and 508 coding in early April.

#### **SYSTEMATIC REVIEW, POLICY BRIEF, AND SUITE OF COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS: "DOES THE GENDER COMPOSITION OF FOREST AND FISHERY MANAGEMENT GROUPS AFFECT RESOURCE GOVERNANCE AND CONSERVATION OUTCOMES?" REVISED AND PUBLISHED (OUTPUT 3.3.1.C-D)**

In FY15, IR3 worked with The Nature Conservancy to complete a systematic review on the influence of gender inclusion on biodiversity governance. The manuscript (3.3.1.C) was completed in Q4 FY15, and was submitted for publication in the journal *Environmental Evidence* in Q1 FY16. The manuscript was accepted November 20, pending revisions. TNC completed the revisions in January and resubmitted the manuscript to the journal on February 17. The manuscript was accepted on March 4 and published on March 21.

Additionally, the research team developed a non-technical brief (3.3.1.D) that summarizes the research and its main findings. This brief was revised internally in Q1 and sent to the IR3 Activity Manager on December 4. However, due to the mandated revisions by *Environmental Evidence*, information that USAID and the research team felt was important was removed from the full report, rendering the brief substantially different from the final manuscript. In April 2016, IR3 produced a PowerPoint presentation and a brief based on the published manuscript for USAID internal use.

Additionally, in order to recover important outputs of the research team's efforts, IR3 discussed with USAID staff the possibility of making an additional gender product for contribution to the grey literature on gender and forestry. This additional product will not be managed by MI or worked on by MI staff, but will be led by The Nature Conservancy.

#### **PUBLICATION SUBMISSION AND NON-TECHNICAL BRIEF: "AN ANALYSIS OF FISH CONSUMPTION PATTERNS AMONG RURAL TANZANIAN HOUSEHOLDS" (OUTPUT 3.3.1.E-F)**

In FY15, IR3 completed an analysis of fish consumption patterns among rural households in Tanzania using data from the Demographic and Health Survey. A draft research manuscript (3.3.1.E) was completed in Q4 FY15. In FY16, IR3 submitted the manuscript to E3/FAB on December 18 and received clearance by the E3/FAB Director on January 4. Following USAID clearance, the manuscript was submitted to the journal *Public Health Nutrition* in January. The manuscript was rejected, and was revised for submission to the journal *Food Security* in Q2. Following the publication of the manuscript, IR3 will develop a short non-technical summary (3.3.1.F) that will outline the research question, methods, and findings for a broader audience.

### **PEER-REVIEWED MANUSCRIPT, RESEARCH REPORT, AND SUITE OF COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS: REWARDS AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN ANTI-POACHING AND ANTI-TRAFFICKING (OUTPUT 3.3.1.G-H)**

In FY15, IR3 worked with the Wildlife Conservation Society on research on the rewards and risks associated with community engagement in anti-poaching and anti-trafficking. In Q1 FY16, the IR3 team revised the research report and research brief (3.3.1.H) and sent it to the Wildlife Conservation Society for comment. The draft report was shared with E3/FAB and with MI leadership in November. Following receipt of comments from MI and E3/FAB, the IR3 team revised the report in Q2 and re-submitted to E3/FAB for comment. IR3 received a second round of comments in February, and worked with Dr. David Wilkie of the Wildlife Conservation Society to address all comments. IR3 completed and submitted the research report on March 24 to the Activity Manager. Dr. Wilkie provided responses to E3/FAB's comments on the research brief, and a revised version was sent to E3/FAB on March 28.

Following discussions with the IR3 AM and the MI COR, a manuscript for peer review based on this research (3.3.1.G) was dropped from the IR3 work plan.

The webinar delivered by the Principal Investigator in late FY15 was lightly edited and shared with the IR3 Activity Manager.

### **EVIDENCE FOR CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES: RESEARCH BRIEF ON SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS USING WORLD BANK PROJECT EVALUATIONS (OUTPUT 3.3.1.I) AND RESEARCH REPORT ON BEHAVIOR CHANGE IN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS INTERVENTIONS (OUTPUT 3.3.1.J)**

In FY15, IR3 coordinated with IR2 to produce new knowledge on sustainable livelihoods using a retrospective analysis of World Bank project evaluations (3.3.1.I) and preliminary results from a systematic review conducted by IIED (3.3.1.J). Research briefs produced from these products will be made available to the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group managed by IR2.

In FY16, IR3 worked to finalize research briefs summarizing the research questions, methods, and main results with IR2's input. For the World Bank paper, IR3 addressed a first round of internal comments, then shared a draft report with the IR2 lead, who suggested further changes in order to best align the paper with the needs of the Learning Group. IR3 is currently incorporating comments and expects to present a final draft to E3/FAB for review in Q3.

For the behavior change research report, IR3 revised and submitted the report to IR2 for comments in September. IR3 is currently in discussion with USAID to propose a revision for the product in Q3 and delivery to the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group.

## **ACTION 3.4.1– SUPPORT FOR MISSION EVIDENCE GENERATION EFFORTS**

USAID's Biodiversity Policy promotes evidence-based conservation, seeking to "enhance and expedite evidence-based programming" and to base transparent decision-making on the best available evidence. Evidence-based approaches can lead to more effective programming, but efficient use and generation of evidence requires specific skills. Specifically, staff members require the capacity to access existing evidence, appraise its quality, and assess its relevance to the strategy being implemented; generating new evidence requires careful project design to guarantee replicability, and appropriate dissemination to facilitate learning. Articulating theories of change allows for systematically identifying assumptions and evidence gaps, which in turn can lead to using evidence to fill those gaps and adaptively manage, modify, or design a conservation and development activity. Illustrating the processes, concepts, and tools required to do this will contribute to increasing the capacity of Mission staff to effectively use evidence in planning and evaluation.

In order to support Missions in this integral capacity building need, IR3 added a focus in FY16 on supporting Mission staff as they use and generate evidence. To achieve this during the first half of FY16, IR3 (1) joined a TDY in Peru to directly support the SAR Mission in evidence generation and (2) began scoping the Evidence Resource for Strategic Approaches in Biodiversity Conservation to provide critical resources to help Missions become good consumers and creators of evidence.

The SAR Mission had identified a list of crucial knowledge gaps around key strategic approaches. The Mission was interested in identifying and articulating a subset of questions that could be developed into scopes of work for research activities. The IR3 lead traveled to Peru January 19-23 to assist the Mission in refining learning questions

around specific components of their theories of change. Working with Mission and USAID/Washington staff, IR3 helped prioritize and frame two learning questions, and developed drafts of two scopes of work. IR3 further refined the scopes of work based on feedback from the Mission in March.

Additionally, IR3 staff began work on the Evidence Resource (Output 4.3.3.A) in the first half of FY16. As the Evidence Resource is an IR4 product, all progress and efforts are described in the IR4 section of this report.

## **ACTION 3.4.2 – DEVELOP EXAMPLES ON BEST PRACTICES ON USING EVIDENCE IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE**

### **BIODIVERSITY AND RESEARCH AGENDA STANDALONE PRODUCTS (OUTPUT 3.4.2)**

Developed in FY15, MI and E3/FAB agreed to delay the final production of the BDRA stand-alone documents in order to incorporate information gathered during the FY15 MI Strategic Retreat. The stand-alone documents augment USAID's available technical content around identifying and using evidence, and research questions and methods. In Q1 and Q2 FY16, IR3 finalized and obtained final approval for the BDRA's stand-alone documents: (1) *Research questions and methodologies for a Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda*, and (2) *Identifying and Using Evidence*. The IR3 team completed a revision of the documents and responded to a requested format change from the IR3 Activity Manager in December 2015. MI received minor comments from the COR in January, addressed the comments, resent the documents for clearance, and obtained clearance for both documents on February 10. The documents were then sent for final 508 coding and preparation for Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) posting. IR3 delivered the final products to the COR, who approved them on February 24. These documents are now available on the DEC and the Biodiversity Conservation Gateway.

### **KEY OUTPUTS**

- The Role of Wild Fisheries in Food Security and Nutrition Briefing Book (3.2.2.B)
- Non-technical Brief: Assessing the Status of Evidence: Stakeholder Engagement for Biodiversity Conservation Goals (3.3.1B)
- Systematic Review "Does the Gender Composition of Forest and Fishery Management Groups Affect Resource Governance and Conservation Outcomes?" (3.3.1.C)
- Publication Submission: "An Analysis of Fish Consumption Patterns among Rural Tanzanian Households" (3.3.1.E)
- Draft Research Report: Rewards and Risks Associated with Community Engagement in Anti-Poaching and Anti-Trafficking (3.3.1.H)
- Draft Research Report on Behavior Change in Sustainable Livelihoods Interventions (3.3.1.J)
- Two SOWs Delivered to SAR in Support of Research Activities (3.4.1)
- Biodiversity and Research Agenda Stand-Alone Products (3.4.2)

## **IR4: SYNTHESIS AND OUTREACH**

The IR4 team realized significant progress during FY16 following the hiring and onboarding of a full staff at the beginning of the year and in response to increased demand from E3/FAB and partner offices for MI assistance. Specific highlights for the fiscal year to date include:

1. MI won the CLA video contest in November 2015 with “Connecting the Dots: Biodiversity Cross-Mission Learning Program.”
2. The MI communications strategy has been operationalized, enabling MI to undertake an initial set of dissemination activities targeted at audiences in USAID, including supporting the development of and populating the E3/FAB Gateway, providing support to development of the cross-Mission learning programs, supporting completion and circulation of IR3 research products, and conducting interviews during the February 2016 Environment Officers Conference.
3. IR4 successfully contributed to E3/FAB training, including a three-day coaches training and the development of six learning modules that were delivered by the IR4 Activity Manager during the E3/FAB Environment Officer Training during December 2015.

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY16 annual work plan, and details regarding IR4 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices during the first two quarters of FY16.

### **ACTION 4.1.1 – OPERATIONALIZE MAINSTREAMING LEARNING AND ADAPTING (MLA) FRAMEWORK**

#### **APPROVED OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR MLA STRATEGY (OUTPUT 4.1.1.A)**

The Framework for Mainstreaming Learning and Adapting (MLA Framework) details the four core enabling conditions that will support the practice of adaptive management in USAID biodiversity programs beyond the life of MI: capacity; knowledge tools and guidance; business processes; and culture. Under each of these enabling conditions, MI and E3/FAB have discussed and come to initial agreement on a set of products and processes that need to be addressed and strengthened during the life of MI to ensure that best practices are institutionalized.

During FY15 MI developed an internal draft of the MLA Framework and used it to inform the FY16 work plan. The current version of the MLA Framework presents a great deal of information in a spreadsheet that is difficult to navigate. During the second half of FY16 MI will simplify the presentation of the MLA Framework so that it can more readily be used by E3/FAB and MI staff to meet its goals of supporting work planning, priority-setting, and assessment of progress

#### **MI OVERVIEW PRESENTATION (OUTPUT 4.1.1.B)**

The MI Overview Presentation is a general overview of the types of TA that MI provides and illustrates the process for engagement at various stages of the Program Cycle. The Overview Presentation is a modified version of the presentation made to the South Africa Regional Mission by the COR in September 2015. IR4 worked in the first half of FY16 to improve the graphic layout and to develop the case examples of MI’s impact in Missions. In Q3, the IR4 team will finalize the presentation based on review and input by the COR and IR4 Activity Manager. IR4 is additionally developing short take-away factsheets to complement the presentation, illustrating case examples of how Missions have engaged with MI in project design, activity design, ME&L planning, and learning activities.

#### **MI ME&L PLAN MEMO (OUTPUT 4.1.1.C)**

The ME&L Plan Memo will be completed in the second half of FY16. It will complement the finalized MI M&E Plan and will include a set of questions that E3/FAB could consider in assessing MI progress against the results chain. The ME&L Plan memo could also inform an evaluation of MI.

### **ACTION 4.2.1 – BUILD CAPACITY FOR NEW PRACTICES**

#### **UPDATED MI CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN (OUTPUT 4.2.1.A)**

During Q1 and Q2 FY16, IR4 worked with IR1 to develop an FY16 update to the MI capacity building plan in the form of an Annex. This Annex (1) describes the capacity needs of coaches and options for meeting those needs; (2) describes the capacity needs of non-focal Missions; (3) outlines approaches to addressing the capacity needs of Program Officers and Contracts Officers as they engage with MI; and (4) includes a section on addressing capacity

needs for Miradi users, particularly with regard to their need for self-paced support tools, as reported during MI's FY15 Synthesis of Findings. A draft annex to the capacity building plan was developed during Q2 and will be delivered to the Activity Manager early in Q3.

#### **AS NEEDED IN-PERSON CAPACITY BUILDING SESSIONS (OUTPUT 4.2.I.B)**

No assistance from MI has been requested to date in FY16.

#### **COACH DEVELOPMENT (OUTPUT 4.2.I.C)**

Richard Margoluis and Marcia Brown led a three-day coach development course from February 29 to March 2 as a follow-on to the Environment Officers Conference. E3/FAB requested this course during the FY16 work planning process to use as a test case for ways to develop the Agency's adaptive management facilitation capacity. These candidate coaches are envisioned to provide leadership and support to other USAID colleagues that program biodiversity funds, particularly after the end of MI. All of the coach development course participants had at least some familiarity with the tools and processes that MI is using in USAID.

The coach development course was modeled on CCNet courses, which MI carefully tailored to USAID's context, and was developed in coordination with the E3/FAB Communications and Knowledge Management effort. Participants included thirteen USAID staff representing the Brazil Mission, E3/FAB, the LAC Bureau, the Nepal Mission, RDMA, the Uganda Mission, and the Zambia Mission. During the training, participants (1) received hands-on experience and peer feedback in facilitating and coaching some of the steps of the design process, (2) shared insights, tips, and overviews of the support available for organizing and facilitating planning processes and workshops, (3) established working relationships with an initial cohort of USAID coaches who can share guidance and suggestions regarding common issues that arise while facilitating a project or activity design process and how to address them, and (4) moved toward achievement of advanced competency in best practices for implementing the Program Cycle.

#### **MIRADI SUPPORT MATERIALS (OUTPUT 4.2.I.D)**

Upon successful completion of the pilot stage, on June 9 2015, authorization was granted by PPL/the Office for Strategic and Program Planning (SPP) to allow the use of Miradi Software by all USAID staff that program biodiversity funds. In the first half of FY16, MI completed a final report of the Miradi pilot and, through this action, developed a set of support materials to introduce new users to Miradi software and its application to the Program Cycle. While Miradi has been approved for use in programming biodiversity funds Agency-wide, MI emphasizes in its work with focal Missions that the conceptual approach to program design and ME&L is the appropriate starting point for new staff; Miradi software should be used by staff who have been exposed to the conceptual approach through TA or training.

MI developed a strategy for introducing Miradi and a set of support materials that can be used by staff of E3/FAB on TDYs as well as materials that can be used independently by staff in Missions. To inform this strategy, MI reached out to Environment Officers in Missions to identify Miradi superusers and "light touch" users in USAID. The IR4 Activity Manager has documented and monitored these Mission staff in order to connect and coordinate users across operating units. The IR4 team additionally created an updated version of the "Getting Started Guide" and developed a flyer for dissemination. The guide and flyer underwent one round of comments and revisions in March, and a revised second draft is currently under review with the IR4 Activity Manager.

#### **SITUATION MODELS, RESULTS CHAIN-BASED THEORIES OF CHANGE, AND RESULTS CHAIN-ASSISTED MONITORING 101 AND 201: E3/FAB TRAINING MODULES (OUTPUT 4.2.I.E-G)**

MI developed six modules that were delivered in the Biodiversity and Development Training on December 7-9, 2015. Based on the content of the three draft Biodiversity How-To Guides on the same broad topic areas, MI worked with the module steward, the Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach (ECO) project, and the E3/FAB Training Coordinator to identify learning objectives and desired knowledge, skills, and abilities for each course; develop course outlines; develop course content; and prepare handouts, facilitators guides, and training exercises. Specific content provided by MI for each of the six training modules included the completed E3/FAB Training Module Content Template, PowerPoint slide decks, facilitator notes, breakout group support materials, and two-page handouts for each module. ECO used the content provided by MI with guidance from the Module Steward to develop a face-to-face version of the training modules. MI provided breakout group facilitation support during the training sessions. MI also provided input to the modules on Evaluation and on Adapting and Learning to ensure that they aligned logically to the other modules and to the draft Biodiversity How-To Guides. The modules developed here also informed sessions for the Environment Officers conference in February 2016.

## **ACTION 4.3.1 – DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, TOOLS, AND GUIDANCE: HOW-TO GUIDES AND NOTES**

### **BIODIVERSITY HOW-TO GUIDES AND COMPANION MATERIALS (OUTPUT 4.3.1.A)**

A major focus for IR4 during FY16 was the completion and dissemination of guidance documents to support the use of adaptive management in USAID biodiversity programs and compliance with the Biodiversity Policy. With the IR4 Activity Manager, the staff of IR4 made significant efforts in Q1 and Q2 of FY16 to finalize and disseminate the three Biodiversity How-To Guides: (1) Developing a Situation Model for USAID Biodiversity Programming, (2) Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming, and (3) Defining Outcomes and Indicators for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in Biodiversity Programming. These three Guides, along with their companion materials, promote best practices in the implementation of the Program Cycle in accordance with USAID policy and guidelines set by PPL.

The first quarter of FY16 was spent making final edits based on inputs of the E3/FAB Office staff and the Activity Managers; refining language to align to USAID style; and finalizing changes to the teaching example that is used in all three guides. The three near-final draft guides were delivered to USAID at the end of the first quarter and went through the first rounds of internal Office review during the second quarter. By the end of the second quarter MI and the IR4 Activity Manager were making final edits pre-clearance. Disseminating the Guides and companion materials to support their uptake (such as 2-pagers, video tutorials, and short testimonials) will be the priority for IR4 in the third quarter of FY16.

Additionally, IR4 staff began to develop companion materials to complement the Guides. Drafts of the standard PowerPoints for delivering TA were completed. In February, MI conducted interviews with staff of focal Missions about their experience with MI to use as a video companion piece to the guides. IR4 staff will complete these companion materials in the second half of FY16 that will be informed by the final versions of the How-To Guides.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BIODIVERSITY GUIDE: INDICATOR REFERENCE RESOURCE HOW-TO NOTE (OUTPUT 4.3.1.B)**

This supplement to the core set of Biodiversity How-To Guides is envisioned to be an inventory reference for use by USAID staff that program biodiversity funds. USAID Environment Officers need to be able to define appropriate indicators for selected strategic approaches, including progress toward threat reduction and conservation of biodiversity focal interests. They also need access to a suite of relevant, feasible, and informative indicators that will help USAID to move away from overdependence on standard indicators, which often do not adequately measure results or help decision makers. The reference resource will help inform selection and refinement of results chain-based indicators to assess progress in implementing their theory of change. It is envisioned that this will be a living resource, initiated by MI during FY16 and added to over time by USAID staff as the body of theory-of-change based program design evidence develops.

IR4 held two scoping meetings with E3/FAB staff during the reporting period. In Q2 FY16, the IR4 team held a March 17 working session with the IR4 Activity Manager and the MI COR on the functionality of the indicator reference tool, and presented an inventory of strategic approaches and results chains. Based on the outcomes and agreements reached in the briefing, IR4 began to develop a product definition. In the second half of the year, IR4 will revise the inventory of strategic approaches, verify the approaches with IRI regional leads, develop at least one new generic results chain, and identify up to five common biodiversity threats and focal interests addressed in USAID programming.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BIODIVERSITY GUIDE: IDENTIFYING BIODIVERSITY FOCAL INTERESTS AND COMPLETING A THREAT ASSESSMENT AND RANKING (OUTPUT 4.3.1.C-D)**

The two supplements to the Biodiversity How-To Guides will be developed in the second half of FY16.

## **ACTION 4.3.2 – DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, TOOLS, AND GUIDANCE: CASE EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES**

### **90-DAY START-UP PACKET (REVISED OUTPUT 4.3.2.A)<sup>5</sup>**

At the MI strategic planning retreat during September 2015, MI and E3/FAB agreed that a priority for FY16 would be strengthening the business processes that support good adaptive management. Working with focal Missions and

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<sup>5</sup> Former outputs 4.3.2.A and 4.3.2.B are proposed to be combined into one output which will include all elements of the previous outputs.

their supporting Regional Bureaus in Washington, MI and E3/FAB understood that Missions needed templates, models, and examples around three key tasks at the project design and implementation stage of the Program Cycle: developing an ME&L plan (project and activity level), writing an activity SOW, and developing first-year work plans and M&E plans with implementing partners. With input from the IR1 and IR4 Activity Managers, IR1 is “incubating” a set of practices and products that will support use of good adaptive management practices in these key USAID business processes.

The first half of FY16 included an in-depth review of the current challenges facing operating units as they try to use adaptive management principles to move from theory-of-change based project design to award and management of activities within that project. In addition to a desk review, MI synthesized information from TDYs to identify needs and inform scoping of materials to support the activity start-up phase. Several MI focal Missions are moving from design of projects to design and implementation of awards, and these Missions identified particular needs around work planning, ME&L planning, and resourcing that are being included in draft materials. MI has outlined and developed initial drafts for a set of templates that can be used more widely by USAID staff at the post-award activity start up stage. This includes a 5-page overview of products, processes, roles, and expectations, and three draft handouts on using results chains to develop and resource an activity work plan, an M&E plan, and quarterly and annual reports.

An initial draft of the Packet was sent to the MI COR and the IR4 Activity Manager on March 15 for their feedback on content, direction, and language, and the concepts and content of the start-up packet were discussed during the April 2016 E3/FAB-MI Quarterly Meeting. The final product for FY16 will include (1) illustrative language describing the activity start-up timeline, tasks and deliverables to support USAID staff through the activity post-award phase of the Program Cycle, modified and tailored to meet the needs of three separate Missions and the E3/FAB Office, (2) illustrative activity work plan and activity ME&L plan outlines and templates, modified and tailored to meet the specific needs of at minimum six new biodiversity activities, developed in consultation with program and technical office staff, (3) in Q3, a 1-2 page memo recommending the key components and scope of a standardized activity start-up packet based on 6 Mission examples, and (4) a E3/FAB approved product definition for the activity start-up packet.

#### **CASE EXAMPLE: "USING RESULTS CHAINS TO DEVELOP LEARNING QUESTIONS" (REVISED OUTPUT 4.3.2.C)**

This case example covers TA that MI provided to the Uganda Mission’s Biodiversity Program. As part of a mid-implementation pause and reflect exercise, the Mission asked MI to conduct a learning review. The review would be used to inform ongoing implementation of the mechanism and was not designed as an evaluation of the implementers’ performance.

The case example focuses on identification of learning questions related to the activity’s theory of change, depicted as its results chain. It provides an illustration of how learning questions can be developed to inform and strengthen implementation and the understanding of both the Mission and the implementing partner of progress against desired results.

MI completed a first draft of the case example in Q1 and received feedback from several Activity Managers. Based on those comments, IR4 rescoped the content of the document to be a learning overview, and reduce the focus on evaluation specifics. MI delivered a revised product definition and first draft to E3/FAB in March, and plans to finalize the case example during the third quarter following receipt of USAID comments.

#### **CASE EXAMPLE: “GEOSPATIAL DATA IN PLANNING: USAID PERU” AND COMPANION MATERIALS (OUTPUT 4.3.2.D)**

MI coordinated with Mark Higgins of the GeoSpatial Center and Silvia Petrova of the Office of Land Tenure and Resource Management to produce a document describing the use of geospatial information during the design of a regional-scale and landscape-scale project in Peru. Geospatial information was used in Peru to set priorities for interventions, refine biodiversity focal interests, and plan monitoring. The case study will include high-quality images and demonstrate links to the Program Cycle, and will be used as a companion for TA in Missions that program biodiversity funds.

Production of the geospatial case example was put on hold in Q1 pending further progress on the SAR ME&L plan. MI held a production call in early March to reach agreement on the scope, purpose, roles, and timeline for the case example. Following further progress on the ME&L plan, MI was able to align the case example with the ME&L plan

in a first draft delivered to the IR1 Activity Manager on March 24. IR4 received comments at the end of March and will incorporate them in a second draft in early Q3.

#### **CASE EXAMPLES: CLIMATE-BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION (OUTPUT 4.3.2.E)**

Based on TA provided to the Peru during FY15, IR4 will complete and disseminate two case examples that outline how MI approaches can be used in designing programs that integrate biodiversity funding with sustainable landscapes (Peru) funding and climate adaptation (generic example). The documents will be designed to complement the recently published "Integrating Biodiversity and Climate Adaptation in Activity Design" (USAID, July 2015) and will demonstrate how MI processes and tools can be integrated with the USAID Climate Resilient Development Framework.

The case examples will: (1) provide Mission and USAID/Washington staff with sound examples of project designs that integrate GCC and biodiversity considerations, (2) help readers understand the process and purpose of creating situation models and results chains for programs that integrate GCC and biodiversity funding streams, and (3) help readers understand how this approach to integrated programs helps meet requirements of the USAID Biodiversity Policy and GCC funding.

The MI team submitted two revised drafts in December and in March based on feedback by Olaf Zerbock of E3/FAB, and developed a dissemination plan for the case examples. The case examples are currently under revision by MI and will be submitted for E3/FAB comment in May.

### **ACTION 4.3.3 – USE OF EVIDENCE IN PAD DESIGN/EVIDENCE RESOURCE**

#### **AN EVIDENCE RESOURCE FOR STRATEGIC APPROACHES IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND SUPPLEMENTARY HOW-TO GUIDE ON BEST PRACTICES FOR USING EVIDENCE IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE (OUTPUT 4.3.3.A-B)**

The new IR3 Research Specialist, Dr. Natalie Dubois, began work on the Evidence Resource focusing on selected strategic approaches in which USAID is heavily invested (Output 4.3.3.A), and supplementary how-to guidance on entry points for using evidence in the Program Cycle (Output 4.3.3.B) in Q2. Dr. Dubois held initial scoping conversations with E3/FAB and MI staff. These conversations informed the agenda for a small group meeting on April 13.

Pursuant to conversations with the IR3 Activity Manager and the COR, the scoping exercise included: (1) a reexamination of the draft list of strategic approaches in which USAID's biodiversity portfolio is heavily invested and the potential for Mission engagement; (2) a review of potential options for the content and scope of the Evidence Resource; (3) decisions on which points in the Program Cycle the proposed Evidence Resource is intended to address, including how "use" and "generation" of evidence have distinct but complementary roles in implementing the Program Cycle; and (4) potential alignment with other MI products. Following a meeting with E3/FAB on April 13, MI is working on developing and obtaining approval for a product definition, and will work to develop content in Q3 and Q4.

### **ACTION 4.3.4 – PRODUCE A "LIGHT TOUCH" APPROACH TO MI**

#### **FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS AND MEMO (OUTPUT 4.3.4)**

During FY16 MI further considered with the E3/FAB and MI management teams the specific needs for "light touch" approaches and the best strategies for helping Missions apply these approaches through procurement and post-award. A light touch could allow Missions to quickly understand how the approach works in the context of the USAID Program Cycle, how to participate with MI in completing the task at hand, and where to go for further information. This light touch approach aligns with MI's complementary work to date on flexible procurement mechanisms (4.4.1).

In Q1, MI met with Hannah Fairbank and Rebecca Butterfield of E3/FAB to initially scope the product. MI will resume the discussion with E3/FAB in Q3 and finalize the memo this FY.

### **ACTION 4.3.5 – INCORPORATE GENDER SENSITIVITY INTO DESIGN, ME&L**

No specific output was planned for Action 4.3.5, as the incorporation of gender considerations is an ongoing and pervasive task. Additionally, IR3 completed a systematic review to answer the question "Does the Gender

Composition of Forest and Fishery Management Groups Affect Resource Governance and Conservation Outcomes?” which was published in *Environmental Evidence* (Output 3.3.C-D). The systematic review “Does the Gender Composition of Forest and Fishery Management Groups Affect Resource Governance and Conservation Outcomes?” was published in *Environmental Evidence* on March 20 2016.

## **ACTION 4.4.1 – ASSESS MI ENTRY POINTS: BUSINESS PROCESSES**

### **ILLUSTRATIVE PROCUREMENT LANGUAGE FOR BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING (OUTPUT 4.4.1)**

During the MI retreat in September 2015, MI staff and E3/FAB agreed that MI needs to identify effective ways to align with and, where possible, strengthen USAID business processes around A&A, procurement, and learning and adapting. As MI support in focal Missions moves out of the program design phase and into implementation, MI is gaining new insights on the needs Missions have for support around A&A, procurement, and learning and adapting.

During FY16, MI consulted a wide range of existing business processes and explored how they are addressed in practice in the agency. In Q1, MI conducted a comprehensive mapping exercise of procurement processes that examined the Food for Peace and Crisis Modeling in East Africa examples of flexible contracting. Additionally, MI analyzed the augmentation of contract language with a theory-of-change approach. The IR1 lead is managing this product, and developed and shared a draft product definition internally to ensure alignment with the Biodiversity How-To Guides in March. MI, through the coordination of the IR4 Activity Manager, is also communicating with PPL and with the Learning and Knowledge Management (LEARN) contract to understand how the Agency is thinking about aligning contracting processes with the renewed commitment to learning and adapting. MI is holding regular informal conversations with these key partners to inform product development. During the third quarter MI will develop draft model language to support flexible and adaptive procurement in biodiversity programs. The final product for FY16 will include the (1) the provision of illustrative procurement language for at least four new biodiversity activities in focal Missions (language tailored to the specific needs of those Missions), (2) a procurement decision tree that will define at minimum three approaches to procurement to assist Missions programming biodiversity funds to plan and procure activities that comply with the Biodiversity Policy and implement best practices in the Program Cycle, and (3) preparation and revision of draft procurement language to support engagement and collaboration with PPL, contract office staff, and with LEARN on the topic of flexible and adaptive mechanisms. Combined, these draft products will better position MI and E3/FAB to develop a final product that is endorsed by PPL and the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA).

At the end of Q3, E3/FAB and MI will revisit this output and refine the scope and production timeline spanning the Q4 FY16 and the FY17 work plans.

## **ACTION 4.4.2 – MODIFY MIRADI SOFTWARE**

### **DECISION MEMO: MIRADI LANGUAGE PACK UPDATE AND DISSEMINATION (OUTPUT 4.4.2)**

During the second quarter of FY16 MI completed the report of the Miradi pilot that was conducted in four MI focal Missions in the preceding fiscal year. The report documents E3/FAB’s request for usage of Miradi software, PPL’s approval of the pilot and subsequent approval of the software for use in all biodiversity programs, and experiences of the pilot in the Missions in Uganda, Philippines, Indonesia, and SAR. It notes recommendations of pilot participants for development of support materials, which have been included in MI’s FY16 work plan under action 4.2.1.D. The final report also documents the USAID Language Pack, which is the Miradi “translation” of Open Standards terms to the terminology of the Program Cycle. The IR4 Activity Manager approved the Language Pack on March 10.

## **ACTION 4.5.1 – ENGAGE WITH NON-FOCAL MISSIONS**

As MI progresses to the right side of the IR4 results chain, MI needs to opportunistically engage non-focal Missions in using best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in order for these approaches to have widespread adoption in the biodiversity portfolio. There were no opportunities or requests to engage with specific non-focal Missions in Q1-2 of FY16, but MI reached non-focal Missions through their involvement in the Environment Officers Conference in February and the Cross-Mission Learning Program in IR2. Dissemination of the three Biodiversity How-To Guides during the third quarter of FY16 will be a priority activity for reaching non-focal Missions.

## **ACTION 4.6.1 – BUILD SUPPORT WITH KEY USAID PARTNERS**

### **QUARTERLY BRIEFINGS AND COMPANION PRODUCTS (OUTPUT 4.6.1.A)**

MI provided the first quarterly briefing on September 21, 2015 during the FY16 Strategic Planning Retreat to E3/GCC, PPL, the Global Development Lab, and Regional Bureaus. This initial briefing covered MI's work to date in linking design to ME&L in SAR, pioneering innovative approaches to learning, building the evidence base for conservation, and institutionalizing new practices in USAID. Building on this outreach, MI and partners in the GeoCenter (now of the LAC Bureau) and the Land Office prepared a second quarterly update on using geospatial data analysis for program design in Peru. IR4 assisted Mark Higgins and Silvia Petrova to develop and edit the presentation, which was aligned with the Geospatial Case Example (Output 4.3.2.D) and delivered to the USAID Biodiversity Working Group on April 7. Due to scheduling challenges around the Environment Officers Conference and travel schedules, this meeting was designated as the second quarter briefing even though it occurred very early in the third quarter.

### **INPUT TO ADS 200 REVISIONS (OUTPUT 4.6.1.B)**

MI continued work with PPL/SPP to institutionalize best practices in implementing the Program Cycle and to ensure that MI approaches are consistent with the Agency's policies and guidance by providing comments on the Automated Directives System (ADS) 200 revisions. MI provided written comments on the draft revisions to the ADS 200 text, including consideration of the problem analysis, the need for more detailed guidance linking project design to activity implementation, and the need to be more explicit in stating assumptions and constructing ME&L plans to inform learning at multiple scales in the Program Cycle. This input was delivered as a memo to the IR4 Activity Manager in January 2016. Following submission of E3/FAB's comments on the ADS revisions, which were informed by MI's input, PPL invited the IR4 Activity Manager to prepare an annex to an Agency-level How-To Note, illustrating how results chains can be used as one of the approaches to completing the logic models that will be required in the new ADS 200 Series.

### **VIDEO (OUTPUT 4.6.1.C)**

In November 2015 MI was awarded a prize for a CLA video. This was the only video prize awarded and profiles how theories of change can be used to support learning, both within and across Missions. During the third quarter MI worked with the LEARN contract and the USAID Learning Lab to develop the script and shooting plan for the 7-10 minute video, which is entitled "Connecting the Dots: Biodiversity Cross-Mission Learning Program." This video will showcase USAID's technical leadership by accelerating interest by Missions to collaborate in order to speed and deepen results, to share the successes and lessons of USAID's initiatives, and to institute improvements to programs and operations. The video will also give adaptive management a wider audience by using the LEARN project's communications channels and by building additional support with key USAID partners.

In Q1, MI collaborated with E3/FAB to develop the script for the video. In Q2, MI held interviews with five Environment Officers on their conservation enterprises experiences and obtained storyboard and script approval from the MI COR and IR4 Activity Manager on March 28. In Q3 and Q4, MI will tape interviews with E3/FAB staff and Peru Mission staff for use in the video.

### **COLLABORATION WITH LEARN (OUTPUT 4.6.1.D)**

MI and the LEARN project have an opportunity to forge a partnership to enrich CLA practice in biodiversity programs and inform the CLA community with examples of innovative MI efforts. At the start of the year, LEARN's Deputy Chief of Party, Sara Schmidt, attended key sessions of the MI retreat to explore possible collaboration opportunities for FY16. She led the CLA Maturity Matrix process, in brief form, with MI, the Biodiversity Results and Integrated Development Gains Enhanced (BRIDGE) project, and the MI Activity Managers, and participated in working sessions to identify points for further collaboration. Following that meeting, MI provided LEARN staff with a project-level briefing in the MI Office during October 2015. This presentation covered the MI approach and tools, including situation models and results chains, to a group of senior LEARN staff.

In Q2, LEARN hosted MI staff for a meeting on February 4 to further discuss collaboration opportunities, including possible contributions by MI to the CLA Toolkit which LEARN is currently developing to accompany Agency-wide rollout of the ADS 200 revisions planned for September 2016. MI expects to continue these discussions through the rest of the year as the CLA Toolkit takes shape and key MI guidance documents (e.g., Biodiversity How-To-Guides) are finalized and become available.

Additionally, MI is in active discussion with LEARN in Q2 to plan a presentation to the USAID Knowledge Management Working Group (tentatively set for June 22).

### **FACILITATED DISCUSSION: INTEGRATION PATHWAYS (OUTPUT 4.6.1.E)**

Considering the significant overlap in scope of work with MI, particularly in relation to the use of integrated program design and synthesizing and using evidence to support integration with other sectors, it was agreed at the MI/FAB strategic planning and work planning retreat in September 2015 that BRIDGE and MI will look for key opportunities to collaborate, beginning with BRIDGE's work planning process, and will keep regular meetings to ensure alignment of activities, reveal synergies, and avoid duplication of effort.

MI facilitated a two-hour discussion with staff of E3/FAB, BRIDGE, and MI to clarify the Office's specific intent around integration pathways to inform planning and TA provided by MI and BRIDGE on November 10 2015. MI developed a brief report on the outcomes of the meeting and delivered it to USAID on November 12 2015. Outputs of the discussion included a shared conceptual understanding of co-benefits pathways as expressed in the Biodiversity Policy to inform future MI TA and guidance documents, and an initial list of tools to support USAID in identifying those pathways.

### **SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENT OF BRIDGE TOC AND ME&L PLAN (NEW OUTPUT 4.6.1.F)**

E3/FAB requested additional TA from MI to assist DAI, the implementing partner on the BRIDGE mechanism, in the development and use of results chains in their ME&L plan. MI provided significant TA to BRIDGE to develop their situation model, results chain, and ME&L plan in the first two quarters of FY16. MI facilitated six half-day working sessions with the entire BRIDGE staff and USAID Activity Managers as well as several smaller group working sessions. Over the course of these meetings, MI introduced BRIDGE to the tools and processes used to develop an ME&L plan, linked these tools to requirements of the Biodiversity Policy and Program Cycle, and facilitated development of a project-level situation model, results chain, set of key results, and associated outcome statements and indicators.

## **ACTIVITY 4.6.2 BUILD USAID TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP: EVIDENCE AND LEARNING**

### **BIODIVERSITY ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OUTREACH (REVISED OUTPUT 4.6.2.A)<sup>6</sup>**

To further MI's goal of building and strengthening awareness of E3/FAB's work in implementing the Biodiversity Policy and using best practices in implementing the Program Cycle, IR4 staff planned two presentations. The first presentation will be a facilitated panel discussion with the Society for International Development/Washington's environment working group and will introduce the use of theories of change using the case example of CWC. The second presentation will be to the USAID Knowledge Management Reference Group on organizational learning and the Cross-Mission Learning Program. These presentations are intended to establish USAID's technical leadership in adaptive management externally as well as within the Agency. Both presentations will occur in the second half of FY16.

### **PLAN FOR FY17 EVIDENCE SUMMIT AND LEARNING MEETING (REVISED OUTPUT 4.6.2.B)**

In FY16, MI will work closely with E3/FAB and BRIDGE to begin to plan an Evidence Summit to be held in FY17. The Summit will showcase USAID's leadership and E3/FAB's innovations in its generation and use of evidence by encouraging participation of other donors and partners. MI held an initial discussion about planning with BRIDGE at the quarterly MI-E3/FAB meeting on January 28, and will move forward with planning in Q3. The Learning Meeting will take into consideration the timing for a MI close out conference, which may be combined with this event. In Q3-4 MI will produce a 3-5 page memo outlining purpose, approach, audience, timeline, and responsible parties to inform and guide planning and preparations for both a Summit and Learning Meeting.

## **ACTION 4.7.1 – DISSEMINATE MI PRODUCTS AND LEARNING EFFECTIVELY**

### **UPDATED MI COMMUNICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (OUTPUT 4.7.1.A)**

IR4 staff updated the MI Communications Strategy, originally developed in FY15, to illustrate our enhanced understanding of Mission needs and increased internal communications function following hiring a full staff in IR4. IR4 also developed a social media annex to the Strategy that details MI's approach in contributing events and knowledge through USAID social media channels. The updated Strategy underwent internal review and comment and was submitted to the IR4 Activity Manager on March 14.

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<sup>6</sup> Note: 4.6.2.A, 4.6.2.B are proposed to be combined into 1 output, now called 4.6.2.A; 4.6.2.C, 4.6.2.D, 4.6.2.E, and 4.6.2.F have been proposed to be combined into 1 output, now called 4.6.2.B.

### **USAID KM PLATFORMS INCLUDE MI PRODUCTS (OUTPUT 4.7.1.B)**

IR4 worked to ensure that Agency knowledge management platforms are populated with regular updates of MI products. In Q1, MI uploaded and cross-referenced documents on the FAB Gateway and submitted documents to the Learning Lab for uploading. In November 2015, MI met with ProgramNet staff to discuss the inclusion of the Biodiversity How-To Guides on the site and possible media that MI could utilize on the ProgramNet site, including webinars and blogs. MI additionally developed a catalog of 19 E3/FAB publications to be posted to ProgramNet and submitted the draft catalog to the IR4 Activity Manager.

### **MI STYLE GUIDE (OUTPUT 4.7.1.C)**

In Q1, IR4 developed an initial writing and editing guide for MI staff use. Version 1.0 was circulated to and socialized with MI staff in early January. MI staff are currently referencing the guide to ensure that MI outputs are internally consistent, high quality, and aligned to USAID standards and expectations. IR4 staff participated in a partner training on the new USAID Branding and Graphic Standards Manual and will produce an updated version of the Style Guide that aligns with the Manual changes in Q3.

### **COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATION WITH E3/FAB (NEW OUTPUT 4.7.1.D)**

MI worked closely with E3/FAB's Communications and Knowledge Management team, E3/FAB's contractors with communications and knowledge management functions (ECO and BRIDGE), and other key USAID audiences. MI participated in an E3/FAB meeting with contractors to plan social media toolkits and other announcements for environmental observances (e.g., Earth Day, World Wildlife Day, etc.). Outcomes from this meeting contributed to the social media annex of the MI Communications Strategy. Moving forward, MI will attend and contribute to quarterly Communications and Knowledge Management meetings to ensure coordination and collaboration of communications functions with E3/FAB and other contractors.

## **KEY OUTPUTS**

- Coach Development Course (4.2.1.C)
- Situation Models 101 and 201: E3/FAB Training Modules (4.2.1.E)
- Theories of Change 101 and 201: E3/FAB Training Modules (4.2.1.E)
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning 101 and 201: E3/FAB Training Modules (4.2.1.E)
- Draft Biodiversity How-to Guides (4.3.1.A)
- Draft Case Example: "Geospatial Data in Planning: USAID Peru" (4.3.2.D)
- Miradi USAID Language Pack (4.4.2)
- Input to ADS 200 Revisions (4.6.1.B)
- Facilitated Discussion on Integration Pathways (4.6.1.E)
- Working Sessions in Support of BRIDGE TOC and ME&L Plan Development (4.6.1.F)
- Updated MI Outreach Strategy (4.7.1.A)
- Updated MI Style Guide (4.7.1.C)

## **IR0: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

IR0 successfully managed and administrated the MI activity in the first half of FY16, enabled by the hiring of the Project Coordinator and the Contracts Compliance Specialist in Q1. Highlights for FY16 for IR0 include:

- Hiring and onboarding five staff in the first quarter of the fiscal year. With the addition of these team members, MI is a fully staffed activity.
- Finalizing the FY16 work plan and budget in December 2015.
- Successful transition of budgetary management to the DC office, enabling more efficient responses to USAID needs.
- Enabling a minimally disruptive move to a new office closer to USAID and with room for the new staff.

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY16 annual work plan, and details regarding IR0 engagement with E3/FAB over FY16.

### **ACTION 0.1 – CONNECT PLANNING TO STRATEGY AND COORDINATE TEAM**

#### **FY16 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET, STAFFING, AND TRAVEL PLAN (OUTPUT 0.1.A)**

MI finalized the FY16 work plan and budget on December 16 2015. MI produced both an Excel document and a narrative PDF work plan that connects FY16 targets, actions, outputs, and resources to life-of-project (LOP) goals. The work plan is organized by IR and includes LOP results and outcomes, performance targets for FY16, indicators, actions, and output descriptions. Additionally, the budget, staffing, and travel plan include an overall budget summary by IR, the level of effort and cost for each action within each IR, and a staffing and travel plan for FY16.

The focus of each IR as defined in the work plan is as follows:

- **IR1:** Continue to strengthen the enabling conditions that support best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in the eleven focal Environment Offices and E3/FAB.
- **IR2:** Work with E3/FAB and Missions implementing strategic approaches to further refine the theories of change that underlie them, identify evidence gaps that can be filled through a Learning Program, and develop CLGs that establish and pursue a Learning Agenda.
- **IR3:** Focus on filling gaps in data, evidence, and knowledge to inform improved conservation and integrated programming at USAID, as well as work with IRs 1 and 4 to provide technical support to Mission-led research efforts and guidance and models for creating and applying evidence in the Program Cycle.
- **IR4:** Strengthen the enabling conditions in other key operating units of the Agency to ensure the use of evidence-based adaptive management practices in biodiversity programs after the conclusion of MI.
- **IR0:** Increase alignment of tracking and reporting systems, use data to support management decisions, and further develop policies.

#### **QUARTERLY COORDINATION REPORTS (OUTPUT 0.1.B)**

MI held two quarterly coordination meetings with E3/FAB activity managers in FY16, the first on November 12 to review progress on the development of the FY16 work plan. During that meeting, MI staff received feedback on each section of the draft MI FY16 work plan and discussed how best to address E3/FAB's comments. The second quarterly coordination meeting was held on January 28. IR leads presented progress on outputs during Q1 and upcoming level-of-effort priorities for Q2, identifying potential roadblocks to completion of outputs. MI and E3/FAB discussed these potential roadblocks and areas in need of E3/FAB attention. A report synthesizing the outcomes from this meeting was submitted on February 18 to the Activity Managers.

#### **STRATEGY AND PLANNING RETREAT (OUTPUT 0.1.C)**

MI management held discussions with the COR on the timing of the FY17 MI Strategy and Planning Retreat. MI has proposed that the FY17 retreat be held in October 2017 to align with E3/FAB staff availability; the COR has agreed. The retreat will be fully scoped and planned in Q3 and Q4. MI has proposed to move this output to the FY17 work plan.

## **ACTION 0.2 - LEVERAGE REPORTING TOOLS TO INFORM MANAGEMENT DECISIONS**

### **ACCRUALS REPORT (OUTPUT 0.2.A)**

Quarterly accrual reports have been sent to E3/FAB two weeks before the end of each quarter on December 15 2015 and March 15 2016. The next two accruals reports will be submitted on June 15 and September 15 2016.

### **0.2.B – MONTHLY VOUCHERS (OUTPUT 0.2.B)**

MI staff updated and refined activity budget tools for FY16 by aligning billing categories with the approved FY16 work plan and streamlining invoicing procedures. Additionally, IR0 staff coordinated with IR leads to ensure effective communication on internal budget management tools, and updated those tools based on feedback. These internal management tools enable IR leads to manage their budgets, observe potential areas of over-or underspending, and correct errors or inconsistencies. MI submitted six monthly invoices in the first half of FY16 and will continue into the second half of the year.

## **ACTION 0.3 – REPORT PERFORMANCE SEMI-ANNUALLY**

### **UPDATED M&E PLAN (FORMERLY PMP) (OUTPUT 0.3.A)**

IR0 staff revised and updated the MI Performance Management Plan (PMP) in Q3-4 of FY15, following the rescoping of IRs 2 and 3 and the MI results chain between FY14 and FY15. Addressing feedback received from the COR and incorporating discussions during the MI retreat in September 2015, IR0 submitted a revised PMP to the COR for review on November 23. IR0 received feedback and discussed with the COR and IR4 Activity Manager in mid-December.

IR0 staff submitted a revised PMP to the COR on February 16. Additional feedback from the COR and IR4 Activity Manager was received on March 25 to further refine two indicators: #5 (Uptake of best practices in focal Missions through business processes) and #8 (Number of research products submitted for publication), and to call the document an M&E plan and not a PMP.

IR0 will submit an approvable draft of the MI M&E plan in early May to the COR. MI staff are tracking progress against the nine proposed indicators in the M&E plan, as reported in the Learning and Adapting section of this report.

### **SEMI-ANNUAL AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS (OUTPUT 0.3.B)**

In October 2015, IR0 staff completed the FY15 Annual Report which summarized what MI has achieved, progress with M&E indicators, lessons learned, and IR-level expenditure tracking. To develop this report, MI staff held interviews with IR leads and key MI staff to obtain input on achievements for the year, updated M&E indicators, and revised the report based on Deputy Chief of Party and Chief of Party comments. The MI FY15 Annual Report was delivered on November 2, 2015.

The FY16 Semi-Annual Performance Report, this document, has been developed in April 2016, and the FY16 Annual Performance Report will be developed and submitted in October 2016.

### **PRESENTATION OF SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS RESULTS (OUTPUT 0.3.C)**

The Synthesis of Findings will be conducted in the second half of FY16. Due to the proposed date changes for the FY17 planning retreat to October 2017, MI has proposed moving this presentation and output to early FY17.

## **ACTION 0.4 – MAINTAIN FULL STAFF**

MI evaluated its staffing needs in FY15 and began the process of seeking, vetting, and negotiating terms of employment for new staff. In Q1 FY16, MI completed the hiring process of five staff:

- Amy Gambrell for IR4 Synthesis and Outreach Specialist Coordinator on October 1 2015 (80 percent FTE)
- David Yamron for IR0 Project Coordinator on October 5 2015 (Full time)
- Sue Hoye for IR4 Synthesis and Outreach Specialist on October 14 2015 (50 percent FTE)
- Natalie Dubois for IR3 Research Specialist on December 15 2015 (80 percent FTE)
- Salvatore Spada for Contracts Compliance Specialist on December 15 2015 (20 percent FTE)

For each staff vacancy, MI developed job descriptions, posted the positions publically through several channels, responded to qualified candidates, screened and interviewed candidates, consulted with USAID, and negotiated employment terms. When each employee was hired, MI provided a thorough introduction to the project through trainings on each IR, providing key documents, and, as El employees, a human resources overview.

## **ACTION 0.5 – PROVIDE SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND POLICIES**

With the hire of the Contracts Compliance Specialist in Q1, IR0 was able to complete several systems, processes, and policies to ensure streamlined and USG-compliant functioning of the MI activity. Completed products in Q1-Q2 FY16 included updated property and inventory management guidelines, a procurement policy, updates to the subcontract and consulting agreement templates and guidance, and a finalized business meals, gifts, and entertainment policy.

## **ACTION 0.6 ADMINISTER AND MANAGE OPERATIONS**

Major efforts under this action in Q1-Q2 FY16 were subcontractor modifications with ICF International and Foundations of Success, and coordinating a transition to a new office. IR0 staff and MI management worked closely with Foundations of Success to draft and approve a subcontract modification that was closely aligned with FY16 MI work plan products and expectations for Foundations of Success staff. The modification was approved on March 8. For ICF International, El came to an agreement with ICF to change the former contract structure to a new structure (time and materials); this was finalized on March 28.

Additionally, the MI activity's Washington office moved to a new, higher-capacity office close to USAID to have room for new staff. MI staff nearly doubled from the level at the time of signing the lease for the original office, making additional office space necessary. Led by the new Project Coordinator, MI found a new space, negotiated lease terms, communicated with USAID, and engineered the logistics of the transition. The new office has been a success. The proximity to USAID is especially beneficial for travel to and from USAID, and MI is able to host more workshops and meetings for USAID and partner organizations due to a larger venue on site and the convenient location.

MI also continued to maintain high-quality service to E3/FAB through seamless management, administrative, and human resources functions. Other administrative operations conducted in Q1-Q2 FY16 include tracking output production, coordinating personnel reviews, consultant administration, travel administration, and MI project office administration.

## **KEY OUTPUTS**

- FY16 Work Plan and Budget (0.1.A)
- Two Quarterly Coordination Meetings (0.1.B)
- Two Accruals Reports (0.2.A)
- Monthly Vouchers (0.2.B)
- Draft Updated M&E Plan (0.3.A)
- New Office (0.6)

### III. LEARNING AND ADAPTING

The MI PMP was submitted and approved in July 2013. Since that time, MI staff and Activity Managers have used results chains to refine the theories of change for the overall program of work and each of the activity's Intermediate Results. These results chains were created in July 2013 and then revised in Q1 FY14 to reflect the strategic rescoping of the activity that occurred during the MI planning retreat in September 2013 and the development of the FY14 work plan. MI further updated the results chains in September 2014 and in Q1-2 of FY15 based on an annual adaptive management process cycle that includes planning, implementing, assessing progress, and refining implementation. At the conclusion of each of these annual adaptive management check-ins, MI and Activity Managers updated the results chain to provide a visual diagram of the MI theory of change, illustrate the causal relationships within the system, and reveal the assumptions underlying the strategy (Figure 2).

In late FY15 and early FY16, MI revised the previously approved PMP into an M&E plan to reflect strategic rescoping and the updated results chain. The MI M&E plan, derived from the MI results chain, contains indicators that track progress toward life-of-project goals. The M&E plan defines the monitoring and evaluation framework and expectations for performance over the life of the contract. It includes detailed definitions for project indicators, rationale for their selection, data collection, reporting and quality assessment methods, and numeric targets for benchmarking. This section of MI's semi-annual report will report against the MI results chain and its accompanying nine project indicators.

An important component of MI's adaptive management system underpinning the project's learning and adapting is the annual Program Effectiveness workshop. Each year MI, Activity Managers, Office leadership, and key partners gather in September to check progress against the updated results chain and inform the adaptive management cycle. MI conducts an extensive series of key informant interviews as well as an assessment of indicator data and review of Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System criteria to develop a detailed synthesis of findings. The findings from FY15 and opportunities for FY16 were presented to USAID and the full MI staff and are included in the FY15 Annual Performance Report (November 4, 2015). They also inform mid-year assessments of progress.

Thus far in FY16, MI has worked to mitigate the challenges and focus on the priorities identified in the FY15 synthesis of findings. At the FY16 Q2 MI/FAB Quarterly Check-In on April 14, 2016, MI illustrated how some of the key findings from FY15 are being addressed:

1. There are frustrations from client and staff on deliverable turn-around time and moving towards approval
  - During Q1-2, MI and E3/FAB have improved the use of the MI Output Tracking Table and clarified clearance items. FAB has instituted review expectation timeline/expectations based on length of document: For products shorter than 1 page, turnaround will be 1-2 days; for products 1-5 pages in length, 5 days; and for products 5-30 pages in length, 10 days.
2. TA is in demand (MI tools and approaches are consistently viewed as valuable in implementing the Program Cycle), but there are barriers to uptake and the capacity to implement depends on the Mission's time, bandwidth, leadership, and business processes
  - Activities are underway in IRs 1-4 that address this, including development of the procurement and activity start-up packets and the MI Light Touch approach
3. There is an urgent need to finalize the revised M&E plan. MI's LOP Results and Objectives are on track, but MI needs to revisit and update the associated targets.
  - The revised M&E plan with a revised suite of indicators and targets was submitted to the COR on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and the IR0 lead and the COR met in mid-December to discuss. A revised draft was submitted February 16, 2016 and final USAID comments were received at the end of Q2. MI will submit the finalized and approvable M&E plan to the COR in early Q3.
4. Hiring for MI is urgently needed
  - MI successfully hired Senior Synthesis and Outreach Specialist Amy Gambrill, Project Coordinator David Yamron, Research Specialist Natalie Dubois, Communications Specialist Sue Hoye, and Compliance Specialist Sal Spada in Q1 of FY16. By the end of the second quarter each of these staff members had led development of deliverables in the FY16 work plan and submitted work products to USAID for review.

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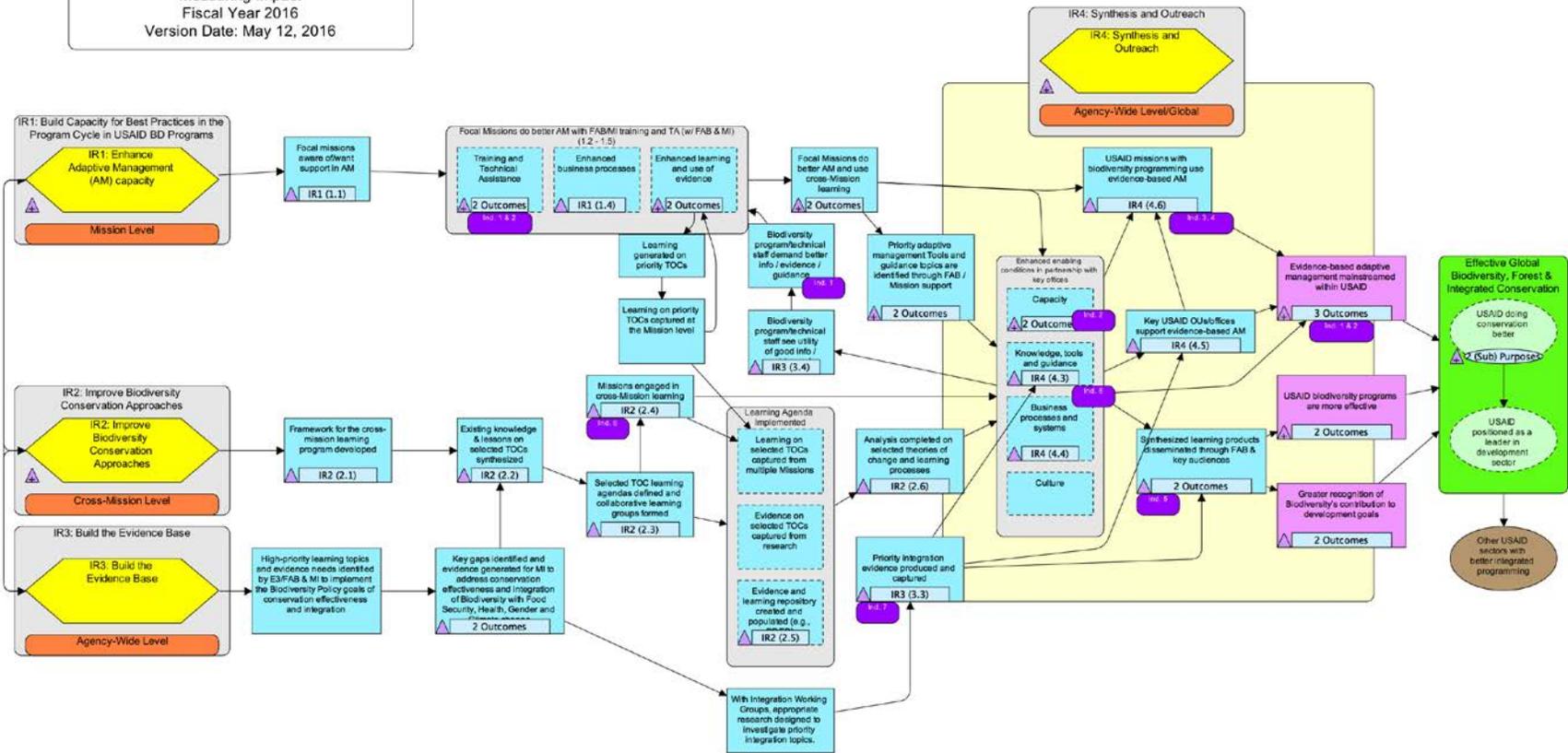


Figure 2: MI Results Chain

## MONITORING RESULTS

The M&E plan defines the following indicators and associated targets for each year of the project as well as the life of the project. Indicators 3 and 4 will be reported on annually (as indicated by “TBD”); data has been entered where available for these indicators.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Annual and LOP Targets						FY13-15 Totals	FY16 Totals to date	LOP Totals
		Annual Sub-totals (Cumulative Sub-totals)								
		FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total			
<b>Evidence-based adaptive management mainstreamed in USAID</b>										
#1	Number of days of USG-funded TA in natural resource management or biodiversity provided to counterparts or stakeholders	300	1,800	1,700	860	632	5,292	2,439	561.5	3,000.5
#2	Number of person-hours of training in natural resource management or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	800	1,600	1,800	3,270	1,770	9,240	4,687	2,611	7,298
#3	Dollar value of programming evaluated using theory-based approaches	\$0	\$87M	\$87M	\$103M	\$105M	\$382M	\$174M	TBD	TBD
#4	Percent change in biodiversity evaluation design quality (Baseline to be recalculated based on new criteria)						Above baseline: 20% exclusive 15% shared 5% review/ indirect <1% no MI	N/A	TBD	TBD
#8	Number of approved adaptive management guidance documents developed with key partner offices or disseminated as Agency best practice	0	0	3	2	2	7	0	0	0
#8	Policy revisions developed with key partner offices or disseminated as Agency best practice	0	0	2	2	2	6	2	1	3
<b>USAID biodiversity programs are more effective</b>										
#6	Number of USAID staff engaged in cross-Mission learning: CLG email	0	0/CLG	0/CLG	30/CLG	50/CLG	50/CLG	N/A	0	0
#6	Webinar/meeting participants – average for all webinars/virtual meetings	0	0	20	25	30	30	N/A	27	27

Indicator Number	Indicator	Annual and LOP Targets Annual Sub-totals (Cumulative Sub-totals)						Totals		
		FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total	FY13-15	FY16 to date	LOP
#6	Online platform—registered users (USAID staff per CLG)	0/CLG	0/CLG	0/CLG	15/CLG	20/CLG	20/CLG	N/A	0	0
#6	Online platform—number of monthly visitors to member page	0	0	0	10% increase over baseline (FY16 June data)	10% increase over FY16 target	TBD	N/A	0	0
<b>Enhance Recognition of Biodiversity Importance</b>										
#5	Number of dissemination activities implemented	10	20	60	100	110	300	96	80	176
#7	Number of completed research products submitted for publication	0	0	1	4	3	8	N/A	2	2

*Table 2: Indicator and Target Summary Table with FY13, FY14, FY15, FY16, FY17, and LOP Totals*

## PROGRESS TOWARDS LOP OBJECTIVES

### MI THEORY OF CHANGE

MI's ultimate goal is the improvement of USAID's biodiversity conservation programming by mainstreaming best practices in implementing the Program Cycle, developing evidence to support decisions in conservation programming, and integrating conservation with other development sectors.

As shown in the right-hand side of the MI results chain (Figure 2), the ultimate goal of MI is: **more effective global biodiversity, forestry, and integrated conservation and USAID positioned as a leader in the development sector** based on its commitment to evidence-based programming and adaptive management of biodiversity and integrated funds. MI's four strategic approaches, or IRs, have been designed to support the achievement of the overall goal and three crosscutting LOP objectives (or threat reduction results) below that capture synergies across the IRs and opportunities to leverage outputs to achieve greater impact.

The crosscutting MI LOP objectives/threat reduction results are:

1. **Best practices in evidence-based adaptive management are mainstreamed** in biodiversity programming in MI focal units, as indicated by: performance measures that are linked to outcomes through explicit theories of change; improved program design, monitoring, and evaluation practices; and systematic application of evidence in implementing the Program Cycle
2. **USAID biodiversity programs are more effective**, as indicated by improved learning practices within and among Missions that program biodiversity funds and increased focal unit capacity to generate, use, and share evidence of the effectiveness of conservation strategic approaches
3. A clearer understanding and articulation that **biodiversity conservation programming effectiveness, evidence, and benefits to other development sectors informs programming decisions**

### LOP OBJECTIVE I – EVIDENCE-BASED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT MAINSTREAMED

To achieve the first LOP objective, MI must ensure that **evidence-based adaptive management is mainstreamed within USAID**. This objective is a culmination of results from IRs 1, 2, 3, and 4. Achievement of this objective ensures that the adaptive management best practices around which MI is building capacity endure beyond the life of the project, not only in the individual focal Missions, but also in central Washington-based operating units such as E3/FAB and PPL.

Evidence-based adaptive management includes activities that respond to the requirements of the Biodiversity Policy and the Program Cycle, including developing and testing situation models and theories of change; developing ME&L programs based on theories of change; engaging in systematic use of evidence to improve understanding of the effectiveness of theories of change; and using best practices in CLA. These best practices are informed by the *Open Standards*, and are documented in MI's *Framework for Mainstreaming Learning and Adapting* and related products, such as the *MI Capacity Building Plan*. MI is providing TA and tools to support use of these adaptive management approaches in the Agency's core business processes that implement the Program Cycle.

#### INDICATOR I – NUMBER OF DAYS OF USG-FUNDED TA IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND/OR BIODIVERSITY PROVIDED TO COUNTERPARTS OR STAKEHOLDERS

MI provided 561.5 days of USG-funded TA in Q1 and Q2 of FY16, putting the project on pace to meet the updated FY16 target of 860 days. Thus far in FY16, IR1 has provided the majority of TA, accounting for approximately 55% (307.5 days) of the total. IR4 has provided an additional 25% (141 days). The rest of the TA provided in the first half of FY16 was delivered by IR3 (14%) and IR2 (6%). In total, MI has provided 3,000.5 days of TA between FYs 13-16.

Of the total 561.5 days of TA provided in the first half of the fiscal year, approximately 54% was provided to Missions and the remaining 46% Agency-wide. Mission support focused on activity design and M&E, PAD design and M&E, and evaluation design. The TA provided Agency-wide included research and analysis support for E3/FAB's Food Security Working Group and Global Health Working Group, CWC Toolkit finalization and further refinement, support to ROUTES and BRIDGE in development of their ME&L plans, Environment Officers Conference planning and support,

and work on IR3 FY15 research products. Tables 3 and 4 show the data for FY16 by operating units and by program cycle units.

Type of Assistance	Total Days of TA
<b>TA provided to Missions</b>	<b>300.9</b>
CARPE	0.4
Indonesia	13.0
Madagascar	2.5
Nepal	1.5
Peru	80.0
Philippines	13.5
RDMA	63.0
SAR/ICAA	40.9
Uganda	76.9
Vietnam	9.3
<b>TA provided Agency-wide</b>	<b>260.6</b>
IR1	23.7
IR2	35.5
IR3	59.7
IR4	164.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>561.5</b>

Table 3: Summary of Q1-Q2 FY16 TA provided to Missions and E3/FAB

Program Cycle Unit	Total Days of TA
PAD Design and M&E	117.9
Activity Design and M&E	174.8
Evaluation Design	13.5
Learning and Adapting	172.2
Development of Research Options	17.5
Implementation of Research Activities	59.4
Knowledge Management and Research Communications	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>561.5</b>

Table 4: Summary of Q1-Q2 FY16 TA provided to Missions and E3/FAB by Program Cycle Unit

## INDICATOR 2 – NUMBER OF PERSON-HOURS OF TRAINING IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION SUPPORTED BY USG ASSISTANCE

MI logged 2,611 person-hours of training in the first half of the fiscal year and is well on track to reach the revised target of 3,270 hours of training. MI hosted 11 trainings which were attended by 127 participants from five focal missions, E3/FAB, the BRIDGE mechanism, and other USAID counterparts. Of the 2,611 person-hours of training provided, 56% was for female participants and 44% was for male participants. 73% of training was provided to focal Missions, including SAR, RDMA, Peru, Uganda, and Vietnam. The other 27% was primarily delivered to non-MI focal units, including BRIDGE, E3/FAB staff at the Environment Officers Training Course in December 2015, and other Mission personnel at the Coach Development Course in February/March 2016.

Training delivered through MI in FY16 focused on the following themes and is captured in Table 5:

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

	Project Conceptualization & Design	Performance Monitoring Design	Evaluation and Learning Design	Project Implementation	Performance Monitoring Implementation	Evaluation Implementation	Systematic Learning & Adapting
<b>SAR</b>	X	X	X				X
<b>RDMA</b>			X	X	X		X
<b>Peru</b>	X	X	X				X
<b>Uganda</b>			X	X			X
<b>Vietnam</b>	X						
<b>Other Mission Staff</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>E3/FAB</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

*Table 5: Trainings provided in Q1-Q2 FY16, indicating the focal units that received training by thematic area.*

For the purposes of tracking indicators 1 and 2, MI tracks and reports training and TA activities separately (as above). However, these indicators measure highly complementary activities that contribute to building the capacity of USAID staff to use adaptive management in the design and implementation of biodiversity programs. Building these capacities are key results in MI's results chain. Thus, the short discussion below reflects MI's work to build capacity around seven key competencies while using the complementary tools of training and TA; the discussion below does not differentiate the individual contributions that training and TA make to overall development of these six core capacities.

### **Project Conceptualization and Design**

Through TA and training provided through MI, E3/FAB, Mission, and other USG 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. Staff are further trained on how to use results chains to clearly define theories of change and associated outputs, outcomes, and purposes. Consistent with the Program Cycle guidance, MI is helping USAID and other USG staff to convert theories of change into clear plans of action, ensuring a clear transition from project design to planning M&E efforts. TA and training delivered for this theme cover:

- Project scope and purpose
- Targets and viability
- Threats and drivers
- Intervention selection
- Theories of change
- Integrating sustainable landscapes and adaptation into USAID biodiversity planning
- Using geospatial information and analyses in USAID biodiversity planning
- Using evidence to inform program design

- Synthesizing and repackaging available evidence to support improved program design

### **Performance Monitoring Design**

MI is building the capacity of E3/FAB, Mission, and other USG staff to use sound theories of change to identify desired outcomes and select indicators and monitoring methods to measure program effectiveness. In this context, MI is working to help staff better understand the relationship between indicators for ME&L 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 learning questions and key outcomes in theories of change 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 delivered for this theme cover:

- Indicator selection
- Defining outcomes, outputs, and purpose
- Monitoring methods
- Defining and planning to establish baselines
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Aligning monitoring across the project and activity levels

### **Evaluation and Learning 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, (2) leveraging theories of change to identify and prioritize evaluation and/or learning questions, define methods, and analyze the cost/benefits of priority questions; and (3) providing assistance in the development of evaluation scopes of work and designs. TA and training delivered for this theme cover:

- Intro to USAID Evaluation Policy
- Conceptualizing evaluation approach and design
- Developing results chain-based evaluation scopes of work
- Intro to learning in the context of USAID and the Program Cycle
- Defining results chain-based learning questions
- Using evaluation results to support improved program design

### **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 PAD design process more closely with the procurement process for new mechanisms, leverage the procurement process to more effectively institutionalize ME&L systems, and appropriately plan and budget for M, E, and L functions both within the Mission and across portfolios. Most of MI's work in this area is "testing and incubating" new tools, language, and examples with MI Activity Managers and in close consultation with PPL and OAA. To date, direct assistance to MI focal Missions in this topic area has been limited because the core tools and approaches for support are still being developed. Topics under development for eventual delivery of TA and training this theme cover:

- Aligning activity design to project design
- Incorporating adaptive management into the procurement process
- Resourcing for adaptive management
- Supporting activity start up to facilitate adaptive management through the life of the award
- Developing results chain-based work plans and ME&L plans

### **Performance Monitoring Implementation**

MI is helping Missions develop results chain-based performance monitoring programs, including developing improved systems to manage, collect, store, and analyze performance data. This can also include helping Missions articulate roles and responsibilities and set new expectations for both USAID staff and implementing partners to assess program effectiveness, at a minimum requiring a systematized monitoring and reporting system from the implementing partner to inform the Mission's ME&L needs. TA and training delivered for this theme cover:

- Linking M&E across scales
- Developing outcome statements and indicators to measure progress in the results chain
- Developing monitoring plans linked to results chains

### Systematic Learning and Adapting

Changes brought about by the Program Cycle and the Evaluation Policy include a new emphasis on using M&E to support systematic learning, in addition to meeting their traditional functions in support of accountability and contract compliance. MI is providing support to focal and non-focal Missions and to E3/FAB and partner offices to develop and systematize approaches to learning to meet these new Agency priorities. Part of this effort involves close collaboration with PPL and with the LEARN contract that is operationalizing the Agency’s approach to CLA. MI is helping these operating units develop shared theories of change and associated outcomes and indicators that will allow learning to take place within and among operating units; design projects and activities to ensure alignment between their respective M, E, and L systems; use evidence, including peer-reviewed literature, grey literature reports, evaluation results, and required reports to program design and adaptation; and participate in communities of practice to share and apply learning. MI’s TA and training around systematic learning and adapting continues to evolve, and topics to date include:

- Developing learning portfolios and learning agendas
- Using evidence to improve program design
- Developing research questions and designing research scopes of work
- Developing results chain-based learning questions
- Production of the CWC Toolkit: “Measuring efforts to combat wildlife crime: A toolkit for improving action and accountability”
- Developing ME&L plans (in some cases linking across scales)
- Synthesizing evidence to test theories of change and inform program design
- Facilitating cross-Mission learning groups

### INDICATOR 3 – DOLLAR VALUE OF PROGRAMMING EVALUATED USING THEORY-BASED APPROACH

This indicator and targets were revised in the updated MI M&E plan. The revised indicator measures the size (magnitude in dollars) of biodiversity programs being evaluated using the theory-based approaches required by the Biodiversity Code and piloted by MI and E3/FAB. This indicator is complemented by a measure of evaluation quality, including the use of theory-based approaches, in Indicator #4 below.

Four programs totaling \$174M (\$146M in Biodiversity funds and \$28M in GCC funds) have been evaluated through FY15 using theory-based approaches. This represents 46% of the LOP target of \$382M. The dollar values of these programs have been estimated by the E3/FAB Points of Contact for those evaluations and/or Missions and include:

Program Name	Evaluation Type	Program Dollar Value
Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA)	Mid-term evaluation	\$75M
Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES)	Performance evaluation	\$12M
USAID and USDA/USFS Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA)	Performance evaluation	\$85M*
Forest, Climate, and Communities Alliance (FCCA)	Lessons learned	\$2M
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$174M</b>

\*Performance evaluation of PAPA (\$85M; comprised of \$57M in biodiversity funds, or 50% of the obligation through Amendment 14 and \$28M in GCC funds or 25% of this same obligation)

Table 6: Summary of Dollar Value of Programs Evaluated using Theory-Based Approaches, FY13-FY15

The value of programs evaluated during FY16, including B+WISER and ECOFISH, which both completed evaluations in April, will be reported on in the MI Annual Report.

#### **INDICATOR 4 – PERCENT CHANGE IN BIODIVERSITY EVALUATION DESIGN QUALITY**

This revised indicator captures the quality of biodiversity evaluation SOWs directly or indirectly influenced by best practices in implementing the Program Cycle. The quality of evaluation SOWs are determined by an independent peer reviewer, based on updated assessment criteria derived from best practices in the evaluation field and best practices for implementing the Program Cycle developed by MI and E3/FAB. Indicator results demonstrate the quality of biodiversity evaluation SOWs and the ability of USAID staff to commission and co-design evaluations that use best practices.

This indicator will be reported against in the MI Annual Report.

#### **INDICATOR 8 – NUMBER OF APPROVED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS AND POLICY REVISION DEVELOPED WITH KEY PARTNER OFFICES OR DISSEMINATED AS AGENCY BEST PRACTICE**

This new indicator is intended to track the degree to which MI is supporting the institutionalization of best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in USAID biodiversity programs. As defined by the Biodiversity Code and Policy, these best practices include using theories of change and indicators linked to those theories of change. This indicator tracks the number of approved guidance documents developed to support these practices as well as approved policy revisions. In both instances, MI tracks the degree to which the guidance documents or policy revisions are the result of engagement with partner offices. Engagement with partner offices helps ensure that the new practices are supported and valued by operating units that engage regularly with staff that program biodiversity funds.

##### **Guidance Documents**

MI anticipates delivering three approved guidance documents in the third quarter of FY16: *Biodiversity How-To Guide: Developing a Situation Model for USAID Biodiversity Programming*; *Biodiversity How-To Guide: Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming*; and *Biodiversity How-To Guide: Defining Outcomes and Indicators for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in Biodiversity Programming*. Three additional supplementary guidance documents are being scoped during the third quarter and will be at least initially drafted by the end of FY16.

##### **Policy Revisions and Best Practices**

As requested by E3/FAB, MI provided written comments on the draft revisions to the 200 Chapter of the ADS. MI's input included many detailed suggestions for text edits as well as four broad points: (1) the need to provide more complete guidance in linking project design to activity design; (2) the need to more clearly call for and provide guidance on conducting the problem analysis; (3) the need to provide clearer support around assessing effectiveness to support learning, in addition to understanding accountability, with ME&L; and (4) clarifying the need and providing guidance to operationalize and resource ME&L at the start-up of an activity.

In April 2016, PPL circulated on ProgramNet *Developing a Learning Agenda, a ProgramNet Resource*, which drew heavily on MI-designed learning agendas. MI's work on learning agendas has been shared with staff of PPL and LEARN, and the ProgramNet posting included extensive use of MI-produced text. Based on MI's strong relationship with PPL and SPP, E3/FAB's inputs to the ADS 200 revisions (which were informed by MI content and drafts), and the inclusion of PPL by MI and E3/FAB in the conceptualization and review of the *Biodiversity How-To Guide on Using Results Chains in USAID Biodiversity Programs*, MI's IR4 Activity Manager was invited to provide comments on PPL's *Results Chains Annex for the How-To Note on Logic Models* and to draft an Annex on use of results chains as a type of logic model.

With these two outputs, MI is on track to achieve the FY16 target of two guidance documents.

With the contribution to the ADS 200 revision and the dissemination of MI-generated best practices around learning agendas and results chains, MI is on track to achieve the FY16 target of two policy revisions or best practices.

In FY15, MI logged one policy revision: input on the first draft of the ADS 200 revision. This fell short of the FY15 goal of two policy revisions, although MI principles informed revisions to the Biodiversity Code in the USAID Biodiversity Policy in Q3 of FY14.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Significant progress has been made in FY16 towards the first LOP objective: evidence-based adaptive management is mainstreamed through TA, training and the work on the guidance documents and policy revisions. Lessons learned to date that will inform a more detailed synthesis of learning in MI's annual report include:

- Demand has continued to grow for Mission TA, including ME&L plan development, start-up packets, and assistance with Learning Agendas. Mission staff consistently view MI tools and approaches as valuable in implementing the Program Cycle, and MI will continue to provide effective TA to Missions, as well as working with E3/FAB to track and support uptake. However, the anticipated increase in days of TA and person-hours of training as anticipated in the last quarter of FY15 have not gone as planned to date in FY16. MI will revisit these target in Q3 FY16.
- Faced with this demand, MI has begun to offer targeted Program Cycle implementation support Agency-wide. In the second half of the fiscal year, MI will continue to work with USAID mechanisms like BRIDGE, ROUTES, and LEARN, provide support to the US Forest Service Lacey Act program, and begin assisting PPL with the planned CLA Toolkit.
- MI has found opportunities to draw other IRs into Mission TA. Andrés Gómez's trip to Peru in January helped the Mission there to define and frame research questions, building on previous IRI TA to sharpen the Mission's evidence needs. Additionally, IR3 developed draft scopes of work designed to be the basis for procurement of research activities to address key knowledge gaps. IR2 products such as the CWC Toolkit, the Conservation Enterprises Brief, and the Learning Agenda have been used to inform mechanism design and learning reviews at the Mission level and, as well, IR2 staff have supported IRI on Mission TDYs. These experiences may be used going forward as a model for providing additional types of support to Missions.

## LOP OBJECTIVE 2 – USAID BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE

To achieve the second LOP objective, USAID must develop a greater understanding of the conditions under which conservation strategic approaches are effective. Through IR2 and in collaboration with IRs 1 and 3, MI is helping E3/FAB and USAID develop systematic approaches to learning that will identify and test underlying assumptions and hypotheses in a set of strategic approaches that are in wide use in USAID's biodiversity programs. This effort will be undertaken to help E3/FAB, Missions, and implementing partners better understand, document, and manage knowledge about what works, what does not, and under which conditions. Success of the second LOP objective will be measured through documented instances of Missions or E3/FAB using learning or generating new evidence using approaches and tools developed through MI.

### INDICATOR 6 – NUMBER OF USAID STAFF ENGAGED IN CROSS-MISSION LEARNING

Indicator 6 was revised for the new MI M&E plan to track participation in cross-Mission learning activities as a measure of success for the overall Cross-Mission Learning Program. Through IR2, and in collaboration with IRI, MI engages with Missions and encourages their participation in Learning Program activities and their use of Learning Program content. Staff from MI focal and non-focal Missions qualify for this indicator, as do staff from USAID/Washington. It should be noted that in addition to tracking Indicator 6, IR2 uses Indicator 1 to track its bilateral TA to Missions or other operating units related to cross-Mission learning topics. Furthermore, IR2 maintains a Mission Engagement Log to capture how its learning products are being used, and an Outcome Harvesting Log to track Mission use of Learning Program content and the outcomes resulting from Mission participation in the Learning Program.

Through Indicator 6, Mission engagement in the Learning Program is assessed by tracking USAID staff participation through three portals of engagement: (1) CLG email lists, (2) Learning Program webinars and meetings, and (3) the Learning Program online platform.

### CLG Email Lists and Newsletters

The Conservation Enterprise and CWC Enforcement Capacity Building CLGs have not begun regular dissemination of newsletters, so there are not yet any subscribers. However, with almost 100 contacts already, MI staff are optimistic that they will achieve the FY16 target of 30 subscribers per CLG email list.

## Webinars/Meetings

IR2 held two successful sessions at the Environment Officers Conference, one each for the Conservation Enterprises and CWC Enforcement Capacity Building CLGs. With an average of 27 participants from these two events, and a minimum of two more webinars planned for Q3-4, MI is on track to achieve the FY16 target of an average of 25 USAID staff signed in to all webinars and meetings.

## Online Platform: Registered Users and Monthly Visitors

MI made major progress on the Cross-Mission Learning Program online platform in Q1-2 of FY16, including completing the site build for the Conservation Enterprises CLG, finalizing the content of that site for launch in early Q3, and developing content for CWC Enforcement Capacity Building site. MI is on track to begin registering users and website visitors in both the Conservation Enterprises and CWC Enforcement Capacity Building CLG sites later in FY16.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Progress has been made in FY16 towards the second LOP objective: USAID biodiversity programs are more effective. Lessons learned to date that will inform a more detailed synthesis of learning in MI's annual report include:

- Feedback obtained from Missions during the Environment Officers Conference and through interviews indicates a portfolio-wide need for understanding the conditions under which the common strategic approaches of conservation enterprises support and CWC enforcement capacity building are effective. Furthermore, there is strong interest in sharing lessons amongst Missions, participation in cross-Mission learning, and forthcoming Cross-Mission Learning Program products and tools.
- The CWC Toolkit, released in Q1, has generated considerable interest within and beyond USAID, and there is an increasing number of instances where it is being used to inform project design and ME&L plans. Furthermore, there is increasing recognition of the value of using common metrics to capture and align the outcomes of the extensive efforts underway by many entities in combating wildlife crime. The interest in and uptake of the CWC Toolkit supports the fundamental approach taken in the Learning Program: that generalized theories of change depicted as results chains provide an efficient framework for learning as well as valuable tools for project design. This suggests that developing a suite of generalized theories of change may be valuable to support project design and learning at multiple scales across USAID.

## LOP OBJECTIVE 3 – ENHANCE RECOGNITION OF BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANCE

The third LOP Objective is to support greater recognition of biodiversity's contribution to development goals and the impacts it has on integrated programming. The underlying theory of change assumes that if the right information is produced and communicated effectively to the right people, they will make better-informed decisions to improve development outcomes related to both human wellbeing and conservation of biodiversity and forests, contributing to achievement of the ultimate goal of the MI project.

If MI is successful, its combined impact will be to improve and better integrate USAID's policies, programs, and impact in biodiversity and forestry conservation in service of enhanced conservation and improved human wellbeing.

### INDICATOR 5 – NUMBER OF DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

IRs 2, 3, and 4 implemented 80 dissemination activities in Q1 and Q2 FY16, putting MI well on track to exceed the FY16 target of 100. MI has implemented 176 dissemination activities to date (including 96 activities from FY13-15), which already exceeds the cumulative target for FYs 13-16 of 160. The bulk of the dissemination activities in FY16 are active circulations (33) and verbal presentations (28), while MI also logged 11 grey literature publications, 7 web postings, and 1 peer-reviewed publication.

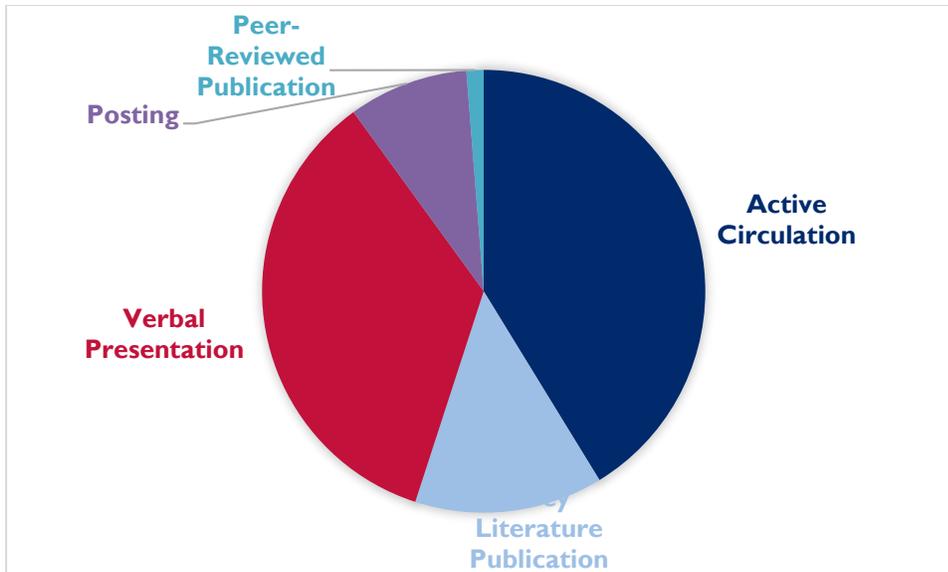


Figure 3: Q1-Q2 FY16 Dissemination Activities

IR4, now with a full complement of staff, was responsible for almost three quarters of the dissemination activities in Q1 and Q2, producing and disseminating a wide array of interviews, training exercises, presentations, and documents. After delivering 19 dissemination activities in FY15, IR4 delivered 58 in the first half of FY16. These include verbal presentations at the USAID Conservation Coach Development training; the active circulation of the 101 and 201 training modules for situation models, results chains, and M&E; and the MI Project Page on the FAB Gateway, which introduces each of the IRs and serves as a repository for MI documents.

IR3 increased its dissemination activities as well, delivering the Gender and Biodiversity Paper (a peer-reviewed publication) as well as 12 grey literature publications, active circulations, and web postings related to the newly completed Fisheries Briefing Book (see Output 3.2.2.B). IR2 was responsible for nine dissemination activities, including holding Conservation Enterprises and CWC Enforcement Capacity Building sessions during the Environment Officers Conference and circulating the CWC Toolkit (Output 2.1.3.A).

Nearly three-quarters (59 of the 80) dissemination activities were delivered to USAID audiences, while the remaining 21 were delivered to external audiences. These included attendees at the Environment Officers Conference on February 22-26 and staff from other USAID mechanisms such as LEARN, BRIDGE, and ROUTES.

#### INDICATOR 7 – NUMBER OF RESEARCH PRODUCTS SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION

This revised indicator was developed to track MI's research activities through the number of research products submitted for publication. MI's research products will help E3/FAB to strengthen the evidence base that informs both biodiversity and other development programming by: (1) identifying and filling evidence gaps to support learning for priority conservation strategic approaches, and (2) providing new knowledge to support integration of biodiversity with other development sectors that could include health, food security, gender, and climate change.

MI's target for FY16 is four submitted research products. In the first half of the year, IR3 produced two formal studies, "Does the gender composition of forest and fishery management groups affect resource governance and conservation outcomes? A systematic map," published March 2016<sup>7</sup>, and "An analysis of fish consumption patterns among rural Tanzania households," submitted for publication in January 2016 and revised for resubmission in April 2016. The published manuscript was accessed online 542 times between March 8 2016 and April 22 2016. The research team is preparing another manuscript based on their original findings, which will likely be completed in FY17. In Q3 FY16 IR3 will submit for review the manuscript "Assessing the nature of evidence: Stakeholder engagement for biodiversity conservation goals" (FY16 3.3.1.A).

<sup>7</sup> Leisher et al. 2016. [Environmental Evidence 5:6](#). DOI: 10.1186/s13750-016-0057-8

## LESSONS LEARNED

Significant progress has been made in FY16 towards the third LOP objective: enhance recognition of biodiversity importance through increasing numbers of dissemination activities and research products submitted for publication. Lessons learned to date that will inform a more detailed synthesis of learning in MI's annual report include:

- With a full IR4 team in place, MI had a significant upswing in dissemination activities. The additions of Amy Gambrell and Sue Hoye provided a nearly 300% improvement over last year in IR4 dissemination output, as the body of work that MI produced from FY13 through FY15 can now be effectively produced, packaged, and disseminated. MI looks forward to leveraging this improved production capacity in the second half of the year, and anticipates meeting and surpassing the FY16 target of 100 dissemination activities.
- IR3's study on gender and biodiversity governance, one of the two research products described under Indicator 7, provided strong evidence in support of the idea that women's participation in natural resource management is associated with improvements in local natural resource governance, supporting the development of a theory of change connecting women's participation in natural resource management with resource governance and conservation outcomes. This filled a serious evidence gap and will be a critical part of the evidence base MI has built, which in turn helps to illustrate the overall importance of an evidence-based approach.
- The briefing book "Fishing for food security: The importance of wild fisheries for food security and nutrition," as well as nine profiles of key Feed the Future countries, synthesized the evidence around the critical contributions that wild fisheries have on food security, nutrition, economic development, and poverty reduction, among other sectors. These products also highlighted key opportunities for future action around integrated programming to sustain wild fisheries.