EVALUATION

Performance Evaluation of the Measuring Impact Activity

ABSTRACT

The Office of Forestry and Biodiversity in the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment commissioned a midterm performance evaluation of USAID's Measuring Impact (MI) activity. MI is a six-year contract that helps strengthen the capacity of Agency staff and enhance the evidence base by providing technical assistance (TA) and tools to foster adaptive management of biodiversity programming. The evaluation sought to examine activity achievements towards mainstreaming best practices for adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making at each stage of the program cycle, in compliance with the Agency's Biodiversity Policy. The evaluation employed a mixed-methods participatory approach using both qualitative and quantitative methods to address five evaluation questions.

The evaluation concluded that MI has furthered USAID's capacity and appreciation for implementing processes for adaptive management in biodiversity programming. This success is due to the flexibility, adaptable framework, stakeholder engagement, and demand-driven model of MI tools and TA that allow for engagement at the various stages of USAID's program cycle. MI has also effectively promoted the use of an analytical framework for incorporating evidence into programming, monitoring, evaluation, and learning purposes. The activity has also had an effect at the Agency policy level on the use of evidence in programming, although findings on missions' utilization of evidence are less conclusive.

The evaluation provides recommendations for further dissemination of tools and technical approaches and continued engagement with Agency operating units, including nurturing cross-mission learning, to help institutionalize achievements in adaptive management and biodiversity programming.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE MEASURING IMPACT ACTIVITY

Prepared by:

Jacques Berard (Team Leader/Evaluation Specialist, MSI)
Jared Berenter (Evaluation Coordinator, dTS)
Setsuko Oya (Researcher, MSI)
Max Shanstrom (Researcher, dTS)
Meredith Waters (Project Manager, MSI)

Cover Photo Credit: Environmental Incentives/Irwandi/AFN

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
BFS	Bureau for Food Security (USAID)
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (USAID)
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CWC	Combating Wildlife Crime
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse (USAID)
dTS	Development and Training Services
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID)
ECOFISH	Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries
EQ	Evaluation Question
FAB	Office of Forestry and Biodiversity (USAID/E3)
FtF	Feed the Future
FSN	Foreign Service National
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Office of Global Climate Change (USAID/E3)
GH	Bureau for Global Health (USAID)
HTG	How-to Guide
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KAPE	Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Enabling Condition
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (USAID)
LEARN	Learning and Knowledge Management Project (USAID)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MI	Measuring Impact
MSI	Management Systems International
OH	Outcome Harvesting
PAD	Project Appraisal Document

PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (USAID)
RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID)
RM Portal	Resource Management and Development Portal
SAR	South America Regional Mission (USAID)
SOW	Statement of Work
TOC	Theory of Change
TA	Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from a midterm performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Measuring Impact (MI) activity. The Office of Forestry and Biodiversity in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID/E3/FAB) commissioned the evaluation.

Activity Background

In July 2014, USAID/E3/FAB launched the Agency's first Biodiversity Policy, reinvigorating USAID'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 a strategy and six objectives to allocate resources to a set of priority countries that feature high-priority biodiversity and ecosystems.

MI is a six-year contract (2012-2018) implemented by Environmental Incentives, Foundations of Success, and ICF International, which includes a recently approved no-cost extension of one year. MI is designed to help USAID implement the Biodiversity Policy. The activity aims to advance the Agency's leadership in developing and implementing effective programs that improve conservation outcomes and human well-being. To accomplish these goals, MI helps strengthen the capacity of Agency staff to design, monitor, and evaluate effective programs and enhance the evidence base that informs programming decisions. MI draws from the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* to provide complementary guidance, tools, and approaches to put these best practices to use in the USAID biodiversity conservation context. The work of MI focuses largely on aligning USAID biodiversity programming with evolving Agency policies and best practice in the conservation field more broadly, so that USAID staff can easily access, use, and see the results of using best practices.

The "MI approach" combines technical assistance (TA) and a variety of tools for USAID/E3/FAB to support focal missions and other Agency operating units in the uptake of the Biodiversity Policy and best practices in biodiversity programming using a results-chain based approach. MI provides TA in the form of face-to-face individual contact, group learning and trainings, web-based meetings, webinars, and desk review of documents to strengthen the capacity of USAID staff in different operating units and foster enhanced communication and knowledge transfer. MI developed tools with USAID/E3/FAB input that help missions with biodiversity programming achieve four intermediate results (IRs):

- **IR1: Build Capacity for Best Practices in the Program Cycle in USAID Biodiversity Programs**, so that USAID/E3/FAB and missions engaged with MI are equipped with the appropriate capacity and systems to mainstream best practices in implementing the program cycle in the environment sector.
- **IR2: Improve Biodiversity Conservation Approaches**, so that USAID/E3/FAB and missions engaged with MI have a greater understanding of conditions under which priority conservation actions are effective.
- **IR3: Build the Evidence Base**, to enable USAID/E3/FAB and missions to draw on a strengthened evidence base to articulate the contribution of biodiversity to development goals and to better understand the effectiveness of conservation strategies.
- **IR4: Synthesis and Outreach**, to enable operating units, beyond USAID/E3/FAB and the focal missions, to have the capacity, guidance, and evidence to strengthen their application of and support for mainstreaming best practices in implementing the program cycle for biodiversity and integrated programs.

Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The primary purpose of this midterm evaluation is to understand the extent to which and how MI has achieved its objective to mainstream best practices for adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making at each stage of the program cycle in USAID biodiversity programming, in compliance with the Biodiversity Policy. The evaluation will also inform understanding of the extent to which these best practices have diffused across USAID sectors and facilitated the integration of biodiversity outcomes with other development programs. The evaluation findings, which aim to ensure that MI outcomes are sustainable, will inform USAID programming decisions through the remainder of the activity award period. USAID/E3/FAB, USAID/PPL, and other relevant Agency operating units may use the evaluation findings to strengthen the design of future interventions surrounding the MI approach and tools that may be developed after MI's period of performance ends.

This evaluation responds to the following five evaluation questions (EQs) that USAID/E3/FAB approved to guide this study:

EQ1. How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle?[1] Why and why not?

EQ2. How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?

EQ3. What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle and how has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?

EQ4. How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID/Washington operating units? Why and why not?

EQ5. How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID/Washington operating units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?

Evaluation Design

The evaluation team employed a mixed-methods participatory approach using both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods to address the EQs. Qualitative methods included a rigorous document review, a modified variation of outcome harvesting (OH), and key informant interview (KIIs), while an online survey of staff from missions and other Agency operating units yielded quantitative results.

The design and implementation of this evaluation faced several limitations, which the evaluation team sough to mitigate to the best of its ability. These limitations included the lack of baseline information, the timeline for outcomes to materialize, challenges in assessing sustainability, response bias, and scheduling challenges.

---

[1] These four last stages of the Program Cycle are: Project Design (including the Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning [MEL] Plan), Activity Design, Activity Start-Up, and MEL. For the purposes of this evaluation, the first stage of the Program Cycle (CDCS) was not considered as it was not within the scope of MI.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Evaluation Question 1

How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle? Why and why not?

Conclusions

The MI approach has successfully increased and further enabled USAID's capacity and appreciation for implementing processes for adaptive management in the USAID context. This success is due to the approach's flexibility, adaptable framework, stakeholder engagement, and demand-driven model that allows for engagement and "on-ramps" at the various stages of the program cycle. USAID/E3/FAB and MI spent 2013 to 2014 developing, testing, and adapting the Open Standards to formalize the MI approach. This process has been successful in promoting and incorporating adaptive management in mission programming through more effective and evidence-based problem analysis and intervention design. The TA and various tools that MI provides, while not meant to be standalone activities, are both showing signs of evolution over the course of the activity, as well as through their utilization at the different program cycle stages. This adaptation is imperative for the sustainability of MI's efforts to meet its objectives.

Missions have responded in different ways to the MI tools and TA. Some missions have approached the process in a more mechanistic way, as a 'check-the-box' type of exercise, but afterward noted the value in going through the steps as it led to greater understanding of the underlying theory. Other missions that had experience with Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) approaches demonstrated a more immediate grasp of the logic and concepts in using the approach.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Leverage the MI investment and products by focusing on instructional design and communications to ensure a wider uptake of MI tools and TA primarily to meet USAID/E3/FAB's needs but also for the Agency as a whole. This may include developing generic presentations and instructional guides for specific tools to be used at different stages of the program cycle and methods on how to effectively use the outputs (e.g., completed results chains and situational model) to communicate with stakeholders.
- Continue to consult mission staff and other operating units on the features that should be included in designing future phases of TA, to anticipate the changing demand in TA, especially with the increased usage of the HTGs, the cross-mission learning program, and other relatively nascent MI products and initiatives.
- Use the cross-mission learning program and other means of communication to share success stories from the use of tools and access to MI TA. The priority target audience for this should be key stakeholders for buy-in for the MI approach, including Mission Directors, operating unit leads, Contracting Officers, and FSOs.
- Approach USAID/PPL to explore how LEARN can be leveraged to disseminate the MI approach.

MI should:

- Continue to pivot away from the production of additional tools, instead ensuring mainstreaming, institutionalization, and dissemination of the MI approach, and emphasizing the approach's underlying logic and concepts for project design and its consistent operationalization.

To enable USAID/E3/FAB to design its next generation of TA, MI should prioritize defining a model for a lighter, less costly form of TA based on its more successful attempts at virtual TA and learning from its less successful engagements.

Evaluation Question 2

How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?

Conclusions

Understanding how to utilize evidence begins with a clear definition of evidence, as well as an understanding of the appropriate operational context, which can vary widely across activities. The evaluation team concludes that MI, through its tools and TA, has effectively promoted the use of a framework for thinking about evidence for programming and MEL uses. The generation of evidence for specific strategic approaches to biodiversity programming has had less of an effect on mission programming, due to the unique operating conditions of each implementation context, associated evidence bases having limited utility for activity implementation, as well as the program cycle stage in which the MI approach was utilized. Other challenges to the use of evidence, as well as to adaptive management and the broader institutionalization of the MI approach, include time, capacity, resource constraints, and the need for champions in leadership positions.

It is expected that the cyclical nature of programming and the application of the MI approach will, over time, generate positive feedback loops that encourage the use of evidence in biodiversity programming. For this reason, it is recognized that evidence is needed at different stages of the program cycle.

MI contributes to the development, or in some cases to the reinforcement, of an institutional culture that values evidence-based decision-making. While findings on the utilization of evidence at a mission level are less conclusive, MI has had an effect at the Agency policy level on the revisions to ADS, which emphasizes the importance of evidence use in programming. Furthermore, while learning platforms that focus on strategic agendas, such as conservation enterprises and CWC learning groups, have enjoyed limited success to date, they may provide useful models.

Recommendations

- USAID/E3/FAB should encourage missions to start their planning cycle earlier to use evidence in the analysis of problems and the design of theories of change or projects and activities.
- MI should reinforce success stories of evidence use and adaptive management, with dissemination made through high-level champions.
- MI should nurture cross-mission learning networks to increase sharing and leveraging of evidence for biodiversity programming, allowing flexibility to account for the demand-driven nature of evidence use at different stages of the program cycle.
- USAID/E3/FAB and MI should enhance and promote initiatives such as Evidence in Action to encourage and guide mission staff on how to better incorporate evidence into biodiversity programming.

Evaluation Question 3

What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle and how has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?

Conclusions

MI seeks to mainstream improved program cycle planning and adaptive management throughout the biodiversity sector as well as for projects and activities that integrate biodiversity with other sectors, and to influence management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity. Evidence suggests that USAID/E3/FAB and MI have exercised leadership in working with key partners like USAID/PPL in institutionalizing evidence-based programming and CLA practices in missions and regional offices. The MI approach's relevance to biodiversity and other programming areas, and to its institutionalization within the Agency, was seen in USAID/PPL and USAID/E3/FAB finding common language for the September 2016 revisions to ADS 201. USAID/PPL has described USAID/E3/FAB and MI as "thought leaders" on several topics. Its efforts to make this thought leadership applicable across the Agency has taken time and has placed USAID/E3/FAB and MI ahead of curve in program cycle planning and adaptive management approaches in the Agency, where USAID/PPL plays a critical policy-making role.

The evaluation team identified seven key challenges that have limited institutionalization of the MI approach to program cycle planning and adaptive management in USAID. While some of these challenges have been mitigated in part, other challenges represent factors that are outside the manageable interest of MI (and possibly USAID/E3/FAB). The seven key challenges, and the attempts that have been made to mitigate them, are summarized below.

1. Many MI TA and tools are time-consuming for USAID and MI staff to implement, so they are often not applied with fidelity to their requirements. USAID/E3/FAB and MI are experimenting with alternative approaches to provide TA.
2. Mission staff is unable to utilize the full range of the MI approach across multiple stages of the program cycle due to FSO assignment rotations and FSNs being insufficiently empowered to guide the full planning cycle. This challenge should lessen over time as more FSOs become familiar with USAID's current program cycle planning approaches.
3. USAID's current processes (e.g., contracting, budgeting, procurement) are not yet conducive to the practice of adaptive management. It is an ongoing Agency-wide challenge to align these processes to the management approaches inherent in USAID's CLA agenda.
4. The MI approach is challenging to learn and apply, and the tools can be complex to use. While MI is undertaking actions to make the tools less complex, a continuing challenge will be to identify ways to better communicate the use of these tools with USAID staff, in particular those who do not work in the biodiversity sector, and to disseminate them in a way that enhances uptake and promotes fidelity.
5. While MI and USAID/E3/FAB have made efforts to align MI and USAID terminology (e.g., the "Rosetta Stone"), there remain some differences in areas such as risk and assumptions that are key concepts for addressing design.
6. The success of the MI approach is challenged when there are no high-level champions with which to work. USAID/E3/FAB plays a significant leadership role and it could exercise this more and empower such champions with senior leadership in missions and other operating units.
7. Delivery of MI TA has been inconsistent, due in large part to human and budgetary mission resource constraints, and has led MI to generally deliver TA on an ad hoc basis, whether in person or virtually.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Consider alternative approaches to packaging and presenting the MI approach for the USAID audience, including discussing with USAID/PPL the possibility of leveraging the LEARN contract for that purpose.
- Develop a workplan with USAID/PPL to harmonize the MI language with that which USAID/PPL thinks is acceptable to the Agency, and work with USAID/PPL to leverage the MI experience with cross-mission learning. USAID/PPL should proceed with caution before adopting MI language to ensure that when guidance is issued, it will be within the framework of a comprehensive approach that will meet with approval from all professionals in the organization, including those from more administrative units.
- Continue and expand its approach of engaging with mission senior management to gain their active support and championing of the MI approach.
- Track where missions are in the program cycle and offer support accordingly.
- Continue to communicate with USAID/OAA the importance of amending contract language to incorporate adaptive management approaches for activities, including through incorporating into agreements language requiring IPs to use problem analysis tools such as situation models, theories of change, and theory-based M&E.
- Focus on better integrating MI tools with the USAID/E3/FAB training program and advisors' cohort. To overcome issues of FSO rotation, provide more trainings and opportunities for FSOs that would help with adaptive management at the mission level.
- Concentrate TA to missions on areas where accountability risks are highest: at the PAD and activity design stages of the program cycle.

Evaluation Question 4

How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID/Washington operating units? Why and why not?

Conclusions

The evaluation team concludes that MI's approaches have positively affected management practices in other USAID sectors, including in USAID/Washington, but there are limitations to uptake. Although MI has made significant strides toward engaging with and delivering effective TA to non-biodiversity sectors, the effect of the MI approach on management practices in other sectors remains nascent. However, USAID/E3/FAB and MI have engaged meaningfully with USAID/PPL to export adaptive management practices to the Agency more broadly.

MI's has been most successful in influencing management practices in sectors that have thematic linkages and issues shared with the biodiversity sector, including climate change and food security.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Continue to promote adaptive management practices in the sectors most closely aligned with biodiversity – specifically global climate change and food security – or in sectors culturally receptive to systems approaches to development, such as democracy, human rights, and

governance and global health. Ensure that this is done with a clear understanding of existing practices in the sectors.

USAID/E3/FAB and MI should:

- Consider amending MI tools, including the lexicon association with these tools, to make them more accessible to stakeholders working in sectors other than biodiversity.
- Continue to consult with and engage USAID staff working in global climate change and food security, prior to initiating work in other sectors with mission or IP staff.

Evaluation Question 5

How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID/Washington operating units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?

Conclusions

The evaluation team concludes that while the MI approach has been used to support integrated programming with global climate change and sustainable landscapes, it remains too early to determine whether the approach would be applicable to integrated programming with other sectors or desired by USAID staff working in those sectors.

Of the various tools promoted by MI, USAID staff has appreciated the results chain-based theories of change and situation models due to their ability to help conceptualize complex programs with multiple cross-sectoral objectives.

As the MI approach was not originally designed with integrated programming in mind, it will take time to adapt the processes and tools to better suit the specific needs of integrated programs. This includes working on adapting the biodiversity-specific language so it resonates with people from other sectors.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB and MI should:

- Continue to pursue opportunities for integrated programming in sectors most closely linked in content to biodiversity – including global climate change, sustainable landscapes, and food security.
- Engage closely with USAID/PPL to align MI tools and practices with modalities for program design in other operating units.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from a midterm performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Measuring Impact (MI) activity. The Office of Forestry and Biodiversity in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID/E3/FAB) commissioned the evaluation. USAID's Statement of Work (SOW) for the evaluation is provided in Annex A.

The first section of this report provides background information about MI. The second section describes the purpose of the evaluation and presents the evaluation questions. The third section explains the methodology of this evaluation and its limitations. The fourth section presents the evaluation team's findings, conclusions, and recommendations for each of the evaluation questions.

ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

USAID Biodiversity Policy

In July 2014, USAID/E3/FAB launched the Agency's first Biodiversity Policy,[2] reinvigorating USAID's commitment to conservation for sustainable, resilient development as well as integration of biodiversity efforts with other development sectors. 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 a strategy and six objectives (shown in the text box on this page) to allocate resources to a set of priority countries that feature high-priority biodiversity and ecosystems.

To ensure alignment with the Biodiversity Policy, all USAID programs receiving biodiversity funds are required to meet the Biodiversity Code, a set of four principles to ensure rigor in identifying and addressing threats and drivers to biodiversity. These four principles are considered a minimum standard for compliance for programs supported by biodiversity funds, and are as follows:

> **USAID's Biodiversity Policy**
>
> USAID's Biodiversity Policy provides a blueprint for how the Agency will achieve its vision for conserving biodiversity for sustainable and resilient development through work on six objectives:
>
> 1. Support enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation
> 2. Reduce priority drivers and threats to diversity
> 3. Integrate conservation and development for improved biodiversity and development outcomes
> 4. Build partnerships to mobilize resources in support of key biodiversity conservation
> 5. Influence key international policies in support of biodiversity conservation
> 6. Apply science, technology, and learning to enhance biodiversity conservation practice

1. The program must have an explicit biodiversity objective; it isn't enough to have biodiversity conservation result as a positive externality from another program;
2. Activities must be identified based on an analysis of drivers and threats to biodiversity and a corresponding theory of change;
3. Site-based programs must have the intent to positively impact biodiversity in biologically significant areas; and
4. The program must monitor indicators associated with a stated theory of change for biodiversity

---

[2] See: https://www.usaid.gov/biodiversity/policy.

conservation results.

The Policy emphasizes: the use of best practices in program design; monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL); use of evidence to support improved programs; addressing threats and drivers of biodiversity loss, especially wildlife trafficking; and integrating biodiversity and other development sectors for improved outcomes. The Policy and the USAID program cycle[3] provide the foundation for MI's work with USAID missions and USAID/E3/FAB around best practices in program design and MEL.

Activity Overview

MI is implemented through a five-year contract that runs from September 30, 2012 to September 29, 2018, as USAID recently approved a no-cost extension of one year. USAID/E3/FAB manages the activity and Environmental Incentives, Foundations of Success, and ICF International are the implementing partners (IPs). The total amount of the cost plus fixed fee MI award (contract number AID-OAA-C-12-00078) is $18,548,426.

MI is designed to help USAID implement the Biodiversity Policy by providing technical assistance (TA) in the design, implementation, and evaluation of biodiversity conservation programming. To accomplish these goals, MI helps strengthen the capacity of Agency staff to use best practices in implementing the program cycle, including conducting situation analyses, using theories of change, engaging in systematic learning, developing and using evidence to support and manage conservation programming decisions, and integrating biodiversity conservation with other sectors. MI's work is meant to largely focus on aligning USAID biodiversity programming with evolving Agency policies (e.g., Evaluation Policy, standardized mission orders) and best practice in the conservation field more broadly, so that USAID staff can easily access, use, and see the results of using best practices. MI draws from *The Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*, an adaptive project cycle management system that is widely used by the conservation community.[4]

The "MI approach" combines technical assistance (TA) and a variety of tools for USAID/E3/FAB to support Agency operating units in the uptake of the Biodiversity Policy and best practices in biodiversity programming using a results-chain based approach. MI has been working with USAID/E3/FAB to assist an increasing number of focal missions. This evaluation examined MI's work with 11 of these missions: Indonesia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Uganda, Vietnam, South American Regional, Central Africa Regional, and the Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA).[5] MI provides TA in the form of face-to-face individual contact, group learning and training, web-based meetings, webinars, desk review[6] of documents to strengthen the capacity of USAID staff in different operating units and foster enhanced communication and knowledge transfer. MI developed tools with USAID/E3/FAB input to help USAID staff meet the standards and best practices of the Biodiversity Policy and adaptive management practices in biodiversity programming. These tools, which are described in Annex H, include situation

---

[3] For an overview of the USAID Program Cycle, see: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdacs774.pdf.
[4] See: http://cmp-openstandards.org.
[5] The number of MI focal missions has increased since evaluation activities commenced. For FY16, there were 14 missions and for FY17, there were 16 missions with the inclusion of USAID/E3/FAB and other Tier 1/Tier 2 missions.
[6] Desk review in the MI context refers to desk studies that are conducted by MI, USAID/E3/FAB or other USAID staff to assist Missions in their engagement with MI. For example, in the Nepal mission, during the activity startup phase, a USAID/E3/FAB staff member provided research assistance for the problem analysis and a staff member from the USAID/E3 Office of Global Climate Change provided documents on climate vulnerability.

models, results chains, MEL plans, how-to guides (HTGs),[7] the Combating Wildlife Crime (CWC) Toolkit, the Online Learning Platform on the Resource Management and Development (RM) portal (used for the cross-mission learning program on conservation enterprises and combating wildlife trafficking), the Miradi Software, as well as indicators, toolkits, case examples, and evidence.

Activity Theory of Change

As shown in Figure 1, MI seeks to improve biodiversity conservation and integrated programming by implementing three core strategic approaches (intermediate results [IRs] 1-3) that are supported by engagement with key audiences (IR4) and sound program management and administration (IR0).[8] These IRs and their associated life-of-project goals are summarized in this section, and form the core structure of MI's results chain (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 1: STRUCTURE OF MI GOAL AND INTERMEDIATE RESULTS
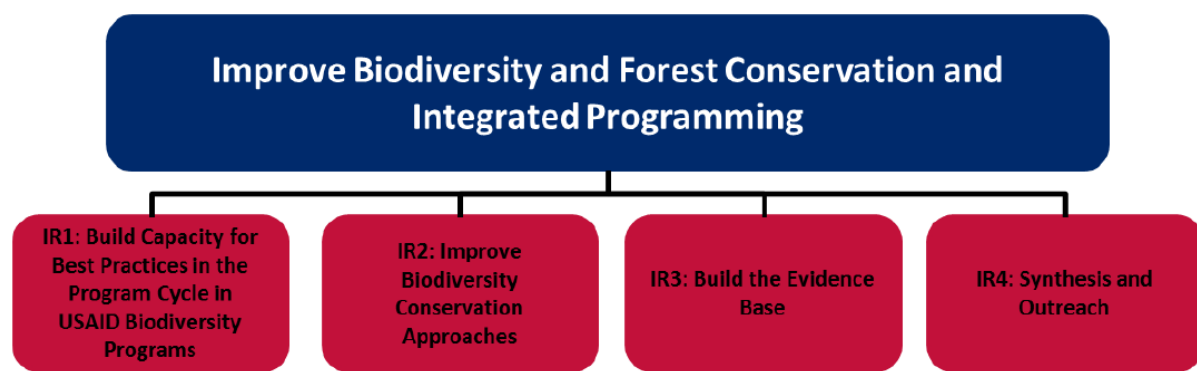
Source: MI FY2015 Annual Performance Report.

IR 1: Build Capacity for Best Practices in the Program Cycle in USAID Biodiversity Programs

Under IR1, MI aims to ensure that USAID/E3/FAB and focal missions are equipped with the appropriate capacity and systems to mainstream best practices in implementing the program cycle in the environment sector. MI seeks to achieve this by providing missions with TA and tools. MI's involvement with missions varies depending on the program cycle stage and level of TA requested. The key products that MI produces under this IR include situation models, workplans, completed results chains, trip reports, site visits, evidence summaries, and mission debriefs.

While MI seeks to support missions receiving biodiversity funding throughout the program cycle, it works with missions and USAID/E3/FAB to customize its approach to best fit the mission context. MI first sought mission engagement through a global call for applications in the 2013 fiscal year (FY) and selected missions based on:

- Priority regions designated by USAID/E3/FAB, USAID, or Congress;
- Demonstrated mission buy-in;

---

[7] The guides are: (1) Developing Situation Models in 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.

[8] MI has five IRs, numbered IR0 to IR4. IR 0 is concerned with internal activity management deliverables, including annual work plans and reports and an MEL plan. This evaluation focuses on IR1s through IR4; the evaluation scope does not encompass IR0.

- Representativeness of the mission portfolio to the broader USAID/E3/FAB agenda and the emerging Biodiversity Policy; and
- Alignment between mission needs and priorities within MI's manageable interests.[9]

This process led to the identification of nine key missions to support capacity development of USAID and IP staff for the design and adaptive management of biodiversity and integrated programs. Table 1 shows these nine missions as well as their requests for assistance and the intervention point for MI. Once the missions were selected, mission workplans were developed to determine the strategy for involvement between USAID/E3/FAB, MI, and the mission.

TABLE 1: ORIGINAL MISSION REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE FROM MI

Region	Participating Missions	Mission Requests for Assistance
Asia	Philippines	Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks for two projects: Biodiversity and Watershed Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER) and Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries (ECOFISH)
	Indonesia	M&E framework and impact evaluation design for project appraisal document (PAD)
	Nepal	Test logic of PAD, M&E framework for biodiversity sector portion of country development cooperation strategy (CDCS)
Africa	Central African Regional Program on the Environment (CARPE)	Alignment of cross-agency U.S. government investments in the region, alignment of Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) III project design and M&E frameworks
	Malawi	Test logic of Forestry and Biodiversity Conservation Project, cross-sectorial research
	Mozambique	Project design for new activity, impact evaluation design
	Uganda	M&E framework for Tourism for Biodiversity activity, project design for Environmental Management of the Oil Sector
Latin America and the Caribbean	South America Regional	Regional M&E framework, impact evaluation
	Ecuador	Cross sectoral M&E framework, impact evaluation design

Source: MI FY 13 Annual Report

IR 2: Improve Biodiversity Conservation Approaches

IR2 seeks to provide USAID/E3/FAB and missions engaged with MI with a greater understanding of conditions under which priority conservation actions are effective. At the beginning of MI, IR2's original intent was to "increase evaluation capability for biodiversity and integrated programs" and provide TA in designing SOWs for evaluating USAID/E3/FAB mechanisms. However, in MI's second year, the strategic approach for IR2 was redefined to focus on creating a cross-mission learning program around biodiversity programming within USAID, with the goal of systematically learning from selected USAID conservation actions to determine the conditions under which a conservation approach is likely to be more effective, and why.[10] Under this IR, with support from IR3, MI developed the cross-mission learning program that currently focuses on providing a forum for interactive learning exchanges by synthesizing lessons learned to develop technical support for conservation enterprises and combating wildlife trafficking with knowledge sharing, generic theories of change, and indicators. The group engaged in this program is

---

[9] MI FY13 Annual Performance Report. October 31, 2013.
[10] MI FY14 Annual Report, October 31, 2014.

comprised of mission staff working on similar efforts who would benefit most from sharing lessons learned and best practices. Key products developed for IR2 include the framework for the cross-mission learning program and two formal learning agendas, "Making Use of the Portfolio: Organizational Learning at USAID", several conservation enterprises briefs, working group facilitation on conservation enterprises and combatting wildlife trafficking, and the CWC Toolkit.

IR 3: Build the Evidence Base

Under IR3, MI intends to enable USAID/E3/FAB and missions to draw on a strengthened evidence base to articulate biodiversity's contribution to development goals and to better understand the effectiveness of conservation strategies. Through this IR, MI and USAID/E3/FAB developed the Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda, which aims to communicate USAID's research priorities and articulate a strategy for generating research. This effort seeks to strengthen the evidence base on biodiversity conservation and improve USAID's ability to integrate biodiversity and development, in line with the Biodiversity Policy. Key products produced under IR3 include the Research Agenda and evidence resources on topics including the importance of wild capture fisheries for food security, the role of communities in countering wildlife trafficking, and contributions to systematic reviews on the effectiveness of sustainable livelihoods approaches and gender and biodiversity outcomes. Through IR3, MI has also supported research agenda and research product dissemination at both external and internal USAID venues.

IR 4: Synthesis and Outreach

IR4 focuses on synthesis and outreach for MI products to enable USAID operating units, including those beyond USAID/E3/FAB and the focal missions, to have the capacity, guidance, and evidence needed to strengthen their application of and support for communicating and mainstreaming best practices in implementing the program cycle for biodiversity and integrated programs. MI's communication strategy as well as the development of three HTGs were managed through this IR. This IR also serves as the liaison with non-biodiversity offices, other USAID mechanisms such as the Learning and Knowledge Management (LEARN) project, and regional Bureaus to align USAID/E3/FAB and MI's efforts with the Agency's needs and priorities. Through this IR, MI has collaborated with the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (USAID/PPL) to better integrate the conservation language to fit the Automated Directives System (ADS) context when using Miradi for developing results chains and situation models. Key products developed under IR4 include the Miradi needs assessment and pilot reports, the HTGs, briefings with regional Bureaus and USAID/PPL, and draft Environment Officer training modules.

MI Results Chain

The MI theory of change and its graphical depiction, the MI results chain (see Figure 2), describe the strategic approaches that USAID/E3/FAB and MI are taking in implementing this activity. This theory of change outlines the expected results and assumptions inherent in the activity's design, and provides the framing structure for the development of expected results, outcomes, and indicators associated with those results. Thus, the MI theory of change and results chain are the foundation for the MI M&E Plan as well as the design for this evaluation.

The blue, pink, and green boxes in the MI result chain represent the outcomes pursued by MI interventions. The evaluation's modified outcome harvest approach (which is described later in this document) is guided by outcomes with a shorter time horizon (represented in blue). The higher-level outcomes represented in the pink and green boxes at the end of the chain are more appropriately assessed at the conclusion of MI and beyond.

FIGURE 2: MI RESULTS CHAIN
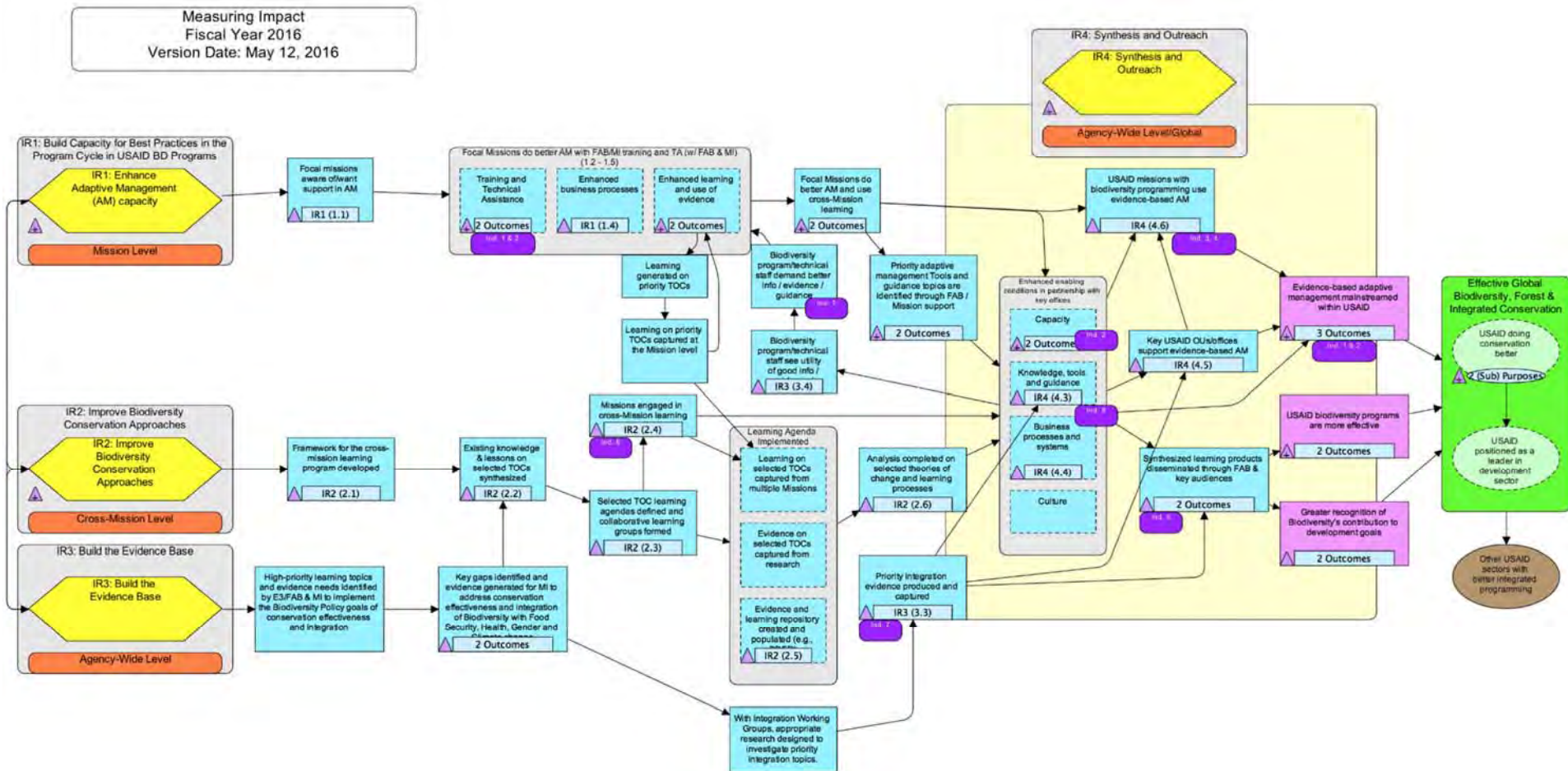
EVALUATION PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

Evaluation Purpose, Audiences, and Intended Uses

The primary purpose of this midterm evaluation is to understand the extent to which and how MI has achieved its objective to mainstream best practices for adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making at each stage of the program cycle in USAID biodiversity programming, in compliance with the Biodiversity Policy. The evaluation will also inform understanding of the extent to which these best practices have diffused across USAID sectors and facilitated the integration of biodiversity outcomes with other development programs. The evaluation findings, which aim to ensure that MI outcomes are sustainable, will inform USAID programming decisions through the remainder of the MI award period. USAID/E3/FAB, USAID/PPL, and other relevant Agency operating units[11] may use the evaluation findings to strengthen the design of future interventions surrounding the MI approach and tools that may be developed after MI's period of performance ends.

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation addressed five evaluation questions (EQs) that the team developed following MI's 2016 annual retreat, with review and input from USAID/E3/FAB and the MI team. These EQs match those in USAID's SOW for the evaluation (see Annex A). Annex B includes a glossary of terms for the EQs.

USAID/E3/FAB agreed that EQs 1-3 are the priority questions for the evaluation and the evaluation team directed the majority of its time and resources to addressing these questions. USAID/E3/FAB considered EQs 4 and 5 to be of lesser priority for the evaluation.

EQ1. How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle[12]? Why and why not?

EQ2. How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?

EQ3. What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle and how has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?

EQ4. How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID/Washington operating units? Why and why not?

EQ5. How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID/Washington operating units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?

---

[11] Other Agency operating units expected to be users of this evaluation include the MI focal Missions, regional Bureaus (e.g., LAC, Africa, Asia) and pillar Bureaus (including Global Health, Bureau for Food Security, and other E3 offices with which MI has collaborated (e.g., the Office of Global Climate Change). These units may draw upon evaluation findings to better integrate biodiversity evidence into their own programming and strategies.

[12] These four last stages of the Program Cycle are: Project Design (including the Project MEL Plan), Activity Design, Activity Start-Up, and MEL. For the purposes of this evaluation, the first stage of the Program Cycle (CDCS) was not considered as it was not within MI's scope.
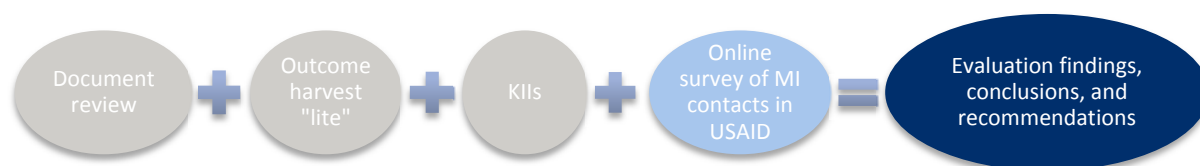
EVALUATION DESIGN

The foundation of this evaluation design is a workshop that the evaluation team held with MI and USAID/E3/FAB staff during the MI annual retreat in October 2016. Since the beginning of the MI activity, USAID/E3/FAB and MI managers have kept an outcomes log, as a way to further shape and adjust the activity's interventions to meet missions' needs. During the 2016 annual retreat, MI staff developed their own findings and conclusions, and also participated in an evaluation design workshop with the evaluation team.

Data Collection Methods

The evaluation team employed a mixed-methods participatory approach using quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to address the EQs. The team used qualitative methods including a review of activity documents, a modified version of outcome harvesting (OH),[13] and KIIs. The evaluation team also administered an online survey that yielded qualitative results.

A summary of data collection and analysis methods employed for each EQ is provided in the Getting to Answers matrix in Annex B. Figure 3 depicts the framework for the evaluation design, and Annex B provides further details on the methodology. Annex C provides the evaluation's data collection instruments for the online survey and key informant interviews (KIIs). Annex E provides the list of key informants who the team interviewed.

FIGURE 3: EVALUATION DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Document review ➕ Outcome harvest "lite" ➕ KIIs ➕ Online survey of MI contacts in USAID ➖ Evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations

A. Document Review

USAID/E3/FAB and MI provided the evaluation team with progress reports, internal documents (e.g., output tracking tables, engagement and outcome logs), and MI products (e.g. evaluations, HTGs, reports, presentations) that the team used for a document review that served as the foundation of this evaluation. Many of these documents were publicly-available, but some procurement-sensitive information was redacted by USAID/E3/FAB and MI before they were shared with the evaluation team. Annex D provides more details on the documentary sources consulted for this evaluation.

B. Outcome Harvesting "Lite"

During the initial evaluation design stage, USAID/E3/FAB invited the evaluation team to consider OH as a primary method for this evaluation, as MI staff had been keeping an outcome log throughout activity period of performance. OH collects ("harvests") evidence of what has changed ("outcomes") and then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes. It is especially useful in complex situations when it is not possible to concretely define most of what an intervention aims to achieve, or even what specific actions will be taken over a multi-year period. The evaluation team decided to use a less demanding and intense process derived from the OH methodology for the evaluation,

---

[13] OH is a utilization-focused, participatory method that enables evaluators, implementing partners, and managers to identify, formulate, verify, and make sense of outcomes they have influenced when relationships of cause-effect are unclear.

referred to here as OH "Lite." The most important reason for using the OH method is that it provides a framework for explaining behavioral and institutional changes across a multiplicity of settings: within missions, across missions, and at the Agency level.

C. Online Survey

Both the document review and the OH Lite analyses informed the design and administration of an online survey and guided the evaluation team in asking more targeted questions during KIIs. The survey allowed the evaluation team to gauge the extent of uptake and appreciation of MI's TA, tools, and approach. The team administered the survey through SurveyGizmo to 86 stakeholders identified by USAID/E3/FAB, MI, activity documents and the OH exercise. Survey respondents included staff from USAID/E3/FAB, missions and other Agency operating units including E3's Office of Global Climate Change (GCC), PPL, and the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Twenty-eight of the 86 individuals completed the survey, for a 32 percent response rate. Of the 28 respondents, 12 were mission staff, 8 were from USAID/E3/FAB, 3 were from USAID/PPL, 2 were from USAID/E3/GCC, and the remaining 3 were from the LAC, Africa, and Asia Bureaus. The survey was conducted between December 14, 2016 and January 17, 2017.

D. Key Informant Interviews

Semi-structured KIIs served to further document, validate, and triangulate the harvested outcomes, survey responses, and information from the document review. In total, the evaluation team conducted 47 KIIs, including 12 MI staff, 11 staff from USAID/Washington (including E3/FAB, PPL, the LAC Bureau, and E3/GCC), 10 staff from missions, and 9 IP staff who were beneficiaries of the MI approach. The team conducted these interviews between November 7, 2016 and February 28, 2017. Annex E provides the full list of interviewees.

The evaluation team identified five missions for interviewing relevant staff: Philippines, Nepal, Uganda, Indonesia, and South America Regional (SAR). The team selected these missions based on the document review, to encompass as much of the program cycle as possible. USAID/E3/FAB reviewed, slightly revised, and validated the selection of missions. The evaluation team subsequently requested a list of key informants from each mission who would be able to speak to the involvement of MI, and extracted names from the document review and OH materials. USAID/E3/FAB then prioritized the list so that the evaluation team could interview at least one Foreign Service National (FSN) from each mission. USAID/E3/FAB provided the evaluation team with a list of staff from E3/FAB, E3/GCC, and PPL for KIIs as well.

Data Analysis Methods

The evaluation team used the qualitative analysis software MaxQDA to review and code key documents and its KII notes to conduct a content analysis, which it used to triangulate within those data sources as well as information from the OH materials and the online survey. The team analyzed the online survey responses via Microsoft Excel, using descriptive statistics. While the survey response rate was relatively high, the number of survey respondents was not large enough to allow for findings to be statistically significant.

Most of the evaluation findings are based on aggregated and synthesized information from across the four data sources (document review, OH materials, online survey, and KIIs). The synthesis of findings that MI prepared for its 2016 retreat provides insight into the level of detail and understanding of USAID/E3/FAB and MI staff. This evaluation does not repeat those findings in detail, but rather focuses on answering the

EQs at a higher level of abstraction and analysis than what is already known and has been done by MI to date. This evaluation picks up on the trends that USAID/E3/FAB and MI staff have already amply documented, but seeks to find new insights or novel solutions that may have been discussed and shared. As USAID/E3/FAB noted to the evaluation team, the best this evaluation can achieve is to corroborate or highlight solutions that MI has already thought about.

Evaluation Team Composition

This study was conducted by a core evaluation team composed of Team Leader/Evaluation Specialist Jacques Berard (MSI), Evaluation Coordinator Jared Berenter (dTS), Technical Associate Setsuko Oya (MSI), and Research Associate Max Shanstrom (dTS). Meredith Waters and Jeremy Gans provided project management support. Conflict of interest disclosures statements for the team members are retained by the MSI home office and are available upon request.

Evaluation Limitations

The design and implementation of this evaluation faced several limitations, which the evaluation team sought to mitigate to the best of its ability.

Lack of baseline information: Since USAID/E3/FAB and MI did not collect baseline data for MI, this evaluation was not able to measure how mission adaptive management practices or use of biodiversity evidence may have changed over time. The evaluation team worked to mitigate this limitation through its data collection, mainly KIIs, but this was mainly dependent on anecdotal evidence.

Outcome time horizons: Due to the up-front time invested to assess the needs of focal missions and other offices receiving support from MI, the evaluation took place at a point in time when only early signs of outcomes may have been observable. Indeed, key products, such as with the HTGs, were only published in August 2016. Although MI delivered TA over the course of its first years, it was not supported by published documents, nor were guidance or tools easily accessible for all. The evaluation team thus focused on outcomes that were more immediate than others and could be achieved near or at the end of the activity.

Challenges to assessing sustainability: Since the sustainability of an initiative can only be verified ex-post, the evaluation team's methods for EQ 3 assessed factors that theoretically contribute to the sustainability of the intervention. EQ 3 describes the likelihood of sustainability, based on evidence collected by the evaluation team and the literature regarding sustainability indicators for an intervention of this nature.

Respondent bias: Key informants constituted the primary source of information in answering all EQs. Although the evaluation team sought to triangulate as much of the data as possible, interview data was subject to cognitive biases, including recall bias for some staff who had moved on to different missions or offices since engaging with MI. The evaluation team sought to ensure the validity and reliability of findings through the use of systematic triangulation of interview, survey, and documentary data and appropriate selection of a range of interview participants encompassing USAID/E3/FAB, MI, missions, and other participants.

Interview/response challenges: The evaluation's data collection methods were intended to be employed sequentially, to have findings from one step inform the next. However, due to the data collection period falling upon the holiday season, the timeline for both the survey and KIIs was broadened to obtain

more data, and thus less sequential than originally intended. Due to interview scheduling challenges and constraints on the timeline, the evaluation team was not able to complete all of the suggested interviews.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report addresses the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for each EQ, and begins each EQ section begins with summary conclusions, followed by the supporting findings and then the recommendations.

Evaluation Question 1

How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle? Why and why not?

The evaluation team answers EQ1 separately for the MI TA and tools. The Activity Background section provides an overview of the TA and tools provided through the MI approach. While EQ1 specifically addresses the last four phases of the program cycle, the evaluation team looked at how MI affected USAID capacity across all of the program cycle stages, in an effort to fully capture the influence of the MI approach.

Overall Conclusions for EQ1

The MI approach has successfully increased and further enabled USAID's capacity and appreciation for implementing processes for adaptive management in the USAID context. This success is due to the approach's flexibility, adaptable framework, stakeholder engagement, and demand-driven model that allows for engagement and "on-ramps" at the various stages of the program cycle. USAID/E3/FAB and MI spent 2013 to 2014 developing, testing, and adapting the Open Standards to formalize the MI approach. This process has been successful in promoting and incorporating adaptive management in mission programming through more effective and evidence-based problem analysis and intervention design.

> "What's happened with MI in 5 years is we've been articulating an approach we want, developing a procedure for it, training much of the agency in it, having supportive materials, having buy-in from the policy branch, having most of the Tier 1, and much of Mission clientele at least been exposed to it and having it picked up and having there be some interest in other sectors in applying the approach"
>
> - USAID/E3/FAB KII, 12/22/16

The TA and various tools that MI provides, while not meant to be standalone activities, are both showing signs of evolution over the course of the activity, as well as through their utilization at the different program cycle stages. This adaptation is imperative for the sustainability of MI's efforts to meet its objectives.

Missions have responded in different ways to the MI tools and TA. Some missions have approached the process in a more mechanistic way, as a 'check-the-box' type of exercise, but afterward noted the value in going through the steps as it led to greater understanding of the underlying theory. Other missions that had experience with Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) approaches demonstrated a more immediate grasp of the logic and concepts in using the approach.

Conclusions for TA

The success of MI's TA lies in its flexibility of delivery methods and the ways it provides clear guidance on how to implement tools for specific program cycle "on-ramps" that participating missions have selected. The form of TA that is currently most utilized, in-person group, is not sustainable, as it is very time and labor intensive at the initial introduction phase with the mission. As mission staff becomes more exposed to the MI approach, "virtual" TA has the potential to reduce the time and labor burdens on all parties. The nature of TA will likely change over the next five years, by leveraging successful virtual TA experiences and the further development of HTGs and other tools and media, such as the online learning platform, to deliver targeted TA based on needs evaluated by criteria such as biodiversity footprint. Survey respondents engaged with MI TA across the program cycle, with the highest frequency in the activity design and activity MEL plan stages. As will be discussed further under EQ 3, this may be because USAID/E3/FAB and MI have limited time and capacity to respond to the high levels of demand from missions for TA and because the TA was often utilized post-award, making heavy use of theories of change to develop workplans. Survey respondents reported generally high levels of satisfaction with how the TA helped them meet their programming needs. This finding was also corroborated by key informant interviews with mission and IP staff, who noted that the quality of TA was very highly regarded in asking critical questions and guiding the conversations.

Findings for TA

1. **MI's criteria to work with missions were the mission's biodiversity footprint, willingness, and interest in working with MI.**

A USAID staff member noted that prior to MI, missions and Environment Officers were not equipped with the means to improve the effectiveness of their biodiversity programming. To address the need and meet the demands of missions, USAID/E3/FAB identified and facilitated the selection criteria for MI's TA intervention, which can be seen in Table 2.

TABLE 2: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR MI TA INTERVENTION

Selection Criteria for TA Intervention	Selection Criteria Details
1. Interest and willingness to receive TA	Developed a tier-based system of missions who were both interested and willing to receive MI TA. The timing and level of engagement was based on the mission's request, timeframe of the intervention, and availability. MI selected Tier 1 Missions.
2. Size of biodiversity-funded portfolio	MI selected operating units within the missions based on the size of their biodiversity-funded portfolio.
3. Potential biodiversity footprint	MI selected operating units whose programming could provide a significant biodiversity footprint, such as the Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon or CARPE.
4. Demand-driven requests	Missions or operating units request MI TA support.
5. Program cycle "on-ramp" ability	Working with the missions and/or operating units to identify MI TA opportunities based on the available "on-ramps" in the program cycle.

Across USAID/E3/FAB, MI, and the missions, demand-driven requests for support and "on-ramp" ability were shown to be the most effective avenues of introduction to MI TA support. Respondents agreed that TA needs to be flexible and adaptable to meet the mission or operating unit in its present program cycle stage. USAID/E3/FAB and MI spent a calendar year carefully testing and refining the application of situation models and results chains across five pilot missions before collaborating with USAID/PPL and proposing

the adoption of its terminology and use in the ADS revisions and the Program Cycle as a means to support better biodiversity programming.

2. The nature of TA under MI has changed over the life of the activity, based on its response to need as well as the evolving nature of the supporting tools.

The document review and KIIs revealed that as MI matured, it undertook efforts to better package technical solutions and products, and partners also sharpened their understanding of the needs at the mission, across missions, at the Agency level, and across the program cycle. An MI staff member noted that the original intent of MI's TA was to do capacity building for missions and USAID/E3/FAB. MI subsequently found itself doing much of the work for missions (e.g., drafting the PAD) and realized that despite yielding short-term benefits, this would not put USAID/E3/FAB in the best position to carry out MI's work once the activity ended. A MI staff member noted that some of the people providing TA who were comfortable with the tools were perceived as relying on them too much, and did not sufficiently emphasize the underlying concepts. This staff member noted that in its initial years, MI seemed to be overly tool driven, but now the TA is more concept driven and the challenges it faces come not in the understanding of the concept, but in operationalizing them consistently.

The demand for TA will likely increase for the development of PADs, and the technical support will evolve to meet this demand for three reasons:

1. Missions will move out of using the MI approach for activities purposes and start to move into the next phases of evaluation, PAD, and project MEL plan. As a result, the provision of TA is expected to change focus. In some cases, TA providers will be confronted with the challenge of answering requests to design PADs that integrate several complex interventions. Evidence shows that trying to do so within a single situation model and theory of change is hard. The legitimate requests of senior mission management to simplify PAD approval processes may increase the level of difficulty of TA by conceptually and technically stretching these tools to their limits.
2. As the HTGs become widely available and their uptake is spurred by educational designers' products and new media, the nature and content of TA will change.
3. As more staff become exposed to the MI approach – including those who would benefit from USAID/E3/FAB and USAID/PPL training in similar concepts – there will be a growing network of users and coaches who will alter TA content and greater need to deliver in-person, group facilitation.

3. MI delivered TA across program cycle stages, and users expressed generally high levels of satisfaction with that TA in meeting their programming needs

Figure 4 shows how survey respondents noted where in the program cycle they have received MI's TA (note that respondents could select more than one stage). Respondents received the greatest amount of TA during the activity design and activity MEL plan stages, followed by the activity start-up and project design stages.

FIGURE 4: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' USE OF MI TA BY PROGRAM CYCLE STAGE (N=28)

Program Cycle Stages
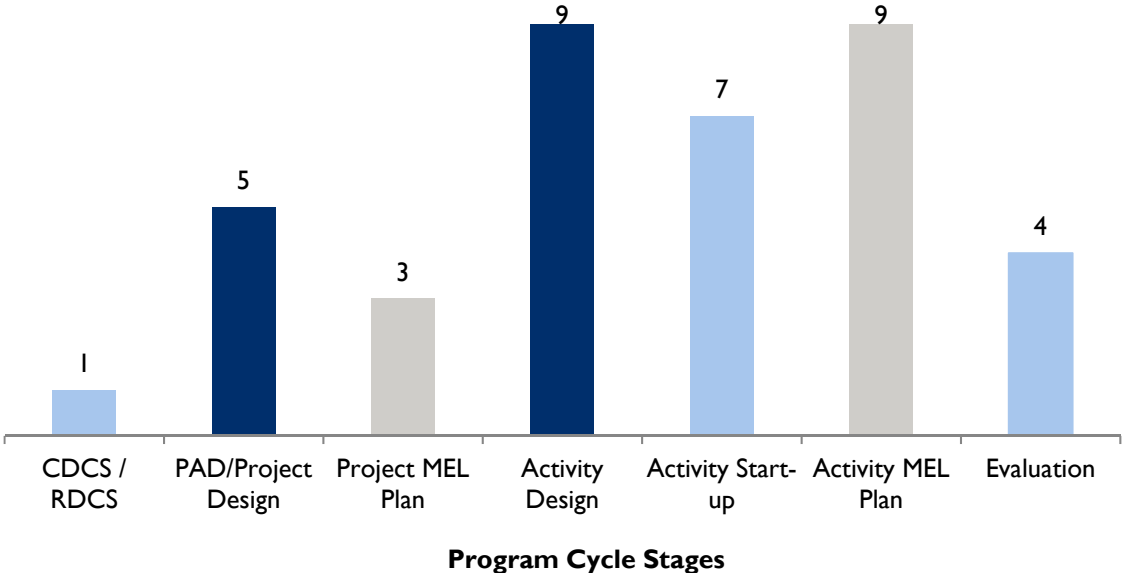
In general, survey and interview respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with how the TA that MI provided met their programming needs along the program cycle. While the number of respondents reporting use for each program cycle stage was fairly low (ranging from 1 to 9), when aggregating responses across the entire program cycle the evaluation team found that 55 percent of respondents noted that the MI TA met their programming needs "to a great extent" and 32 percent noted that it met their needs "to some extent" (see Figure 5). This survey finding was corroborated by the KIIs with mission and IP staff, who generally noted that MI's TA generally met their expectations and needs, highlighting MI's facilitation skills and adaptability of the TA (e.g., using a combination of virtual and in-person TA).

FIGURE 5: EXTENT TO WHICH MI TA MET PROGRAMMING NEEDS ACROSS THE PROGRAM CYCLE (N=28)
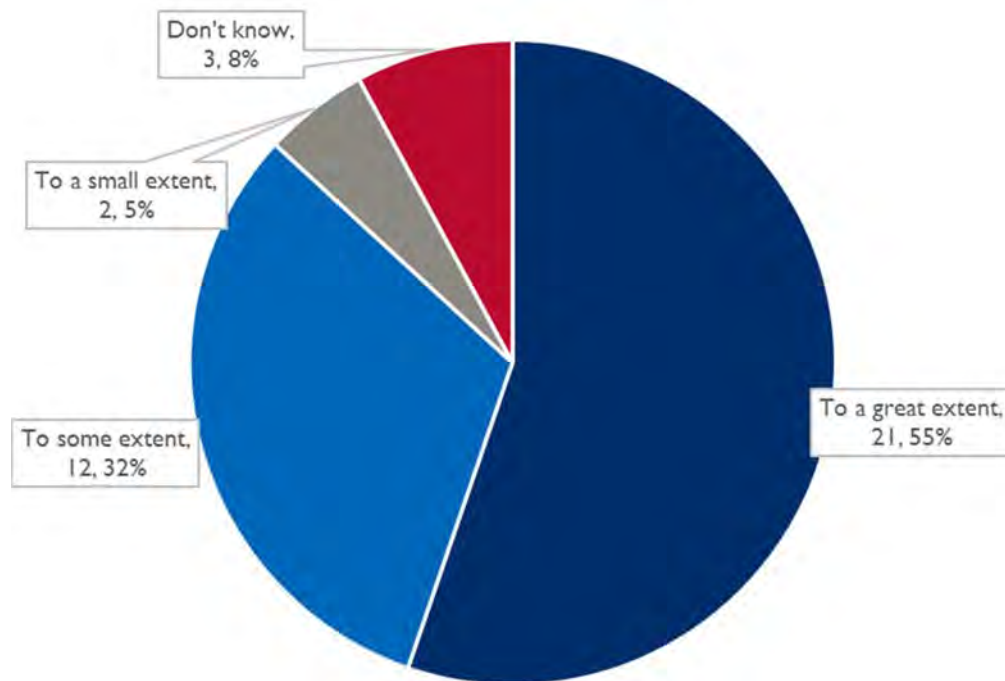
*Note: some respondents received TA in more than one stage, so the number of responses exceeds 28.

Given the relatively small number of survey respondents, limited inferences can be drawn from comparative levels of satisfaction in different stages of the program cycle. However, respondents were most positive in their responses about the TA provided during the PAD/project design and evaluation stages, in terms of it meeting their programming needs.

How and when MI was launched and introduced to missions and operating units likely played a key role in the stage of engagement and level of satisfaction with the TA. As most missions and operating units have not come full circle on the program cycle, it is difficult to determine how effective TA will be for the purposes of the beginning stages (project/PAD design and project MEL plan development), especially in the case of complex projects.

4. Respondents noted that the PAD/project design stage was the ideal time for MI intervention.

With each mission having its own unique timelines, projects, activities, and biodiversity footprints, it is difficult to pinpoint when would be the ideal time for engagement with MI. This is made especially challenging as MI has not existed long enough for a mission to go through an entire program cycle. However, key informants told the evaluation team that the ideal timing for MI's intervention was the PAD/project design stage, or the design stage in general. Given the timing and process of the activity's engagement with missions, however, it had to take missions wherever they were in their process. A staff member from USAID/E3/FAB also noted that if MI could intervene with a situation model at the project design stage, they would be able to exert more influence on the downstream design of activities flowing from the PAD/project design stage. However, another USAID/E3/FAB staff member noted that PAD-level planning sometimes does not become evident at the implementation level, whether due to staff turnover

or because the PAD is at a meta level. Staff with this concern noted that the activity level or at the workplan stage may be a better time for MI TA.

A MI staff member noted that successful use and uptake of the tools is not a matter of "when" in the program cycle these are applied. Instead, it depends on the biodiversity footprint and where the mission intends to invest its time and resources, and MI would be able to customize its approach with the mission to meet them where they are – which is exactly what the activity has been doing since it first engaged with missions.

5. Most TA under MI has been in-person and in a group setting (as opposed to virtual and individual) and was delivered at the activity level of the program cycle

Based on the 28 survey responses, mission and other USAID staff accessed the various modes of TA under MI with the following frequency: (1) in-person group facilitation (100 percent of respondents); (2) virtual group facilitation (92 percent of respondents); (3) desk review (67 percent of respondents); (4) virtual one-on-one contact (58 percent of respondents); and (5) in-person, one-on-one contact (50 percent of respondents).

A survey question asking about TA experience[14] indicates the extent to which respondents felt that each type of TA experience was effective in imparting elements of adaptive management across all stages of the program cycle. Survey respondents generally preferred group facilitation forms of TA, whether virtual or in-person. This was especially the case in the design stage of the program cycle, so that stakeholders' voices (e.g., relevant ministry staff, sector experts) are considered and their understanding of the adaptive management process (and any associated tools) increases. Survey respondents generally ranked virtual solutions second for their effectiveness in imparting elements of adaptive management.

While survey respondents rated in-person group facilitation as the most effective for supporting adaptive management, this "full treatment" of in-person TA is labor- and time-intensive for both MI and mission staff. This model requires four to six weeks of working virtually (with expected outputs including a mission TA workplan and memorandum of understanding), then two weeks of in-person TA, with follow-up throughout the following year. To help ease this burden on missions, USAID/E3/FAB and MI have been carrying a heavier load in assisting the workshop preparation (e.g., by helping with desk reviews) which has raised sustainability concerns. KIIs and survey responses indicated that lack of time is a consistent and widespread factor limiting this approach, suggesting that USAID/E3/FAB will not have the capacity to sustain TA to missions at the level that is being currently delivered.

MI is pursuing two avenues to address the costly time investment that this form of TA requires for USAID/E3/FAB, MI, and mission staff: increasing the amount of virtual TA it provides, and delivering TA through a mixture of virtual and in-person engagements. The survey data showed that the more time staff spend virtually to prepare and debrief for workshops, the less time it took to complete the overall process. In the survey and KIIs, USAID/E3/FAB and MI staff reported successful experiences with virtual engagements. These may bring elements of a proof-of-concept model, with virtual TA leveraging HTGs and experience gained to date with effective virtual meeting protocols, as in the case of SAR. There is a now a wealth of knowledge, resources, and experience (e.g., group process scripts and notes, memoranda of understanding, workplans, templates, examples of situation models and theories of change) that can be

---

[14] The exact survey question was: "In your experience with MI/FAB, to what extent is each of the following modes of technical assistance effective in imparting the elements of adaptive management?(Adaptive management is an intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context.)"

captured to further develop a virtual TA model different from, but as effective as, the in-person group model.

Conclusions for Tools

There are clear signs that MI tools are effective in building the adaptive management capacity of mission and IP staff to improve their biodiversity programming. The tools allow for the creation of frameworks to analyze and communicate programmatic issues, design interventions guided by results chains, and improve theories of change based on MEL. Given significant amount of time and labor required to implement the MI approach, the tools component does require a great deal of planning and work upfront, bringing together key stakeholders for extensive thinking about projects and activities. However, it does facilitate understanding and consensus about the program cycle stages, thus creating better adaptive management practices.

Findings for Tools

1. **Respondents perceive the MI tools to be useful in setting up projects and activities for building capacity for adaptive management.**

Many key informants and survey respondents noted that the MI tools are useful in building capacity for adaptive management of biodiversity programming. For example, a survey respondent stated, "once you understand [the tools'] utility for injecting rigor into the design and M&E processes, they become indispensable." An IP staff member who received TA from MI also noted that the tools provide a framework for getting to impact, help with planning, and help tell the story of the activity better. An USAID/E3/FAB staff member remarked that the importance of the tools lies not in the "tools per se, but to get people to be critical thinkers and to take the time to devise a theory to be tested."

The publication of the HTGs in August 2016, the synthesis of MI products occurring through IR4, and the cross-mission learning program is evidence of MI's ongoing efforts to improve its ability to promote and deliver tools and share experiences of tool usage, to build mission capacity for adaptive management. The cross-mission learning program on conservation enterprises has already gained some recognition as it developed a case example storyboard for the annual collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) case competition held by the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in USAID/PPL. The case example storyboard won the Agency-wide CLA case competition in 2015 in the video category. The LEARN project produced the video and it was shown at the annual Moving the Needle event in November 2016. This allowed MI to showcase its efforts, gain recognition, and reach a wider audience.[15]

2. **Missions most commonly use the results chains, Miradi, situation models, and the MEL plan, and the activity design stage is the most common stage program cycle stage for the tools to be used.**

Table 3 shows the extent of use of MI tools by survey respondents[16] across the program cycle. These data and the KIIs and document review confirmed that results chains are the most commonly used MI tool. Miradi, situation models, and Project and Activity MEL plans have also been used with somewhat less frequency across the program cycle, in both the design and implementation stages although less for the evaluation stage. An MI staff member corroborated that while "results chain is probably the tool most

---

[15] LEARN is funded by USAID/PPL and supports strategic learning and knowledge management at USAID to improve the effectiveness of projects in achieving sustainable development outcomes. It provides Missions and other operating units with access to expertise through buy-in to the contract for technical support and services.

[16] The exact survey question was "Which of these tools (listed vertically) have you used to prepare the following documents (listed horizontally)? (Please select all that apply)"

used and popular with the mission," Project and Activity MEL plans have also been commonly requested as "people feel obligated to do MEL or M&E." Respondents reported less use of the online learning platform and the cross-mission learning program, but MI reported in its FY16 Synthesis of Findings that that the proof-of-concept has been developed and the conservation enterprise learning group has been launched with the CE learning agenda published on the learning platform. MI staff acknowledged during the KIIs that the launch was slower than expected, however there is good interest and feedback in the missions. One key informant from USAID/E3/FAB who works closely with the Uganda Mission noted that this learning group will be relevant and used for an upcoming design session at the Mission level.

Similar to the findings for TA noted in the previous section, survey respondents reported that tools are most commonly used at the activity level (design, MEL plan, start-up plan) of the program cycle.

TABLE 3: USE OF MI TOOLS BY PROGRAM CYCLE STAGE

MI Tools	Program Cycle Stages										Total for each tool
	Activity Design	Activity MEL Plan	Activity Start-up Plan	Evaluation	PAD	Project MEL Plan	CDCS/RDCS	None	Don't know	N/A - Did not use this tool	
Results Chains	8	7	8	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	**30**
Miradi	9	5	5	3	4	2	1	0	0	0	**29**
Situation Model	9	4	6	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	**27**
MEL Plan	3	6	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	*3*	**16**
CWC Toolkit	3	5	3	1	2	0	0	1	0	3	**14**
Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal (CE and CWC)	3	2	2	3	0	0	0	1	1	5	**10**
Cross-Mission Learning Program	2		0	1	0	0	0	1	3	5	**3**
Total for each program cycle stage[17]	**37**	**29**	**27**	**13**	**13**	**8**	**2**	**3**	*4*	*16*	

3. **Factors that affect the use of MI tools include: ease of the tool application, ability to operationalize the USAID Biodiversity Policy, and buy-in from senior leadership and Contracting Officers.**

Table 4 shows the factors that survey respondents found important for using the MI tools.[18] Respondents prioritized the ease of application, the extent to which it helps operationalize the requirements of the Biodiversity Policy, and the ability of the tools to improve the ability to engage in evidence-based adaptive management as having the greatest importance in affecting their use.[19] However, the vast majority of responses to this question were "to a great extent" or "to some extent", so it is difficult to identify specific factors that might be more important than others. KIIs suggested that the MI approach is appealing because it helps to operationalize the high-level guidance of the Biodiversity Policy or the USAID regulations around the program cycle (ADS 201).

---

[17] This total does not include "none," "don't know," or "N/A."
[18] The survey question was "To what extent is each of the following factors important for you to use the MI/FAB tools?"
[19] As the number of survey respondents was low, the evaluation cannot attribute statistical significance to these findings.

TABLE 4: IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE USE OF MI TOOLS

	To a great extent	To some extent	To a small extent	Don't know	Not at all
The tools are easy to apply	13	6	1	0	0
The tools help operationalize the requirements of the USAID Biodiversity Policy	12	6	1	1	0
The tools helped you improve your ability to engage in evidence-based adaptive management	12	5	2	1	0
The tools offer clear step by step instructions	11	7	2	0	0
The availability of technical assistance to explain how to use the tools	11	6	1	1	1
The tools help operationalize the requirements of the new ADS 201	9	9	0	1	1
The tools have been customized to meet the specific needs of your operating unit	9	8	1	2	0
The tools cover all the steps to follow at each stage of the Program Cycle	8	9	2	1	0

Mission staff and a survey respondent also highlighted the importance of support and buy-in from mission and office leadership as well as the Contracting Officer in contributing to whether and how much MI TA and tools were used. This finding is also corroborated in the answer to EQ3.

Additional findings for some of the MI tools can be found in Annex G.

4. Respondents voiced mixed opinions about the use of the tools as an effective communication device.

The situational models and results chains can be used as graphic representations of the operating context and theory of change, respectively. A survey respondent noted that the tools "aren't just easy to apply, they are a very valuable tool for communication" However, another respondent noted that because "a well-designed situation model and theory of change [captures] the full logic behind your design, including the major assumptions which are often missed by other planning tools, such as log frames,"[20] the tools "are a bit complicated to use (especially the software!) and the outputs do not lend themselves to clear communication." Two key informants referred to the resulting Miradi-based results chain product as "spaghetti bowls" that cannot be communicated to senior managers in missions and Washington.

The survey results and KIIs identified limitations or challenges to the uptake of these tools. This issue is addressed in more detail under EQ 3, but it is noted here that lack of time and USAID staff turnover are major impediments to uptake, as is the relatively complex nature of the tools. A mission program officer noted that the results chains can be a daunting but useful tool. Other mission users of the tools expressed their appreciation for the ensuing dialogue and the injection of rigor into M&E processes, even if they were initially hesitant about the tools.

---

[20] The question on the survey was "Please use this space to describe any other factors that could contribute to your use of MI/FAB tools and why."

According to survey respondents, while unclear guidance on how to use tools for purposes of analyzing situations/problems, design, M&E, and learning is not overly limiting to the use of tools, it does constitute a barrier to their mainstreaming.[21] Respondents noted the use of the CWC Toolkit to inform the development of situational models and results chains as examples of how MI has been able to address the challenge of lack of time, by providing so much useful information that it reduces the time needed to do programming. The generic theories of change for conservation enterprises have also helped to shorten the programing design timeline. A USAID interviewee noted that the CWC toolkit was useful to guide a virtual planning process with the Guatemala Mission, as it provides a generic narrative that can be adapted to a specific context. MI staff also noted in the 2016 Synthesis of Findings Report using the CWC Toolkit and generic conservation enterprises theories of change to speed up the design process in Vietnam and RDMA. A caveat from the use of generic or suggested theories of change that MI and USAID staff mentioned was that it may not leave room for the designer to think as creatively and may not rely as much on their own critical thinking skills to create something that is suited for their particular situation.

Recommendations for EQ1

Based on the findings and conclusions discussed for EQ1, USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Leverage the MI investment and products by focusing on instructional design and communications to ensure a wider uptake of MI tools and TA primarily to meet USAID/E3/FAB's needs but also for the Agency as a whole. This may include developing generic presentations and instructional guides for specific tools to be used at different stages of the program cycle and methods on how to effectively use the outputs (e.g., completed results chains and situational model) to communicate with stakeholders.
- Continue to consult mission staff and other operating units on the features that should be included in designing future phases of TA, to anticipate the changing demand in TA, especially with the increased usage of the HTGs, the cross-mission learning program, and other relatively nascent MI products and initiatives.
- Use the cross-mission learning program and other means of communication to share success stories from the use of tools and access to MI TA. The priority target audience for this should be key stakeholders for buy-in for the MI approach, including Mission Directors, operating unit leads, Contracting Officers, and FSOs.
- Approach USAID/PPL to explore how LEARN can be leveraged to disseminate the MI approach.

MI should:

- Continue to pivot away from the production of additional tools, instead ensuring mainstreaming, institutionalization, and dissemination of the MI approach, and emphasizing the approach's underlying logic and concepts for project design and its consistent operationalization.
- To enable USAID/E3/FAB to design its next generation of TA, MI should prioritize defining a model for a lighter, less costly form of TA based on its more successful attempts at virtual TA and learning from its less successful engagements. This documentation should cover:

  o A step-by-step process guide to the flow of each session
  o Possible scripts of key processing points for productive interactions
  o Samples of memoranda of understanding and workplans

---

[21] The question on the survey question was "To what extent are the following factors hindering your use of the MI/FAB approach to adaptively manage biodiversity projects and activities?"

Evaluation Question 2

How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?

Conclusions for EQ2

Understanding how to utilize evidence begins with a clear definition of evidence, as well as an understanding of the appropriate operational context, which can vary widely across activities. The evaluation team concludes that MI, through its tools and TA, has effectively promoted the use of a framework for thinking about evidence for programming and MEL uses. The generation of evidence for specific strategic approaches to biodiversity programming has had less of an effect on mission programming, due to the unique operating conditions of each implementation context, associated evidence bases having limited utility for activity implementation, as well as the program cycle stage in which the MI approach was utilized. Other challenges to the use of evidence, as well as to adaptive management and the broader institutionalization of the MI approach, include time, capacity, resource constraints, and the need for champions in leadership positions.

It is expected that the cyclical nature of programming and the application of the MI approach will, over time, generate positive feedback loops that encourage the use of evidence in biodiversity programming. For this reason, it is recognized that evidence is needed at different stages of the program cycle.

MI contributes to the development, or in some cases to the reinforcement, of an institutional culture that values evidence-based decision-making. While findings on the utilization of evidence at a mission level are less conclusive, MI has had an effect at the Agency policy level on the revisions to ADS, which emphasizes the importance of evidence use in programming. Furthermore, while learning platforms that focus on strategic agendas, such as conservation enterprises and CWC learning groups, have enjoyed limited success to date, they may provide useful models.

Findings for EQ2

1. **MI has supported evidence-based programming through the identification of evidence gaps and by framing research and learning questions.**

In the SAR, Uganda, Philippines, and Nepal Missions, staff credited MI with providing needed support in identifying and framing research and learning questions that drive evidence gathering for MEL needs. However, in all but two of the operating units that the evaluation team examined, MI engagement has not demonstrably increased the use of evidence at the design stage of the program cycle.

2. **Understanding of what evidence is or how it should be used varies.**

While USAID's revision to ADS 201 in 2016 clearly defined the term "evidence,"[22] the evaluation team found that there are varied understandings of the concept across operating units. In SAR, the evaluation team found a shift in attitudes toward evidence: rather than conceived of as anecdotes, evidence has become more structured, systematically built, and discussed. Nonetheless, the challenge of defining evidence remains and MI recognizes the need to guide people through what is meant by evidence and how

---

[22] "Body of facts or information that serve as the basis for programmatic and strategic decision making in the Program Cycle. Evidence can be derived from assessments, analyses, performance monitoring, and evaluations. It can be sourced from within USAID or externally and should result from systematic and analytic methodologies or from observations that are shared and analyzed." See https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf

to use it. As will be further discussed in the findings for EQ3, there is not yet any clear institutional guidance on how to use evidence for learning.

3. **The time required to generate and incorporate evidence into programming decisions is a key challenge to MI efforts to increase the use of evidence in biodiversity programming.**

Table 5 shows notable responses from the survey question about different factors that may hinder the use of the MI approach to adaptively manage biodiversity programming. Sixteen of 20 respondents agreed that a lack of time was a challenge to the use of the MI approach for adaptive management, 8 of whom said that this was the case "to a great extent." Staff interviewed from the Uganda Mission, for example, indicated that the greatest challenge to generating and incorporating evidence into its decision-making is the time required to do so. The environmental sector between development partners in Uganda is highly disorganized, making it difficult to bring everyone together to share information and to build a community of practice. This finding is corroborated in the evaluation's answer to EQ3.

4. **In addition to time constraints, respondents cite poor quality evidence and the lack of access to evidence as key challenges to the use of evidence in biodiversity programming.**

As shown in Table 5, survey respondents also indicated that issues of access and quality of evidence are challenges to the use of the MI approach for adaptive management. Fifteen out of 20 respondents indicated that insufficient access to evidence was a challenge to the use of evidence for adaptive management, and 13 out of 20 respondents cited the poor quality of evidence as hindering its use. A smaller number of respondents pointed to unclear guidance on the use of evidence for design or learning, or the use of monitoring for evidence, to be challenges; only one respondent in each of these cases found the lack of guidance to be a hindrance to the use of the MI approach to a great extent. This finding is at odds with what the evaluation team found for EQ3, but it can be explained by the fact that very few respondents have actually used evidence to inform their adaptive management of biodiversity interventions except for the activity design stage, as well as by the fact that those who have used such evidence have done so under the active guidance and facilitation of MI or USAID/E3/FAB staff.

TABLE 5: EXTENT TO WHICH FACTORS HINDER THE USE OF THE MI APPROACH TO ADAPTIVELY MANAGE BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMING

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Institutional: Lack of time	3	2	6	8	1
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use evidence for design	8	4	3	1	4
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use monitoring for evidence	7	5	2	1	5
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use evidence for learning	6	6	3	1	4
Other: Insufficient access to evidence	3	7	6	2	2
Other: Poor quality of evidence	3	5	4	4	4

As confirmed in the survey results on constraints to institutionalization of the MI approach that will be discussed under EQ3, MI respondents recognized that mission staff feel hindered in their ability to use

evidence for adaptive management by their poor access to quality evidence. Thus, there stands to be great value in being able to either provide evidence on demand or in directing mission staff to sources of quality evidence.

5. **The extent to which MI efforts have affected the use of evidence in biodiversity programming has yet to be determined, but there is recognized value in the MI approach as an impetus for thinking about and operationalizing the use of evidence.**

Fifteen of 18 survey respondents agreed that the MI approach facilitates the use of evidence in biodiversity programming to at least a small extent, although only 2 respondents indicated that MI facilitates this "to a great extent." Respondents indicated that situation models were particularly effective for identifying evidence gaps in biodiversity programming.

MI's support for evidence generation and utilization is in its early stages. The MI learning agendas developed under IR2, for example, have only recently been launched and MI staff confirmed that the activity has not formalized specific guidance related to the use of evidence developed under IR2 or IR3. USAID/E3/FAB interviewees noted that the use of evidence in programming decisions has been embraced by some and resisted by others. For example, MI staff saw a positive shift toward evidence-based programming in CARPE, while in other cases tight timelines precluded systematic treatment of evidence in programming decisions. Although respondents recognized that the MI approach provides a framework for thinking about evidence, they could not directly link their increased use of evidence to the MI TA or tools; their organization was already headed in a direction of making more use of evidence. In the case of the Indonesia Mission, evidence used to inform adaptive management has traditionally been based on evaluations to comply with Sections 118/119 of the Foreign Assistance Act. Indonesian respondents suggested that MI engagement enhanced their ability to meet those requirements.

A USAID/E3/FAB staff member noted that IR3 is developing an "Evidence in Action" product that, while in its early stages, aims to guide people through what is meant by evidence, how it can be used, and how to fill in evidence gaps. This complements the Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda and its standalone products on evidence and research methods.

USAID/PPL interviewees noted that a key contribution of MI was how the ADS 201 revisions highlighted the importance of evidence use. These USAID/PPL staff cited the need for greater evidence use at the mission level, as well as the importance of clear guidance on defining evidence and the importance of its application to implementation and MEL. However, multiple USAID/PPL interviewees expressed skepticism regarding the extent to which the use of evidence can be regulated through policy.

6. **Respondents highlighted how the use of evidence for biodiversity programming needs to be prioritized by mission leadership.**

USAID/Uganda provided the most pronounced example of the effect of mission leadership on the use of evidence in biodiversity programming. Mission respondents there pointed to leadership, either at the management or technical level, as a key facilitating factor for the MI approach to evidence-based programming. This finding is further validated through the findings to EQ3 later in this report.

7. **While learning platforms and programs have been rolled out to facilitate cross-mission learning, mission engagement with these vehicles has been limited.**

Respondents cited a number of platforms for cross-mission learning supported by MI, including an online platform, webinars, a newsletter, email communications highlighting common biodiversity issues and upcoming activities, and discussion groups. MI has also recently developed conservation enterprises and

combatting wildlife trafficking learning groups, which represent one of the first systematic attempt at cross-mission learning at USAID. Strategically, MI and USAID/E3/FAB have determined that USAID should be the face of these cross-mission biodiversity learning groups.

However, mission engagement with these platforms remains limited to date and most mission staff, when asked during interviews, were not aware of or have not used the vehicles that MI provides under IR2. Survey respondents also indicated that they have limited experience with USAID/E3/FAB's platforms in general. Only 2 of 18 respondents recognized USAID/E3/FAB's Resource Management and Development Portal (RM Portal), which provides resources for the conservation sector and hosts cross-mission learning program pages for conservation enterprises and combatting wildlife trafficking. Since six of 18 respondents reported having visited these pages directly, it is possible to have findings for only these sites, distinct from the results for the RM Portal. Still, recognition of the RM Portal by only one-third of respondents is lower than expected. Based on the KIIs, this can be explained at least in part by the relatively recent release of the various vehicles, as well as mission staff feeling overwhelmed with the overabundance of information.

This limited engagement notwithstanding, the conservation enterprises learning agenda serves as an example of synthesized resources for cross-mission learning. In developing both learning agendas, MI interviewed key mission staff, identified needs, and produced generic theories of change that could serve as a basis for country- or context-specific elaboration. MI then conducted a synthesis of findings from the published and gray literature, producing a 10-page summary of what is known.

USAID/Indonesia expressed familiarity with MI theories of change for conservation enterprises and combatting wildlife trafficking, but placed more value on the development hypotheses of those learning agendas than on the corresponding evidence bases. The CWC Toolkit, on the other hand, has served as an entry point for MI engagement with missions such as Guatemala, Vietnam, and RDMA.

Recommendations

- USAID/E3/FAB should encourage missions to start their planning cycle earlier to use evidence in the analysis of problems and the design of theories of change or projects and activities.
- MI should reinforce success stories of evidence use and adaptive management, with dissemination made through high-level champions.
- MI should nurture cross-mission learning networks to increase sharing and leveraging of evidence for biodiversity programming, allowing flexibility to account for the demand-driven nature of evidence use at different stages of the program cycle.
- USAID/E3/FAB and MI should enhance and promote initiatives such as Evidence in Action to encourage and guide mission staff on how to better incorporate evidence into biodiversity programming.

Evaluation Question 3

What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle and how has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?

Conclusions for EQ3

MI seeks to mainstream improved program cycle planning and adaptive management throughout the biodiversity sector as well as for projects and activities that integrate biodiversity with other sectors, and to influence management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity. Evidence suggests that

USAID/E3/FAB and MI have exercised leadership in working with key partners like USAID/PPL in institutionalizing evidence-based programming and CLA practices in missions and regional **offices.**

The MI approach's relevance to biodiversity and other programming areas, and to its institutionalization within the Agency, was seen in USAID/PPL and USAID/E3/FAB finding common language for the September 2016 revisions to ADS 201.

> "It's a special program. MI and FAB team has really changed how conservation is done here. The whole approach and supporting tools and training changes how people think. It's a huge sea change."
>
> - USAID/E3/FAB KII, 12/22/16

 USAID/PPL has described USAID/E3/FAB and MI as "thought leaders" on several topics. Its efforts to make this thought leadership applicable across the Agency has taken time and has placed USAID/E3/FAB and MI ahead of curve in program cycle planning and adaptive management approaches in the Agency, where USAID/PPL plays a critical policy-making role.

> "MI brings very practical, rigorous approaches. [The activity] comes at it from sector-specific conversation but in a way that if you're listening from another sector it's transferable. At the PPL- or Agency-level, I witnessed several conversations of how do we bring this very proactive posture by PPL to be very open to model contribution themselves or learning organizations themselves that really matters. FAB and MI have a lot of visibility and respect."
>
> - USAID/PPL KII, 12/23/16

MI works to achieve culture change at the organization level, which is ambitious and can take many years to accomplish. Key informants from MI, USAID/Washington, and missions noted that it would take more time for MI, working with USAID/E3/FAB and USAID/PPL, to fully realize these types of goals, given institutional challenges and time horizons related to changing organizational culture.

The evaluation team identified seven key challenges that have limited institutionalization of the MI approach to program cycle planning and adaptive management in USAID. While some of these challenges have been mitigated in part, other challenges represent factors that are outside the manageable interest of MI (and possibly USAID/E3/FAB).

The seven key challenges, and the attempts that have been made to mitigate them, are summarized below.

1. Many MI TA and tools are time-consuming for USAID and MI staff to implement, so they are often not applied with fidelity to their requirements. USAID/E3/FAB and MI are experimenting with alternative approaches to provide TA.
2. Mission staff is unable to utilize the full range of the MI approach across multiple stages of the program cycle due to FSO assignment rotations and FSNs being insufficiently empowered to guide the full planning cycle. This challenge should lessen over time as more FSOs become familiar with USAID's current program cycle planning approaches.
3. USAID's current processes (e.g., contracting, budgeting, procurement) are not yet conducive to the practice of adaptive management. It is an ongoing Agency-wide challenge to align these processes to the management approaches inherent in USAID's CLA agenda.
4. The MI approach is challenging to learn and apply, and the tools can be complex to use. While MI is undertaking actions to make the tools less complex, a continuing challenge will be to identify ways to better communicate the use of these tools with USAID staff, in particular those who do not work in the biodiversity sector, and to disseminate them in a way that enhances uptake and promotes fidelity.

5. While MI and USAID/E3/FAB have made efforts to align MI and USAID terminology (e.g., the "Rosetta Stone"), there remain some differences in areas such as risk and assumptions that are key concepts for addressing design.
6. The success of the MI approach is challenged when there are no high-level champions with which to work. USAID/E3/FAB plays a significant leadership role and it could exercise this more and empower such champions with senior leadership in missions and other operating units.
7. Delivery of MI TA has been inconsistent, due in large part to human and budgetary mission resource constraints, and has led MI to generally deliver TA on an ad hoc basis, whether in person or virtually.

Findings for EQ3

1. **MI's approach to program cycle planning and adaptive management is time-consuming and intensive.**

The MI approach to program cycle planning is highly collaborative and requires significant engagement with key stakeholders. It is often difficult for all stakeholders to make available the time necessary to engage in these activities, and even scheduling such a highly collaborative process can be complex. Respondents cited the limited bandwidth and heavy schedules of mission staff as a challenge to the full utilization of MI tools. As one KII from USAID/Uganda noted, "One must have awareness of what it means for time, not with the partner but on the USAID on the side. There are implications for USAID: you have to be part of the process."

While numerous respondents noted this constraint, the evaluation team did find some successful examples (e.g., Uganda, Philippines) in mitigating this constraint where learning is embedded in the organizational culture throughout the program cycle.

2. **Mission and USAID/Washington staff lacks sufficient time to fully implement the MI approach in their program cycle planning.**

USAID staff, whether in missions or in Washington, is pressed for time. As one respondent reflected, "we live in our inbox." Mission staff must complete a number of tasks to meet the Agency's administrative requirements. These requirements, particularly those of ADS 200, leave staff with limited time to engage in activities that focus on program cycle planning and management. The amount of time that staff can dedicate to thorough and participatory analysis of a situation, the development of a comprehensive results chain and theory of change, or a MEL plan, is insufficient to adopt practices such as those advocated by MI. This is especially true for Program Officers or staff in large missions with large portfolios to manage. As a survey respondent noted, "Honestly, it is my own lack of time more than anything else! Too many other priorities divide my attention."

3. **Mission staff sometimes has insufficient time and resources to engage meaningfully with MI TA.**

MI's "full treatment" TA requires a considerable time commitment from mission staff, including up to eight weeks of intensive engagement for problem analysis and design (or activity start-up), followed by up to one year of periodic engagement to facilitate preparing MEL plans. Mission staff perceives these time commitments to be overly demanding. As one respondent noted, "[mission] teams are under incredible pressure to move money, get the PAD done, get the Activity design done. They are always behind."

While this constraint applies to all missions, it is especially the case in larger missions, which have many activities for which staff must prepare reports to fulfill their accountability and due diligence obligations. In these missions, senior managers pressed for time are more likely to attempt to bundle together

interventions under one PAD. In this context, it is difficult both conceptually and practically (in terms of finding sufficient time) to engage with partners to construct a single over-arching SM, result chain, or theory of change, or even to identify appropriate learning priorities.

4. **MI and USAID/E3/FAB lack sufficient capacity and resources to respond to all mission requests for assistance.**

Information from the document review and KIIs indicated that while mission uptake of MI TA has been strong, MI does not have sufficient capacity and resources to respond to all mission requests for TA. As one MI respondent noted: "We can't satisfy all requests for [temporary duty assignments]; sometimes we just don't have enough people." A USAID/E3/FAB interviewee noted that even when MI does have the capacity to provide TA, it may not have the time to carry out all the tasks anticipated in providing extensive and intensive TA support to missions.

This situation may resolve over the longer term, as more staff become trained in MI approach and form a critical mass of expertise. Currently, as will be discussed further below, FAB/MI are experimenting with alternative approaches to TA.

Respondents also indicated that USAID/E3/FAB staff currently have uneven competency in the MI approaches and not all staff can deliver TA adequately. This situation may improve somewhat over time as MI produces improved guidance, templates, and standard presentations.

5. **USAID's rotation of FSOs hinders application of MI approaches and exposure to the suite of tools.**

The full program cycle during which MI tools and TA are applied lasts between five and seven years. FSOs typically rotate on a two- or a four-year basis, and these rotations are not aligned to any program cycle. A USAID/E3/FAB interviewee note that, "nobody at a mission designs a project, sees it procured and implemented. This does not fit with the rotation cycle." For this reason, regardless of the normal challenges of turnover in any large organization, it is difficult to institutionalize either the process within missions (there are reports of derailed uses of the MI approach as mission directors rotate in and out of post) or the expertise within mission staff. The evaluation team found that FSNs, who often do have experience to guide the full planning cycle are sometimes not sufficiently empowered to pursue this approach as incoming rotating supervising staff (FSOs) may not be aware of it or have different ideas for programming.

The roles and responsibilities of FSNs vary from mission to mission, but multiple interviewees noted that they serve a key role in preserving institutional memory. In some missions, MI's interaction was mainly with FSNs, not FSOs. In another mission, an interviewee noted that there was an Environment Officers conference for which there was a training component, and trainees were mostly FSOs. The interviewee noted that FSNs would be very interested in this type of opportunity, or the opportunity to lead workshops in other countries. One FSO interviewee noted that they would be in the mission long enough to see the contracts signed, but the FSOs would lead the adaptive management throughout the life of the project.

6. **The full application of MI tools and processes is too complex for adoption by some missions on the program timescale.**

MI's program cycle planning tools and processes are complex for many mission staff, and appropriating them requires learning by doing throughout program cycle and engagement with MI TA. As one respondent pointed out, "once mission staff have gone through the process, the tools lose some of their complexity and it takes less time to complete it."

Some respondents indicated that MI's approach may be challenging even for some experienced practitioners to employ. As reported in MI's FY16 Synthesis of Findings, one respondent expressed the need for a "clear crosswalk between the MI requirements and USAID requirements during each step of the process." One USAID/SAR staff member stated that it would be useful for MI to provide a one-pager or a cheat sheet of all the steps and different methods of support that MI offers.

One USAID respondent in MI's FY16 Synthesis of Findings noted that in approximately half of the cases, the full application of these tools and processes with fidelity has not been achieved, and for many of the cases may not be realistic or necessary. In such cases, MI's TA focused on imparting the application of specific tools and processes, while ensuring that mission staff understand how the tools work and feed into one other and into mission documents. For example, a USAID/E3/FAB interviewee noted that the situation model may be the essential foundational tool for mission staff to use as, after completing it, staff may then proceed with what they do best: programming projects and activities with their choice of theories of change or logic models to permit results-based MEL.

7. Guidance on the use of MI tools and processes is not sufficiently clear for USAID staff.

Survey respondents reported that guidance from within the Agency on the use of MI tools for analyzing problems, using evidence, and monitoring was not clear. Respondents stressed that a lot of new guidance from USAID/PPL and USAID/E3/FAB has come recently and that the rollout of the ADS 201 revision is creating a situation of "information overload" for some staff. In this context, "uptake of new tools is slow [as] new tools and guidance are being generated all the time [and] mission staff are unsure of how to navigate and absorb all of the materials that are available to them."[23]

8. Some missions lack the time and capacity to systematically analyze evidence on biodiversity approaches, a key driver of MI's tools and processes.

The evaluation team found some evidence that missions lack sufficient resources and capacity to generate evidence from their own data. For instance, key informants reported that it took up to 40 days of labor to complete products such as the fisheries handbook. Some missions do not have the bandwidth to generate evidence of this nature.

9. MI has experimented with several models to facilitate adoption of MI tools.

MI has used some modified approaches to communicate and facilitate the adoption of at least some MI tools – if not the strict and faithful adherence to its approach to program cycle planning and management. For instance, in some cases the focus has been on effectively packaging the existing tools and communicating the requirements (i.e., timelines and level of effort) of applying these tools to stakeholders, which is a new and less intensive form of TA. Several respondents suggested that further efforts to develop new tools and processes should be abandoned in favor of disseminating learning and application of the tools through IR4.

USAID/E3/FAB and MI have identified alternative approaches to deliver TA that can facilitate the use of MI approaches, including combining virtual work conducted from Washington to facilitate shorter, intensive TA delivery. Two examples of how alternative approaches to TA can still facilitate improved program cycle planning took place in Guatemala and Vietnam. In Guatemala, a series of teleconferences were used to facilitate development of a situation model – eight calls of two hours each, and then two more calls of the same length to produce a viability analysis to determine best biodiversity focal interest, a prioritization of threats, five different strategies, and a last prioritization of strategies from five to four.

---

[23] [FY13-IR1\IR1 Deliverable 1 1 B Analysis of Lessons Learned Across Missions. Even though this comes from 2013 document, the quote remains valid in 2016.

In Vietnam, there was a successful experiment using a topic guide to consult with key informants as opposed to using the formal situation model approach to problem analysis. In contrast, evidence indicates that TA for conservation enterprises was most effective in-person, although in Uganda time could be saved if work is done remotely to aid in analyzing mission documents to develop evidence prior to in-person TA.

10. Effective communication is required to facilitate uptake of MI tools with stakeholders.

The complexity of the MI tools makes it difficult to communicate them to stakeholders in a way that promotes uptake. In some cases, MI has been successful in communicating the use of its tools, such as showing USAID staff how the tools will contribute to missions meeting Biodiversity Policy and ADS requirements rather than adding to an already heavy staff workload.[24]

With the publication of the HTGs in August 2016, MI and USAID/E3/FAB staff recognized the importance of communication and socializing stakeholders to their use. While packaging and disseminating communication products is not an MI core competency, MI staff support contracting educational design experts to tailor the IR4 products (such as the HTGs) and widen their dissemination by using different media and formats to improve their penetration into and use by USAID.

11. The lack of consistency in MI and USAID/PPL approaches to program cycle planning has caused confusion among stakeholders.

The adoption of MI approaches across USAID has clear implications and effects that will extend far beyond USAID/E3/FAB and biodiversity more generally. The relationship between USAID/E3/FAB and USAID/PPL has been critical in shifting the Agency's institutional priorities towards adaptive management and learning. However, differences in language and terminology have made it difficult to align broader Agency stakeholders around MI's program cycle planning and management approaches.

MI's approach is inspired by the Open Standards, the lexicon for which has been in place since 2004 but in many respects does not align with USAID's broader terminologies. For instance, there is confusion about key concepts such as assumptions and the notion of "evidence."[25] During the last two years, USAID/PPL and USAID/FAB/MI have worked together to adopt Agency-wide language that would represent a compromise, but USAID/E3/FAB cannot push the Agency in a direction that does not have USAID/PPL's full endorsement. MI staff noted that this challenge affects activity implementation and it has made efforts to directly address it, such as developing a "Rosetta Stone" for aligning terminology used by the Open Standards and the ADS. An MI staff member indicated that there has been an evolving conversation around confusing terminology, including the terms "risk" and "assumption," for which MI is hoping to receive further Agency guidance, especially as they pertain to design.

12. The institutionalization of adaptive management practices remains inconsistent with USAID's processes.

USAID's current processes, like many large organizations with established processes and organizational culture, can pose a challenge in the face of adaptive management efforts. For instance, the concept of evolutionary acquisition is not embedded with USAID's Office of Acquisition Assistance (OAA) and there is no contracting mechanism for adaptive management. USAID/E3/FAB and MI are working with USAID/OAA on changes in contractual language that will permit adaptive management in IP contracts and

---

[24] One Mission source stated the need to see a clearer cross-walk between the MI approach and ADS 201, which was also noted in other KIIs.

[25] For MI staff, "evidence" has many meanings as the evaluation team witnessed during the October 2016 MI workshop retreat. For some, it meant the information drawn from evaluation questions whereas, for others, it encompasses of sources of information as defined in ADS 201.

agreements, but there will remain challenges of technical staff and Contracting Officers in missions understanding their respective roles and responsibilities in implementing CLA with partners. USAID/OAA and mission Contracting Officers are conceived of as the 'next level of adoption' of the MI approach.

Looking at the whole of the USAID system, there is a contradiction between the ADS requiring CLA and the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, which stresses compliance with contract budgets and timelines rather than adaptive management or informed risk-taking based on new evidence. However, there were instances identified where adaptation has been enabled, such as in Uganda, where IPs are involved from the outset and allowance is made in the contract for the preparation of several evolving drafts of the workplan based on an increasingly deeper understanding of the situation. While USAID/E3/FAB is considering solutions as the Uganda example, wholesale Agency-wide changes in interpretation or processes require coordination with USAID/OAA and Contracting Officers and greater levels of collaboration between Contracting Officers and technical teams.

Finally, some interviewees highlighted the need for a common understanding between technical and administrative staff of what is expected of IPs. One possible solution is to have TA also directed to administrative staff.

13. The institutionalization of MI approaches has been facilitated where mission staff demonstrates buy-in.

The previously mentioned challenges of terminology and misaligned procurement mechanisms have been mitigated in some cases by mission staff exercising leadership as champions of organizational learning and adaptive management, which is more likely to occur where staff has previously been exposed to USAID/E3/FAB's biodiversity programming. An interviewee from the Uganda Mission provides an example of this phenomenon: "The learning started from the top. Every incoming COP met with the Director who reinforced the idea of learning. The missions coordinated monthly talks about learning, what was not working." A USAID/PPL interviewee noted that the Uganda Mission prioritized learning and good programming and design, but leadership was key to making that happen.

14. MI has focused on embedding the MI approach throughout all levels of mission staff.

In light of the challenges presented by mission staff turnover and the rotation schedule for FSOs, and the benefits to institutionalization of mission-based champions, MI has been focusing its attention on ensuring that FSNs have access to MI training and materials. In addition, where the Program Office has been involved, including most notably M&E staff, there has generally been greater championing of the MI approach. Across missions, MI has also focused on securing buy-in by explicitly linking (through MI's approach) improved learning with reduced workloads and efficient reporting of mission documentation (i.e., MI products feed into documents that missions must prepare anyhow, such as PADs).

15. USAID staff often lacks relevant and high-quality data, which they perceive to constrain their application of some MI approaches.

USAID staff engaged in planning often is not aware of the relevant evidentiary needs or where and how to access such data, leading to a perception that MI approaches are not appropriate. As one interviewee noted, "Specific evidence needed hasn't come out until process of making boxes and arrows [and] there is a dearth of evidence in conservation across the board. Where there is evidence or researcher data, it is not accessible or codified in any way that is searchable." Based on the experience of MI staff, it can take months to gather evidence even if it is "relatively" easy to find material on USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, in portal documents, or internally at a mission. According to MI staff, the "challenges include poor understanding of what is meant by evidence-based programming, lack of access to resources."

MI is considering steps to address this perceived constraint, but has not yet implemented many of these as the managers responsible for IRs 2 and 3 came on board after the start of MI.

16. Country context and the degree of IP support affect the level of adoption of the MI approach or similar adaptive management practices.

Country context is an important factor affecting the level of adoption of the MI approach. In some cases, IPs resist adopting approaches such as those promoted by MI due to contextual considerations and longstanding practices. Respondents offered several reasons for this resistance. First, IPs working in a sector for a long time often see no advantage to trying new approaches. As one IP respondent in Indonesia stated, "That's the nut that needs to be cracked: siloism, ego-sectoralism. At the national level goes down to provincial or district level. People work within institutions and their own objectives and don't look at how that fits in the bigger picture."

Another reason for this resistance is that it takes a long time and considerable engagement with other stakeholders to co-develop situational models, theories of change, or MEL Plans. This time has not generally been built into existing contracts and grants, which obligate IPs to deliver on products or activities very soon after the award. As a result, some IPs view such requirements as unpaid "add-on" services. As one interviewee noted regarding the use of a theory of change to inform monitoring, "It's hard to work with partner organizations unless there's something in the procurement document that says "you are going to do this and you are going to measure things along this theory of change". If it's suggested after the procurement, they would say, we like this stuff but it's complicated and we don't want to do it."

In cases such as in the Uganda, Nepal, and Philippines missions, where IPs' use of the MI approach is the norm, respondents noted that "IPs didn't have a choice in the shift – the challenge was our internal processes [which] are very slow […] I didn't get the sense of resistance from IP".[26] One solution that USAID/E3/FAB and USAID/PPL have been considering is to have mission staff co-develop a situational models they share with IPs who are asked to submit proposals with a theory of change. Another solution came out of Uganda, where a Mission key informant noted that procurement did not impede adaptation and learning because "very often the kinds of changes we are talking about do not require contract change. They are operational changes; the language is in there that we can just remove that mentality that "this in the contract we signed and this is how it needs to be implemented."

Finally, linked to the issue of the complexity of the tools is the fact that IPs also need support to apply these practices.

17. Mission staff is reluctant to engage with stakeholders out of a concern for releasing procurement-sensitive information.

Although early engagement with key stakeholders (especially IPs) is critical to applying adaptive management and collaborative learning processes to activity design, mission staff members are reluctant to do so for fear of sharing procurement-sensitive information – a fear which in some cases may be well-grounded. One of the ways that MI and USAID/E3/FAB have begun to address this problem is to start to better track where missions are in the program cycle and to proactively offer TA well in advance of the moment when it will be needed.

18. MI tools do not explicitly highlight gender considerations.

Respondents acknowledged that there has been little work or guidance on incorporating gender considerations in the MI tools, and if gender was incorporated it was because of the people involved, not

---

[26] Key informant from the Uganda Mission.

because of the tools. Some noted that the tools are gender-neutral and it is the evidence used that should be gender-sensitive. There appears to have been very little interaction with the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Office. A MI staff member noted, "we don't have structured document, structured guidance – but is on people's mind."

MI has, however, been open to and made efforts in highlighting gender in its work. MI examined the unique and diverse roles of women in the wild fisheries sector. MI worked on the first systematic review of evidence around gender and biodiversity governance, which also developed a theory of change describing the relationships between gender inclusion and biodiversity conservation goals. MI supported a presentation of this research to USAID's Gender Champions Group in 2016. MI's work on stakeholder engagement highlights the importance of incorporating women's views and values when making decisions about diversity programming. MI also worked with the Gender Environmental Working Group to discuss how to incorporate gender into situation models and results changes, although this did not gain much traction. MI also worked with the Gender Environmental Working Group on discussing how to incorporate gender into situation models and results chains, although this did not gain much traction. In addition, MI worked on the first systematic review of evidence around gender and biodiversity governance, and made other efforts to bring gender to the forefront.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Consider alternative approaches to packaging and presenting the MI approach for the USAID audience, including discussing with USAID/PPL the possibility of leveraging the LEARN contract for that purpose.
- Develop a workplan with USAID/PPL to harmonize the MI language with that which USAID/PPL thinks is acceptable to the Agency, and work with USAID/PPL to leverage the MI experience with cross-mission learning. USAID/PPL should proceed with caution before adopting MI language to ensure that when guidance is issued, it will be within the framework of a comprehensive approach that will meet with

> "Leveraging LEARN is leveraging PPL. We have significant buy-ins to both. It's totally in our self-interest for this to work."
>
> - USAID/PPL KII, 2/28/17

  approval from all professionals in the organization, including those from more administrative units.
- Continue and expand its approach of engaging with mission senior management to gain their active support and championing of the MI approach.
- Track where missions are in the program cycle and offer support accordingly.
- Continue to communicate with USAID/OAA the importance of amending contract language to incorporate adaptive management approaches for activities, including through incorporating into agreements language requiring IPs to use problem analysis tools such as situation models, theories of change, and theory-based M&E.
- Focus on better integrating MI tools with the USAID/E3/FAB training program and advisors' cohort. To overcome issues of FSO rotation, provide more trainings and opportunities for FSOs that would help with adaptive management at the mission level.
- Concentrate TA to missions on areas where accountability risks are highest: at the PAD and activity design stages of the program cycle.

Evaluation Question 4

How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID/Washington operating units? Why and why not?

As previously noted, USAID/E3/FAB considers EQ4 to be secondary for the purposes of the evaluation as it addresses issues not part of the MI mandate. Through this question, USAID/E3/FAB seeks to better understand the scope of MI's influence on the approaches used in other sectors. The evaluation team answers this question by first presenting its summary conclusions, then describing its key conclusions with supporting findings under each conclusion.

Overall Conclusions for EQ4

The evaluation team concludes that MI's approaches have positively affected management practices in other USAID sectors, including in USAID/Washington, but there are limitations to uptake. Although MI has made significant strides toward engaging with and delivering effective TA to non-biodiversity sectors, the effect of the MI approach on management practices in other sectors remains nascent. However, USAID/E3/FAB and MI have engaged meaningfully with USAID/PPL to export adaptive management practices to the Agency more broadly.

MI's has been most successful in influencing management practices in sectors that have thematic linkages and issues shared with the biodiversity sector, including climate change and food security.

Conclusions and Findings for EQ4

Conclusion: MI's approaches can and have been successfully introduced to USAID programming in other sectors.

Findings

There is nothing about the MI-promoted approaches that necessarily preclude their use in other sectors. Eighty-three percent of survey respondents working in sectors other than biodiversity reported that they have experience using MI approaches.

MI has successfully introduced its approaches to activities in other sectors, including with USAID/E3/GCC in Peru, Feed the Future in Uganda, and with USAID/PPL more generally.

In 2015, MI provided training to staff in the Office of Strategic Policy and Planning in USAID/PPL on the Miradi software and the application of MI tools, including situation models and theories of change. USAID/PPL respondents spoke highly of the training, specifically the results-based theories of change and the introduction to Miradi. USAID/PPL has expressed interest in incorporating Miradi software in its future training on project management and design.

Conclusion: MI's approaches and tools address unmet needs in other sectors.

Findings

Non-biodiversity stakeholders have found Miradi to be useful for engaging with concepts of adaptive management. Respondents stated that the software was useful as an adaptive management tool and that

it encouraged fresh thinking and group discussion.[27] While USAID/PPL respondents noted that some of Miradi's features are best suited to the biodiversity sector and need to be repurposed, they nonetheless found it useful and were willing to engage with USAID/E3/FAB and MI to test applications of the software in other sectors. This could present an opportunity to help USAID/PPL push out a powerful tool capable of supporting more effective results-based programming in other sectors. A key informant from USAID/PPL noted, "We found…that [Miradi] was very compatible with what we were trying to do. It was serving a slightly different purpose because it was focused on biodiversity and conservation. We thought it was very relevant to what we were trying to do with project design in particular…we were looking at developing approaches for creating logic models for projects at a higher level in between the project and the strategy."

There is widespread engagement with MI in the global climate change sector. Ninety percent of survey respondents who had engaged with MI in sectors other than biodiversity did so in the context of global climate change programming. A USAID/E3/GCC staff member noted that a potential reason why MI has had success in this sector may be that GCC has no equivalent set of tools or modalities for program design, theory of change development, or the use of evidence.

Conclusion: Specific conditions affect whether uptake of the MI approach is enhanced or limited.

Findings

Where MI has introduced its approaches to activities in non-biodiversity sectors, these engagements have been informal, case specific, and non-continuous – ending after the period of initial engagement. Furthermore, while survey responses indicate that uptake of the MI approach in sectors other than biodiversity is widespread, respondents perceived this uptake as relatively shallow. Fifty percent of respondents characterized MI's influence on institutional policies or guidelines in sectors other than biodiversity as "a small extent" or "not at all," compared to 22 percent who characterized MI's influence as having "some effect" or "a great effect."

A commonly cited barrier to greater uptake of the MI approach in non-biodiversity sectors is the fact that MI tools such as the HTGs are steeped in biodiversity-specific lexicon. This makes concepts that are applicable in all sectors inaccessible to staff unfamiliar with biodiversity programming. Interviewees such as those in USAID/E3/GCC and the Peru Mission expressed the need for MI to modify the language used in the tools to accommodate the needs of staff working in other sectors.

Uptake of the MI approach in other sectors has also been constrained in part due to the limits of MI's mandate. For example, the Program Office in Uganda noted the challenge of MI's limited ability to follow-up with operating units outside of biodiversity. This type of interaction is meant to take place under the mandate of Biodiversity Results and Integrated Development Gains Enhanced (BRIDGE), a separate USAID/E3/FAB activity with which MI works in close collaboration.

Uptake of the MI approach is facilitated when there is a critical mass of staff within missions or other operating units involved who have expertise in implementing the MI approach and experience with adaptive management. In Peru, the integration of MI tools with global climate change programming was enabled through transfer of knowledge from mission staff who had been through the process before, and imported it into the mission. Similar knowledge sharing occurred in Uganda with Feed the Future

---

[27] One interviewee in Uganda said that Miradi was also a good tool for creating an institutional memory, because of all the information it captures and safeguards for future use.

programming. Uptake should be facilitated over the longer term by the presence of FSOs who have experience in adaptive management and can transmit the approach from mission to mission.

Staff continuity and having champions from non-biodiversity sectors also help uptake of the MI approach in other sectors. As mentioned in the answer to EQ3, the uptake of the MI approach is facilitated when there are USAID staff who champion the approach. This was seen in Senegal, where the biggest champion of MI is a project office working in food security. Similarly, in Peru, the presence of an MI expert who championed the approach helped to facilitate the cross-sector appeal of MI, leading to uptake of Miradi and the MI approach in global climate change programming.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB should:

- Continue to promote adaptive management practices in the sectors most closely aligned with biodiversity – specifically global climate change and food security – or in sectors culturally receptive to systems approaches to development, such as democracy, human rights, and governance and global health. Ensure that this is done with a clear understanding of existing practices in the sectors.

USAID/E3/FAB and MI should:

- Consider amending MI tools, including the lexicon association with these tools, to make them more accessible to stakeholders working in sectors other than biodiversity.
- Continue to consult with and engage USAID staff working in global climate change and food security, prior to initiating work in other sectors with mission or IP staff.

Evaluation Question 5

How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID/Washington operating units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?

As previously noted, USAID/E3/FAB considers EQ5 to be secondary for the purposes of the evaluation as it addresses issues not part of the MI mandate. Through this question, USAID/E3/FAB seeks to better understand the scope of MI's influence on the integration of biodiversity and programming in other sectors. The evaluation team answers this question by first presenting its summary conclusions, then describing its key conclusions with supporting findings under each conclusion.

Overall Conclusions for EQ5

The evaluation team concludes that while the MI approach has been used to support integrated programming with global climate change and sustainable landscapes, it remains too early to determine whether the approach would be applicable to integrated programming with other sectors or desired by USAID staff working in those sectors.

Of the various tools promoted by MI, USAID staff has appreciated the results chain-based theories of change and situation models due to their ability to help conceptualize complex programs with multiple cross-sectoral objectives.

As the MI approach was not originally designed with integrated programming in mind, it will take time to adapt the processes and tools to better suit the specific needs of integrated programs. This includes working on adapting the biodiversity-specific language so it resonates with people from other sectors.

Conclusions and Findings for EQ5

Conclusion: **MI tools support integration of programming across sectors.**

Findings

Survey respondents highlighted how certain MI tools provide a basis for and support integrated programming. Eighty percent of respondents who had experience with MI's support for integrated programs used theories of change or situation models to "some" or to a "great" extent, with 66 percent using Miradi software. Interviewees in Nepal and Indonesia cited the theory of change approach as allowing complex programs to fit together disparate streams of funding to be articulated, demonstrating how indicators can link across sectors. Respondents also highlighted how the situation model and the facilitation process lend themselves to distilling program complexity such that it can be addressed through a single integrated program.

Conclusion: MI has supported programming integrating global climate change and biodiversity.

Findings

Two-thirds of survey respondents stated that MI has facilitated integrated programming to "some" or a "great" extent. Integrated programming has been most successfully achieved with global climate change. For example, in Nepal, a Mission key informant noted that MI has supported integrated programming where funding from global climate change; democracy, human rights, and governance; and biodiversity is combined. Respondents from MI and USAID/E3/GCC noted that MI has also been successful in supporting integrated sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity programming in both Peru and Indonesia, and IP and mission staff in both countries spoke positively about the impact of the MI approach on integration.

Conclusion: The challenges to integrated programming are similar to those posed by promoting the MI approach in non-biodiversity sectors.

Findings

Respondents noted a similar set of challenges in supporting integrated programming as did other respondents when discussing the challenges of applying the MI approach in other sectors. Overlap between these challenges is not particularly surprising, as some of the non-biodiversity sectors with which MI has engaged are also part of combined funding streams and integrated programming. Foremost among the challenges identified was the biodiversity-specific lexicon used in the MI tools, which can be distracting and difficult to manage for staff in other sectors.

Recommendations

USAID/E3/FAB and MI should:

- Continue to pursue opportunities for integrated programming in sectors most closely linked biodiversity – including global climate change, sustainable landscapes, and food security.
- Engage closely with USAID/PPL to align MI tools and practices with modalities for program design in other operating units.

ANNEX A: STATEMENT OF WORK

Performance Evaluation: Measuring Impact Activity

1. Activity Description

USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment/Office of Forestry and Biodiversity (E3/FAB) launched the Measuring Impact initiative (MI) with the aim of strengthening USAID's biodiversity programs by (1) improving best practices in implementing the USAID Program Cycle for biodiversity-funded programs and (2) developing evidence to support decisions in conservation and integrated programming. Measuring Impact is a five-year contract (2012-2017), managed by the Office of Forestry and Biodiversity and implemented by Environmental Incentives, Foundations of Success, and ICF International.

The goal of MI is that USAID's biodiversity conservation programming is improved through the practice of mainstreaming best practices in implementing the Program Cycle, including using theories of change and systematic learning, and by developing evidence to support decisions in conservation programming and the integration of conservation with other development sectors.

The primary beneficiaries of MI's work include E3/FAB, the USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL), other USAID operating units which can benefit from an increased evidence base for biodiversity programming and environment, program and contracting officers in eleven USAID focal Missions: Indonesia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Uganda, Vietnam, South American Regional, Central Africa Regional (CARPE), and Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA).

2. Development Hypothesis

The overall goal of MI is to "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."[28]
MI has four intermediate results (IR) that contribute towards the overall goal of the program.

- IR1. Build Capacity for Best Practices in the Program Cycle in USAID Biodiversity Programs so that E3/FAB and Missions engaged with MI are equipped with the appropriate capacity and systems to mainstream best practices in implementing the USAID Program Cycle in the environment sector.
- IR2. Improve Biodiversity Conservation Approaches so that E3/FAB and Missions engaged with MI have a greater understanding of conditions under which priority conservation actions are effective.
- IR3. Build the Evidence Base to enable E3/FAB and Missions to draw on a strengthened evidence base to articulate the contribution of biodiversity to development goals and to better understand the effectiveness of conservation strategies.
- IR4. Synthesis and Outreach to enable operating units, beyond the E3/FAB Office and MI's focal Missions, to have the capacity, guidance, and evidence to strengthen their application of and

---

[28] Measuring Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (USAID, May 13, 2016).

support for mainstreaming best practices in implementing the Program Cycle for biodiversity and integrated programs.

In lieu of a traditional results framework model and in line with its approach to fostering adaptive management, MI and E3/FAB have developed detailed theories of change – depicted graphically as results chains. These theories of change outline the expected results and assumptions inherent in the activity's design, and provide the framing structure for development of expected results, outcomes, and indicators associated with those results. These theories of change are iterative and updated annually in consultation with E3/FAB. Both the initial activity theory of change (2013) and the most recent theory of change (2016) are provided in Annex A to this Statement of Work.

3. Existing Performance Information Sources

The following existing sources of performance information have been identified by the evaluation team:

- MI program management documents submitted to USAID including:
    - Annual Performance Reports
    - Semi-Annual Performance Reports
    - Monitoring and Evaluation Plans
- MI Deliverables, including the following:
    - Output Tracking Tables for each MI Intermediate Result
    - Mission and PPL Work Plans
    - Mission Site Visit Reports
    - Analyses of Lessons Learned Documentation
    - MI-produced Technical Papers and Briefs
    - MI-produced trainings and workshop agendas
    - MI-produced How-To Guides
- MI-produced Annual Synthesis of Findings

4. Evaluation Purpose, Audience, and Intended Use

The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the extent to which the Measuring Impact (MI) activity has addressed a critical need in USAID, how it has attempted to meet this need, and what it has done to increase the likelihood that its work will endure post-activity.
The primary audiences for this evaluation will be the USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment/Office of Forestry and Biodiversity and MI Activity staff.

5. Evaluation Questions

E3/FAB and the E3 Analytics and Evaluation project have developed five evaluation questions to guide the evaluation. The first three evaluation questions comprise the priority questions for the evaluation and a disproportionate ratio of time and resources should be directed to addressing these questions. The final two questions are considered by E3/FAB to be of lesser priority and correspondingly, the evaluation team should devote less time and fewer resources to addressing these evaluation questions than the first three.

Priority Evaluation Questions
- **EQ 1:** To what extent has MI technical support and guidance in program cycle planning contributed to the improved capacity of USAID to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs?

- **EQ 2:** What are the challenges to mainstreaming MI's approach to program cycle planning throughout USAID biodiversity programming?

- **EQ 3:** In what ways has MI been or not been effective in promoting greater utilization of evidence in order to increase the effectiveness of USAID biodiversity program, including through its learning and knowledge sharing and evidence generation activities?

Secondary Evaluation Questions
- **EQ 4:** How has MI's technical support and guidance in program cycle planning influenced management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity?

- **EQ 5:** Have MI's research products and technical support led to a greater recognition within USAID of the links between biodiversity (and conservation interventions) and other development outcomes?

6. Gender Considerations

As part of its activities, MI works with E3/FAB, USAID Missions and the Biodiversity and Gender Working Group to promote the integration of gender into USAID biodiversity programs, including through integrating gender into project design using the adaptive management tools and guidance being advanced through MI for USAID's biodiversity programming.

The evaluation should consider the extent to which MI has contributed to increased USAID capacity to integrate gender into USAID biodiversity programs and whether MI has contributed to increased use of evidence on the differential impacts on gender of biodiversity programs and programs in other relevant sectors.

7. Evaluation Methods

The evaluation team, in the Evaluation Design Proposal, will propose detailed evaluation methods suitable for addressing the evaluation questions. It is anticipated that theory-based evaluation approaches applying mixed methods will likely be appropriate, in light of the evaluation questions and the anticipated availability of data. Table 1 summarizes the range of methods the evaluation team may consider using to gather evidence needed to address the evaluation questions.

Table 1: Getting to Answers Matrix of Evaluation Questions and Methods

Evaluation Questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Sampling or Selection Plan	Data Analysis Plan
1. How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle? Why and why not?	– MI Program Management Documentation – MI Tools and How-To Products – MI Staff – E3/FAB staff – USAID Mission staff – USAID Biodiversity IPs	- Outcome harvesting exercise - Key informant interviews (KIIs) - Document review - Online survey	- Purposive sampling - Census for population of exposed Mission staff (as contact info permits)	- Thematic coding - Triangulation and synthesis - Descriptive statistics
2. How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?	– MI Program Management Documentation – MI Staff – E3/FAB staff – USAID Mission staff	- Outcome harvesting exercise - KIIs - Document review	- Purposive sampling	- Thematic coding - Triangulation and synthesis
3. What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle and how has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?	– MI Program Management Documentation – MI Staff – E3/FAB staff – USAID Mission staff – USAID Biodiversity IPs	- Outcome harvesting exercise - KIIs - Document review - Online survey	- Purposive sampling - Census for population of exposed Mission staff (as contact info permits)	- Thematic coding - Triangulation and synthesis - Descriptive statistics
4. How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID/Washington operating units? Why and why not?	– MI Program Management Documentation – MI Staff – E3/FAB staff – Staff from USAID PPL, BFS & GCC	- Outcome harvesting exercise - KIIs - Document review	- Purposive sampling	- Thematic coding - Triangulation and synthesis
5. How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID/Washington operating units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?	– MI Program Management Documentation – MI Research Products – MI Staff – E3/FAB staff – Staff from USAID PPL, BFS & GCC	- Outcome harvesting exercise - KIIs - Document review - Online survey	- Purposive sampling	- Thematic coding - Triangulation and synthesis - Descriptive statistics

8. Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis methods to be proposed in the evaluation team's Evaluation Design Proposal will follow closely from the methods used to collect each type of data needed to answer the evaluation questions. Whatever data analysis methods are chosen for this evaluation, they should be justified in terms of their fit with the data collected for a question and the types of answers that USAID seeks. Time and cost considerations are also important in this area.

9. Strengths and Limitations

There are several factors that have the potential to limit the ability of the evaluation team to fully address the evaluation questions. These include:

- Limited time to undertake evaluation research activities: The draft evaluation report has been requested in early January, 2017. As a result, there are only approximately 9 weeks in which to undertake primary data collection and 11 weeks to complete the evaluation. It is likely that this will limit the number of persons with whom the evaluation team can speak who may have insights into the delivery of the MI program and evidence to address the evaluation questions.
- Lack of evaluation resources in light of the MI activity breadth: The MI activity works with several USAID bureaus and offices and approximately 14 USAID Missions. The assistance it provides to these bureaus, offices and Missions is tailored to the needs of the recipient in each case. It will not be possible within the time and resource constraints of this evaluation to fully address the evaluation questions with respect to each of these beneficiaries.
- Sensitive but unclassified information: Many project documents containing relevant information for the evaluation cannot be readily shared because they contain "Sensitive but Unclassified" (SBU) information or are not yet ready to be shared.

There is one factor that will mitigate the limitations above to some degree. The MI activity team engages in and documents periodic learning and reflection that provides a rich sources of documentary evidence. This documentary evidence is augmented by E3/FAB and MI staff who have to date made themselves readily available to discuss the achievements, strengths, challenges and limitations of the MI activity itself.

10.   Evaluation Deliverables

The evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables. Specific due dates will be proposed in the Evaluation Design Proposal to be prepared by the evaluation team.

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
1. Evaluation Design Proposal, including description of the evaluation methodology, drafts of data collection instruments and a sampling plan, as relevant	Week commencing October 31, 2016.
2. Oral Presentation of draft findings, conclusions and recommendations to E3/FAB and its invitees	Week commencing January 9, 2017
3. Draft Evaluation Report	Week commencing January 23, 2017
4. Final Evaluation Report including evaluation data sets, codebooks, etc.	o/a 21 days following receipt of USAID feedback on Draft Evaluation Report

All documents and reports will be provided electronically to USAID no later than the dates indicated in the approved Evaluation Design Proposal. All quantitative data will be provided in electronic format to USAID either by email or by thumb drive, depending on the size of the files being provided. All debriefs will include a formal presentation with slides delivered both electronically and in hard copy for all attendees.

Prior to the submission of the Evaluation Design Proposal, the evaluation team will discuss with USAID whether its preliminary dissemination plan for this evaluation indicates other deliverables that should be prepared. Such additions as agreed with USAID will then be included in the Evaluation Design Proposal.

11. Team Composition

The evaluation will be delivered by a core evaluation team supported by management and administrative support provided by the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Activity. The core evaluation team will be composed of a Team Leader who is an Evaluation Specialist and one Research Assistant.

Team Leader/Evaluation Specialist
An evaluation Team Leader with extensive experience conducting performance evaluations of complex projects will oversee the evaluation implementation process including field data collection, analysis and report preparation. The Team Leader should hold at least a master's degree with at least 10 years of experience as an evaluation team leader or team member. Relevant experience and knowledge with organizational development, project management, adaptive management and/or biodiversity and conservation programming is preferred.

Research Assistant
A Research Assistant with at least five years of experience conducting planning and research for performance evaluation or other relevant research studies, including thorough document review, conducting key information and semi-structured interviews and the thematic coding of qualitative data. The Research Assistant should demonstrate previous experience with biodiversity and conservation development programs, either through the implementation of such programs, course of study or research conducted to assess the efficacy of these programs.
In addition to the positions listed above, the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project will provide additional home office and administrative support, including through the appointment of an experience evaluation Activity Manager and Project Manager. These resources will be made available to the evaluation team for the purposes of providing logistical support, quality assurance of deliverables and ad hoc research support, including in the design of quantitative surveys.

12. USAID Participation

Regular communication between the evaluation team and the designated USAID Activity Manager for this evaluation will be essential to the successful execution of the evaluation activities. The evaluation team will keep USAID apprised of changes and developments that necessitate/require any significant decision-making or modification of the approved Evaluation Design Proposal.

Possible USAID participation in the data collection phase of the evaluation will be determined prior to the start of field work.

13.   Scheduling and Logistics

The following Gantt chart provides a general overview of the anticipated timeframe for evaluation activities and deliverables. This schedule is assuming approval of this SOW and the Evaluation Design Proposal in early November 2016. The evaluation implementation is anticipated to run between September 2016 and February 2017, with approximately four weeks of data collection.

Estimated MI Performance Evaluation Timeline (2016)

Task/Deliverable	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Evaluation Preparation	▓					
Outcome Harvesting Exercise		▓				
Evaluation SoW		▓	▓			
Evaluation Design Proposal		▓	▓			
Primary Data Collection			▓	▓		
Analysis and Report Writing				▓	▓	
Presentation of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations					▓	
Draft Evaluation Report					▓	
Final Evaluation Report						▓

The evaluation team will be responsible for procuring all logistical needs such as work space, transportation, printing, translation, and any other forms of communication. USAID will offer some assistance in providing introductions to partners and key stakeholders as needed, and will ensure the provision of data and supporting documents as possible.

14.   Reporting Requirements

The format of the evaluation report should follow USAID guidelines set forth in the USAID Evaluation Report Template (http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/evaluation-report-template) and the How-To Note on Preparing Evaluation Reports (http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/how-note-preparing-evaluation-reports).
The final version of the evaluation report will be submitted to USAID and should not exceed 30 pages, excluding references and annexes.

All members of the evaluation team will be provided with USAID's mandatory statement of the evaluation standards they are expected to meet, shown in Annex A, along with USAID's conflict of interest statement that they sign and return to the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project Home Office where necessary before field work starts.

15.   Budget

The evaluation team will propose a full detailed budget which will be included in the Evaluation Design Proposal for USAID's approval

ANNEX B: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This annex is taken from the approved Evaluation Design Proposal that the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project submitted to USAID on January 4, 2017 and provides further details on the evaluation's approach and data collection and analysis methods.

Evaluation Approach

The evaluation team will employ a mixed-methods participatory approach using quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to address the EQs. Figure 1 shows the overview of the evaluation design. Qualitative methods to be employed include document review, modified outcome harvesting (OH), and key informant interviews (KIIs), while the online survey of MI contacts will yield results to be analyzed quantitatively. These methods will be employed sequentially to have findings from one step inform the next. However, the collection and analysis of data may lead the evaluation team to revisit a previous step as needed to enrich findings.

The initial document review stage will include a review of activity progress reports and other publicly available MI documents that will help the evaluation team ascertain the extent to which MI outputs and outcomes are being achieved. This information, coupled with notes provided by the IR leads, the 2016 OH Log (which is described in further detail below), and other relevant documents, will provide a comprehensive description of the most significant outcomes along the results chain of each IR. KIIs are expected to yield the majority of data for the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

FIGURE 1: OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION DESIGN

During initial contacts between the evaluation team and E3/FAB in August and September 2016, E3/FAB staff invited the evaluation team to consider Outcome Harvesting (OH) as a primary method for this evaluation. The evaluation approach builds on an informal evaluability assessment conducted in September,[29] culminating with an evaluation design workshop that the evaluation team held on October 21, 2016 with MI staff.

---

[29] This evaluability assessment sought to ascertain if the evaluation could be done as E3/FAB conceived it. The assessment examined: (1) the availability and quality of the OH Statements to assess if they meet the requirements of the OH methodology; (2) the extent to which the activity boundaries, both in terms of what it aims to accomplish and of beneficiaries, are clearly defined; (3) the extent to which the activities had been conducted over a long enough period of time to be able to discern their effects; and (4) the extent to which there is a baseline sufficient enough to assess movement against the expected outcomes.

FIGURE 2: STEPS IN OUTCOME HARVESTING

Steps in outcome harvesting
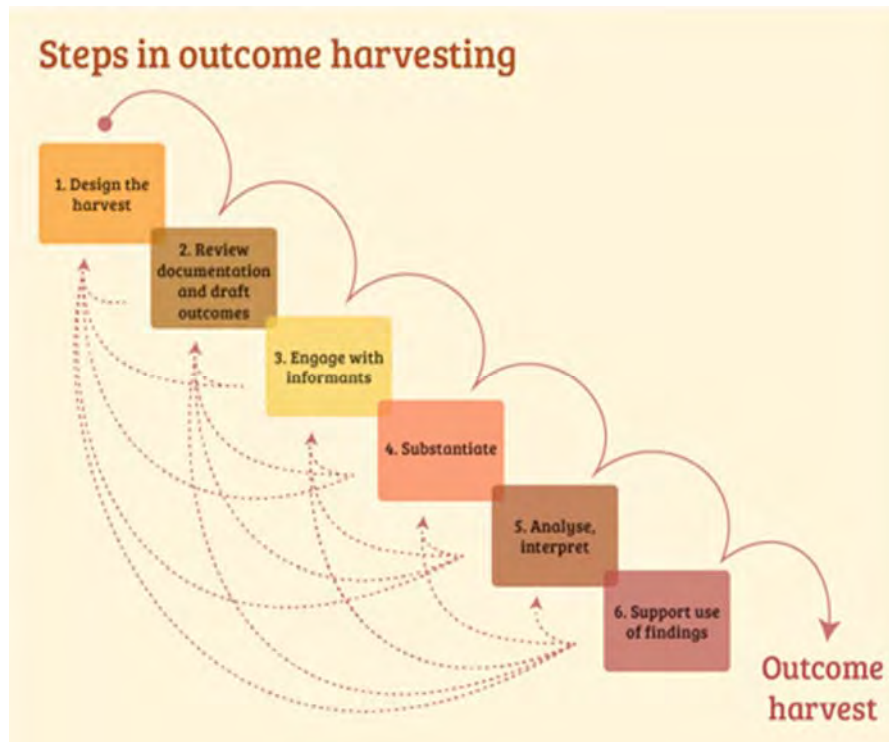
OH[30] is a utilization-focused, highly participatory method that enables evaluators, IPs, and managers to identify, formulate, verify, and make sense of outcomes they have influenced when relationships of cause-effect are unclear. Figure 2 shows the typical steps in this method.

OH combines Outcome Mapping,[31] Most Significant Change,[32] and Contribution Analysis.[33] This method collects ("harvests") evidence of what has changed ("outcomes") and then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes. It is especially useful in complex situations when it is not possible to concretely define most of what an intervention aims to achieve, or even what specific actions will be taken over a multi-year period. Outcomes are defined as observable changes in the behavior, relationships, activities, and actions of social actors. Social actors are: individuals, groups, work units, organizations (including IPs) or institutions that were influenced in a small or large way, directly or indirectly, intentionally or not by MI (and E3/FAB) staff in relation to the approach MI used and the tools it has produced.

---

[30] Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Heather Britt. *Outcome Harvesting.* Ford Foundation, MENA Office, May 2012.
[31] Smutylo, T. The Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative, (2005). *Outcome mapping: A method for tracking behavioural changes in development programs* (ILAC Brief 7). Retrieved from website:
http://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/resource.php?id=182.
[32] See Rick Davies and Jess Dart, *The Most Significant Change Technique: A Guide to its Use.* Version 1.00 – April 2005 available at: http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf
[33] Befani, B. and Mayne, J. (2014). 'Process Tracing and Contribution Analysis: A Combined Approach to Generative Causal Inference for Impact Evaluation.' IDS Bulletin, Special Issue: Rethinking Impact Evaluation for Development by Barbara Befani, Chris Barnett and Elliot Stern. Volume 45, Issue 6, pages 17–36. Retrieved
from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1759-5436.12110/abstract.

The evaluation team will use a less demanding and intense process derived from the OH methodology for the evaluation, referred to here as OH Light. The details on how this method will be employed are described in further detail in the Data Collection Methods section.

Although the evaluation will use a modified version of OH, the use of the OH method remains relevant for the following reasons:[34]

1. MI staff have been collecting information about their achievements in an "Outcome Harvest Log," which contains very short OH statements on TA, tools, and other MI activities. Although these do not meet the criteria of the formal OH methodology, they can be analyzed to see which changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices MI staff have noted as a result of the activity's interventions.

2. The Log makes mention of all significant interactions MI staff have had with USAID operating units.[35] The OH statements are classified according to six meta-categories of outcomes that MI staff align with broader categories that encompass the 35 outcomes in the MI results chain. Because of this, the evaluation team will have the possibility of sorting through detailed events to identify significant OH statements with regards to MI results chain outcomes. Also, even though the Log statements are not explicitly organized by IRs or the Program Cycle, the evaluation team can sort and analyze the current statements.

3. The Log provides the basis upon which MI staff can look back into their documentation to craft richer stories of what they consider to be the most significant outcomes achieved and explain how they contributed to those realizations.

4. From the onset, MI staff indicated to USAID a strong desire to participate in the evaluation. The use of the Log allows for a unique opportunity to have MI staff participate in the evaluation, let them "tell their story," and allow them to see that the information produced is being used to inform USAID's decision making. This Log provides MI staff with the basic material from which they can craft more complete OH statements relating more details of the achievements, by IR, and a clearer link to the outcomes of the MI results chain.

5. OH is relevant because it focuses on identifying, and explaining, behavioral changes. The outcomes of the MI results chain are about USAID's organizational behavior changes. OH offers MI staff the opportunity to show their perspective on what changed and what the activity has contributed to the changed behaviors.

6. Usually, OH should be used when pre-determined objectives are not well defined. Although MI has a results chain with fairly well-defined objectives, the specific nature of the changes sought in individual or organizational behaviors (i.e., outcomes) are not always clearly defined. Outcomes depend on the business environments of the individual work units. The OH methodology will be able to generate the relevant outcome information for answering the EQs.

7. OH is useful in situations when the causal relationships leading to results are not clearly established. Although causal relationships in the MI results chain are hypothesized, there can be a number of intervening factors (e.g. new policies, guidance, management directives, staff turnover, budget directives) that can affect the relationship between an action and an outcome, or one outcome with another. The OH approach may help capture the influence of factors not considered in the results chain, as well as unintended outcomes or unforeseen events influencing causal relationships.

8. Finally, and most importantly, OH is relevant because EQs 1, 2, 4 and 5 ask to what extent and how have USAID's organizational behaviors changed. The OH method provides a framework for

---

[34] USAID suggested the evaluation team consider the use of this method because MI staff have an Outcome Log. It was thought that this source of information should and could be exploited. The availability of this Log is one, albeit limited, reason for using this method: the Log can be exploited for some findings.

[35] As MI staff recognize, this Log has been used as a notebook in which to consign the details of events and, to some very limited extent, describe how staff have responded to the technical assistance delivered during them.

explaining these changes across a multiplicity of settings: within missions, across missions, and at the Agency level.

Both the document review and the OH analyses will inform the design and administration of an online survey to USAID staff in missions, and in the regional and pillar Bureaus, including other E3 offices. Findings from the document review, enhanced with those from the OH and, later, the survey will guide the evaluation team in asking more in-depth questions during KIIs with USAID staff. As the evaluation team expects to find limited information that is new to USAID in the document review and through the use of OH, the evaluation team will use the survey and KIIs to supplement those two tools.[36]

The survey will allow the evaluation team to gauge the extent of the uptake and appreciation of MI's TA and approach as articulated through its toolkit. The quantitative data from the survey will be useful in validating and triangulating the findings uncovered in the document review and OH. This technique will ensure trustworthy inferences when formal sampling procedures are not used or there is a reliance on reporting data prepared by the MI activity, as differences in responses by types of respondents are readily apparent. In general, agreement between respondents of different types on a given question tends to suggest that the underlying data are accurate. Differences indicate either inaccuracies or the possibility that an activity had different impacts on the different types of respondents questioned.

The KIIs will be a critical component of the evaluation to further document, validate, and triangulate the harvested outcomes along with information from the document review. The KIIs will also serve to contextualize the quantitative survey results.

MI Staff

E3/FAB and MI staff have worked very closely over the course of the MI activity. They have participated in annual retreats since 2013 to review progress, identify challenges and possible solutions, and engage in annual work planning. Because of the learning culture of the MI team and because of organizational "pause and reflect" moments during which accomplishments and issues are freely and widely discussed, MI staff have very rich insights into the activity.

The evaluation team and MI staff participated in an evaluation design workshop on October 21, 2016 in which they jointly identified how to approach the crafting of OH statements based on an analysis of which ones come up more frequently. The evaluation team will rely heavily on MI staff to craft initial versions of the outcome statements based on recall of events, notes, and on procurement-sensitive documents to which the evaluation team does not have access. In this way, the approach is respectful of the OH principle of stakeholder participation in the evaluation inasmuch as MI will be able to "tell its story" by writing the first draft of the outcomes. During KIIs, the evaluation team will invite MI staff to elaborate upon those outcome statements to ensure they are complete and substantiated.

Data Collection Methods and Respondent Selection

The evaluation team will employ a mixed-methods approach that will rely upon the following data collection methods:

- Document review
- Outcome harvesting
- Online survey
- Key informant interviews

---

[36] This is mainly because the Agency has been exposed, in varying degrees, to this information and has also received other reports with procurement-sensitive information.

Document Review

As noted in the previous section, the evaluation team will review documents produced by MI to identify relevant information to answer the EQs and to identify trends in the accomplishment of the outcomes stated in the MI results chain. The document review will be conducted throughout the evaluation, although most of it will be conducted up-front in preparation for the survey and the KIIs.

Outcome Harvesting

The evaluation team will use a less demanding and intense process derived from the OH methodology for collecting evidence. Given time and informant availability constraints, the highly participatory nature of the OH in this context will be limited. As such, a limited version of OH referred to here as OH Light will adhere to the following steps within the OH process:

1. **Design the harvest and review documentation and draft outcomes:** As explained above, the document review will produce an analysis of suitable candidates for the purposes of developing "full" OH statements, thus satisfying steps 1 and 2 of the traditional OH methodology.
2. **Engage with informants and substantiate:** Through the engagement of MI staff in crafting the first draft of the outcomes, and with the subsequent interviews with them and with USAID staff, the evaluation team will engage with respondents and substantiate evidence, corresponding to steps 3 and 4 of the OH methodology. During the October 21, 2016 workshop, MI and the evaluation team discussed and identified ways the evaluation would be able to corroborate findings and OH statements.
3. **Analyze, interpret, and support use of findings:** As the evaluation team confronts the data coming from the survey and KIIs (see below), steps 5 (analyze and interpret) and 6 (support use of findings) will be carried out.

Outcome statements will answer the following questions:

- What changed?
- Why is the change significant?
- When did the change occur?
- Who changed?
- Who brought about the change?
- How was the change brought about?
- What is the result area to which this change contributes?

The OH will be initiated with MI staff at the front-end of the evaluation and the outcome statements will be validated, enriched, and triangulated throughout the evaluation with results from the survey and the KIIs.

Online Survey

The survey will be administered through an online (i.e., Survey Gizmo) platform to two groups of stakeholders: staff from missions and staff from regional Bureaus. Each of these groups has knowledge, to varying degrees, of the MI technical assistance, tools, and approach and are responsible for the design of biodiversity projects. The evaluation team has been provided with a non-exhaustive list of people with whom MI staff have been in contact in the 11 focal missions and regional Bureaus.

IPs and other USAID/Washington staff (including E3/FAB) working to institutionalize MI's approach at an Agency-wide level will not be included in the survey respondent pool. The evaluation team decided to exclude the IPs for the following reasons:

- Based upon first interviews with Uganda and Indonesia mission staff, where direct IP engagement with MI has occurred, this engagement has been limited. The tool kit and guidance, for example, were only formalized in August 2016 and are tailored for missions.
- Indirect engagement between the IPs and MI technical assistance and tools has been limited. MI is focused on missions that have not yet had the opportunity to roll-down their expectations to IPs, given that most have not gone through a complete five-year programming cycle since 2013-14.
- The survey in part captures information related to stages in the program cycle in which the IPs are not involved.
- The evaluation team anticipates that IP feedback may be more forward looking and thus more easily captured through KIIs than through a survey capturing the experiences of actors who have directly and extensively engaged with MI technical assistance and tools.

The survey will be crafted based on the findings from the document review, the retreat, and workshops held with MI staff in October 2016, the first draft of the OH statements, and the initial KIIs with MI staff. Survey respondents will be identified through engagement logs detailing MI interaction with missions, outcome statements completed by MI staff, and participant rosters of MI activities to be provided by MI staff. The evaluation team anticipates up to 200 respondents for the survey, based on engagement logs and outcome statements.

Key Informant Interviews

The evaluation team will conduct semi-structured interviews that will primarily rely on open-ended questions but may include closed-ended questions, such as asking respondents to identify the specific cases where MI promoted tools and approaches to project design and activities or MEL plans were used. The semi-structured nature of the interviews enables a balance to be achieved between keeping the interviewee on the topic of interest and allowing sufficient scope for a free-flowing discussion to take place.

KIIs will proceed in three phases of data collection, described below. These phases are delineated by type of informant:

- MI staff;
- Mission staff and IPs; and
- USAID/Washington staff, including E3/FAB and staff from other Washington-based operating units.

Within each stage, the evaluation team will proceed by Tier of respondents based on USAID's and MI's appreciation of who, among prospective respondents, are likely to be most informed and most apt to provide rich answers to the EQs. The evaluation team hopes to complete up to 50 KIIs, but will focus efforts on speaking to the most informative respondents. A draft topic guide for the KIIs and online survey is included in Annex D.

Phase 1: The evaluation team will interview MI staff to complete the outcome statements from the OH and seek their insights into the challenges and opportunities of sustainably implementing the Biodiversity Policy through, among other means, the MI tools and approach to evidence-based adaptive management. The evaluation team expects to interview up to 12 MI staff as part of this phase and these interviews will be prioritized as follows:

- o Tier 1: IR Team Leads
- o Tier 2: Regional Leads and other staff who work across IRs and/or regions

Phase 2: Following Phase I, the evaluation team will conduct telephone interviews with key mission staff and IPs in a subset of the 11 MI focal missions. In each mission, the evaluation team aims to interview one representative from the Program Office, one staff member from the Environment Office, and representatives of two IPs. In the event that both the Program and Environment Office staff are U.S. direct hires, the evaluation team aims to interview an additional FSN in each of the selected focal missions. This phase is expected to produce a total of up to 20 KIIs.[37] Through these interviews, the evaluation team will validate and substantiate the outcomes that MI staff will have developed and obtain first-hand information on (1) staff's actual use of tools, (2) preferred and less preferred features, (3) challenges and opportunities to further the sustainable institutionalization of the MI approach, and (4) staff experiences with using evidence for adaptive management and integrated programming purposes.

As a means of prioritizing missions to elicit the most useful information in the limited evaluation and interview timeline, the focal missions have been categorized into two tiers. Tier I Missions will be the priority focal missions for the KIIs and will include Nepal, Philippines, Uganda, Indonesia, and SAR.[38] Through discussions with MI and E3/FAB staff during the retreats and review of MI documents, the evaluation team determined that this list would be sufficient in providing insight into the Program Cycle and MI project cycles for answering the EQs. If needed, the KIIs will be expanded into the Tier II Missions; input from all 11 focal missions will also be solicited through the online survey.

Phase 3: The evaluation team will interview staff in the Washington-based operating units including FAB, GCC, and GenDev within the E3 Bureau as well as PPL, GH, and BFS. The lines of questioning used with E3/FAB and PPL staff will differ from that used with officials from E3/GCC, E3/GenDev, GH, and BFS. With E3/FAB staff, the evaluation team will use the KIIs to elicit new information relative to the MI results chain, enrich and validate findings from the OH, and seek insights into the challenges and opportunities of institutionalizing and sustaining the tools, approach, and use of evidence that MI has been promoting for adaptive management in the biodiversity sector.

For PPL, the evaluation team will seek information to contextualize the policy environment within USAID in how MI has (or has not) been able to influence or institutionalize adaptive management practices. For E3/GCC, E3/GenDev, GH, and BFS, the KIIs will elicit further details on integration activities with biodiversity and enrich the views of non-biodiversity stakeholders to inform OH findings and challenges. The list of Phase III key informants was developed from a list of recommended respondents provided by E3/FAB staff as well as recommendations from MI staff and mention in engagement and OH logs. The evaluation team is currently working to determine which individuals in E3/GenDev, GH, and BFS will be interviewed. Overall for Phase 3, the evaluation team will seek to interview up to 12 people in the Washington Bureaus and E3 offices.[39]

The evaluation team aims to sequence the KIIs, completing Phase I first, followed by Phase 2, and then Phase 3, in hopes that each phase will inform the next. However, sequencing is subject to respondent availability and the time constraints of the evaluation. A list of the organizations and individuals with whom semi-structured interviews were conducted is provided in Annex E.

---

[37] As the KIIs proceed, the evaluation team may be informed that there are additional, people to interview.

[38] The evaluation team has been led to understand that USAID has drawn enough conclusions about its engagement with the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). Should time and resources permit, the team may interview CARPE staff in order to document why engagement was unsuccessful there and to inform a more successful TA strategy for that Mission in the future.

[39] As KIIs proceed, we may be informed that there are additional, people to interview.

Table 1: Getting to Answers Matrix

Question	Primary Data Sources	Data Collection Methods				Data Analysis Methods
		Doc Review	OH Light	Survey	KII	
1. How and to what extent have MI TA and tools affected USAID's capacity to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four last stages of the Program Cycle? Why and why not?	- MI documents - OH statements - MI staff - Mission staff - USAID biodiversity IPs	X	X	X	X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs; descriptive statistics will be used for the survey
2. How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming? Why and why not?	- MI documents - OH statements - MI staff - Mission staff - USAID/Washington staff	X	X	X	X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs; descriptive statistics will be used for the survey
3. What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle, starting at the strategy level of the CDCS?	- MI documents - MI staff - Mission staff - USAID biodiversity IPs	X		X	X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs; descriptive statistics will be used for the survey
3.1 How has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?	- MI documents - MI staff - Mission staff	X			X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs
4. How and to what extent have MI's TA and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID Washington work units? Why and why not?	- MI documents - OH statements - MI staff - Mission staff - USAID/Washington staff	X	X	X	X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs; descriptive statistics will be used for the survey
5. How and to what extent have the MI tools and approach affected integrated programming in Missions and in USAID Washington organizational units working on outcomes other than biodiversity? Why or why not has there been an effect?	- MI documents - OH statements - MI staff - Mission staff - USAID/Washington staff	X	X		X	Content analysis will be used for OH statements, document review and KIIs

ANNEX C: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Survey Questionnaire

The Forestry and Biodiversity Office (FAB) is implementing the Measuring Impact (MI) project as one component of its action to ensure the attainment of the USAID Biodiversity Policy goals. The MI project aims to achieve the following results:

- *IR1. Build Capacity for Best Practices in the Program Cycle in USAID Biodiversity Programs, so that E3/FAB and Missions engaged with MI are equipped with the appropriate capacity and systems to mainstream best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in the environment sector.*
- *IR2. Improve Biodiversity Conservation Approaches, so that E3/FAB and Missions engaged with MI have a greater understanding of conditions under which priority conservation actions are effective.*
- *IR3. Build the Evidence Base, to enable E3/FAB and Missions to draw on a strengthened evidence base to articulate the contribution of biodiversity to development goals and to better understand the effectiveness of conservation strategies.*
- *IR4. Synthesis and Outreach, to enable operating units, beyond the E3/FAB Office and MI's focal Missions, to have the capacity, guidance, and evidence to strengthen their application of and support for mainstreaming best practices in implementing the Program Cycle for biodiversity and integrated programs.*

The purpose of this survey is to solicit responses from USAID personnel with whom MI/FAB have engaged in order to assess ways in which the MI program, tools and technical assistance can be improved over the next two years to best meet the needs of USAID mission staff and other MI partners.

All answers will be kept confidential; we request personal and demographic details for purposes of analysis only. Your participation in this survey is essential to better understand how and to what extent these results have been achieved and how FAB can improve its actions in support of the Biodiversity Policy.

The survey length will vary depending on your level of involvement with the activity, but on average we anticipate it will take an average of 20 - 30 minutes. The survey is also designed so you may save your progress and return to it at a later time.

Please complete the survey by December 27th.

If you have any questions or comments for the evaluation team, please feel free to contact xxxx.

Thank you for your time!

Survey Section 1 of 3: Introduction and Background

Name:

_____

Please select your gender:
( ) Male
( ) Female

Please select the year you began working at USAID:
( ) Before 1999 ( ) 1999 ( ) 2000 ( ) 2001 ( ) 2002 ( ) 2003 ( ) 2004 ( ) 2005 ( ) 2006 ( ) 2007 ( ) 2008 ( ) 2009
( ) 2010 ( ) 2011 ( ) 2012 ( ) 2013 ( ) 2014 ( ) 2015 ( ) 2016

Do you work on issues related to biodiversity?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "yes" to "Do you work on issues related to biodiversity?"
Please   select   the   year   you   began   working   on   biodiversity-related   issues:
This can include years you've spent working on biodiversity-related issues outside of USAID.
( ) Before 1999 ( ) 1999 ( ) 2000 ( ) 2001 ( ) 2002 ( ) 2003 ( ) 2004 ( ) 2005 ( ) 2006 ( ) 2007 ( ) 2008 ( ) 2009
( ) 2010 ( ) 2011 ( ) 2012 ( ) 2013 ( ) 2014 ( ) 2015 ( ) 2016

Do you work on issues related to climate change?
( ) Yes
( ) No

Do you work in another sector? If so, please describe briefly below.

_____

Do you work in a mission?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "yes" to "Do you work in a mission?"
Please select your role from the choices below:
( ) Foreign Service Officer (FSO)
( ) Foreign Service National (FSN)
( ) U.S. Personal Services Contractor (USPSC)
( ) Other - please specify:: _____

If answered "yes" to "Do you work in a mission?"
Please select your **current** mission:
( ) Brazil
( ) Cambodia
( ) CARPE
( ) Indonesia
( ) Madagascar
( ) Mozambique
( ) Nepal
( ) Peru
( ) Philippines
( ) RDMA
( ) SAR

( ) Tanzania
( ) Uganda
( ) Vietnam
( ) Other - please specify:: _____

If answered "yes" to "Do you work in a mission?"
Is this the same mission you were located at when you interacted with MI?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "no" to "Is this the same mission you were located at when you interacted with MI?"
Please select the mission you were located in when you interacted with MI:
( ) Brazil
( ) Cambodia
( ) CARPE
( ) Indonesia
( ) Madagascar
( ) Mozambique
( ) Nepal
( ) Peru
( ) Philippines
( ) RDMA
( ) SAR
( ) Tanzania
( ) Uganda
( ) Vietnam
( ) Other - please specify:: _____

Please select your technical or program focal area(s) within the mission (select all that apply):
[ ] Democracy and Governance
[ ] Economic Growth
[ ] Education
[ ] Food security / Feed the Future
[ ] Health
[ ] Program Office
[ ] WASH
[ ] Other - please specify:: _____

Is this the same technical or program focal area you worked in when you interacted with MI?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "no" to "Is this the same technical or program focal area you worked in when you interacted with MI?"
Please select the technical or program focal area(s) you worked in when you interacted with MI:
[ ] Democracy and Governance
[ ] Economic Growth
[ ] Education
[ ] Food security / Feed the Future
[ ] Health
[ ] Program Office
[ ] WASH
[ ] Other - Please specify:: _____

If answered "no" to "Do you work in a mission?" If "yes" to this question, skips to page 2 in section 2 (MI Tools and Technical Assistance)

Do you work in the E3/Forestry and Biodiversity Office?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "no" to "Do you work in the E3/Forestry and Biodiversity Office?" All responses Skip to Section 3 (MI Involvement with Non-Biodiversity Sectors).
Please select your current USAID/Washington office or operating unit:
( ) E3/Global Climate Change
( ) E3/Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
( ) Bureau of Food Security
( ) Global Health Bureau
( ) PPL Bureau
( ) Other - Please specify: _____

Survey Section 2 of 3: MI/FAB Tools and Technical Assistance

This section includes questions regarding the tools and technical assistance that MI has provided as part of the MI/FAB approach. The questions aim to gain an understanding of what types of TA/tools were brought to different missions, their level of uptake / use, and challenges in application.

Below are some definitions of terms to guide your responses:

Technical Assistance (TA): In the context of MI, this refers to the provision of MI/FAB support to increase the capacity of USAID operating units through means of communication, knowledge transfer, and capacity development via methods including face-to-face individual contact, group learning, web-based meanings, webinars, desk review of documents.

Tools: In the context of MI, this refers to Situation Models, Results Chain based Theory of Change, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plans, associated How-to Guidebooks, the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit, the Online Learning Platform on the RM portal (used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking), the Miradi Software, and the cross-mission learning program. It also includes Indicators, Toolkits, Case Examples and Evidence.

MI/FAB Approach: The development of Situation Models, Results-Chain Based Theory of Change, and associated Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Plans for adaptive management.

Which methods of technical assistance did you receive? (select all that apply)
[ ] In-person individual contact: *Refers to in-person coaching, consultation, embedded advisors or methods to develop capacity in which the focus was on developing the capacity of an individual.*
[ ] In-person group facilitation: *Refers to group trainings, workshops, and others methods to develop the capacity of a group of people.*
[ ] Virtual individual contact: *Refers to availability of MI staff to provide guidance remotely (via web or telephone).*
[ ] Virtual group facilitation: *Refers to MI facilitating or coordinating learning and use of tools and approaches remotely and could include webinar or online class format or remotely learning by doing together.*
[ ] Desk review: *MI desk review informing work being prepared/conducted by an individual/operating unit working with MI.*
[ ] Other - please specify: _____

For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance? (Select all that apply)
[ ] CDCS / RDCS
[ ] PAD/Project Design
[ ] Project MEL Plan
[ ] Activity Design
[ ] Activity Start-up
[ ] Activity MEL Plan

[ ] Evaluation

*If selected "CDCS/RDCS" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the CDCS/RDCS level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

*If selected "PAD/Project Design" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the PAD/Project Design level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

*If selected "Project MEL Plan" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the Project MEL Plan level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

*If selected "Activity Design" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the Activity Design level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

*If selected "Activity Start-up" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the Activity Start-up level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

*If selected "Activity MEL Plan" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"
To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the Activity MEL Plan level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know
*If selected "Evaluation" was selected for "*For which step(s) of the program cycle did you receive technical assistance?"

To what extent have your programming needs been met by technical assistance at the Evaluation level?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

Which of these tools (listed vertically) have you used to prepare the following documents (listed horizontally)? (Please select all that apply)

	CDCS / RDCS	PAD	Project MEL Plan	Activity Design	Activity Start-up	Activity MEL Plan	Evaluation	None	Don't know	N/A - Did not use
Situation Models	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Results Chain based Theory of Change	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Combating Wildlife Trafficking Crime Toolkit	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal *(used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking)*	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Miradi Software and User Guide	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Cross-Mission Learning Program	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

To what extent has evidence from monitoring reports, evaluation or research been used at each of the following stages of the program cycle?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
CDCS / RDCS	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
PAD/Project Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Project MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Activity Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity Start-up	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Evaluation	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Survey Section 2 of 3: MI Tools and Technical Assistance

This section includes questions regarding the tools and technical assistance that MI/FAB has provided. The questions aim to gain an understanding of what types of TA/tools were brought to different missions, their level of uptake / use, and challenges in application.

Below are some definitions of terms to guide your responses:

Technical Assistance (TA): In the context of MI, this refers to the provision of MI/FAB support to increase the capacity of USAID operating units through means of communication, knowledge transfer, and capacity development via methods including face-to-face individual contact, group learning, web-based meanings, webinars, desk review of documents.

Tools: In the context of MI, this refers to Situation Models, Results Chain based Theory of Change, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plans, associated How-to Guidebooks, the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit, the Online Learning Platform on the RM portal (used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking), the Miradi Software, and the cross-mission learning program. It also includes Indicators, Toolkits, Case Examples and Evidence.

MI/FAB Approach: The development of Situation Models, Results-Chain Based Theory of Change, and associated Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Plans for adaptive management.

To what extent have you applied the practices learned from MI/FAB at each of the following stages of the Program Cycle?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
CDCS / RDCS	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
PAD/Project Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Project MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity Start-up	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Evaluation	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

In your experience with MI/FAB, to what extent is each of the following modes of technical assistance effective in imparting the elements of adaptive management?
(Adaptive management is an intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context)

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
In-person individual contact: *Refers to in-person coaching, consultation, embedded advisors or methods to develop capacity in which the focus was on developing the capacity of an individual.*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
In-person group facilitation: *Refers to group trainings, workshops, and others methods to develop the capacity of a group of people.*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Virtual individual contact: *Refers to availability of MI staff to provide guidance remotely (via web or telephone).*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Virtual group facilitation: *Refers to MI facilitating or coordinating learning and use of tools and approaches remotely and could include webinar or online class format or remotely learning by doing together.*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Desk review: *MI desk review informing work being prepared/conducted by an individual/operating unit working with MI.*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please use this space to describe any other modes of technical assistance that may be useful for adaptive management and why.

_____

To what extent have you used each of the following MI/FAB tools?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Situation Model	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Results Chain based Theory of Change	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal *(used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife)*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Miradi Software and User Guide	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cross-Mission Learning Program	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent is each of the following factors important for you to use the MI/FAB tools?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
The availability of technical assistance to explain how to use the tools	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools offer clear step by step instructions	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools cover all the steps to follow at each stage of the Program Cycle	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools are easy to apply	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools help operationalize the requirements of the USAID Biodiversity Policy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools help operationalize the requirements of the new ADS 201	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools helped you improve your ability to engage in evidence-based adaptive management	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The tools have been customized to meet the specific needs of your operating unit	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please use this space to describe any other factors that could contribute to your use of MI/FAB tools and why.
_____

To what extent do you find each of the following tools effective for adaptive management?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Situation Model	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Results Chain based Theory of Change	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal *(used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife)*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Miradi Software and User Guide	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cross-Mission Learning Program	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent are the following factors hindering your use of the MI/FAB approach to adaptively manage biodiversity projects and activities?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Institutional: Lack of time	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: Insufficient financial resources	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: USAID Staff turnover	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: Insufficient support from office / mission / operating unit leadership	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for purposes of analyzing a situation / problem	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for design purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for monitoring and evaluation purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for learning purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use **evidence** for design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use monitoring for **evidence**	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use **evidence** for learning	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Yes	To some extent	No	Don't know	N/A
Guidance: Complexity of MI/FAB tools	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Insufficient technical assistance when needed	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Insufficient access to evidence	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Poor quality of evidence	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Resistance from implementing partner	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Resistance from host government	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please use this space to describe any other factors that inhibit your use of MI/FAB tools and why. _____

Has the use of the MI/FAB approach been:

	Yes	To some extent	No	Don't know	N/A *(Please select this if you are in FAB for all questions regarding "Office")*
Embedded in the Collaboration, Learning and Adapting processes of your **office** *(e.g. environment office, program office within your mission)?*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embedded in the Collaboration, Learning and Adapting processes of your **operating unit** *(e.g. entire mission, E3/FAB) ?*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embedded as a competency in the Annual Personnel Performance Appraisals of your **office**?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embedded as a competency in the Annual Personnel Performance Appraisals of your **operating unit**?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embedded as a requirement in the official guidance of your **office** ?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embedded as a requirement in the official guidance of your **operating unit** ?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Otherwise communicated as an management directive?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please select the top factors that you believe are hindering the use of the MI approach to adaptively manage biodiversity projects and activities. *You may select a minimum of 2, up to 5 ranked choices.*
_____Lack of time
_____Unclear guidance on how to use the tools for purposes of analyzing a situation / problem
_____Unclear guidance on how to use the tools for design purposes
_____Unclear guidance on how to use the tools for monitoring and evaluation purposes
_____Unclear guidance on how to use the tools for learning purposes
_____Unclear guidance on how to use evidence for design
_____Unclear guidance on how to use evidence for monitoring
_____Unclear guidance on how to use evidence for learning
_____USAID Staff turnover
_____Complexity of MI/FAB tools
_____Insufficient Management support
_____Insufficient technical assistance when needed
_____Insufficient access to evidence
_____Poor quality of evidence
_____Insufficient financial resources
_____Resistance from Implementing Partners
_____Resistance from host government

Survey Section 3 of 3: MI involvement with non-biodiversity sectors

This final section of the survey is for USAID staff who work in sectors other than biodiversity, such as climate change, economic growth, education, democracy and governance, food security, gender, health and WASH. The questions address issues of capacity and the challenges that these other sectors have in applying the MI approach (evidence-based problem analysis, theory-based approach to the design, monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities, including learning and adaptive management for the improved integration of biodiversity dimensions) in their programming.

Have you been involved with using MI/FAB approaches, TA and tools in sectors other than biodiversity and/or in integrated programs in sectors other than biodiversity?
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "yes" to "Have you been involved with using MI/FAB approaches, TA and tools in sectors other than biodiversity and/or in integrated programs in sectors other than biodiversity?"
In which non-biodiversity sector(s) did you incorporate the MI/FAB approach, tools, and/or TA? *Please select all that apply*
[ ] Climate Change
[ ] Food Security
[ ] Health
[ ] Gender
[ ] Economic Growth
[ ] Other - Please specify: _____

This final section of the survey is for USAID staff who work in sectors other than biodiversity, such as climate change, economic growth, education, democracy and governance, food security, gender, health and WASH. The questions address issues of capacity and the challenges that these other sectors have in applying the MI/FAB approach (evidence-based problem analysis, theory-based approach to the design, monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities, including learning and adaptive management for the improved integration of biodiversity dimensions) in their programming.

Below are some definitions of terms to guide your responses:

Technical Assistance (TA): In the context of MI, this refers to the provision of MI/FAB support to increase the capacity of USAID operating units through means of communication, knowledge transfer, and capacity development via methods including face-to-face individual contact, group learning, web-based meanings, webinars, desk review of documents.

Tools: In the context of MI, this refers to Situation Models, Results Chain based Theory of Change, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plans, associated How-to Guidebooks, the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit, the Online Learning Platform on the RM portal (used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking), the Miradi Software, and the cross-mission learning program. It also includes Indicators, Toolkits, Case Examples and Evidence.

MI/FAB Approach: The development of Situation Models, Results-Chain Based Theory of Change, and associated Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Plans for adaptive management.

Do you have experience in using MI/FAB's approach and products in sectors other than biodiversity? *(specifically in non-integrated programming)*
( ) Yes
( ) No

If answered "yes" to "Do you have experience in using MI/FAB's approach and products in sectors other than biodiversity?" Please briefly describe your experience using MI's approach and products in sectors outside of biodiversity. We are interested in seeing how useful the approach and products were and any challenges and disadvantages you encountered.
_____
_____

In your experience, to what extent has the role of biodiversity been integrated with other sectors' programming?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

Please briefly describe your experience integrating biodiversity programming with other sectors. Was the use of the MI approach and products useful for this purpose?
_____
_____

In your experience, to what extent have MI/FAB **tools** facilitated integrated programming between sectors?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

To what extent have you applied the following MI/FAB approach and products in your work that integrated biodiversity with other sectors?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Situation Model	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Results Chain based Theory of Change	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal *(used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking)*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Miradi Software and User Guide	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cross-Mission Learning Program	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent have you applied the MI/FAB approach and products at each stage of the Program Cycle in your work that integrated biodiversity with other sectors?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
CDCS / RDCS	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
PAD/Project Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Project MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity Design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity Start-up	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Activity MEL Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Evaluation	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent has each of the following MI/FAB tools been effective in changing management practices to be more adaptive at each stage of the Program Cycle in integrating your work with sectors other than biodiversity?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Situation Model	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Results Chain based Theory of Change	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Online Learning Platform on the RM Portal *(used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife)*	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Miradi Software and User Guide	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cross-Mission Learning Program	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent has the MI/FAB approach and products facilitated the use of evidence on biodiversity in your operating unit's programming?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

To what extent have the following components been effective in improving your use of learning and evidence to inform your strategic approaches in biodiversity programming?

	Not aware of this	Aware but haven't used	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
The Cross mission learning program on Conservation Enterprises and/or Combatting Wildlife Trafficking	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

The Online learning platform on the RM Portal / Biodiversity Gateway	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

To what extent have policies, directives, or guidelines in sectors other than biodiversity been modified to reflect the MI/FAB approach?
( ) Not at all
( ) To a small extent
( ) To some extent
( ) To a great extent
( ) Don't know

To what extent are the following challenges hindering your use of the MI/FAB approach in sectors other than biodiversity?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a great extent	Don't know
Institutional: Lack of time	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: Insufficient financial resources	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: USAID Staff turnover	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: Insufficient support from office / mission / operating unit leadership	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Institutional: Lack of support from non-biodiversity-sector staff	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for purposes of analyzing a situation / problem	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for design purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for monitoring and evaluation purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use the **tools** for learning purposes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use **evidence** for design	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use monitoring for **evidence**	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Guidance: Unclear guidance on how to use **evidence** for learning	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Complexity of MI/FAB tools	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: Insufficient technical assistance when needed	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Guidance: unclear guidance on how to apply the MI approach and products to non-biodiversity sectors.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Insufficient access to evidence	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Poor quality of evidence	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Resistance from implementing partner	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other: Resistance from host government	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please include any comments you may have on how the MI approach and products could be of better used for integrated and non-integrated programming with non-biodiversity sectors.

_____

_____

Thank You!

Key Informant Interview Topic Guide – MI Staff (Generic)

> This Topic Guide is intended for use in qualitative research with MI Staff. It should be used to <u>guide</u> key informant interviews with these respondents. It is not intended to be read or delivered verbatim but serves as a list of suggested topics and sub-topics to be explored with respondents.
>
> Prompts (noting areas to consider exploring) are highlighted in blue and preceded by a dash (-)

I. **Introduction (~5 minutes)**
    a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
    b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
    c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
        ➢ Obtain information about our five evaluation questions:
            1. MI's effect on adaptive management of USAID biodiversity programming
            2. MI's effect on utilization of evidence for biodiversity programming
            3. Challenges to the institutionalization of the MI approach (and mitigation of those challenges)
            4. MI's effect on management practices in other sectors
            5. MI's effect on integrated programming.
        ➢ Verify findings from previous discussions with MI staff
    d. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
    e. Explain confidentiality and anonymity
        ➢ Please note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous.
    f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

II. **Background Information (~ 15 minutes)**
    a. Role of Respondent (Position, Responsibilities)
    b. Do you have experience **collaborating with FAB**?
        ➢ How would you characterize that relationship?
        ➢ What are some of the challenges associated with collaborating with FAB?
        ➢ Particular activities for which you have collaborated with FAB?
    c. What has been your interaction with MI?
        – What was your first interaction with MI?
        – Why was MI engaged?
    d. **IF APPLICABLE: Objectives of working with MI**

III. **Activity Descriptions** [IF KNOWLEDGE OF MI]
    a. **IF RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM MI:** Can you describe how MI support was delivered?
        ➢ How did engagement begin?
            – To whom has technical support been provided? (FSNs?) Staff from other sectors?
            – How was it determined who got what assistance and when?
            – Specific needs that the various modes of TA were designed to meet?
        ➢ Type of support

- Trainings/ workshops (in-person or virtual? Preceded by virtual?)
- Technical expert advice
- How were tools and/or services modified to meet the mission's needs? IP needs?
  - ➤ Stages in the program cycle?
    - How did activities in each stage of the program cycle relate to the next? Were you able to bridge stages of the program cycle through the use of these tools?
  b. Are there specific MI tools and/or Technical Assistance activities you found particularly useful?
  c. Effectiveness of the Activity:
    - Do you think this activity met its objectives?
    - Are there stages in the program cycle where you find the MI approach to be more effective? Why?
    - Do you have a way of tracking or measuring whether the activity met its objectives?
  d. Do you continue to engage with MI? (webinars, online portal, etc.?)
  e. Any specific challenges that you encountered in delivering this activity?
  f. [**IF APPROPRIATE**] Was there any focus through this activity in addressing **gender**?

EQ 4: How and to what extent have MI's technical assistance and tools affected management practices in USAID sectors other than biodiversity, notably in USAID Washington work units?

1. Have you engaged with these tools/practices after working with MI?
2. Advantages?
3. Disadvantages?
4. What have been the outcomes of the use of these tools?
   - What outcomes did you aim to achieve?
   - Were intended outcomes met?
   - Were there unintended outcomes from this work?

EQ 4.1 Why or why not?

1. How could MI be modified or improved to better adapt to your management needs?

EQ 5: How and to what extent have the MI tools and practices affected integrated programming in Missions working on outcomes other than biodiversity?

1. In your opinion, have MI tools and/or practices facilitated integrated programming between non-BD and Biodiversity funding streams?
   - Are you more or less likely to include biodiversity outcomes into non-BD programming?
2. Are there alternate modalities within non-BD meant to facilitate CLA or evidence-based programming?
   a. Synergies between modalities?
   b. Incongruities?
3. Have any non-BD policies or guidelines been adjusted as a result of MI TA/Tools/Evidence?

EQ 5.1: Why or why not has there been an effect?

1. What has worked well in integrating biodiversity funding into non-BD programs?
2. What has worked well in integrating biodiversity indicators or outcomes into non-BD programs?
3. What has **not** worked well in integrating biodiversity funding into non-BD programs?

4. What has **not** worked well in integrating biodiversity indicators or outcomes into non-BD programs?
5. Recommendations?

EQ 1: How and to what extent have MI technical assistance and tools affected the Mission's capacity for adaptive management - to adaptively manage its biodiversity programs throughout the four stages of the Project Cycle? [IF APPLICABLE – I.E. IF MI HAS PROVIDED SUPPORT]

1. Do you understand what we mean by adaptive management?
2. Has MI provided support SPECIFICALLY targeting adaptive management capacity?
   – Stage of the program cycle?
3. Uptake: How have MI technical assistance and tools affected adaptive management practices?
   – EXAMPLES of adaptive management?
4. What are the gaps in adaptive management capacity that are still present in the Indonesia mission's biodiversity programming?
   – How does the mission track adaptive management practices of the IPs?
5. How have MI tools and technical assistance affected the management practices of implementing partners?
   – How were the IPs engaged in the use of MI tools and practices? AT WHAT POINTS IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE?
   – Have you seen EXAMPLES of adaptive management by IPs? (E.g. course correction in the implementation of biodiversity programs?)
   – Have procurement rules served as an impediment to learning and adaptive management of the IPs?
6. Has MI helped the mission to operationalize the requirements of the Biodiversity Policy?

EQ 1.1: Why and why not?

1. What are the challenges to improving adaptive management capacity in biodiversity programming in Indonesia?
2. How could support for the Mission's adaptive management capacity be improved?

EQ 2: How and to what extent has MI affected the utilization of evidence in USAID's biodiversity programming?

1. How is evidence used in the mission's biodiversity programming (at each stage of the Program Cycle)?
2. How has the use of evidence in the Mission's biodiversity programming changed (at each stage of the program cycle)?
   – How have attitudes about the use of evidence in biodiversity programming changed?
   – Are there any specific examples of (not so) successful evidence utilization?
3. What methods have been the most effective thus far in promoting the utilization of evidence at each stage of the program cycle?
4. We have spoken with MI staff about identifying knowledge gaps as part of the activity planning process – Has the mission identified key knowledge gaps in its planning?
   – What has the mission done to address those gaps?
5. How has the mission engaged with other missions to facilitate learning?

6. Experience with Conservation Enterprises/Combatting Wildlife Crime learning groups?
   – Interest in participating in future learning groups?

EQ 2.1: Why or why not?

1. Are there stages in the Program Cycle where use evidence-based programming has been taken up more so / less so?
2. What are the challenges facing promotion of utilization of evidence?
   – Did MI/FAB take measures to mitigate these challenges to promote greater use of evidence?
   – What else needs to be done to mitigate these challenges?
3. How could the use of evidence in USAID biodiversity programming be improved?

EQ 3: What are the challenges to institutionalizing MI's approach to biodiversity programming throughout USAID's Program Cycle, starting at the strategy level of the CDCS?

1. Is the mission taking measures to make MI tools and practices sustainable?
2. What are some of the challenges that the mission has faced in institutionalizing the MI approach to biodiversity programming?
   – What are some institutional / cultural barriers to the effectiveness of TA/Tools?
   – <u>Time</u> – How much of a barrier is time to using these tools?
   – <u>Staff turnover</u>? Has this been a problem?
3. What are some of the challenges that IPs have faced in institutionalizing their approach to biodiversity programming?
   – Institutional / cultural barriers to the effectiveness of TA/Tools with IPs?
4. We have heard that the FSNs can play an important role in championing the use of these tools and approaches – What is your take on this?
5. How-to guides?

EQ 3.1: How has MI successfully or not mitigated some of these challenges, including those pertaining to IPs or host governments?

1. What are some of the ways in which MI has mitigated these challenges the mission has faced?
   – Was the mitigation successful? If not, why?
2. What else could USAID do to mitigate challenges to institutionalizing MI tools and practices throughout USAID's Program Cycle? FAB?

IF NO KNOWLEDGE OF MI/FAB?

1. Are there alternate modalities meant to facilitate CLA or evidence-based programming?
   a. Synergies between modalities?
   b. Incongruities?
2. What has worked well in integrating biodiversity funding?
3. What has worked well in integrating biodiversity indicators or outcomes into your programs?
4. What has **not** worked well in integrating biodiversity funding into your programs?
5. What has **not** worked well in integrating biodiversity indicators or outcomes into your programs?
6. Recommendations?

ANNEX D: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The evaluation sought to be inclusive with respect to data sources, to ensure that the views of MI and USAID staff at sufficient levels were considered. The evaluation team identified three types of data sources to inform its findings to address each EQ:

1. MI activity documentation
2. MI activity staff
3. USAID staff and IPs in some missions

MI Activity Documentation

MI shared over 250 documents with the evaluation team. Many of these, also available on USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, reported on realized activities and outputs. These documents described accomplishments and challenges and point to outcomes. USAID has accepted them as suitable for public consumption. MI also produced a number of internal documents, including output tracking tables and engagement and outcome logs, that constitute a primary and important source of data. However, as these accounts come from MI staff and thus likely reflected the official IP position, the evaluation team triangulated the contents of these documents with other sources of information. Although the shared MI documents are informative, MI staff have recognized that they do not contain all known information about activity outcomes.

USAID Staff

MI staff have engaged with USAID/Washington and mission staff around the world, who are prime beneficiaries of MI's TA and in many cases are the intended users of the MI tools. From a methodological perspective, not only are mission staff valuable sources of new information, they are also sources for validating and substantiating the outcomes that MI staff have harvested. Using activity records, the evaluation team surveyed USAID staff who had collaborated with or received TA from MI.

The evaluation team also conducted KIIs with staff from missions where MI had the most comprehensive involvement. The evaluation team focus its efforts on five Missions: Philippines, Nepal, Uganda, Indonesia and SAR. The evaluation team also interviewed USAID staff in PPL, other E3 offices, and other regional and pillar Bureaus to seek information related to integration activities, influence on policies and guidance, and other MI outcomes.

IP Staff

IPs across focal missions also served as distinct and important key informants in four ways:

1. IPs may have engaged with MI either directly through participation in capacity building activities, or indirectly through mission knowledge transfer. IPs thus offered valuable insight into the effectiveness of MI's capacity building efforts, received both directly and indirectly, and the effect of these efforts on the implementation of biodiversity activities.
2. In the context of EQ1, IPs offered unique perspectives on enabling conditions and challenges to adaptive management.
3. To the extent that MI practices inspired changes to mission procurement requirements (e.g., through a call for inclusion of Theories of Change in activity proposals), IPs may have used MI tools and practices to comply with USAID contractual obligations or with the Biodiversity Policy.

4. In the context of EQ3, IPs may speak to conditions under which MI tools and practices can be institutionalized and sustained beyond the life of the MI activity.

To capture the IP perspective, the evaluation team sought to conduct KIIs with at least two IPs from each of the five focal missions.

ANNEX E: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

Key Informant	Organization/Project
Hadas Kushnir	E3/FAB
Cynthia Gill	E3/FAB
Megan Hill	E3/FAB (Activity Manager, MI IR2)
Olaf Zerbock	E3/FAB (Activity Manager, MI IR1)
Diane Russell	E3/FAB (Activity Manager, MI IR3)
Rebecca Butterfield	E3/FAB (former MI COR)
Marco Flores	E3/FAB (Activity Manager, MI IR4)
Jonathan Cook	E3/GCC
Rodolfo "Ronet" Santos	IP/B+WISER
Nygiel Armada	IP/ECOFISH
Gerry Silvestre	IP/ECOFISH
Rajendra Lamichhane	IP/Hariyo Ban I
Judy Oglethorpe	IP/Hariyo Ban I
Reed Merrill	IP/LESTARI
Alan White	IP/SEA
Samuel Mwandha	IP/UBP
Shelly Hicks	MI
Richard Margoluis	MI
Shawn Peabody	MI
Tess Present	MI
Andres Gomez	MI
Liz Lauck	MI
Caroline Cook	MI
Arlyne Johnson	MI
Marcia Brown	MI
Vinaya Swaminathan	MI
Nick Salafsky	MI
Judy Boshoven	MI
Heather D Agnes	Mission/Indonesia
Roya (Sutan Royansyah)	Mission/Indonesia
Bronwyn Llewellyn	Mission/Nepal
Nancy Ebuenga	Mission/Philippines
Rebecca Guieb	Mission/Philippines
Randy Vinluan	Mission/Philippines
Annie Wallace	Mission/SAR
Lane Pollack	Mission/Uganda (former)
Shawna Hirsch	Mission/Uganda
May Mwaka	Mission/Uganda
Tony Pryor	PPL
Mikell Borough-Stevens	PPL
Jackie Greene	PPL (former; current Bureau for the Middle East)

Key Informant	Organization/Project
Terry Brown	PPL
Jerome Gallagher	PPL
Ana Villegas	LAC

ANNEX F: GLOSSARY

- **Adaptive Management:** Defined in the ADS 201 as an intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context.
- **Capacity Building:** Capacity Development is defined in the ADS as "Approaches, strategies, or methodologies used by USAID and its stakeholders to change, transform, and improve performance at the individual, organizational, sector, or broader system level[40]." In the context of MI, Capacity Building Refers to the development of USAID's human, scientific, technological, organizational, management, institutional and resource capabilities. It encompasses the acquisition of new knowledge, the adoption of changed attitudes and the implementation of improved business environment practices and systems. A fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environment potentials and limits and of needs perceived by the people of the organizations concerned.[41]
- **Evidence:** Defined in the ADS 201 as the body of facts or information that serve as the basis for programmatic and strategic decision making in the Program Cycle. Evidence can be derived from assessments, analyses, performance monitoring, and evaluations. It can be sourced from within USAID or externally and should result from systematic and analytic methodologies or from observations that are shared and analyzed.
- **Integration:** The process of attaining close and seamless coordination between two or more departments, groups, organizations, systems, etc.[42]
- **Institutionalization:** This term refers to the process which translates an organization's code of conduct, mission, policies, vision, and strategic plans into action guidelines applicable to the daily activities of its officers and other employees. It aims at integrating fundamental values and objectives into the organization's culture and structure.[43]
- **Program Cycle:** USAID's operational model for planning, delivering, assessing, and adapting development programming in a given region or country to advance U.S. foreign policy. It encompasses guidance and procedures for: (1) making strategic decisions at the regional or country level about programmatic areas of focus and associated resources; (2) designing projects and activities to implement strategic plans; and (3) learning from performance monitoring, evaluations, and other relevant sources of information to make course corrections and inform future programming, as needed. In the context of this evaluation, it refers to: project design, activity design, activity start-up, and MEL.
- **Management Practices:** Management consists of the interlocking functions of creating corporate policy and organizing, planning, controlling, and directing an organization's resources in order to achieve the objectives of that policy.[44] This term refers to the systematic process by which an organization forecasts, plans, executes, monitors, evaluates the use of its legal, financial and human resources, administrative (procurement) and programmatic activities and learns from this process to adapt its processes to a changing environment.
- **MI Approach:** This term refers to the MI way of managing biodiversity programming throughout the stages of the *Program Cycle*. It includes the development of a Situation Model, a Theory of Change, the associated indicators and framework for monitoring and evaluation as well as the development and use of *evidence* for *learning* and *adaptive management* practices.

---

[40] USAID. Glossary of ADS terms. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/glossary.pdf
[41] Adapted from *Capacity Building - Agenda 21's definition (Chapter 37, UNCED, 1992.)*
[42] Read more: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/integration.html
[43] See http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/institutionalization.html
[44] See http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/management.html

- **Learning:** This refers to a measurable and relatively permanent change in behavior through experience, instruction, or study. Whereas individual learning is selective, group learning is essentially political its outcomes depend largely on power playing in the group. Learning itself cannot be measured, but its results can be. Chris Argyris, a psychologist at the Harvard Business describes learning as "detection and correction of error" where an error means "any mismatch between our intentions and what actually happens."[45]

- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):** ADS 201 defines **monitoring** as the ongoing and systematic tracking of information relevant to USAID strategies, projects, and activities. It defines **evaluation** as the systematic collection and analysis of information about strategies, projects, and activities as a basis for judgements to improve or inform decisions about programming. **Learning is defined** as the use of data from monitoring, portfolio reviews, research findings, evaluations, analyses, knowledge gained from experience, and other sources to develop plans, implement projects, manage adaptively, and contribute to USAID's knowledge base to improve development outcomes.

- **Technical Assistance (TA):** In the context of MI, this refers to the provision of MI and E3/FAB support to increase the capacity of USAID operating units through means of communication, knowledge transfer, and capacity development via methods including face-to-face individual contact, group learning, web-based meanings, webinars, desk review of documents.

- **Tools:** In the context of MI, this refers to Situation Models, Results Chain based Theory of Change, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plans, associated How-to Guidebooks, the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit, the Online Learning Platform on the RM portal (used for Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking), the Miradi Software, and the cross-mission learning program. It also includes Indicators, Toolkits, Case Examples and Evidence.

---

[45] See: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/learning.html

ANNEX G: ADDITIONAL EQ1 FINDINGS

Situation Model

- **Respondents noted that the situation model is a useful tool in providing a framework for understanding the problem context to develop targeted solutions.**

  All relevant key informants and survey respondents, as well as several MI documents, noted that the application of the situation models enhances the capacity of their organization by providing a structure for understanding the problem before developing solutions. An MI interviewee noted that "the situation model was a way for the mission to make use of 118/119, mandatory assessments, and to get a snapshot of conservation/food security issues that the project would need to contend with." Nineteen out of 20 survey respondents noted that they find situation models an effective tool for adaptive management.

  MI supports developing situation models through both virtual and in-person TA. The level of engagement and program cycle stage in which missions received TA for situation models was dependent on the capacity of the team they were working with and time constraints of the mission.

- **Respondents noted that the ideal time for the situation models is at the project design stage.**

  This stage was noted as the ideal starting point for MI and a critical stage for analysis. Influencing the PAD can not only affect the multitudes of activities that flow from it, but may also set the foundation for influencing any other non-biodiversity programming. One interviewee noted that the "PAD level [is] where the problem analysis is critical… where in depth problem analysis should take place… bring in experts...do additional research and analysis and synthesis of existing information. Also, the PAD is broader than biodiversity so there will be opportunities to make explicit linkages through the situation model, through the results chains and into the range of Activities that come out of the PAD." The Peru Mission used geospatial analysis for a situation model in project design and a MEL plan, which is an example of a promising practice for using evidence to identify gaps and then generate more evidence to help identify the final selection of priority landscapes.

- **Respondents and activity documentation noted that incorporating the development of situation model (and other tools) in the request for proposals is an emerging best practice that respondents noted as a useful way of facilitating buy-in from IPs.**

  In its 2015 Annual Report, MI identified the use of adaptive management tools, such as situation models and results chains, to inform procurement for a new project or activity as one of the "emerging best practices" across MI focal missions. A mission staff member noted that situation models are helpful to hone in on focal interests and to identify realistically what can be accomplished. IP, MI, and USAID staff noted that if a project or activity is to include the development of a situation model in the post-award period, including language to that effect in the request for proposals can facilitate IP buy-in.

- **Respondents noted that the quality of a situation model is determined by the information available to the participants; thus, if their information is limited, so is the usefulness of the situation model.**

One of the limitations of the situation model is that the content is mainly limited to the information, evidence, and insights of the people present during the workshops (and what is accessible to them). So if there is something that is missing due to lack of awareness on the participants, this may not be realized until the situation model has been put to use. One of the key informants summarized this as "garbage in, garbage out."

Results Chain-based Theory of Change

- **Respondents generally found results chains to be a useful tool in depicting theories of change, and preferable to the logical framework (LogFrame).**

  Eighteen of the 20 survey respondents who have used results chains found that it is an effective tool for adaptive management. USAID/E3/FAB staff noted that results chains are a useful tool for mapping out ideas, depicting the logic of interventions and their underlying assumptions, identifying what kind of intervention(s) would be useful, and finding appropriate entry points into a problematic situation. They also noted that it can also be used in interagency processes to facilitate consensus and mutual understanding. An M&E specialist for an IP noted that results chains have facilitated evidence-based adaptive management in its activity. A mission Program Officer noted appreciatively that results chains provide more structure than a LogFrame. One mission interviewee noted that to get to adaptive management, a strong development hypothesis is needed to better identify critical points in the logic chain. They note that the value of MI is that it forced the staff, and IP, to articulate on paper the development hypothesis to guide implementation, identify suitable performance and impact indicators, and develop realistic workplans.

- **Results chains are complex, time intensive, and require participation or understanding from the inception of its development.**

  All the evidence points to the fact that developing results chains requires that stakeholders invest enough time to be rigorous in the elaboration of a sound evidence-based development hypothesis and a management framework with appropriate indicators to measure outcomes for complex problems. IPs noted that the tool is helpful for measuring the impact of an intervention but also imposes an additional time burden on them, and this has been met with resistance. Mission staff noted that results chains produce complicated diagrams of limited value to those who have participated in their development; from an outsider's perspective, they can be hard to understand and may seem like a waste of time because their value may not be immediately evident. In Indonesia, staff who questioned the process are now identified as champions of the approach because they have participated in the process of developing them.

  Stakeholder involvement from the beginning of the development of the results chain is an intensive process that helps stakeholders understand intimately what they are planning to do and such a process helps with the development of SOWs, narrative descriptions of interventions, and with other design documents such as MEL Plans. A mission Program Officer noted that "a strong development hypothesis provides a good foundation for reflection down the road, during implementation and helps to get back on track or change course. In Indonesia, USAID and the IP revisited the results chain after a year after seeing that the activities weren't adding up towards outcomes. As a result, the activities were adjusted to fit better in the results chain and the IP provided advice for strategic assessments."

  Results chains have been used in all stages of the program cycle. A staff member from a regional Bureau noted that engineering the retrofit of a results chain to an activity after it has started has resulted, and will continue to do so, in a lack of IP ownership of the results chain. However, while

a results chain mechanistically comes from the development of a situation model, this staff person found that it is sometimes necessary to start with a results chain rather than a situation model to speed up the process of programming and procurement in the face of tight deadlines.

- **Presenting bidders with fully fleshed out results chain might be an option for reducing the time burden, but this may lead to a lack of original thinking about innovative solutions in bidders' proposals.**

A compromise, which was discussed under EQ3 in further detail, could be that the proposal lists the results that USAID wants to achieve but the request for proposals or request for assistance does not specify the logic of any intervention to achieve the stated goals. This practice could help USAID officials differentiate between bidders and make better-informed award choices based on the quality of the proposed intervention's logic to get to outcomes. MI and USAID/E3/FAB are working on sample procurement language that missions can include in their requests for proposals, adapting it to their own desired level of detail. According to this scenario, the results chains would then be refined during the activity start-up workshop and the M&E plan could be developed over the next three to four months and to formalize "pause and reflect" moments with all involved stakeholders. This would provide enough time to reflect on the results chain with the IP and to identify ways to measure results in the chain. A USAID/E3/FAB activity manager noted that USAID would need to be prepared to help with facilitating this process and this would add requirements to mission and IPs to follow through on this.

As results chains are increasingly being incorporated in activity design and request for proposals, they are also becoming key tools for the activity start-up process. The results chains provide a framework for planning work and developing MEL plans, including learning or reflection moments throughout the life of the activity. A mission Environment Officer noted that whether the intervention is a contract or a cooperative agreement could also determine how much flexibility for adaptive management can occur later in the activity, the first type of arrangement being, currently, more rigid.

For some mission staff, the results chain is too detailed to serve as an easy-to-use tool for project and, even, activity management purposes. Some evidence, however, points to the fact that results chain details are important at the mission level as they serve as the basis for managing towards successful interventions. For instance, in the Philippines, one Program Officer noted that not everyone can immediately appreciate the power of results chains and that it took mission and IP staff some time to appreciate this tool, which was initially seen as an added burden with no real use.

In one instance, the evaluation team found that MI could improve the way and extent that it guides some through results chains by teaching staff, especially neophytes, about the MI approach of non-linear relationships between multiple variables. Indeed, one USAID/E3/FAB staff member commented that the MI approach forces a culture change away from linear and simple causal relationships towards more comprehensive and holistic approaches to complex, system-based, interventions.

Miradi

- **MI and USAID/PPL developed a "Rosetta Stone" to translate Miradi terminology to align with ADS language.**

    MI, USAID/E3/FAB, and USAID/PPL have worked on a "Rosetta Stone" to cross-walk the Open Standards/MI terminology to the language of the ADS. The evaluation team found that this will be essential to the uptake of the MI approach within USAID and may be seminal to Agency-wide adoption of the approach by facilitating user interface with Miradi by using a lexicon that is clearly aligned with ADS 201. This "Rosetta Stone" informed development of a number of MI deliverables, including the three HTGs, result chains-based theories of change, and outcomes and indicator M&E.

    Respondents find Miradi to be as a useful tool for storing information on results, logic, and indicators, but some find it time intensive to maintain.

    Respondents had a mixed reaction to learning and using the Miradi software. Most gave positive feedback, but there is also some indication of difficulties that limit its uptake and questions the usefulness of its reports and graphics for communication purposes. Mission staff (especially younger staff) reflected positively about Miradi as well as USAID/PPL, whose staff noted its usefulness in conveying a complex theory of change and as a software platform useful for storing information on results, the underlying logic, and key indicators.

    A mission Environment Officer noted that "Miradi is a perennial favorite, in Tanzania, a lot of people are excited about it and want to use it in other technical areas. It's just a methodology for good project design, and essentially a flow-chart diagram. It is an elegant tool." USAID/PPL interviewees also had a positive perception of Miradi's powerful intervention design tool, noting "it was very compatible with what [PPL was] trying to do. …[PPL] thought it was very relevant to what [it was] trying to do with Project design, in particular, even though that Approach was principally used for Activity design (mechanisms designed like contracts and grants) and [PPL was] looking at developing approaches for creating logic models for Projects at a higher level in between the Activity and the Country Strategy."

    One mission Program Officer as well as a USAID/PPL staff member noted that a strength of Miradi is its capacity to store information. However, it requires dedicated time and effort to input and maintain, which adds to the time constraints that USAID operating units face.

ANNEX H: MI TOOL DESCRIPTIONS

Tool	Description
Situation Model	A diagram or graphic representation that uses boxes and arrows to portray a program or activity's biodiversity focal interests, threats, and drivers, resulting in clearly defined causal relationships amongst critical factors and the identification of potential development pathways. The process of developing a situation model helps create a common understanding of the program's context and the factors that affect the focal interest. Used by E3/FAB, USAID mission staff, and implementing partners to inform project and activity design, identify evidence gaps in the problem analysis, as a communication tool with stakeholders, to inform procurement mechanisms, and to inform the development of theories of change and strategic approaches to address problems.
Results Chain	A graphic representation of a theory of change and a type of logical model. It displays the strategic approach and programmatic assumptions for achieving the activity or project objective. Often follows the development of a situation model. It has been used by E3/FAB, USAID mission staff, and Implementing partners for brainstorming and prioritizing strategic approaches, articulating and communicating the theory of change, defining results at multiple levels, define realistic timeframes, and provide a framework for CLA.
MEL Plan	A planning document that facilitates learning and adaptation at and across activity, project, and CDCS levels. MEL plans include details on data collection, reflection points along the results chain, pathways to integrate learning into ongoing implementation or future programs. Used by E3/FAB, USAID mission staff, and Implementing partners for monitoring implementation and across the project and activity level, informing portfolio reviews, and identify and communicate unexpected developments.
CWC Toolkit	This toolkit provides a situation model and results chain recommends indicators for monitoring progress and effectiveness for ten major strategic approaches for combating wildlife crime. This toolkit was published in 2015 and has been used by E3/FAB and USAID mission staff as a method of expediting the design process for CWC activities.
Online Learning Platform and Cross-Mission Learning Program	An online platform hosted on USAID's Biodiversity Conservation Gateway that connects USAID staff and facilitates sharing of knowledge through learning programs. Currently there are learning programs on Conservation Enterprises and Combating Wildlife Trafficking.
Miradi Software and User Guide	An Adaptive Management software for conservation projects used in the *Open Standards of the Practice of Conservation*. MI, E3/FAB, and the PPL Bureau collaborated on a "Rosetta Stone" to cross-walk the language to meet the language of the ADS. The software is also used to create the visualization of the situation models and results chains and can be used to store relevant information on the results and indicators.
HTGs	The HTGs provide guidance on tools and practices to support USAID and implementing partners as they design and manage biodiversity programs. They have been developed for the following three topics: 1) Developing Situation Models; 2) Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change; and 3) Defining Outcomes and Indicators for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning.

U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004