



MONITORING AND EVALUATION REVIEW

Project Summary

01/12/2023

The MSC's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Stakeholder Review project was conducted between March 2022 and March 2023. Overall, the review found that the MSC M&E system is more than adequate for passing the ISEAL evaluation process and for meeting codes of best practice. In sum, the MSC is working efficiently to improve how their programs are monitored. However, in terms of evaluation, additional efforts are recommended to coordinate efforts across the organisation, develop meaningful targets and assess the impacts and outcomes of MSC programs more comprehensively.

The intrinsic benefits of an effective M&E system include (1) learnings that feed into policy or program development, (2) impact measures that can be easily communicated and (3) increasing credibility through rigour.

The review found that the MSC M&E system is largely effective in providing information about the size and credibility of the MSC program, and has the potential to generate a wide range of benefits and insights given the wealth of data currently collected. However, care needs to be taken to remain coordinated in data collection to avoid redundancy, and to remain open to challenges in the scope and definition of the Theory of Change. With more coordination and investment in efforts to evaluate program impacts, the MSC will be able to increasingly provide information on the effectiveness and efficiency of MSC programs.

What are impacts?

Impacts are defined in the MSC M&E Framework as the effects resulting from the MSC program, including those that are intended or unintended and negative or positive. For example, positive change on the water or access to new markets resulting from MSC certification is *impact*. Certification alone is not necessarily a material impact.

a new Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Working Group that will be responsible for coordinating impact evaluation activities across the organisation and developing and implementing a comprehensive Impacts Evaluation Framework.

What is the difference between monitoring and evaluation?

Monitoring is the systematic collection of data related to the MSC program, while *evaluation* is the analysis of that data to determine the worth of the MSC program in the context in which it operates. For example, data dashboards are monitoring, while analyses that use data to investigate the effectiveness or impacts of MSC activities are evaluation.

Overall, considerable effort has been put into improving the MSC's *monitoring* capability through better data architecture, quality control, and visualisations, with clear plans for further improvement. However, the full value of this work should be complemented by a more comprehensive and coordinated *evaluation* strategy that can guide future data collection, provide recommendations for appropriate indicators, and identify thresholds of impact and success.

Key products produced from the review include a new framework of indicators and data that can be used to measure progress towards MSC's Theory of Change, an internal M&E report card, and a comprehensive list of current MSC data sources. As a result of the review, the MSC is developing

