



LAND-at-scale

Guidance for project implementers on project management

This document presents information on general project management, the project Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and indicates how it links to Knowledge Management (KM) activities of the programme.

- This document presents the guidance for project M&E and indicates how M&E links to KM activities of LAND-at-scale (LAS). LAS is an **adaptive programme** and encourages transparency regarding 'on the ground' impact of projects. Through an integrated approach to M&E and KM, LAS aims to provide a platform for monitoring, evaluation, learning and exchange.
- In setting up your Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) **protocol** please take into consideration the following guidance (general requirements, indicators, reporting) to ensure it adheres to the requirements of LAS.
- M&E and KM will be guided by 6-month **learning loops** to support implementation and facilitate adaptive programming and establish a continuous feedback mechanism between experiences in the field, and project activities and plans. The aim of these loops is to openly learn and adapt.

Objectives

Through the LAS projects, our collective objective is to set the basis for just, inclusive and sustainable land governance globally. We aim to achieve structural change, which is generally characterized by working in complex systems where beforehand not all challenges and opportunities are clear. It is therefore crucial to be adaptive in our approach and learn along the way. Our M&E and KM approach is tailored to this adaptive approach and aims to provide valuable learnings along the way, as we collectively strive for maximum long-term impact and contribute to gaining a deeper understanding of the conditions required to create structural change.

What can you expect from Knowledge Management?

Monitoring, evaluation and learning are a priority for LAS and this will be facilitated by both 1) project M&E and 2) KM activities and the close interaction between the two.

For activities related to KM, RVO has partnered with organizations specialized in KM: [LANDac](#) and the [International Land Coalition](#). KM entails both learnings from land governance projects globally, and staying up-to-date, as well as managing the specific learnings and knowledge gathers within the LAS-projects and the dissemination of knowledge between LAS projects. LAND-at-scale's KM-partners will work together with project implementers to establish a KM-strategy for each country project. Open, multi-stakeholder dialogue and research on overlapping themes and regions will be facilitated to allow for inter-program exchanges and cross-learning. Implementers are encouraged to share their questions and ideas on how to mobilize and utilize the expertise among KM-partners to achieve maximum impacts of their projects. Questions arising from projects can be brought to KM-partners, and may be taken up as part of the KM activities.



Project implementers are expected to work closely together with KM-partners, as the KM-partners aim to assist them in capitalizing on the learnings and creating more impact. KM is about openly sharing and learning from each other. Project implementers are responsible for project M&E with a focus on output and outcome indicators, while KM-partners will support in the linking to other LAS projects as well as the broader context in which the activities take place. KM-partners will be involved with:

- **KM introduction gathering:** RVO and the KM-partners jointly organise an introduction to the KM strategy, inviting all LAS country partners that have recently started the implementation of their LAS country project.
- **KM kick off meeting:** RVO organises a kick-off per country with the project implementers and KM-partners to dive deeper into the project strategy, (draft) M&E-plans and perform an initial exploration of possible KM-themes and objectives.
- **KM strategy meeting:** KM-partners prepare a draft KM strategy for the project based on the kick-off meeting, which will be discussed during a second and final with project implementers and (a dedicated group of) the KM-partners. The outcome of this meeting is a KM strategy specifically for the country.
- **Six-monthly learning loops:** Periodically (every six months) RVO will host learning loops, where KM-partners assist in interpreting quantitative and qualitative results in the broader context of the programme and land governance in general and in learning loops. These learning loops will explicitly be a joint effort in which project implementers present progress on output and outcome indicators, and focus on opportunities and obstacles. KM-partners will share lessons learned from similar projects and contexts and assist in interpreting the progress, facilitating a discussion on adaptive programming, and linking results to other LAS-projects. Discussing costs is explicitly not part of these discussions, these learning loops are not meant for discussions on accountability or mismanagement of funds. KM-partners document the findings from learning loops, and coordinate the feedback between LAS projects, other KM-partners and RVO LAS staff.
- **Other KM inputs:** Other areas the KM-partners will be involved in is providing technical advice for the indicators in the project M&E plan, mainly to ensure synergy with other LAS projects and to identify potential programme-wide indicators and methods of collecting the data. Also, KM-partners might suggest indicators based on literature and lessons learned from other LAS projects. KM-partners will also facilitate broader discussions in countries to present and discuss project findings and results for further uptake and impact in collaboration with platforms and discussion forums present in countries.

KM budget lies with the KM partners. It is important therefore that the KM strategy for the country closely aligns with and/or benefits project objectives and M&E-plans.

Monitoring & Evaluation

1. Costs and budget

Project costs for monitoring and evaluation will be approximately two percent of total project costs and should be included in the project budget. In case there are multiple implementers the M&E plans should be aligned. Alternatively, an integrated M&E plan may be considered.

2. Indicators



LAS impact pathways are guided by the programme's Theory of Change¹. Each LAS project has its own unique set of indicators; this will be a combination of programme standard indicators and project-specific indicators (see Annex A for an overview).

- **PROJECT STANDARD indicators:** All projects will report on a set of required indicators originating from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).
- **PROJECT-SPECIFIC indicators:** Additionally, project specific indicators may be added as they seem fit. Partners can suggest their own indicators, and sometimes the KM-partners might suggest indicators, or RVO might suggest indicators based on comparability and synergy with other LAS-projects. Project specific indicators may also be used to ensure alignment with government, the SDGs or other international standards or guidelines, or other donors, with the view to upscale activities beyond the duration of LAS.

At the very start of the project, you will be asked to provide baseline results and projected results for standard indicators (compulsory); for the project-specific indicators, you are advised to fill out projected results as much as possible but this is not compulsory. In case of an inception phase, you may update projected indicators based on the results of your inception phase.

Indicators will be quantified when feasible; disaggregated by gender (male/ female/ other) and youth (age <35).

Gender and climate change require specific attention: all activities under LAS will have to be gender aware, and where feasible gender transformative². All activities will consider measures for climate mitigation and adaptation. This is especially relevant when activities relate to land use planning and/or land management. Please refer to the programme standard indicator lists in Annex A for guidance. In the event the project is unable to report on the suggested indicators, this needs to be substantiated and alternative gender- and climate-relevant indicators need to be included when feasible.

3. Required documents and reporting schedule

The below table provides an overview of M&E requirements for all LAS projects. Depending on the type of contract, risk profile of the project, and discussions with your RVO Programme Advisor, additional requirements may be agreed on.

Document	Timeline	Content
Overview of programme standard indicators	Prior to contracting for all types of contracts (subsidies, tenders, arrangements)	All project standard indicators on which the project aims to deliver, with baseline values where possible and applicable and projected results per indicator
Project M&E Plan ³ (Project partner responsible, supported by KM-partners)	Prior to the start of activities OR (if applicable and agreed on with your Programme Advisor) at the end of the inception phase	Background of project M&E: for who and why? Objective of M&E: what to monitor and how (method)

¹ <https://english.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2019/04/Annex-1-programme-LAND-at-scale.pdf>

² Gender aware accounts for differences in needs of men and women, ensuring that both benefit and that neither of them is harmed. Women need the skills and resources to be able to complete on the international market, and equal and fair access to financial institutions; Gender transformative aims to transform current gender beliefs or relations, because the inequality impedes development of one of both genders. In order for women to benefit from economic activities, it is important that women have the opportunity to take decisions and have ownership of their resources and profit (Source: LAS Gender framework).

³ Overview of main elements for a M&E Plan are included in Annex B



		Elaborate on links with upscaling and institutionalization: how can M&E contribute to these goals? Finalized project-specific indicators Pragmatic plan on continuous monitoring of indicators Plan on how to proceed if results on an indicator are lagging Baseline (parameters to monitor indicators; survey and sample; geographical area and spread; data sources used; research method) How are gender & climate change addressed? Budget in relation to results: value for money? In accordance with the budget submitted and elaborated per budget item.
Progress reports (Project partner responsible)	At least once a year after start of the project (project specific condition)	Progress on project indicators General project progress Lessons learned and consequences for adaptive programming Coordination/ collaboration with other programmes and donors Possible project alteration requests Depletion of budget in relation to activities and progress; in accordance with the budget submitted and elaborated per budget item.
Mid-term review (MTR) (Project partner responsible, supported by KM-partners)	Half-way project implementation	Project implementers will send RVO a plan for the MTR in line with RVO requirements two months ahead of the due date, including depletion of budget in accordance with the budget submitted and elaborated per budget item. Project implementers, RVO and KM-partners will agree on a final version of the MTR plan. The main role of KM is uniformity (at programme level), quality control and providing advice. The MTR is done by an external partner; in agreement with RVO this may be done by your organisation's M&E department on the condition that M&E staff is not involved in project implementation.
Draft final report	4 weeks after project completion date	Final reporting will include an overview of achieved results (output and outcome level), longer term impacts, findings and lessons learned from the bi-annual learning loops, project adjustments (if applicable), financial justification in accordance with the budget submitted



		and elaborated per budget item, and recommendations for future activities.
Final report	No later than 13 weeks after the end of project date as specified in the contract	A final report in which progress and final results of the funded activities are recorded. An itemized statement of all activities actually incurred, prepared in accordance with the budget submitted. An audit report by an auditor in accordance with the ISA standards and the applicable audit protocol.
End-term evaluation	At the end of the project implementation; conditional for final payment	In most cases, this will be an external evaluation for which you have reserved budget; in agreement with RVO this may be done by your organisation's M&E department on the condition that M&E staff is not involved in project implementation. Evaluations will focus on the outcomes and impacts (as opposed to outputs) and the broader land governance landscape.

N.B. In case of an inception phase, project implementer and RVO will always sit together to evaluate how activities are evolving and what changes/ lessons/ good practices have to be incorporated into the subsequent project and how.

4. Progress reports and MTR

Specifically for the progress reporting and MTR, standardized data and information will need to be collected and reported on. The standardisation will furthermore support learning between and across LAS projects, and contribute to overarching lessons on scaling land governance around the world.

The standardised elements of progress reports and MTR include:

- Reporting on assumptions, progress of output and outcome **indicators** (quantitative) as mentioned in the overview of indicators above and presented in the attached annex
- **General project progress**, achievements and challenges (narrative) following a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), in collaboration with KM-partners
- **Lessons learned** and how lessons learned could/ should/ are fed back into project activities, including broader/ spill-over/ unforeseen project impacts, in collaboration with KM-partners
- Linkages/ collaboration/ coordination with **partners and donors** in the region; including a quick scan/ scoping of potential future cooperation.
- Any **project alteration** that the implementer wishes to propose.
- Depletion of **budget** in relation to activities and progress; in accordance with the budget submitted and elaborated per budget item.

The main objective for progress reports and MTR is to allow for adaptive learning and include flexibility and space for adapting project activities based on intermediary results and findings from the field. LAS aims to facilitate an open learning culture in which project implementers and others feel safe to share good practices as well as challenges and problems arising from project activities.



Sustainability and risk management

In addition to monitoring on the above-mentioned result areas LAND-at-scale explicitly aims to promote the application of the principles of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure in all its activities. The “Do No Harm” concept, as stated in the VGGT, aims to identify the ways in which assistance given may be provided, so that, rather than exacerbating and/or worsening the situation, it helps people to strengthen their tenure and food security. It aims to ensure that activities designed to achieve good outcomes do not inadvertently cause harm.

Since there are many risks related to working on land governance, it is important for LAND-at-scale to actively monitor, discuss and learn with and from its implementing partners about the risks and mitigation measures over the course of the projects. Topics to consider are for instance the functioning of grievance mechanisms in practice, data access and security, working with government parties and working relations with sub-contractors. RVO will organize webinars and exchange sessions with the LAND-at-scale community, so that implementing partners and RVO can learn from each other’s best practices and lessons learned on sustainability and risk management within land governance projects. We would like to stress that we aim for continuous open dialogues about these topics.

Annex A: Longlist of project-standard and project-specific result indicators⁴

Standard (mandatory) indicators

1. Mandatory for all projects:

All projects must report on (a selection of) the following indicators:

Policy Theme	Result area	Indicator	Level
Food and Nutrition Security (FNS)	Enablers for FNS - land rights	Number of people that enjoyed secure tenure rights to land	Outcome
	Enablers for FNS - land rights	Number of (inter) national institutions that contributed to improved (sub)national land governance aspects	Outcome
	Increased productivity and income	Number of small-scale food producers directly reached	Output
	Increased productivity and income	Number of small-scale food producers indirectly reached	Output
	Increased productivity and income	Number of small-scale food producers with increased productivity/income	Outcome
	Sustainable use of farmland	Number of hectares of farmland directly reached	Output
	Sustainable use of farmland	Number of hectares of farmland indirectly reached	Output
	Sustainable use of farmland	Number of hectares of farmland used more eco-friendly	Outcome
Water	Improved river basin management and safe deltas	Number of integrated river basin and delta management plans drawn up and implemented	Outcome
	Improved river basin management and safe deltas	Number of people benefitting from improved river basin management and safe deltas	Outcome
Climate	Forests and Land Use	Adoption and implementation of inclusive forest (smart) public and private policies, plans, commitments and practices in the landscape / jurisdiction	Outcome
	Forests and Land Use	Number of beneficiaries (m/f) supported by projects and programs on sustainable agriculture and/or forestry practices in the landscape / jurisdiction	Outcome

⁴ Definitions and methodological notes for all project-standard indicators can be found in the document 'LAND-at-scale Standard Indicators – Guidance note for LAND-at-scale project partners'.

	Forests and Land Use	Hectares of forest(ed) land under sustainable forest management or other improved practices contributing to decreased deforestation, enhanced sinks and increased adaptive capacity of ecosystems and livelihoods	Outcome
Security and rule of law	Rule of Law	Number of beneficiaries (f/m) with access to justice	Outcome
	Rule of Law	Number of people (f/m) reached through justice awareness campaigns	Output
	Rule of Law	Number of (formal/informal) justice institutions strengthened in terms of fairness, effectiveness, accountability or independence	Outcome
	Peace processes & political governance	Number of people (f/m) trained in conflict resolution skills	Output
	Rule of Law	Number of inclusive law and policy reform initiatives advanced	Output
	Rule of Law	Number of perception studies and justice needs surveys conducted with NL support	Output
	Peace processes & political governance	Number of studies on drivers of conflict or political governance perception surveys conducted with NL support	Output
Private sector development	Strengthened economic governance and institutions	Number of strengthened (farmer/workers/entrepreneurs/traders) organisations for a sustainable local business climate	Outcome
	Strengthened economic governance and institutions	Number of members of supported organisations	Outcome
	Strengthened economic governance and institutions	Description of changes achieved in laws, regulations, policy plans, outcomes of social dialogue or development strategies enacted or adopted by local government or social dialogue partners in the reporting period due to direct intervention by the programme, yielding tangible benefits to the business climate	Outcome
	Improved sustainable production and trade	Number of trained small farmers in sustainable agricultural production practices	Outcome
	Improved sustainable production and trade	Number of hectares under sustainable land use	Outcome
	Business development	Number of companies with a supported plan to invest, trade or provide services	Outcome
	Business development	Number of direct jobs supported in individually supported SME by PSD programme	Outcome
	Business development	Number of indirect jobs supported	Outcome

	Business development	Amount of mobilised private finance (in million EUR)	Outcome
Women's rights and gender equality	Strengthened capacity of women	Number of individuals with strengthened competencies to advance women's rights and gender equality	Output
	Strengthened capacity of women	Number of organizations with strengthened capacity to advance women's rights and gender equality	Output
Civil society development	CSO involvement	Number of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage	Outcome
	CSO capacity	Number of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency	Outcome
	CSO capacity	Number of CSOs with increased L&A capacities	Outcome
	Improved laws, policies, norms, attitudes and practices	Number of laws, policies and norms, implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	Impact
	Improved laws, policies, norms, attitudes and practices	Number of laws, policies and norms/attitudes, blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development	Impact

Project-specific indicators

Next to mandatory indicators (for all projects in the LAS programme), projects also have project-specific indicators. Select all applicable result indicators out of this long list, and feel free to add your own indicators if you find the list is lacking an indicator for your project. This list will continue to be updated over the course of the LAND-at-scale programme, so that new interventions can be inspired by and learn from the application of indicators by other LAND-at-scale projects.

Result area	Indicator	Level	Details
All Sustainable Development Goals	Specific attention to SDG 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 15. Defined at SDG target level	Outcome or impact	See https://sdgs.un.org/goals



Annex B Main elements LAS project M&E Plan

The list below contains all elements of an extensive M&E plan. You may use (elements of) this guidelines for your own M&E plan.

1. Introduction
 - a. Context
 - b. Purpose of M&E
 - c. M&E Standards
 - d. Roles and Responsibilities regarding M&E
2. Project Information
 - a. Design
 - b. Relationship with other projects
 - c. Relationship with SDGs and MoFA/ Embassy Result framework
 - d. Relevant responsible business conduct (code of conduct misbehaviour; corruption; gender framework; and other applicable codes)
3. Result Framework
 - a. Theory of Change
 - b. Problem definition
 - c. Policy goals
 - d. Impact
 - e. Outcome and output indicators
 - f. Assumptions
 - g. Opportunities and Risks
4. Monitoring
 - a. Project level
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Data collection
 - d. Quality assurance
 - e. Budget and Planning
5. Evaluation
 - a. Baseline
 - b. Mid-term review
 - c. End-term evaluation
 - d. Budget, planning and division of roles
6. Reporting
 - a. Project Reporting
 - b. Accountability to RVO
 - c. IATI reporting