

# **Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund**

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*Addendum to the Conceptual Framework on the topic of  
**Thematic Evaluations***

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Cooperation via GIZ with the Amazon Fund

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### **8.3. Addendum on inputs for thematic evaluations in the context of the Amazon Fund**

Since 2016 the Amazon Fund has conducted evaluations of its completed projects. With the increase in the number of completed projects, it became evident that evaluating them in thematic blocks according to their objectives would produce important inputs for the aggregation of the results and impacts achieved by the projects and would identify joint contributions towards achieving the objectives of the Amazon Fund. In addition, thematic evaluations would make it possible to optimize the completion of the evaluations and produce lessons learned and recommendations to the support given by the Fund to certain themes and not just individual projects.

In this sense, it became necessary to complement the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#)<sup>1</sup> so as to include these new types of evaluations. These thematic evaluations bring together two or more projects which have focused on the same component<sup>2</sup>, the same theme or targeted beneficiaries and therefore responded to similar indirect effects within the Logical Framework of the Amazon Fund.

The integration of direct effects, actions and indicators of two or more projects require specific strategies of analysis, so that the projects can be assessed thematically and not only individually within the same document. Therefore, this addendum aims to present the logical structure of projects supported by the Amazon Fund and a few tools and strategies that may contribute to thematic evaluations.

#### **8.3.1. Methodological approach**

Until 2018, the Amazon Fund built a specific logical framework for each project it supported, together with the entities responsible for its implementation. The supported projects' logical frameworks essentially followed the same logical framework of the Amazon Fund, with the main difference being in their hierarchical level, given that projects execute actions, while programmes execute lines of action. Therefore, the direct effects of each project should have a close correlation with the direct effects of the Amazon Fund as a programme, in addition to the indirect effects of the supported projects being contained in one or more of the four indirect effects (components) of the Amazon Fund.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at:

<http://www.fundoamazonia.gov.br/export/sites/default/en/.galleries/documentos/monitoring-evaluation/Amazon-Fund-impact-evaluations-projects-supported-2016.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>The Amazon Fund Logical Framework is composed of four components: "sustainable production", "monitoring and control", "land-use planning" and "science, innovation and economic instruments".

For more information, refer to the document "Amazon Fund's Logical Framework":

<http://www.amazonfund.gov.br/export/sites/default/en/.galleries/documentos/monitoring-evaluation/Amazon-Fund-Logical-Framework.pdf> and "Quadro Lógico do Fundo Amazônia 2017"

(Portuguese only):

[http://www.fundoamazonia.gov.br/export/sites/default/pt/.galleries/documentos/monitoramento-avaliacao/FA\\_Quadro\\_Logico\\_2017.pdf](http://www.fundoamazonia.gov.br/export/sites/default/pt/.galleries/documentos/monitoramento-avaliacao/FA_Quadro_Logico_2017.pdf)

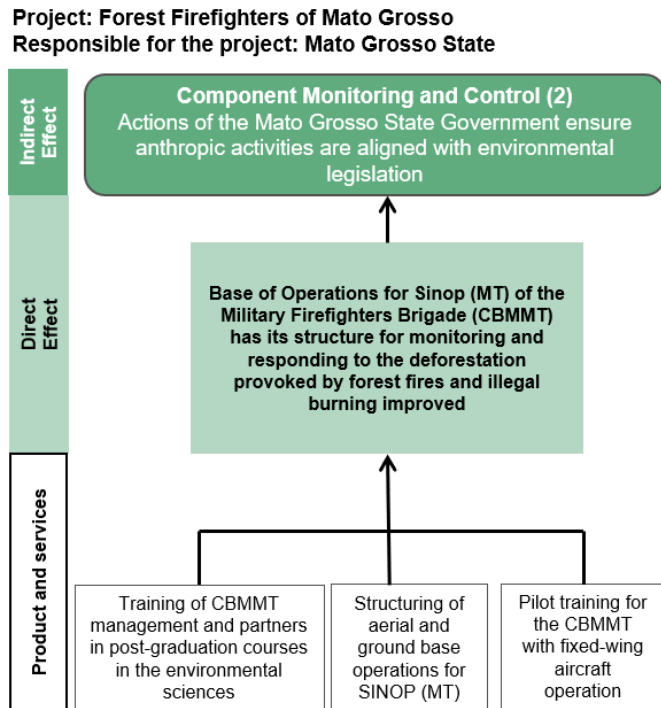


Figure 1 Example of an objective tree for the project Forest Firefighters of Mato Grosso

From 2018, aiming to align the Amazon Fund with the procedures followed by the other BNDES operational units and to enable the digitalization of this macro-process, in addition to generating gains in efficiency and quality, the Fund started to use results frameworks. The results framework of each project shows: (i) the objectives, in terms of results, to which the project will contribute; (ii) the amount of financing associated with each objective; and (iii) the efficiency and effectiveness indicators to be monitored. This organization is tabular and facilitates the integration of Amazon Fund projects to the flow of initiatives supported by BNDES.

In the impact evaluations, the logical frameworks or results frameworks of the individual projects (and their respective indicators), established jointly at the beginning of each project, should be analysed together with Amazon Fund indicators (see tables of indicators per component in the [Amazon Fund Logical Framework](#), in Portuguese, on pages 29, 34, 39 and 44). This analysis should be complemented by an assessment of the reality of the project's implementation, based on its performance reports and on information collected during the evaluation missions. These are fundamental methodological inputs for aggregating the thematic impacts of the projects, in addition to allowing for the creation of a theory of change for each project. In this theory of change, correlations between different results can be drawn, including those which were unintended and unplanned at the beginning of the projects, but which are nevertheless useful in their evaluation.

In thematic evaluations, a general theory of change can be developed to integrate the results frameworks of the two or more evaluated projects with the logical framework of the component in which they are included. This theory of change is useful for the visualization of all the possible contributions (expected and unexpected) of these projects, showing how their results have contributed to the direct and indirect effects of the component and to the objectives of the Amazon Fund.

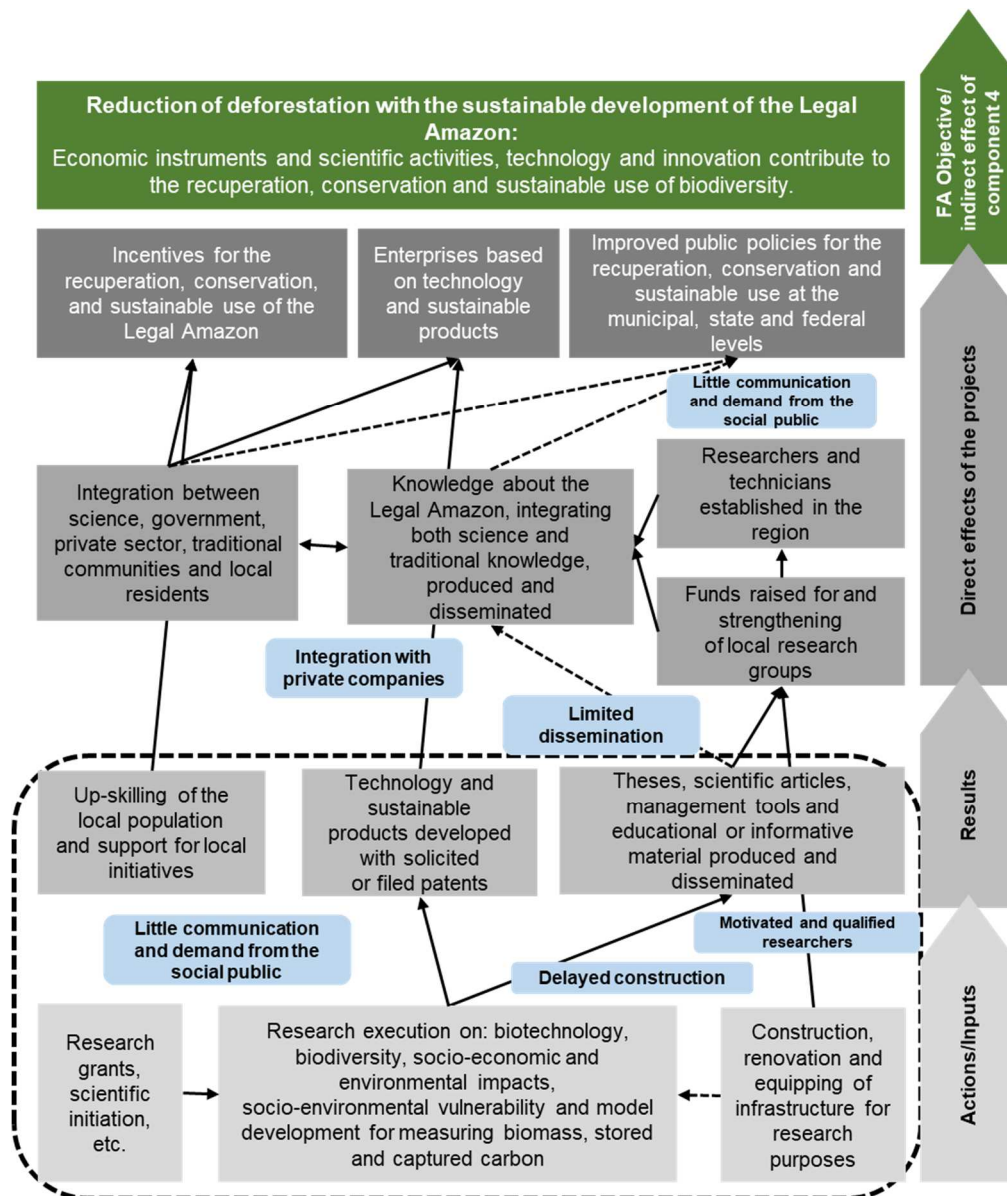


Figure 2 General theory of change for the thematic evaluation of projects within the Science, Innovation and Economic Instruments component of the Amazon Fund

### 8.3.1.1. Methods for analysing contributions to components supported by the Fund

The monitoring and analysis of projects can be done in terms of their contribution to performance and impact at different levels. In the case of projects supported by the Amazon Fund, the structure of the levels is as follows:

- **Amazon Fund Level:** monitoring of the contribution of all projects to the objectives of the Amazon Fund;
- **Theme/component level:** monitoring of the contribution of the set of projects on the same theme/component to their aggregate direct effect and to the expected indirect effect of the component of the Amazon Fund's logical framework;
- **Project level:** monitoring of the achievement of indicator targets and of the particular direct effects of each project; and

- **Beneficiary level:** monitoring of the direct effects on the population of the states and municipalities that are the focus of the projects' activities.

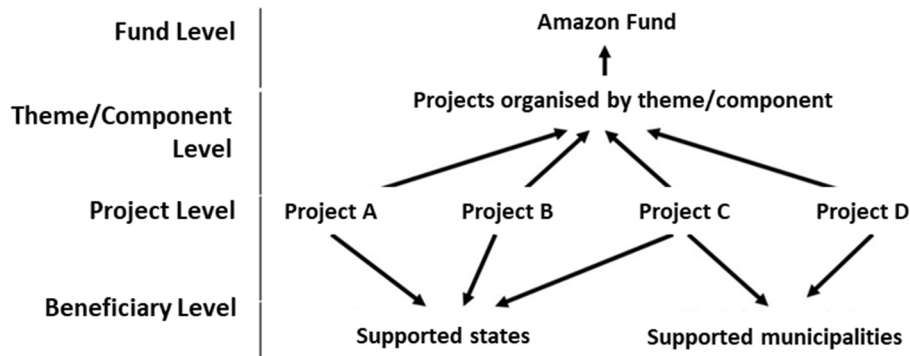


Figure 3 Structure of levels for monitoring and evaluation within the Amazon Fund

With regard to thematic evaluations, this structure (Figure 3) facilitates the visualization of the levels in which the evaluated projects' impacts are expected, including the "theme/component level", which allows assessment of the contribution to specific components in addition to the general objective of the Amazon Fund. For this assessment, relationships between logical frameworks or results frameworks of different projects are established (see Figure 4), which permits the aggregation of achieved results in terms of:

- **Indirect effects** of the projects, which correspond to the long term impacts of interventions, contributing directly to achieving the general objective of the Amazon Fund;
- **Direct effects** of the projects, which correspond to the changes they intend to achieve in the short and medium term, that is, consequences of the products and services elaborated by the projects and used by the target audience within the projects; and
- **Products and services**, which demonstrate the changes directly achieved by the projects' activities (including goods, services, knowledge provided, norms and regulations created, among others).

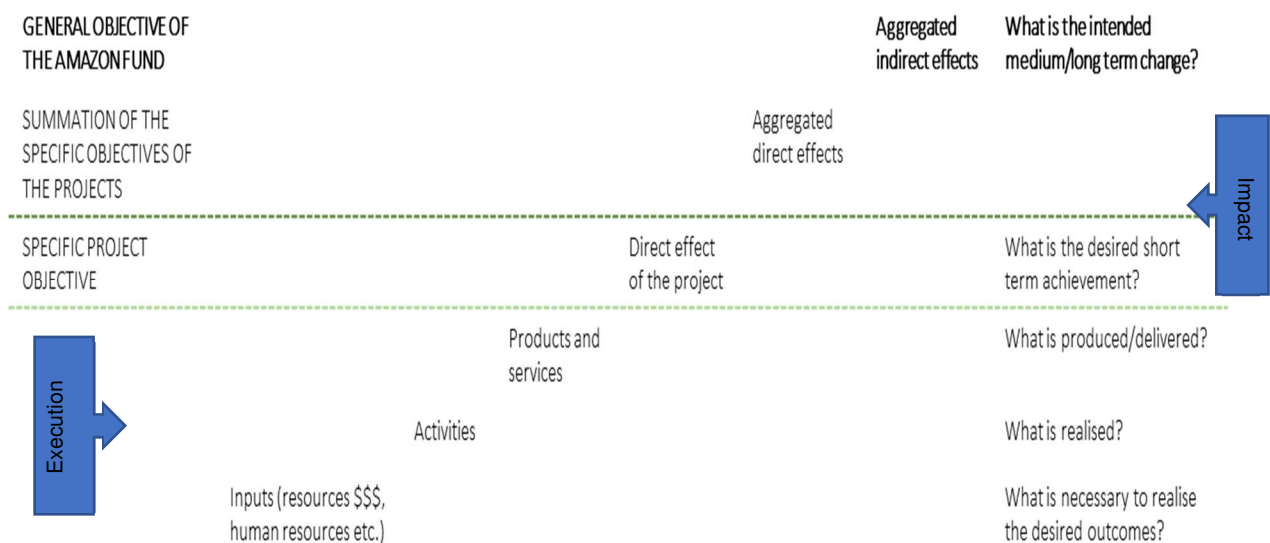


Figure 4 Results chain

Based on the similarities between their management and execution processes, matrix crossings can be made between projects to generate analyses and comparisons on their effectiveness. This kind of crossing can also contribute to the visualisation of the major challenges and obstacles in the execution of the projects, as well as give inputs for the development of recommendations and lessons learned.

In addition to processes, matrix crossings can be done in terms of similarities between the direct effects of different projects and their indicators. An analysis of this crossing promotes the aggregation of individual direct effects, which can then be analysed comparing them to the direct effects expected in the component.

Table 1 Example of matrix crossing

Project	Direct effect 1	Direct effect 2	Direct effect 3	Direct effect 4
Project 1				
Project 2				
Project 3				
Project 4				

Finally, in order to collect information from projects in thematic evaluations, in addition to the guiding questions available in the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#) (pages 23 to 29)<sup>3</sup>, the following complementary questions are recommended to assess effectiveness and aggregate impacts:

Table 2 ODCE, Crosscutting criteria and complementary guiding questions

Criteria	Guiding questions
<b>Relevancy</b>	Did the projects jointly contribute in an aggregate way to the objectives of the Amazon Fund?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	What aggregate direct effects have been achieved?
<b>Efficiency</b>	Does the cost-benefits of project activities maintain consistency between them?
<b>Impact</b>	What were the main aggregate effects of the projects? Have there been any aggregate impacts? Have they demonstrated scalability in the territory?
<b>Sustainability</b>	Are the aggregated effects achieved by the projects sustainable? Has sustainability been achieved?
Crosscutting criteria	
<b>Poverty reduction</b>	How have the projects together influenced the reduction of poverty, social inclusion and the improvement of the living conditions of the beneficiaries living in the areas affected by their activities?
<b>Gender equality</b>	Have the projects together had impacts and results in gender-sensitive issues? How and what aggregated results can be observed?

### 8.3.1.2 Methodology for conducting counterfactual observation for evaluation

In individual evaluations, a complementary analysis to compare the reality of project execution with scenarios outside its field of activity is recommended. This counterfactual analysis aims

<sup>3</sup> Also see publication: Evaluation Systems and use: a working tool for Peer Reviews and Assessments. This publication has a list of questions that cover eight dimensions that must be addressed when assessing projects and programmes. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/35857765.pdf>

to assess impacts in similar situations, but without the intervention of the project in question, in order to build a basis for comparing and to isolate the actual impact of the project. That is, the impact that only happened due to its intervention.

In the case of thematic evaluations, the challenge of choosing an appropriate counterfactual scenario is broadened, since the number of variables to be taken into account in order to identify the counterfactual that is most similar to the set of projects, and therefore most appropriate, is multiplied.

The matrix crossing presented in the previous section may prove to be a useful tool for identifying possible counterfactual scenarios. If a counterfactual analysis is chosen for the thematic assessment, it is possible to apply statistical or regression techniques in order to estimate the progress of variables in the project's scenario and in the counterfactual scenario. It is also possible to make qualitative analyses, by elaborating analytical frameworks which include: i) common actions among projects (synergies and differences); ii) analysis of the counterfactual scenario; and iii) situation analysis<sup>4</sup>.

### **8.3.2 Reports**

The thematic evaluation reports follow those described in items 8.1.7.1 and 8.1.7.2 of the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#), with the following differences:

#### **8.3.2.1 Design Report**

The thematic evaluation design report has the same objectives as the individual evaluation design report, but since it involves a description of more than one project, it should include a maximum of 20 pages in the main body of the report (excluding annexes).

##### **A. Introduction**

In addition to describing the objectives of the evaluation, it should also include a brief analysis of the theme or component's situation in the areas covered by the projects combined (focus of the evaluation). It should also have a brief description of the projects, including similarities and differences among them, in terms of coverage areas, start and end dates of implementation, beneficiaries and organizations responsible for implementation (objects of the evaluation). The tables with basic project information should be moved to the annexes.

##### **B. Return in relation to TdR (according to the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#), page 20).**

##### **C. Division of labour, Work Plan and Logistics (same as item B).**

##### **D. Design/Methodology**

Similar to the format described for individual evaluations, but should mention whether specific methods have been used to account for an evaluation that is thematic rather

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<sup>4</sup>See example of a qualitative analysis framework in the evaluation of the Sementes do Portal project (pages 22-25), available at: [http://www.fundoamazonia.gov.br/export/sites/default/pt/galleries/documentos/monitoramento-avaliacao/relatorio-efetividade-projetos/IOV\\_1a-fase\\_Relatorio-Efetividade.pdf](http://www.fundoamazonia.gov.br/export/sites/default/pt/galleries/documentos/monitoramento-avaliacao/relatorio-efetividade-projetos/IOV_1a-fase_Relatorio-Efetividade.pdf)

than individual. Include the general change theory, if applicable (see topic 8.3.1 of this addendum).

E. Annexes

Basic information for each project individually should be presented, since they are only presented combined in the introduction. The guiding questions for questionnaires and interviews here presented should also be divided by project. In addition, it is recommended to present additional criteria specific to thematic evaluations that will guide the evaluation.

E.1. Basic information on the evaluated projects: tables containing name of the project to be evaluated, organization responsible for its implementation, project beneficiaries, deadline and place of implementation, and a summary paragraph of the project.

E.2. Guiding questions for questionnaires and interviews organized by project

E.3. Criteria of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), REDD+ Safeguards, Crosscutting Criteria of Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality and Evaluation Questions;

E.4. Term of Reference.

### **8.3.2.2 Effectiveness evaluation report**

The thematic effectiveness evaluation report has the same objectives as the individual effectiveness evaluation report, specifically, to present the evaluation results. However, as it encompasses more than one project and includes an evaluation on the common theme in these projects, it must have, in the main body, up to 45 pages (without considering the cover, summary, table and figure indexes, list of abbreviations and acronyms, executive summary and annexes). Each annex containing individual project evaluations should be up to 15 pages long.

A. Cover

It should contain the title of the evaluation according to the theme that unites the evaluated projects (for example: "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Scientific and Technological Development Projects of the Science, Innovation and Economic Instruments Component supported by the Amazon Fund/BNDES"), in addition to subtitles with the names of the projects evaluated, the authors and date of publication;

B. Summary; lists of tables, graphics, images, abbreviations and acronyms; glossary (if applicable).

C. Executive summary

It should describe, clearly and briefly, all the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the thematic evaluation that relate to the set of projects in a maximum of five pages.



D. Background

It should present an analysis of the situation and public policies relevant to the theme of the evaluation in the territories covered by all the projects combined. It should also contain a description of the projects in terms of scope, start and end dates of implementation, beneficiaries and organizations responsible for implementation, their similarities and differences and their relationship to the theme.

E. Introduction

It should present the objectives and scope of the evaluations in general and the specific thematic evaluation in particular.

F. Applied methodology

In addition to what has already been presented in the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#) and in topic 8.3.1. of this document, the applied methodology should include the logical framework of the Amazon Fund component into which the evaluated projects fit, and mention whether specific methods were used to account for an evaluation that is thematic. The theory of change is a useful tool for integrating the results tables of the two or more projects evaluated and the logical framework of the component in which they are included, in order to demonstrate the complementarity of the products and services of the projects and their results towards achieving the direct and indirect effects of the component.

G. Results

The results of the evaluation should be presented in terms of the achievement of the objectives and of the progress of the established indicators; in terms of the impact, sustainability and relevance of the aggregated direct effects; in terms of the effectiveness of the contributions of the aggregated products and services to the results of the projects, and their efficiency in relation to the resources invested in the projects; and in terms of the arrangements, execution and management of the projects in general.

H. Conclusions

Similar to individual evaluations, they should put forward the evaluators' views stemming from the results, reporting briefly on the positive points, challenges and medium and long-term effects that the projects together are generating. Considerations about the component as a whole, including its contribution to the formulation and implementation of public policies, should be given.

I. Recommendations and lessons learned

These should follow the guidelines of the [Conceptual Framework for Impact Evaluations of Projects Supported by the Amazon Fund](#) (page 22) and may include, as part of the target audiences for the recommendations, the public policy makers on the theme that is the focus of the evaluation, if appropriate.

In addition to presenting the most important recommendations among those made in the annexes of individual project evaluations (to improve management, execution and achievement of project results individually), they must include recommendations for cooperation and articulation between projects, to guide the Amazon Fund's support to the component and aid its management of the project portfolio. Finally,

recommendations for the implementation of public policies relevant to the theme on which the projects work should also be included.

The lessons learned should synthesize, from the evaluation of the projects individually and of the theme or component, positive and negative experiences that are useful for future interventions or for modifying the support strategies and policies of the Amazon Fund. These should not repeat information presented in the recommendations.

## J. Annexes

### J.1. Individual evaluations of the projects

These must include:

- i) An introduction, with a table containing basic project information (title, organization responsible for project and finance management, period of implementation, territorial scope, beneficiaries, objective, total value of the project and value of support provided by the Amazon Fund);
- ii) Project summary;
- iii) Intervention logic (objective tree or results framework agreed upon at the beginning of the project);
- iv) Specific methodology (in addition to the criteria and methodologies described in the main part of the report, it should mention if there was any specificity and present the specific target audience of each methodology applied);
- v) Evaluation of results (evaluation of the progress of indicators; individual theory of change and analysis of the project's relevant impacts and results based on the theory of change; impact, sustainability and relevance of the specific direct effects of the project; effectiveness of the contribution of products and services to the results of the project and efficiency of these products and services in relation to the resources invested in the project; arrangements, execution and management; level of compliance with the REDD+ Safeguards and the Crosscutting Criteria of Poverty Reduction and Gender Equity, in terms of "no", "in part", "yes" or "does not apply");
- vi) Conclusions; and
- vii) Recommendations and lessons learned.

J.2. Criteria of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), REDD+ Safeguards, Crosscutting Criteria of Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality and Evaluation Questions;

J.3. Questions used in questionnaires and interviews;

J.4. List of photos;

J.5. List of interviews;

J.6. Term of Reference (optional, can be omitted should it be too extensive);

J.7. Bibliography consulted (optional, mentioning it in the footnotes is sufficient).