



Central African Forest Initiative

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Policy

Version of December 22, 2022

Adopted via decision [EB.2022.28](#)

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1. List of acronyms

EB = Executive Board

IO = implementing organization

GIS = Geographic information system

Lol = Letter of Intent

ME&L = monitoring, evaluation and learning

MoU = memorandum of understanding [between a UN organization and the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office]

MPTFO = Multi Partner Trust Fund Office

RBM = results based management

RBP = results based payment

UNDG = United Nations Development Group

PES = Payment for environmental services

2. Objectives of the Policy

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (ME&L) Policy sets out the approach of CAFI to assessing how its investments deliver climate and development results and how its results contribute to the overall objectives of CAFI to significantly contribute to low emission development in partner countries through interventions in the land use and forestry sector.

It brings together and clarify guiding principles and mandatory requirements related to monitoring and reporting performance and results, evaluations, verifications and learning.

It clarifies roles and responsibilities for results management and reporting and establishes reporting requirements and processes for monitoring and verification at the project/programme level.

This policy is part of a larger package of the CAFI ME&L system, that comprises

- The ME&L Policy
- The ME&L Results framework, derived from CAFI's Theory of Change
- A package of guidelines, tools and protocols for monitoring, evaluations, verification and reporting
- The CAFI Secretariat multi-annual ME&L plan

In addition, while the ME&L Package relates mostly to performance and results, the CAFI Risk Management strategy also comprises elements of monitoring and learning as it allows risk and risk mitigation measure monitoring.

The ME&L Policy is evolutive and revised to reflect changes in CAFI's approach to programming. The Policy and its revisions are adopted by the CAFI Executive Board.

The Policy guides the Executive Board, the Secretariat, the Implementing organizations and partner governments.

3. Terminology

The CAFI Multi partner Trust Fund is a UN Fund. Terminology used in this protocol is therefore based and adapted primarily from the UN Results-based Management handbook¹. CAFI is also a multi-donor initiative, so additional definitions commonly used have also been summarized below.

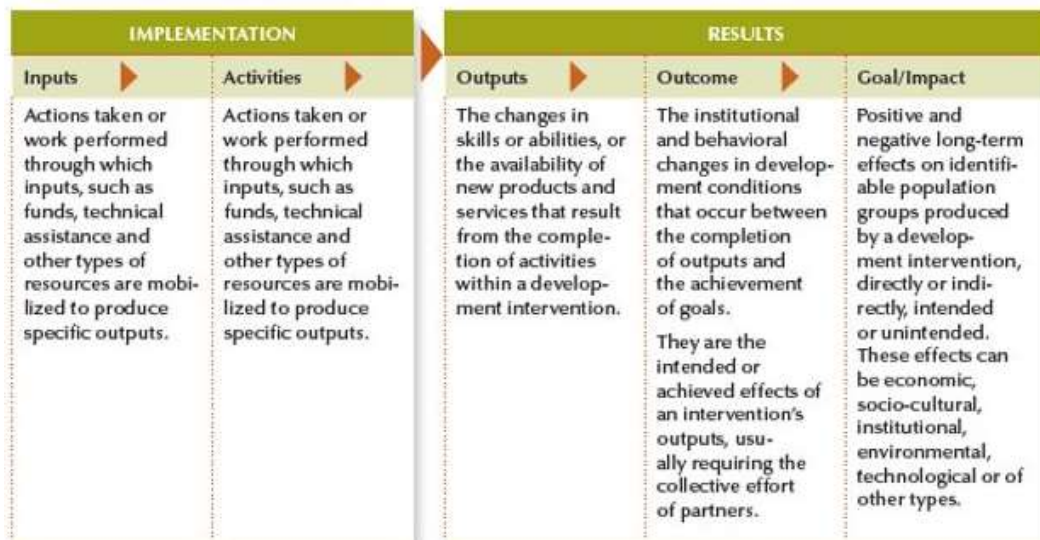


Figure 1 : Results Chain terminology as per the UNDG Handbook

“Results” are changes in a state or condition that derive from a cause-and-effect relationship. There are three types of such changes - outputs, outcomes and impact - that can be set in motion by a development intervention. The changes can be intended or unintended, positive and/ or negative.

“Activities” refer to actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources, are mobilized to produce specific outputs. *Example derived from CAFI's programmes: trainings are held.*

“Outputs” are changes in skills or abilities and capacities of individuals or institutions, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention within the control of the organization. They are achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified.

- *Example : hectares of perennial crops planted (progress level, measurable each year) ; hectares of perennial crops that have reached productive stage (result level, measurable after x years depending on crops)*

The CAFI Framework, adopted by the Executive Board, recalls that the output level is within CAFI's **sphere of control**, or more precisely within the sphere of control of the programmes funded by CAFI.

¹ <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf>.

“**Outcomes**” represent changes that occur between the completion of outputs and the contribution to impacts.

- *Examples derived from CAFI’s Theory of Change : agriculture encroaches less on forests while providing food security.*
- *Counter example: the agricultural reform is adopted*

The CAFI M&E Framework, recalls that results at outcome level are within CAFI's **sphere of influence**. This means that attribution of results is less direct than at the output level.

“**Impact**” implies changes in people’s lives. This might include changes in knowledge, skill, behaviour, health or living conditions for children, adults, families or communities. Such changes are positive or negative long-term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental, technological or of other types. Positive impacts should have some relationship to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs²), internationally agreed development goals, national development goals (as well as human rights as enshrined in constitutions), and national commitments to international conventions and treaties.

The CAFI M&E Framework, adopted by the Executive Board, recalls that impact level corresponds to CAFI's **sphere of interest (i.e. not of control)**

- *Examples : CO2 emissions are reduced ;*
- *Counter example: A reform is implemented*

The causal link between output, outcomes and impact is linked to **testing the robustness of the CAFI’s theory of change**³.

“**Indicators**” help measure impacts, outcomes and outputs, adding greater precision. Indicators ensure that decision-making is informed by relevant data. Indicators should be specific, measurable, attainable, cost efficient and realistic.

“**A Value for money analysis**”⁴ combines analyses of economy⁵, effectiveness and efficiency and examines whether inputs of appropriate quality have been bought at a minimized price (which pertains to the rules and

² The Handbook refers to Millennium Development Goals. The post-2015 agenda now refers to (a larger set of) Sustainable Development Goals

³ For example: is support to subsistence agriculture in a specific area (output) leading to improved productivity (outcome)? Is improved productivity of subsistence agriculture (outcome) contributing to less annual conversion of forests (impact) by small scale agriculture?

⁴ Based on

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918479/value-for-money-framework.pdf

⁵ The UK provides the following definitions : Economy: minimizing the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (are inputs of appropriate quality bought at a minimized price?); Efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them (or : how well are inputs converted into outputs?); Effectiveness: the extent to which objectives are achieved and the relationship between intended and

procedures of implementing organizations), whether inputs converted into outputs and how well outputs achieve outcomes.

“Beneficiaries”: beneficiaries are categorized according to the directness does the person know it is a beneficiary) and intensity of support (low, medium and high)⁶. Definitions and categorization e used by all programmes.

“Performance criteria” used in monitoring, evaluations and verifications are defined [in Annex B](#). They apply differently depending on when (ex programme development and appraisal, routine monitoring, mid term or final evaluations) and by whom the monitoring/evaluation/verification is undertaken (ex : double blinded independent reviews, Secretariat, independent evaluators or verifiers).

“Monitoring” is a continuous management function that provides managers and key stakeholders with regular feedback on the consistency or discrepancy between planned and actual activities and programme performance, and on the internal and external factors affecting results.

“Evaluations” are periodic assessments aimed at providing information on and improve effectiveness, efficiency, value for money, future programming, strategy and policy making. “Impact evaluations” are rigorous studies that measure the effects of programmes (or portfolio of programmes) and focus on establishing what has been the cause of observed changes , i.e. establish causal attribution. “Evidence-based” evaluations use high levels of evidence (based on established criteria) such as randomized control trials (deemed for example “higher” than pre and post-test studies)

“Verifications” are ad-hoc, spot check exercises that seek to verify a claimed result. In performance-based mechanisms, verification (at various level of results, such as impact or output) trigger results-based payments.⁷Monitoring, evaluation and verification ensure **“Learning” or “lessons learning”**, i.e a process where knowledge is acquired through reports and experience, that is continuous and leads to actions. Learning is not a theoretical exercise but a repeated process by which successes, failures and innovations – and their reasons - are identified and recorded so that results, processes and funding prioritization improve.

actual impacts (how well do those outputs achieve outcomes?).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/value-for-money-standard/value-for-money-code-of-practice-april-2018>

⁶ [Annex D](#) showcases the level of guidance provided by different Funds.

⁷ As these results-based payment mechanisms such a payment for environmental services develop and are funded by CAFI the use of verification is expected to become more prevalent and sophisticated. Specific standardized protocols and methodologies will be developed to this end.

4. Legal and institutional framework

CAFI is a UN Multi-partner Trust Fund that uses a “pass-through modality”⁸. This means that the financial and programmatic responsibility (including the M&E of programmes) lies mainly with implementing organizations.

Obligations of implementing organizations include to create separate ledger accounts for the funds received, use the funds to carry out the activities results as set out in the approved programmatic document, manages for results and submit reports once a year and at the end of the project.

The overall programmatic and fiduciary responsibility of each implementing organisation is regulated in three distinct types of agreements signed between the Administrative Agent of the Trust fund and the implementing organizations:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the UN agencies who have automatic access to the Trust Fund⁹
- An Administrative Agreement with the World Bank¹⁰ that limits the role of the Secretariat to simply transferring the submitted documents (such as reports)
- A framework and financing agreement for the non-UN organizations (NUNOs), such as international cooperation agencies¹¹ or international NGOs, that only have access if they pass a fiduciary and safeguards assessment, and there are additional provisions on audits etc.

The CAFI Terms of Reference describes different legal agreements signed by the different entities and accountability flows. There are certain limitations to what Trust Fund's oversight functions (its Executive Board) can do due the nature of the MOU signed between the participating UN organizations. The MOU states that the Fund is developed by the participating UN agencies who agree to establish the Executive Board and coordinate with donors so that they can contribute funds and receive reports in a single channel.

Furthermore, unlike other Trust Funds, CAFI is a **platform for policy dialogue** that brokers and signs high level political commitments in the form of Letters of intent. In these Letters of intent, **governments are accountable for the results**. This happens sometimes explicitly, for example, it is mentioned in the Letter of Intent, such as in the 2nd LoI with the DRC¹² ; or in practice : the EB has suspended funding to a country when it considered the LOI breached), while **budgets and activities are managed by Implementing Organizations (as per the legal framework described above)**. Furthermore, the second tranches of the programs depend on the performance of the programs and their release requires a decision by the EB. In such conditions, partner governments - none of which have access to the CAFI Trust Fund - expect to have an oversight and monitoring role and

⁸ As per the MOU: The implementation of the programmatic activities will be the responsibility of the Participating UN Organizations and will be carried out by each Participating UN Organization in accordance with its own applicable regulations, rules, policies and procedures (...)

⁹ Available here : <https://mptf.undp.org/document/download/15351>

¹⁰ Available here : <https://mptf.undp.org/document/download/23390>

¹¹ Available here: <https://mptf.undp.org/document/download/25034>

¹² <http://www.cafi.org/countries/democratic-republic-congo/decisive-usd-500-m-agreement-cop26-protect-dr-congos-forest>

capacity. In response, CAFI funds central coordination functions hosted by a coordinating ministry, the Presidency or the Prime minister's office.

Moreover, in the Democratic Republic of Congo a National REDD Fund, or FONAREDD had been set up before the creation of CAFI. This MPTF, with a separate MPTF account, is used by CAFI to channel the funds to DRC. As FONAREDD is a MPTF by its own accords it has a separate governance structure and legal framework, i.e. separate agreements with its implementing organizations to which CAFI is not a party. This creates an M&E accountability gap for CAFI as CAFI cannot enforce obligations set in the agreements between FONAREDD and its implementing organizations but have to rely on FONAREDD. As a new Letter of Agreement is expected to be signed between CAFI and the FONAREDD after the adoption of this Policy, some elements of their respective roles in terms of M&E will be clarified.

Finally, the legal agreements also refer to the Terms of Reference of the Trust Fund, adopted by the CAFI Executive Board¹³. This document further details the roles of the Administrative Agent, the Executive Board and the Secretariat among others regarding monitoring, evaluation and learning.

This setup has implications on the way monitoring, evaluations and learning responsibilities are shared across different organs of the Trust Fund and on different levels, from the regional to the national and programme levels.

¹³ <http://www.cafi.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/2021%2012%20-%20CAFI%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20ENG%20-%20Revised%20December%202021.pdf>

5. The CAFI Results and M&E framework

5.1. The Trust Fund’s logical framework

CAFI uses the United Nations Results-based Management (RBM) terminology for the construction of its results framework (see figure 2 above).

The terms of reference (ToR) of the CAFI Trust fund identify **two impacts: emission reductions and removals** from the forest and land use sector and **development co-benefits**.

The ToR also identify seven outcomes contribute to the achievement of impacts based on the assessment of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. These assessments are part of the REDD+ analytical work that spanned several years at the global, regional and country levels. These assessments have been supported mainly by the UNREDD program, the FCPF and other REDD+ Readiness support. One relevant piece of the readiness support focused on the development of REDD+ strategies that aimed to identify deforestation and forest degradation drivers and propose measures that would address them.

These seven outcomes are:

1. Sustainable **agricultural** practices lead to less land conversion and increased food security¹⁴;
2. Sustainable alternatives to current **wood energy** practices are adopted;
3. **Forestry sector and protected areas** institutions and stakeholders have the capacity and the legal framework to promote, monitor and enforce sustainable management of forests;
4. Future **infrastructure and mining** projects minimize their overall footprint on forests;
5. **Land use planning** decisions ensure a balanced representation of sectoral interests and keep forests standing, and better **tenure** security does not incentivize forest loss by individuals, communities or companies;
6. **Population growth and migration** to forests and forest fronts are slowed down;
7. Better inter-ministerial coordination and **governance** resulting in a permitting, enforcement and fiscal regime of economic activities that do not push economic actors to forest conversion and illegal activities; and a business climate favourable to forest-friendly investments

For each of the above outcomes several possible outputs are proposed.

Outcomes	Outputs (indicative – do not apply to each country)
Sustainable agricultural practices lead to less land conversion and increased food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks guide , regulate and enforce a limitation of the conversion of forests into agricultural concessions • More intensive agriculture is supported and directed towards savannahs areas • Rural farmers are supported so that food security and incomes are safer • Private sector is supported to direct its investments in savannahs areas

¹⁴ A bibliography compiled for the agriculture sector may be found in Annex A, and will be complemented through the dedicated learning platform (see “Learning” section below)

<p>Sustainable alternatives to current wood energy practices are adopted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks guide, regulate and enforce the sustainable management of, and alternatives, to fuelwood • Improved energy solutions are more available and used • Production of sustainable fuelwood increases • Jobs are created along the value chain of sector of improved energy solutions • Household spending on energy decreases
<p>Forestry sector and protected areas institutions and stakeholders have the capacity and the legal framework to promote, monitor and enforce sustainable management of forests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks guide, regulate and enforce the sustainable management of forests • Percentage of forest areas under sustainable management plans increase • Share of industrial and artisanal illegal timber decreases • Percentage of areas under certification (vs non-certified) increases • Surfaces of sustainable community forestry increase • Timber traceability improves • Capacity to monitor and track land use increases
<p>Future infrastructure, hydrocarbons and mining projects minimize their overall footprint on forests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are developed and applied during siting and development/exploitation infrastructure, hydrocarbons and mining investment and include requirements to undertake participatory and inclusive approaches to planning and implementation
<p>Land use planning decisions ensure a balanced representation of sectoral interests and keep forests standing, and better tenure security does not incentivize forest loss by individuals, communities or companies¹⁵</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms are enhanced to document and map land uses, land allocations and their overlaps • Land-use planning instruments protect high-value forests • Tenure rights are secured, conditioned on the sustainable management of forests • Customary authorities practice sustainable land use and allocation
<p>Population growth and migration to forests and forest fronts are slowed down</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements from and to forest fronts are better understood • Access to modern family planning services increased • Family planning awareness amongst women and men increased • Education and schooling for girls is enhanced • Opportunities for women increased
<p>Better inter-ministerial coordination and governance resulting in a permitting, enforcement and fiscal regime of economic activities that do not push economic actors to forest conversion and illegal activities;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal measures put in place to dis-incentivize forest loss • Streamlined permitting across sectors incentivize forest protection • Transparency in land allocations increased • Participation of civil society stakeholders is enhanced • Transparency about implementation of national investments framework enhanced

¹⁵ Land use planning and land tenure appear as one outcome in the CAFI Terms of reference. Only a revision of the ToR and adoption can decouple these two.

and a business climate favourable to forest-friendly investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National investment frameworks anchored in national development policies and institutional fabric
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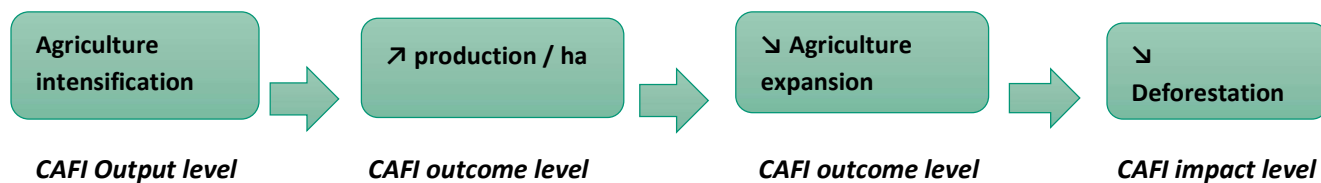
One important assumption behind this framework is that **not every country will address all outcomes (nor all of the outputs within the outcomes) through CAFI's programs**. This is because one driver may be present in one country and not in another.

- Country-specific theories of change are developed in National Investment Frameworks, that are endorsed by the CAFI Executive Board and the basis for negotiations of Letters of Intent. To note, CAFI does not intend to fund all possible actions to address all drivers, but rather help governments have a coherent vision in addressing the drivers with CAFI and other funding. This means that a driver may be present in a county- and a specific program is required to address it - but it is already being funded by another entity or does not represent a strategic entry point for CAFI.
- Programme-specific theories of change are based on the IO's assessment of specific drivers. The robustness of these theories of change are reviewed prior to programme approval by independent evaluators, the CAFI Secretariat and the Executive Board. They are also evaluated through final evaluations of programmes, because outcome-level results cannot be measured in the first few years of a programme.

Each level of the causal chain was constructed using assumptions and risks. A short example is provided below for the outcome "Sustainable **agricultural** practices lead to less land conversion and increased food security"

Text Box 1 : Rationale, assumptions and risks for CAFI’s “Agriculture” outcome

Necessary agricultural intensification must, in a REDD+ logic, be accompanied by specific policies and measures to limit the expansion of areas converted to agriculture on forests (realization of the land-sparing theory as first described by the Borlaug hypothesis schematized below)



To achieve this, multiple levers must be activated in a coordinated manner, and certainly very differently depending on the actors and types of agriculture considered. In DRC, the implementation of the REDD+ National Framework Strategy in the agriculture sector relies on agricultural intensification, framed by a land-use planning process (from the macro to the micro level) integrating forest preservation and supported by positive (or even negative) incentives for the respect of zoning plans and associated natural resource management rules. The measured integration of small-scale, more labor-intensive perennial crops allows for the retention of shifting agriculture and the absorption of excess labor (population growth, migrants). Sustainable land management is also supported by collective or even individual land tenure security, and conditional support for the development of value chains.

Levers of action may be : (conditional) support for the improvement of agricultural practices and the development of value chains, incentives (such as Payment for Ecosystem Services), sustainability criteria, zoning, identification and land security, traceability, deforestation alerts, special economic zones. *Note : these do not all appear in the “agriculture “ outcome of the CAFI theory of change.*

One main identified risk is the so-called “rebound effect” (or “negative land sparing”), where agricultural intensification leads to more agricultural expansion). This risk depends on various factors:

- Market access and the ability to sell surplus production, without which there is very little incentive to increase the area under cultivation (apart from an improvement in family food security, which has a relatively limited impact): the existence of transport routes, the ability to carry out transport in a time and at a cost that is appropriate for the perishable foodstuffs transported (remoteness, the context in terms of "hassle", artificial price control by certain interests, etc.), the sensitivity of prices to an increase in production, etc.
 - Constraints in terms of the labor force needed to increase the area under cultivation, whether family or contracted, provided that the latter is available. In this context, positive and negative migratory movements must be taken into account. Technical and agronomic improvements can influence this factor
 - Capital constraints for the necessary investments (seeds, tools, contractual labor). This capital can come from profits made through agricultural activity or from income from outside the sector (traders, teachers, etc.), from subsidies, from loans;
 - Constraints on available land (only applicable in very densely populated areas such as the DRC’s Kivu.
 - Other risks such as unwillingness to invest or ability to access loans
-

This logical framework is used to structure and monitor programs that the CAFI Trust Fund supports. It has been the basis of the National Strategies and Investment Frameworks that partner countries have developed and that represent preconditions for the negotiations and signature of the political agreements (Letters of intent).

☞ The CAFI Results Framework provides the list of indicators at impact, outcome and output levels. It is annexed to this Policy and can undergo revisions adopted by the CAFI Executive Board.

5.2. Letters of Intent

The Letters of Intent (LoI) signed between CAFI and partner governments contain political and programmatic milestones. There is naturally a certain level of overlap between the outcomes/outputs of the CAFI Fund and the milestones, but letters of intent are political instruments signed at the highest political level which impacts their content and there are several differences with the outcomes and outputs listed above. For example, some milestones are aspirational, and their language is not as tight as the outputs and outcomes, while some others reflect political priorities of the moment when the letter of intent was signed. But as the LOIs are the basis for the policy dialogue, the milestones are monitored and methodologies (including indicators) are developed with the partner countries to measure progress. This add another layer to the CAFI's M&E framework and will be presented in subsequent chapters.

In addition to these indicators, for each Letter of intent a specific milestone monitoring matrix is developed with the partner countries with indicators (results and process) to be able to measure progress towards jointly defined objectives of the LOI.

☞ The CAFI website is the repository of Letters of Intent, including their milestones.

5.3 National Investment Frameworks

National Governmental structures monitor the implementation of their National Investments Frameworks and strategies. Programmes funded by CAFI report on how they contribute to these frameworks.

6. Implementation arrangements

6.1. Processes

In a complex system such as CAFI's, that combines investments on the ground coupled with policy dialogue, programmes processes, results risk and safeguards but also policy commitments are monitored, evaluated and/or verified. The section below summarizes what is monitored, evaluated and verified based on the type of exercise, with a greater emphasis on results and performance as risks and safeguards are treated in separate documents. This is further developed in the CAFI ME&L Guidelines.

	Monitoring			Evaluation	Verification	
Type	Portfolio	Programme	Milestones of Letters of Intent		Milestones of Letters of Intent	Results
Performed by	Secretariat	Implementing organization	Government and CAFI EB	Independent consultants or firms	Independent firm	3 rd party certification
Frequency	Periodic, regular			Episodic	As defined in Letters of Intent or by governance bodies	Systematic to trigger results-based payments
Function	Tracking/oversight			Assessment	Assessment	
Purpose	Spots delays, concerns Learning, improve effectiveness and efficiency in portfolio management, communicate on combined portfolio results	Improve efficiency and effectiveness, provide information for reprogramming to improve outcomes	Accountability, enhance commitment to reach milestones, unlocks issues	Improve effectiveness, impact, value for money, future programming, strategy and policy making	Assesses level of achievement of milestones	Assesses selected claimed results in an independent way

Focus	Governance, financial and results delivery	Inputs, outputs, processes, workplans (operational implementation)	Political engagement	Effectiveness, relevance, impact, cost-effectiveness	Specific, quantitative, time-bound achievements	Specific, quantitative, time-bound results
Methods	Routine review of reports, registers, administrative databases	Routine review of reports, registers, administrative databases, field observations		Scientific, rigorous research design, complex and intensive	Rigorous, independent, whole spectrum of milestones	Rigorous, independent, targeted results

Information source		Routine or surveillance system, field observation reports, progress reports, rapid assessment, program review meetings (steering committees)	Joint progress reports	Same sources used for monitoring, plus population-based surveys, vital registration, special studies		Same sources used for monitoring plus GIS data when possible
Cost	Consistent, recurrent costs spread across implementation period		Episodic, undertaken at midpoint and end of implementation period	Episodic and scheduled in Letters of Intent	Episodic, scheduled to allow payment when claim is verified	

6.1.1 Monitoring

Monitoring principles

Monitoring is the continuous management function that provides decision-makers, managers and key stakeholders with regular feedback on the consistency or discrepancy between planned and actual activities and programme performance, and on the internal and external factors affecting results.

The CAFI Fund derives its guidance from the UNDG Results Based Management (RBM) handbook¹⁶, which highlights that monitoring:

- involves regular and systematic assessment based on participation, reflection, feedback, data collection, analysis of actual performance (using indicators) and regular reporting.
- makes it possible to gauge where programmes stand in terms of international norms and standards. It helps understand where programmes are in relationship to results planned, to track progress (on the basis of intended results and agreed indicators), and to identify issues and analyze relevant information and reports that become available as implementation occurs.
- is used to fulfill accountability requirements; communicate, review and report results to stakeholders; adjust approaches to implementation if necessary; and inform decision-making.
- feeds into evaluation and real-time learning.

The challenges of monitoring development outcomes have been largely documented and relate to transparency, accuracy, completeness and consistency of monitoring. Underpinning these challenges are the over-reliance and burdensome process of paper-based post-facto reporting, the inherent conflicts of interest between the functions of implementing organizations that both implement and report on results, difficulties in verifying claimed results, challenges in establishing causal links between output and outcome and outcomes and impacts, and challenges in attributing results beyond the activity and output level. To these are added challenges inherent to the Central African region, amongst which weak capacities and poor and inconsistent national statistical data.

Because of these challenges, a new system will be developed and tested in parallel to the existing system, and progressively scaled up. As highlighted in Text box 2 below, this new system of monitoring protocols will rely on mobile data collection for output-level results¹⁷, and sample-based 3rd party verifications prioritizing instances where data is missing or questionable.

¹⁶ <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/unsdg-results-based-management-handbook>

¹⁷ See Annex B.

Text box 2 : Stronger M&E systems for CAFI standardized programmes

Programme based on Payment for environmental services (PES) and possibly other standardized CAFI programmes will have particular needs in terms of monitoring and assessing, in a cost-effective and timely manner:

- (i) events of deforestation in key areas in near-real time
- (ii) the delivery of commitments from the various environmental services providers (communities, companies or individuals).

This is required in the challenging context of tropical forest countries where human resources capacity is low and internet connection challenging. To date, while various unrelated partial solutions exist, there is no integrated system that caters adequately to the specific overall needs of PES programmes in tropical forest countries. Existing programmes do not make optimal use of new spatial technologies. These technologies can enable more user-friendly, effective and efficient monitoring and adaptive management. Two key technologies (mobile data collection and web based remote sensing services) will be used by CAFI to develop a centralized system to manage information starting with PES but to be extended to all other standardized programmes (see Annex B).

For standardized programmes such as the CAFI Payment for Environmental Services programme, **monitoring and verification will be operated through a centralized information platform**, with the following being developed

- a. A standardized list of mandatory indicators at outcome and output levels
- b. Mandatory guidance and protocols for establishing baselines, monitoring and reporting, including the requirement to provide GPS coordinates and geo-referenced photographs
- c. A system to collect, centralize, analyse and communicate this geospatial data, especially at output level
- d. Protocols for verification or certification of the achievements of targets by for 3rd party, independent organizations. The periodicity of these verifications will be decided programme per programme

What is monitored?

Programme results and factors affecting their performance, programme performance, risks, safeguards, fund mobilization, milestones of letters of Intent are monitored by various actors of the CAFI system, as explained below.

a) Programmes results and factors affecting performance

are primarily monitored by IOs using their internal processes and resources and in line with their institutional M&E strategies and approach, whose description is required in programme documents.

☞ Guidelines and protocols for monitoring of programme results by IOs to be part of the CAFI ME&L Guidelines and tools

b) Monitoring of results against CAFI indicators

is performed by Implementing organizations and compiled by the CAFI Secretariat. The CAFI Secretariat compiles the results provided by each programme as per the indicators in their programme documents, that include CAFI indicators. If necessary, the CAFI Secretariat funds dedicated studies or programmes to obtain results data, especially at impact and outcome levels.

☞ The CAFI Results Framework is adopted by the Executive Board and defines the CAFI indicators at the 3 levels of impact, outcome and output. Additional information to clarify why, how and by whom these indicators are monitored and reported will be developed and annexed to the MEL Guidelines

c) Project and portfolio performance

The CAFI Manual of Operations¹⁸ mandates the CAFI Secretariat to “develop performance criteria for implementing agencies and programs to justify decision on disbursement of subsequent tranches to agencies **Project and portfolio performance is monitored by** the Secretariat and presented annually, accordingly to their progress against criteria below, whose definitions provided in [Annex C](#).

¹⁸ Available here: [How we work | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

Criteria	How criteria translates into project performance monitoring by the Secretariat
Compliance	Conformity with CAFI programme reporting templates and reporting deadlines.
Clarity	Clarity of annual and semi-annual programme reports
Coherence	The extent to which the programme ensures compatibility, coordination and complementarity with other programmes and initiatives in the sector (across the region) and country through its interventions.
Completeness	The extent to which all indicators in the logical framework are reported against, and to which the relevant CAFI indicators are used in this framework
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual disbursement rate compared to PTBA • Cumulative disbursement rate and its annual evolution • Share of operational and indirect costs • Time lap between fund disbursement and beginning of implementation • Relation between resources (costs, human resources, time and other resources) spent and outputs/results achieved
Effectiveness	The extent to which the programme has achieved its intended results <u>at output level</u>
Measurability	The extent to which the programme reports on all the indicators it has defined in its results framework and provides evidence that allows doing so.
Evidence and accuracy	Providing proof of claimed results so that they can be independently verified.
Country ownership	Measurable by extent and level of government participation in programme steering committees
Equity for beneficiaries	<p>The extent to which the programme disaggregates its indicators per type of beneficiaries in annual/semi-annual reports</p> <p>The extent to which the programme demonstrates and reports on actions taken to integrate and benefit underrepresented groups</p>
Gender	Estimated each year through five criteria : conception, budget, implementation (incl socio-economic outputs), M&E and governance/participation ¹⁹

¹⁹ Examples are provided in FONAREDD and CAFI consolidated annual reports

Inclusive and effective governance	<p>The project complies with the project governance modalities outlined in the PRODOC (e.g., organizes meetings at the correct frequency and with listed stakeholders) and implements the decisions adopted by the programme governance bodies.</p> <p>By acting as observers in project steering committee meetings, the Secretariat monitors inclusive representation and participation of stakeholders, including people who are marginalized or with low representation (women, Indigenous peoples, youth)</p>
Risk mitigation	<p>The Secretariat identifies potential new risks and assesses the actual implementation of measures taken to mitigate identified risks.</p>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the methods and means of verification used to report results are clear and can be accessed • The extent to which results are publicly available
Visibility and communication	<p>The extent to which communication products showcase CAFI</p>
The extent to which unintended positive results are reported and shared	<p>Compiled through annual and semi-annual project reports present any unexpected results of the intervention.</p>
The extent to which unintended positive results are reported and shared	<p>At output level</p>

d) Agency performance

Agency performance is derived from aggregating projects performance as per the above. This information is considered by the CAFI Executive Board to inform its funding decisions.

e) Safeguards

Monitoring of the existence of safeguards tools is performed by the Secretariat based on information provided in projects annual reports. This includes the existence of

- A screening or preliminary social and environmental assessment
- An evaluation of the social and environmental impact
- A feedback and grievance redress mechanism
- A socio-environmental management plan
- A strategic study for a new national policy

Monitoring the existence of safeguards tools is different from potential assessment of their implementation. Such assessment can be discrete exercises or part of larger programme evaluations. This means that the existence of a tool (eg : a complaints and recourse mechanism) is a more rapid exercise than the assessment of the application and usefulness of this tool.

f) **Risks**

Risks are monitored depending on their type. The CAFI Risk Management Strategy describes primary responsibilities, risk ownership and escalation.

g) **Milestones of Letters of Intent**

Milestones of Letters of Intent are jointly monitored, both a technical and a political level, by the CAFI Executive Board and partner countries. In addition, implementing organizations monitor and report how their projects contribute to the achievement of milestones.

6.1.2 Reporting

Reporting principles

Reporting obligations are framed by the legal agreements with UN organisations, the World Bank, cooperation agencies or other international organizations.

What is reported?

There are two types of reports submitted by implementing organizations:

- 1) Financial reporting, for which UN and non-UN implementing organizations have different frequency of reporting
- 2) Results, risks and safeguards are reported in annual and semi-annual reports and at the closure of projects.

Reporting requirements Summary table

3) Reporting requirements - CAFI funded projects (including via FONAREDD in the DRC)		
Type of report	Narrative report (Word)	Financial Report
Format	Word document sent to CAFI Sec ²⁰	Data sent to MPTFO via UNEX and copy to CAFI Sec by e-mail
Template to follow	CAFI / Templates for implementing organizations	As sent by MPTF
Language	French or English	

²⁰ And FONAREDD Secretariat for programmes funded through the FONAREDD in the DRC

Timeline of Submission	UNOS	Annual (30 March) and semi-annual (30 August)	Annual (30 April)
	NUNOS	Annual (30 March) and semi-annual (30 August)	Quarterly as per Gateway windows
Contact info	CAFI Secretariat		MPTFO Portfolio Manager
Conformity checklist	CAFI / Templates for implementing organizations		
During Project Closure	Final Narrative Reports submitted by 30th April of following operational closure year.		Certified final financial statements and final financial reports submitted by 31st May of following financial closure year.

☞ The CAFI Manual of Operations²¹ describes the different reporting requirements (financial and narrative) according to the type of implementing organization

☞ Guidelines and templates for reporting are compiled in the CAFI ME&L Guidelines and tools. They vary according to the type of standardized project and may be adjusted annually.

The CAFI Secretariat compiles and aggregates this information in the consolidated CAFI Fund Annual report.

6.1.3 Evaluations

Purpose

The primary purpose of evaluations is to determine the relevance, impact, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency and sustainability of interventions (eg programmes or projects) and contributions. Evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the organizations of the UN system and its members.

Evaluation principles

As per the UNDG Handbook, evaluations are assessments, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance, etc.

²¹ Available here [How we work | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

They focus on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors of causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof.

When well-conducted by expert teams, based on clear protocols for evaluators, **and** when findings and recommendations are discussed and followed-up by implementing organizations, evaluations can be critical for project/programme improvement, accountability and learning. They are part of the learning system and ensure that they help review (and revise as necessary) a project theory of change²² and the conditions for project performance.

Trusted, high-quality evidence produced from credible evaluations helps to inform CAFI investments, policies, structure, performance, processes and strategies by informing and guiding the Fund for its day-to-day operations and providing strategic guidance to the Executive Board, the Secretariat and implementing organizations. This, in turn, ensures CAFI investments have the most possible positive impact.

What is evaluated

There are 2 main types of evaluations of programmes under the CAFI legal framework.

a) Evaluation of projects or programmes

Different evaluations occur at various stages of the life cycle of a project or programme.

1. Evaluations of the quality of project proposals **prior to approval** and of the compliance with the project document template
2. **Mid-term** evaluations of programmes:
 - a. Evaluations (internal or external) mandated by the implementing organizations, as per their evaluation rules and procedures **When they are not directly commissioned and managed by CAFI, all evaluations above should be submitted to the CAFI Board via its Secretariat, unless implementing organizations rules and procedures specifically forbid this.** Best practices in these evaluations include sharing Terms of reference with the Secretariat and the CAFI Executive Board for comments (FONAREDD Secretariat and Technical Committee for FONAREDD projects in the DRC), and inviting the Secretariat to participate in meetings with evaluator through reference groups or similar.
 - b. Independent evaluation of project and programme performance and financial delivery, commissioned and managed by CAFI (or the FONAREDD in the DRC) through their Secretariats, to inform the release of the second tranches of programmes
3. Final evaluations of projects (similarly to a) and b) above, these can be mandated by implementing organizations or by the Secretariats)
4. Ad-hoc evaluations are made possible at the request of donors: “Ad-hoc evaluations may be mandated with a view to determine whether results are being or have been achieved and whether donors’

²² Note that under standardized programmes, the adoption of a standard theory of change and associated results framework and performance indicators will be required.

contributions have been used for their intended purposes”.²³ Decisions are made by donors, with priority informed by projects where evidence is weak or there are specific concerns about implementation

b) Mid-term evaluations of the CAFI Fund

A mid-term evaluations of the CAFI Fund are mandated by CAFI Terms of Reference. The evaluation terms of reference are drafted by the Secretariat and adopted by the CAFI Executive Board²⁴. Beyond evaluating CAFI’s performance as per the OECD evaluation criteria, mid-term evaluations of the CAFI Fund can include selected programme-specific analyses, as well as country-specific analyses that highlight how the portfolio of approved and active projects and programmes have come together to address a country-specific drivers.

As CAFI’s programming approach evolves and standardized programmes become more prevalent, evaluations will progressively focus on evaluating the linkages between output and outcomes, while 3rd party verifications will focus on verifying claimed results, mostly at output level. Verification will become increasingly important as CAFI rolls out results-based payment programmes such as payment for environmental services.

A regional programme for evaluating CAFI’s effectiveness and efficiency to address the direct and indirect causes of deforestation can be developed to develop and implement a methodology and structure for systematic data analysis and impact assessment, with the involvement of national universities through Masters and PhD opportunities. Partnerships with regional and international universities may also be envisaged, as well as South-South cooperation with advanced countries in other regions²⁵.

Ensuring that evaluations feed back into learning and adaptive system

At project level, to encourage learning and uptake of lessons learned, a formal management response is undertaken by implementing organizations including matrices detailing how evaluation recommendations have been followed. The Secretariat reviews these matrices and organizes meetings to discuss challenges with project or portfolio governance structures. A list of all evaluations of projects performed to date is maintained and made available to the Executive Board

At Fund level, the Secretariat compiles evaluations findings into lessons learned briefings. These briefings are prepared punctually at the EB request, but no more than once a year and according to priorities. Other means to share lessons learned are described in the Learning section.

²³ Page 11, paragraph 4 of the MoU

²⁴ The first CAFI mid-term evaluation is available on the CAFI website here [Mid-term review of the CAFI Fund | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

²⁵ Such as Ecuador in Latin America

Summaries of roles and responsibilities in evaluations

The table below summarizes the differentiated roles that actors of the CAFI system have in different types of evaluations

	Implementing organizations	CAFI Secretariat	CAFI Board	National governments	Civil society stakeholders
1 Quality of project prior to approval	<p>Cooperates to provide additional information if unclear</p> <p>Reports annually on recommendations of the EB</p>	<p>-Develops terms of reference and criteria²⁶</p> <p>-Ensures anonymity of independent evaluators</p> <p>-Manages contract</p> <p>-Provide secure way for EB members to access report</p>	<p>Reviews evaluation and adopt decision that reflect its priority recommendations</p>		<p>In DRC: civil society represented in Technical Committee that receives the reviews and produces resolutions</p> <p>In other countries:</p>
2a Mid-term evaluations of projects mandated by IO	<p>Informs CAFI Secretariat of timing of evaluations</p> <p>Communicates report and management response unless rules specifically prohibit it</p>	<p>Provide secure way for EB members to access report</p> <p>Work with IO to ensure recommendations are used or responded to</p> <p>Summarizes top/recurring recommendations for EB and flags risks</p>	<p>Engage as necessary with agencies directors on priority concerns</p>	<p>Cooperate to provide information to evaluators</p> <p>Takes note of evaluations</p>	<p>Proactively approached by evaluators</p> <p>Cooperate to provide information</p> <p>Takes note of evaluations</p>

²⁶ Publicly available

2b Mid-term evaluations of projects commissioned by Secretariat	<p>Cooperate to provide information</p> <p>Considers recommendation and prepare responses as needed</p> <p>Reports annually on follow-up to recommendations</p>	<p>Provide secure way for EB members to access report</p> <p>Develops terms of reference and criteria</p> <p>Manages recruitment and contract</p> <p>Summarizes top/recurring recommendations for EB and flags risks</p>	<p>Takes formal note of report and adopt decision</p> <p>Engage as necessary with agencies directors on priority concerns</p>	<p>Cooperate to provide information to evaluators</p> <p>Engage as necessary with IO at various levels on priority concerns</p>	<p>Proactively approached</p> <p>Cooperate to provide information</p> <p>Takes note of evaluations</p> <p>Monitors the follow-up to recommendations in particular areas of concerns for civil society</p>
3a Final evaluations of projects	<p>Same as 2-a</p>	<p>Same as 2-a</p>	<p>Same as 2-a</p>	<p>Same as 2-a</p>	<p>Same as 2-a</p>
3b Final evaluations of projects	<p>Same as 2-b</p>	<p>Same as 2-b</p>	<p>Same as 2-b</p>	<p>Same as 2-b</p>	<p>Same as 2-b</p>
4 Ad-hoc evaluations requested by donors	<p>Same as 2-b</p>	<p>Manages recruitment and contract</p>	<p>Develops terms of reference and criteria</p> <p>Takes formal note of report and adopt decision as needed</p>		<p>Proactively approached</p> <p>Cooperate to provide information</p> <p>Takes note of evaluations</p> <p>Monitors the follow-up to recommendations in particular areas of concerns for civil society</p>
5 Mid term evaluations of the CAFI Fund	<p>Cooperate fully to provide information</p>	<p>Cooperate fully to provide information</p> <p>Draft terms of reference</p>	<p>Cooperate fully to provide information</p>	<p>Cooperate fully to provide information</p>	<p>Proactively approached</p> <p>Cooperate to provide information</p>

		<p>Manages recruitment and contract</p> <p>Reports regularly to the Executive Board on follow-up to recommendations</p>	<p>Review and approve Terms of reference</p> <p>Constitutes an advisory group to monitor evaluation</p> <p>Prepares response as needed</p>		<p>Takes note of evaluations</p> <p>Monitors the follow-up to recommendations in particular areas of concerns for civil society</p>
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Roles and responsibilities in different types of evaluations

☞ Guidance on evaluations for evaluators to be further detailed through guiding questions, including as per the criteria below, in the CAFI MEL Guidelines.

6.1.4 Verifications

Principles

Verifications are ad-hoc, independent assessments verifying a claimed result.

Large discrepancies between a reported result and a verified result are an indication that the entity claiming results (an implementing organization claiming project results or country claiming results-based payments) does not have a sufficiently robust monitoring and reporting system.

The use of verification is expected to become more prevalent as CAFI's programmatic approach develops (e.g. verification will be an important part of the PES project).

Verifications differ from audits, that assess the adequacy of management controls to ensure the economical and efficient use of resources; the safeguarding of assets; the reliability of financial and other information; the compliance with regulations, rules and established policies; the effectiveness of risk management; and the adequacy of organizational structures, systems and processes. By contrast, evaluations are more closely linked to monitoring for development results and learning, while audits focus on compliance.²⁷

What is verified

CAFI undertakes two types of verifications:

6.1.5.1 Verification of milestones of the Letter of Intent

Independent verification of the achievements of milestones are mandated by the Letter of Intent and contracted by the CAFI Secretariat. They have been undertaken twice in the DRC (2019 and [2020](#)), while the Gabon verification is expected to be finalized in early 2022. The terms of reference of the verifications are agreed to jointly by the two signatories of the letter of Intent. Verification reports contain not only information about the level of achievement of milestones but also an assessment of solutions that are planned or found to address delays in the achievement of milestones

6.1.5.2 Verification of the results of selected projects

²⁷ <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>

Results under performance-based payment schemes are verified. These can happen

- at CAFI’s impact level, such as in the verification and certification of claimed results in terms of CO2 emission in the results-based agreement between CAFI and Gabon
- at output level, for example through the payment for environmental services (PES) project. The protocols for 3rd party verification are described in the CAFI MEL Guidelines and protocols

Additional ad-hoc verifications at output level can be undertaken punctually at the request CAFI Executive Board and as part of mandated evaluations, using satellite imagery and field verification and sampling methods.

6.2. Roles and responsibilities

A summary table is presented below to set out the ME&L responsibilities purely related to projects, risks and safeguards and those appearing in Letters of Intent.

Entity	Primary ME&L responsibility
Implementing organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a CAFI-aligned Theory of change for projects as part of project proposal - Establishes baseline data - Designs and implement a budgeted MEL plan according to its process and monitoring protocol (for standardized programmes) - Submits financial and narrative reports to CAFI Secretariat and MPTF according to reporting obligations - Shares results through mobile data reporting, with GPS coordinates and geo-referenced images at output level (eg: PES programme) - Communicate, if procedures allow, share the results of its internal evaluations and audits - Supports, through implementation of programmes and projects, the achievement of “programmatic” milestones set out in Letters of Intent - Document and share lessons learned (successes and failures) - Revise theory of change, processes and activities as per lessons learned
FONAREDD Secretariat	The respective roles and responsibilities of the CAFI and FONAREDD Secretariats will be clarified in a Letter of Agreement between the two
National Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in project monitoring as per the MEL plan defined in the project documents - Responsible for political milestones set out in Letter of Intent - Contributes inputs to lessons sharing
CAFI Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides guidance, support and training on how to implement the MEL Policy - Establish protocols and methodologies for baselines, monitoring and reporting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develops theory of change for standardized projects and list of mandatory indicators - Develop and provide specific training on the use of reporting templates and tools (paper-based and mobile data collection– see Annex B) - Develops templates for project documents and annual and semi-annual reports - Review the projects ToC and logframe as part of project proposal review process - Reviews and clears baseline and target data - Develop criteria-based tools to monitor project performance, implement and report to the Board through scorecard - Reviews narrative reports and reports to the EB on their conformity - Develops an integrated spatial M&E system centralized information system to collect, analyze and showcase data received through mobile data collection - Compiles results at portfolio level and analyses data and reports to the Executive Board - Commissions and manages independent project proposals reviews, mid-term and final evaluations - Draft terms of reference for CAFI Fund mid-term evaluations - Develops tools to support the joint monitoring of milestones of Letters of Intent - Compiles lessons learned as requested by the EB and no more than every year related to priorities defined by the EB (thematic : eg agriculture ; programmatic etc) as per monitoring, evaluations and verifications and experiences
<p>CAFI Executive Board</p>	<p><i>Projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approves projects (including their CAFI-aligned ToC and logframes) - Approves annual report including portfolio-level data and analysis (donors) decide and mandate ad-hoc project evaluations - Fund projects that support the achievement of Letters of Intent - Contributes inputs to lessons sharing by IOs - <p><i>Letters of Intent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in Annual partnership reviews with countries - Approve any modification of the strategic direction of CAFI and its overall results framework - Organize annual reviews with individual Partner Countries where stakeholders are invited to discuss progress toward performance targets as agreed in the Letters of Intent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review performance targets with Partner Countries based on each Letter of Intent <p><i>Risks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the Fund risk management strategy - Adopts the risk dashboard semi-annually
Independent evaluators/ certification firms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and conduct project proposals reviews - Design and conduct mid-term and final evaluations - Verify milestones - Verify and certify claimed results according to protocols established in MEL guidelines & protocols
Beneficiaries /project stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in project monitoring as per the MEL plan defined in the project documents - Participate voluntarily in evaluations designed to measure benefits for stakeholders.

6.2.1. Implementing organizations (IOs)

Implementing organizations have the primary responsibility for monitoring project results and reporting on these. They cooperate willingly on externally mandated evaluations with a view of learning.

Monitoring of projects by IOs

IOs monitor their projects using their internal processes and resources and in line with their institutional M&E strategies and approach, whose description is required in project document. For standardized programmes such as the PES programme or zero deforestation programme, the CAFI Secretariat will create monitoring protocols to be followed by IOs as part of the ME&L Guidelines and tools.

The ability of IOs to follow these protocols will be critical in the performance-based payment programmes.

Reporting obligations by IOs

Project financial and reporting obligations are described in a dedicated chapter of CAFI Manual of Operations²⁸.

Internal audits of IOs

The MoU specifies that

“The activities of [...] each Participating UN Organization in relation to the Fund will be audited by their respective internal and external auditors in accordance with their own financial regulations and rules. The corresponding external and internal audit reports will be disclosed publicly unless the relevant policies and procedures of each of the relevant Participants provide otherwise.”

Evaluations by IOs

Evaluation requirements mandated by IOs are subject to their internal rules and procedures.²⁹ The CAFI project document template requires one paragraph specifically dedicated to Evaluation strategies, including the timing of anticipated internal /external audits.

All evaluations should be part of a learning system and ensure that it helps review (and revise as necessary) a project theory of change and the conditions for project performance.

6.2.2. CAFI Secretariat

Responsibility of the CAFI Secretariat in terms of M&E

As per its Manual of operations³⁰, the responsibilities of the CAFI Secretariat in terms of MEL are described in the table below, to which have been added information about the tools/ platforms and their availability as well as frequency of use.

Monitoring of reporting requirements

Decisions adopted by the CAFI Executive Board (as well as, in the DRC, decisions adopted by the FONAREDD Steering Committee) on disbursements of funding will take into account the quality of the narrative reports as

²⁸ Available here [How we work | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

²⁹A full list of evaluation guidance will be compiled for each Implementing organization.

³⁰ Available here : [How we work | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

well as reported expenditure levels. The Terms of Reference of the CAFI Fund³¹ state that compliance with reporting obligations is one of the conditions for requests for disbursement of additional tranches of funding.

In order to inform these decisions, a **compliance matrix of financial and narrative reports**, by project and by agency, is compiled by the CAFI Secretariat (with the support of the FONAREDD Secretariat for projects in the DRC financed through this channel) and presented to the Executive Board at the time of approval of CAFI's annual report (i.e., in June every year).

Role as per Manual of Operations ³²	Mechanisms, tools, platforms and availability	Frequency & comments
Results		
1. Support the EB in monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of the milestones in each country's LOI	Milestone matrix shared with - EB ahead of country sessions of EB meetings - regularly with the country working groups	Ongoing
2. Participate in the monitoring of the portfolio of CAFI-funded projects	1) CAFI Sec reviews the quality of project proposals and the logic between inputs, outputs and outcomes 1) CAFI Sec sits in project steering committees and makes reports accessible to donors on Google Drive (eg here) 2) CAFI Sec on Steering and Technical Committee of FONAREDD, with reports accessible to donors on Google Drive (here)	Rolling basis Rolling basis – Project steering committees usually occur at least twice a year (i.e. 60 meetings a year) There are approximately 10 FONAREDD Technical Committee meetings a year
3. Organize and implement the assurance plans under the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) framework for cash transfers to other implementing organizations	Internal documents	Rolling basis

³¹ <http://www.cafi.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/2021%2012%20-%20CAFI%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20ENG%20-%20Revised%20December%202021.pdf>

³² In the case of the DRC, a specific table will be developed to clarify respective roles and responsibilities of the CAFI and FONAREDD Secretariats

4. Prepare progress reporting (annual, provisional and final) by consolidating Implementing Organization reports using the M&E scorecards and other tasks specified in the M&E framework.	Public annual reports	Annual
5. Organize mid-term and end-term independent evaluations of the Fund's performance	Independent evaluation	One was organized in 2020. Next one could be in mid-2023. Final one in 2027.
Finance		
6. Review financial reporting (annual and final) by Implementing Organization reports through the M&E scorecards.	Annual consolidated report	Annual
7. Monitoring program delivery rate and report back to the Executive Board	<p>Presentation at EB meeting (example (accessible to EB only) on slide 10 here).</p> <p>Consolidated in annual reports through project performance scorecards.</p>	Annual
8. Review and approve project budgetary revision requested by agencies below 25%.	Decisions made in the context of the Steering Committees of the programs	Ad-hoc
9. Submit to the EB budgetary revision above 25% over the allocated total budget or if there are substantial changes in the program document as described under Program and budget revisions section of the MOP below		Ad-hoc
10. Approve installments of payment based on agency performance, program document and annual workplans approved by the EB (see section on Reporting)		Ad-hoc
11. Coordinate programmatic closure of Fund and potential request for program extension with the		Ad hoc

MPTF-O, the EB and implementing organizations.		
Risks and safeguards		
12. Monitoring and risk management through the risk management dashboard.	Risk Dashboard (see here).	Ongoing, with annual reporting
13. Gender monitoring	Annual report of the CAFI Fund, based on five criteria	Annual reporting
14. Coordinate with the implementing organizations on reporting related to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment by consolidating information in the reports provided by the implementing organizations and by preparing quarterly updates to the Executive Board based on feedback received from the implementing organizations	Reporting template for IOs contains section to report on, info then consolidated into annual report of the CAFI Fund	Ongoing, with quarterly oral updates and Annual reporting
15. Coordinate with the implementing organizations on misuse of fund allegation reporting as per the Legal framework of the Trust Fund and consolidate information at the fund level from the reports provided by the implementing organizations and by preparing quarterly updates to the Executive Board based on feedback received from the implementing organizations.	Reporting template for IOs contains section to report on misuse of fund allegation. The information is consolidated into the annual report of the CAFI Fund.	Ongoing, with Annual reporting
16. Consolidate Cancun Safeguards reporting at the fund level as per the TORs of the Trust Fund	Reporting template for IOs contains section to report on the safeguards. The information is consolidated into the annual report of the CAFI Fund.	Annual reporting
17. Oversee the complaints management mechanism of the fund	Reporting template for IOs contains section to report on complaint management mechanisms. The information is consolidated into the annual report of the CAFI Fund.	Ongoing – annual reporting

	Monitor complaints at fund level on CAFI website, as per complaints mechanism in the MoP	
18. Consolidate information on complaints management mechanisms and whistleblower protection mechanisms of the implementing organizations	Reporting template for IOs contains section to report on complaints management and whistleblower protection mechanisms. The information is consolidated into the annual report of the CAFI Fund.	Annual reporting

Although implicit, the “learning” roles and responsibilities of the CAFI Secretariat is not explicitly defined in the Manual of Operations³³ (version of 2021) on which the table above is based.

However, the CAFI Secretariat compiles lessons learned in writing as requested by the EB and no more frequently than once a year, related to priorities defined by the EB (thematic : eg agriculture ; programmatic etc) and based on monitoring, evaluations and verifications and experiences.

The review of projects prior to approval (although listed under programming responsibilities of the CAFI Sec) also examines the log frame/results frameworks in the project documents developed by IO, through technical expertise and two independent reviews.

The organigram of the CAFI Secretariat in Annex D shows where ME&L functions lie

6.2.3. Executive Board (EB)

As per the CAFI Fund ToR, the EB’s role in MEL includes :

- Approve any modification of the strategic direction of CAFI and its overall results framework
- Provide general oversight of the Fund
- Approve the Fund risk management strategy
- Review Fund status and oversee the overall progress against expected results as reported by National Funds/CAFI Projects consolidated by the Secretariat (through a Risk Dashboard³⁴ and M&E Framework³⁵)
- Review performance targets with Partner Countries based on each Letter of Intent
- Commission mid-term and final independent evaluations on the overall performance of the Fund
- Approve Fund extensions and revisions of the Fund TOR (that contain CAFI’s theory of change)
- Organize annual reviews with individual Partner Countries where stakeholders are invited to discuss progress toward performance targets as agreed in the Letters of Intent
- Conduct policy dialogue at high level

³³ Available here [How we work | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

³⁴ The Executive Board approves the risk dashboard semi-annually

³⁵ Annexed to the CAFI annual report every year

Underperforming projects, whose performance is evaluated using set criteria and reported are brought to the attention of the EB during its meetings and through the submission of the FONAREDD and CAFI consolidated annual reports.

Ad-hoc evaluations by donors are also envisioned in the MoU: *“Donor(s) may, separately or jointly with other partners, take the initiative to evaluate or review their cooperation with the Administrative Agent and the Participating UN Organizations under this Memorandum of Understanding, with a view to determining whether results are being or have been achieved and whether contributions have been used for their intended purposes.”*

6.2.4. National Governments

The National Investment Frameworks define sets of intended impacts and outcomes specific to countries contexts.

Letters of intent and institutional arrangements provide information about the oversight responsibility of governments, which may be structured in different ways depending on the Letters of Intent.

In these Letters of intent, governments are accountable for the results, while budgets and activities are managed by Implementing Organizations. Furthermore, second tranches of funding to projects depend on their performance, and their release requires a decision by the CAFI Executive Board. In such conditions, partner governments, while they do not have access to the CAFI Trust Fund, have an oversight and monitoring role and capacity. To enable these functions, CAFI funds central coordination functions hosted by a coordinating ministry, the Presidency or the Prime minister’s office³⁶

7. Learning and knowledge-sharing

7.1 Principles

Learning is the responsibility of all stakeholders.

Learning is supported through a variety of tools, mechanisms, and functions, including monitoring, evaluations, verifications and audits.

CAFI’s approach to learning **is to ensure continuous and action-oriented learning**. It is not a theoretical exercise but a repeated process by which **results, processes and funding prioritization improve**.

While some degree of informal and incidental learning is inevitable (and desirable), CAFI’s learning system needs to ensure institutional memory.

Lessons are learned through the implementation of projects, including on processes and the achievement of results at various levels and their interconnection to address a country’s theory of change.

³⁶ As of March 2022, in Gabon, DRC and Republic of Congo, under different institutional arrangements

Lessons learned are based on both experts' knowledge (of or contracted by the CAFI Secretariat and implementing agencies, captured ad-hoc in various technical meetings of the Executive Board and country Working groups) and evaluation experiences that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. They highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect an intervention's performance, outcome, and impact³⁷.

While lessons learning does not solely happen in writing, lessons learned reports are prepared punctually at the EB request, but no more than once a year and according to priorities.

7.2 Learning programme

A programme on learning and adaptive management is established to

- 1) analyze data from projects (surveys and studies, monitoring and evaluation activities);
- 2) extract lessons learned as well as best practices from CAFI interventions (and potentially others) on effective and efficient projects and strategies to address the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;
- 3) ensure the diffusion of those through learning opportunities and products (scientific publications, communication material, learning material and sessions, etc).

This programme, whose Terms of reference will be annexed to this Policy when developed, will seek to partner with a network of national, regional and international research and educational institutions to analyze and complement the vast array of relevant data collected by CAFI-funded projects, bridge data gap, and support CAFI in further enhancing its theory of change and impact. This may involve supporting existing research, commissioning new ones. The learning programme will combine South-South learning, North-South/South-North learning, gap filling measures and long term capacity building, described below.

This programme will be composed a various child-projects, led by different institutions, on various thematic areas and/or geographies. An example of this may be the envisaged applied research project in collaboration with [the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (JPAL) on the design, deployment, analysis and adaptive management of CAFI's future payment for environmental services (PES) programme, using randomized control trials.

A scientific committee will support CAFI in identifying the key data gaps and related priority research questions, and in defining, overseeing and coordinating the various child-projects.

a) South-South learning

The CAFI Ministerial Declaration stipulates that *“CAFI encourages and is open to support South-South and triangular cooperation projects. Interested Third country Parties and international organisations are welcome to participate in CAFI by means of projects that aim, in particular, at capacity building and exchange of*

³⁷ Adapted from OECD (2002)

experiences and expertise in the implementation of policies that may contribute to fulfilling the objectives set by CAFI, as well as to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.”

Specific South-South cooperation projects can be established on specific programmes such as the PES programme.

Periodically, and on specific topics, South-South is organized:

- multilaterally: For example, at the discretion of the presenting Government, all partner countries are invited to attend dedicated country sessions of the Executive Board
- as country-to-country thematic exchanges. The “exchanges” organized by the SE FONAREDD (called “Cadre d’échanges et de concertation”) could be opened to implementing organizations operating outside of the DRC with similar goals (outputs and outcomes)
- regionally: CAFI’s ToR state that “An annual forum with all stakeholders will be organized to update progress, share experiences and obtain inputs. The annual forum will also be an opportunity to explore further collaboration with other Central Africa regional initiatives such as COMIFAC, ECCAS and CBFP.” This Forum is flexible in nature. It has taken the form of thematic sessions on land-use planning (Oslo, 2018 and Libreville, 2022)

b) North – south and South- North learning opportunities, depending on stakeholder demand

Also called “CAFI Dialogues”, these learning exchanges gather Governments, EB members, INGOs and research institutes. CAFI organized such exchanges as a roundtable on forestry (2018) and as a two-day dialogue hosted by GIZ in 2019 on the complex causes of forests loss in the region, the role that community forestry can have to secure lands and sustainable revenues, and possible solutions to address the growing domestic and international demand in timber.

c) Gap filling and long-term capacity building on MEL

When projects are not designed or not able to report on CAFI results indicators, especially at the outcome level, CAFI’s learning programme will explore several modalities

- 1) CAFI funds baseline studies as part of preparatory grants and feasibility studies, based on harmonized methodologies
- 2) CAFI designs and supervises research studies that provide additional data. This may be done under the learning programme. These studies
 - are based on state of the art and agreed methodology
 - seek economies of scale and replication across countries and projects
 - to the most possible extent, utilize and build the capacity in local and regional universities in the Central African region to build their capacities

7.3 Making information accessible and centralized

Learning needs to rely on accessible, centralized, curated documentation that ranges from articles published in peer-reviewed literature to internal audits or evaluations. Because information ranges from fully public to internal to the Executive Board, CAFI's learning system will manage differentiated access to information.

The CAFI Secretariat, organizes a system that makes the following information more accessible:

1. A database of monitoring and evaluation data from the various CAFI-supported projects (cf. Annex B).
2. A database of published articles that support CAFI's programmatic choices (see bibliography in Annex G for agriculture, searchable by country and topic)
3. A database of evaluations – accessible in folders dedicated to each project of the CAFI portfolio and in a centralized location. The list of such evaluations is found in Annex F and updated annually.
4. An annual assessment of the portfolio (in annual reports)
5. Results as per CAFI's framework (annexed to the CAFI Annual report)
6. Studies on selected aspects of the performance and objectives of projects

Additionally, a platform that summarizes and provides easy access to what is known and what is not will be eventually set up. It will help access and visualize, for each outcome and possibly output of the CAFI ToC:

- What the evidence tells us (in terms of effectiveness of interventions)
- Where it comes from, informing **the strength of evidence**, for example
 - one or multiples sources?
 - specific to the Centra African region or global?
 - originating from project reports, opinion pieces, or peer-reviewed publications
- If cost effectiveness studies exist, what are their conclusions.

This platform is also informed by information that is only accessible to donors in the Executive Board, who are expected to actively share information they receive from bilaterally funded projects.

Annex A: CAFI M&E Results Framework

The most recent version of the CAFI M&E results framework appears on the CAFI web site³⁸.

A list of indicative output indicators was developed during for programming under the 2nd CAFI Letter of Intent and is provided in the programming framework (in French)³⁹.

These two frameworks will be revised as part of the CAFI M&E protocols for standardized programmes.

Annex B: Spatial monitoring system

Rationale for spatial M&E

Spatially explicit information represents an essential aspect of the monitoring and evaluation of land use interventions. Spatial Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) represents the collection, analysis, and dissemination of location-based data to monitor land use activities. A complete system encompasses both spatial data (e.g. the exact location of a tree plantation) and non-spatial data (e.g. species and age of trees planted, name of owner and support received including results-based payments, photos of the plantation at various points in time, etc).

Spatial M&E is critical to both the effective governance of land-use/REDD+ initiatives and to the effectiveness of an initiative such as CAFI, as it helps:

- Project implementers to effectively monitor project activities and manage their local partners. And donors and governments to effectively verify these results
- Capture socio-economic and biodiversity co-benefits
- Automate/facilitate the tracking of project progress and results, using remote sensing and detection tools
- Communicate powerfully about progress and impacts.

These represent also critical aspects for an effective and efficient Payment for Environmental Services (PES) scheme, which rely on the concept of payment for agreed results (i.e. sustainable agriculture, afforestation/reforestation, respect of land use plans, zero-deforestation agriculture, biodiversity preservation, etc.), as is envisioned in DRC and potentially other CAFI countries.

Various conventional tools (results frameworks, spreadsheets and reports) are indeed used to consolidate information from the various programmes and countries involved in CAFI for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation (“BaU M&E”). While CAFI-funded programmes have been asked to report spatially explicit results by the CAFI Executive Board, data has been to date rather scarce. CAFI and its partner countries currently lack **a cost-effective and simple ‘system’ to efficiently consolidate, analyse and verify progress towards reduction of deforestation, and report on it across programmes and levels of territorial governance** (from local to subnational, national and regional levels) in a timely manner.

³⁸ [CAFI Secretariat | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

³⁹ [Cadre programmatique synthétique pour la mise en œuvre de la Lettre d'Intention RDC-CAFI 2021-2031](#)

Proposed steps in developing a comprehensive spatial M&E system for CAFI

To improve the effectiveness and transparency of CAFI investments and enable greater collective impact:

Level 1: CAFI first defines explicit spatial M&E and reporting standards for its investments (i.e. “M&E Protocol” with related spatial component of country/programme results frameworks; *e.g. ha under sustainable agriculture -> GIS layer of location of sustainable agriculture supported with CAFI investments*). This requires both some level of standardization as well as country-specific work to accommodate national circumstances. CAFI has started to support this work, however this needs to go in more operational details to guide programs within and across countries.

New tools and technologies exist that drastically change the paradigm of management and monitoring of activities aiming at addressing the drivers of land use change and deforestation. They allow for user-friendly, effective and efficient management of interventions across sectors, actors and levels of territorial governance, even in a context as challenging as the Congo Basin.

Level 2: Mobile data collection technologies (MDC) provide CAFI with an opportunity to develop a simple and cost-effective solution enabling countries and programmes to greatly improve their M&E data collection, management and reporting capacity, including spatial data (responding to the M&E Protocol). While partners could continue just using classic papers monitoring forms along with GIS, this could enhance strongly the capacity of programmes, countries and CAFI in managing, monitoring and verifying the implementation of CAFI-supported activities, ultimately improving the quality of implementation and the overall impact of CAFI investments, as well as better communicating on CAFI results. While some partners are starting to use MDC in their operations, this is not systematic and this project aims to mainstream it, whenever appropriate. Beyond MDC:

Level 3: Linking (a) spatial M&E data (level 1 and potentially 2) **with (b) near-real time land use monitoring through remote sensing** would address most of the wider needs of REDD+ implementation monitoring, whether at programme &/or country level. This would **indeed encompass and link together**:

- i. **The M&E of CAFI-supported programmes implementation** (i.e. what, where, how much, when), also enabling countries to easily extend this to non-CAFI investments and even non-REDD+ land use programmes (facilitating synergies);
- ii. **The monitoring of drivers of deforestation** (e.g. large-scale agriculture concessions), dynamic in nature and requiring swift detection and remediation measures;
- iii. **The impact of CAFI-supported activities on forest cover** (linking with NFMS/MRV), and
- iv. **The delivery on commitments from the various land users** (e.g. respect of agreed land use plans, zero-deforestation agriculture, etc.), which is the basis for Payments for Environmental Services (PES) and other types of Performance-Based Payments (PBPs).

This requires to **develop an integrated spatial M&E system** composed of: **A) MDC** (existing systems) for field-based M&E data collection; **B) An online/offline spatial database** to easily process, store, organize and analyze data originating from the MDC system, and to facilitate data security and circulation across partners (from field implementers to governments and CAFI) ; **and C) A web-platform** to easily analyse, visualize and communicate

on data, as well as to link with remote-sensing services and deforestation alerts (see below for more clarifications).

Level 4: Building on levels 1-3, CAFI will have the key elements to start a process of **systematic analysis of its impact in reducing deforestation while contributing to sustainable development**, challenging and improving its theory of changes and related assumptions **for adaptive management**. As highlighted in the scientific literature, the objective cannot be to attribute emission reductions to individual policies or interventions, considering the direct and indirect influence of multiple variables (complex system), but (i) to have a more detailed understanding of the combined effectiveness and efficiency of CAFI investments in reducing deforestation in the medium term; (ii) to identify weaknesses in the original theory of change followed by CAFI at regional and national levels &/or within individual programs or their implementation; and (iii) to propose corrective measures. This objective will require to define a methodological and institutional framework adapted to the context of Central Africa countries. In addition to relevant country-specific bodies this component should be strongly based on national universities and research institutions, possibly under the regional coordination of ERAIFT⁴⁰, in collaboration with various international universities and research institutions. To the extent possible, the system would build synergies or at least learn from ongoing efforts in other countries (for example, Ecuador is also exploring this as part of its national REDD+ process and synergies could be explored).

While these 4 stages (“levels”) of spatial M&E are flexible and modular, partly developed in parallel, the proposed project would develop all 4 of them at the regional level, starting with the DRC as a test case considering the current volume and state of investments, and building on ongoing efforts from the National REDD+ Fund (mostly at level 1). These different options may however be addressed and deployed differently in different countries/programmes according to their specific context (needs, interest, existing initiatives). They could rely on completely free-of-charge open-source systems, or more hands-on or tailored systems at a relatively small cost in regard of benefits.

Elements of a spatial M&E system

Building on cost-effective, easy-to-use and modular solutions, CAFI could provide countries and programmes – if they want – with access to tools specifically designed to **facilitate the cost-effective collection, management, transfer and analysis of data across stakeholders, sectors and levels of territorial governance** (Programme / country-level / CAFI), truly changing the paradigm of land use and programme implementation monitoring.

Mobile Data Collection (MDC) (i.e. level 2 M&E system in this paper) refers to the use of mobile phones, tablets or personal digital assistants for data collection and analysis ([ODK](#), [KoboToolBox](#), etc). It allows cheap, fast and efficient collection, transmission and analysis of both spatial and non-spatial “rich data” (M&E data directly linked with GPS coordinates, geo-referenced photos, etc). MDC strongly increases the quality and reliability of M&E data (e.g. field monitoring of deforestation from agriculture concessions documented with geo-tagged).

⁴⁰ L’Ecole Régionale Postuniversitaire d’Aménagement et de Gestion intégrés des Forêts et Territoires tropicaux (ERAIFT) is a regional school, placed under the auspices of UNESCO. Its originality is its intersectoral and interdisciplinary, participatory, global and integrated approach, ie a systemic approach. ERAIFT provides quality postgraduate education to students from different professional backgrounds, who have completed 3-5 years of university studies in various fields and with enriching and complementary experiences, originating from various countries in Central Africa and beyond.

It enables the consolidation of data directly in soft format, online and in (near-)real time. And it facilitates also the crowd-sourcing of information (e.g. data collection/verification from multiple actors).

A robust [online/offline spatial database](#) would also enable countries and programmes to capitalize on the many new opportunities brought by fast progress in [remote sensing products and services](#) (i.e. level 3 M&E system in this paper). The last few years have indeed seen a wide increase and diversification of free or cheap satellite imagery and related products (e.g. deforestation alerts), accessible even to non-experts: [Global Forest Watch](#), [MapHubs](#), [Terra-I](#), etc. These various initiatives provide access to free near-real time information on land use change and deforestation, which is key in guiding and supporting REDD+ implementation (i.e. very dynamic nature of drivers of deforestation requiring swift reaction and adaptive management). As such, they complement greatly National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS), as (i) few countries have yet the capacity to generate such information (longer-term objective), and (ii) for which access to and contribution of data may be restricted (1 Ministry or even 1 Department, while REDD+ implementation is cross-sectoral and multi-actors in nature). Alternative systems (while linked to the NFMS) provide the opportunity to extend services to e.g. private sector actors involved in zero-deforestation initiatives, financial institutions to develop green credit lines, etc.

The proposed system would include the ability to crowdsource information from the field, whereby registered and civil society organizations and other stakeholders may be able to provide feedbacks on the information reported: existence and quality of results achieved (e.g. forestry and agroforestry plantations), alerts of events of deforestation (false or confirmed alerts, documentation of the driver of deforestation using geotagged photos and other evidences, etc). This would enable to tremendously strengthen the ability to verify results on the ground with limited costs.

Annex C: Definitions of criteria used in monitoring, evaluations and verifications

The following criteria have been compiled to ensure a common understanding.

While this list is comprehensive, not all criteria are used in all processes such as independent review prior to programme approval, routine monitoring, mid-term & final evaluations or verifications.

Criteria	Definition	Lead institutions* that use or recommend the criteria
Compliance	Compliance with CAFI templates.	
Clarity	The extent to which information is presented in a clear and concise manner, accessible to external readers. The relationship between causes and effects is presented in a way that is easy to understand, and repetition is avoided.	
Relevance	The extent to which programme objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' needs, the objectives and milestones of LOIs signed between CAFI and the partner countries, the SDGs, the National Investment Frameworks and applicable national policy objectives (including national poverty reduction objectives), and continue to do so if circumstances change.	OECD, GCF, EU
Coherence	The compatibility of programme strategies and objectives with other interventions within the partner country or the relevant sector(s) of the LOI (across the Central African region), and the implementing organisation's strategy for and ability to ensure coordination and complementarity with other relevant programmes and initiatives in the sector and country.	OECD, GCF, EU
Economy	The extent to which programmes minimise and optimise the cost of resources (inputs) used or required – spending less.	UK National Audit Office
Effectiveness	The extent to which interventions have achieved, or are expected to achieve, its objectives and intended results (i.e., LOI objectives and milestones, CAFI outcomes and outputs, and/or outcomes and outputs defined in programme results frameworks), including any differential results across beneficiary groups.	OECD, GCF, EU, FFEM, UK National Audit Office
Efficiency	The relation between resources/inputs spent (funds, expertise, human resources, time, etc.) and results achieved at output level. Includes the measure of programmes' financial delivery against planned budgets (annual and cumulative) and per outcome and outputs, annual/semi-annual disbursement rate compared to PTBA, cumulative disbursement rate and its annual evolution, share of operational and indirect costs.	OECD, GCF, EU, FFEM, UK National Audit Office

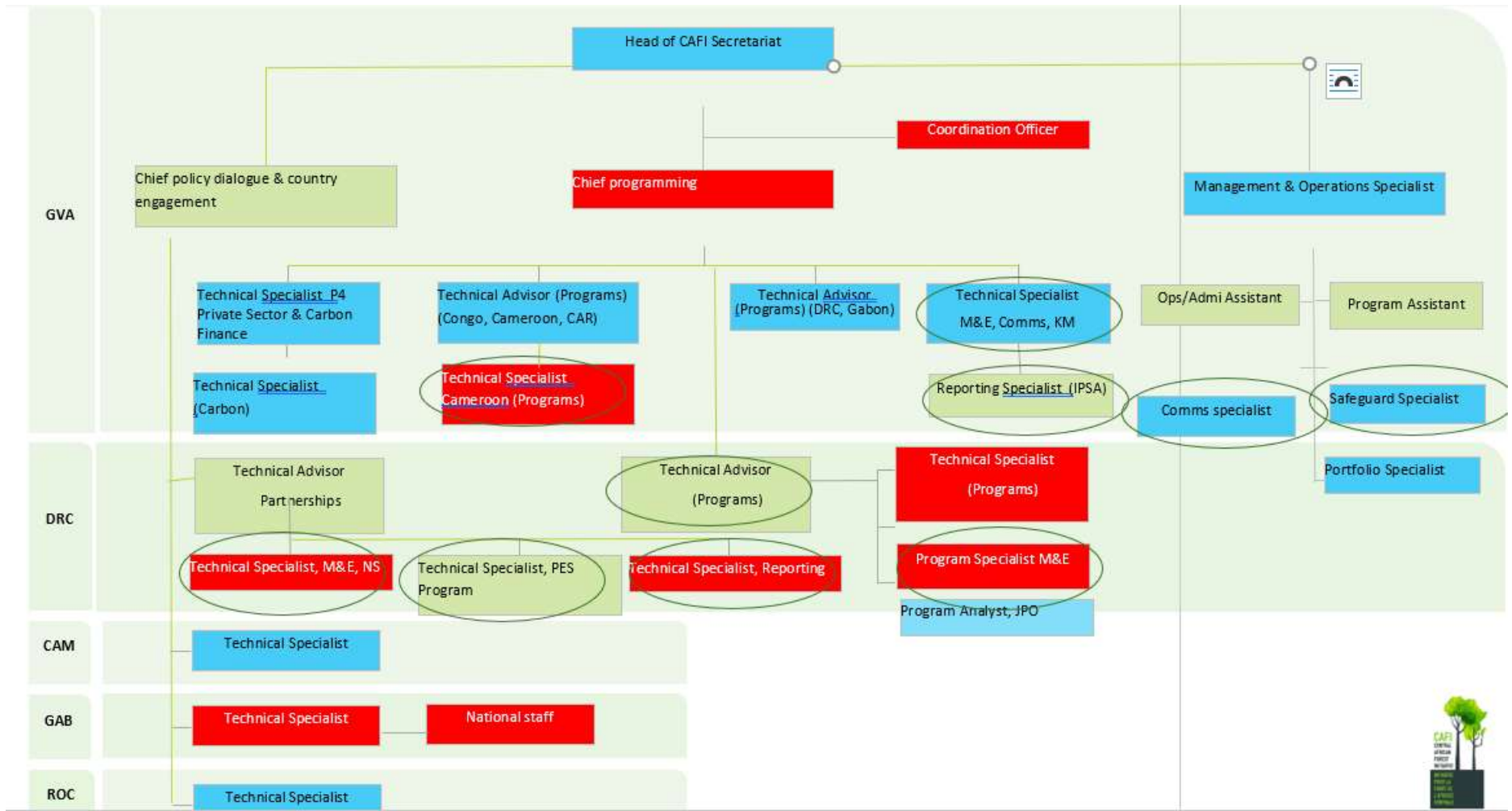
Evidence	Quality and comprehensiveness of proofs provided to demonstrate a result	
Value for money	Combines the three criteria above: overall assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of programmes.	UK National Audit Office
Sustainability	The extent to which programmes provide and successfully implement a sound strategy enabling the continuation of net benefits of interventions after CAFI's support has been completed, taking into account technical, sociocultural, financial, economic, organisational, environmental and territorial sustainability.	OECD, GCF, EU, FFEM
Replicability and scalability	The extent to which programmes provide and successfully implement a sound strategy enabling the scaling up or replication of interventions in other locations within the country or in other countries.	
Impact	The extent to which programmes have contributed or are likely to contribute to the two desired impacts outlined in the CAFI Theory of Change (emission reductions and removals from the land use sector, and development co-benefits).	OECD, GCF, EU, FFEM
Immediate effects	The measure of immediate effects - direct or indirect, positive or negative - of programmes when it is too early to assess programme impacts.	
Measurability	The extent to which programmes have a sound results framework based on the CAFI's defined outcomes and outputs, with SMART (specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic and time-bound) indicators, collect and/or ensure the availability of necessary data and reports on these indicators in programme reports.	FFEM
Country ownership	The extent to which the programmes provide and successfully implement clear modalities ensuring and strengthening the appropriation, ownership and embeddedness of programmes by/in national and provincial authorities and institutions.	GCF
Equity for beneficiaries	The extent to which interventions provide and successfully implement strategies that make sure services are available to and reach all people that they are intended for, giving particular consideration to under-represented groups such as indigenous peoples, local communities and ethnic minorities, as well as aspects related to age and gender.	UK National Audit Office
Transparency and integrity	The extent to which adequate measures are planned and implemented to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, fraud and corruption, and the extent to which the programmes operate effective complaints management systems through which they receive and treat complaints that impact the financial, programmatic or safeguarding integrity of the CAFI Trust Fund.	

Gender	The programmes provide, successfully implement and report on a sound strategy for integration of the gender dimension, and of women in particular, based on CAFI's five gender criteria: (i) delivery of a gender analysis at the stage of programme conceptualisation aimed at identifying ways in which the programme can generate socio-economic benefits for women, (ii) allocation of budgetary resources to measures that generate socio-economic benefits for women, (iii) implementation of planned measures that generate socio-economic benefits for women, (iv) definition and reporting on results indicators regarding the generation of socio-economic benefits for women, and (v) definition, implementation and reporting on measures that ensure the participation of women in programme governance structures.	
Inclusive and effective governance	The extent to which programmes have clearly defined, functional and inclusive, multi-actor governance structures that meet regularly, have operational and adequate decision-making mechanisms, and ensure sufficient information and documentation to members and relevant stakeholders.	
Other social and environmental safeguards	The extent to which interventions implement social and environmental safeguards including - but not limited to - to ensure the conservation of natural forests, biological diversity and ecosystems, promote sustainable livelihoods, address the risks of reversals and take actions to reduce displacement of emissions (if applicable), respect national and international legal frameworks, take into account national sovereignty and circumstances, ensure compliance with human rights obligations under international law.	
Beneficiaries' satisfaction	The measure of programme beneficiaries' (direct and indirect) self-reported satisfaction with programme outputs.	
Risk mitigation	The extent to which risks are identified and foreseen, and risk mitigation measures identified and implemented.	
Visibility and communication	There is a clear communication strategy in place at the level of the programmes and the Fund as well as necessary funds and expertise available to implement it; the implementation of the communication strategy is reported on regularly. The Fund and programmes are well known by relevant stakeholders, including institutional actors and the civil society.	
Innovation in result areas	The extent to which tried and tested approaches are coupled with innovative strategies and measures that are likely to contribute to a paradigm shift towards low-emission, low-deforestation and climate-resilient development pathways.	GCF
Unexpected positive results	Implementing organisations report on unexpected positive results of their interventions.	GCF
Unexpected negative results	Implementing organisations report on unexpected negative results of their interventions.	GCF

Annex D: CAFI Secretariat organigram (updated annually each December)

MEL functions are indicated with dark blue circles in the CAFI organigram below.

However, the CAFI MEL system also draws and coordinates various expertise within the CAFI Secretariat including programming (circled in green, who monitor implementation of programmes), financial and safeguards expertise within the Secretariat. In addition, the Secretariat of the FONAREDD comprises a number of staff participating in MEL.



Annex E: Comparative note on “beneficiaries” definitions

The below showcases how different funds define beneficiaries, and guide a conversation that will help adopt a common definition and therefore improve consistent reporting, especially at linked to CAFI’s 2nd impact (numbers of beneficiaries, poverty reduction). CAFI’s adopted definition and guidance will be part of the CAFI MEL Guidelines.

1. United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

No definition of beneficiaries and no mention of *direct beneficiaries*.⁴¹

2. Global Environment Facility (GEF)⁴²

Direct beneficiaries are defined as “number of individuals (disaggregated by sex) who receive targeted support from a given GEF project/activity/ and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances”. No mention of indirect beneficiaries.

Targeted support is defined as “the intentional and direct assistance of a project to individuals or groups of individuals who are aware that they are receiving that support and/or who use the specific resources” (either monetary or non-monetary).

3. Green Climate Fund (GCF)⁴³

Beneficiaries receive support that are defined within two dimensions:

- a) *Targeted support* (received by individuals who can be identified and counted by the project and are aware they are receiving support) vs. untargeted support.
- b) *Intensity of support*;
 - Low (for ex: individuals living within an administrative area where the authority receives capacity building support)
 - Medium (for ex: individuals who receive flood warnings alerts by text message)
 - High (for ex: individuals who receive cash transfers, trainings, agricultural services etc.)

Direct beneficiaries are defined as “number of individuals (disaggregated by sex) who receives targeted support of high intensity”.

⁴¹ As per its [“Results-based management handbook”](#) and [“Monitoring and evaluation UNDAF companion guidance”](#)

⁴² As per its [“Guidelines on core indicators and sub-indicators”](#)

⁴³ As per its [“Integrated Results Management Framework”](#)

Indirect beneficiaries are defined as “number of individuals (disaggregated by sex) who receives targeted or non-targeted support of medium intensity”.⁴⁴

4. The Global Fund

Unique beneficiaries are defined as “number of individuals supported with the defined package of interventions as part of a program”.⁴⁵ More generally, beneficiaries are not included among main indicators linked to impact⁴⁶, outcome⁴⁷ and coverage (of health facilities, products, service delivery etc.).⁴⁸

5. The Adaptation Fund

Same definitions as the GCF (see above).⁴⁹

6. The World Bank⁵⁰

The WB is interested in the *extent of coverage*, being legal coverage (groups covered by statutory schemes) or effective coverage (persons covered within the whole population or target group). The *effective coverage* identifies two sub-groups:

- *Protected persons* (= indirect beneficiaries) have benefits guaranteed but are not necessarily currently receiving them
- *Actual beneficiaries* (= direct beneficiaries) are defined as the proportion of the population affected by a certain contingency who actually receive the respected benefit.

⁴⁴ If data on individuals is not available, households could be reported and converted into individuals based on average number of people per household in a given context.

⁴⁵ As per its “[Measuring framework for adolescent girls and young women programs](#)”

⁴⁶ Measured in for example number of infections or a percentage of people living with a disease (the people involved are thus not considered beneficiaries)

⁴⁷ Measured in for example a percentage of people living with HIV who reports cases of discrimination (the people involved are thus not considered beneficiaries)

⁴⁸ As per its “[Modular framework handbook and core set of indicators](#)”

⁴⁹ As per its “[Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators](#)”

⁵⁰ As per its “[Analytical techniques and considerations for evaluating Performance of SPL Programs - Welfare, Living Standards and Poverty Assessments](#)”

Annex F: list of evaluations undertaken to date (updated annually each December – last updated December 2022)

1. Project evaluations

Programme	Implementing organization	Approval date	End date ⁵¹	Budget approved\$ (USD)	Budget transferred as of 30/08/2022	Mid-term evaluation	Final evaluation
DRC							
FONAREDD Secretariat	UNDP	09/05/2016		\$15,866,934	\$7,906,706		
Indigenous Peoples	World Bank	20/10/2016	31/07/2023	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000		
Civil society	UNDP	20/10/2016	30/06/2022	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	Finalized in August 2021	
National Forest Monitoring system	FAO	20/10/2016	30/06/2021	\$10,000,003	\$10,000,003		
Tenure reform	UN-HABITAT	08/02/2017	30/09/2022	\$6,999,490	\$6,999,490	Finalized in December 2022	
Land use planning	UNDP	08/02/2017	31/12/2022	\$8,000,000	\$5,775,605	Finalized in November 2021	
Sustainable Management of Agriculture	FAO	22/02/2018	30/09/2022	\$3,000,000	\$2,299,913		Scheduled December 2022
Energy	UNDP /UNDCF	07/11/2018	30/06/2024	\$15,000,000	\$9,000,000	Scheduled in December 2022	
Family planning	UNOPS/UNFPA	22/05/2019	30/11/2022	\$33,000,000	\$33,000,000	Finalized in November 2021. Mandated by programme	

⁵¹ Including extensions

Savannahs and degraded forests	AFD	05/07/2019		\$14,999,378	\$8,000,000		
Sustainable management of forests	AFD	05/12/2019		\$12,000,000	\$6,000,000		
PIREDD Mai-Ndombe	World Bank	20/10/2016		\$30,000,000	\$20,000,000	Finalized in July 2021	
PIREDD Orientale	UNDP	08/02/2017	31/12/2024	\$33,000,000	\$20,000,000	Finalized in April 2022	
PIREDD Sud-Ubangi	World Bank	08/02/2017	30/06/2021	\$7,000,000	\$4,000,000		
PIREDD Kwilu	JICA	22/02/2018		\$3,999,607	\$3,168,041	Scheduled December 2022	
PIREDD Equateur	FAO	22/02/2018		\$10,000,000	\$8,500,000	.Finalized in April 2021	
PIREDD Mongala	ENABEL	22/05/2019		\$12,000,000	\$9,000,000		
PIREDD Maniema	GIZ	30/12/2020		\$30,000,000	\$10,000,000	Scheduled December 2022	

2. Mid-term evaluation of CAFI Fund

First mid-term evaluation: finalized in 2020: [Mid-term review of the CAFI Fund | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)

Second mid-term evaluation: planned in 2023

3. Reviews & Verifications of Letters of Intent

DRC

- First verification of milestones of 1st letter of Intent in 2019 : [Vérification indépendante des jalons de la lettre d'intention entre la RDC et la CAFI](#)
- Second verification of milestones of 1st letter of Intent in 2021 : [DRC : 2nd verification of the milestones of the Letter of Intent | Central African Forest Initiative \(CAFI\)](#)
- Scheduled review of 2nd Letter of Intent: 2026 (section 3.2 here : [EB.2021.18 - Letter of Intent with the DRC 2021-2031 with annexes 0.pdf \(cafi.org\)](#))

Gabon

- First verification of Letter of Intent in 2021 : [2022-02-24 Rapport Analyse jalons final clean \(cafi.org\)](#)

Republic of Congo

- Scheduled independent review of the partnership : 2023 (see section 4.4 here : [Letter of Intent - CAFI Republic of Congo - ENG.pdf](#))

Annex G: references

Monitoring and evaluation policies of large Funds

- GCF <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/evaluation-policy-gcf>
- FFEM https://www.pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/ffem_guide_evaluation_2007.pdf
- OCDE/DAC (<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>)
- European Commission (https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/evaluation-matters_en.pdf)
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