



Promoting forest tenure and governance reforms as pre-requisites to effective implementation of REDD+

## Independent Mid-Term Evaluation

NORAD Grant Agreement: GLO-4226 QZA-16/0166

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25 January 2019

Offer: 2018-003B



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### 1. Executive Summary

The dominant political narrative, most recently articulated at the Katowice Conference of Parties (COP), is that governments face a policy choice between climate action and social inclusion. The argument is based on a false dichotomy that a “just transition”, away from the carbon-based economy, cannot be achieved while upholding human rights and social protections.<sup>1</sup> Ending deforestation is crucial to achieving a host of global goals, including preventing a climate crisis, sustaining rural livelihoods and preserving natural biodiversity. The role of lands over which Indigenous Peoples and local communities exercise traditional rights was confirmed by a recent geo-spatial study, which found that recognizing Indigenous Peoples’ rights to land, benefit sharing, and institutions is essential to meeting global conservation and climate agreements.<sup>2</sup> The Katowice COP also put on display the effects of a rightward shift in several key governments.<sup>3</sup> Activists face increasing threats, as in the case of the *UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, who was falsely accused of terrorism in the Philippines.<sup>4</sup>

The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is a global coalition of multiple international, national and local partners, affiliated networks, collaborating organizations and other experts dedicated to forest and land policy reforms in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Its goal is to advance forest tenure, policy and market reforms to reduce rural poverty, strengthen and improve forest governance, conserve and restore forest ecosystems and achieve sustainable forest-based economic development. More specifically, its *Third Strategic Program (SP III)*, which covers 2018-2022, seeks to catalyze the legal recognition of an additional 150 million hectares of lands and forests, benefitting over 370 million people.

RRI occupies a strategic niche in the area of forest and land rights advocacy and remains an important global player in the eyes of external stakeholders. RRI is regarded as an authoritative source of research and data, not least due to its work on tenure tracking. RRI’s recent analysis titled “At a Crossroads” reveals significant gains in the legal recognition of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as forest owners and designated rightsholders over the past 15 years; however, the pace of recognition has generally remained slow since 2008.

The Coalition’s work spans from the global to the local level, which is of critical importance for many issues, not least climate change. In some instances, positive change can be directly traced back to RRI’s efforts, as in the case of the Global Climate Action Summit, where RRI’s work resulted in international foundations joining a growing coalition of land rights defenders and pledging \$4 billion in support. The “Global Baseline on Carbon

***“Consulted stakeholders agree that RRI is perceived as a world leader in working towards the recognition of collective rights, particularly Indigenous Peoples’ forest and land tenure rights. The RRI Coalition is perceived differently in different national contexts, and its adaptation to the unique complexities of each national context is a key source of its relevance at the national and international levels.”***  
Universalia, Mid-Term Evaluation of RRI, 2016

<sup>1</sup> Kate Wheeling, *At COP24, Will Climate Action Include Basic Protection For Human Rights?*, Pacific Standard, 14 December 2018  
<sup>2</sup> Stephen T. Garnett et al., *A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation*, Nature Sustainability, 16 July 2018  
<sup>3</sup> The Economist, *The UN’s latest climate meeting ends positively*, 18 December 2018  
<sup>4</sup> Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, *A silent war is being waged on Philippine indigenous communities*, Financial Times, 29 March 2018



Storage in Collective Lands” report reveals that at least 22 percent of forest carbon is stored in tropical and sub-tropical countries managed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and that a third of this lies in areas where communities lack legally recognized rights. The report’s significance is also due to the fact that it allows other development actors, including government agencies and international organizations, to better understand, plan and measure the effects of their interventions. How better analysis can trigger action is exemplified by the report on the Democratic Republic of Congo’s Mai-Ndombe province, which convinced other development actors to reframe and realign country-level REDD+ interventions to better protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and rural women.

Multi-stakeholder platforms play an increasingly important role in light of the 2030 Development Agenda with its Sustainable Development Goals. The Interlaken Group is one such platform bringing together companies, activists, investors and global organizations to develop new tools and approaches to engaging the private sector on land tenure.

### **1.1 Summary of findings and recommendations**

Every evaluation needs to confront the counter-factual question: would the results have been achieved even without the activities under review? In the case of RRI’s work on Rights & Climate, there is ample anecdotal evidence that the Coalition has been instrumental in catalyzing change.

The work of the Coalition on securing land tenure rights is much broader than climate change, and also tackles issues related to sustainable livelihoods and human rights. Rights & Climate is just one of four Thematic Areas (TAs) under *SP III*; however, as illustrated by RRI’s Theory of Change, all four TAs are mutually supportive of each other. Moreover, the work across all TAs is relevant to NICFI Outcomes. So, while Norway’s financial contribution of NOK 30 million represents less than seven percent of the resources RRI expects for the period 2016 to 2020, the utilization of these resources is good value for money since they have leveraged and contributed to results on a much broader front due to the holistic approach RRI employs. The downside of RRI’s holistic approach is the challenge to capture and delineate results.<sup>5</sup>

The activities funded through the grant contribute directly to NICFI Outcomes 2 and 3. The results set out in the grant agreement remain pertinent, and their achievement overall appears to be on track. Since this is a mid-term evaluation, it is too early to say anything definitive on impact, but RRI made important contributions through its research, advocacy, and convening activities at the country level that have led to legislative reforms and improved REDD+ policies in support of community rights. RRI’s theory of change and its outcomes are conscious of long-term sustainability. The focus on the legal recognition of land tenure is an attempt - by design - to “lock in” positive change for local communities and Indigenous Peoples. However, for the results pursued under this Grant to be sustainable requires RRI to perform functions that are outside the scope of the Grant, such as tenure tracking or the furnishing of advocacy platforms. RRI also has to consider the unintended consequences its work can have for activists on the ground and needs to carefully calibrate its support in certain country contexts to limit the exposure of individuals and communities to retaliatory actions. Donors are well aware of the RRI’s traditional funding

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<sup>5</sup> See Section 3.2 Scope and Methodology.





model and the ongoing change process that is designed to equip RRI better for managing earmarked contributions.

**Recommendation 1: Keep the results framework stable for the remaining duration of the grant.**

Achieving outcomes requires time and is a multi-year process by definition. While adjustments to the results framework can be important to refocus attention, and to optimize the use of resources, frequent changes also risk the maturation of any results, and limit RRI's ability to present a cohesive progress account and enhance future strategic decision-making. Since the Grant result statements were already adjusted in January 2018, it is recommended to maintain the currently-agreed results and indicator statements for the duration of the Grant.

**Recommendation 2: Align NICFI funding in support of Outcome 3.** The achievement of outcomes, by definition, always requires broad collaboration across a multitude of stakeholders. Hence, the budget of a single entity can never capture the true cost of achieving an outcome. Ideally, a small amount of money can leverage much larger resources to be mobilized and implemented by others in support of a common outcome. During the first two years of implementation, RRI has not used any NICFI funding for activities supporting Outcome 3,<sup>6</sup> and instead prioritized other dedicated private sector funding. That raises questions to what extent the results reported under Outcome 3 can be credited to NICFI funding. From Norway's perspective it might appear beneficial that results they are interested in are also being pursued with other funding.

**Recommendation 3: Consider a multi-year planning process in light of multi-year commitments.** RRI has traditionally used an annual bottom-up planning process that reflects its grassroots nature and its aspiration to be agile, responsive, and impactful. However, transformational change requires sustained attention and planning, as recognized in the Coalition's *SP III*. Yet, the current planning process is not designed to deliver multi-year results that require collaboration across regional and thematic work plans. Consequently, RRI should consider adapting its planning process so that multi-year commitments are also reflected in multi-year work plans and collaboration agreements.

**Recommendation 4: Review the five-year targets for outcomes and outputs in terms of their ambition and adjust them so that the targets become meaningful.** All three indicators for Outcome 1 are off their 3-year target, and particularly the target of 50 million hectares formally recognized as controlled or owned by communities appears unlikely to be achieved in the remaining Grant period. The ambitious target diminishes what would otherwise be a significant achievement. Meanwhile, the two indicators for Outcome 3 have either already reached their 5-year target or even exceeded it more than two-fold. The level by which actual progress either over- or underperforms compared to the 3-year target demonstrates the limited utility of the indicators and targets to assess RRI's true contribution.

**Recommendation 5: Ensure that the indicators defined for the Grant are reflected in annual work plans.**

The work plans do not include any indicators *per se*, and only references *SP III* indicators in an annex without references to targets or measurement methodologies. Progress reports at the mid-year and year-end mark indicate the link to *SP III* results, and so indirectly reference applicable indicators. To avoid any impression that the achievement of results is the product of accident instead of design, RRI should ensure that indicators are consistently used in the preparation of and reporting on work plans.

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<sup>6</sup> RRI fully disclosed that no NICFI funding was used for Outcome 3 in their 2016 and 2017 reports. In 2018 an estimated \$150,000 in NICFI funding was used for several activities.



**Recommendation 6: Improve horizontal and vertical communication around results and risks in the Coalition.** Since RRI pursues results through a combination of regional and thematic work plans, coordination and communication among managers responsible for these work plans is essential. In several cases inconsistencies became apparent how shared results and activities were incorporated into regional and thematic work plans. In addition, feedback from local stakeholders, who implemented a large part of the work as collaborating partners, also indicated that communication needs to be improved, particularly in light of recent changes to the annual planning process.

**Recommendation 7: Address implementation challenges at country level and set up a central repository for collaborating agreements.** Overall the use of resources, to the extent it could be reviewed, appears to be reasonable and consistent with RRI's strategy. Working with local grassroots organizations tends to be challenging because of their limited absorptive capacity, which is a challenge for all development actors working at this level. A review of available collaborative agreements reveals that the same local partners are contracted on a periodic basis. However, feedback indicates that RRI's planning process does not facilitate local planning because of it too confined to the current year implementation cycle and interviewees expect a more committed long-term engagement.

**Recommendation 8: Continue the ongoing change management process.** RRI has traditionally funded its operations through unearmarked funds, which required less stringent tracking of individual sources of funds. In response to changes in the donor environment, RRI implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning system that better tracks results and resources. Several new appointments also hold the promise to strengthen RRI's project management culture, including the arrival of a Chief Operating Officer.



## 2. List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
<b>ATEMs</b>	Alternative Tenure and Enterprise Models
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organization
<b>CFE</b>	Community-Based Forest Enterprise
<b>Coalition</b>	Rights and Resource Initiative
<b>COP</b>	Conference of Parties
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>FECOFUN</b>	Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal
<b>Grant</b>	Agreement GLO-4226 QZA-16/0166
<b>ILFTF</b>	The International Land and Forest Tenure Facility
<b>IM</b>	Independent Monitor
<b>LO</b>	Log-frame Outcome ( <i>SP III</i> )
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MTE</b>	Mid-Term Evaluation
<b>NICFI</b>	Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NORAD</b>	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>PB'18</b>	Program Book 2018
<b>REDD</b>	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
<b>REDD+</b>	The evolution of REDD to include sustainable forest management, conservation of forests, and enhancements of carbon sinks
<b>RRG</b>	Rights and Resources Group (legal entity registered in Washington DC)
<b>RRI</b>	Rights and Resources Initiative (the Coalition)
<b>SAGE</b>	Strategic Analysis and Global Engagement
<b>SO</b>	Strategic Objective ( <i>SP III</i> )
<b>SP III</b>	Strategic Program 2018-2022
<b>SRM</b>	Strategic Response Mechanism
<b>Strategy Document</b>	Rights & Resources Initiative Framework Proposal 2013-2017
<b>TA</b>	Thematic Area ( <i>SP III</i> )
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations







**3.1 Purpose and Objectives**

This report evaluates progress in the implementation of the five-year Grant<sup>9</sup> and presents findings and recommendations for its remaining duration. The primary objectives of the mid-term evaluation (MTE), as per the Terms of Reference, are to:

1. Verify the RRI coalition’s attainment of the key results as per the Application<sup>10</sup>
2. Identify the cause of discrepancies (including “bottlenecks”) between outputs and outcomes sought and those actually being delivered by RRI
3. Produce a set of options for RRI to increase the chances of achieving the output and outcome targets in the project log frame through the remainder of the Support Period
4. Assess progress, adequacy, and efficacy towards 2020 goals and outcomes by looking at a selection of activities, supported by RRI’s agreement with NORAD
5. Analyze the major factors and constraints that have influenced key results
6. Produce a clear set of observations and options that can position RRI to achieve the key results of the grant agreement

**3.2 Scope and Methodology**

The grant period runs from 1 July 2016 to 31 May 2021. The MTE considers activities undertaken and reported between 2016 and 2018 that are paid from the grant amount. Earmarked Core Activities falling under the program component “Rights and Climate” as per *SP III* are being reviewed, including relevant activities in five program countries that are incorporated into regional work plans: Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Indonesia, Peru and Colombia. Unintended or unplanned results are being considered and qualitatively measured to the extent that they have relevance for RRI’s achievements and performance.

The MTE assesses RRI’s theory of change, results framework, and targets as they are contained in the Grant and its subsidiary documents, which in turn are based on Rights & Resources Initiative Framework Proposal 2013-2017 (the Strategy Document) dated 6 December 2016. These documents constitute the backdrop for the MTE and define the framework to assess RRI’s performance.

At the time the grant application was made, RRI anticipated USD 55 million dedicated its 3 outcomes aligned with NICFI for the period 2016 to 2020, of which the Grant amounted to USD 3.63 million (NOK 30 million), or less than 7 percent. During the period under review, RRI received three tranches of NOK 6 million, which have been recorded by RRI in line with the table below:

Tranche	2016	2017	2018 (est.)	Total (est.)
<b>NORAD receipt</b>	USD 693,807	USD 656,394	USD 717,660	<b>USD 2,067,861</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	USD 378,055	USD 701,247	USD 850,000	<b>USD 1,929,302</b>

Table 1

<sup>9</sup> Grant Agreement GLO-4226 QZA-16/0166

<sup>10</sup> RRI’s application to NICFI was not received, but the key results are evident from RRI’s 2016 report to NICFI.



Funding is not necessarily the primary driver to delineate the scope of an evaluation, and increasingly outcome evaluations look at a range of projects with a variety of funding sources to better understand the collective impact of projects. However, such an approach would only be justified if the projects and sources of funding under review actively collaborate and are somewhat coordinated. In the case of Grant Outcome 3, RRI reported that in 2016 and 2017 none of the activities and results are funded from NICFI. Moreover, while from a results perspective there is alignment between Grant Outcome 3 and SP III Outcome 3, it is debatable to what extent an evaluation specific to a funding source should consider activities funded from other resources. However, since Outcome 3 is included in the Grant agreement and RRI has disclosed that the funding originates elsewhere, the evaluation team considers it in scope.

***“All reported results are attributable to NICFI funding support, except for those reported under Outcome 3.”***  
RRI, Progress Report to NORAD, 2016

As RRI consists of a coalition of partners, collaborators, affiliated networks, and Fellows working in collaboration with others, delineating RRI’s achievements is not trivial. Several entities receive funding through RRI as well as directly from their own donors and business operations for work in the same area. As a principle, only work based on an agreement with and reported through RRI is considered in the context of the mid-term evaluation.

RRI uses an annual planning process<sup>11</sup>, so results are defined, activities are undertaken, and progress is reported for each year separately. Progress is primarily assessed based on self-reporting by operational units and documentary evidence. Each year an Independent Monitor reviews annual progress and achievements as part of RRI’s planning and reporting cycle. The Independent Monitor’s findings are contained in a series of reports, and in 2016 RRI was also subject of an independent evaluation. This evidence base is complemented by a number of in-depth interviews and one country visit to Liberia. Details on the TOR for the mid-term evaluation, the methodology, document sources, and resource persons are included in the Annex.

**3.3 RRI Background**

Created in 2005, RRI currently comprises 15 partners, 7 affiliated networks, 150+ collaborators and 14 international fellows. At its core stands the Rights and Resources Group (RRG), a non-profit secretariat based in Washington, DC, that serves as the legal entity and formal coordination mechanism of the Coalition.

RRI’s rationale of engagement starts from the argument that “research shows that – through the empowerment of local peoples – it is possible to achieve the seemingly irreconcilable goals of alleviating poverty, conserving forests and encouraging sustained economic growth in forested area.” Accordingly, the Coalition shares the belief that “securing the rights of these individuals and communities to access and use natural resources, as well as participate fully in markets and political processes that regulate these lands, will achieve these goals.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The link to the 5-year SP III is detailed in Section 4.  
<sup>12</sup> Overview RRI, Mission Statement and Rationale of Engagement.



The Concept Note attached to RRI’s Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the partners defines three major goals:

- To substantially increase the forest area under local ownership and administration, with secure rights to manage, conserve, use and trade products and services
- To prevent all changes to national laws and regulations that weaken the customary and statutory forest land rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and simultaneously promote new laws that strengthen customary and statutory rights of Indigenous People.
- To dramatically reduce poverty in the forested areas of the world.

The Coalition emphasizes “that progress on the necessary tenure and policy reforms requires constructive participation by communities, governments and the private sector, as well as new research and analysis of policy options and new mechanisms to share learning between communities, governments and the private sector.”

Overall, the Coalition serves as a proactively engaged global node to connect and coordinate between relevant constituencies at all levels – Indigenous Peoples’ and local community organizations, civil society, international organizations, governments, private investors, donors and other strategic change agents. Its value proposition, as reflected in *SP III*, is that “with limited incremental investments in strategic planning, analysis, and coordination across scales and sectors, RRI Partners, Affiliated Networks, and Collaborators can dramatically increase their impacts in favor of the world’s poor and disenfranchised.”

***“With limited incremental investments in strategic planning, analysis, and coordination across scales and sectors, RRI [...] can dramatically increase their impacts in favor of the world’s poor and disenfranchised.”***

RRI, SP III (2018-2022)

3.3.1 Overview of RRI’s organizational structure

RRI’s network comprises a broad spectrum of organizations, such as community-based and Indigenous Peoples’ organizations, research institutions, development assistance organizations, and local and international advocacy and human rights groups. The Coalition comprises the following five categories:<sup>13</sup>

- *15 Partners:* Partners demonstrate commitment to RRI goals and mission, and signed RRI’s Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). In general, “Partners have a high degree of input into matters of RRI’s policy, program implementation, governance and research,” and are strongly involved in RRI’s governance and strategic planning of programmatic targets and activities.
- *150+ Collaborators:* Collaborators are individuals or organizations with a commitment to RRI objectives and who participate in the planning and implementation of RRI-sanctioned activities. National, and regional and global collaborators have less influence on RRI governance, but many play important roles in RRI’s planning process and implement the majority of RRI activities for which they receive funds direct from RRI.
- *7 Affiliated Networks:* These are institutional or informal networks of key constituencies (such as Indigenous Peoples, forest communities, women, policy-makers, academia and civil society) that complement RRI’s capacities and advocacy efforts. Affiliated Networks can be invited to participate in planning meetings at country, regional and global levels and are eligible to propose activities and broader initiatives for consideration by RRG and Partners.

<sup>13</sup> Some documents refer to a Donor Support Group in addition



- *14 Fellows:* The Fellows Program is designed to recognize international leaders in the area of forestry, land and resource tenure, poverty reduction, and human rights issues. It is an honorary position that adds to the pool of credible expertise and experience of the Initiative enabling long-term collaboration on subjects of mutual interest.
- *RRG with the Board of Directors:* The RRG is the secretariat that represents the Coalition’s coordination and leadership mechanism with four fundamental roles:
  - Provide coordination services for the RRI
  - Provide leadership to the RRI and its advocacy for the RRI mission and goals
  - Conduct globally relevant analytical and program work of the RRI in collaboration with Partners
  - Conduct other, global related, work that contributes to the overall goals of RRI, in collaboration with the Partners

**3.4 Operational Model**

RRI employs a tiered results framework comprising activities, outputs, priorities, outcomes and objectives defined either on an annual or 5-year basis. *SP III* spans 2018 to 2022, and hence overlaps with most of the Grant’s implementation.

***“RRI maintains an annual planning, implementation and reporting cycle, in line with its original purpose and design; to strategically complement existing organizations and their programs. Nonetheless, this cycle is seen to be both short and strategically limiting by Collaborators.”***

Universalia, Mid-Term Evaluation of RRI, 2016

RRG, as the secretariat of the Coalition, spearheads the annual planning process, which combines bottom-up planning at country and regional level with a global planning exercise. The result of the planning process is a series of work plans that last for 12 months aligned with the calendar year. The work plans reflect both a regional and a global/thematic logic, and in several instances the same or similar results appear in multiple work plans due to the predominantly bottom-up nature of the planning exercise.

Leadership and control of the work plans is vested with RRG managers in line with an Organizational Matrix (see Annex 7.6) which, on the one hand, looks at regional and core programs, and references five key topics (e.g. gender justice, rights and climate), on the other hand.

The implementation of work plans is split between activities implemented by RRG directly and those implemented by collaborating partners on the basis of agreements with resource transfer. As a network, RRI implements significant aspects of the grant through collaborating partners. These are supported through flanking activities that RRG undertakes directly. It is understood that collaborating and network partners also pursue their own objectives aligned with the Coalitions overall ambition, and hence also implement resources they might have received directly. In addition, RRI also implements global activities, such as analysis and advocacy.

Reporting is done on a six-monthly basis, which includes both a narrative account of progress and fund utilization, as well as reporting against planned work plan activities. Year-end reports discuss achievements in relationship to the planned activities; however, they do not include any reference to resource utilization. While *SP III* includes risks and mitigation strategies, the work plan reports make no reference to what extent these risks actually materialized and whether they affected performance.



### 3.5 Assumptions and Constraints

The work plans represent both a regional and a global/thematic logic with overlapping and/or similar results in some instances. In several cases results are cross-referenced and funding is only provided once as part of either a regional or global work plan. Prior to 2018, work plans in general did not consistently identify the source of funds for each activity, but instead all resources were pooled for each work plan. While the evaluators can confirm that NICFI funding has been tracked consistently in the documentation received, it is less clear that the dedicated NICFI work plans for 2017 and 2018 were used operationally. From interviews and the way aggregated data on 2018 NICFI activities was submitted to the evaluation team, it appeared as if the NICFI work plans served primarily as reporting templates, and less as operational documents that contain updated information.

A large part of RRI’s activities are undertaken by entities that have their own objectives and resources. The Coalition expressly states that its members share common goals and pursue them in an orchestrated manner, but they are still distinct entities. As outlined above, only work based on agreement with and reporting through RRI is being considered. However, the assumption is that the work other entities perform on behalf of RRI and with RRI resources can be delineated from their non-RRI work funded from other resources outside the scope of the mid-term evaluation.

***“Better integration of thematic workplans and proposal results will help ensure NICFI contributions are leveraged to achieve progress across the results contained in RRI’s proposal to NICFI.”***  
RRI, Progress Report to NORAD, 2016

RRI follows a strictly annual planning process. Activities that could not be funded or completed generally do not carry over into the next calendar year.<sup>14</sup> So, a key assumption is that progress and achievement of results can be observed within the same calendar year for which activities were planned.

The extent to which progress is due to RRI-sponsored activities is difficult to assess, as has been pointed out by several Independent Monitor reports.<sup>15</sup> The assessment of progress and the achievement of results is based on self-reporting by RRG managers. To the extent feasible, claimed progress is validated through independent sources, such as supporting documents or testimonials. In select instances, it is clear that results can be directly attributed to RRI’s work (e.g. Global Climate Action Summit, Indonesia Tenure Conference 2017), but in the majority of cases RRI has contributed to results.

***“RRI uses confusing terminology for levels of results (outputs, outcomes, impacts), which affects the coherence of its operations as well as its clear reporting to donors.”***  
Universalia, Mid-Term Evaluation of RRI, 2016

Typically, an organization’s theory of change can be used to test if its activities and outputs credibly contributed to the achievement of higher-level results. Hence, it is possible that RRI is not sufficiently credited for progress due to lacking evidence, just as it is possible that RRI receives credit for results that might have materialized without RRI’s contribution.

During 2018 RRI implemented a new enterprise resource planning system that aims to enable the closer tracking of activities and financial resources. At this stage, RRI’s project management tools do not allow

<sup>14</sup> In 2018 there are several exceptions where activities are planned into 2019; however, it is unclear to what extent this is a result of the delayed start of implementation.  
<sup>15</sup> The IM reports included anecdotal evidence that speaks to the value brought by RRI’s coordination.



for the match of financial performance with results performance. Moreover, during the period under review, RRI has changed the presentation of its financial statements.

The work plans do not include any indicators *per se*, and only references *SP III* indicators in an annex. Progress reports at the mid-year and year-end mark indicate the link to *SP III* results, and so indirectly reference applicable indicators.

Local stakeholders have collaborated with RRI for many years in many instances. Even when they are directly involved in the implementation of activities, they are not aware which donor is funding the activities, as from their perspective RRI is the donor. Consequently, their feedback and observations typically reflect RRI’s work overall, and are not specific to activities funded from a particular source of funds.

**4. The Results Logic**

Understanding the results logic of the grant presents two significant challenges: (a) The grant straddles two of RRI’s strategic planning periods that differ significantly in how results are defined and how activities are linked. The new *SP III* is an attempt to improve on RRI’s results management in line with the recommendations of prior independent monitoring reports. (b) The grant positions the work of RRI as a contribution to NICFI project results, and reporting is geared to demonstrating how RRI helps achieve NICFI’s outcomes 2016-2020. Planning and day-to-day implementation of activities, however, follow RRI’s results logic as contained in the program books and strategic programs. Consequently, the Earmarked Core Activities are associated to two distinct results chains, one aligned with NICFI and the other with RRI’s *SP III*.

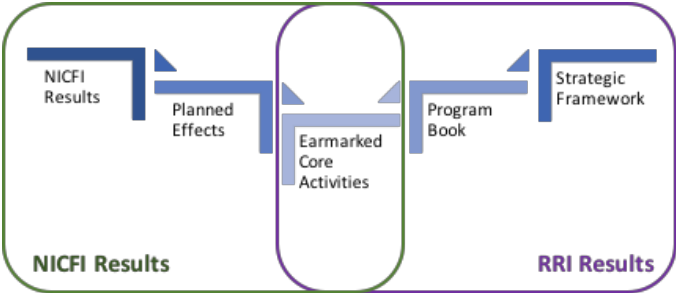


Figure 2 (Source: Global Goals Consulting)

Consequently, this section reviews the results logic in the context of the Grant, which in the end represents the commitment RRI has entered vis-à-vis NICFI, as well as *SP III*, since that represents the organizational reality that affects the implementation of the Grant.

**4.1 The Logic of RRI’s Theory of Change**

RRI’s Theory of Change, as defined in *SP III*, follows a system-wide approach which combines the four major elements of **evidence**, **capacity**, **interaction** and **advocacy**:

“The legal recognition and enforcement of rural land and resource rights, including the freedom to exercise and benefit from those rights, can be secured, strengthened and expanded through the synergistic combination of **evidence** (strategic analyses and tenure data), **capacity** (practical tools, solutions, and lessons learned), **interaction** (to raise awareness and create strategic partnerships across key constituencies), and **advocacy** (evidence-based engagement); which enables actors at multiple scales to create and take advantage of windows of opportunity to influence the policies, laws, and markets that affect the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women.”





RRI’s Theory of Change is further detailed in the Action Framework, a system-wide approach consisting of four **Thematic Areas** and four **Core Strategies**, which together form the operational foundation and modalities of the Coalition’s Strategic Program.

To achieve the overall impact, results and activities are planned in an iterative fashion; so, the intention is that over the course of five years, progress builds up as part of annual work plans that then deliver on the *SP III* results. All activities are supposed to be mapped against planned 1-year and 5-year performance targets as well as the four Thematic Areas of the Action Framework. At the program level, planned activities and outputs are intended to achieve specified program outcomes. In addition, achieved program level results then connect to higher-level outcomes and objectives.

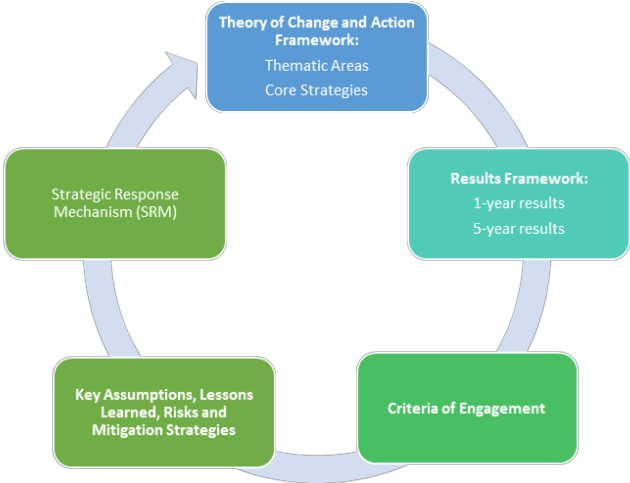


Figure 3 (Source: Global Goals Consulting)

Thematic Areas	Core Strategies
Gender Justice	1. Leverage strategic analyses and tenure data to raise awareness and strengthen advocacy on the barriers, opportunities, and benefits of securing Indigenous Peoples’, communities’, and women’s land and resource rights;
Private Sector Engagement	2. Connect and catalyze strategic actors and networks to enhance collective action across scales and sectors to advance rights-based legal frameworks and economic development models at local, national, and global levels;
Realizing Rights	3. Support change agents in Asia, Africa, and Latin America to advance national reforms and market transformations in favor of communities’ and women’s rights through joint planning, implementation, and learning; and
Rights and Climate	4. Catalyze change through strategic global initiatives (e.g., Interlaken Group, the Tenure Facility), and unanticipated but time-sensitive local opportunities or developments via RRI’s Strategic Response Mechanism.

Table 2 (Source: Third Strategic Program 2018-2022)

**4.2 NICFI Results Framework**

NICFI Outcomes 2016-2020	
<b>NICFI Outcome 1</b>	Incentives to achieve REDD+ efforts are established through the new international climate regime and/or other climate, environment and development funding streams.
<b>NICFI Outcome 2</b>	Governments in targeted developing countries have implemented REDD+ related policies, measures and safeguards, such as policies for green growth, sustainable livelihoods, land use-planning, the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities and women’s rights.
<b>NICFI Outcome 3</b>	Private sector actors have implemented social and environmental policies and practices that reduce the pressure on forests, and are engaged in global public private partnerships to reduce deforestation.

Table 3 (Source: NICFI website)



For the funding period 2016 to 2020, NICFI defined four thematic areas<sup>16</sup> and three outcomes to be achieved in 11 countries.<sup>17</sup> Originally RRI’s contribution was positioned under NICFI Outcome 2 and NICFI Outcome 3 as per RRI’s report on its contribution in 2016.

**4.3 RRI’s Results Framework**

“Rights and Climate” Outcomes and Outputs in 2018	
Outcome	Outputs
<b>Outcome 1: Governments in key tropical forest countries accelerate the legal recognition and enforcement of forest land rights for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women, as enabling conditions for REDD+, sustainable livelihoods, and green growth</b>	Country-specific analyses of the tenure rights of IPs, LCs and women are developed and gaps relative to REDD+ ambitions and other sustainable development goals are identified
	Strategic road maps to accelerate community tenure reforms and minimize risks of reversals are produced
	Opportunities to strengthen community tenure rights, to reduce deforestation and enhance local livelihoods, are identified and pursued in targeted countries
<b>Outcome 2: International climate initiatives and financing mechanisms, and developing country governments adopt institutional safeguards and standards to scale up the recognition of forest and land tenure rights, as a conditional requirement to REDD+ and other joint mitigation and adaptation approaches</b>	Strategic analyses of the linkages between collective tenure security and climate change mitigation and adaptation are produced, disseminated and leveraged
	Dialogues or events on collective tenure security in the context of climate change and sustainable forest governance are held to accelerate learning and consensus on effective and equitable climate actions in tropical forest countries
	Advocacy in key climate decision-making arenas and engagement with climate financing institutions and implementation mechanisms are leveraged to strengthen collective tenure rights as conditional requirements to effective and equitable climate actions
<b>Outcome 3: Influential companies and investors commit to rights-based approaches and standards, and work with governments, CSOs, and rural communities to reduce tenure risks and enhance social and environmental outcomes in key tropical forest countries.</b>	Strategic analyses on tenure risks in key tropical forest countries are developed and made available to companies, investors, communities and governments to appraise and address land tenure problems
	Pre-competitive networks of companies, investors, CSOs, and government representatives are established at national and international levels to promote rights based business models for commodities and sectors driving deforestation
	Community-based sustainable forest management and conservation models and approaches that support climate and development priorities are identified, promoted and scaled at national and international levels
	Tools and practices (e.g., investment screens, due diligence protocols) are developed and adopted by companies, investors and governments to manage/ resolve tenure risks in key tropical forest countries

Table 4 (Source: Program Book 2018)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.norad.no/en/front/funding/climate-and-forest-initiative-support-scheme/grants-2016-2020/>

<sup>17</sup> Countries include: Brazil, Colombia, DR Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guyana, Indonesia, Liberia, Myanmar, Peru, and Vietnam



Within RRI’s results logic, the Earmarked Core Activities are managed as part of annual work plans contained in the Program Book under the “Rights and Climate” section. The outcomes in RRI’s Program Book mirror the Planned Effects contained in the grant agreement, but the outputs are different from the Strategy Document.

SP III includes an Action Framework, and the grant activities align with Thematic Area 4 – “Rights and Climate”, which contains three outcomes that are largely, but not completely, consistent with the outcomes in the Program Book 2018 and the Grant agreement:

Outcomes as per SP III	
<b>SP III Outcome 1</b>	Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and rural women leverage their capacity, leadership, and rights to transform social, economic, and environmental agendas in support of inclusive and equitable development, sustainable land and resource governance, and accelerated climate actions.
<b>SP III Outcome 2</b>	Governments scale-up the legal recognition and enforcement of land and resource rights for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women in those communities, as enabling conditions for democratic engagement, inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, and climate change adaption and mitigation.
<b>SP III Outcome 3</b>	Influential private investors and companies at national and international levels adopt international standards and rights-based approaches recognizing customary tenure rights, and work with governments, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and rural women’s groups to (I) to resolve land tenure disputes and conflicts; (II) reduce deforestation and forest degradation pressures; and (III) support community enterprises and locally determined business and conservation models that enhance livelihoods and sustainability outcomes

Table 5 (Source: Third Strategic Program 2018-2022)

**4.4 Grant Results Framework**

Planned Effects as per Grant Agreement	
<b>Grant Outcome 1</b>	Governments in selected REDD+ countries accelerate the legal recognition and enforcement of forest land rights for Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women, as enabling conditions for REDD+, sustainable livelihoods, and green growth.
<b>Grant Outcome 2</b>	International climate initiatives and financing mechanisms, and developing country governments adopt institutional safeguards and standards to scale-up the recognition of forest and land tenure rights, as a conditional requirement to REDD+ and other joint mitigation and adaption approaches.
<b>Grant Outcome 3</b>	Influential private investors and companies commit to international standards and practices that recognize tenure rights, and work with governments, CSOs, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities to resolve land governance issues – especially tenure – in order to reduce conflict, enhance local livelihoods, and reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

Table 6 (Source: Grant Agreement)

The grant agreement defines as its intended impact the “Improved governance of forest areas in developing countries for poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience”, and specifies “planned effects” or outcomes that the Earmarked Core Activities are intended to bring about for target groups. The intended main target groups are civil society actors, including Indigenous Peoples’ organizations, private sector actors involved in land-based investments, actors involved in the climate



change/conservation/land rights community, governments and policy makers involved in REDD+, including key multilateral initiatives and financing mechanisms. The grant agreement refers to the application with regards to how the “planned effects” are linked to NICFI outcomes:

After the submission of the 2016 annual report in May 2017, RRI and NORAD entered a dialogue about clearer results linking (as per Attachment B of the agreement) in light of the changes introduced by SP III and indicator formulation that did not conclude until April 2018. The agreement encompasses adjustments to the language and results formulation, and states that the “overall goals for the project remain the same”. The following mapping was agreed as per NORAD approval of the revised results framework (Annex B to the Agreement), dated 26 June 2018:

***“A number of indicators and result areas (at the output level) were found to be redundant and/or difficult to isolate in terms of meaning and application.”***  
RRI, Progress Report to NORAD, 2016

- Outcome 2 of SP III is linked to Outcome 1 for NICFI;
- Sub-result 2.1 of SP III is tied to Outcome 2 for NICFI;
- Outcome 3 of SP III is linked to Outcome 3 for NICFI;
- Indicators for SP III 2.1.1 to 2.1.5 are tied to Outputs and indicators for Outcomes 1 and 2;
- Sub-result 3.1 and 3.2 of SP III are linked to Outputs and Indicators under Outcome 3;
- Targets 1.2.4 and 3.2.3 of SP III are tied to Output 3.4.

While the approval specifies that the new results framework is applicable “from now” on, i.e. prospectively, the revised framework was also updated with “actual achieved targets for 2016 and 2017”. Consequently, this mid-term evaluation will refer to the results, indicators and targets contained in this new results framework when assessing RRI’s progress.

**5. RRI Performance**

RRI occupies a strategic niche in the area of forest and land rights advocacy and remains an important global player in the eyes of external stakeholders. RRI is regarded as an authoritative source of research and data, not least due to its work on Tenure Tracking.

***“This [Tenure Tracking] is the most valuable role. It gives them credibility and produces top quality data. Nobody else has something like that.”***  
Interview with donor representative, 2018

The Coalition’s work spans from the global to the local level, which is of critical importance for many issues, not least climate change. In some instances, positive change can be directly traced back to RRI’s efforts, as in the case of the Global Climate Action Summit, where 34 governors from nine countries entered into partnership with indigenous peoples and international foundations pledged \$4 billion in support. The “Global Baseline on Carbon Storage in Collective Lands” report reveals that Indigenous Peoples and local communities manage at least 22 percent of the forest carbon stored in tropical and sub-tropical countries. The

***“The majority of consulted Coalition members agree that RRI has contributed to the scaling up of reforms related to forest tenure and land rights. RRI has identified, engaged and mobilized new constituencies, including agrarian and land reform organizations, food security and anti-poverty organizations, and the private sector.”***  
Universalia, Mid-Term Evaluation of RRI, 2016



report’s significance is also due to the fact that it allows other development actors to better understand, plan and measure the effects of their interventions. How better analysis can trigger action is exemplified by the report on the Democratic Republic of Congo’s Mai-Ndombe province, which convinced other development actors, including government agencies and international organizations, to reframe and realign country-level REDD+ interventions to better protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and rural women. At the global level, the adoption of an Indigenous Peoples Policy by the Green Climate Fund is another, unexpected, example how analytics can lead to policy change. RRI Coalition members (in particular Tebtebba and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) leveraged RRI’s analysis of Indigenous Peoples’ rights in the portfolio of selected GCF projects to advocate for and eventually obtain strong policy guidance in their favor.

Multi-stakeholder platforms play an increasingly important role in light of the 2030 Development Agenda with its Sustainable Development Goals. The Interlaken Group and MegaFlorestais are such platforms bringing together companies, activists, investors and global organizations to develop new tools and approaches to engaging the private sector on land tenure.

The assessment of progress in quantitative terms is less straightforward. While the Grant includes indicators at outcome and output level, they play a marginal role in the day-to-day management of RRI’s work plans. At outcome level, the Grant contains seven outcome indicators aligned with the three outcomes. When looking at the cumulative progress, marked differences among the three outcomes are evident as per Chart 1. After three years, progress of Outcome 1 lags as measured by all three indicators. Meanwhile, progress on Outcome 3 seems to exceed RRI’s expectations, as the indicators exceed the 3-year target or even the 5-year target. As explained in the following section, this is more reflective of challenges with the indicator design and target setting, than the actual level of progress achieved by RRI.

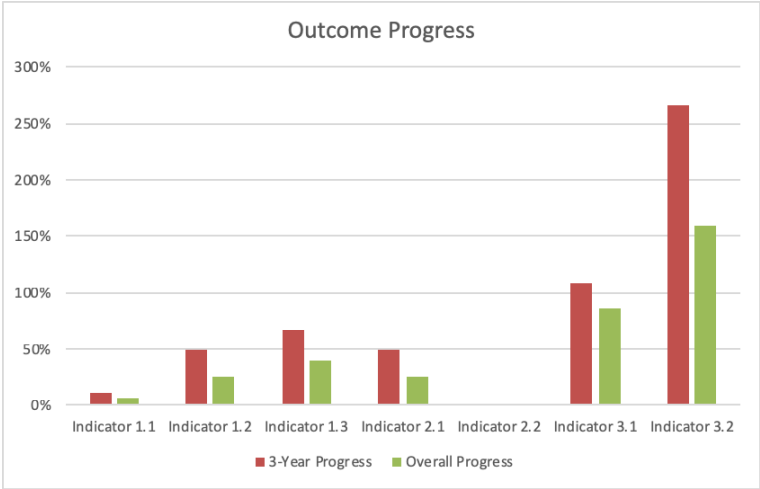


Chart 1

The indicators aligned with Outcomes 1 and 2 reflect long-term outcome-level change at country and global level (e.g. number of hectares of forest lands formally recognized) and are challenging to achieve and measure. Meanwhile the indicators aligned with Outcome 3 track changes in behavior of companies and investors that are more short-term and limited in scope. For instance, Indicator 3.1 tracks the number of investors or companies that adopt rights-based approaches and standards. Of course, RRI only knows about investors or companies that it directly works with since there is no global registry of entities adopting rights-based approaches.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> **Note:** The naming convention of indicators can be somewhat confusing. For instance, Indicator 1.1 is one of three indicators measuring Outcome 1 and not Output 1.1, which is measured by Indicator 1.1.1 instead. For instance, Outcome 1.1 Indicators could have been labeled Indicator 1.A instead to avoid confusion with Output 1.1



At the output level, the divergence in progress is even more pronounced, as illustrated in Chart 2. As explained in section 4.4, several changes were already implemented in in January 2018 following a joint review with the donor. While indicators for outputs under Outcome 1 and 2 show good, and some cases even excellent progress, indicators for outputs under Outcome 3 show progress that exceeds the 3-year target by 150 percent, 467 percent or even 700 percent. Overall, ten output indicators exceed, in some instances dramatically, the 3-year target, while progress at the outcome level is less pronounced. While outcomes would generally progress at a much slower pace compared to outputs, the dramatic difference in progress between the sum of all outputs compared to their associated outcomes – with the exception of Outcome 3 as an outlier – suggests a certain disconnect between the outputs and outcomes. A review of the intervention logic, risks, and assumptions could provide further insights.

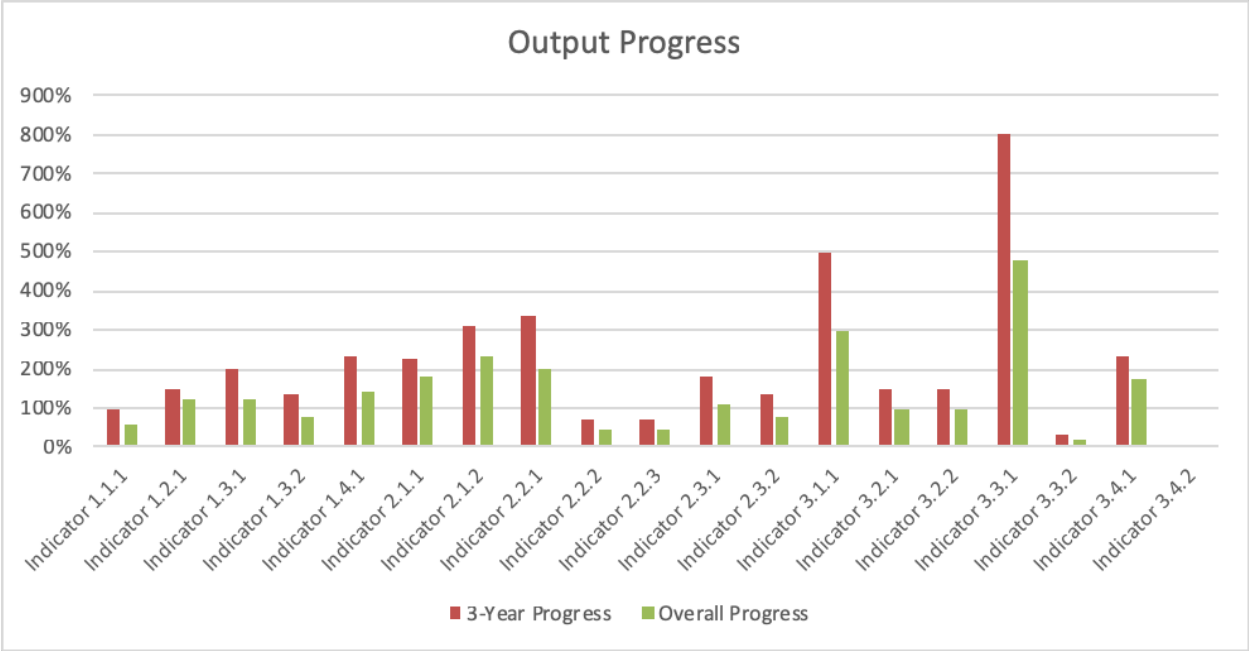


Chart 2

5.1 Detailed observations by Outcome

The performance at outcome and output level is measured through a total of 26 indicators as listed in the Annex. Targets are set for each of the five years as contained in RRI’s annual reporting to NORAD. To asses performance in the context of this evaluation, the targets for each year of operation were aggregated into a 3-year target and a 5-year target. The actual level of achievement for each year was also aggregated into a cumulative actual value, which was then compared to both the 3-year target and the 5-year target. Performance was rated:

- “green” if the cumulative actual value exceeds **70% of the 3-year target**
- “yellow” if the cumulative actual value is between **50% and 70% of the 3-year target**
- “red” if the cumulative actual value is **below 50% of the 3-year target**





Since the evaluation does not assume that progress against indicators is necessarily linear, the cumulative actuals were also compared to their respective 5-year target, but this is simply for reference and no rating was assigned based on the level of progress against the 5-year target.

5.1.1 Outcome 1 – “Governments in selected REDD+ countries accelerate [...]”

The outcome is measured through 3 outcome indicators that are rated off track. Particularly Outcome Indicator 1.1, which measures the forest area formally recognized as owned or controlled by communities shows only 17% progress in each of the first two years. No data for 2018 was available at the time of the evaluation due to the complexity of tenure tracking, and no early indication was available that 2018 results would be significantly different to the previous years. At output level, all five indicators are rated green, and in three cases RRI has significantly exceeded their 5-year targets already.

RRI has made significant contributions to the formal recognition of about 4 million hectares of forest lands as owned by forest communities and Indigenous Peoples. Also, with regards to REDD+ related policies and the halt of measures that disadvantage Indigenous Peoples and local communities, RRI has chalked up important successes in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru and Indonesia.

However, these achievements are diminished when compared to RRI’s ambitious targets, particularly with regards to a total of 50 million hectares being formally recognized over five years. Hence, RRI should proactively adjust the targets for all three outcome indicators together with the donor.

Indicator	Rating
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.1:</b> Number of hectares of forest lands formally recognized as owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples, forest communities or households, including women	Red circle
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.2:</b> Number of REDD+ related policies or measures adopted by target countries in support of community land and forest rights	Yellow circle
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.3:</b> Number of regressive tenure reforms, legislative measures or exploitative land grabs halted or modified in favor of Indigenous Peoples and local communities	Yellow circle
<b>Output Indicator 1.1.1:</b> Number of strategic analyses produced and disseminated in key languages	Green circle
<b>Output Indicator 1.2.1:</b> Number of strategic road maps strengthened or developed	Green circle
<b>Output Indicator 1.3.1:</b> Number of multi-stakeholder convenings held to advance tenure rights in the context of climate investments and initiatives	Green circle
<b>Output Indicator 1.3.2:</b> Number of CSO and IP platforms established or strengthened to further bottom advocacy and engagement in REDD and sustainable forest governance	Green circle
<b>Output Indicator 1.4.1:</b> Number of IP and CSO-led initiatives undertaken to recognize community tenure rights in support of forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods	Green circle

Table 8

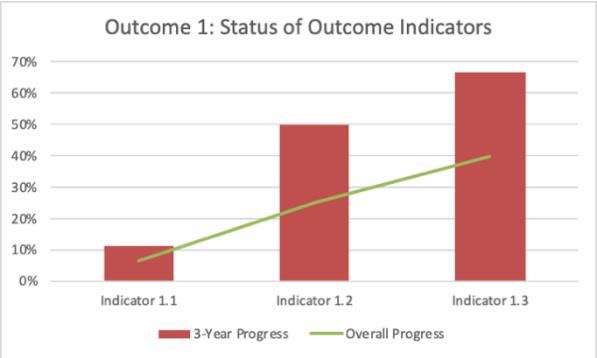


Chart 3

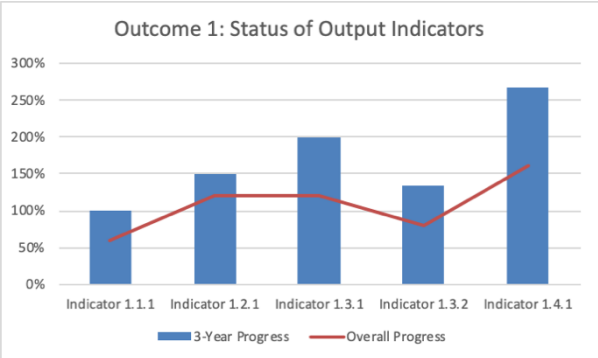


Chart 4

5.1.2 Outcome 2 – “International climate initiatives and financing mechanisms [...]”

The outcome is measured through two outcome indicators that are rated off track; however, compared to Outcome 1 they seem within reasonable reach within the remaining Grant period. RRI has had some early successes with financing mechanisms, in particular the adoption of an Indigenous Peoples Policy by the Green Climate Fund in February 2018.<sup>19</sup> Advances have been made in several countries to integrate

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/safeguards/indigenous-peoples>



local community tenure security into national REDD+ strategies, so there is good reason to believe that the target can still be achieved.

At the output level, four of the seven output indicators have already exceeded their 5-year target, but for quite different reasons. For instance, indicators 2.1.1 tracks the dissemination of global analyses with a 5-year target of 5 or one per year. So, the additional dissemination of just one analysis implies that the target is exceeded by 100%. At the same time, the additional dissemination of a global analysis is meaningful and requires efforts on RRI’s side. The same applies for indicators 2.2.1 and 2.3.2 that also have a 5-year target of 5. The situation is different for indicator 2.1.2 that tracks the number of media hits in the national and international press. The 5-year target is 200 and in 2018 alone RRI recorded 185 media hits. Unlike the previous example, the achievement of 10 additional media hits is not terribly meaningful due to diminishing returns, and the diversity of media, for instance, could be far more illustrative (e.g. global versus national media or the number of countries with media hits).

Indicator	Rating
<b>Outcome Indicator 2.1:</b> Number of climate initiatives or financing mechanisms that prioritize community land and forest tenure security in their support to key tropical forest countries	●
<b>Outcome Indicator 2.2:</b> Number of targeted countries that make indigenous and local community tenure security a key part of their nationally determined contributions and/or REDD+ strategies	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Number of global analyses produced and disseminated in key languages	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.2:</b> Number of media hits in national and international press	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.1:</b> Number of convenings (dialogue or events) held	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.2:</b> Number of Indigenous Peoples and local community representatives engaged in key international fora	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.3:</b> Number of press releases and strategic messaging outreach to key audiences (governments, international initiatives, civil society)	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.3.1:</b> Number of engagements held with key climate initiatives and institutions to advance tenure reforms in the context of climate actions and investments	●
<b>Output Indicator 2.3.2:</b> Number of targeted analyses of rights-based commitments and safeguards endorsed by relevant international initiatives	●

Table 9

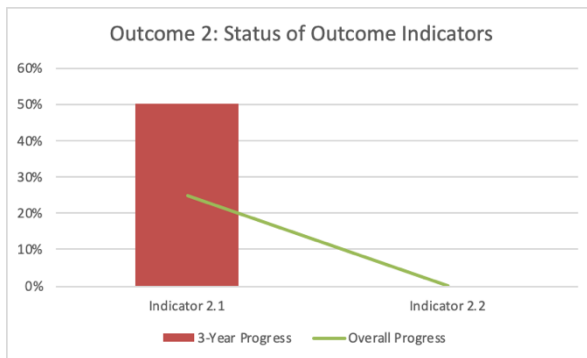


Chart 5

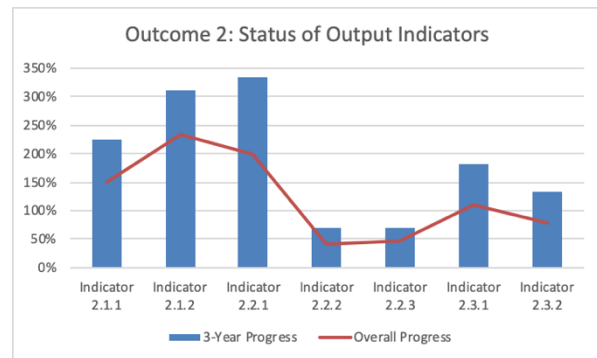


Chart 6

5.1.3 Outcome 3 – “Influential private investors and companies commit [...]”

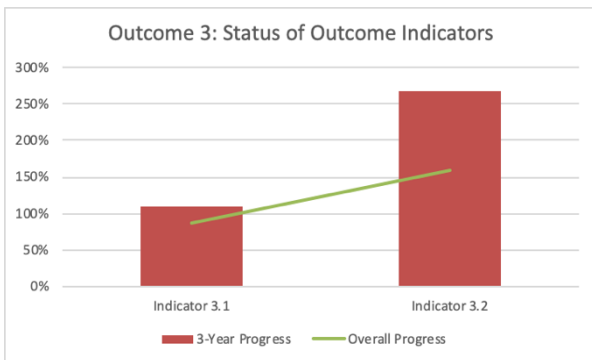


Chart 7

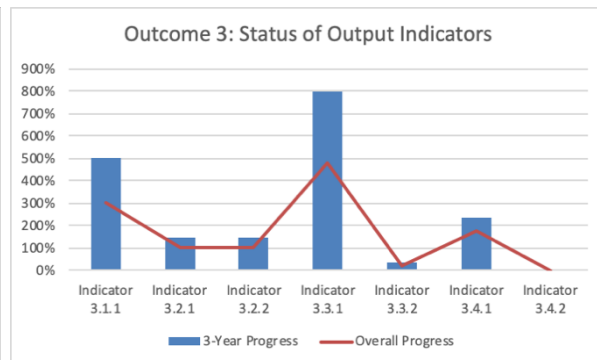


Chart 8



As discussed below, it is debatable to what extent this outcome should be considered within scope of the mid-term evaluation since no NICFI funding was allocated to its achievement during the first two years.<sup>20</sup> However, since the outcome is part of the Grant agreement, it is included here.

The outcome is measured through two indicators that both exceed their 3-year targets, and in the case of indicator 3.2 already exceeds the 5-year target significantly. Most of the output indicators also exceed or meet their 5-year targets already, with the exception of indicators 3.3.2 that tracks tools and instruments produced and indicator 3.4.2 that tracks the development of alternative sourcing strategies. Both indicators relate to outputs that appear well within reach, so their status comes as somewhat of a surprise.

Since Outcome 3 was significantly redesigned in January 2018, one possibility could be that RRI was somewhat cautious when setting outcome and output targets, and these should be revised for the remaining duration of the Grant in order to be relevant.

Indicator	Rating
<b>Outcome Indicator 3.1:</b> Number of investors or companies that adopt rights-based approaches and standards	●
<b>Outcome Indicator 3.2:</b> Number of companies and/or countries that strengthen opportunities for community-driven economic and conservation models that reduce impacts on forests and improve livelihoods	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.1.1:</b> Number of strategic analyses produced	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.2.1:</b> Number of pre-competitive networks or platforms initiated in key tropical forest countries	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.2.2:</b> Number of initiatives that pilot measures to reduce tenure risks and/or other factors driving deforestation	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.3.1:</b> Number of companies and investors that pilot investments screens to assess their exposure to tenure risks	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.3.2:</b> Number of targeted tools and instruments produced	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.4.1:</b> Number of community enterprise and conservation initiatives identified and promoted in target countries	●
<b>Output Indicator 3.4.2:</b> Number of alternative sourcing strategies developed between companies and communities	●

Table 10

**5.2 Implementation aspects and financial performance**

The implementation of the Grant is imbedded into RRI’s regular annual work plans that are either regional or thematic in nature as detailed in section 4.3. Since RRI’s planning process is largely bottom-up, the same or similar results can appear in different work plans. It is not unusual for several operational units to share a result and to undertake separate activities in support; in fact, this type of collaboration is generally desirable. However, collaboration on a result requires coordination and communication. Typically, one unit will take the lead to ensure that all the activities are undertaken and sequenced in such a way that add up to the desired result.

The evaluation team found it challenging to trace NICFI activities through regional and thematic work plans due to inconsistencies in their formulation and their tagging to framework results. RRI traditionally has worked with largely unearmarked funding, so many of the planning documents contain no reference to the source of funding. Interviews with regional managers also confirmed that they manage work plans “holistically”, which in this context suggests that funding sources are seen as somewhat fungible. Feedback from country-level partners indicates that they are not aware of any specificities in funding, as from their perspective all the funds originate from the Coalition. Overall it is unclear to the evaluation team how multi-year commitments, as enshrined in the Grant, are effectively rolled forward from one planning period to the next.

RRI has implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning system that allows for much closer tracking of results and activities, but while the system may be in place, RRI’s culture has not quite caught up yet. This is no surprise to donors who indicated in interviews that they are well aware of the RRI’s traditional

<sup>20</sup> As mentioned, in 2018 an estimated USD 150,000 in NICFI funding was budgeted under Outcome 3.



funding model and the ongoing change process that is intended to better equip RRI for managing earmarked contributions.

More than half of all activities (56% in USD terms) are implemented through, mostly local, collaborating partners. So-called collaborative agreements are concluded between work plan managers and partner entities. Since RRI follows an annual planning process, these agreements are typically concluded and valid for a duration of less than a calendar year. Of the collaborating agreements provided to the evaluators for 2018, more than half of the initial agreements were concluded in May or June 2018. A fifth of the initial agreements were only concluded in the second half of 2018 and had to be revised to extend their timeline beyond 2018. In interviews local partners expressed frustration with the planning process during 2018, which was changed in the wake of the new SP III. Given the significance of collaborative agreements, the evaluation team was surprised that RRI could not provide a consolidated list of signed agreements for the three years.

RRI submits annual progress reports to Norway that contain updates on the level of progress in line with the agreed indicators. These progress reports are based on and consolidate mid-year and end-of-year reporting by each unit. So, units do not as such report against the so-called NICFI work plan, but instead report on their complete regional or thematic work plan that captures all activities and all sources of

Tranche	2016	2017	2018 (est.)	Total (est.)
<b>NORAD receipt</b>	USD 693,807	USD 656,394	USD 717,660	<b>USD 2,067,861</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	USD 378,055	USD 701,247	USD 850,000	<b>USD 1,929,302</b>
<b>Implementation rate</b>	54%	106%	118%	<b>93%</b>

Table 11 (Source: RRG)

funds. Since results are shared among – in some cases up to three – work plans, arriving at an overall picture is somewhat challenging for an external reviewer.

During the first three years of the Grant period, RRI received an estimated USD 2,067,861.<sup>21</sup> Based on information from RRI’s Independent Audits for 2016 and 2017<sup>22</sup>, the total amount spent in 2016 and 2017 was USD 378,055 and USD 701,247, respectively. As of the end of 2017, the unspent balance on the Grant was USD 270,899, which was re-phased to 2018. This translates into an implementation rate of 54% for 2016. The comparatively low implementation rate for 2016 is explained by the fact that

Norad Grant #GLO-4226 QZA-16/0166 Promoting Forest Tenure and Governance Reforms as Pre-requisites to the Effective Implementation of REDD+		
	2016	2017
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 45.028,00	\$ 114.350,00
Staff travel	\$ 4.823,00	\$ 28.039,00
Publications	\$ -	\$ 13.231,00
Administrative Consultants	\$ -	\$ 8.524,00
Misc. Expenses	\$ -	\$ 60,00
Collaborative Agreements	\$ 269.377,00	\$ 334.687,00
Participant Travel	\$ 15,00	\$ 4.662,00
Program Consultants	\$ 31.029,00	\$ 154.338,00
Administration	\$ 25.423,00	\$ 43.356,00
Conference Costs	\$ 2.360,00	\$ -
	\$ 378.055,00	\$ 701.247,00
*Source: RRI Independent Audits 2016 and 2017		

Table 12 (Source: RRG)

<sup>21</sup> At the time the mid-term evaluation was finalized, no final account of 2018 income and expenditures was available to the evaluation team.

<sup>22</sup> Only the summary table was made available, not the complete audit reports



the funding was only received during the course of the year and implementation had to ramp up before expenditures could begin. The implementation rates for 2017 and 2018 are markedly better and show that implementation is catching up. Overall the use of resources for the first two years appears to be reasonable and consistent with RRI's strategy. More than half of all activities (56% in USD terms) are implemented through, mostly local, collaborating partners. Working with local grassroots organizations tends to be challenging because of their limited absorptive capacity, which is a challenge for all development actors working at this level.

### 5.3 Country Examples

As part of the mid-term evaluation, two country cases were reviewed in-depth. In the case of Liberia, a three-day mission to the capital Monrovia was undertaken to meet with local stakeholders and to participate in the country planning process. A mission to Indonesia was originally planned but had to be converted to a desk study due to the Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami on 28 September 2018.

#### 5.3.1 Liberia

In 2009 the Liberian government started a land reform process and established a land commission. Following the adoption of a land rights policy in 2013, the commission set out to draft the Land Rights Bill. Among its four categories of tenure, customary land is with significant implications for millions of rural Liberians without formalized land rights. After four years of debate the law was passed in August 2018. Foreign palm oil concessions were at the heart of reforms which the World Bank has credited with transforming Liberia into a promising country for agricultural producers to invest in. But land concessions - which now cover more than 45 percent of Liberian territory - have also provoked conflict in recent years. An estimated 90 percent of Liberia's civil court cases are related to land, and as many as two thirds of violent conflicts in the country have their root in land rights issues.<sup>23</sup> Several development partners have been active on land rights advocacy in Liberia for several years, including UNDP, the European Union, SIDA and USAID.

RRI's engagement in Liberia is structured along three working groups on land rights, palm oil, and rights & climate with participation of CSOs. Key objectives of the working groups are to advocate for community customary rights, help CSO representatives understand the REDD+ process, train communities in agricultural practices that reduce deforestation, and to promote alternative livelihoods so that forests are not converted.

RRI in cooperation with partners played a significant role in supporting civil society in the runup to the approval of the Land Rights Bill, including through an online campaign and video, a radio and social media outreach, and direct engagement with lawmakers and government officials<sup>24</sup> The land rights working group actively engaged across 15 counties, resulting in 41,000 signatures of a petition, plus an additional 30,000 signatures from 25 different countries. The results of the petition were handed over to parliament in a formal ceremony with traditional chiefs and civil society, women and youth representatives. The reflections of CSO representatives on RRI's contribution are very positive and acknowledge the

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-liberia-landrights-lawmaking/liberia-set-to-secure-ancestral-land-rights-with-long-awaited-law-idUSKCN1LC1PA>

<sup>24</sup> The online discussion was supported by Landesa, Sustainable Development Institute, Rights & Rice Foundation, Land Rights Now, Habitat for Humanity, and OXFAM International: <https://landportal.org/debates/2018/liberia-land-rights-act>



importance of broadening the base of supporters and the active engagement with government, which were instrumental to persuade government to seriously consider CSO concerns.

However, CSO representatives are less familiar with the analytical products prepared by RRI. For instance, while global tenure tracking covers Liberia, little awareness exists locally among CSOs engaged on land tenure issues, which raises the question to what extent RRI's global knowledge products impact at the national level. Donor representatives regard RRI as the most cost-effective avenue to pursue the land rights agenda but raise questions on the level of RRI's continued attention to Liberia.

The working group on palm oil and rights & climate are closely connected thematically. Liberia has developed its REDD+ strategy and is accelerating the implementation of remaining REDD+ readiness activities. The Foundation for Community Initiatives has put in place the necessary components to conduct a broad review of the current state of the REDD+ implementation process in Liberia, including a literature review, stakeholder meetings, and a CSO REDD+ technical team. The Forest Development Authority has convened meetings at community level, and communities have not yet given their consent to REDD+. Through the working group eleven CSOs working on palm oil issues have met to discuss REDD+ activities and documents, and it has become apparent that most CSOs, particularly those in the oil palm sector, had little knowledge or REDD+ in Liberia. The RRI Liberia Coalition and Inclusive Development International (IDI) focused on completing a chain-mapping analysis, developing a strategy based on that analysis, and conducting advocacy to advance tenure rights in the context of private sector expansion. IDI completed the investment chain-mapping report of four oil palm companies active in Liberia and support the definition of a strategy and advocacy plans to communicate the results of the analysis to affected communities. Rapid Rural Appraisals were conducted to gather the inputs of local communities affected by large scale palm oil development. With the support of Green Advocates local communities brought a test case against one palm oil producer to the grievance process set up to protect customary tenure rights holders affected by private sector expansion. Using advocacy guidelines, pressure was exerted that resulted in the company lost a \$1.5 billion loan.<sup>25</sup>

CSO representatives appear somewhat wary at this stage. They are critical of calls for them to change their small-scale practices while the government is granting large-scale concessions for the palm oil sector. They feel that their tradeoffs have not been sufficiently analyzed to assure them of the viability of alternative livelihoods. They expressed unease with RRI's ability to support their capacity building and felt the time provided to them for solid inputs was too short. From their point of view, a thorough understanding of the local situation was key for RRI's support to be meaningful. At the same time, they strongly appreciate RRI's grassroots approach and positively compare it with other actors. As one CSO representative put it, the World Bank forest project only engages with the government while RRI engages with the communities. From their perspective, RRI should focus on two things going forward: to continue influencing policies and to focus on bringing back the information to communities.

### 5.3.2 Indonesia

In Indonesia, fundamental policy changes are still pending following the landmark Constitutional Court Ruling (MK 35) from 2013 which converted customary forests (*hutan adats*) from state-owned forests to forests subject to the rights of indigenous and local communities (*hutan hak*). Moreover, as part of the government's current five-year plan (2015-2019) the Social Forestry Program targets to allocate 12.7

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.inclusivedevelopment.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Letter-to-Westpac-1.pdf>





million hectares of forest to community management by 2019. However, as of July 2018 social forestry permits were distributed to approximately 395,000 households for 1.75 million hectares, which corresponds to only 15% of the total target.<sup>26</sup> Against these developments, RRI's engagement in Indonesia remains centered around the implementation of tenure policies and the realization of pledges to accelerate recognition of customary lands and forests, agrarian reforms, corporate sector engagement and conflict mapping.

A major achievement of RRI was the formation and expansion of the Indonesia Tenure Coalition, an informal meeting mechanism which convenes and coordinates roughly 30 local CSOs, NGOs, other organizations that work with various branches of the Government. In 2018, the Tenure Coalition developed its own structure and bimonthly meetings in line with a hosting arrangement with RRI. Together with the President's Executive Office and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), the Tenure Coalition co-hosted the Jakarta Tenure Conference in October 2017 on the realization of people's rights in the context of Indonesian forest and land tenure reforms. The conference brought together over 600 participants from government, academia, civil society, local communities and international donors, and was the top 'trending' news of the month. The conference had 11 topic-specific panels based on highlighting the gaps between policy and action for advancing customary forest rights, tenure and peatland to the role of the private sector. The MoEF's announced the formal recognition of nine new village forests (*hutan desa*) as well as nine new customary forests (*hutan adat*), covering a total of more than 83,500 hectares. The conference put forth recommendations on next steps to address the gaps in implementation of the MK35 Constitutional Court decision, the social forestry targets, peatland protection, and the agrarian reform targets. These conclusions formed the basis for the creation of a Joint Action Plan by Tenure Coalition to identify joint priorities and strategies which directly permeate into RRI's planning. In the same vein, discussions started with the Ministry of Social Forestry to take up and fund various parts of the Joint Action Plan and to prepare for an Indonesia Tenure Facility Project.

However, delayed finalization of the Joint Action Plan by the Tenure Coalition also had negative side effects on RRI issuing contracts for 2018. As a result, funding of collaborators was postponed and budgets of activities had to be reallocated in some instances. This was flagged by RRI as an important lesson learned for future planning cycles.

2018 was seen as an important year for RRI's operations in Indonesia due to the country's upcoming general elections in 2019 and the biennial Global Land Forum (GLF) co-organized by the International Land Coalition (ILC) in Bandung in September. This major event convened over 700 activists, organizations and government agencies to learn from and contribute to international land governance successes and challenges. Among the panelists were several RRI Collaborators such as KPA and AMAN who discussed Indonesia's agrarian reform agenda and implementation, or SAINS on people-centered land governance. On its first day, Indonesia President Joko Widodo signed an instruction document to accelerate efforts towards local communities' greater control over land. In the same vein, several members of RRI and the Indonesia Tenure Coalition such as AMAN, HuMa or JKPP are actively participating in a Working Group headed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to accelerate the establishment of customary forests. As the Working Group was set-up only towards the end of last year, its objective was restricted to process only 89,000 ha by end 2018. This ambition seems to be only limited, particularly in view of the governments' overall targets and a potential 1.3 million ha which could be processed without delay

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. <https://forestsnews.cifor.org/58344/taking-stock-of-indonesias-social-forestry-program?fnl=en>



according to an estimate of Tenure Coalition members. To a large extent, this slow progress is connected to the government's decision to provide new titles only in case of "clean and clear" ownership, resulting in the exclusion of all areas that are under dispute in one way or another. Within the same context, RRI has ongoing efforts through its collaborator HuMa to assess the impacts of the designation of customary forest in conservation areas, including a comparative study of the expansion rate of customary forests in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forests (KLHK) and various other ministries and CSOs.

An important focal point of RRI's Indonesia operations are customary and fisher communities in coastal areas and small islands. The Indonesian archipelago consists of thousands of islands with roughly 81,000 km coastline and millions of people dependent on the sea.<sup>27</sup> Their livelihood has become increasingly threatened by climate change as much as reclamation projects, mining, conservation or ecotourism. KIARA's Data and Information Center recorded 38 reclamation projects, 1,895 maritime mining licenses and hundreds of tourism development projects, resulting in multiple conflicts and contested areas across Indonesia. Similarly, 2016 data collected by KIARA counted several thousand coastal villages struck by natural disasters such as landslides, floods, tsunamis or earthquakes. Among its interventions, RRI is providing training and capacity-building to local fishing communities and conducting research on traditional access and ownership rights in coastal and small islands communities. In 2018, RRI Collaborator KIARA initiated a pilot project for the legal recognition of coastal territories by supporting Pulau Pari's local community of 1,200 people in their fight against an illegal land grabbing attempt by a private company. This effort led to an external review of the case and an audit by the National Land Agency.<sup>28</sup>

In 2018, a general lack of funding in the Asia work plan also affected Indonesia, leading to a roughly 40% decrease in available budgets compared to the previous year (\$270,000 to \$160,000). This led to more limited engagement in RRI focus countries and was flagged by RRI collaborators as a critical obstacle for the future.

## 6. Findings and Recommendations

### 6.1 Relevance

Deforestation and forest degradation are the second leading cause of global warming, responsible for about 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and the loss of forests directly affects the world's capacity to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. RRI occupies a strategic niche in the area of forest and land rights advocacy and is regarded as an authoritative source of research and data, not least due to its work on tenure tracking. The work funded through the grant contributes directly to NICFI Outcomes 2 and 3, and the results set out in the grant agreement remain pertinent.

Achieving outcomes requires time and is a multi-year process by definition. While adjustments to the results framework can be important to refocus attention, and to optimize the use of resources, frequent changes also risk the maturation of any results, and limit RRI's ability to present a cohesive progress account. The results framework was revised in January 2018 to better align it with RRI's SP III and to

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-landrights-tourism/indonesian-islanders-fight-developer-with-snorkels-and-homestays-idUSKCN1MJ01L>

<sup>28</sup> Status: October 2018.



improve the initial results design. So, at this stage no further change to the currently-agreed results and indicator statements should be implemented in order for outcome-level change to take place.

**Recommendation 1: Keep the results framework stable for the remaining duration of the grant.**

The achievement of outcomes, by definition, always requires broad collaboration across a multitude of stakeholders. Hence, the budget of a single entity can never capture the true cost of achieving an outcome. Ideally a small amount of money can leverage much larger resources to be mobilized and implemented by others in support of a common outcome. During the first three years of implementation, RRI has not used any NICFI funding for activities supporting Outcome 3, and instead used other resources to support it. That raises questions to what extent any of the results reported under Outcome 3 can be credited to NICFI funding. From Norway's perspective it might appear beneficial that results they are interested in are being pursued with other funding.

**Recommendation 2: Align NICFI funding in support of Outcome 3.**

## 6.2 Effectiveness

The achievement of results overall appears to be on track. RRI made important contributions through its research, advocacy, and convening activities at the country level that have led to legislative reforms and improved REDD+ policies in support of community rights. RRI has traditionally used an annual bottom-up planning process that reflects its grassroots nature and its aspiration to be agile and impactful. Feedback from interviews points to challenges in the planning process, particularly during 2018, when changes introduced in the wake of the new SP III led to somewhat open-ended discussions and consequently the delay of contracts. Of the collaborating agreements provided to the evaluators, more than half of the initial agreements were concluded in May or June 2018. A fifth of the initial agreements were only concluded in the second half of 2018 and had to be revised to extend their timeline beyond 2018.

Transformational change requires sustained attention and planning, as recognized in the Coalition's *SP III*. However, the current planning process is not designed to deliver multi-year results that require collaboration across regional and thematic work plans. NICFI commitments should be placed front and center in dedicated planning sessions, to both frame discussions and ensure continuity of actions. Consequently, RRI should consider adapting its planning process so that multi-year commitments are also reflected in multi-year work plans and collaboration agreements.

**Recommendation 3: Consider a multi-year planning process in light of multi-year commitments.**

At the output level, 63% of the 5-year targets have either already been achieved or surpassed. In some instances, particularly under Outcome 3, the output indicators are exceeded up to five-fold, and outcome indicators have exceeded their targets for year 3. Given that Outcome 3 was revised only in January 2018, it is understandable that target setting for Outcome 3 and related outputs would be cautious, but the level of performance suggest that the targets were set unrealistically low.

Meanwhile, progress on Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 is lagging based on outcome indicators. It is not unusual for outcome-level indicators to require more time to register change, and in several instances the data for 2018 actuals is still being compiled. Outcome 1 is driven by local partners and collaborators that were affected by the shift in planning modalities outlined above. However, progress measures by outcome



indicators 1.1 and 2.2 is such that the evaluators are not persuaded that RRI's 5-year targets are still within reach in the remaining Grant period. Moreover, the level by which actual progress either over- or underperforms compared to the 3-year target demonstrates the limited utility of the indicators and targets to assess RRI's true contribution.

**Recommendation 4: Review the five-year targets for outcomes and outputs in terms of their ambition and adjust them so that the targets become meaningful.**

### 6.3 Efficiency

The Grant's implementation is imbedded into RRI's regular annual work plans, which are either regional or thematic in nature. The evaluation team found it challenging to trace NICFI activities through regional and thematic work plans due to inconsistencies in their formulation and their tagging to framework results. In several cases inconsistencies became apparent how shared results and activities were incorporated into regional and thematic work plans, and the assessment of progress for the same activity differed between regional and thematic managers. RRI submits annual progress reports to Norway that contain updates on the level of progress in line with the agreed indicators. These progress reports are based on and consolidate mid-year and end-of-year reporting by each unit. So, units do not as such report against the so-called NICFI work plan, but instead report on their complete regional or thematic work plan that captures all activities and all sources of funds. Since results are shared among – in some cases up to three – work plans, arriving at an overall picture is somewhat challenging for an external reviewer. RRI has implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning system that allows for much closer tracking of results and activities, but while the system may be in place, RRI's culture has not quite caught up yet.

The work plans do not include any indicators *per se*, and only references *SP III* indicators in an annex without references to targets or measurement methodologies. Progress reports at the mid-year and year-end mark indicate the link to *SP III* results, and so indirectly reference applicable indicators. To avoid any impression that the achievement of results is the product of accident instead of design, RRI should ensure that indicators are consistently used in the preparation of and reporting on work plans.

**Recommendation 5: Ensure that the indicators defined for the Grant are reflected in annual work plans.**

Overall the use of resources, to the extent it could be reviewed, appears to be reasonable and consistent with RRI's strategy. Working with local grassroots organizations tends to be challenging because of their limited absorptive capacity, which is a challenge for all development actors working at this level. RRI has demonstrated good use of its partner network, and more than half of all activities (56% in USD terms) are implemented through, mostly local, collaborating partners. So-called collaborative agreements are concluded between work plan managers and partner entities. Given the significance of collaborative agreements, the evaluation team was surprised that RRI could not provide a consolidated list of signed agreements for the three years. A review of available collaborative agreements reveals that the same local partners are contracted on a periodic basis. However, feedback indicates that RRI's planning process does not facilitate local planning because of it too confined to the current year implementation cycle. It seems not enough strategic, long-term dialogue with local partners takes place and interviewees expect a more committed long-term engagement.



**Recommendation 7: Address implementation challenges at country level and set up a central repository for collaborating agreements.**

## 6.4 Impact

Since this is a mid-term evaluation, it is too early to say anything definitive on the possible impact achieved through RRI's work funded by NICFI. Overall, RRI appears to be on the right track to making a meaningful contribution in the larger context of climate change and community forest tenure. Two issues that potentially stand in RRI's way to achieving impact are the complexity of its results architecture and its consideration of risks.

It might appear that the Grant's results framework is reasonably straight-forward when looked at through the perspective of RRI's so-called NICFI work plan. In essence this is a compilation of activities embedded in regions and global work plans, which instead are actually used for day-to-day management. Since RRI pursues results through a combination of regional and thematic work plans, coordination and communication among managers responsible for these work plans is essential. Collaboration on results across different organizational units is nothing unusual – in fact it is highly desirable – and often requires extra communication efforts. Feedback from local stakeholders, who implemented a large part of the work as collaborating partners, indicated that communication needs to be improved, particularly in light of recent changes to the annual planning process.

RRI's *SP III* includes a risk section that is helpful in understanding and contextualizing possible barriers to the achievement of impact. However, mid-year and end-of-year reports typically contain no reference to risks. There is evidence that risk mitigation does take place; for instance, several activities were re-programmed in 2018 due to delays and changes in the local country context. Risks and opportunities are often two sides of the same coin, and through SRMs RRI has already a mechanism in place to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. At present, the approval criteria for SRMs only reference high-risk opportunities, but it could be interesting to use SRMs more broadly to mitigate implementation risks that jeopardize the achievement of results.

In one specific instance, RRI has to consider the unintended consequences of its work. As reported in the Liberia example, RRI's support was critical to allow local communities to access and take advantage of the formal grievance process set up to protect customary tenure rights holders affected by private sector expansion. However, this led to increased pressure and threats on local activists. So, RRI needs to carefully calibrate its support in certain country contexts to limit the exposure of individuals and communities to retaliatory actions.

**Recommendation 6: Improve horizontal and vertical communication around results and risks in the Coalition.**

## 6.5 Sustainability

RRI's theory of change and its outcomes are conscious of long-term sustainability. The focus on the legal recognition of land tenure is an attempt - by design - to "lock in" positive change for local communities



and Indigenous Peoples. Laws and regulatory frameworks provide a level of certainty that is harder to undo, and hence create a sense of certainty. However, legal recognition is not enough, and RRI's other outcomes represent flanking measures that advance the knowledge about the critical linkage between forest land tenure and climate change, increase civil society's capacity to understand and claim their rights, and influence the behavior of key stakeholders, in particular investors and private sector entities.

These are all important aspects that shore up sustainability, but to ensure sustainability also requires a certain long-term perspective in RRI's outlook and planning. For the results pursued under this Grant to be sustainable requires RRI to perform functions that are outside the scope of the Grant, such as tenure tracking or the furnishing of advocacy platforms. RRI has spearheaded several strategic partnerships on visualizing land tenure data (LandMark), advocacy campaigns (LandRightsNow), and private sector engagement (Interlaken Group). These play an important role in coalescing RRI's partners and collaborators around specific issues. While partners see the value in these tools, their sustained financing is less secure. RRI has traditionally funded its operations through unearmarked funds, which required less stringent tracking of individual sources of funds. In response to changes in the donor environment, RRI implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning system that better tracks results and resources. Several new appointments also hold the promise to strengthen RRI's project management culture, including the arrival of a Chief Operating Officer.

**Recommendation 8: Continue the ongoing change management process.**





## 7. Annex

### 7.1 Performance

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	Cumulative Actual	Year-3 Target	3-Year Progress	Rating	Year-5 Target	Overall Progress
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.1:</b> Number of hectares of forest lands formally recognized as owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples, forest communities or households, including women	1.7	1.7	-	3.4	30	11%	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	50	7%
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.2:</b> Number of REDD+ related policies or measures adopted by target countries in support of community land and forest rights	1	1	1	3	6	50%	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	12	25%
<b>Outcome Indicator 1.3:</b> Number of regressive tenure reforms, legislative measures or exploitative land grabs halted or modified in favor of Indigenous Peoples and local communities	2	1	1	4	6	67%	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	10	40%
<b>Output Indicator 1.1.1:</b> Number of strategic analyses produced and disseminated in key languages	5	1	1	7	7	100%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	12	58%
<b>Output Indicator 1.2.1:</b> Number of strategic road maps strengthened or developed	2	3	1	6	4	150%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	120%
<b>Output Indicator 1.3.1:</b> Number of multi-stakeholder convenings held to advance tenure rights in the context of climate investments and initiatives	5	4	3	12	6	200%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	10	120%
<b>Output Indicator 1.3.2:</b> Number of CSO and IP platforms established or strengthened to further bottom advocacy and engagement in REDD and sustainable forest governance	0	1	3	4	3	133%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	80%
<b>Output Indicator 1.4.1:</b> Number of IP and CSO-led initiatives undertaken to recognize community tenure rights in support of forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods	3	3	1	7	3	233%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	140%
<b>Outcome Indicator 2.1:</b> Number of climate initiatives or financing mechanisms that prioritize community land and forest tenure security in their support to key tropical forest countries	0	1	1	2	4	50%	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	8	25%
<b>Outcome Indicator 2.2:</b> Number of targeted countries that make indigenous and local community tenure security a key part of their nationally determined contributions and/or REDD+ strategies	0	0	-	0	3	0%	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	5	0%
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Number of global analyses produced and disseminated in key languages	4	2	3	9	4	225%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	6	150%
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.2:</b> Number of media hits in national and international press	80	200	185	465	150	310%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	200	233%
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.1:</b> Number of convenings (dialogue or events) held	2	4	4	10	3	333%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	200%
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.2:</b> Number of Indigenous Peoples and local community representatives engaged in key international fora	5	5	11	21	30	70%	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	50	42%
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.3:</b> Number of press releases and strategic messaging outreach to key audiences (governments, international initiatives, civil society)	5	5	4	14	20	70%	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	30	47%
<b>Output Indicator 2.3.1:</b> Number of engagements held with key climate initiatives and institutions to advance tenure reforms in the context of climate actions and investments	2	3	6	11	6	183%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	10	110%
<b>Output Indicator 2.3.2:</b> Number of targeted analyses of rights-based commitments and safeguards endorsed by relevant international initiatives	1	2	1	4	3	133%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	80%
<b>Outcome Indicator 3.1:</b> Number of investors or companies that adopt rights-based approaches and standards	6	7	-	13	12	108%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	15	87%
<b>Outcome Indicator 3.2:</b> Number of companies and/or countries that strengthen opportunities for community-driven economic and conservation models that reduce impacts on forests and improve livelihoods	0	8	-	8	3	267%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	160%
<b>Output Indicator 3.1.1:</b> Number of strategic analyses produced	9	5	1	15	3	500%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	300%
<b>Output Indicator 3.2.1:</b> Number of pre-competitive networks or platforms initiated in key tropical forest countries	0	3	0	3	2	150%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	3	100%
<b>Output Indicator 3.2.2:</b> Number of initiatives that pilot measures to reduce tenure risks and/or other factors driving deforestation	0	1	2	3	2	150%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	3	100%
<b>Output Indicator 3.3.1:</b> Number of companies and investors that pilot investments screens to assess their exposure to tenure risks	6	15	3	24	3	800%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	5	480%
<b>Output Indicator 3.3.2:</b> Number of targeted tools and instruments produced	0	1	0	1	3	33%	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	5	20%
<b>Output Indicator 3.4.1:</b> Number of community enterprise and conservation initiatives identified and promoted in target countries	0	2	5	7	3	233%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	4	175%
<b>Output Indicator 3.4.2:</b> Number of alternative sourcing strategies developed between companies and communities	0	0	0	0	1	0%	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	2	0%



**7.2 Methodology**

The methodology includes the following tasks in accordance with the *Independent Monitoring 2018 TORs*:

- A review of foundational documents, including the grant application, the grant agreement, supporting documentations, and RRI’s strategic planning documents;
- All documents relevant to the implementation of the grant, including plans, progress reports, and financial reports, and audits;
- Interviews with key stakeholders (by telephone/email/Skype/etc.);
- Site visit and participation at planning meetings;
- Consultations with other relevant stakeholders (partners, collaborators, affiliated networks, donors, fellows, etc.);

Document reviews, interviews and consultations, as well as site visits and meeting participations provide the evidentiary basis to identify and assess effectiveness and progress. As major sources of input they include both, the measure and target state against which performance is assessed, as well as the evidence of the actual state to be measured in form of reports, data, interviews, etc.

The performance at outcome and output level is measured through a total of 26 indicators as listed in the Annex. Targets are set for each of the five years as contained in RRI’s annual reporting to NORAD. To asses performance in the context of this evaluation, the targets for each years of operation were aggregated into a 3-year target and a 5-year target. The actual level of achievement for each year was also aggregated into a cumulative actual value, which was then compared to both the 3-year target and the 5-year target. Performance was rated:

- “green” if the cumulative actual value exceeds 70% of the 3-year target
- “yellow” if the cumulative actual value is between 50% and 70% of the 3-year target
- “red” if the cumulative actual value is below 50% of the 3-year target

Since the evaluation does not assume that progress against indicators is necessarily linear, the cumulative actuals were also compared to their respective 5-year target, but this is simply for reference and no rating was assigned based on the level of progress against the 5-year target.

**7.3 Details of documentary evidence**

<b>Foundational Documents</b>
RRI Application
NORAD Final decision letter, 13 Dec 2016
Annex 1: RRI 2016 Contribution to NICFI Project Results
Annex 2: Standardized reporting information – results framework for the Climate and Forest funding to civil society 2016-2020
NORAD Approval of revised results framework, 26 Jun 2018
RRI Program Books 2016-2018
RRI Framework Proposal 2013-2017 (FP II)
RRI Strategic Program 3 (SP III)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Documentary evidence explicitly linked to NORAD grant funding</b>
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2016	Results linked to RRI staff time, including travel, meetings, etc.
2016	Agreements with collaborative partners
2016	Reports from collaborative partners
2016	Consolidated expenditure reporting
2017	Results linked to RRI staff time, including travel, meetings, etc.
2017	Agreements with collaborative partners
2017	Reports from collaborative partners
2017	Consolidated expenditure reporting
2018	Plans linked to RRI staff time, including travel, meetings, etc.
2018	Mid-year reports linked to RRI staff time, including travel, meetings, etc.
2018	Agreements with collaborative partners
2018	Mid-year reports from collaborative partners
2018	End-of-year reports against RRI work plans

<b>Other Documentary Evidence of Results</b>
Consolidated reporting on results to NORAD for 2016
“Mai-Ndombe: Will the REDD+ laboratory benefit Indigenous Peoples and local communities?”, March 2018
Independent audits for 2016 and 2017
Consolidated financial reports for 2016 and 2017

**7.4 Evaluation Questions**

The questions below establish the overall framework for written and oral interviews. The intention was to keep oral interviews open and minimally structured in order to give stakeholders a chance to elaborate as broadly and comprehensively as possible on both intended and unintended results.

Question	RRI Staff	Collaborators/Partner	Peer Organizations	Donors/Board
1. How would you describe RRI’s approach to achieving land rights for marginalized groups, to scale-up the recognition of collective tenure security, and to influencing companies and investors to be more rights-based?	X	X	X	
2. What are the major factors, opportunities or constraints RRI and others are facing in pursuing these objectives? Have they changed during the last three years?	X	X	X	X
3. How does RRI monitor its progress? Does RRI have adequate metrics or indicators in place?	X	X		X
4. What do you see as the major accomplishments of the program to date? Are there any weaknesses you have observed?	X	X		
5. How would you describe your role in the program in relationship to the other stakeholders?	X	X		
6. What type of support do you provide to and/or receive from other stakeholders? How would you assess the quality of that support?	X	X		
7. How are financial and other resources allocated and what role, if any, do you play in the decision-making?	X	X		X
8. What bottlenecks, if any, have you observed during the implementation of the program?	X	X		X
9. How would you judge the sustainability of the accomplishments so far?	X	X		



10. What would be different without RRI's program? What change would not have happened or would have taken place anyway?	X	X	X	
11. How could RRI leverage stakeholder more?	X	X	X	
12. What do you think needs to be changed in how the program is implemented to ensure it achieves results?	X	X	X	
13. What other key lessons do you take away from the first couple of years of implementation?	X	X		

## 7.5 RRG Organizational Matrix 2018

Executive Team		Regional Programs			Core Programs			
Andy, President Alan Landis, COO		Africa	Asia	Latin America	Strategic Analysis & Global Engagement	Comms	Coalition/ Networks	Finance & Administration
		Dir: Solange Bandiaky Badji	Dir: Kundan Kumar	Dir: Omaira Bolanos	Dir: Alain Frechette	Dir: Jenna DiPaolo Colley	Dir: Claire Biason-Lohier	Dir: Carole Carlson
		Patrick Kipalu, Caroline	Natalie Campbell, Wendy Atieno	vacant	Bryson Ogden, Stephanie Keene, Chloe Ginsberg, Christina Healy	Jamie Kallongis, Lindsay Bigda, Lai Sanders, Luke Allan	Joe Bono, Eric Teller	Pengju Lu, Mat Gonzales, Johnathan Erves, Solveiga Jaskunas
Gender Justice (SPIII SO 1) Lead: Solange and Silene	Supporting and Leveraging Community Advocacy (SPIII SO 2) Lead: Kundan and Jenna	Solange, Silene	Kundan, Natalie, Silene	Silene	Stephanie	Lindsay		
	ATEMs (SPIII SO 3) Lead: Bryson	Caroline	Kundan	Vacant	Alain, Stephanie, Chloe,	Jenna, Jamie, Lai, Lindsay, Luke	Claire, Eric	
	Advancing Recognition by Key Actors (SPIII SO 4) Lead: Claire	Patrick	Natalie, Wendy	Omaira	Bryson, Christina	Luke	Joe	
	Rights and Climate Lead: Alain	Patrick	Kundan, Wendy	Omaira	Alain, Bryson,	Jamie	Claire, Joe, Eric	
	Tenure Facility Support Program Arvind Khare, Sandra Leon Bolourian, Rachel MacFarland	Solange	Kundan, Natalie	Omaira	Alain	Jenna	Claire	
	Solange, Caroline	Kundan, Wendy, Natalie	Omaira, Monica	Alain	Jenna, Luke	Claire, Joe, Eric		
Reporting & Donor Relations Teams	Dfid FGMC Lead: Solange Support: Jamie	NICFI Lead: Alain Support: Mat G	Wellspring Lead: Solange Support: Silene	Ford Lead: Claire Support: Joe, Eric	Sida Lead: Jenna Support: Mat G	Finland Lead: Solange Support: Patrick	Dfid Legend Lead: Bryson Support: Christina	

\* RRG--the Secretariat of the RRI Coalition--fully transitioned to a matrix organization in January 2016 to better reflect the integration of RRI thematic and regional priorities. In January 2018, RRG updated the matrix to better reflect the Strategic Objectives in Coalition's 3rd Strategic Plan (SPIII 2018-2022).



## 7.6 Resource Persons Consulted

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Andy White	Rights & Resources Group
Alan Landis	Rights & Resources Group
Solange Bandiaky-Badji	Rights & Resources Group
Omaira Bolanos	Rights & Resources Group
Alain Frechette	Rights & Resources Group
Claire Ciason-Lohier	Rights & Resources Group
Jenna DiPaolo-Colley	Rights & Resources Group
Arvind Khare	Rights & Resources Group
Carol Carlson	Rights & Resources Group
Patrick Kipalu	Rights & Resources Group
Natalie Campbell	Rights & Resources Group
Stephanie Keene	Rights & Resources Group
Chloe Ginsberg	Rights & Resources Group
Jamie Kalliongis	Rights & Resources Group
Matthew Gonzales	Rights & Resources Group
Anne-Sophie Gindroz	Rights & Resources Group
Margareta Nilsson	International Land Tenure Facility
Paula Alvarado	International Land Tenure Facility
Luca Miggiano	Oxfam
Peter Veit	World Resource Institute
Sally Collins	MegaFlorestais/Rights & Resources Group
Mark Constantine	International Finance Corporation
Scott Schlang	Landesa
Annalisa Mauro	International Land Coalition
David Kaimowitz	Ford Foundation
Kevin Currey	Climate and Land Use Alliance
Francis Colee	Green Advocates
Moses Nywoeh	Sustainable Development Institute
Marit Fikke	NORAD
Torstein Taksdal Skjeseth	NORAD
Julie Weah	Foundation for Community Initiatives
Francis Colee	Liberia Land Working Group
Michael Wells	Independent Environmental Consultant
Penny Davis	IDinsight
Andiko	AsM Law Office
Bharati Kumari Pathak	FECOFUN
Pasang Dolma Sherpa	CIPRED Nepal
Racchya Sha	IUCN Nepal



## 7.7 Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Evaluation

### Introduction

The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) began in 2002 as a series of conversations between individuals within research, conservation and development organizations (CIFOR, Forest Trends, IUCN, IDRC and Ford Foundation) – all of whom were dedicated to rights-based approaches to conservation and poverty alleviation and all of whom felt that there was a great need, and a new opportunity to advance pro-poor tenure, policy and market reforms globally.

Coalition members came together to improve their collective impact and efficiency in supporting local actors in advancing institutional, policy and tenure reforms that lead to pro-poor forestry outcomes as well as raise the level of efforts on this issue globally. *The value proposition of this Initiative is that, with a limited incremental investment in improved coherence and coordination, existing organizations can dramatically increase their contribution to the rights, dignity and development of forest dependent people globally as well as to forest conservation and more equitable economic and social development.* From its inception, RRI has been focused on delivering results and impact. The main document that articulates the coalition's identified goals with regards to the Norad/NICFI grant is the project logframe.

#### 1. Key Outcomes

- a. Governments in key tropical forest countries accelerate the legal recognition and enforcement of forest land rights for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women, as enabling conditions for REDD+, sustainable livelihoods, and green growth.
- b. International climate initiatives and financing mechanisms actively support national and global efforts to scale-up the recognition of collective tenure security as a conditional requirement to REDD+, improved forest governance and the pursuit of sustainable development.
- c. Influential companies and investors adopt rights-based approaches and standards, and work with governments, CSOs, and rural communities to reduce tenure risks and enhance social and environmental outcomes in key tropical forest countries.

#### 2. Key Outputs

- a. Strategic analyses of the tenure rights of IPs, LCs and women in key REDD+ countries are developed and gaps relative to climate ambitions and other sustainable development goals are identified;
- b. Strategic road maps to accelerate community tenure reforms and minimize risks of reversals are produced.
- c. Coordination on forest governance and climate change is enhanced at the local and national levels to strengthen collective tenure security in the context of REDD+ and sustainable forest governance.
- d. Opportunities to strengthen community tenure rights, to reduce deforestation and enhance local livelihoods, are identified and pursued in targeted countries.
- e. Strategic analyses of the linkages between collective tenure security and climate change mitigation and adaptation are produced, disseminated and leveraged.
- f. Key convenings on forest governance and climate change are held to accelerate learning and consensus on the importance of collective tenure security in the context of effective and equitable climate actions in tropical forest countries;





- g. Advocacy in key climate decision-making arenas, and engagement with climate financing institutions and implementation mechanisms are leveraged to strengthen collective tenure rights as conditional requirements to effective and equitable climate actions.
- h. Strategic analyses on tenure risks in key tropical forest countries are developed and made available to companies, investors, communities and governments to appraise and address land tenure problems.
- i. Pre-competitive networks of companies, investors, CSOs, and government representatives are initiated at national and international levels to promote rights based business models for commodities and sectors driving deforestation.
- j. Tools and practices (e.g., investment screens, due diligence protocols) are developed and piloted by companies, investors and governments to manage/ resolve tenure risks in key tropical forest countries
- k. Community-driven enterprises and conservation models that reduce pressure forests and increase social, economic and environmental benefits are identified and promoted.

In addition to monitoring progress against these goals, the grant agreement with Norad commits RRI to conducting a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) or progress achieved over the first half of the grant. The assessment of RRI's progress towards the agreed upon outcomes of the agreement comprises the principal task for the MTE.

#### **Objective and Purpose of the Activity**

The MTE will focus on RRI's performance to date, with a view to assess progress made towards the realization of results outlined in its 2016-2020 grant agreement with Norad. Drawing on data generated through interviews, on-site visits, annual monitoring and narrative reports, and other documentation, the MTE will review the relevance and effectiveness of RRI's efforts to advance forest tenure and policy reforms in selected tropical forest countries, identify the factors affecting results as well as emerging lessons, and make recommendations as required to support the delivery of planned results.

#### **Scope of Work**

##### **Overall**

1. Verify the RRI coalition's attainment of the key results as per the Application
2. Identify the cause of discrepancies (including "bottlenecks") between outputs and outcomes sought and those actually being delivered by RRI.
3. Produce a set of options for RRI to increase the chances of achieving the output and outcome targets in the project log frame through the remainder of the Support Period

##### **Program and Activity Assessment**

4. Assess progress, adequacy, and efficacy towards 2020 goals and outcomes by looking at a selection of activities, supported by RRI's agreement with Norad.
5. Analyze the major factors and constraints that have influenced key results.
6. Produce a clear set of observations and options that can position RRI to achieve the key results of the grant agreement.

##### **Agreed Scope and Plan of Work**

7. Develop a thorough understanding of the RRI Coalition and how it seeks to deliver the key results of the grant agreement with Norad.
8. Assess the work undertaken at the global and country/regional levels funded by the grant agreement. The international level will contemplate the most relevant global program efforts



and at the country level, the effort will focus on several countries through physical visits and virtual studies undertaken by the evaluation team.

9. Consult and agree with RRI leadership on work plan, methodology and timeline of deliverables;
10. As part of the inception process, the consultant will agree with the project manager in terms of:
  - (1) the level of participation vis-à-vis management of the process, data collection, data analysis, drawing conclusions/supplying recommendations, and giving reactions to draft conclusions; and
  - (2) the methodology to be followed (sequence of desk reviews, country visits, interviews, questionnaires, participatory techniques, etc.).
11. The Consultant(s) will arrange all travel and accommodations required to perform the MTE, based on the key contacts and introductions provided by RRG staff and Partners, as well as those suggested by the MTE team itself. Consultants will be supported logistically by RRI as needed.

## **Midterm Evaluation and Delivery**

### ***Timetable***

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out throughout 2018, the third year of the five-year agreement. The consultant will undertake the mid-term evaluation between June and September with a draft report to be presented to RRG and the Executive Committee by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Comments will be submitted to the consultant no later than October 7th and the final report will be submitted by the consultant by October 22nd, 2018. See timetable below.

### ***Organizational Relationship***

The MTE consultant will report to Mr. Alain Frechette, Director, Strategic Analysis and Global Engagement, and will work under his direction with other staff in the Rights and Resources Group to design and undertake the evaluation. RRI staff, Partners, and Collaborators will provide key background documentation to the team (governance documents, and related project and funding proposal documents, program and activity reports, events and studies documentation.) The findings will be disseminated to the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

### ***Deliverables and timeline***

1. An inception report which includes a proposed methodology, assessment criteria/questions and detailed work plan, due August 20, 2018
2. A first draft report that will include all findings, due October 19, 2018
3. A second draft report that incorporates RRG comments on first draft of report, due October 26, 2018
4. A final report, due October 31, 2018
5. Final invoice and detailed expense report, due December 1, 2018

### **Qualifications and Criteria**

It is anticipated that the review will be carried out by a consultant with:

1. Extensive experience in strategic evaluations;
2. Experience in organizational reviews;
3. Experience and understanding of issues and trends in the land sector and, in particular, forest tenure;
4. Experience and knowledge of RRI Strategic Program III, RRI-Norad logic framework and strategy for implementation;