

International Forestry Knowledge Programme (KNOWFOR): Final Evaluation

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
CoP	Community of Practice
COP	Conference of Parties
COR	Collaborative Outcomes Reporting
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DFID	Department for International Development
DMEL	Design, monitoring, evaluation and learning
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EOP0	End of Programme Outcomes
EROI	Expected Return on Investment
FIP	Forest Investment Programme
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GLF	Global Landscapes Forum
GPoA	Gender Plan of Action
GFCCP	Global Forest and Climate Change Program
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact
IDRC	International Development Research Institute
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWMP	Integrated Watershed Management Programme
KEQ	Key evaluation question
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Study
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MozFIP	Mozambique Forest Investment Program
MRV	Measurement, reporting and verification
MSC	Most Significant Change
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non-government organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ORMAC	The Programme for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean
PACTO	Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact
PEN	Poverty and Environment Network
PROFOR	Program on Forests (World Bank)
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ROAM	Restoration Opportunities Assessment Method
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRO	Senior Responsible Owner
TOC	Theory of Change
UK	United Kingdom
UKCCU	United Kingdom Climate Change Unit
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VFM	Value for Money

Executive summary

KNOWFOR was a DFID-funded (£38 million) partnership between the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Bank Programme on Forests (PROFOR).¹ Subtitled ‘Improving the way knowledge on forests is understood and used internationally’, KNOWFOR aimed to address the disjuncture between the supply and uptake of knowledge by practitioners and decision-makers in the forestry sector. To achieve this, KNOWFOR sought to increase the interaction of policy-makers and forestry practitioners with relevant knowledge products, tools and capacity-building activities through improved planning for knowledge use and more deliberate learning and reflection. KNOWFOR worked across a wide range of forestry and land use themes, while focusing on forest landscape restoration (FLR), forest governance, mobilising investment for forests and land use management, and the relationships between forests, livelihoods, climate change, gender, and economic development. To address the gap between knowledge and action, KNOWFOR delivered a range of outputs including systematic reviews, syntheses, policy briefs, tools and manuals, blogs and think pieces via a range of engagement approaches.

The evaluation covered a five-year period between March 2012 and October 2016. The key audience for the evaluation comprised DFID and partners, primarily for the purposes of learning and accountability. The evaluation largely focussed on **effectiveness and understanding the key success factors**, with a secondary emphasis on the approach itself, including the **management of the programme and value for money (VFM)**. The evaluation was ‘partner-led’, such that representatives from CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR helped devise and conduct most of the evaluation activities. The partner-led evaluation was supported and facilitated by Clear Horizon Consulting. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) played the role of independent quality assurer to provide accountability. We adopted this approach in keeping with the design, monitoring, evaluation and learning (DMEL) framework adopted by the programme and to make the most of the opportunity for reflection, learning and ownership of the evaluation by partners. The rationale was that a partner-led evaluation would be more efficient and in-depth because it would harness partners’ deep technical knowledge and capability.

Consistent with the Collaborative Outcomes Reporting (COR) approach to evaluation (Dart and Roberts, 2014), partners collected evidence to bring to a series of ‘sense-making’ partner workshops, which were followed by a whole-of-programme ‘summit’ workshop at which results were scrutinised and overall findings agreed collectively. The main evidence sources included in the evaluation were 9 ‘deep-dive’ case studies, 19 outcome stories, 8 lessons learned stories and a programme-wide ‘results chart’ capturing outputs and outcomes against programme logframe targets. Partners conducted the bulk of the data collection, with an overall total of 170 people being consulted across 9 case study areas covering wide-ranging topics including: fire and haze in Indonesia, brazil nut plantations in Peru, the Poverty and Environment Network (PEN) (CIFOR); FLR in Guatemala and FLR financing mechanisms and commitments to the Bonn Challenge (IUCN); and watersheds in India, the relationship between forests and poverty, and forest governance (PROFOR). See section 1.2 and Annex 4 for more detail on the evaluation methodology.

¹ CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR are referred to as ‘the partners’ throughout this report.

Key findings: KNOWFOR catalysed policy and practice changes

By equipping decision-makers, policy-makers and practitioners at multiple scales, KNOWFOR catalysed and supported **policy and practice changes** that will continue beyond the programme timeframe. To varying degrees, KNOWFOR played a minor but significant role alongside many other factors and interventions in bringing about changes that have the potential to endure beyond the programme timeframe. For instance, with KNOWFOR support, CIFOR engaged with the Peruvian forestry agency to share knowledge gained from research on timber harvesting in brazil nut concessions, which set a precedent by providing the first ever scientific input into the National Guidelines (SERFOR, 2016) for brazil nut forest management, which makes a significant contribution to the national economy (CIFOR_CS_03). Although the specific research recommendations were not adopted directly in this study, the case is significant as an example of science informing the dialogue on national forestry policy in Peru. Meanwhile, a study of watersheds and catchment management in India enabled PROFOR to directly influence the design of World Bank investments in India, Nigeria, Malawi and Haiti through a dissemination strategy led by PROFOR with KNOWFOR support. For instance, in Haiti specific actions were planned for supporting catchment management to reduce downstream water flows and sedimentation of community water sources as a result of learnings from the India Watersheds study. With KNOWFOR support, IUCN facilitated 44 country commitments to the Bonn Challenge between 2012 and 2017, 23 of which were directly supported by KNOWFOR, representing an area of around 90.5 million hectares. These commitments lay the foundations and blueprint for action by countries to put FLR activities into effect, which will potentially lead to social, environmental and economic benefits. To help put FLR into action, with KNOWFOR support IUCN has worked with partners including the World Resources Institute to secure over £200 million in investment for FLR.

The contribution of KNOWFOR to outcomes

While there is good evidence that policy-makers and practitioners were equipped through KNOWFOR support, the degree to which this in turn contributed to policy and practice changes varied from case to case. Policy and practice changes in forestry are influenced by many factors beyond knowledge and are embedded within different social, institutional and political contexts. However, the weight of evidence suggests that, overall, KNOWFOR played a modest but significant role in influencing policies and practices which have the potential to lead to broader impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, the protection of climate and other ecosystem services through landscape management.

How it worked

Analysis of multiple lines of evidence for this evaluation showed that decision-makers were equipped with knowledge and resources via a range of mechanisms and factors within specific contexts. The KNOWFOR programme approach is based on four assumptions of what is needed to create policy and practice change: user-focussed design and planning, engagement, adaptive management and collaboration. While there was not strong evidence that all four programme assumptions held true, two mostly held true. User-centred design using Theory of Change (ToC) and stakeholder analysis appears to have increased the likelihood of knowledge being used. Dialogue, engagement and the exchange of ideas and knowledge co-production with decision-makers played an important role in influencing policy and practice. Other success factors beyond our assumptions included understanding the context, building trust, utilising champions, and being strategically opportunistic. These factors worked together in different contexts to trigger change and support the achievement of outcomes.

Achievement of end-of-programme outcome and output targets

KNOWFOR reached its outcome of successfully ‘equipping’² decision-makers in the forestry and land use sectors with knowledge. As a result, practitioners and policy-makers now have access to a range of knowledge, research, scientific and technical products, resources and tools. As indicated in Table 1 below, almost all the performance targets were met, with many exceeded. The strength of evidence used in the evaluation was found to be high to medium overall by the external quality assurer.

Cumulative targets were vastly exceeded by all partners. The eclipsing of targets indicates that output targets may have been set too low, particularly for social media which was exceeded by 300% overall. With some exceptions, the audience profile of those equipped by social media is not well known, which raises the question of whether the right people were equipped through this media. However, it is fair to conclude that KNOWFOR partners were extremely productive in terms of the sheer output of knowledge products and engagement processes undertaken. Knowledge products and processes were tailored to specific audiences, as illustrated in 9 case studies and 19 outcome stories. Programme-wide targets were met with respect to tailoring products and processes to meet the needs of women and girls, but this was not spread evenly across all partners, with PROFOR performing lower than anticipated. Similarly, while the target for female participation was met at a programme-wide level, it was lower than expected for PROFOR.

Table 1. KNOWFOR performance summary

² The concept of ‘equipped’ recognises that policy-makers and practitioners need access to high-quality, evidence-based knowledge and information, but that decision-making and action are also driven by ideology, influence and the institutional context. KNOWFOR partners have primary mandates for knowledge creation and knowledge translation. In this work, they recognise the need to pay deliberate and explicit attention to the context in order to encourage and support the use of knowledge for better environmental and social outcomes.

Level	Description	Target	Evidence strength
Output	DMEL to support knowledge programming ³	Exceeded	High
	Knowledge products ⁴	Exceeded	High
	Engagement processes and events ⁵	Exceeded	High
	Meeting audience needs (relevance) ⁶	Met	Medium
	Feedback and learning ⁷	Met	Medium
	Meeting needs of women and girls ⁸	Met by 2/3 partners	Medium
	Gender-responsive engagement ⁹	Met by 2/3 partners	Medium
Outcome	Knowledge uptake ¹⁰	Met	High
Impact	Policy and practice change ¹¹	Met	Medium

KNOWFOR met its outcome target around **equipping decision-makers and intermediaries** with knowledge products, tools, resources and knowledge. Three-quarters of PROFOR and IUCN activities and 85% of CIFOR activities funded under KNOWFOR were rated as meeting or exceeding expectations¹² for equipping decision-makers and intermediaries, with 9 case studies and 15 outcome stories demonstrating this. Policy-makers, practitioners and knowledge audiences were equipped at multiple levels including globally, regionally, nationally, sub-nationally, and in specific districts, localities and communities. A range of audiences were reached by KNOWFOR including government, non-government, private sector, community and advocacy organisations.

Embedding practices in partner organisations

KNOWFOR had a significant effect on the ways partners approach and undertake DMEL. Partners designed and implemented a programme-wide DMEL system that effectively addressed the findings of an early 2013 Annual Review by DFID (AR-13), which criticised the lack of consistency, transparency and usefulness of monitoring and evaluation. Following this review, with KNOWFOR support, all three partners adopted and strengthened their use of ToC. PROFOR also embedded DMEL into its Project Activity Tracking System (PATS) reporting systems and protocols – an achievement considering that the organisation is a multi-donor trust fund.

³ Target: KNOWFOR reaches acceptable level for DMEL rubric – this required that 75% of projects have a knowledge uptake pathway articulating a ToC, have done some work to identify end user information requirements, and show evidence that this has informed product development.

⁴ Target: 397 Knowledge products across the life of KNOWFOR – actual result was 973.

⁵ Target: 197 KNOWFOR supported engagement process/events – actual result was 770.

⁶ Target: 9 narrative descriptions of good practice examples of creating processes and/or products that identified and delivered on audience-specific information needs including at least one example that delivered on the needs of women or girls.

⁷ No target on this, but it is noted in the Phase 2 ToC: Extent to which partners enhanced knowledge practices through feedback and learning.

⁸ Target: 9 narrative descriptions of good practice examples of creating processes and/or products that identified and delivered on audience-specific information needs including at least one example that delivered on needs of women or girls.

⁹ No target was set for this.

¹⁰ Target: KNOWFOR is rated as 'Meeting expectations' or 'Above expectations' in the uptake rubric; at least 30 outcome stories are captured to demonstrate this.

¹¹ No target. Expect to see sufficient instances of knowledge uptake demonstrated in case studies and outcome stories and captured in above-expectations level of rubric.

KNOWFOR accelerated gender mainstreaming within CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR and the **Gender Working Group remains active** at the end of the programme, with closer connections between specialists as a result of KNOWFOR. In addition, the programme has integrated gender into forestry and land use policy. The IUCN Global Gender Office influenced changes in government policy, for instance, by embedding gender into the Brazil National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

Despite its efforts to forge partnerships, KNOWFOR was unable to substantially improve or foster meaningful or lasting collaboration between partners with the exception of joint work in the areas of DMEL and gender. Barriers to collaboration between partners included unclear expectations from the donor, differing partner systems, the relatively short timeframe of the programme, high transaction costs and a lack of incentives to collaborate. Underlying these barriers is the fact that, to some degree, these partners are competitors for funding and resources. A clearer vision from DFID on the expectations for partnership and collaboration may have been beneficial. See section 4 for a discussion of the influence of KNOWFOR on partners and their efforts to collaborate.

The KNOWFOR model

Partners stressed that the two-way ‘mutual learning’ between partners (CIFOR, PROFOR and IUCN) and the donor (DFID) was a unique and distinctive characteristic of the KNOWFOR approach. KNOWFOR was seen by partners and DFID to be more flexible and adaptive than other similar programmes. KNOWFOR is also credited with having a stronger emphasis on ToC, DMEL and organisational change than other similar programmes. The management of the KNOWFOR programme by DFID received strong endorsement from partners, who praised the flexible, adaptive, patient and hands-on approach of the DFID Senior Responsible Owner (SRO). On the downside, it was noted that KNOWFOR had a lower profile within DFID than other similar programmes. See section 5 for a discussion of the KNOWFOR model and an assessment of the VFM of the programme.

In terms of the future relevance of KNOWFOR, there is a clear and compelling need to focus on forest restoration and climate change more generally. However, in a narrowing policy context in the UK, it is hard to predict future interest. KNOWFOR may, however, provide a valuable case study for the UK aid programme of institutional learning, specifically with regards to DMEL, ToC and gender. In terms of VFM, for every pound spent there is evidence of a good return on investment. In accordance with the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) approach to VFM, this assessment took into account the effectiveness of the planning, the delivery approach and the learning. It also considered the development impact on global policy and practice, some impressive figures on additional money leveraged from IUCN (£217.10 million) and the good level of return on investment identified in the cost/benefit analysis conducted for three case studies. Given these results, we conclude that KNOWFOR represents good VFM.

Conclusions

By engaging closely with target audiences in the development and extension of knowledge to the forestry and land use sectors, KNOWFOR has set a solid foundation for informing a range of initiatives that contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically with regards to the management of natural resources and landscapes (Goal 15) (i.e. through FLR and watershed planning), climate (Goal 13) (i.e. by influencing the global REDD+ agenda) and gender (Goal 5) (i.e. by mainstreaming gender into forestry research). While KNOWFOR provided VFM, it

could have gone further in terms of integrating gender considerations into knowledge programming beyond more inclusive and equitable participation, and some questions remain as to whether there was added value in bringing the three partners together under one programme. Moreover, despite progress in partner DMEL systems, more work is needed to better embed DMEL institutionally in all partners.

There were both benefits and costs to the partner-led evaluation. This approach was intensive in terms of time and cost, when compared with traditional external evaluations. There was also variability in the quality of partner inputs. Yet the final product and process were more in-depth and more carefully vetted than is normally the case in externally led evaluations. The partners felt that they gained more from this partner-led approach than they would have from an external evaluation. In addition, they felt that it provided a great learning opportunity, with IUCN already drawing on this process for a forthcoming multi-country evaluation. There is also potential for the evaluation to have an ongoing influence on the way partners design, monitor, evaluate and learn from interventions in the future. See section 6 for conclusions and recommendations arising from the evaluation.

Recommendations for partners¹³

1. Each partner organisation could benefit by refining their ToC and knowledge uptake strategies to take better account of the success factors identified through KNOWFOR, which were specific to each partner. These partner-specific factors should be tested progressively over time to enhance the effectiveness of knowledge programming practices. This may involve further consideration of the knowledge-to-action literature, which provides a rich body of existing knowledge on this topic.
2. Partner DMEL leads should continue to support and encourage the use of ToC as a DMEL tool in their respective organisations to maximise the effectiveness of programming. Appropriate incentives and support should be offered to encourage its use. Despite progress and considerable interest from partners in ToC as a DMEL tool, there was limited evidence that they used it in the case studies developed for this evaluation.
3. Partners should continue to contribute to the Gender Working Group. The group should continue to explore ways to better integrate gender into the knowledge programming cycle and DMEL. In particular, the group has the opportunity to provide an important cross-institutional link and forum for partners to continue to learn from one another. Gender Working Group members should explore opportunities to sustain and resource this valuable partnership so it can continue to provide benefits.
4. Efforts to monitor and evaluate gender in knowledge programming by all partners should shift from a focus on output (i.e. participation) to a focus on impact (i.e. on the lives of men, women and girls as well as on systems and institutions). A good place to start is by clarifying gender standards and expectations for knowledge programming, for instance, by interrogating, refining and developing the gender rubric adopted by KNOWFOR (see Annex 8). This could be progressed by the Gender Working Group in consultation with the DMEL leads from all three partner organisations. In particular, PROFOR should continue to improve its gender monitoring systems. KNOWFOR gender monitoring findings indicate the need to increase the participation of women and girls in PROFOR programming, both as participants and users of PROFOR communications.
5. All partners need to conduct further work to consolidate and extend DMEL across their organisations, especially monitoring tools and capacity. All partner organisations should continue to invest in their approach to monitoring and to ensure that the organisational enablers of DMEL (such as resourcing and structures) are in place. In particular, the IUCN

¹³ To be detailed more fully in the partner evaluation reports.

GFCCP M&E team should continue to interface with M&E teams in other parts of the organisation to build the consistency of M&E across the organisation.

6. All partners need to improve the way they track audiences and reach – especially when using social media. Tracking segmented audience penetration through web-based engagement and social media was not achieved because monitoring systems did not support audience identification. This should be done by DMEL leads in close cooperation with their respective media teams, who bring valuable expertise in communications tracking and outreach.
7. Each partner and DFID could benefit from conducting further work to assess the VFM of research-to-knowledge programmes more comprehensively. The VFM case studies tentatively uncovered a high rate of return. Partners should further verify these rate of return claims where possible.
8. All partners should promote opportunities to learn from failure and be more open about what did not work. It was not always possible to discuss failure openly in cross-partner forums because of the competitive nature of the relationship between partners. However, there is further potential to do this more within each partner organisation. DMEL leads in each organisation in conjunction with their executives should encourage more opportunities to share instances of failure to promote a deeper level of learning that has the potential to accelerate programme effectiveness.

Recommendations for DFID

9. The KNOWFOR approach to programme planning and management is an exemplar for how to adaptively manage a complex programme. This includes the DFID Rapid Response Mechanism that was part of the design as well as the flexible management approach. This is important for DFID as it represents a move towards management by outcomes and a greater focus on learning. The KNOWFOR approach to adaptive management and co-learning between implementers and the donor should be considered in the design of other similar programmes. Learning and reflection from adaptive learning in the programme should be shared by the DFID SRO sectorally (among forests, land use and climate change specialists) and thematically (with those working in the knowledge uptake space).
10. DFID should continue to endorse the use of ToC in knowledge programming. The KNOWFOR approach to ToC and user-centred design is of direct relevance to other knowledge uptake programmes more broadly.
11. When DFID invests in future knowledge programmes such as KNOWFOR, it needs to better pitch performance targets. Without appropriate targets, it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of programmes like KNOWFOR. The initial design of KNOWFOR did not provide a basis for the development or measurement of meaningful performance indicators, largely because intermediate outcomes between outputs and impact were not made explicit.
12. DFID should ensure that future programmes do not expect large global players to collaborate in core programming without careful consideration of the costs and likely benefits of doing so; and, if pursued, this needs to be incentivised. However, there is clear merit in bringing communities of practice together to develop shared knowledge on good practice process, in particular around ToC, DMEL, user-centred approaches to knowledge programming, and gender. DFID should be more explicit in articulating expectations for partnership at the outset.

Minor recommendations for immediate follow-up

13. The evaluation methodology is of interest to a wider audience and should be shared. The quality assurers will conduct an evaluation of this evaluation. Following this, the M&E contractor/quality assurers should write an accessible practice note about the evaluation process itself. This could be presented at the UK Evaluation Society Conference in 2018, as well as through a seminar for DFID partners.

14. An accessible paper/think piece should be written on the management approach taken in KNOWFOR, recognising the importance of the factors unique to KNOWFOR which enabled programme flexibility, such as the role of the SRO in facilitating flexibility. This should potentially be led by partners and the SRO, who really led this partnership.
15. The communications plan should clearly identify who is targeted by communications outputs from KNOWFOR DMEL. This should be led by the DMEL facilitation team.

1. Introduction

1.1. About this report

This report presents the findings of the final evaluation of the KNOWFOR programme. The evaluation was conducted using a novel partner-led approach supplemented by external quality assurance. This overarching report draws on monitoring information collected by partners since 2013. Additional data was collected by partners and the evaluation facilitation team as part of this evaluation.

In section 1 we present an overview of the KNOWFOR programme and its theory of change (ToR), followed by an overview of the evaluation. We then discuss findings which are structured according to the three key evaluation questions (KEQs):

1. How and to what extent did **KNOWFOR contribute** to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries? What lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR's approach to translating knowledge for action?
2. What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake **their core business** and how enduring are these changes likely to be?
3. What were KNOWFOR's programme **approach and management processes**; were these effective, appropriate and relevant; and did they provide value for money?

In section 2 we provide the 'performance story' of the KNOWFOR programme to address the first part of KEQ1, while section 3 provides further analysis of the lessons and factors that supported programme outcomes (the second part of KEQ1). Taking a Collaborative Outcomes Reporting (COR) approach (Dart and Roberts, 2014), the 'performance story' of the programme describes what was done, and then what was achieved. To this end, in turn, we describe the programme output (2.1 and 2.2), reach in terms of gender (2.3), its influence on decision-makers (2.4), and finally its impact on policy and practice change (2.5). This approach – of reporting on what was done first as a basis for an assessment of outcomes and impact – is a distinctive feature of telling the performance story.

Section 4 addresses the influence of the programme on the core business of partners (KEQ2), while we address KEQ3 in section 5, which focuses on the programme model and management.

1.2. About the KNOWFOR programme

KNOWFOR was a £38-million, DFID-funded knowledge programme that forms part of the International Climate Fund forests portfolio. It involved a partnership between the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Bank Programme of Forests (PROFOR) (hereafter referred to as partners).

Subtitled 'Improving the way knowledge on forests is understood and used internationally', KNOWFOR provides high-quality original and synthesised knowledge products for a wide range of audiences in the forest and land use sectors aimed at addressing the disjuncture between the supply and use of knowledge. KNOWFOR places a strong emphasis on the enabling conditions and role of partner systems in supporting knowledge uptake.

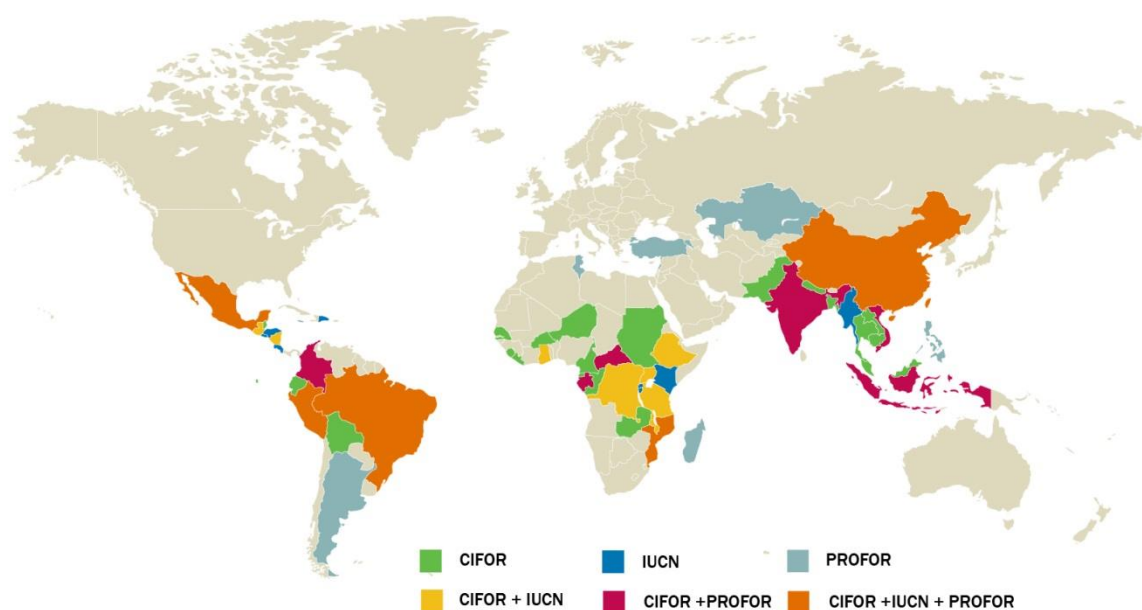
The programme brought together three significant and complementary organisations in the international forestry development sector, drawing on their strengths and networks to improve the uptake of relevant knowledge in forest-related practice and policy processes. The original business case for KNOWFOR recognised the distinct features of the three institutions and the potential benefits to be gained from bringing global institutions together under one umbrella. Specifically, the business case recognised the unique positioning of PROFOR as a ‘secretariat housed in the World Bank’, the ‘high international regard’ for CIFOR’s network of researchers within the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and the convening power of IUCN as a member-based institution ‘combining civil society and sovereign states’ (DFID, 2012).

1.1.1 What did KNOWFOR implement?

KNOWFOR was implemented over two phases by the three partners CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR.

Phase 1 was implemented between 2012 and 2015 and Phase 2 was implemented between 2015 and 2017. Activities were undertaken at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels. KNOWFOR took a devolved approach to funding, whereby partners determined the priorities for delivery under the overall theme of better connecting knowledge (comprising research, scientific and technical products and support) to action (comprising practice and policy) in the forestry and land use sectors. Figure 1 below presents a map of the countries where CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR¹⁴ worked in the programme.

Figure 1. Map showing where KNOWFOR was implemented by CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR



KNOWFOR worked across a wide range of forestry and land use themes with a specific focus on forest landscape restoration (FLR), forest governance, mobilising investment for forests and land use management, and the relationships between forests, livelihoods, climate change, gender, and economic development. To address the gap between knowledge and action, KNOWFOR

¹⁴ Because PROFOR operates as a multi-donor trust fund, the map shows a selected sample of countries where PROFOR worked in the KNOWFOR programme timeframe to provide a representation of the four major focus areas for PROFOR: livelihoods, cross-sectoral work, financing sustainable forest management and governance.

delivered a range of outputs including systematic reviews, syntheses, policy briefs, tools and manuals, blogs and think pieces via a range of engagement approaches.

Over the course of KNOWFOR, CIFOR funded a total of 29 sub-projects across a range of locations, sectors and themes. Significant investment went into the areas of forest and food security, forest contributions to rural livelihoods, payment for environmental services, sustainable forest management and forest restoration. The largest single investment was in a portfolio of evidence-based forestry studies with the aim of consolidating knowledge related to effective forestry and land use interventions. In Phase 1 CIFOR funded 23 sub-projects. In Phase 2, following a review of the KNOWFOR strategy and the development of the programme DMEL approach, CIFOR then funded 12 sub-projects in alignment with the KNOWFOR ToC, 6 of which were continued from Phase 1. The work funded by KNOWFOR has contributed to a range of science and research activities undertaken by CIFOR to address the challenges set out in the CIFOR Strategy 2016–2025.

During KNOWFOR, IUCN used its links to members, knowledge brokering, technical analysis and convening attributes to support the global FLR movement, including direct support for 23 countries to undertake restoration opportunity assessments. In particular, with KNOWFOR support, IUCN has worked globally to facilitate commitments to the Bonn Challenge. IUCN has also supported the integration of gender considerations into the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) and FLR processes.

With KNOWFOR support, PROFOR undertook analysis and developed a range of knowledge products targeted at World Bank staff including Task Team Leaders (TTLs) and clients to help make funding decisions and guide future work. Using its unique position within the World Bank as a quasi-autonomous think-tank for forests, PROFOR worked directly with a wide range of World Bank investments and country programmes to undertake KNOWFOR activities. More detail on the work undertaken by each partner is provided in Annex 4 (Results chart).

1.1.2 Programme history and rationale

The original KNOWFOR business case (DFID, 2012) recognised that there was a lot of existing knowledge about how to use forests to improve climate, livelihood and environmental outcomes. However, much of this knowledge was fragmented and under-utilised. It also noted that much of the knowledge produced did not have a clearly identified audience and the use or application of such knowledge by decision-makers has not been clearly defined. The forestry knowledge audiences identified by KNOWFOR included diverse users such as policy makers and practitioners in addition to researchers and scientists. Decisions on forest management are inherently complex and involve long timeframes, trade-offs, cross-sector collaboration, politics and ingrained self-interests. Given this context, KNOWFOR was conceived as a vehicle to support three organisations with proven track records in the production of quality forest knowledge to translate this knowledge for use by targeted decision-makers.

KNOWFOR was initially designed to support IUCN, CIFOR and PROFOR to individually address the knowledge gaps relevant to each partner's position and strengths. For example, IUCN activities have been focused on FLR, PROFOR was well placed to work on models for unlocking private sector investment, and CIFOR has drawn on its vast evidence base and networks to produce policy-focussed knowledge. The original programme design identified a number of specific outputs for each partner to deliver and was intended to demonstrate the impact of these knowledge products on the state of the environment, livelihoods and carbon emissions.

While the overarching rationale for the KNOWFOR programme was sound and the investment proved valuable, the performance measures outlined in the business case meant that the programme appeared to be underperforming. In response to criticisms made during the first annual programme review that there was poor alignment between partner reporting systems and performance metrics in the DFID logframe (July 2013), KNOWFOR's programme approach and DMEL strategy were substantially redesigned. KNOWFOR programme managers opted to pursue a highly participatory approach to the programme and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework review. Over an initial 12-month period during 2013–14, partners worked together with Clear Horizon Consulting (hereafter the evaluation facilitator) to develop a new programme ToC and a new M&E framework. The revised programme focussed more on the process of achieving policy and practice influence and more clearly identified the outcomes of KNOWFOR partner efforts (that is, policy influence rather than policy change and environmental and social impacts). Partners also co-developed a suite of monitoring tools that focussed on the programme's sphere of influence and collected information about partner efforts to establish the necessary preconditions for policy or practice influence.

Following the 2013 annual review, the programme widened its remit to encourage greater collaboration between partners and improved DMEL practice. As part of efforts to tell a more cohesive story about KNOWFOR's contributions to outcomes, partners identified three key joint results areas where their comparative advantages complemented each other and there was scope to demonstrate a collective contribution to key constraints or knowledge gaps. These joint results were both internal (that is, effective approaches to knowledge programme design, implementation and learning, and gender mainstreaming) and content specific (such as forest landscape restoration). Since 2013, KNOWFOR partners have individually and collectively invested in the development and implementation of new capacity and approaches to project design, monitoring, evaluation and learning for knowledge uptake. Activities related to the other two joint results areas (DMEL and gender) commenced under the 2015 cost extension and built on each partner's work in these areas.

1.1.3 Intended programme outcomes

KNOWFOR's main programme outcome¹⁵ is **'equipping policy-makers and practitioners in developing countries with strategic knowledge, comparable evidence, reliable**

tools and systematic analysis on forests, trees and climate'. This outcome is intended to have a broader impact on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through the improved management of forests and trees.

'Equipping' policy-makers and practitioners. The concept of 'equipped' recognises that policy-makers and practitioners need access to high-quality, evidence-based knowledge and information, but that decision-making and action are also driven by ideology, influence and the institutional context. KNOWFOR partners have primary mandates for knowledge creation and knowledge translation. In this work they recognise the need to pay deliberate and explicit attention to the context in order to encourage and support the use of knowledge for better environmental and social outcomes. It is recognised by KNOWFOR partners that, to be effective, such knowledge and information should be tailored based on the skills, capacity and broader enabling environment of intended audiences.

1.1.4 Theory of change (ToC)

The programme-level ToC (see Figure 1) was developed by KNOWFOR partners in June 2014, during the second year of programme implementation. Developing a ToC is recognised as a

¹⁵ Revised by partners in early 2014.

crucial step in evaluating knowledge uptake programmes (Jones, 2011). This ToC made it explicit that KNOWFOR partners were responsible for planning for policy influence by working with knowledge audiences both directly and indirectly. In some cases, partners may interface directly with policy-makers or forestry practitioners. Yet, where such a relationship did not exist, KNOWFOR partners worked through intermediaries¹⁶ to ensure that policy-makers and practitioners are equipped with the knowledge and information needed. The KNOWFOR ToC indicates that policy and practice change is beyond the scope of what the programme can be reasonably held accountable for. This was agreed by partners and the funder (DFID), who recognised the multitude of external influences, factors and forces that shape policy and practice beyond the control and sphere of influence of the programme. In keeping with an ultimate focus on impact, this final evaluation has, however, considered the influence of the programme on policy and practice change (see section 2.5).

While the activities, intermediaries and end users of partners overlap and are not mutually exclusive, each partner's operations have different areas of focus and strength. The ToC emphasises the importance of the systems and cultures that support effective planning and knowledge uptake.¹⁷ Like all programmes, KNOWFOR does not operate in a vacuum. Programme outcomes and impacts are influenced by a myriad of factors, many of which are outside the control of the programme. The influence of external factors, while critical to the programme, is not depicted in the diagrammatic model for the programme but is addressed in the evaluation design.

¹⁶ 'Intermediaries' is a general term used to describe stakeholders with whom KNOWFOR partners interact and/or work/partner to reach their end users. 'End users' in KNOWFOR are defined as the ultimate target groups named in the end-of-programme outcome – policy-makers and practitioners in developing countries.

¹⁷ The KNOWFOR ToC was updated in Phase 2 in 2015 to include a greater focus on adaptive management and two-way learning. The Phase 1 ToC is presented here as it formed the basis for the Phase 2 ToC.

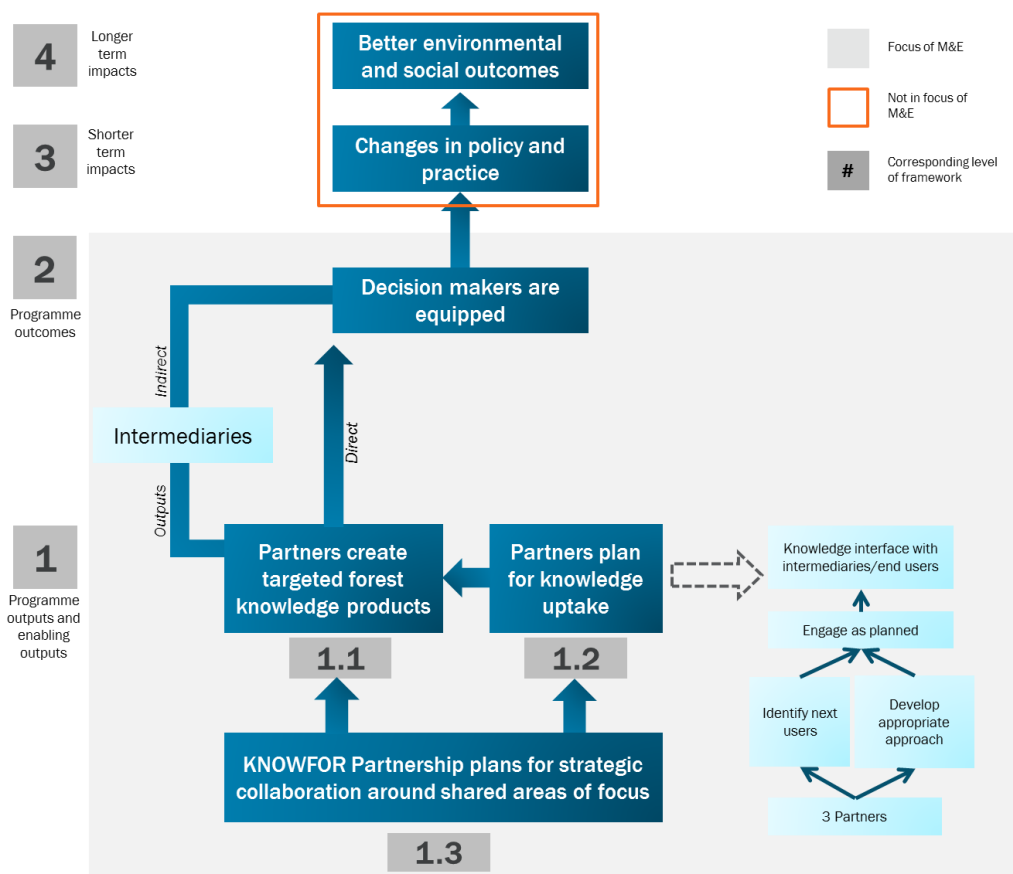


Figure 2: KNOWFOR ToC (Phase 1)

The programme model is based on four core assumptions:

- That **deliberate planning for audience use** will increase uptake (that is, having an explicit ToC, identifying key audiences, tailoring knowledge products and engagement).
- That **adaptive management** and refining the project approaches based on monitoring and reflection will increase uptake.
- That **dialogue, engagement and the exchange of ideas** and knowledge co-production with decision-makers are crucial to influencing policy and practice.
- That there is **advantage in bringing three complementary organisations (CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR) together** to maximise knowledge uptake in forest-related sectors.

The ToC was subsequently revised by partners in 2015 at the commencement of Phase 2 to emphasise the role of DMEL and feedback in the programme cycle. It is important to recognise that the ToC was not a static model. Partners were encouraged to update and adapt the model in response to changing programme and partner contexts.

1.3. About the evaluation

The evaluation, which took about 18 months¹⁸, examined the collective and partner-specific work conducted under KNOWFOR over a five-year period between March 2012 and October 2016. The

¹⁸ Around six to nine months was spent on designing and planning the evaluation, while a further nine months was spent executing and finalising the evaluation. This amount of time spent in the design and planning stage was quite long compared with more 'traditional' independent evaluation but was considered necessary given the uniqueness of

evaluation is intended to inform future programmes following KNOWFOR (which concluded in October 2017). The evaluation design was informed by the KNOWFOR DMEL Framework (2014), which drew on a ‘White Paper’ on knowledge uptake prepared by the evaluation facilitation team (Clear Horizon, 2014).

The evaluation largely examined **effectiveness** and **understanding the key success factors**, with a secondary emphasis on the KNOWFOR **model**, programme **management** and **value for money** (VFM). The implementation of the evaluation was largely consistent with the original evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) developed by partners in early 2016, with the exception of VFM (section 5.4), which was added in March 2016 in response to donor (DFID) requirements. ‘Lessons learned’ stories intended to illustrate cases where things did not work were also added to the initial TOR development to improve the rigour and balance of the evaluation design, following advice from the quality assurer (ODI). Another minor deviation included dropping a ‘participatory mapping’ exercise with partners. As is often the case with multi-partner endeavours, the sequencing and timing of activities also deviated from planned timelines, resulting in delayed completion of the evaluation.

The **primary evaluation audiences** were KNOWFOR partner organisations, DFID and the UK International Climate Fund (ICF).¹⁹ Other audiences with an interest in the evaluation may include other UK government departments engaged in the ICF as well as DMEL personnel and teams within each partner institution.

We anticipate that the evaluation process itself and findings may also be of relevance to other DFID knowledge uptake programmes as well as the wider DMEL community, particularly those involved in knowledge-to-action (including policies and practices) programming.

1.2.1 Key evaluation questions

This evaluation was guided by three key evaluation questions (KEQs) relating to programme effectiveness (KEQ1), influence on the core business of partners (KEQ2) and programme management (KEQ3) (see section 1.1). Questions 1 and 2 are the primary focus of the evaluation. Question 3 was addressed in less detail. KEQs were developed and agreed by partners and were based on those in the original KNOWFOR DMEL Framework (2014), which included a set of KEQs based on evaluation criteria recommended by Hovland (2007, p. 38) for knowledge-to-action programmes.²⁰ Each of the KNOWFOR final evaluation KEQs is broken down into sub-questions (see Annex 5).

1.2.2 Innovative partner-led approach

The KNOWFOR evaluation was conducted as a ‘partner-led’ process whereby DMEL representatives from the three implementing partners helped devise and conduct most of the evaluation activities. This process was supported and facilitated by the evaluation facilitator, who was engaged as a DMEL partner for the programme from 2014 onwards. The partner-led approach was complemented by an independent quality assurance process, led by ODI to provide

the ‘partner-led’ approach and the fact that it was necessary to establish agreement and a shared understanding of the scope between three quite different partner organisations.

¹⁹ The cross-departmental mechanism through which the UK channels climate change finance.

²⁰ Performance criteria suggested by Hovland (2007, p. 38) include evaluating: (i) strategy and direction, (ii) management, (iii) output, (iv) uptake, and (v) outcomes and impact.

additional rigour and transparency.²¹ Additionally, as with all DFID evaluations, the report was reviewed by the independent evaluation quality assurance and learning service known as EQUALS, who rated the evaluation as being 'good'. All feedback was fully addressed and incorporated into the report prior to finalisation through several rounds of editing and feedback.



Figure 3. Partner-led approach

The rationale for adopting a partner-led process was twofold. First, we wanted to use and stay true to the principles of the recently developed DMEL approach for the programme. Second, partners wanted to try something different from a typical external evaluation. KNOWFOR is a complex and technical programme and partners noted that it took external evaluators a long time to understand other similar programmes and their findings often seemed to add little to what was already known. The rationale was that a partner-led evaluation would be more efficient and in-depth because it would harness partners' technical knowledge and capability. We were also able to do this due to KNOWFOR having an embedded DMEL support, with Clear Horizon being involved since late 2013. To increase the rigour and objectivity of the evaluation we added an external component to the approach by including an external quality assurance function.

1.2.3 Collaborative Outcomes Reporting

Both the initial DMEL framework and the evaluation approach drew heavily from the COR approach (Dart & Roberts, 2014). COR is a participatory approach to outcomes reporting developed by Jess Dart. It is based around a performance story that presents evidence of how a programme has contributed to outcomes and impacts that is then reviewed by both technical experts and programme stakeholders. COR is an appropriate means to evaluate knowledge uptake programmes, which are characterised by complexity, uncertainty, long timeframes between knowledge and action, and a multitude of causes and external influences (Mayne and Stern, 2013, p.18).

COR combines contribution analysis and Multiple Lines and Levels of Evidence (MLLE), mapping data against the ToC to produce a performance story. Performance story reports are essentially short narratives about how a programme contributed to outcomes. Although they may vary in content and format, most are short, mention programme context and aims, relate to a plausible results chain, and are backed by empirical evidence (Dart and Mayne, 2005).

²¹ This 'partner-led' approach is informed by work undertaken in a range of other sectors and by evaluation approaches adopted by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Aid Programme of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as well 'joint' evaluation approaches endorsed by the OECD DAC Evaluation Network (2005).

COR includes a verification step by way of an expert panel and stakeholder ‘summit’ workshop, to check the credibility of the evidence of impacts and the extent to which these can be credibly attributed to the intervention (Dart and Roberts, 2014). Review via an independent expert panel²² and a summit workshop (a facilitated, collaborative meeting to develop outcomes) differentiates COR from other approaches to outcome and impact evaluation. COR also uses a mixed-method approach that involves the participation of key stakeholders, generally via five process steps (see Figure 3 below). Participation by partners has occurred at all stages of this process.

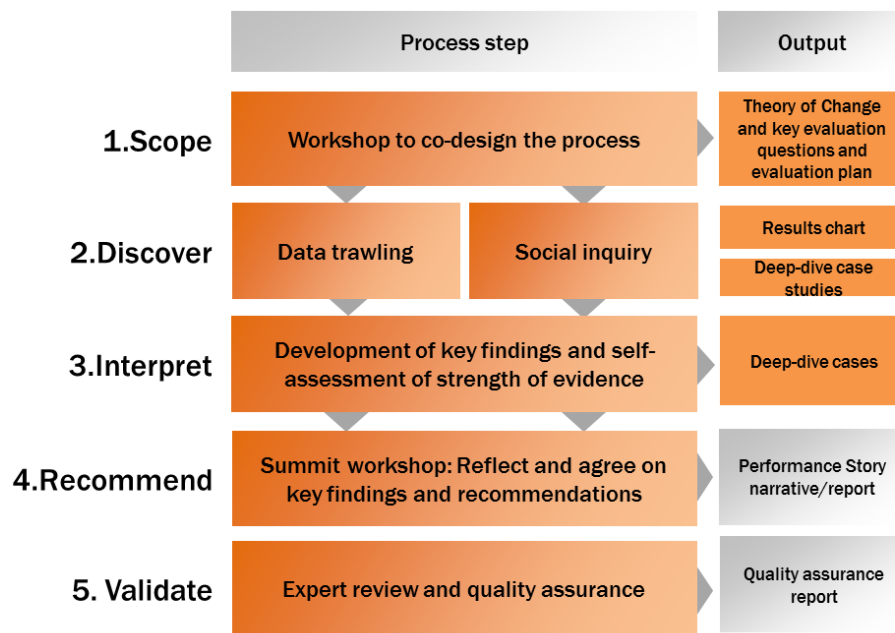


Figure 4: COR methodology

1.4. Evidence

Consistent with the COR approach, partners developed key data sources to bring to the summit workshop and form part of the evaluation. The key data items were ‘deep-dive’ case studies, outcome stories, lessons learned stories and the programme-wide results chart²³ (see Figure 4).

²² The KNOWFOR evaluation did not use the expert panel. This function of external review was fulfilled in part through the role of ODI as independent quality assurer.

²³ The programme results chart collates evaluation data sources against targets and expected outcomes as set out in the KNOWFOR logframe.

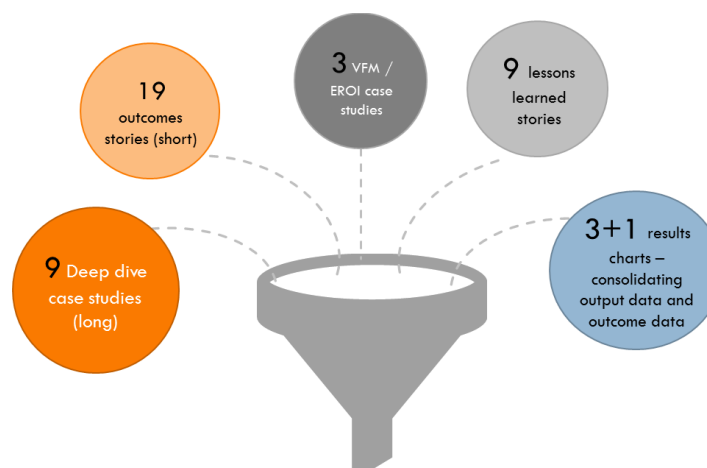


Figure 5: Key data sources

The case studies were focussed mostly on project-level outcomes, used multiple lines of data and were each over 30 pages in length. The outcome stories were much shorter narratives that described a specific outcome, often at a project or sub-project level. The lessons learned stories were intended specifically to highlight instances where things **had not worked**. However, the majority of lessons learned stories received from partners instead provided reflections on and learnings from implementation. The results charts are essentially a data synthesis tool, compiling evidence against the ToC to assemble the performance story. Results charts were first developed by each partner, before a programme-wide results chart was developed (see Annex 4). A fuller description of each type of artefact can be found in Annex 8.4.

To create these data sources, evidence was collated from a wide range of sources and mostly collected by partners. A summary of the data sources is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Data sources and evidence base

Evidence source	Number of sources ²⁴	Who collected	KEQ	Links
Most Significant Change (MSC) interviews/stories	17	CIFOR	KEQ2	Conducted by CIFOR. See CIFOR Partner Report
Interviews for deep-dive case studies	138	CIFOR (n=64), IUCN (n=52), PROFOR (n=22)	KEQ 1	Refer to Partner Case Studies
Desktop review	40	CH	KEQ1,2&3	See Evidence (Annex 1) and References (Annex 2)
Semi-structured interviews ²⁵	15	CH (15)	KEQ2&3	Interviews with DFID (3), Partners (11) and external informant (1)

²⁴ Interviewees or documents.

²⁵ See Annex 6 for the interview guide used in the partner interviews.

1.3.1 Deep-dive case studies

Each partner conducted three in-depth (or ‘deep-dive’) case studies, resulting in a total of nine. Case studies were purposefully selected by partners on the basis that they would provide insight into knowledge uptake. Because of the focus on learning about how and in what contexts partners were able to influence changes in policy and practice through programme activities, positive cases were selected, with the exception of the PROFOR Governance DRC Sub-Case (PROFOR_CS_7). The case studies were all more than 30 pages long and most were subcontracted to external parties, though some were conducted in-house. They were undertaken using either COR (seven case studies) or the episode study approach (two case studies). See Annex 4 for more detail on the case study methodology and approach. Consistency in case studies was supported by the use of standard templates and approaches as well as guidance provided by the evaluation facilitators.

A description of each of the case studies is provided in Table 3 below, and summaries of each are included in Annexes 14, 15 and 16. The strength of evidence was determined by the quality assurer. These case studies are referred to throughout the report, particularly in relation to KEQ1 (see sections 2 and 3).

Table 3: Case studies undertaken for the final KNOWFOR evaluation

CIFOR	CIFOR_CS_01	Fire and Haze	Indonesia	Performance Story Report of CIFOR’s Fire and Haze project	High
	CIFOR_CS_02	PEN	Global	Performance Story Report of Poverty Environment Network	Medium
	CIFOR_CS_03	Brazil nut	Peru	Performance Story Report of Brazil Nut case study	High
IUCN	IUCN_CS_04	Bonn Challenge	Global	Exploring IUCN’s influence on the development and growth of the Bonn Challenge	Medium
	IUCN_CS_05	Guatemala	Guatemala	Analysing KNOWFOR’s Contribution to Forest Management Policy in Guatemala	High
	IUCN_CS_06	Finance	Global	Understanding IUCN’s Role in Unlocking FLR Finance	Medium
PROFOR	PROFOR_CS_07	Governance	DRC, Mozambique, Global	Forest Governance: Impacts from outreach and implementation of country assessments	Low-medium
	PROFOR_CS_08	Poverty	India, Philippines, Turkey	Understanding forests contribution to poverty reduction: An Evaluation of the PROFOR-funded activities in India, Philippines, and Turkey	Low

	PROFOR_CS_09	Watershed	India	Watershed development in India: Approach evolving through experience	High
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Further economic analysis (expected return on investment [EROI]) was conducted for CIFOR_CS_01 (Fire and Haze), PROFOR_CS_09 (Watershed) and IUCN_CS_05 (Guatemala). See Annexes 14, 15 and 16 for detailed CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR case study summaries respectively.

1.3.2 Outcome stories and other evidence

In addition to the more in-depth case studies, partners collected 19 outcome stories, of which Annex 1 provides the full list. These stories are referenced in this report by noting the name of the partner, the abbreviation OS (outcome story) and the number – for example, 'IUCN_OS_11'.

1.5. VFM analysis

Our methodology for the VFM analysis involved adopting the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) approach to assemble a 'case' for the VFM of KNOWFOR. This drew on the existing evaluation data and some additional cost/benefit data that partners collected. Partners agreed to build on at least one of their case studies by adding in additional data and a cost/benefit analysis (in Table 3 above we note which case studies have extended sections covering a cost/benefit analysis). All three partners adopted a variation of the Redstone²⁶ Strategy approach recommended by the Quality Assurance team for programmes of this sort to conduct the analysis. This involved establishing the percentage contribution of KNOWFOR among that of other actors and estimating the relative return on investment. VFM findings are presented in section 5.4.

1.6. Roles and responsibilities

Consistent with the COR approach, the evaluation was organised around four main phases: planning, data collection, interpretation and reporting. Each phase involved iterative engagement among partners, the evaluation facilitator and the independent quality assurer, whose roles in this process are described in more detail below.

²⁶ The Redstone Strategy approach estimates the EROI of policy and practice changes by considering benefits, the likelihood of success, the relative contribution to the likelihood of success and the costs (Redstone Strategy Group, 2013) <https://www.redstonestrategy.com/publications/new-approach-global-think-tank-network/>.

A diagrammatic overview of the evaluation roles and responsibilities and governance arrangements is provided in Annex 11.

1.5.1 The role of partners

Partners were engaged from the outset in co-designing the evaluation approach; they then collected the bulk of the data for the evaluation. The key roles they played were:

- **Co-design of the methodology.** Partners provided input into and feedback on the evaluation methodology and tools. They were also responsible for developing an evaluation plan for their organisation in alignment with the overarching evaluation plan.
- **Data collection and collation.** Partners collated all existing output and outcome data from the monitoring system into a collation template referred to as ‘the results chart’. They each conducted three deep-dive case studies, one with a more extensive focus on VFM, as well as a series of shorter outcomes stories, and lessons learned stories.
- **Reflection, analysis and reporting at the organisation level.** Partners each held a partner-level reflection workshop to develop their organisation-specific findings.
- **Reflection, analysis and reporting at the programme level.** Partners participated in a programme-wide summit workshop to agree on programme findings and provide feedback to inform the programme-wide report.

1.5.2 The evaluation facilitator

The role of the evaluation facilitator was to develop the evaluation methodology and to coach the three partners through the evaluation process, as well as to facilitate agreement on the evaluation findings and support the reporting. Specifically, the evaluation facilitator:

- **facilitated and led the overall evaluation process.** In particular, the Clear Horizon team facilitated the process of developing the initial evaluation plan. They also developed templates for the partner plans, case studies reports, data synthesis, partner reports and final reports. Tools for assessing the strength of evidence and gender were developed with partner input.
- **facilitated the learning environment.** The team convened regular meetings (virtual) with partners to encourage peer-to-peer learning, gain feedback and refine the approach and guidelines. They also supported partners individually by way of coaching.
- **played a project management role.** The Clear Horizon team organised meetings and developed agendas while also keeping everyone on track with deadlines.
- **facilitated the development of evaluation findings.** The team devised the events and facilitated the partner-wide summit workshop as well as two out of three of the partner-level reflection workshops.
- **supported reporting.** The Clear Horizon team drafted the final report, drawing strongly on partner-level reports and workshop findings.

1.5.3 Role of the quality assurers

The purpose of the independent quality assurance role was to provide an independent perspective on the partner-led evaluation methodology, approach, findings and recommendations. This role of the ‘critical friend’ was aimed at providing partners with a trusted

outsider to challenge assumptions, provide fresh perspectives and offer constructive critiques of both the evaluation process and products. The independent quality assurer shadowed the partner-led evaluation process, provided advice and input throughout the evaluation, and produced reflection reports on the process. In particular, ODI:

- **provided a critical review** of the overarching evaluation plan and of each of the three partner-level evaluation plans.
- **provided a critical review** of the nine draft deep-dive case study reports, as well as suggestions for improvement on the three partner-level results charts and the programme-level report.
- **provided ‘critical friend’ input.** ODI attended all three partner-level workshops, as well as the summit workshop, and presented its observations and judgements regarding the quality of reflection and learning.
- **judged the strength of evidence.** The quality assurer provided a separate report to accompany the partner reports that included overall conclusions about the strength of evidence of the evaluation.
- **collected process learnings.** ODI documented key learning moments throughout the evaluation process as well as reflections on and experiences with the evaluation from those involved.
- **led the evaluation of the evaluation.** Partners decided that it would be worthwhile to undertake an evaluation of the evaluation due to the novelty and interest in the partner-led approach. The quality assurer led this work.

1.5.4 Role of the DFID Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

The DFID SRO commissioned the evaluation and held overall responsibility for the evaluation process, signing off on all final data sources and reports, as well as participating in the summit workshop. The DFID SRO was also a partner in the evaluation process and played an active role in the collective decision-making throughout the process, particularly with regards to the scope, purpose, audience and use of the evaluation. The DFID SRO played a key role in enabling the partner-led approach to be conducted for this evaluation by gaining support for the approach within DFID. The DFID SRO also played a key role in liaising with the evaluation facilitator, the external quality assurance team, and internal evaluation advisers and quality assurers (EQUALS).

1.7. Limitations of the evaluation

As with all evaluations, this approach comes with specific limitations. In particular:

4. Being partner-led, it involved a risk of positive bias. Partners may tend to present their achievements in a favourable manner. The evaluation facilitator was also arguably invested in the programme. Its work and input formed part of the evaluation and for KEQ2 in relation to the DMEL system, so was also potentially positively biased.
5. Despite guidance and encouragement, lessons learned stories tended to avoid addressing things that did not work, but rather focussed on reflections and learnings pertinent to each partner. This highlights the sensitive and potentially competitive nature of the KNOWFOR partnership, which was not always conducive to critical and honest self-reflection by partners, who are arguably competitors as well as partners.

6. As discussed, the rationale for choosing a partner-led approach was based on the potential for maximising the opportunities for learning and utilisation by partners. We attempted to retain the learning benefits while mitigating the above positive biases through three strategies: 1) by having an external quality assurer who inspected the data and assessed the strength of evidence, 2) by having explicit methodology to include what did not work (lessons learned stories), and 3) by substantiating all claims with evidence and judging the strength of the evidence. However, as discussed above (point 2), lessons learned stories did not, for the most part, address weaknesses; and, as discussed below (see point 7), the strength of evidence was mixed.
7. The case studies were drawn purposefully as success cases, and cannot be seen to be representative of all the investments. As noted by Newman (2014)²⁷, case studies can provide useful examples of where knowledge has led to change; however, they also need to be analysed with caution for a number of reasons. In particular, the selection of case studies in the KNOWFOR programme was based on cases that had achieved positive results which therefore could result in overestimation of the influence of partners. We attempted to mitigate this through three strategies: 1) the case studies were supplemented with a programme-wide results chart that collected evidence on all project activities, and included an assessment of the degree of influence of partner activities using the uptake rubric; 2) the case study methodology included the need to substantiate all claims with evidence and conclude on the strength of the evidence; and 3) the quality assurer provided feedback on the draft case studies to strengthen them, and highlighted inaccuracies or methodological weaknesses where relevant.
8. As noted by Newman (ibid), due to the long causal pathway, it is often very difficult to prove and quantify the extent to which knowledge contributes to action (policy and practice changes), and thus any claims of contribution must be viewed with caution. This remains a concern in this evaluation. In this regard, efforts were made to provide an evidence-based case for contribution including assessment of the strength of the evidence. An external quality assurer was also used to scrutinise and make final judgements about the contribution of the programme.
9. The overall evaluation methodology was strongly influenced by the COR approach (Dart and Roberts, 2014), with seven out of nine case studies using COR. A potential weakness or risk of COR is that it focuses on the effect of the intervention, with less emphasis on understanding the role of the wider context or other factors that might trigger or support knowledge uptake. COR takes context into account through the use of ToC and qualitative methods for causal inference (Maxwell, 2004), but there is a potential for 'overemphasis' of the influence of the intervention 'vis-a-vis other factors' (Start and Hovland, 2004: p. 12).
10. There is inconsistency in the quality of data, with some case studies relying heavily on a limited sample of interviews. Responsibility for data collection, analysis and synthesis was devolved mostly to partners, who, in turn, in most cases, subcontracted or delegated data collection to third parties. Output reporting and monitoring is

²⁷ Newman, K., 2014. What is the evidence on the impact of research on international development?, London: Department for International Development (DFID).
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a089aced915d622c000343/impact-of-research-on-international-development.pdf>

similarly characterised by multiple data sources and methods, which can vary widely in form and content. As a result, there is considerable variability in the quality of evidence collected and used for this evaluation as well as its comparability. We attempted to mitigate this problem of inconsistency by standardisation, coordination and guidance provided by the evaluation facilitators and DMEL representatives within each partner, but a lack of consistency and comparability remains a weakness of this approach. There were also benefits to devolving responsibility to partners, who were able to draw on their local networks and knowledge to gather evidence efficiently and effectively.

2. The performance story of the KNOWFOR programme (KEQ1)

This section summarises the overall performance story of the KNOWFOR programme against its ToC and the logframe targets. It describes what was done, the reach of knowledge products and engagement, the extent to which the programme outcomes (equipping decision-makers) were achieved, and the contribution to policy and practice change. More detailed results can be found in the results chart (Annex 4). This performance story addresses the first part of ‘KEQ 1: How and to what extent did KNOWFOR contribute to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries?’.

2.1. KNOWFOR exceeded all targets in terms of volume of knowledge products and reach of engagement

KNOWFOR partners were extremely productive in terms of the **volume of knowledge products**²⁸ and **reach of engagement processes**. Targets for engagement were exceeded by more than 300%. This may indicate that targets were set too low. It is also reasonable to conclude that, given the breadth and scale of output, KNOWFOR has been quite productive in terms of developing and disseminating knowledge products. However, with exceptions²⁹, the social media audience profile of KNOWFOR is not fully known, which raises some degree of uncertainty about the penetration of the wide digital footprint of the programme.

Table 4: All partners exceeded output targets for volume of knowledge products and reach of engagement

Level	Target	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
Outputs	397 Knowledge products across the life of KNOWFOR	973 Knowledge products across the life of KNOWFOR More than double – with all partners exceeding individual targets	Exceeded expectations	High
	194 KNOWFOR supported engagement process/events	770 KNOWFOR supported engagement process/events Target exceeded by 300% with all partners exceeding individual targets	Exceeded expectations	High

Overall, the programme was very productive, with partners well exceeding agreed targets for product delivery. All partners made much of their information available online, with blogs, web-

²⁸ The definition of ‘knowledge products’ includes a diverse range of outputs delivered by partners including technical and non-technical reports; fact sheets; published, peer-reviewed academic papers; handbooks; datasets; maps; grey literature; and tailored communication products (such as news releases, media briefings and blogs). See Results Chart in Annex 4 for detailed examples.

²⁹ CIFOR (2014) ‘Enhanced download data: a better way to understand our audience’, internal learning blog; and; IUCN (2016) ‘Social network and content analysis report 2016: A guide to IUCN and COP21 related Social Networks’.

based publications and other online media all well represented. Social media targets were also vastly exceeded by all partners at a programme level, with a total of 844,747 page views and 102,811 downloads reported. For instance, PROFOR exceeded its target during one event alone (the 2015 World Forestry Congress). Only IUCN reported not fully reaching its target for the number of downloads, managing to achieve 85%. Both IUCN and PROFOR had Twitter accounts, with some 19,324 followers between them, and the latter receiving 239,500 Twitter views.

The extent to which social media targets were exceeded does highlight the need for appropriate targets. This was raised in the 2016 Annual Review by DFID, which recommended adjustments to the logframe to set more 'challenging' targets (AR-16). The 2016 Review stated that 'Further adjustments to the logframe are required. Based on the performance of partners for some targets (notably relating to social media), which have been comfortably exceeded, there is a need to set more challenging targets and/or review whether more nuanced indicators can better capture some of the outputs'. This theme of setting more realistic but sufficiently challenging targets arose several times throughout the programme, with several joint revisions to targets being made between 2013 and 2016.

In terms of engagement processes, all partners performed well above expectation, easily exceeding their targets – all by more than double. CIFOR, for instance, exceeded its cumulative target of 59 by 556 engagements, of which 506 were workshops, meetings and forums. A high proportion of engagement processes involved working meetings with immediate stakeholders to discuss the implementation or progress of various projects/activities – involving academics, practitioners and decision-makers – rather than broader audiences for dissemination purposes. Nonetheless, some 34,149 people participated directly in these predominantly face-to-face processes. Added to this, online engagement processes, which were interactive, included the participation of 6,683 people in a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), as well as 674 participants in webinars (PROFOR), indicating the potential of these platforms.

However, despite the impressive numbers, the audience profile of KNOWFOR is not fully known, raising some uncertainty regarding the penetration of KNOWFOR digital media. A better understanding of audience profiles reached by online media through KNOWFOR would potentially assist partners to improve their online knowledge uptake strategies.

2.2. KNOWFOR provides clear examples of a user-centred approach to developing knowledge products and knowledge uptake pathways

KNOWFOR's approach promotes planning based on a user-centred approach, and two-way learning to enhance this. The target of providing nine narrative descriptions of the creation of processes/products tailored to audience-specific needs was clearly met. The target of demonstrating that these met the needs of women was narrowly met, with one example being provided, as targeted. There are a few examples of feedback and learning being used to enhance products.

The partner-led data collection demonstrated that partners sought to understand, respond to and meet audience needs through KNOWFOR. Product relevance was supported by extensive engagement processes and an ongoing effort by partners to understand the context in which knowledge processes are undertaken.

Table 5: Partners met output targets for audience orientation

Level	Performance criteria	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
Outputs (meeting needs)	Nine narrative descriptions of good practice examples of processes and/or products created that identified and delivered on audience-specific information needs, including at least one example that delivered on the needs of women and girls. ³⁰	Partners all demonstrated relevance through outcome stories (n=19) and case studies (n=9). Where examples were not relevant, learnings were documented. Only one outcome story (IUCN 'Gender in Forest Landscape Restoration') explicitly addressed the needs of women and girls.	Met	Medium-high Although the quality and strength of evidence is somewhat mixed there are clear examples
	Extent to which partners enhanced knowledge practices through feedback and learning No target on this, but it is noted in the Phase 2 ToC	There is limited data on the extent to which partners enhanced knowledge practices through feedback and learning. Evidence was provided by IUCN and CIFOR demonstrating feedback.	Met though evidence is limited	Medium Examples are provided but evidence specifically demonstrating responsiveness to feedback is limited

IUCN demonstrated strong tailoring in its outcome stories and case studies.

Tailoring is evidenced by the demand-driven ROAM processes in 23 countries as well as gender-responsive ROAM guidelines.

PROFOR's three deep-dive case studies and four outcome stories also demonstrated good practice in

identifying audience needs and targeting and adapting knowledge products – for example by:

- meeting the needs of activity designers in the World Bank
- developing options for effective institutional coordination reform for Watershed Management, which met the immediate needs of the Indian Government as well as World Bank staff developing similar programmes (most directly in Haiti, Nigeria and Malawi)

IUCN outcome stories (ROAM, Gender in FLR, and Bonn Challenge commitments) highlight how ROAM was translated into other languages to meet the demand from 23 countries – including animated guidance; demands for a gender-responsive ROAM were met by piloting, including tailor-making a Gender Plan of Action (GPoA) for Brazil; and producing FLR opportunity maps for DRC and Burundi which revealed that more than 10 million hectares is suitable for forestation, resulting in a World Bank expression of interest to provide financial support valued at US\$50 million dollars to Burundi's commitment to the Bonn Challenge in collaboration with IUCN.

³⁰ This target was included in the programme logframe in 2016 and so has only been reported on once by partners. Therefore, findings have also been based on other available sources, such as case studies.

- tailoring the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) forestry module to the needs of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry/DG forestry in Turkey
- using PROFOR's multi-stakeholder-based governance diagnostic tool for project design in Mozambique.



Photo 1. Thosegar Falls, India: PROFOR's India Watershed study informed a host of development investments (Source Author/Shutterstock)

CIFOR case studies also demonstrated relevance to the research context (Poverty Environment Network [PEN]), the political economy (Fire and Haze) and policy needs. CIFOR product relevance was demonstrated through a survey of CIFOR knowledge users in 2015, which found that 88% of knowledge users who accessed CIFOR products found them quite or highly relevant to their work. When target audiences did provide feedback on the quality, utility and accessibility of the project outputs, it was positive.

The case studies demonstrate, for the most part, that KNOWFOR outputs responded to user demand in the majority of cases, including the Bonn Challenge (IUCN_CS_04), Guatemala (IUCN_CS_05), Finance, PEN (CIFOR_CS_02), Fire and Haze (CIFOR_CS_01), Governance, Poverty and Forests. The PROFOR Governance Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) sub-case study was less driven by demand than was the Mozambique Governance case study. In the CIFOR Brazil Nut case study, target audiences including concessionaires and their associations were not identified and engaged sufficiently during the project. Conversely, CIFOR prioritised community initiatives at the expense of sound scientific advice, which led to some pilot peatland restoration work initially failing. Importantly, where products did not hit the mark in terms of relevance, these cases provide valuable opportunities for learning for partners.

There is limited data on the extent to which partners have enhanced knowledge practices through feedback and learning. However, there were examples such as ongoing refinement of the ROAM guidelines by IUCN, including the development of Gender-Responsive ROAM based on feedback and learning from piloting the methodology in Brazil and Malawi, the inclusion of gender into the Brazilian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) through a critical review and feedback process (IUCN), adaptation of e-Learning Governance modules by PROFOR, and the evolution of interdisciplinary research transfer processes by CIFOR to meet audience needs (see Brazil Nut case study). There is also evidence that reflection and learning based on DMEL is increasing in CIFOR.

2.3. Performance on tailoring knowledge products and engagement with women and girls was mixed but has improved

Table 6: Results for tailoring products for gender

Level	Target	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
Outputs (gender)	25% of products and range of categories either explicitly respond to the specific needs of women and girls or generate sex-differentiated gender relevant knowledge	Target met by IUCN and CIFOR (39% and 38% respectively) but not by PROFOR (7%)	Met at programme level – with 2 partners exceeding and one failing to meet target	Medium Results are largely self-reported
	% of engagement processes that were gender responsive	No target. Evidence of responsive engagement and adaptation to meet gender-specific needs was provided by two of the three organisations	Somewhat lower than expected for one partner	Medium Results are based on selected examples

The KNOWFOR programme did not explicitly articulate performance expectations with regard to gender until 2015³¹, following recommendations from the 2014 Annual Review (AR-14). Performance expectations and criteria for gender were then further clarified in 2016, in preparation for the final evaluation. The results against this target should therefore be seen in this context, where expectations have become more explicit as implementation has progressed. This clarification of expectations, and the concomitant development of a shared understanding of gender responsiveness, is significant as it represents an early step towards more appropriate gender-sensitive and gender-responsive programming and monitoring by partners.

Despite this late start, examples of gender-responsive programming were provided by partners where audience needs were identified and accordingly responded to through the use of planning tools and approaches by partners. IUCN, for example, conducted gender-responsive engagement in relation to the implementation of ROAM in Brazil and Malawi (see section 2.2 above). While CIFOR also demonstrated responsiveness in the Brazil nut (CIFOR_CS_03) and PEN

³¹ Despite the inclusion of a gender participation indicator in 2014.

(CIFOR_CS_02) case studies, as well as in the larger effort to undertake gender-specific forestry research funded by KNOWFOR.

In terms of meeting the overall target of 25% of knowledge products being gender responsive, both IUCN and CIFOR exceeded this target (39% and 38% respectively), with CIFOR achieving over 50% in gender-relevant products in the year 2015. PROFOR has not performed as well, achieving only 7% overall – a result that was exacerbated by a lack of attention to the gender responsiveness of products in reporting. However, PROFOR improved gender reporting over time, with 15% of products paying explicit attention to gender in 2016, potentially signalling an upward trend.

As illustrated in Table 7 below, gender ratings for the case studies ranged from Low-Medium (two case studies), to Medium (five case studies) and High (one case study) using the KNOWFOR Gender Tool.³² Refer to Annex 8 for the gender rubrics used to determine these ratings.

Table 7: Gender assessment of KNOWFOR evaluation case studies

Partner	Case study	Gender rating	Details ³³
CIFOR	Fire and Haze	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender not explicitly considered in the design, methodology, products and engagement Sex-disaggregated data was collected on two occasions Analysis based on gender variables
	PEN	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEN integrated gender equity considerations consistently across all stages of the research cycle
	Brazil Nut	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female and male concessionaires considered and responded to in research and engagement process despite not featuring an explicitly gender-sensitive design
IUCN	Bonn Challenge	Medium – High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender emphasised in revised ROAM guidelines Gender stressed in supporting FLR documentation including NBSAPs Gender training undertaken for those involved in the ROAM process in Brazil and Malawi
	Guatemala	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender considered in the ROAM process and in supporting mechanisms (FLR Roundtable)
	Finance	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender not addressed explicitly in case study as it was not within scope
PROFOR	Governance	Low – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex-disaggregated data presented on Governance Assessments (DRC and Mozambique) and E-Learning course Access to E-Learning course considered in terms of gender DRC assessment does not explicitly address gender while Mozambique does
	Poverty	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender considered in design in Turkey, the Philippines and India Gender not fully considered as a variable for forest dependence in India project, while a gender lens was more fully integrated in the Philippines and Turkey
	Watershed	Low – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and girls were considered at various stages of implementation, but there was no evidence of proactive efforts to increase their participation No sex-disaggregated data available for participation

³² The IUCN Finance case study was not rated as it was not within the study scope to explicitly address gender.

³³ Refer to case studies for more detail.

CIFOR noted that its KNOWFOR-funded activities generated gender-specific knowledge with regard to access to forest products, Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) implementation, benefit sharing and property rights, the composition and role of forest management groups, resource governance and conservation outcomes.

Subsequent to the recent (2016) requirements for consistent gender reporting, CIFOR saw a progressive improvement in taking gender into consideration over the course of KNOWFOR. PROFOR is developing guidance notes and tools to assist the inclusion of gender analysis and gender considerations into activity design. IUCN is undertaking more rigorous analysis of gender dimensions in 2017, which will potentially inform subsequent planning and programming. This will be supported by momentum generated through KNOWFOR, including connections and networks established between gender advisers across the three partner institutions, as well as other practical actions at the national and regional levels such as the formation of a gender group that has been created under the Brazilian Panel for Biodiversity (PanelBio) to follow on the implementation of activities identified under the NBSAP (IUCN_OS_12) and the development of gender-responsive monitoring by the Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact (PACTO) (IUCN_OS_13).

2.4. Decision-makers were shown to be equipped³⁴

Table 8: Summary of results for equipping decision-makers

Level	Performance criteria	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
End of Programme Outcomes (EPOO)	KNOWFOR is rated as 'Meeting expectations' or 'Above expectations' in the uptake rubric	Decision-makers were shown to be equipped in 9 case studies and the majority of 19 outcome stories. Over three-quarters (>75%) of projects met or exceeded expectations in the uptake rubric in 2016, representing an improvement over the course of the programme.	Performance: Met target	High
	At least 30 outcome stories are captured to demonstrate this			

Over the course of the programme, KNOWFOR successfully equipped a range of policy-makers and practitioners in the land use and forestry sector/s working at multiple scales with knowledge, tools and resources. Decision-makers and practitioners can also act with greater confidence, ability and capability due at least in part to the programme. However, the programme did not always hit the mark in terms of reaching intended audiences. This is to be expected to some degree in knowledge programming particularly in a development context characterised by change, complexity and uncertainty. In fact there is good evidence that partners learned from experience and implementation when things did not go as planned (see section 3.5 for more detail). More detail on the scales at which decision-makers and practitioners were equipped through the programme is provided below.

³⁴The concept of 'equipped' recognises that policy-makers and practitioners need access to high-quality, evidence-based knowledge and information, but that decision-making and action are also driven by ideology, influence and the institutional context. KNOWFOR partners have primary mandates for knowledge creation and knowledge translation. In this work, they recognise the need to pay deliberate and explicit attention to the context in order to encourage and support the use of knowledge for better environmental and social outcomes.

Globally and regionally: For instance, under KNOWFOR, 23 countries including Colombia, Mexico, Ghana, El Salvador and Rwanda have been supported by IUCN to undertake restoration opportunity assessments. Through ROAM these countries are now equipped with guidance, tools and technical advice on how to implement their FLR commitments. In addition, IUCN has trained 150 people from 25 countries and supported champions who are now able to provide ROAM training in their own languages, regions and countries (Bonn case study).

National and sub-national: Governments are better equipped with resources, tools and knowledge because of KNOWFOR. A range of policy and practice changes that have occurred (see ‘Policy and Practice Change’ below, section 2.5) provide evidence that KNOWFOR has equipped decision-makers. For instance, in Peru the National Government used CIFOR research findings to inform the brazil nut concession management guidelines published in January 2016 (CIFOR_CS_03). Other instances of knowledge uptake by national and sub-national governments include equipping:

- national policy-makers and practitioners with gender-responsive FLR guidance by IUCN in Rwanda, Mexico, Uganda and Guatemala through ROAM (IUCN_OS_15; IUCN_CS_05)
- decision-makers in Cameroon and the Congo Basin on how to best procure local and legal wood for shared processing facilities as part of the ongoing World Bank dialogue on forests and climate in these countries (PROFOR_OS_16)
- government and non-government actors, experts in gender and biodiversity, and community leaders in Brazil with policy advice and input into the NBSAP, which integrates gender and FLR considerations into national planning processes (IUCN_OS_12)
- local government in Bengkalis Regency and Riau Province with a briefing prepared by CIFOR as the basis for drafting the Regency and Provincial Regulation on Fire Management and Prevention (Fire and Haze case study).



Development partners, including multilateral agencies, donors and non-government organisations (NGOs), have also been equipped with forestry-related knowledge through KNOWFOR. For instance, with support from the KNOWFOR rapid response mechanism, CIFOR provided a briefing on the Miombo woodlands and charcoal production to the United Kingdom Climate Change Unit (UKCCU) in support of the development of a DFID business case. The CIFOR PEN project, for example, with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), co-contributed to the development of a forest module for the LSMS being used by the World Bank as well as the Forest Poverty Toolkit in use by IUCN (CIFOR_CS_02).

Researchers, scientists and academics have also been equipped with tools, information and guidance through KNOWFOR. For instance, the CIFOR PEN dataset was shared with 18 external parties who are currently analysing the data with the aim of producing a range of publications that acknowledge the use of PEN data (PEN case study). As highlighted above, PEN has also informed the design of the World Bank LSMS forest module. PEN partners stated that PEN was beneficial to their scientific understanding of the topic, and their technical research capacity through the experience of conducting household-level surveys (CIFOR_CS_02).

The PROFOR Watershed Study has informed a range of investments and priorities including the US\$500-million-per-year India Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), and specifically in Karnataka and Uttarakhand, the Neeranchal National Watershed Project, a US\$357-million project (with a 50% World Bank share).

This project aims to provide technical support to the IWMP over eight years and its design directly follows from the recommendations of the Watershed report on Catchment Assessment and Planning for Watershed Management, reflecting the need discussed in the PROFOR-supported report.

NGOs and civil society actors, including not-for-profit groups and organisations, were equipped through KNOWFOR. This was evident in the Fire and Haze case study, where local and international NGOs such as Jikalahari and Greenpeace used CIFOR findings for advocacy purposes. In Guatemala, as a result of the ROAM process, ‘people and civil society representatives from Rocjá Pomptila were using participatory tools to rethink the future of their community and their relationship with authorities and companies in the area’ (IUCN_OS_11). In the IUCN Guatemala case study (IUCN_CS_05), civil society stakeholders were engaged and equipped via a stakeholder roundtable. In these examples, KNOWFOR interfaced with indigenous and/or community groups and stakeholders to address cross-cutting issues of human rights and land tenure in relation to forest and land use.

Private sector actors were also equipped through the programme. For instance, the Brazil Nut case study (CIFOR_CS_03) found that concessionaires and workers who were directly involved in the research increased their knowledge about brazil nut ecology and the factors influencing brazil nut production. Concessionaires were also provided with information on the location of brazil nut trees and ecological characteristics about their concessions that may be useful for future management. The IUCN Finance case study also highlights outcomes in terms of equipping the private sector, including the establishment of a private sector network to support the implementation of the Bonn Challenge. Overall, however, there is less evidence of private sector stakeholders being targeted and/or equipped through the programme compared with government and not-for-profit entities. The reasons for this difference are not fully understood,

though it is reasonable to assume that partners worked through their existing networks, which to some degree are made up of public and civic entities.

2.5. Numerous examples of policy and practice change with variable degrees of contribution

Table 9: Policy and practice change results summary

Level	Performance criteria	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
Short-term impacts	Expect to see sufficient number of instances of knowledge uptake demonstrated in case studies and outcome stories and captured in above-expectations level of rubric	KNOWFOR aimed to equip decision-makers to improve policy and practice that would lead to broader impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through improved forest landscape management. KNOWFOR met expectations around this short-term impact by providing multiple examples of policy and practice changes, which were instigated and catalysed at least in part through KNOWFOR outputs and efforts. However, it is important to note that the level of contribution from KNOWFOR varied from case to case.	Performance expectations: Met	Medium

Where policy and practice changes have been influenced by KNOWFOR there is evidence that partners purposefully planned for knowledge uptake, identified key audiences, used existing networks and delivered knowledge that was both credible and relevant. Other success factors are discussed in section 3. Policy and practice changes influenced by KNOWFOR are identified below and include global commitments; development investment and planning; national policy; gender mainstreaming; measurement, reporting and verification (MRV); forest monitoring protocols and practices; and research planning and practices.

Policy and practice change outcome claims are based on evidence sources that vary in terms of evidence strength. Outcomes also vary in terms of the level of contribution that can be ascribed or attributed to the programme and partners. While case studies and outcome stories all address to varying degrees the role of KNOWFOR-funded activities in supporting outcomes, the factors external to the programme are not fully considered. This can lead to an overestimation of the role of knowledge vis-a-vis other factors' in contributing to outcomes (Start and Hovland, 2004: 12).

Moreover, because of the positive deviance case selection method³⁵, the examples below are not necessarily representative of the short-term impacts of this programme but rather illustrate achievements on a case-by-case basis.

Global commitments supported by KNOWFOR include a rise in the number of Bonn commitments, from five countries in 2012 to 39 countries in 2016, 23 of which received KNOWFOR support (Bonn case study, Finance case study) either directly through the IUCN Global Forest and Climate Change team or indirectly through regional office support. These 39 commitments represent a growth in the volume of area under restoration transition from 20 million hectares in 2012 to over 130 million hectares in 2016, 90.5 million hectares of which were supported by KNOWFOR.³⁶ Meanwhile, KNOWFOR has also directly supported the Kigali declaration recently endorsed by 13 countries via the Ministers of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) to reaffirm commitment to the Bonn Challenge and FLR. Commitments made to the Bonn Challenge represent 136 million hectares from 39 national and sub-national governments, restoration alliances and companies.³⁷ Within the private sector, KNOWFOR has also supported the first commitment to the Bonn Challenge from Asia Pulp and Paper, which committed 1 million hectares at the Global Landscapes Forum in 2016 with IUCN support.

Development investment has been secured by partners through KNOWFOR support. IUCN has secured over £217.10 million in funding from a range of sources including the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) including £17.9 million for a suite of projects (see Finance case study), £42.2 million from the GEF towards FLR in 10 Asian and African countries, as well as an additional £157 million secured from the GEF-funded Restoration Initiative (IUCN_CS_06). Forest governance assessment work undertaken by PROFOR in Mozambique has informed the Forest Investment Programme³⁸ (FIP) whereby the priority indicators that were identified during the assessment exercises, and activities supporting their delivery, have been incorporated into the results framework of the activities funded by the Mozambique Forest Investment Program (MozFIP) (PROFOR_CS_07). The CIFOR bushmeat engagement work informed the agenda of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), leading to a €46-million 'Wild Meat' project agreement with the European Commission.

Development planning has also been influenced by KNOWFOR. For instance, the World Bank Forest Action Plan 2016–2020 was informed by PROFOR's work on proxy indicators as well as CIFOR's PEN study (CIFOR_CS_02). By undertaking restoration opportunity assessments in 23 countries, IUCN has laid a foundation for FLR planning. The CIFOR Global Comparative Study (GCS) on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) influenced the UN-REDD Policy Board to include land tenure on its list of priorities, while the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) has drawn on CIFOR and IUCN work on the contribution of landscape approaches to conservation and biodiversity. CIFOR's work on landscape approaches has also

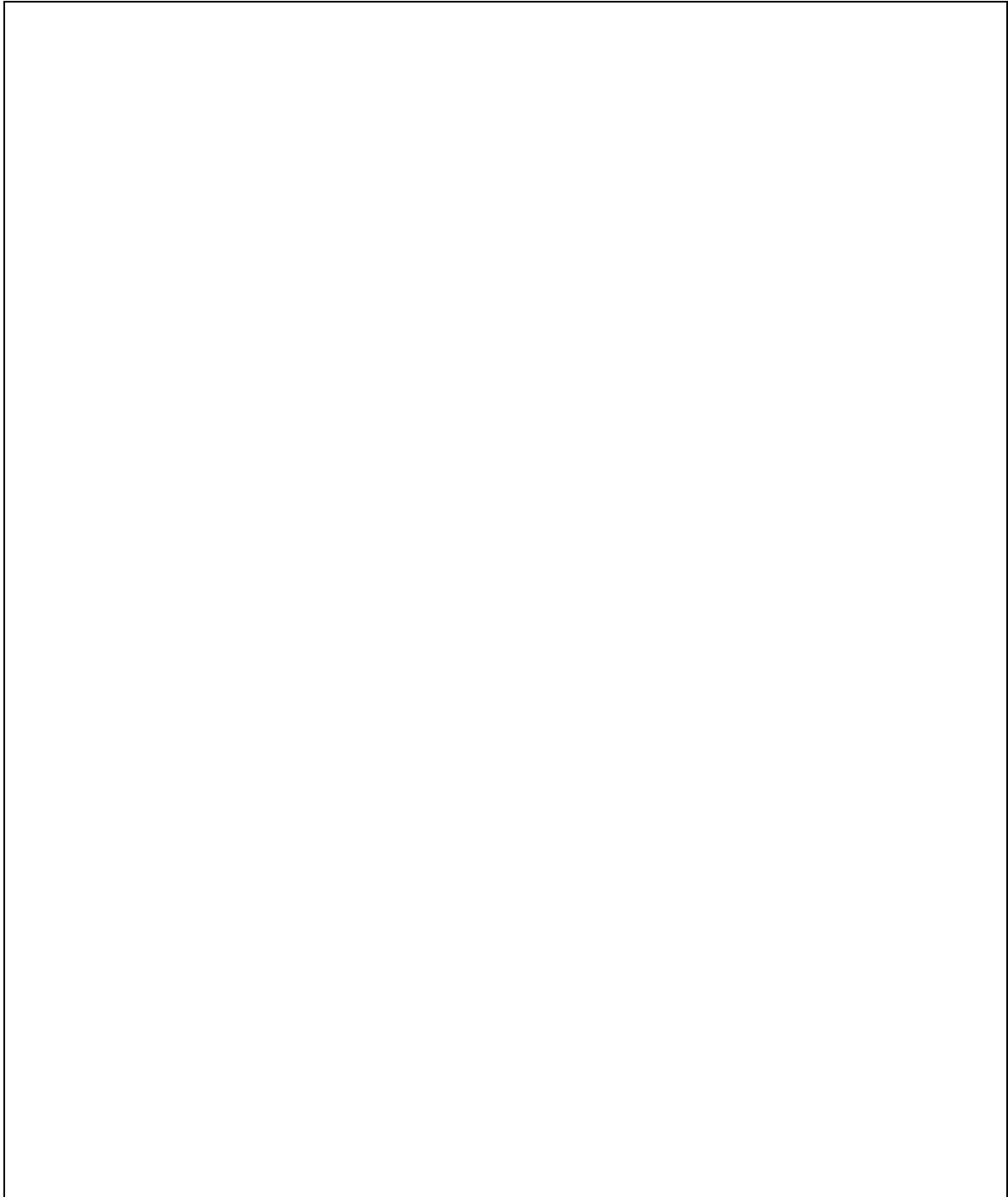
³⁵ See Methodology in Annex 5 for a full discussion of limitations.

³⁶ 23 commitments made with KNOWFOR support, representing an area of 90.5 million hectares.

³⁷ These figures are taken from the Bonn Challenge (IUCN_CS_04) and Finance case studies, which were finalised in late 2016.

³⁸ The FIP is a global multilateral fund under the Climate Investment Fund to which the UK is a significant contributor.

informed the design of such work under the USAID-funded LESTARI³⁹ project (see Outcome Story CIFOR_OS_04).



³⁹ LESTARI, meaning 'everlasting' in Bahasa Indonesia, is a sustainable forest management project designed to support the Indonesian Government in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving biodiversity in carbon rich and biologically significant forest and mangrove ecosystems.

⁴⁰ As noted in the Peru brazil nut case study, 'The guidelines were, however, modified in July 2016. Although the new document still acknowledges CIFOR research, findings are included as an optional recommendation in a footnote. The modified guidelines re-inserted a technical value (5m³/ha) that had no scientific basis' (CIFOR_CS_03).

⁴¹ 'Brazil nut production significantly contributes to the country's annual gross domestic product (GDP) and to more than half of the annual income for at least one-third of the population in the Department of Madre de Dios, Peru' (CIFOR_CS_03).

Gender mainstreaming undertaken because of KNOWFOR includes the integration of gender into the NBSAP as a result of a KNOWFOR-funded policy review, advice and engagement. While gender was not referred to in the original NBSAP, following a review by the IUCN Global Gender Office, 'gender' and 'women' are referred to 37 times in the final document (IUCN_OS_12) (IUCN, 2017).

Forest monitoring and MRV protocols and practices were informed by KNOWFOR in Zambia to include local communities and improve their capacity to undertake MRV activities (CIFOR_OS_5). The ability of communities and partners to undertake MRV of the social co-benefits of sub-national REDD+ initiatives has also improved as a result of support from the KNOWFOR-funded Global Comparative Study (GCS) on REDD+, while the IUCN Global Gender Office incorporated two gender-sensitive socioeconomic indicators into the PACTO FLR monitoring protocols.

Research design informed by KNOWFOR includes the World Bank LSMS forest module, which has incorporated questions on the contribution of forests to household income, in part through PEN (CIFOR_CS_02) and in collaboration with FAO.

Some KNOWFOR investments and activities did not influence or inform policy or practice. For instance, in the DRC, forest governance recommendations were not adopted despite wide engagement and dissemination of findings, due to a range of factors including timing and political changes. The DRC Forest Governance Assessment may still be used, however, as it continues to have currency and relevance within the country's changing context (PROFOR_CS_07). This DRC case stands as a valuable example of the importance of time, context, and purposeful user-centred planning and design.

2.6. Modest but significant contribution to policy and practice change

KNOWFOR introduced a greater emphasis on purposeful user-centred project design, with a high volume of relevant knowledge products and engagement processes produced by all three partner organisations. There is also evidence, albeit somewhat limited at this stage, that clarification of the ToC and a greater focus on knowledge uptake pathways have enabled KNOWFOR project leaders to be more focussed and tactical in their efforts to influence change. Case studies and outcome stories demonstrate that linking project activities to a clear purpose and use increases the likelihood of knowledge being used.

However, in the case of CIFOR it is more difficult to attribute changes to KNOWFOR. Given that CIFOR had already begun its journey with user-centred design and ToC, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the organisation equipped decision-makers *better* as a result of KNOWFOR. Yet the ability to marshal the evidence to demonstrate these results within KNOWFOR is significantly better than is the case with the non-KNOWFOR-funded projects currently managed by CIFOR.

Where policy and practice changes were seen, there is evidence that, in most cases, partners planned for uptake, identified key audiences, used existing networks and delivered knowledge that was both credible and relevant. In a broad sense, this supports the KNOWFOR ToC hypothesis that user-centred design and engagement will support the use of KNOWFOR knowledge by decision-makers. More specifically, as discussed in section 3.1, further research and evaluative inquiry may be necessary to test these assumptions.

It is possible that decision-makers may have been equipped without the support of KNOWFOR and/or user-centred design and knowledge programming (the counterfactual). However, several case studies and outcome stories demonstrate that KNOWFOR at least accelerated the uptake of knowledge in some cases, and in other cases decision-makers and intermediaries would not have been equipped at all, or to a far lesser degree, without KNOWFOR support (see Table 10 below).⁴² This is significant given that the literature has demonstrated that research utilisation is a gradual and ‘extremely complex phenomenon’ (Weiss, 1979: 427) and that uptake outcomes are often uncertain at best.⁴³ In this light, the outcomes of KNOWFOR, while variable and to some degree uncertain, should be viewed favourably, notwithstanding the limitations and challenges involved in evaluating knowledge uptake.

Table 10: Levels of influence over equipping decision-makers to make policy/practice changes

Level of influence	Description	Which cases
None	Cases/sub-cases where decision-makers were not equipped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance – DRC⁴⁴ (PROFOR_CS_07)
None yet	Cases/sub-cases where decision-makers were equipped but no practice/policy changes have yet been made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance – E-Learning (PROFOR_CS_07) Forests and Poverty – India, the Philippines, Turkey (PROFOR_CS_08) PEN (CIFOR_CS_02)
Acceleration	Cases/sub-cases where KNOWFOR accelerated knowledge uptake and where policy/practice changes were made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire and Haze (CIFOR_CS_02) Bonn (IUCN_CS_04)
Minor contribution	Cases/sub-cases that demonstrate KNOWFOR was one factor among many that contributed to equipping decision-makers to make policy/practice changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil nut (CIFOR_CS_03) Finance (IUCN_CS_06) Bonn (IUCN_CS_04)
Major contribution	Cases/sub-cases that demonstrate KNOWFOR was a significant factor that contributed to equipping decision-makers to make policy/practice changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watershed (PROFOR_CS_09) Governance – Mozambique (PROFOR_CS_07) Guatemala (IUCN_CS_05)

It is important to recognise that, in addition to the direct influence and scope of the programme, policy and practice change led by decision-makers is often the result of the work of many actors, processes and circumstances. The case studies reveal that in some cases KNOWFOR was a significant contributor, such as in the brazil nut case study, where national forestry policy was

⁴² The Bonn Challenge simultaneously demonstrated ‘acceleration’ as well as a ‘minor contribution’.

⁴³ Table 9 presents a comparative analysis of the cases studied for the KNOWFOR evaluation. It should be noted that these cases vary widely in the extent to which they address the contribution of KNOWFOR as well as in terms of the strength of evidence.

⁴⁴ The DRC governance case study could be picked up off the shelf and used at a later date. However, given the considerable changes in context (see case study and Lessons Learned Story – PROFOR_LS_08), further investment and work would almost certainly be required to mobilise support and momentum for the findings of this case study to be taken up.

influenced by CIFOR research (CIFOR_CS_03). In other cases, the influence of KNOWFOR was lower because of the multitude of factors influencing the outcome. For instance, KNOWFOR was one factor among many that led to securing an estimated US\$200 million in FLR investment.

‘KNOWFOR was able to provide important evidence and documentation that has supported the acceptance and adoption of FLR processes internationally. However, alone this would have been insufficient to achieve the changes that have been delivered over the past 15 years. Much of the success behind FLR has involved long, patient and careful support to building political momentum for FLR at different levels. Without strong political will, FLR would not be in a position to equip decision-makers for better decision-making.’
(IUCN_CS_04)

The IUCN’s contribution to the Bonn Challenge illustrates the influence of one organisation among many other actors and stakeholders working together to build global momentum towards a common objective and target⁴⁵ based on country-specific commitments and priorities. In this case, IUCN used its existing relationships developed from working in the FLR space over a long time period to accelerate national commitments to the Bonn Challenge over the programme timeframe. In the Bonn case, the vast increase in the number of national commitments made to Bonn within the programme timeframe (2013–17) would not have been the same without KNOWFOR support. Yet, given the global breadth of this case, we must recognise the role of factors and processes external to the programme’s influence in bringing about these large-scale changes (IUCN_CS_04).

In summary, KNOWFOR introduced new approaches to user-centred planning and process that certainly helped equip decision-makers with a high volume of relevant knowledge products. However, the degree to which any subsequent change can be attributed to the programme varies from case to case. Policy and practice change in forestry is influenced by many factors beyond knowledge and is embedded within political contexts. There is also a lack of evidence on which actors or organisations were reached by the knowledge products more broadly. However, the weight of evidence identified by this partner-led evaluation suggests that, overall, KNOWFOR played a modest but significant role in influencing policy which has the potential to lead to broader impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through improved forest and landscape management.

⁴⁵ This target is ‘to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030’ (<http://www.bonnchallenge.org/content/challenge>).

3. Analysis of results and lessons learned

In this section, we focus on the results obtained from case study analysis and other data sources to identify patterns in how and why KNOWFOR worked in different contexts. It addresses the second part of KEQ1: *what lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR’s approach to translating knowledge for action?* In the sections below, we present the results in terms of the following:

- the extent to which the ToC assumptions held true
- success factors
- promising practices
- unexpected outcomes
- areas for improvement.

Summary of findings. Analysis across multiple lines of data showed that decision-makers were equipped with knowledge via mechanisms and processes which were enabled by a range of factors within specific contexts. While there was not strong evidence that all four programme assumptions held true, two mostly held true. User-centred design using ToC and stakeholder analysis appears to increase the likelihood of knowledge being used. Dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas, and knowledge co-production with decision-makers all had some degree of influence on policy and practice. Other success factors included understanding the context, building trust, utilising champions through the knowledge uptake cycle and being strategically opportunistic. These factors worked together in different contexts to trigger change processes and the achievement of outcomes. In many cases, outcomes were supported by external factors such as the political and social climate, demand for evidence, and timing. To varying degrees these external factors were incorporated into knowledge programming by partners. Responsiveness to these factors and opportunities was identified as a success factor.

3.1. Some of the assumptions held true and some did not

The core features of the KNOWFOR approach are encapsulated in four key assumptions. In this section, we consider whether these four assumptions held true during the implementation of the programme. A challenge in assessing the veracity of the assumptions is that the three organisations have different ways of working. Table 11 summarises the findings, using traffic light colours to show the degree to which the assumptions held true.

Table 11: Summary of extent to which assumptions held true

Assumption	Extent to which it held true across the case studies and outcome stories	Extent to which it held true at the programme level
1. User-centred design using ToC, stakeholder analysis and tailoring knowledge products will lead to improved uptake.	There is a reasonable body of evidence that this assumption held true.	N/A
2. Adaptive management and refining the project approaches based on monitoring and reflection will increase uptake.	There is weak evidence that adaptive management happened as a result of monitoring and DMEL. Around half of the case studies refer to adaptive management of some form or	At the programme level, adaptive management may be necessary for a complex, knowledge-to-policy uptake programme (see section 5).

	other – but links to KNOWFOR are limited.	
3. Dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas, and knowledge co-production with decision-makers, are crucial to influencing policy and practice.	In a conceptual, principled way this assumption mostly held true. There is considerable variation in the ways partners undertake engagement to support uptake.	N/A
4. There is an advantage in bringing three complementary organisations (CIFOR, PROFOR and IUCN) together to maximise knowledge uptake in forest-related sectors.	There is no evidence that collaboration between the three partners led to enhanced knowledge uptake in forest-related sectors.	There is evidence at the programme level that collaboration helped develop and refine the DMEL and gender approaches.

Assumption 1: User-centred design using ToC, stakeholder analysis and tailoring knowledge products will lead to improved uptake – tentatively held true.

In section 2 we noted that there was evidence, albeit somewhat limited at this stage, that clarification of ToC and/or a greater focus on knowledge uptake pathways have enabled KNOWFOR project leads to be more focused and tactical in their efforts to influence change. As discussed in section 4, most of the case studies in this evaluation did not have an existing ToC, suggesting that clarification of uptake pathways was rarely based on a formal ToC. However, there is evidence that projects have applied ToC and DMEL principles in identifying and clarifying audience and user needs, albeit implicitly and informally rather than through more formal ToC planning. The case studies and outcome stories demonstrate that linking project activities to a clear purpose and use increases the likelihood of knowledge being used. Yet the extent to which this, in turn, contributed to improved knowledge uptake is hard to categorically demonstrate. As mentioned earlier, there are many variables that influence knowledge uptake, including timing, capability, networks and the experience of the project teams involved, resources, internal (institutional) capacity, and external factors (such as political climate). However, we tentatively conclude that this assumption is more likely than not to be true, although further evidence is needed to be conclusive.

Assumption 2: Adaptive management and refining the project approaches based on monitoring and reflection will increase uptake – did not hold true.

Around half of the case studies and similarly half of the outcome stories provide examples of adaptive management approaches being applied in KNOWFOR-funded projects and activities. Several case studies, for instance, illustrate how programme staff used learnings to adapt, with some success. Yet there are cases where there was no evidence of projects adapting activities in response to changing needs and contexts. Outcome stories provide evidence of partners acting with ‘strategic opportunism’, planning for and exploiting opportunities as they arise. For instance, in a CIFOR outcome story on REDD+ in Brazil (CIFOR_OS_5)⁴⁶ the following adaptation was made in response to broader global shifts in REDD+ discourse:

‘changing the focus of GCS Module 2 mid-course from REDD+ pilot projects to REDD+ subnational initiatives to recognize the increased adoption of larger-scale jurisdictional approaches at the subnational level.’ (CIFOR_OS_5)

⁴⁶ ‘CIFOR’s contribution to monitoring the social co-benefits of jurisdictional REDD+ in the Brazilian Amazon.’

However, in the majority of outcome stories, the relationship between adaptation and outcomes is less clear. Moreover, in the examples where adaptive approaches were observed there was often no clear or explicit link to DMEL activities. In other words, while it is certainly possible to identify examples of adaptive approaches in KNOWFOR-funded projects, there is little evidence that adaptation is borne out of the use of DMEL.

Analysis conducted by CIFOR of the KNOWFOR-funded CIFOR projects (Reumann, 2017) also found no strong link between DMEL principles and intended project outcomes (equipping decision-makers). This finding of a tenuous and uncertain link between project outcomes and DMEL processes is further supported by interviews conducted with DMEL representatives from each partner for this evaluation and the DMEL case study conducted in 2015. In fact, of all partners, CIFOR expressed the least confidence in this assumption holding true due to the paucity of evidence.

Partner feedback suggests that this assumption applies equally at the programme level and project level (see section 5).

Assumption 3: Dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas, and knowledge co-production with decision-makers are crucial to influencing policy and practice – mostly held true but with considerable variation in how these principles were implemented.

This assumption was different in practice for each partner. In a conceptual, principled way it is true for all partners but there was variation in the ways the three partners undertook engagement to support uptake. For example, CIFOR informants contend that this assumption did hold true for CIFOR projects but noted challenges particularly in terms of reconciling user engagement with a traditionally scientific worldview.

'Interaction between researchers, producers and users of knowledge is a core part of the model. From a CIFOR perspective, we are rhetorically quite committed to this. It is in a lot of our documentation and our commitments. But when people think about co-generation this can be quite challenging for a lot of scientists, many of whom come from a disciplinary background that sees interaction with research users as perhaps a weakness, which can open up questions about the credibility of research.' (I-1)

Similarly, IUCN informants agreed in principle that the assumption captured the intent but not some of the nuance in the way that IUCN engages in practice – that is, in convening and developing trustful relationships with counterparts over long time periods.

'In general, I agree that this statement holds true for IUCN, I am just not sure that it is worded in a way that it directly reflects the way that we work. We probably have a different way to phrase this for IUCN. For instance, we are knowledge brokers. We use our positioning, relationships and networks to influence the uptake of knowledge ... The engagement parts are probably implicit in the way that we work.' (I-4)

All case studies (9) and outcome stories (19) demonstrate the importance of engagement in supporting knowledge uptake. Moreover, partner representatives argued that engagement supports better quality work that is of greater relevance to policy-makers and practitioners. Evidence from some of the case studies points to more success where this type of engagement with decision-makers and intermediaries occurred, although this was not true in every case. There is some evidence that this assumption may not hold true when the context is not conducive or the timing is not right (for example, at a time of crisis, political change or unrest). In

this context, dialogue or engagement may not be crucial to the achievement of outcomes. In other words, the available evidence suggests that this assumption is necessary but not sufficient for outcomes to be achieved.

Assumption 4: There is an advantage in bringing three complementary organisations (CIFOR, PROFOR and IUCN) together to maximise knowledge uptake in forest-related sectors – did not hold true.

With notable exceptions (DMEL and gender), this assumption was not supported by partner experience. However, all partners recognised the value and potential of inter-organisational collaboration. See section 4 for more detail.

3.2. Decision-makers were equipped through a range of different mechanisms and these were highly context dependent

This section looks beyond the core programme assumptions to consider other success factors. The main factors that enabled the achievement of outcomes in the KNOWFOR programme, beyond taking a deliberate audience focus, include:

- engagement to understand the context
- building trust and ongoing relationships
- the role of ‘champions’ in the knowledge uptake cycle
- strategic opportunism – planning for the unplanned.

The knowledge-to-action field is wide and covers a broad range of theoretical perspectives. The success factors identified above are broadly consistent with the theory of ‘incrementalism’ – the idea that policy and systems change often happens over an extended period of time, whereby managers and planners adapt and respond to small opportunities for change (Lindblom, 1979). Moreover, these factors are consistent with the theory of ‘agenda setting’ (Kingdon, 1995); the idea that policy and systems change happens within finite periods of time when ‘policy windows’ are opened by consensus around an issue and a politically suitable solution is tabled. Where possible, the discussion in this section references relevant existing theory, though this may be an area for further exploration following the evaluation.

The enabling factors presented here were elicited from the case studies and outcome stories collected by partners for this evaluation. They represent general themes that have emerged from individual cases, which are highly diverse, albeit under one common framework. Therefore, these themes should be interpreted not as representing a definitive account of the causal mechanisms at play, but rather as an inductive analysis of the success factors in the KNOWFOR programme.

3.2.1 Understanding the context through engagement

Early engagement with decision-makers to understand the context was apparent in several case studies (see section 3.2.2 below for more detail). In the brazil nut case study the original purpose of the project was based on an identified need.

'Defining the research question around a real management need: in this case it was determining how much timber can be extracted from a brazil nut concession without affecting the brazil nut production.' (CIFOR_CS_03)

Understanding the political economy was emphasised in the CIFOR Fire and Haze project, as well as the IUCN Bonn (IUCN_CS_04) and Finance case studies. In the Fire and Haze project, for instance, CIFOR's work on peatlands was supported by a commitment by the Indonesian President Jokowi to place fire and haze on the national policy agenda. The Fire and Haze project also highlighted how the project had currency not only politically, but also socially and diplomatically as an issue of regional significance (CIFOR_CS_01).



Photo 3. A burning issue: an expanse of burnt peat in Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan (Source: CIFOR⁴⁷)

Research demand and relevance was emphasised in the PEN study from a technical point of view, whereby the PEN research was undertaken to address an identified gap in scientific knowledge on the contribution of forests and other environmental resources to household income and livelihoods (CIFOR_CS_02).

Alignment and harmonisation between the objectives of knowledge production, on the one hand, and national priorities, on the other, represent a major theme, particularly in IUCN case studies, which emphasised complementarity between national and sub-national objectives (such as national economic development) and broader global (such as the Bonn Challenge) and regional (such as the Kigali Declaration) goals. The IUCN finance (IUCN_CS_06) and Guatemala (IUCN_CS_05) case studies illustrate that alignment between national and international objectives is the key reason why uptake was successful in these cases.

⁴⁷ <https://www.flickr.com/photos/cifor/sets/72157660141979565>

In the CIFOR Nyimba Forest project outcomes story (CIFOR_OS_5), uptake was supported by a conducive national context in which Zambia was receiving support from the UN REDD+ Readiness programme, which provided impetus, networks and a platform for the adoption and revision of MRV protocols in Nyimba. Similarly, in the Zambia Charcoal Debate outcome story (CIFOR_OS_9), the UN REDD+ Readiness process provided a mandate for action on charcoal policy.

The Mozambique sub-case in the PROFOR Governance case study also highlights how a clear pathway between a tangible purpose (investment through MozFIP) and an intervention is a critical enabler of uptake. Indeed, the Mozambique case demonstrates how a clear purpose can incentivise and accelerate uptake.

Timing is critical for knowledge uptake, particularly when it forms part of a knowledge strategy. Understanding context allowed partners to plan and deliver projects at the right time and in an appropriate sequence in order to make the most of opportunities for uptake. However, getting the timing right alone does not guarantee uptake. At the KNOWFOR Summit Workshop, partner representatives stressed that good timing is not coincidental but is something that can be planned for as part of a broader strategy. For instance, in the Brazil nut case study CIFOR delivered research findings at the same time as management guidelines were being drafted for Brazil nut concessions following the approval of the Forestry Law in 2011 (CIFOR_CS_03). Similarly, the Pro Formal Artisanal Chainsaw Milling in Cameroon outcome story demonstrates how an existing legislative review provided an appropriate context for change (the drafting of a new policy manual for the national timber market), which was further reinforced by donor (European Union, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit⁴⁸ and World Bank) pressure (CIFOR_OS_8).

The Mozambique Governance Assessment was planned and delivered to coincide with decisions being made on investment through the MozFIP. By contrast, the uptake of the DRC Governance Assessment was hindered by certain factors, including political change underway at the time of the release of the findings. Yet, as the Guatemala case study (IUCN_CS_05) demonstrates, timing alone is not sufficient to support uptake.

‘There was a fortunate moment between the National FLR Strategy and the process of approval of the PROBOSQUE Law. However, the lesson learned here is that this is not a sufficient factor for success. In the context of this situation, the political crisis was important. That is why it was vital for IUCN to have avoided politicisation around the law. This was achieved by continuing to work hard, providing concrete guidelines and sound technical knowledge. Consensus around technical FLR knowledge and products allowed organisations sitting at the roundtable to function as key allies to continue underpinning restoration matters.’ (IUCN_CS_05)

This example from the Guatemala case (IUCN_CS_05) is consistent with Kingdon’s (1995) ‘policy window’ theory, which contends that policy options need to be presented within a finite time window in order to be adopted. In Kingdon’s formulation, it is only possible to influence the political agenda within this window of opportunity, when political support is mobilised and viable policy options are put forward. This combination of a clearly identified problem (via ROAM), political engagement and policy response (nationally and internationally) is evident in both the IUCN Guatemala case (IUCN_CS_05) and Rwanda sub-case (IUCN_CS_06).

⁴⁸ German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).

3.2.2 Building trust and ongoing relationships

Linked to the assumption around **dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas**, building trust through engagement with knowledge audiences was found to be an enabler of uptake throughout every step of the project cycle: from design and planning to delivery and finalisation. Developing trust with partners and users is demonstrated in the Brazil nut case study (CIFOR_CS_03), where personnel turnover highlighted the importance of relationships.

'The former director of the National Forestry Service (SERFOR) and personnel were open to scientific knowledge and willing to use science to inform policy. CIFOR has built a relationship of trust with the National Forestry Service and with influential organizations such as SPDA. A new government was put in place on July 2016 and SERFOR's director and other personnel changed. This implies a new challenge for future collaborations where CIFOR will need to build a new relationship of trust with the current administration.' (CIFOR_CS_03)

The importance of building political will and trust was also a common theme to emerge from the IUCN Bonn (IUCN_CS_04), Guatemala (IUCN_CS_05) and Finance (IUCN_CS_06) case studies, which all found that the political will and trust were built over a long time period prior to the KNOWFOR programme (see also Laestadius et al, 2015 for a comprehensive history of FLR). The Guatemala case study (IUCN_CS_05) highlighted the role of inclusive engagement with diverse stakeholders who bring different perspectives in building and maintaining trust. The FLR Roundtable was emphasised as a key enabler of uptake in the Guatemala case study, in a country and cultural context where open dialogue between different groups and stakeholders was necessary for success. The IUCN case studies also emphasise the role of networks and mechanisms, platforms and forums for engagement with knowledge audiences in supporting uptake and the achievement of outcomes. In particular, IUCN used existing forums and relationships to 'seed' FLR concepts with audiences. Mechanisms for ongoing engagement with knowledge audiences, decision-makers and intermediaries, such as the FLR National Roundtable in the Guatemala case study, provided a forum for maintaining relationships and ensuring the relevance of knowledge products.

'IUCN's linkage to members and the convening of attributes are reflected in the way the FLR National Roundtable was planned and delivered to the country as a referent of democratic national participation and consensus.' (IUCN_CS_05)

These forums and channels, both informal and formal, are arguably key to understanding IUCN's role as a convenor and influencer. In this regard, using direct relationships with government ministers and decision-makers is a well-documented pathway for influencing policy, which has been theorised as 'power politics' (Mills, 1956). Yet this raises the question of how to monitor IUCN's influence via informal channels. Indeed, it also needs to be considered whether and when it is appropriate to evaluate political influence in the first place. This highlights a challenge for evaluating the impact and influence of IUCN in its role as an invisible influencer, which is by no means specific to IUCN but is a challenge for advocacy and policy evaluation.

IUCN highlights its ongoing relationships and membership in networks 'such as the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) (which it hosts), United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), Global Landscapes Forum, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (COP) meetings' as critical in supporting uptake (IUCN_CS_04). The use of networks as a means to deliver KNOWFOR programming was

highlighted in the Guatemala case study (IUCN_CS_05), which used the FLR Roundtable for dialogue, debate and dissemination. Similarly, the CIFOR outcome story on Pro Formal Artisanal Chainsaw Milling in Cameroon demonstrates how, through its membership of the ‘official task force on the domestic timber market’, CIFOR ‘provided insights on ... integrating the national timber market in the ongoing review of the forest law’ (CIFOR_OS_8).

The CIFOR Nyimba Forest project (CIFOR_OS_5) outcome story of ‘monitoring the social co-benefits of jurisdictional REDD+ in the Brazilian Amazon’ (CIFOR_OS_7) and the PEN case study both stressed the role of the relationship between research credibility and the development of trust in supporting uptake by knowledge audiences (CIFOR_CS_02).

3.2.3 The role of champions

The role of champions was emphasised in the case studies, outcome stories and lessons learned stories as a critical enabler of knowledge uptake. The term ‘champions’ here broadly covers knowledge producers, users and intermediaries who supported and played a critical role in enabling uptake. Importantly, partner representatives cautioned against uncritical or generalised endorsement of a champion as a success factor or ‘silver bullet’. In the KNOWFOR programme the role of champions in supporting uptake varied widely depending on the context, intervention and relationships. The role of champions in the case studies, for instance, encompassed the following functions in the knowledge programming cycle:

- providing **scientific credibility**. For example, CIFOR highlighted the importance of working with ‘top scientists’ to ‘increase the credibility of the programme’ and ‘generate a common interest’ (see CIFOR_CS_02).
- linking or spanning **networks and relationships**. For instance, acting as ‘gate-keepers’ to decision-makers or marshalling support from influential people.
- **driving the delivery** of the project and actively seeking to link knowledge production to use by ‘championing findings’. For example, in the PROFOR Watershed case study the commitment of the team leader was identified as a critical enabler (PROFOR_CS_09).
- lending their **endorsement**, thus providing political legitimacy. For instance, the IUCN Rwanda ROAM study was signed off by the Minister for Natural Resources (IUCN_CS_06).
- gaining **social licence** (as in the case of CIFOR_OS_6, where ‘local leaders (or “champions”) and the existing local institutions who have been consistently attempting to support the Kajang people without any hidden personal political agenda’ were mobilised⁴⁹).
- building **political support** for a concept such as FLR. For example, in the Bonn case study donors and implementing agencies were instrumental in supporting the momentum and groundswell of support for FLR, which was committed to the Bonn Challenge (IUCN_CS_04).

As a counterpoint to positive cases where a champion supported achievements, PROFOR compared the success of the Watershed case with a governance assessment in Laos and a benefit-sharing study in Mexico where project impacts were reduced because no-one championed the findings of the assessment or study (see PROFOR_LS_07 and PROFOR_OS_17).

⁴⁹ ‘The Story of CIFOR Policy Influence through Participatory Action Research: The Approval of District Regulation on Confirmation, Recognition and Protection of Ammatoa Kajang Indigenous People.’

As with any project, using key influential individuals can be beneficial for several reasons. However, there are risks in relying on key individuals, as demonstrated in the Fire and Haze study:

'Since the former head of the Center of Disaster Study, University of Riau, left the organisation, almost none of the knowledge was transferred to the organisation. The new replacement was not engaged scientifically to the project, instead is more logistically. The expertise of the former person was as a biophysicist who has strong technical knowledge on the peatland and fires.' (Fire and Haze)

3.2.4 Strategic opportunism: planning for the unplanned

Another success factor was the ability of partners to adapt to changing contexts and be ready to act when an opportunity arose – which can be described as 'strategic opportunism' (Jackson, 2008). Flexibility is a key requirement of being able to capitalise on opportunities.

Flexibility was evident at multiple levels in the programme:

- at a **programme level** – for instance, donor flexibility enabled partners to respond to opportunities as they emerged
- by partners **across multiple activities and projects** – that is, by reallocating funds in response to changes in priorities and strategic direction. For example, PROFOR took a 'forest smart' approach to investing in non-forest land use activities such as mining and infrastructure development that nevertheless have a profound impact on forests
- at a **project level** – the adaption of tools over time in response to changing conditions and circumstances, as in PROFOR's Governance Assessment Tool: *'In the DRC and Mozambique projects, PROFOR took an established tool and adapted it to new circumstances. The experiences reinforced the finding that this is a versatile and effective tool, both for assessing governance and for spreading knowledge about governance to stakeholders'* (PROFOR_CS_07)
- at an **activity level** – by modifying specific activities in response to field experience, such as subtle adaptations over time.

3.3. Promising practices

A range of promising new and innovative practices were identified by partners. Practices that were identified as promising from the deep-dive case studies were engaging beyond the usual suspects, developing capacity through participatory monitoring (CIFOR_CS_03), 'farm radio' as a dissemination tool, mobile phone technology applications for tree selection, and real-time tracking of survey data. Other promising practices to emerge through KNOWFOR include the wider use of ToC as a conceptual tool, and the use of DMEL tools and VFM/EROI studies undertaken for the evaluation.

The Forests and Poverty survey in Turkey set up an online website, with a Geographical Information System (GIS) map of Turkey and markers indicating the sampled forest villages. This allowed the project team to monitor survey progress in real time. The markers changed colour after the survey of a village was completed. (PROFOR_CS_08)

Broadening engagement beyond the ‘usual suspects’ (that is, those frequently engaged in development projects) was identified as a promising practice, specifically in the DRC Governance Assessment by PROFOR.

In the Brazil Nut case study a promising practice was developing local capacity by involving students and concessionaires in **participatory monitoring** (CIFOR_CS_03). Capacity was similarly built through participatory processes in the Guatemala case study (IUCN_CS_05).

Innovative web-based tools were used by KNOWFOR partners, including a **real-time web-tracking survey tool** piloted by PROFOR in Turkey (PROFOR_CS_08).

Another innovative tool developed in part with KNOWFOR support was the **Bonn Challenge Barometer**, a progress-tracking protocol for the Bonn Challenge (IUCN_CS_04).

IUCN trialled ‘farm radio’ in Uganda, involving an innovative 24-week participatory radio show focussed on FLR that was broadcast in Mount Elgon, Uganda, to reach a broad audience of up to 1 million potential listeners including remote rural villages (IUCN_OS_15).⁵⁰

The PROFOR DRC governance project demonstrated the value of reaching out to normally isolated stakeholders – in this case, the artisanal loggers. This group brought attention to the governance of small-scale harvesting, processing and use, which are issues that assessments often overlook, particularly in the case of DRC where large-scale commercial logging concerns have taken up most of the attention. (PROFOR_CS_07)

Mobile phone technology was also deployed in response to user feedback by IUCN who developed a mobile application with the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) called *Africa Tree Finder* that provides farmers with advice on finding the right species of tree to plant. The *Africa Tree Finder* was awarded first prize at the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) and screened at the opening plenary of the 22nd UNFCCC COP in Marrakech (IUCN_OS_15).

The **use of ToC** as a planning, management and DMEL tool by partners is also a promising practice that has been promulgated and supported by KNOWFOR (see IUCN_LS_05 and section 4). The use of **innovative monitoring tools** such as social media analysis by CIFOR and IUCN is another promising practice, as is the use of **VFM and EROI** by partners for assessing the relative benefits and costs of knowledge programming.

3.4. Unexpected outcomes

There were a range of unexpected outcomes to emerge from the programme. The positive unexpected outcomes included formalised partnerships and enhanced relationships, raised awareness, new institutional structures, individual change, diplomatic engagement and collective action. The potentially negative unexpected outcomes included an increase in demand for FLR, expectations for support and funding, and CIFOR receiving blame for enforcement of policies informed by, but not directly linked to its research.

Positive unexpected outcomes included:

- **Contributing towards dialogue** – PROFOR has contributed to the dialogue on ‘forest smart’ approaches within the World Bank and influenced the bank’s shift towards investment and operations that recognise the cross-sectoral interdependence of

⁵⁰ Including 200,000 potential listeners in the target area (Kapchorwa and Kween districts), with a potential 800,000 listeners in nearby districts.

forests. The role of PROFOR in the emerging forest smart dialogue is significant from a development perspective, which recognises the inter-relationships between forests, economic development, environmental sustainability, land tenure, gender and human rights.

- **New institutional structures** – a peatland restoration agency was established in part through CIFOR’s fire and haze work. As a result of media training undertaken by CIFOR in the DRC, an association of journalists was formed (CIFOR_OS_02). And a Gender Working Group was established in the PACTO programme partly as a result of involvement with the IUCN gender office (IUCN_OS_13).
- **Formalised partnerships** – a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between CIFOR and the Vietnamese Academy of Forestry Science to maintain working relationships (CIFOR_OS_01).
- **Enhanced relationships** – the PEN functioned as a community of practice and support network for researchers working remotely, effectively becoming a ‘place for PhD orphans’ (CIFOR_CS_02). PROFOR and IUCN have further developed joint work to share experiences and promote gender-responsive approaches via the Gender Working Group.
- **Raised profile** – the Fire and Haze project received national and international media attention, raising CIFOR’s profile and reputation as an adviser on haze issues, particularly within Indonesia and the region (CIFOR_CS_01).
- **Adoption** – USAID LESTARI/Tetrattech adopted ‘10 principles for a landscape approach’ developed by CIFOR as the basis for its methodological framework for a landscape project across six Indonesian sites. This is considered an unexpected outcome because CIFOR did not encourage any organisations, policy-makers or donor agencies to adopt these principles (CIFOR_OS_4).
- **Diplomatic interest** – the UK Ambassador to Indonesia took part in the inception workshop for the Fire and Haze project and as a result mentioned the importance of fire prevention public forums (CIFOR_CS_01).
- **Individual change** – a government technical expert and CIFOR collaborator received a promotion in part due to the high profile of the Fire and Haze project (CIFOR_CS_01).

Potentially negative unintended consequences of KNOWFOR include:

- **Raising expectations and demand for FLR** – this poses considerable challenges for funding and implementation; characterised by the author of the Finance case study as ‘be careful what you wish for’ (IUCN_CS_06).
- **Unfounded expectations for support and funding** – were expressed in the DRC Governance Assessment due to misconceptions about the project scope and purpose (PROFOR_CS_07).
- **CIFOR receiving blame for enforcement** of timber extraction limits based on previous research conducted (CIFOR_CS_03).

3.5. Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement identified from the case studies fall into three main categories:

- responsiveness to user needs
- gender-responsive programming
- responsiveness to unanticipated factors.

A number of challenges were also identified, including those related to conducting interdisciplinary and integrated research, the risks of relying on individuals, the importance of timing in planning for uptake, managing disparate networks, the importance of good governance and capacity building, research design, gaining support from programme implementation staff for the value of DMEL in project design and implementation, and cross-partner collaboration.

3.5.1 The importance of understanding and responding to user needs

The importance of understanding and responding to user needs was emphasised as a major area for improvement in a number of case studies. Despite some improvements in the way that partners planned for knowledge uptake by identifying knowledge audiences, there is inconsistent monitoring data on the audience profile reached by the programme. This is evident in the monitoring data (see section 2) collected by partners, which, for instance, does not disaggregate by audience type. This was also evident in some of the case studies. For example, the CIFOR PEN project found that increased engagement with practitioners at the design stage could have resulted in knowledge products that better met their needs (CIFOR_CS_02). Likewise, the Brazil Nut case study identified that ongoing involvement of key stakeholders could have ‘increased the project’s impact’ and ‘research legitimacy’ (CIFOR_CS_03). The PROFOR Governance E-Learning sub-case also found that ‘engagement of students probably could have been more effective’, specifically in terms of ‘recruitment, securing student commitment to do the work, accommodation of student needs, and interaction’ (PROFOR_CS_07).

Managing stakeholder expectations was also identified as an important area for improvement. For instance, the PROFOR DRC Governance Assessment case study found that:

‘In DRC, many stakeholders assumed that because the World Bank wanted to hear about their problems, the bank was ready and able to address those problems. When the stakeholders came to realise that the assessment was a first step in a longer process of having the government address generic problems, they were disappointed.’
(PROFOR_CS_07)

These examples above, where engagement could have been improved, provide a counterpoint to the cases of successful uptake.

3.5.2 The need to improve gender-responsive monitoring

KNOWFOR has provided a valuable contribution to partners’ efforts to better integrate gender into their knowledge programming and DMEL work. This evaluation has found that gender monitoring has improved over the course of the programme for each partner, which bodes well for future programming.

All partners, however, noted the need to improve their data collection, either by retrospectively applying the newly developed gender-responsive screening tool (IUCN), improving the gender reporting conducted by task team leaders (PROFOR), or utilising the CIFOR-developed Gender Equity in Research Scale (GEIRS). This CIFOR tool measures the gender relevance of research, ensures the inclusion of gender in M&E procedures, and gives an indication of the gender relevance and responsiveness of each project. The need for gender-responsive DMEL within the forests and development arena is now recognised as a challenge to be addressed by all partners. These challenges will of course vary for each partner, in keeping with their different roles in supporting the use of knowledge in policy and practice.

3.5.3 The influence of external factors

KNOWFOR case studies, outcome stories and lessons learned stories provide examples of the extent to which outcomes can be shaped by ‘supervening forces’ such as politics, health epidemics and social changes beyond the control of delivery agents (see CIFOR_LS_03 and PROFOR_LS_08). Various external contextual factors had either a positive or negative influence on knowledge uptake in the KNOWFOR case studies. In the DRC Governance Assessment, for example, political factors prevented reforms that were recommended by the assessment from being enacted.

‘The presidential elections, the tension with the opposition, and in general a tough political climate has led to many of the reforms being put on standby – with the forestry sector taking a back seat for the time being as it is not a priority for the government.’
(PROFOR_CS_07)

The Governance case study provides an example of the importance of understanding the context and political economy (PROFOR_CS_07). The CIFOR lessons learned story ‘It’s never finished and it’s never right’ (CIFOR_LS_03) highlights the value of theory-based planning in informing project reflection and learning from ‘failure’ when unanticipated events occur – political change in Cameroon adversely affected the CIFOR small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and Informal Sector sub-project. Together, these examples demonstrate the importance of planning for the unplanned in knowledge programming.

3.6. Summary and implications for knowledge programming

To sum up this section, the KNOWFOR programme influenced knowledge uptake via a range of mechanisms and factors within diverse contexts. Positive outcomes were achieved in conducive contexts where knowledge intersected with national priorities and reform processes, and where political will was mobilised. Where policy and practice change was enacted there was often a clear pathway between knowledge and action, and even where this pathway was not direct or fully explicit, there were clear goals in place at the outset. Policy and practice changes achieved were often supported by the use of existing relationships between partners and knowledge audiences. In addition, in all cases timing was critical to project success. Typically, policy and practice changes were influenced by a combination of these mechanisms and contextual factors. Indeed, KNOWFOR demonstrates that knowledge programming is a complex area of development that is highly context dependent.

This evaluation has identified and distilled **take-away points** for managers, designers and evaluators involved in knowledge programming. KNOWFOR has been delivered in diverse contexts via a range of mechanisms and approaches. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some common success factors in the way that partners have addressed the gap between knowledge and action within the forestry and land use sectors. These factors are highlighted below:

- **User-focused design and planning** – being clear about who the ‘end users’ of knowledge are is critical, as is identifying and working with ‘intermediaries’ (those who can support uptake).
- **Purposefully engaging with knowledge users, decision-makers and intermediaries** in a way that is mindful of and responsive to the political, economic and social context – for instance, by linking knowledge to investment.
- **Using existing contacts, networks and relationships** and recognising the importance of trust between actors in supporting knowledge to action.
- **Using champions** to support uptake is a success factor, taking into account the risks of relying on individuals and the need for solutions to be embedded institutionally to leave a legacy.
- **Strategic opportunism** – planning for the unplanned and responding to changing needs and context.

4. Extent to which KNOWFOR influenced partners' core business (KEQ2)

In this section we consider the extent to which KNOWFOR influenced partners' core business. We look at how DMEL was consolidated and systematised within each organisation and the legacy this work has left. We also explore the extent to which the work on gender influenced these organisations and collaboration was institutionalised. These three components were included as enabling outputs of the programme logframe.

In 2013, KNOWFOR received a review that was critical of the programme DMEL. In response to this review, the programme designed and implemented a DMEL system that effectively addressed the review findings. From 2014 onwards, KNOWFOR had a substantial effect on the ways partners approached and undertook DMEL, with all partners applying it comprehensively across their programmes and exceeding targets. In particular, the value of ToC for DMEL was widely recognised by partners, though there is still limited available evidence of ToC being used by IUCN and PROFOR. DMEL capacity was built among key representatives within each partner organisation. While not all DMEL tools were used, the underlying principles of evidence-based, fit-for-purpose, user-focussed, complexity-aware DMEL were applied more broadly. There are also indicators of systems change and evidence that DMEL was embedded in each partner organisation beyond the KNOWFOR-supported projects and programmes. KNOWFOR has also helped integrate gender into forestry and land-use knowledge programming. Significantly, the programme has provided a welcome space for dialogue among partners grappling with challenges in integrating gender into their knowledge programming work. With these exceptions of joint work in DMEL and gender, there are limited examples of collaboration between partners in the programme due to a range of constraints (see section 5).

4.1. How and to what extent was DMEL adopted across KNOWFOR-funded projects?

In terms of reach, the DMEL system was applied widely across CIFOR (n=29 projects), IUCN (via the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme), and PROFOR (n=39 projects). All partners met DMEL targets in a self-assessment.

Table 12: All partners exceeded output targets for applying DMEL

Level	Target	Actual result	Conclusion	Strength of evidence
Outputs	KNOWFOR reaches acceptable level for DMEL rubric which required that 75% of projects have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a knowledge uptake pathway articulated • a ToC • done some work to identify end user 	By 2016, 100% of all projects from all partners were assessed as 'meeting expectations' according to the DMEL rubric.	Target exceeded	High Self-rating corroborated with externally conducted interviews

	<p>information requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shown evidence that this has informed product development. 		
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4.1.1 DMEL targets were met and capacity built in core staff

The DMEL system and tools were well received within each partner institution in principle, though there were challenges often found in similar programmes in making the DMEL system operational. By 2016, to varying degrees all partners had enhanced the way they plan and monitor their programmes, due in large part to KNOWFOR support. In particular, the value of ToC came to be widely recognised by partners. Yet there is still limited evidence of adoption of ToC at the project level. For instance, while partners reported using ToC across the majority of their projects, only a minority of case studies for this evaluation used ToC as the basis for their inquiry. DMEL capacity was built among key representatives within each partner organisation. While not all tools developed for KNOWFOR were used, the underlying principles of enhanced DMEL were applied more broadly:

'I try to bring in the spirit of KNOWFOR rather than using all the tools etc. to make it more outcomes focussed, looking at audience etc. It is the principles embedded in the programme about focus on outcomes, knowledge transfer, output to outcome, awareness of complexity etc.' (I-4)

Part of the DMEL approach involved user-focussed planning, ToC and stakeholder analysis for each project. The results indicate that, by the end of 2016, the vast majority of projects funded under KNOWFOR complied with the minimum standards.⁵¹ It was intended that this would lead to more tailored knowledge products that better respond to audience needs, are gender responsive, and ultimately lead to more uptake.

The case studies reveal that having clear, purposeful and realistic objectives at the outset and designing and planning for knowledge uptake in a focussed, purposeful and strategic way were important enablers. Moreover, the case studies and outcome stories demonstrate that linking project activities to a clear purpose and use increases the likelihood of knowledge being used. In projects where planning did support uptake, it focussed on the strategic and political context, purpose and actors involved. It is important to recognise that identifying actors and stakeholders was essential to achieving the desired outcome, as demonstrated in the programme's use of 'people-centred' programme logic (Dart and McGarry, 2006), which recognises the specific contribution of people and organisations in bringing about change.

4.1.2 Partners resourced and committed to DMEL

The DMEL framework was developed by partners in 2014 with a package of 10 tools including data collection, synthesis and performance assessment templates.⁵² To support operationalisation of the revised approach to DMEL, a Community of Practice (CoP) was formed in 2015 which met annually thereafter. In early 2016, partners and DFID continued this

⁵¹ As self-assessed by partners against the enabling rubric (see Annex 9).

⁵² Refer to KNOWFOR DMEL Framework (2014) for more detail.

commitment to co-learning by choosing a partner-led evaluation. Throughout the programme, partners remained committed to the DMEL process, contributing resources towards DMEL activities and support. CIFOR maintained its support of DMEL staff despite funding cuts (2014–15), and in 2016 co-funded a ‘Research to Impact’ team comprised of eight staff and a full-time Team Leader. In 2014, IUCN began funding a full-time M&E role within the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme (GFCCP), partially funded through KNOWFOR. And PROFOR has maintained funding for an M&E role undertaken by a consultant within the Secretariat since 2015.

KNOWFOR influenced the approach taken to using DMEL within each institution. This has resulted in the development of DMEL capacity among key representatives within each partner organisation, and enhanced DMEL capacity and support provided by KNOWFOR have stimulated the uptake and application of DMEL in all three partner organisations. However, challenges remain in embedding enhanced DMEL systems and practices in these organisations.⁵³

KNOWFOR developed a programme-wide ToC and nested partner-specific ToCs in Phase 1 of the programme during the initial M&E Framework development in 2014. The ToC was then updated in 2015 at the beginning of Phase 2 of the programme, incorporating a greater focus on learning, adaptation and feedback. Among the core group of DMEL leads across the three organisations was a strong buy-in and collaboration around creating a programme-wide ToC. However, with the exception of CIFOR, where the use of ToC has become more widespread in part through KNOWFOR support, there appears to be limited evidence of the use of ToC by partners more widely. IUCN has mandated the use of ToC across all institutional investments through the use of the Project Appraisal and Approval System, though the contribution of KNOWFOR to this change is not known.

4.1.3 KNOWFOR DMEL triggered change in partner systems

In the final evaluation workshop partner representatives commented that the design of the DMEL system may have been over-ambitious, and that implementation proved to be challenging. In summary, the DMEL system influenced the design and planning undertaken by CIFOR, the application of DMEL and ToC principles within the IUCN GFCCP, and the application of monitoring reporting tools by PROFOR. The programme arguable had less of an influence on partner M&E than on ToC and actor-centred planning approaches.⁵⁴

More specifically, on a partner-by-partner basis, this influence can be summarised as follows:

- **KNOWFOR has had a ‘catalytic effect’ (I-2) in transforming the DMEL approach of CIFOR** by building on the existing work to embed DMEL within the institution. A receptive, enabling environment within CIFOR played a significant role in supporting the uptake and embedding of DMEL within the organisation. And the timing of KNOWFOR’s commencement in 2013 was critical in supporting the uptake of DMEL by CIFOR.
- **At the time of KNOWFOR’s initial focus on enhanced DMEL in 2013–14, the enabling environment within IUCN** was also very receptive. According to the IUCN representatives, the IUCN leadership prioritised gender integration and DMEL across the organisation, which provided an enabling environment for both. Since 2013, the influence of

⁵³ See DMEL Case Study (2015) for a broader discussion of the enablers of and constraints on effective DMEL within the context of the KNOWFOR programme.

⁵⁴ The influence of the partner-led evaluation process for this report will also be followed up on in a forthcoming ‘evaluation of the partner-led evaluation process’.

KNOWFOR on IUCN has steadily improved the integration of enhanced DMEL into GFCCP programming. KNOWFOR has influenced IUCN’s approach to DMEL, particularly within the GFCCP in terms of the application of ToC in DMEL and delivery processes.

- **PROFOR has adopted and systematised a range of DMEL tools, templates and practices as a direct result of KNOWFOR.** Since 2013, PROFOR has exceeded performance expectations overall, meeting agreed criteria in the enabling rubric. These monitoring and planning tools have gained wide exposure through PROFOR’s role in the World Bank.

KNOWFOR has instigated, systematised and influenced a range of changes in the way that partners undertake DMEL, which are summarised in Table 13 below.

Table 13. The influence of KNOWFOR DMEL on partner systems and operations

Partner	Domain of change	Role and contribution of KNOWFOR
CIFOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematising use of ToC at design stage • Increasing acceptance of ToC and theory-based evaluation approaches • KNOWFOR ToC influencing CIFOR strategy • Influencing project pipeline i.e. US\$471 FTA proposal⁵⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalysing and accelerating change processes already underway • Providing practical support and tools to address demand for DMEL with CGIAR • Resourcing the ‘research to impact’ team
IUCN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of DMEL principles • Increased acceptance, adoption and use of ToC as a planning tool and approach, though take-up still appears to be limited • KNOWFOR ToC influencing IUCN strategy • Clearer line of sight between head office and regions • Influencing the SUSTAIN programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandating DMEL under Phase 2; 18 internal agreements signed in 2015 with a DMEL clause • Resourcing DMEL support in GFCCP
PROFOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating reporting and monitoring protocols i.e. the PROFOR PATS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding DMEL tools within existing PROFOR reporting and monitoring systems • Providing support and advice to operationalise DMEL tools

For a more detailed account of the influence of DMEL on partners, refer to the partner reports.

Because of the relatively short timeframe since the inception of intensive DMEL support in the KNOWFOR programme (in 2014) and the delay in this support reaching projects (from 2015 onwards), in most cases it is too early to make firm conclusions about the influence of KNOWFOR DMEL on policy and practice change in the forestry sector. There is more evidence that deliberate planning, ToC and identifying audience needs and tailoring knowledge products led to knowledge uptake. With regards to the monitoring and adaptive management aspects of DMEL, there is less evidence.

4.1.4 The legacy of KNOWFOR DMEL

The changes made through KNOWFOR via DMEL support bode well for the future, though challenges remain. By influencing systemic change within all three partners, KNOWFOR has shaped the way partners undertake DMEL and gender responsive programming. By clarifying, monitoring and evaluating the pathways from knowledge to impact, KNOWFOR is putting the

⁵⁵ Forests, Trees and Agroforestry: Landscapes, Livelihoods and Governance (Phase II).

Paris Declaration (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008) commitments to ‘results’ and ‘mutual accountability’ into practice.

This is apparent in the fact that the strategic direction at both CIFOR and IUCN has been influenced by the learnings from KNOWFOR about pathways from knowledge to action. At PROFOR, changes to the way the trust fund tracks, monitors and reports its operations will be lasting. This is of significance because the influence of KNOWFOR DMEL will reverberate widely, and beyond KNOWFOR and DFID investment. In this sense, the KNOWFOR programme has instigated systemic and policy change in the way that DMEL is conducted, representing a policy shift – albeit an internal one – within the partner institutions. For example, in the Final Evaluation PROFOR representatives observed that the adoption of the KNOWFOR DMEL system by the Secretariat was a ‘significant improvement and innovation’.

Yet challenges remain in relation to implementing DMEL. For instance evaluating policy influence via informal and indirect channels is a challenge with which IUCN is grappling. For instance, when working through informal channels to influence policy and decision-making it may not be appropriate for IUCN to publicly lay claim to outcomes, such as policy reform or decisions which could be owned by IUCN members.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing partners is in maintaining the momentum DMEL has stimulated. Within each organisation, there is a solid core of personnel with familiarity, acceptance of and capacity to implement DMEL. Beyond this core, and early adopters, there are considerable obstacles to wider acceptance of DMEL across the partner organisations, particularly when there are competing interests and a lack of incentives to undertake DMEL (see DMEL case study, 2015).

‘It is clear that integrating enhanced DMEL requirements at the very early stages of programme design is critical, as is ensuring adequate financial support for enhanced DMEL implementation (staff, tools, external expertise). The inclusion of an across-the-board minimum proportion of project budget for DMEL could help address this issue. The use of a fit-for-purpose data collection, management and reporting tool is required to effectively and efficiently monitor and make sense of programme activities and the influence these are having on target audiences and processes. The time taken to enhance approaches to DMEL is significant, and champions play a critical role in trialling approaches and demonstrating the value of enhanced DMEL.’ (IUCN_LS_05)

Resourcing DMEL in a budget-constrained context is another challenge faced by all three partners, which highlights the need to demonstrate the value of DMEL in contributing towards outcomes.

4.2. How and to what extent did KNOWFOR influence the partners to integrate gender across the programme, and how well did this work?

Prior to the KNOWFOR programme, all three partners were to varying degrees integrating gender into knowledge-to-action programming. CIFOR and IUCN, for instance, had in-house gender teams responsible for the provision of advice to knowledge programmers, while PROFOR had access to gender advisers within the World Bank. These teams have been enhanced and supported by the KNOWFOR programme, which has funded gender-specific research and mainstreaming.

KNOWFOR brought gender to the fore in Phase 2 (2015), when DMEL was given a more explicit focus in the programme’s direction. Since becoming an explicit part of the programme’s performance system and expectations in 2015, the focus on gender has been formalised through the establishment of the Gender Working Group. KNOWFOR has worked to catalyse and disseminate changes within each partner institution in the way that gender is integrated into forestry and land use knowledge and engagement.

Gender stands out in the programme as a main area of collaboration and common focus through the Gender Working Group. However, gender is also one of the main areas for improvement. As highlighted in section 3.1, gender-sensitive and gender-responsive programming improved over the course of programme delivery since 2012, yet, at a programme level, gender was one of the few areas not to meet performance targets (see Table 6, section 2).

4.2.1 Efforts to integrate gender across the programme

Efforts to integrate gender into the KNOWFOR programme occurred primarily through the Gender Working Group, in specific activities undertaken by partners and through the integration of gender into performance monitoring in the DMEL system. The Gender Working Group was formed in 2015 ‘to take work forward within partner organisations, but also to engage with other partners’ (AR, 2016). Since 2015, the group has formally met annually, with ongoing informal contact between members. According to the partner informants interviewed for this evaluation (n=11), the Gender Working Group provided a space for partners to develop relationships and explore opportunities and potential for further work between partners in this area. Since 2015, partners have also worked together to develop standardised gender-sensitive and gender-responsive criteria for assessing performance, which provided the basis for shared agreement on gender-specific goals sought through the programme.

Although KNOWFOR has had a positive influence in terms of mobilising support for gender-responsive programming, there is still much work to be done to better integrate gender into partner and boundary partner operations. As noted in section 3.1, PROFOR has improved its reporting of sex-differentiated data to the point where all activities are required to report on the participation of women and girls. However, the next step is to move beyond counting outputs to demonstrating meaningful and lasting impact in the lives of women and girls. This of course presents a challenge for DMEL particularly, given the relatively short timeframes (three to five years) of most aid investments. The partner-specific changes that have occurred in the integration of gender considerations into knowledge programming and organisational systems are detailed in Table 14 below.

Table 14. The influence of KNOWFOR on the gender programming undertaken by partners

Partner	Domain of change	Role and contribution of KNOWFOR
CIFOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boosting profile of gender-specific research within CIFOR Supporting a cultural shift within CIFOR Sex-disaggregated project monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of US\$2 million for gender-specific research, supporting the ‘Gender Integration and Gender-Responsive Research’ project Supporting the integration of gender-sensitive and -responsive principles into 12 funded research projects
IUCN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating gender into the NBSAP, from zero gender references to 37 in final version Integrating gender considerations into the ROAM guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the NBSAP review Supporting the integration of gender into ROAM guidelines

Partner	Domain of change	Role and contribution of KNOWFOR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceleration of gender integration across the institution, particularly within GFCPP programming Sex-disaggregated project monitoring 	
PROFOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex-disaggregated project monitoring Catalysing gender awareness Incorporating gender-sensitive considerations into World Bank project designs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the use and application of sex-disaggregated project monitoring Providing further impetus to consider gender at the project and activity design stage

4.2.2 Low probability that enhanced gender planning influenced gender outcomes

At this stage, there is a low likelihood that the gender work supported through KNOWFOR has translated into gendered impacts for those affected by forests and land use decision-making. As outlined above, the main value of the Gender Working Group was in bringing partners together to discuss common challenges and goals to and explore the potential for future collaboration. At the end of the funding cycle there is evidence that the Gender Working Group has established connections between partner institutions that will persist without programme support. KNOWFOR has also funded gender-specific research at CIFOR, raised the profile of gender within the three partner organisations, and integrated gender into planning processes such as the NBSAP and the ROAM guidelines and on-the-ground assessment of restoration opportunities. Due to the timeframes and delays associated with these long-term processes, it is uncertain what gender impacts, if any, have been influenced by KNOWFOR.

KNOWFOR has, however, undoubtedly improved the potential for gender-sensitive and gender-responsive planning to be adopted by each partner institution. In some cases, this influence has extended into actual planning and implementation of activities with the potential or likelihood for positive results. For instance, in Malawi, Burundi and Mozambique, IUCN ensured that both women and men were involved in planning and implementing restoration activities. Moreover, this project integrated gender considerations into benefit-sharing arrangements (IUCN, 2017).

KNOWFOR has thus raised the profile of gender within and between the three partner organisations. However, there is much work yet to be done to better integrate gender-responsive principles into knowledge programming within each institution.

4.3. How and to what extent did KNOWFOR result in productive collaboration across the organisations?

Despite efforts to forge partnerships between the three partner organisations, KNOWFOR did not result in meaningful or lasting collaboration with the exception of joint work on DMEL and gender and some collective work around events such as the GLF. Barriers to collaboration between partners included unclear expectations from the donor, differing partner systems, the relatively short timeframe of the programme, high transaction costs and a lack of incentives to collaborate. Furthermore, underlying these barriers is the fact that, to some degree, these partners are competitors for funding and resources.

KNOWFOR was designed to draw on the individual strengths of three global partners under the one programme. The original design did not include targets or expectations around collaboration. Prior to 2014, there was limited and 'largely opportunistic' collaboration between these partners

(AR, 2014). After the annual review in 2014, targets around collaboration were included in the logframe. The intention was that the three organisations would work together to achieve collective impact around forestry and land use. In 2015, partners held 'their first fully coordinated priority setting workshop to identify those areas where the three partners could provide the best VFM from collaborative working', in 'anticipation of preparing proposals for a cost extension to the KNOWFOR programme'.

'This workshop provided an opportunity for partners to critique and reflect on each organisation's focus areas, identify potential areas of technical collaboration, as well as areas of joint working.' (AR, 2015)

The participatory development of the KNOWFOR DMEL system was recognised by DFID as an 'exemplary exercise in collaboration and joint learning', which stimulated 'high commitment' from partners, leading to 'transformational' progress (AR, 2014). This was recognised as the 'high point' of collaboration by a CIFOR partner representative.

In addition to DMEL, gender is the other main thematic area on which partners collaborated.

'The other thing that is positive is establishing the working group on gender with PROFOR and CIFOR to exchange our experiences. With CIFOR it has worked very well with the last Community of Practice (CoP) where we have talked about efforts to work together. The Gender Working Group has also been an opportunity to enhance knowledge products. Also, thanks to these working groups, they have opened spaces for us within the forest carbon partnership, to present some of our work. From that side, it was positive.... The [Gender] working group was very successful. In KNOWFOR we have strengthened the relationships between CIFOR and PROFOR, to the extent that we see them definitely continuing beyond KNOWFOR. For instance, we have been asked to support PROFOR to review new ToRs they are developing.' (I-7)

Beyond DMEL and gender, there are some (albeit limited) examples of partner collaboration, mostly at globally significant forums and events. Partners worked together to organise joint side events at the GLF (2014) and the IUCN World Conservation Congress (2016), while there was a joint presentation between partners at the UNFCCC in COP 2016. IUCN and PROFOR also collaborated on developing joint proposals for work Burundi and Mozambique as well as training modules (developed with KNOWFOR support by the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies). Further, IUCN and PROFOR have worked together to promote FLR initiatives in Brazil and Mozambique by supporting the application of ROAM, organising a regional conference on FLR in Mozambique and promoting sustainable charcoal production (AR, 2016).

So, while there was good collaboration on DMEL and gender, collaboration in relation to core programming was seen by all partners to have not met expectations, and to have been hindered by:

- short timeframes
- insufficient financial incentives to collaborate
- operational modality differences between partners
- insufficient donor mandate to work together (no explicit, funding-tied obligation to develop joint work plans, for example)

- competition between partners for funding and resources.

Two differing conclusions around collaboration emerged from the final evaluation. Some partner representatives felt that it should have been incentivised and that it would have been beneficial if collaboration had been more extensive. Others felt that it was an unrealistic objective given the widely differing mandates of the three organisations and the fact that they are ultimately competitors.

'I don't think [the relationships] have changed in nature. The issue of collaboration is important but fundamentally the organisations are so different. In a sense, the common ground is DMEL and a bigger focus on gender.' (I-2)

'I think we missed an opportunity with collaboration. We sold the story about how we work together, [and] there are all these examples out there about us working together, but in practice we didn't realise the opportunity that was there. There was all that money on the table. Had the funder said that the money was conditional on us working together: 'Look at the overlaps, gaps, strengths, weaknesses, comparative advantage whatever you want to call it and then decide to exploit and implement actions to realise these opportunities.' There were clear opportunities for CIFOR and IUCN to really get together and while there was some incipient collaboration on DMEL and other incidental things like gender and FLR, the collaboration hasn't materialised.' (I-4)

There also remains a question as to whether the partner organisations should have been expected to collaborate in the first place under the programme umbrella. The transaction costs of collaborating were not fully recognised, while other barriers to collaboration such as competition between partners were also not considered.

5. Appropriateness, relevance and VFM of KNOWFOR's approach (KEQ 3)

As discussed in section 4, KNOWFOR placed a strong emphasis on improving the DMEL of knowledge planning and programming. KNOWFOR also focussed on integrating gender considerations into knowledge planning and programming, and invested heavily in audience-centred planning for knowledge use and more deliberate learning and reflection. While it is not possible to formally compare the performance of KNOWFOR with other similar programmes, this section analyses the appropriateness and relevance of the model compared to similar programmes in the forestry and land use sector. The section then considers the management approach taken by KNOWFOR more generally and the extent to which it remains relevant to the policy and development context, and finally focuses on the programme's overall VFM.

5.1. How does KNOWFOR's model compare to similar programmes?

KNOWFOR was seen by partners and DFID representatives to be more flexible, with a stronger emphasis on ToC, user-centred M&E and learning than other similar programmes. On the downside, it was noted that it had a lower profile within DFID than other similar programmes.

5.1.1 Flexibility within structure

KNOWFOR's flexibility allowed partners to better target tools, resources and advice to the needs of knowledge audiences. It also enabled them to take advantage of strategic opportunities when they arose. This does not mean that the KNOWFOR programme simply allowed partners to pursue their own agenda *carte blanche*. Rather, flexibility is closely related to the foundational KNOWFOR assumption of adaptive management.

'Adaptive management can be volatile. It needs to happen within structure. The programme needs to focus on the outcome then adapt actions according to the problem.' (I-6)

In this regard, KNOWFOR provided a clear structure and pathways for partners to pursue their own ends under a common objective. For instance, the ROAM tool was updated in response to field experience but also to include a greater focus on gender as consistent with KNOWFOR, DFID and IUCN priorities. At a programme level, the DFID SRO observed that the involvement of all three partners in the original design and business case (DFID, 2012) was an important step in enabling agreement on the scope and parameters of the programme between the funder and proponents. This, in turn, facilitated ongoing adaptation and refinement due to the shared agreement on the programme's overall structure and scope.

Flexibility in the KNOWFOR approach was considered by a majority of the partner informants (n=11) to be the main strength of the programme and something not seen widely in other programmes.

'With other donors we can't change and adapt like we can with this; i.e. with climate meetings we have invested significantly in working with negotiators in response to

unanticipated opportunities that have arisen. That flexibility with KNOWFOR I haven't seen that much with other projects.' (I-8)

Flexibility was not explicitly considered in the design of the programme (other than the DFID Rapid Response Mechanism⁵⁶) and may have been largely a result of the programme managers' style than the original programme objective. This issue is explored further in section 5.2 below on the effectiveness of the management of the programme.

'[During the programme design] DFID were very keen on an outcomes-based approach and outcomes-based budgeting. Other donors say they want to do it but the DFID have been true to their ambition and desire to move on an outcome-based budgeting process, which has given us the flexibility to be responsive to new opportunities and fully accountable and keep that rigour of accountability. The importance of a donor being able to step up and support the development of applied knowledge, science, tools development. That was significant because it is difficult sometimes to persuade donors to do that. "Let's see the change" but this doesn't happen in a project framework. One of the things is it isn't knowledge for the sake of knowledge. The management has allowed us to work at making research relevant to policy and this has cascaded through to affect change at scale.' (I-5)

Flexible, adaptive programming is certainly in keeping with good practice programming within complex, highly individualised and emergent contexts. As a key informant observed, *'When you are talking about policy influence it is not a linear process but a lot of donors force you to develop a linear path'* (I-8).

The DFID Rapid Response Mechanism was a proportion of funding that was controlled directly by DFID. This facility allowed many of the programmatic enhancements to take place over time. Indeed, being able to access a flexible pot of funding was central to KNOWFOR's success (at both the DFID and partner levels). Future complex programmes could benefit from having such a flexible fund, as well as an adaptive management and flexible programming approach.

5.1.2 A greater focus on ToC

The informants (n=11) agreed that KNOWFOR placed a heavier focus on ToC than is usual within similar DFID programmes, and with other donors in the forestry and land use sector:

'For DFID crafting a whole programme around a theory of change this is new as well and I don't think there are other examples of this.' (I-1)

'Compared to a lot of the work that goes on in the CGIAR network there is a more thoughtful, theory-driven approach to programming in KNOWFOR. By articulating a theory of change KNOWFOR is a bit unusual. In most of the CGIAR programming there is often that black box of the miracle occurring between research and action. By using ToC we open up the uses of knowledge, values, networks, channels and the environment that it occurs within. This provides better accountability and transparency and that is partly why our board is so excited about it. Because no one is dealing with it properly throughout the consortium and it is a challenge that all our partners are facing.' (I-1)

⁵⁶ The DFID Rapid Response Mechanism was a flexible response fund that enabled DFID to take advantage of opportunities as they arose and to commission work that addressed UK Government priorities..

Another element of the model that was seen as strong by the informants was the user-centred approach to knowledge programming.

'The unique thing [about KNOWFOR] is that we go from knowledge generation to focus on dissemination to increase the uptake of that knowledge to look at how that uptake influences policy, which is the ultimate goal. The ToC is very clear about what we are trying to achieve. From the beginning, we assert that knowledge generated should be used by someone. We could, for example, be talking about different forms of knowledge. The beauty of KNOWFOR is to take the right knowledge to the right people in the right places via a range of investments, initiatives and processes. To help people see the pathways of influence from knowledge generation to use – this is the really unique thing about KNOWFOR.' (I-6)

5.1.3 Strong commitment to DMEL

It was recognised by partners and DFID informants that KNOWFOR included a strong commitment to DMEL (encompassing the use of ToC for programme planning and design) in both intention and practice, which provided an active feedback loop into knowledge uptake strategy and tactics. Since the 2013 Annual Review (AR-13), KNOWFOR has maintained an explicit focus on M&E. An M&E partner (Clear Horizon Consulting) was brought into the programme in early 2014, and a programme-wide M&E framework was established. This was maintained through partner resourcing for M&E, the DMEL CoP and the commitment to a partner-led evaluation in 2016–17. DFID representatives and observers including the quality assurer (ODI) recognised that KNOWFOR has a greater focus on DMEL systems than other similar comparable programmes within the UK aid portfolio.

5.1.4 Influential but low in profile

The informants noted that, although KNOWFOR has the potential to be influential within the UK Government, it had a very low profile compared to other knowledge uptake programmes in DFID. Many people within DFID are simply not aware of KNOWFOR. One explanation for this is that KNOWFOR did not purposefully set out to promote itself as a programme. Rather, each partner undertook and promoted KNOWFOR activities under their own respective brands, which were sometimes tagged as being supported by UK Aid. This is what the SRO characterised as the programme working 'behind the scenes'. Thus, while the model provided many advantages in terms of each partner having a direct link with DFID, it resulted in challenges with branding.

5.2. How well managed was the programme?

Partners uniformly praised the donor for its management style. In fact, the programme management style is credited by partners as being critical to the achievement of the programme outcomes. The flexibility within the programme management approach taken by the donor was seen to have a positive impact on the achievement of outcomes.

There was universal praise for the management of the programme by the donor among all the partner representatives interviewed for this evaluation (n=11). Partners were positive about what they saw as flexible, adaptive, pragmatic and patient programme management by DFID. The donor programme manager was also well regarded for having a relevant technical background, which enabled effective and informed communication and shared understanding between partners:

'DFID did such a wonderful job. [The programme manager] was our partner always. I have never seen in other programmes someone so committed to make this work. It was very clear and transparent. We had a very good relationship.' (I-6)

'I think it was managed quite well. I like the way that [the programme manager] was hands off and yet engaged, not interfering and weighing in in small things but providing broad direction and input. I have always found [the programme manager's] input to be very positive and constructive.' (I-9)

Flexibility was cited by the majority of respondents as the main reason why the programme was effectively managed:

'[The programme manager] has managed responsively and adaptively. [The programme manager] is solutions focussed and pragmatic. This has helped us to meet DFID requirements while enabling us to do so without it being painful. It was well managed.' (I-4)

Praise for KNOWFOR's flexibility was, however, tended by recognition of the need for sufficient structure and scope in a programme like KNOWFOR. The view was put forward that the expectations of partners could have been more clearly defined, particularly in the very beginning of the programme during Phase 1 in 2012–13.

'DFID should have perhaps been more directive and not let us do whatever we wanted to do. I thought that they could have pushed their own agenda a bit more in terms of what they want to change. Perhaps better explaining what the funding was for.' (I-2)

Realistic funding timeframes and patience on the part of the donor were identified as supporting the achievement of outcomes, particularly in embedding changes in DMEL systems and practices.

'Giving us the time to make this change was important. Not expecting changes straight away. It takes time for a whole organisation to make a shift in mindset from outputs to outcomes. This is not a change you make overnight. [KNOWFOR] was not the only force at play.' (I-3)

Partner representatives noted the high degree of engagement with the donor in KNOWFOR. While this supported cohesion in the programme, it may also have led to some fatigue due to high engagement demands. As the DFID SRO pointed out, however, it is not uncommon for attention and energy to wane at the end of a demanding programme.

'We have had regular and ongoing contact with the donor and with one another now for several years. As a result of this, people are perhaps getting a little bit over it.... This has

The CIFOR lessons learned story 'Managing a flexible fund for impact' charts the evolution of the KNOWFOR programme from Phase 1 in 2012 when it was 'difficult to tell a coherent story about project achievements' to Phase 2 when 'funding was concentrated in a smaller number of sub-projects with a clear shared objective, across a smaller range of themes' in CIFOR. This lessons learned story reflects that, although expectations were clarified in Phase 1 following the 2013 DFID Annual Review (AR-13), these 'foundations' for developing shared expectations about performance among partners could have been built on more deliberately in Phase 2. The story concludes that, although 'mutual sharing did take place through the evaluation sense-making workshop, several researchers noted that more opportunities to do so in a structured way would have been beneficial' (CIFOR_LS_01).

happened I think in part because of some of the fatigue that sets in as a result of so much contact and engagement.’ (I-1)

The strong level of commitment, mutual learning and partnership between the donor, partners and independent reviewer is reflected in the approach and effort to undertake the partner-led evaluation.⁵⁷

5.3. Relevance of objectives and approach to DFID’s policy context and to the development context

There is a clear and compelling need to focus on forest restoration and climate change more generally. However, in a narrowing policy context, it is hard to predict DFID’s future interest. KNOWFOR may, however, provide a valuable case study for the UK aid programme around how to institutionalise learning.

It is hard to comment on the extent to which knowledge programmes like KNOWFOR remain relevant within an evolving UK aid policy context. And it is difficult to confidently predict whether investing in knowledge for forestry and land use within the UK aid portfolio will remain a priority.

In terms of the development context, there is a clear and compelling case to focus on forest restoration and climate change more generally, and, within this context, KNOWFOR remains relevant. Given that poor rates of knowledge uptake are commonplace, an effective programme like KNOWFOR is important to support the development of global policies around forest restoration and climate change mitigation. According to a study on downloads and citations (Doerte and Trevino, 2014), only 13% of World Bank policy reports were downloaded at least 250 times, while more than 31% of policy reports had never been downloaded and almost 87% of policy reports were never cited.

As mentioned earlier, by extending high-quality evidence and knowledge to the global forestry and land use sector, KNOWFOR set a solid foundation for informing a range of investments and activities that have the potential to contribute to development impacts and the SDGs, including Gender Equality (Goal 5), Climate Action (Goal 13), Life on Land (Goal 15) and Partnerships (Goal 17). KNOWFOR has also built capacity to address cross-cutting issues of aid effectiveness (DMEL), gender, poverty, climate and environment.

One of the most influential and unique features of KNOWFOR was its approach to adaptive management and complex programming, and this is directly relevant to DFID’s ‘learning agenda’ (see box below). Recently there have been a series of masterclasses on ‘how to learn’ that were developed as a result of a negative review of DFID by ICAI (2014). This push for reflection and learning within the aid management cycle is gaining traction both within the UK and globally.

‘KNOWFOR is very relevant because of the increasing recognition of the importance of the quality of MEL.... People get swamped with synthesis in MEL – how to share the results with stakeholders. KNOWFOR’s approach should be picked up as an example of good practice and shared with DFID.’ (DFID informant)

2013 Review of programme management: ‘DFID needs to prioritise learning and adaption during project implementation.’

⁵⁷ An evaluation of the evaluation is planned, which will cover in depth the management and coordination of the KNOWFOR partner-led evaluation.

2014 ICAI Review of Learning: ‘Learning and adapting during implementation are vital.’
2014 UK Cabinet What Works Review: ‘We should ... get the data that helps us to learn during implementation and adapt our programmes.’
2014 Smart Rules: Create a space to work more adaptively, as ‘Continuous learning and adapting is essential for UK aid to achieve maximum impact and value for money.’

5.4. VFM

In this section, we assess the VFM of KNOWFOR using the ICAI approach, which consists of four questions. Against each of the questions the criteria are summarised, the result provided and a conclusion given. A more detailed methodology can be found in Annex 5.

In terms of VFM, for every pound spent there is evidence that there was a good return from KNOWFOR. In accordance with the ICAI approach to VFM, this assessment takes into account the effectiveness of the planning, the delivery approach and the learning. It also considers the development impact on global policy and practice, some impressive figures on additional money leveraged from IUCN (£217.10 million) and the good level of return in the analysis conducted for three case studies. Given these findings, we conclude that KNOWFOR represents good VFM.

5.4.1 Realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan

Criteria	Actual result	Conclusion
Realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan as to how and why the planned intervention will have the intended impact	By Phase 2, KNOWFOR had set realistic objectives and targets backed by a clear and shared ToC. The very design of KNOWFOR encouraged alignment and avoided duplication between the three global partners who work to support uptake of knowledge in the global forestry and land use sector. The business case was clear and compelling, backed by the ability to draw on existing knowledge by narrowing the gap between knowledge production and use.	Met

Clear, relevant objectives? The original logframe of the programme was acknowledged in the 2013 Annual Review for having unrealistic targets and no common means of measurement. In response, at the start of Phase 2 KNOWFOR outputs and targets were adjusted; but it could be argued that the revised output targets were somewhat under-ambitious, given that they were later exceeded.

Clear and convincing plan? The business case was clear and compelling, backed by the potential to use existing knowledge by narrowing the gap between knowledge production and use. In 2014, KNOWFOR created a clear and widely shared ToC with agreed assumptions. This programme-wide ToC brought with it a clearer narrative around how the programme would work across the three different organisations.

Complement efforts and avoid duplication? The very design of KNOWFOR encouraged alignment and avoided duplication between the three global partners. Their existing networks and delivery approaches were also effectively used.

Appropriate to the political, economic, social and environmental context? As discussed earlier in section 5 and demonstrated in the original business case (DFID, 2012), given the poor rates of

knowledge uptake, a programme like KNOWFOR that is well delivered is appropriate to help develop global policies around forest restoration and climate change mitigation. It also has the potential to contribute to development impacts and the SDGs, including Gender Equality (Goal 5), Climate Action (Goal 13), Life on Land (Goal 15) and Partnerships (Goal 17).

5.4.2 Delivery: is the delivery chain designed and managed to be fit-for-purpose?

Criteria	Actual result	Conclusion
The programme has robust delivery arrangements that support the desired objectives and demonstrate good governance and management through the delivery chain	The delivery chain was designed and managed in a flexible manner to accommodate three very different organisations while minimising costs and maximising added value. All partners had reasonable management costs, with one partner substantially reducing its costs. In some cases, partners achieved far more wide-reaching outcomes than expected, for example, with IUCN's investment in ROAM now being used in 23 countries. There is also evidence of KNOWFOR investments securing very high levels of additional funding from other development investments.	KNOWFOR meets this criterion

Efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery chain with a clear view of costs? The delivery chain was designed and managed in a flexible manner to accommodate three very different global organisations, while minimising costs and maximising added value. The delivery arrangement through three established global partners was effective as was demonstrated by the programme achieving, and in some cases exceeding, its output and outcome targets. Amendments made after Phase 1 made the programme more feasible and targeted. Overall, there was an effective and transparent delivery chain, with a reasonably clear view of costs.

In terms of cost efficiency, CIFOR had the highest management costs of the three partners. CIFOR committed to reducing its overhead costs from a high of 29% in 2009 to 15% by 2015. It successfully exceeded this target and now overhead costs are at 14%. CIFOR was awarded its '7 pillar assessments' from the European Commission (EC), which confirms the efficiency and effectiveness of its procurement and subcontracting procedures. This is an independent external audit and sets out rules and procedures for providing financing from European Union funds through grants, procurement and financial instruments, and sub-delegation. In 2014, IUCN was approved as a Global Environment Facility (GEF) agency and in 2016 was registered as an accredited Green Climate Fund (GCF) entity, requiring compliance with strict GCF fiduciary standards and GEF financial procedures. PROFOR produced outputs of the required quality at the lowest cost through pre-established quality review processes at the World Bank which are aimed at maximising productivity and ensuring that overheads remain low at 5%. PROFOR also exhibited efficiencies by making use of new large-scale online fora to get its messages out to large audiences. For IUCN, overheads and administration costs remain reasonable at 8%, given the global reach of its work.

Choice of funding and delivery options appropriate? Using well-established and reputable partners provided VFM on a partner-by-partner basis. However, there remains a question as to whether the three partners needed to be brought under the same programme. Refinements to KNOWFOR in 2014 brought greater emphasis on the expectations for collaboration between partners, which were not reached. Collaboration was limited to DMEL and gender, and some work around events such as the GLF. A range of factors including institutional constraints, competition and a lack of incentives prevented further collaboration. It could therefore be argued

that this aspect of the delivery model was ineffective. However, it should also be recognised that there was never a clear expectation from DFID that partners would collaborate at the outset of the programme.

Design and roll-out take into account the needs of the intended beneficiaries? As demonstrated in this evaluation, KNOWFOR introduced a greater emphasis on user-centred project design, producing a high volume of relevant knowledge products and engagement processes across all three partner organisations. KNOWFOR has also raised the profile of gender within and between the three organisations. However, there is much work still to be done to better integrate gender-responsive principles into knowledge programming within each partner institution.

Resources being used to maximise impact? IUCN has continued to demonstrate that KNOWFOR's support for its work on FLR represents a good return on investment for the UK Government. The investment in the ROAM has far exceeded expectations, with 23 countries now using the methodology to design and implement their restoration objectives. IUCN has trained 150 people from 25 countries and supported practitioners who are now able to provide ROAM training in their own languages, regions and countries.

There were also several instances of KNOWFOR partners securing additional funding:

1. Co-financing for the PROFOR portfolio (out of a total value of US\$6.2 million) was **US\$6.8 million**, and every \$1 invested by PROFOR leverages almost \$70 in World Bank forestry project investments. This leveraging ratio is based on the value of the forestry components of 15 World Bank investment projects active in 2015 that were directly influenced by PROFOR. This has increased from \$1 leveraging \$8 in 2012.
2. IUCN unlocked **£217.10 million** through a number of its investments (IUCN_CS_06), including:
 - **£17.9 million** (22.86 million CHF) in grants from the suite of projects mentioned in the Finance case study (IUCN_CS_06).
 - **£42.2 mil** (US\$54 million) – IUCN was awarded a US\$54-million grant for a new forest restoration project under the GEF. Much of the analysis that went into the programme design was generated under the KNOWFOR programme, and DMEL principles are fully embedded. This programme will help support implementation in 10 countries.
 - **£157 million** (US\$201 million) secured from governments and UN agencies. IUCN obtained this funding from a range of sources including the IKI of the BMUB and the GEF. This comprised a US\$54-million commitment from the GEF from The Restoration Initiative (TRI) for FLR in the following 10 countries: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, China, the DRC, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Myanmar, Pakistan, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tanzania.

Additional VFM through sideways DMEL uptake? DMEL and gender tools were adopted outside KNOWFOR projects, providing some additional VFM. KNOWFOR also influenced DMEL systems and processes within partners beyond KNOWFOR-funded projects. The enhanced DMEL capacity and DMEL support provided by KNOWFOR stimulated the uptake and application of DMEL in each organisation.

5.4.3 Impact: what is the impact on intended beneficiaries?

Criteria	Actual result	Conclusion
Having a transformational, positive and lasting impact on the lives of the intended beneficiaries	KNOWFOR succeeded in equipping a vast range of decision-makers with knowledge to improve policy and practice, which will potentially lead to broader impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through the improved management of forests and trees. KNOWFOR met expectations around short-term impacts by providing multiple examples of policy and practice changes that were instigated and catalysed at least in part through KNOWFOR outputs and efforts to engage and equip policy-makers and practitioners. This contribution is likely to have a long-term development impact.	Met

Benefits for intended beneficiaries? There is a long causal chain between the investment in knowledge uptake and the impact on the lives of marginalised people. The KNOWFOR objectives, targets and expectations made this clear from the outset. Under KNOWFOR, the ‘beneficiary’ is targeted decision-makers.

This evaluation found that KNOWFOR introduced new approaches to user-centred design and planning and processes that supported knowledge uptake. Yet the degree to which policy and practice changes can be attributed to KNOWFOR varies from case to case. Policy and practice change in forestry is influenced by many factors beyond knowledge and is embedded within political contexts. However, the weight of evidence suggests that, overall, KNOWFOR played a modest but significant role in influencing policy, which has the potential to lead to broader impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through the improved management of forests and trees.

Equity? In terms of equity of the distribution of benefits, it is not possible to draw programme-wide conclusions. However, there are examples and promising early results indicating how KNOWFOR-supported projects have contributed towards greater equity. There are two examples of the development of benefit-sharing frameworks aimed at ensuring that marginalised groups shared in economic outcomes (in Mexico and Vietnam), and specific work intended to ensure that lagging regions, and in particular youth, do not get left behind in Tunisia (PROFOR-OS-19). Under KNOWFOR, efforts were made to ensure that knowledge products addressed the needs of women and girls. KNOWFOR has also improved the potential for gender-sensitive and gender-responsive planning within each of the three partner institutions. In some cases, this influence extended into the planning and implementation of activities, with greater potential for equitable distribution of benefits. For instance, in Malawi, Burundi and Mozambique, IUCN ensured that both women and men were involved in planning restoration activities and integrated gender considerations into its benefit-sharing arrangements.

Economic and financial impact? While the results are tentative and not necessarily representative of the whole programme or directly comparable, three project-level analyses revealed reasonably high economic and financial returns on investment. Each of the partners provided a cost/benefit analysis for one of their case studies using a variation of the Redstone approach. This approach is characterised by the inclusion of a step discounting the return on investment using an estimate of contribution. Table 15 provides an overview of the findings, with

fuller calculations provided in Annex 5. All partners showed reasonably high rates of return, over varying timeframes. It should be noted that the very high figure of US\$56 dollars of benefit for every dollar spent in the IUCN assessment is based on a timeframe of 35 years. It should also be noted that this was the first time that partners attempted to assess return on investment, and the results are somewhat tentative and not comparable with one another. It is widely acknowledged that it is challenging to estimate the costs and benefits of knowledge activities, and more work can be done in this area to provide guidance and practical examples of studies that estimate return.

Table 15. Summary of return on investment for three case studies

Partner	Case study	Contribution of partner to policy change	Nature of benefit quantified	Return on investment	Time period
IUCN	Guatemala's Forest Landscape Restoration (IUCN_CS_05)	12% from IUCN (government being the main actor)	Financial benefit from landscape restoration	US\$56	35 years
CIFOR	Fire and Haze in the province of Riau, Indonesia (CIFOR_CS_01)	2.5% (most pessimistic) to 10% (most optimistic)	Cost avoidance as seasonal forest and land fire in Indonesia, based on World Bank estimates	Between US\$5.24 and US\$60.96	Does not say – assume one year of fires
PROFOR	2011 Guidelines of the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), India (PROFOR_CS_09)	0.5% (most pessimistic) to 2% (most optimistic)	The increased outlay (US\$) per hectare of land under integrated watershed management	Between US\$12.7 and US\$25.40	Three years

Long-term and sustainable impact and appropriate exit strategy? The programme impacts are highly sustainable, given that the core business practices of the three partners were influenced, particularly with regard to DMEL and gender.

Accountability? All partners have transparent systems and demonstrate high levels of accountability, particularly CIFOR which was awarded the '7 pillar assessments' from the EC. The case studies and the practice of declaring the strength of evidence also enhance transparency.

5.4.4 Learning: what works and what needs improvement?

Criteria	Actual result	Conclusion
The programme demonstrated a strong application of learning to improve future aid delivery	KNOWFOR implemented an extensive and best practice DMEL system across all three partner organisations. There is some evidence of learning from monitoring at the project level, and a substantial commitment to learning at the KNOWFOR programme level.	Met

Appropriate monitoring arrangements? As already discussed, a best practice and comprehensive DMEL system was embedded across the programme along with an unusually strong commitment

to learning. The programme team actively responded to the feedback around the need to improve the DMEL in 2013. The team revised the ToC and invested in a new approach to DMEL that clearly provided benefits, evidenced by the rating change from a B in 2013 to an A+ in 2015, largely due to the reframed approach to DMEL.

Lessons learned and shared effectively? The KNOWFOR approach stressed two-way learning and feedback loops. Four of the case studies demonstrate this at the project level and the foundations have been established for learning in all three organisations. In terms of effective sharing of lessons, a CoP was established for both DMEL and gender and these appear to have been effective. Efforts should be made to share the learnings from this partner-led evaluation.

Evidence of innovation and use of global best practice? The programme embraced new, innovative approaches, including by undertaking a novel approach to partner-led evaluation, which saw all partners critically appraising their own performance in partner-level workshops, and documenting and sharing lessons learned at a partner-wide workshop. There was also a strong aspect of peer learning, with partners engaging in several shared learning forums. In terms of substantive content, promising innovative practices emerged from the programme, including the use of participatory monitoring, online tools for real-time monitoring, and engagement beyond the usual suspects.

In terms of programme improvement, there was unmet potential for further collaboration between the three partners. There was also scope for expectations of partner collaboration to be made clearer by the funder, particularly in the early stages of the programme. In hindsight, it would have been worth providing more incentives for collaboration. Further steps could also have been taken to institutionalise gender empowerment and monitoring across the organisations. Additionally, work could have been undertaken to assess the costs and benefits and VFM of the programme in a more robust manner.

5.4.5 KNOWFOR represented good VFM overall

In terms of VFM, for every pound spent there was evidence that there was a good return. This finding is based on the ICAI approach to assessing VFM, thus taking into account the effectiveness of the planning, the delivery approach and the learning, as well as the development impact on global policy and practice. This assessment also includes some impressive figures on additional money secured from IUCN (£217.10 million) and the high return on investment demonstrated in three case studies using a discounted return on investment that accounts for the level of contribution of the organisation. Partners provided a novel cost/benefit analysis for one of their case studies using a variation of the Redstone approach. This approach is characterised by the inclusion of a step discounting the return on investment using an estimate of contribution. Given these results, we conclude that, overall, KNOWFOR represented good VFM.

6. Conclusions, recommendations and reflections

Without doubt, KNOWFOR met and exceeded its performance targets in embedding a new approach to DMEL within the partner organisations' systems and in terms of the reach and uptake of knowledge. While it narrowly met its gender targets, there were clear improvements in this area seen over time.

As a result of KNOWFOR, forestry and land use sector policy-makers and practitioners in developing countries are now better placed to act based on their knowledge. By extending high-quality knowledge to the forestry and land use sector, KNOWFOR has set a solid foundation for informing a range of investments and activities that have the potential to contribute to development impacts and the SDGs, specifically Gender Equality (Goal 5), Climate Action (Goal 13), Life on Land (Goal 15) and Partnerships (Goal 17).

Considering that it was focussed exclusively on knowledge translation, KNOWFOR was a relatively large and complex programme with considerable variation in context and delivery approach among the three global partners. As a result, this evaluation covered a lot of ground, and it was challenging to arrive at an overarching set of conclusions given the heterogeneity in contexts and delivery mechanisms. However, despite this diversity, the most consistent and agreed findings are that:

- The investment in using ToC and user-focussed design approaches was adopted widely by partners.
- Collaboration between partners provided a basis for the development of a consistent approach to DMEL and dialogue on gender-responsive approaches.
- Progress was made with gender-positive programming, but more can be done.
- The case studies revealed common success factors. Successful cases were characterised by a sensitivity and responsiveness to the political economy, strategic opportunism and the use of champions to support knowledge programming.
- The value of working with well-established partners was validated by the high level of financial leverage found in just a few key case studies.
- The flexible and adaptable approach of the programme as a whole was widely valued and effective in supporting outcomes.
- The partner-led evaluation itself was a significant learning opportunity for all involved and this approach should be explored further.

These findings are discussed in turn below, and recommendations offered where they flow from the finding.

Use of ToC and user-centred design

The application of ToC to creating more deliberate knowledge pathways was taken up across all three partner organisations. For example, ToC is used in the CIFOR strategy as well as operational guidelines and institutional performance assessment. It is now being used by researchers across seven teams within CIFOR and in three regional hubs. ToC has also informed the IUCN strategy and been used for the first time in regional strategic planning by IUCN via the Programme for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (ORMAC). PROFOR has meanwhile

embedded DMEL into its PATS reporting systems and protocols. This is a significant change considering that PROFOR is governed by a multi-donor trust fund. By changing the PROFOR reporting system, KNOWFOR has in effect changed the way that the secretariat reports and interfaces with donors on the results of its work.

By influencing partner systems and approaches to knowledge programming, KNOWFOR effectively embedded tools and approaches such as ToC and user-oriented design into the knowledge planning and programming cycle. This will ensure that the benefits from this programme continue beyond the timeframe of investment.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing partners is around maintaining the momentum DMEL has stimulated within each organisation. In each partner, there is now a core of personnel who have familiarity with, acceptance of and capacity to implement DMEL. Beyond this core and early adopters, there are considerable challenges in supporting wider acceptance of DMEL across the partner organisations, particularly given that there are competing interests and a lack of incentives to undertake DMEL. It will be interesting to see whether the partner-led evaluation itself provides further momentum to embed data collection in an ongoing, systematic manner.

Collaboration fell short of expectations

The programme did not achieve the expected targets for collaboration that were added to the logframe after the 2014 review.⁵⁸ Collaboration was mainly undertaken by partners in building a consistent approach to DMEL and in efforts to support gender-responsive programming. It is important to note that expectations for collaboration were not made clear in the original programme design and only became explicit once partners were already implementing the programme.

KNOWFOR was originally designed to draw the individual strengths of three global partners under the one programme. In 2014, the concept of collaboration between partners was expanded with the promise of 1+1+1= 4. The idea was that the three organisations would work together to achieve a greater collective impact. However, the transaction costs of collaborating were not fully recognised, while other barriers to collaboration such as competition between partners were also not fully considered.

Progress was made with gender-responsive programming but more can be done

The Gender Working Group remains active at the end of the programme, with closer connections between specialists both within and among the three organisations. While gender specialists in all three partners valued the opportunity for 'dialogue', 'co-learning' and 'exploration' facilitated by the group, the Gender Working Group has also influenced material changes in government policy. For instance, IUCN was able to embed gender into the NBSAP, while KNOWFOR is seen to have accelerated gender mainstreaming within CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR.

⁵⁸ Targets for collaboration were not part of the original design; they were added to the revised logframe in 2014.

Success factors included responsiveness, strategic opportunism and the use of champions

The case studies revealed common success factors. Successful cases were characterised by a sensitivity and responsiveness to the political economy, strategic opportunism and the use of champions to support knowledge programming.

The cross-case analysis of the case studies found that decision-makers were equipped with knowledge and resources via a range of mechanisms and factors within specific contexts. This included understanding the strategic context and the political economy, building trust, utilising champions through the knowledge uptake cycle and being strategically opportunistic. It is important to recognise that these factors work together in different contexts to trigger change processes and the achievement of outcomes. The learnings around success factors for knowledge uptake are of direct relevance to the three partners and to DFID more broadly.

Nonetheless, investing in the co-design of a consistent approach to the **process of how knowledge uptake is designed** (in terms of using ToC, taking a user-centred focus and incorporating gender) paid dividends across the KNOWFOR programme. So, while the intent that collaboration across the three partners would assist with knowledge uptake was not fulfilled, a real benefit appears to have been gained around creating momentum and shared learning on **how to do better planning** for knowledge uptake. This is an important finding.

Working through established channels delivered benefits

The model of working with well-established partners is demonstrated in part by level of financial leverage found in just a few key case studies.

The case studies on VFM suggest a good level of return for every pound invested in KNOWFOR. This validates the original rationale of the KNOWFOR programme that there would be economy and efficiency in working through reputable and established institutions. On a partner-by-partner basis there is clear value, but the value of bringing three complementary organisations together under the one programme – purely in terms of contractual effectiveness – is tenuous.

Balancing programme flexibility with structure

KNOWFOR has been supported by a sufficiently flexible yet rigorous programme structure, which has in turn enabled partners to work and deliver according to their strengths. This flexibility within structure was identified by partners and observers as a distinctive and unique characteristic of the programme. This flexibility included the DFID Rapid Response Mechanism that was part of the design as well as the flexible management approach. These examples are important for DFID as they represent a move towards management by outcomes and a greater focus on learning.

Reflections on the partner-led evaluation

This evaluation took a partner-led approach, with all three partners (CIFOR, IUCN and PROFOR) leading the direction of the evaluation with the support of evaluation facilitators and external quality assurers. A partner-led approach was undertaken at the request of partners as it was

consistent with the broader effort in the programme to embed DMEL approaches and principles into the ways that partners deliver knowledge programmes.⁵⁹

Partners felt that they gained a lot more from this partner-led approach than they normally do from an external evaluation. They noted that they saved time by not having to explain the context to external consultants. They were also better able to position the evaluation to serve multiple purposes. Partners felt more vested in the evaluation process than they do in external evaluations, and noted that the partner-led approach enabled dialogue with research teams and they felt like they received more honest responses. Partners also felt that the evaluation provided them with a great learning opportunity, with one noting that they are going to draw heavily on this process in their next evaluation.

On the downside, the evaluation process was without doubt more time consuming than anyone expected. Deadlines slipped on several occasions, and partners struggled to understand what was expected of them. Some questioned whether this approach was worth it for such a complex, multi-partner programme. The three partners felt that more support could have been provided for the case studies, most of which ended up being contracted to third parties. It was also noted that, as the quality assurance contract was delayed, the feedback on the evaluation plans came a little too late to be acted fully on.

In terms of product quality, the case studies were variable in the strength of evidence and degree to which they provided credible evaluation findings. When external parties were contracted to do this task, they were often not familiar with the approaches being used (such as Episode Studies and COR) and struggled to understand what was expected of them. Quality assurance feedback was not always recognised and/or addressed by partners, and strength of evidence ratings were not always well accepted by them. Partners also did not always engage with the independent feedback provided by the quality assurer.

In terms of the quality of learning and reflection, some occasions saw partners reflecting deeply on their work, especially at the partner-level workshops. People were certainly open and direct in providing their comments. However, there were some constraints to learning in a multi-partner setting, especially as the three partners do compete for funding.

From the perspective of the evaluation facilitator, Clear Horizon does acknowledge that the evaluation methodology was perhaps too complex for a partner-led evaluation. There was a tendency for all partners to critique and provide additional ideas for each step of the methodology which led to a progressively bigger endeavour. There was considerable deliberation on the evaluation process and aspects of the methodology among partners, which was healthy but at times held up progress.

This raises the question – was it all worth it? There were clearly both benefits and costs to this partner-led approach. The costs were in the time and money devoted to this endeavour and the occasional bout of frustration. The benefits included the product and process being more in-depth and more carefully vetted than would have been the case in an externally led evaluation, and therefore of more value to all partners. There is also potential for the evaluation to have a far-reaching influence on the way partners do both monitoring and evaluation in the future. However, time is needed to verify this claim.

⁵⁹ A full discussion of the partner-led evaluation process will be presented in a joint paper on the subject in late 2017.

6.1. Recommendations

Recommendations for partners⁶⁰

1. Each partner organisation could benefit by refining their ToC and knowledge uptake strategies to take better account of the success factors identified through KNOWFOR, which were specific to each partner. These partner-specific factors should be tested progressively over time to enhance the effectiveness of knowledge programming practices. This may involve further consideration of the knowledge-to-action literature, which provides a rich body of existing knowledge on this topic.
2. Partner DMEL leads should continue to support and encourage the use of ToC as a DMEL tool in their respective organisations to maximise the effectiveness of programming. Appropriate incentives and support should be offered to encourage its use. Despite progress and considerable interest from partners in ToC as a DMEL tool, there was limited evidence that they used it in the case studies developed for this evaluation.
3. Partners should continue to contribute to the Gender Working Group. The group should continue to explore ways to better integrate gender into the knowledge programming cycle and DMEL. In particular, the group has the opportunity to provide an important cross-institutional link and forum for partners to continue to learn from one another. Gender Working Group members should explore opportunities to sustain and resource this valuable partnership so it can continue to provide benefits.
4. Efforts to monitor and evaluate gender in knowledge programming by all partners should shift from a focus on output (i.e. participation) to a focus on impact (i.e. on the lives of men, women and girls as well as on systems and institutions). A good place to start is by clarifying gender standards and expectations for knowledge programming, for instance, by interrogating, refining and developing the gender rubric adopted by KNOWFOR (see Annex 8). This could be progressed by the Gender Working Group in consultation with the DMEL leads from all three partner organisations. In particular, PROFOR should continue to improve its gender monitoring systems. KNOWFOR gender monitoring findings indicate the need to increase the participation of women and girls in PROFOR programming, both as participants and users of PROFOR communications.
5. All partners need to conduct further work to consolidate and extend DMEL across their organisations, especially monitoring tools and capacity. All partner organisations should continue to invest in their approach to monitoring and to ensure that the organisational enablers of DMEL (such as resourcing and structures) are in place. In particular, the IUCN GFCCP M&E team should continue to interface with M&E teams in other parts of the organisation to build the consistency of M&E across the organisation.
6. All partners need to improve the way they track audiences and reach – especially when using social media. Tracking segmented audience penetration through web-based engagement and social media was not achieved because monitoring systems did not support audience identification. This should be done by DMEL leads in close cooperation with their respective media teams, who bring valuable expertise in communications tracking and outreach.
7. Each partner and DFID could benefit from conducting further work to assess the VFM of research-to-knowledge programmes more comprehensively. The VFM case studies tentatively uncovered a high rate of return. Partners should further verify these rate of return claims where possible.
8. All partners should promote opportunities to learn from failure and be more open about what did not work. It was not always possible to discuss failure openly in cross-partner forums because of the competitive nature of the relationship between partners. However, there is

⁶⁰ To be detailed more fully in the partner evaluation reports.

further potential to do this more within each partner organisation. DMEL leads in each organisation in conjunction with their executives should encourage more opportunities to share instances of failure to promote a deeper level of learning that has the potential to accelerate programme effectiveness.

Recommendations for DFID

9. The KNOWFOR approach to programme planning and management is an exemplar for how to adaptively manage a complex programme. This includes the DFID Rapid Response Mechanism that was part of the design as well as the flexible management approach. This is important for DFID as it represents a move towards management by outcomes and a greater focus on learning. The KNOWFOR approach to adaptive management and co-learning between implementers and the donor should be considered in the design of other similar programmes. Learning and reflection from adaptive learning in the programme should be shared by the DFID SRO sectorally (among forests, land use and climate change specialists) and thematically (with those working in the knowledge uptake space).
10. DFID should continue to endorse the use of ToC in knowledge programming. The KNOWFOR approach to ToC and user-centred design is of direct relevance to other knowledge uptake programmes more broadly.
11. When DFID invests in future knowledge programmes such as KNOWFOR, it needs to better pitch performance targets. Without appropriate targets, it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of programmes like KNOWFOR. The initial design of KNOWFOR did not provide a basis for the development or measurement of meaningful performance indicators, largely because intermediate outcomes between outputs and impact were not made explicit.
12. DFID should ensure that future programmes do not expect large global players to collaborate in core programming without careful consideration of the costs and likely benefits of doing so; and, if pursued, this needs to be incentivised. However, there is clear merit in bringing communities of practice together to develop shared knowledge on good practice process, in particular around ToC, DMEL, user-centred approaches to knowledge programming, and gender. DFID should be more explicit in articulating expectations for partnership at the outset.

Minor recommendations for immediate follow-up

13. The evaluation methodology is of interest to a wider audience and should be shared. The quality assurers will conduct an evaluation of this evaluation. Following this, the M&E contractor/quality assurers should write an accessible practice note about the evaluation process itself. This could be presented at the UK Evaluation Society Conference in 2018, as well as through a seminar for DFID partners.
14. An accessible paper/think piece should be written on the management approach taken in KNOWFOR, recognising the importance of the factors unique to KNOWFOR which enabled programme flexibility, such as the role of the SRO in facilitating flexibility. This should potentially be led by partners and the SRO, who really led this partnership.
15. The communications plan should clearly identify who is targeted by communications outputs from KNOWFOR DMEL. This should be led by the DMEL facilitation team.

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8. Annex

8.1. Annex 1: Evidence

Figure 6. Evidence log

Number	Source	Date	Title	Evidence type	Code/Reference
1	CIFOR	2017	Results chart: CIFOR	Results chart	-
2	IUCN	2017	Results chart: IUCN	Results chart	-
3	PROFOR	2017	Results chart: PROFOR	Results chart	
4	CIFOR	2017	Performance Story Report of Brazil Nut case study	Case study	CIFOR_CS_01
5	CIFOR	2017	Performance Story Report of Poverty Environment Network	Case study	CIFOR_CS_02
6	CIFOR	2017	Performance Story Report of CIFOR's Fire and Haze project	Case study	CIFOR_CS_03
7	IUCN	2017	Exploring IUCN's influence on the development and growth of the Bonn Challenge	Case study	IUCN_CS_04
8	IUCN	2017	Analysing KNOWFOR's Contribution to Forest Management Policy in Guatemala	Case study	IUCN_CS_05
9	IUCN	2017	Understanding IUCN's Role in Unlocking FLR Finance	Case study	IUCN_CS_06
10	PROFOR	2017	Forest Governance: Impacts from outreach and implementation of country assessments	Case study	PROFOR_CS_07
11	PROFOR	2017	Understanding forests contribution to poverty reduction: An Evaluation of the PROFOR-funded activities in India, the Philippines, and Turkey	Case study	PROFOR_CS_08
12	PROFOR	2017	Watershed development in India: Approach evolving through experience	Case study	PROFOR_CS_09
13	CIFOR	2017	The use of 'Political economy of fire and haze study' results by the Government of Indonesia to discuss how to combat fire in the long term	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_1
14	CIFOR	2017	CIFOR outcomes in promoting the 3Es in benefit sharing in Vietnam	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_2
15	CIFOR	2017	OUTCOME story about the media training in DR Congo	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_3
16	CIFOR	2017	The uptake of the 10 principles for a landscape approach	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_4
17	CIFOR	2017	Change practices in MRV strategy by engaging local communities as well as improve capacities of local community in MRV	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_5

18	CIFOR	2017	The Story of CIFOR Policy Influence through Participatory Action Research: The Approval of District Regulation on Confirmation, Recognition and Protection of Ammatoa Kajang Indigenous People	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_6
19	CIFOR	2017	CIFOR's contribution to monitoring the social co-benefits of jurisdictional REDD+ in the Brazilian Amazon	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_7
20	CIFOR	2017	Proformal Artisanal Chainsaw Milling in Cameroon	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_8
21	CIFOR	2017	Mainstreaming charcoal production and trade into forestry policy agenda in Zambia	Outcome Story	CIFOR_OS_9
22	IUCN	2017	Intensive restoration assessment helps define sub-national Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programme in Brazil	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_10
23	IUCN	2017	Climate Change Regional Programme – Pilot Application in Nicaragua and Guatemala	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_11
24	IUCN	2017	Development of a gender-responsive Brazilian National Biodiversity Strategies Action Plan (NBSAP) in Brazil	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_12
25	IUCN	2017	M&E FLR protocol in Brazil takes a step forward in ensuring gender criteria	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_13
26	IUCN	2017	KNOWFOR's mandate and momentum as a catalyst for gender inclusion in Rwanda's FLR planning, policy and implementation	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_14
27	IUCN	2017	A Multi-Faceted Approach to Restoration in Uganda	Outcome Story	IUCN_OS_15
28	PROFOR	2017	Congo Basin Timber: Examining the Potential to Boost the Volume of Legal Wood Used in Construction and Furniture Making in the Congo Basin	Outcome Story	PROFOR_OS_16
29	PROFOR	2017	Developing a Roadmap for Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms by Using PROFOR's Options Assessment Framework (OAF) – Mexico	Outcome Story	PROFOR_OS_17
30	PROFOR	2017	Enabling the Russian Forest Sector to Attain Sustainability through Governance Reforms	Outcome Story	PROFOR_OS_18
31	PROFOR	2017	Sustainable Management of Oasis Ecosystems – Tunisia	Outcome Story	PROFOR_OS_19
32	CIFOR	2017	Managing flexible funding for impact in uncertain times	Lessons Learned Story	CIFOR_LS_01

33	CIFOR	2017	Is there value in being systematic?	Lessons Learned Story	CIFOR_LS_02
34	CIFOR	2017	It's never finished and it's never right	Lessons Learned Story	CIFOR_LS_03
35	IUCN	2017	Capacity development for knowledge uptake on forest landscape restoration assessments	Lessons Learned Story	IUCN_LS_04
36	IUCN	2017	Implementing enhanced DMEL in a knowledge uptake setting	Lessons Learned Story	IUCN_LS_05
37	IUCN	2017	Mainstreaming Gender in KNOWFOR programme	Lessons Learned Story	IUCN_LS_06
38	PROFOR	2017	Champions for Change	Lessons Learned Story	PROFOR_LS_07
39	PROFOR	2017	Supervening forces, persistence, and shelf life	Lessons Learned Story	PROFOR_LS_08
40	PROFOR	2017	Moving Knowledge across Boundaries	Lessons Learned Story	PROFOR_LS_09
41	KNOWFOR	2015	DMEL case study	Programme Report	DMEL, 2015
42	DFID	2013	KNOWFOR Annual Report	Programme Report	AR-13
43	DFID	2014	KNOWFOR Annual Report	Programme Report	AR-14
44	DFID	2015	KNOWFOR Annual Report	Programme Report	AR-15
45	DFID	2016	KNOWFOR Annual Report	Programme Report	AR-16
46	Clear Horizon	2014	KNOWFOR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	Programme Report	-
47	DFID	2012	KNOWFOR Business Case	Programme Report	DFID, 2012
48	CIFOR	2016	CIFOR Implementation Plan for the KNOWFOR Evaluation	Evaluation Plan	-
49	IUCN	2016	IUCN Implementation Plan for the KNOWFOR Evaluation	Evaluation Plan	-
50	PROFOR	2016	PROFOR Implementation Plan for the KNOWFOR Evaluation	Evaluation Plan	-
51	CIFOR	2017	'Report on assumption with data on KNOWFOR and DMEL', prepared by Andreas Reumann	CIFOR analysis	Reumann, 2017
52	CIFOR	2017	Fire and Haze - Value for Money (VfM) Estimation	Value for Money Assessment	Kartika K, Purnomo H
53	IUCN	2017	IUCN value for money case - Guatemala Forest Landscape Restoration	Value for Money Assessment	Colomer J, Imbach A, Raes L, Parrilla U, Reinhard F, Fernandez M
54	PROFOR	2017	Value for Money of the India 'Deep Dive' Case Study: A Note	Value for Money Assessment	A.J.James

8.2. Annex 2: Interviews

A total of 15 interviews were conducted with partner, donor representatives and strategic informants by the DMEL coordinators. See Annex 6 for the interview guide. Note that interviews conducted by partners for case studies are not included below.

Figure 7. Interviewees

Code	Organisation	Role
I-01	CIFOR	Partner
I-02	CIFOR	Partner
I-03	CIFOR	Partner
I-04	IUCN	Partner
I-05	IUCN	Partner
I-06	IUCN	Partner
I-07	IUCN	Partner
I-08	IUCN	Partner
I-09	PROFOR	Partner
I-10	PROFOR	Partner
I-11	PROFOR	Partner
I-12	DFID	Donor
I-13	DFID	Donor
I-14	DFID	Donor
I-15	ODI	Strategic informant

8.3. Annex 3: Results chart

A **results chart** is one component of COR and is a feature of the KNOWFOR DMEL approach. The results chart presented here is for the whole KNOWFOR programme. Each partner developed its organisation-specific results chart, and this programme-wide one drew from the three partner-level charts. The results chart brought together our need to understand results against both the ToC and the logframe targets. It also allowed us to note the strength of evidence for each row of the table. The results chart was a key artefact for the partner-level summit workshop, where partners scrutinised the draft results chart, concluded on the strength of evidence and developed draft conclusions.

Figure 8. KNOWFOR programme results chart table

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
Enabling output	To what extent did partners apply the DMEL and gender principles in planning KNOWFOR-funded projects?	KNOWFOR is rated as 'Meeting expectations' or 'Above expectations' in the 'Enabling' rubric (rubric includes criteria such as whether project planning included identification of next users and knowledge pathways and the differentiated needs of women and girls) Key criteria include: • The knowledge uptake pathway is clearly articulated • The project has done some work to identify end user information requirements • The project was assessed for gender relevance	All partners, including IUCN, CIFOR and PROFOR, have to varying degrees improved the integration of DMEL and gender into programming since 2013, due in large part to KNOWFOR support. KNOWFOR partners have widely applied DMEL and gender principles in planning for KNOWFOR-funded projects. The DMEL system was applied widely across CIFOR (n=29 projects), IUCN (via the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme), and PROFOR (n=39 projects). When self-rated against a scale for applying DMEL at the project level, all three partners met targets. By 2016, 100% of all projects from all partners were assessed as 'meeting expectations' according to the DMEL rubric. KNOWFOR has influenced the approach taken to undertake DMEL within each institution. This has resulted in the development of DMEL capacity among KNOWFOR focal points within each partner. Enhanced DMEL capacity and support provided by KNOWFOR has stimulated the uptake and application of DMEL in each partner organisation. Gender principles have been integrated well by IUCN into the FLR planning through the review and modification of the ROAM guidelines. Gender has also been integrated into national biodiversity planning (i.e. Brazil NBSAP) due to KNOWFOR. KNOWFOR has 'enabled a cultural shift towards embedding gender into forestry research within CIFOR and supported the integration of gender-sensitive and gender-responsive principles into 12 funded research projects. Within PROFOR, KNOWFOR has promoted gender-sensitive considerations into World Bank project designs and improved sex-disaggregated project monitoring.	IUCN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN has steadily improved the integration of DMEL and gender into GFCCP programming since 2013 due in large part to KNOWFOR support. KNOWFOR has influenced the IUCN approach to DMEL, particularly within the GFCCP – specifically, in the application of TOC in DMEL and delivery processes. There has been limited wider DMEL influence in IUCN beyond GFCCP. There are some examples, however, of DMEL influence beyond GFCCP (i.e. on the IUCN TOC and the SUSTAIN programme) but these tend to be isolated at this stage. DMEL has been formalised internally through the KNOWFOR Phase 2 Internal Agreements, which mandated DMEL and gender-sensitive programming. Gender integration and mainstreaming have been 'substantially accelerated' by KNOWFOR (I-4, I-5, I-6, I-7, I-8). In 2015–16, IUCN met its expectation in terms of identifying and engaging targeted audiences and having monitoring systems. IUCN indeed succeeded in ensuring that all relevant projects initiated under different result areas addressed the following criteria (6 out of 6) set out in the 'enabling' rubric: Identification of end user requirements: The projects on all the Key Result Areas were initiated only after detailed consultations with end users, including national and sub-national governments, IUCN's regional and country offices, and boundary partners. All new IUCN projects initiated in 2015–16 had to clearly articulate knowledge uptake pathway, which was reviewed by the knowledge and communications team. All internal IUCN and external projects were screened by the Monitoring and Learning Officer and have provisions for developing and using specific tailor-made tools to report on knowledge uptake. Over 75% of the external partner-led activities were designed in consultation with them and with their engagement. All the project contracts/agreements have an explicit clause to have a dissemination plan in place in the consultations with the Global Forest and Climate Change program At the end of 2015, the IUCN office for Guatemala, with the support of ORMACC, developed a Results Chain that expresses its planning based on the TOC for 2015–20. This is the first time that IUCN in Guatemala planned this way (Guatemala case study). KNOWFOR-funded gender-responsive FLR processes are ensuring that women are active participants in the restoration agenda in Brazil, Honduras, Burundi and Malawi (IUCN Lessons Learned). PROFOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the course of the KNOWFOR programme PROFOR has improved its DMEL approach by adopting and modifying a range of DMEL tools and templates such as the 'Concept Note'. Since 2013, PROFOR has exceeded performance expectations overall, meeting agreed criteria in the 'enabling' rubric. PROFOR has influenced planning and design in the World Bank across a wide range of projects such as the WAVES Partnership Programme, PMEH Programme, and Korean Green Growth programme, though the extent and depth of this influence are uncertain (I-9, I-10, I-11). CIFOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KNOWFOR has had a 'catalytic effect' (I-2) in transforming the DMEL approach taken at CIFOR by building on the existing work and effort that was being undertaken to embed DMEL within the institution. KNOWFOR has had a wide influence on awareness of DMEL across the institution and a small but significant influence on DMEL capacity. KNOWFOR has directly influenced the CIFOR Strategy (2016–2025) as well as large proposals such as the US\$471M Forests, Trees and Agroforestry: Landscapes, Livelihoods and Governance (Phase II) proposal. 9 out of 17 CIFOR Most Significant Change Stories provide tangible examples that DMEL approaches have become 'embedded' at the individual (skills, ability, knowledge etc.) and institutional (systems, processes, resources etc.) levels. Outcomes illustrated by the MSC stories include: embedding DMEL, informing design, increased effectiveness, 'generating knowledge for impact', showing inter-connectedness, 'multidimensional, multi-pathway framework has been inserted into my way of working and thinking', and an 'ability to generate and promote evidence meaningfully'. Change in DMEL approaches at an institutional level are observed by some (5 out of 17) in the organisation to be 'transformative'; 'this focus on process is unprecedented'; '[CIFOR is] at a crossroads - understand learning and make science based knowledge our mission, or follow the money'. KNOWFOR has helped CIFOR shift from a focus on 'mainstreaming' gender to considering gender in terms of impact; i.e. from a focus on process ('getting your house in order') to focusing on the outcomes and impacts on gender as a result of CIFOR activity and investment (Secondary analysis of CIFOR interviews), evidenced by gender-specific research where 2 million out of 5 million dollars is being allocated to gender issues. Meanwhile, reach has been broadened through gender mainstreaming; i.e. in looking at the gender dimensions of REDD+. 	Target exceeded	High – self rating corroborated with interviews

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
Outputs	How adequate were the reach and volume of KNOWFOR knowledge products and engagement processes?	397 knowledge products across the life of KNOWFOR (logframe output indicator 1.3) 194 KNOWFOR supported engagement process/events (workshops, forums, meetings, trainings etc.) including gender-disaggregated data on participants and engagement processes. (logframe output indicator 1.2)	<p>KNOWFOR has delivered a high volume of knowledge products, supported by a range of engagement processes. Overall, the reach of the programme was vast, with partners well exceeding agreed targets. The reach and volume of the programme's output and engagement have exceeded expectations.</p> <p>In terms of the quantity of knowledge products produced, all partners have vastly exceeded their targeted output, with all in excess of >37% (by 62 products [IUCN], 247 [PROFOR] and 225 [CIFOR]). This result is way above initial expectations. While each partner used slightly different categories for its product type, which were refined over the years, there was a good spread of knowledge products. Tailored communication products made up a good proportion of products (for example, 45% for PROFOR), and all partners made much of their information available online, with blogs, web-based publications and other online media all well represented.</p> <p>In terms of engagement processes, all partners also performed well above expectation, easily exceeding their targets – all by more than double. CIFOR performed well, exceeding its cumulative target of 59 by 556 engagements; however, 506 of these were workshops/meetings/forums, as were 1/3 of PROFOR's direct engagement processes. This may indicate a high proportion of engagement processes involved working meetings with immediate stakeholders to discuss the implementation or progress of various projects/activities – albeit involving academics, practitioners and decision-makers – rather than broader audiences for dissemination purposes.</p> <p>Nonetheless, some 34,149 people participated directly in these largely face-to-face processes. Added to this, participation in online engagement processes that were interactive included the participation of 6,683 people in a Massive Open On-line course, as well as 674 participants in webinars (PROFOR), indicating the potential of these platforms.</p> <p>Social media targets were also vastly exceeded, with PROFOR exceeding its target during one event alone (the 2015 World Forestry Congress). 844,747 page views and 102,811 downloads were reported, with CIFOR accounting for the bulk of the page views (93%). Only IUCN reported not fully reaching its target for the number of downloads, managing to achieve 85%. Both IUCN and PROFOR had Twitter accounts, with some 19,324 followers between them and the latter receiving 239,500 Tweet views. Facebook is also proving to be a well-used platform.</p>	<p>IUCN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48 studies supported by KNOWFOR (target 35) 213 knowledge products (29 reports and handbooks, 9 news releases, 7 briefing notes/case studies, 5 flyers and brochures, 4 presentations, 34 blogs & web pages, 4 peer-reviewed open-access journal articles, 1 video, 1 magazine, 1 tutorial, 118 not described) (target 151) 114 engagement processes (47 forest events and forums – target 14), 45 capacity-building activities (target 18) and 22 engagement processes for dissemination, transfer of knowledge and capacity building to use knowledge products were supported (target 21)) a total of 4,380 people from over 70 countries participated in KNOWFOR events, of which more than 270 from over 60 countries participated in interactive training on tools to assess forest restoration potential (target 3500) 3,845 downloads of documents from the IUCN Forest Landscape Restoration website (target 4,500), with 31,698 reported page views (target 10,900) distribution of 12,640 print products and 10,852 digital products (target 17,000) @IUCN_Restore handle accumulated nearly 600 followers, closed and transitioned into IUCN_Forests handle, with 14,324 followers (target 1000). 397 likes on Facebook (target 300), with a reach of over 26,000 (target 4000). The video titled 'Equipping Uganda for restoration: Radio and apps for Reforesting Landscapes' was chosen as the winner of the GLF 2015 Partner Video Award <p>PROFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 437 knowledge products (target 190 – NB assumes 100 for 2015 and 90 for 2016), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 207 tailored communication products (125 web-based materials/articles, 22 summary reports for dissemination, 11 policy briefs, 8 brochures, 6 video-taped/audio presentations (including podcasts) etc., 6 workshop proceedings, 4 translations of frameworks/tools, 1 media briefing on activity/report, and 24 unspecified) 51 conceptual frameworks tools and methodologies (25 methodology/framework/tools, 11 learning modules, 8 implementation/business plans, 4 handbooks/guidelines, 2 guiding principles, 1 field manual) 179 analytics and databases (34 full reports of project findings, 32 technical notes/papers, 27 country or case studies, 11 databases, 8 syntheses, 7 scoping reports, 6 literature or institutional reviews, 52 unspecified products) 333 engagement processes (target 80), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 79 events (11 product or project launches, 55 events where PROFOR participated or gave a presentation, organised 5 forums or events, 10 unspecified events) 210 knowledge and networking platforms (96 working meetings/workshops/engagement processes, 4 'Brown bag' discussions, 41 consultations/focus group discussions (gathering input), 32 dissemination workshops, 5 published materials available online, and 32 unspecified events) 44 capacity-building opportunities (9 trainings, 19 exchanging methodological expertise/study tours, 13 unspecified opportunities) 12,289 direct participants in engagement processes, 13% of whom were women an additional 6,683 people engaged with an online learning module (counted above as a knowledge product), as well as 674 participants in 11 webinars published four books and five working papers (target 7 for 2016) As at 31 March 2017, Twitter followers: 4320, Twitter impressions (i.e., # of times users saw a tweet): 30,700, Twitter mentions: 41, Twitter retweets: 61, Facebook fans: 1590, Facebook likes: 255, website page views in 2016: 42,344, website page views in Q1 2017: 12,306, website sessions (what Google used to call visits) in 2016: 16,034, website sessions in Q1 2017: 1,364, downloads in 2016: 10,718, downloads in Q1 2017: 1,682 @forestideas was mentioned 220 times, and the account earned 515 retweets, with a potential audience of 51,000 during the World Forestry Congress in September 2015 <p>CIFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a total of 323 knowledge products were produced between 2013 and 2016 (112 articles, 108 online media, 26 briefs, 25 papers, 18 tools, 15 reports, 15 books, 4 datasets) (target 98) a total of 615 engagement processes were undertaken (506 workshops (incl. meetings, forums), 43 presentations, 19 policy dialogues, (incl. briefings, roundtables), 18 conferences, 16 focus groups, 11 training sessions, 2 media training) (target 59 – 2016) a total of 17,480 participants (including 38% female) in engagement processes the reach of knowledge products (via online presence) was 887,288 (91,234 downloads, 787,054 page views [including blog views], 9000 hard copies [all 2016]) (target 95,000) 		Overall rating: High IUCN- High: Majority of the products/events data was cross-referenced to a data source in the IUCN results chart PROFOR- High: Majority of completion and progress reporting provides links to the knowledge products produced/events as physical evidence of their existence or statistical data on attendance; however, data on the number of participants at events is likely to be under-reported. Web stats are sound and sourced from the Bank's media section CIFOR- Medium. Evidence sources were difficult to aggregate due to inconsistent reporting of indicators. Some measures may be underestimated due to unknown values treated as zero.
Gender- outputs	How well did KNOWFOR products and engagement processes take into consideration the needs of women and girls?	% of engagement processes that were gender-responsive. 25% of products and range of categories either explicitly respond to the specific needs of women and girls or generate sex-differentiated gender-relevant knowledge. (logframe output indicator 1.1)	<p>Performance on gender-responsive engagement processes was mixed. While there were no targets for the engagement of women and girls, none of the partners achieved more than 38% of female participation, with PROFOR reporting a proportion of 13% women and girls' participation – inadequate reporting of disaggregated data notwithstanding. Over the course of the programme, however, partners improved gender reporting, sensitive engagement and product development.</p> <p>In terms of meeting the overall target of 25% of knowledge products being gender-responsive, both IUCN and CIFOR exceeded this target (39% and 38% respectively), with CIFOR achieving over 50% in gender-relevant products in the year 2015. PROFOR has not performed as well, achieving only 7%, a result that was exacerbated by lack of attention to the gender responsiveness of products in reporting. PROFOR has improved gender reporting, with 15% of products paying explicit attention to gender in 2016 potentially signaling an upward trend. CIFOR noted its KNOWFOR-funded activities generated gender-specific knowledge on the issues of access to forest products, role in REDD+ implementation, benefit sharing and property rights, and the impact of gender composition of forest management groups on resource governance and conservation outcomes.</p>	<p>IUCN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of female participants at KNOWFOR engagement process was 38% overall (35% (2014-15), 40% (2015-2016)) percentage of studies that addressed gender considerations was 20% (2013-14), 35% (2014-15) percentage of knowledge products respond to specific needs of women or provide sex-differentiated knowledge was 39% (2014–15) and 50% (2015–16) (overall target 40%) <p>PROFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> of 12,289 direct participants in events, 1611 (13%) were women (485 at forums/events, 474 at meetings/workshops, 20 at brown bag discussions, 330 at consultations/focus groups, 194 at dissemination workshops, 81 at trainings, 27 unspecified) an additional 6683 people engaged with an online learning module, as well as 674 participants in 11 webinars but the gender is unknown of 437 knowledge products, 32 (7%) were female targeted (7 web-based materials, 6 methodology etc., 5 technical notes/papers, 5 project reports, 1 synthesis report, 1 literature review, 1 database, 1 guiding principles, 5 unspecified products) In 2016, 15% of PROFOR products paid explicit attention to gender. <p>CIFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a total of 17,480 people participating in CIFOR engagement processes, 38% were women (2014: 45%, 2015: 42%, 2016: 36 %) Gender responsiveness of engagement processes: 2013: Not reported; 2014: 100% recorded gender disaggregated participation, with minimal gender responsiveness; 2015: 100% recorded gender disaggregated participation, with minimal gender responsiveness; 2016: 100% recorded gender disaggregated participation, with 20 engagement processes rated high on gender responsiveness rubric Projects assessed for gender relevance: 2013: Not done; 2014: Only two projects (PEN and Teak Value Chains) – 70% identified themselves as gender relevant; 2015: Same as for 2014; 2016: All projects gender relevant (12) 	Not fully met for all three partners	Overall rating: Medium IUCN-Medium: IUCN was asked to report on gender aspects for the first time in 2013–14. It took some time to fully integrate gender responsiveness into the programme. PROFOR-Low: Data on gender specificity of knowledge products and attendance at events was not well documented. It may be vastly under-reported by TTLs.

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
			<p>All partners noted the need to improve their data collection, either by retrospectively applying the newly-developed gender responsive screening tool (IUCN), improving gender reporting done by task team leaders (PROFOR), utilizing the CIFOR developed Gender Equity in Research Scale (GEIRS), a tool that measures gender relevance in research and streamlines gender into monitoring and evaluation procedures, and gives an indication of gender relevance and responsiveness for each project. To date, CIFOR has applied the tool to 43 projects within and beyond KNOWFOR, and 19 projects have been assessed as gender relevant, 4 of which have KNOWFOR funding. In response to the delay in finalising inconsistent gender reporting requirements since the start of KNOWFOR, CIFOR has noted a progressive improvement in taking gender into consideration over the course of KNOWFOR, while PROFOR is developing guidance notes and tools to assist the inclusion of gender analysis and gender transformative actions, and IUCN is undertaking more rigorous analysis of gender dimensions in 2017.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender responsiveness of knowledge products. Overall 38% gender relevant and 16% gender specific: 2013 (not reported); 2014 (45% gender relevant, 3% gender specific), 2015 (>50% gender relevant, 15% gender specific), and 2016 (17% gender relevant and 28% gender specific). Overall 16% of products rated high on the Gender Equity in Research Scale (3% in 2014; 15% in 2015; 28% in 2016) 		<p>CIFOR: Medium: Inconsistencies in reporting and the development of the gender dimension after the start of KNOWFOR made the level of analysis more superficial than it could have been, making it difficult to substantiate the conclusions required for this indicator.</p>
Meeting needs-outputs	Were the knowledge products relevant and targeted to requirements of users? And were these knowledge practices enhanced through feedback and learning?	9 narrative descriptions of good practice examples of creating processes and/or products that identified and delivered on audience specific information needs including at least one example that delivered on the needs of women or girls (logframe output indicator 1.4)	<p>Despite inconsistencies in the reporting for this output due to the delayed requirement for all activities to identify their audiences, all partners were able to demonstrate incidence of good practice which illustrates the relevance of knowledge products and events to target audiences.</p> <p>IUCN developed and reported 3 narrative descriptions (ROAM, Gender in FLR, and Bonn Challenge commitments) including one that spoke specifically to the needs of women and girls (Gender in FLR). These highlighted how ROAM was translated into other languages to meet demand from 23 countries – including animated guidance; demands for a gender-responsive ROAM were met by piloting, including tailor-making a GPoA for Brazil; and producing FLR opportunity maps for DRC and Burundi which revealed that more than 10 million hectares is suitable afforestation, resulting in a World Bank expression of interest to provide financial support valued at 50 million dollars to Burundi's commitment to the Bonn Challenge in collaboration with IUCN.</p> <p>PROFOR's three deep-dive case studies and four outcome stories demonstrated good practice in identifying, targeting and adapting knowledge products to audience information needs, including: meeting the needs of activity designers in the World Bank; development of options for effective institutional coordination reform for Watershed Management met the immediate needs of the Indian Government as well as World Bank staff developing similar programs (most directly in Haiti, Nigeria and Malawi); tailoring the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) forestry module to the needs of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry/DG forestry in Turkey; using PROFOR's multi-stakeholder-based governance diagnostic tool for project design in Mozambique, etc.</p> <p>Rather than producing the three narrative examples, CIFOR utilised a survey to demonstrate product relevance. Overall, the majority of CIFOR's KNOWFOR projects and associated knowledge products were relevant and targeted to the requirements of users, with 88% of knowledge users accessing CIFOR products finding them quite or highly relevant to their work. When target audiences did provide feedback on the quality, utility and accessibility of the project outputs, it was positive. Deliberate, evidence-based reflection and learning is increasing in CIFOR – both within projects and across projects.</p> <p>In addition, the case study data (see below) also indicated that KNOWFOR outputs were driven in response to demand in the majority of cases including: Bonn, Guatemala, Finance, PEN, Fire and Haze, Governance and Poverty, and Forests. While the PROFOR Governance DRC sub-case study was more driven by the supply-side in contrast to the Mozambique Governance case study. The CIFOR Fire and Haze case did not always reach the right audiences and the format of outputs was not always appropriate in the CIFOR Brazil Nut case. Importantly, where</p>	<p>IUCN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting ROAM into practice. IUCN, in collaboration with partners, released in 2014 the print version of the ROAM Handbook. It is based on real experience from national assessments undertaken in Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico and Rwanda in 2013–14. From eight countries in 2014, the demand for use and application of ROAM has grown to twenty-three countries. IUCN adopted a multi-pronged approach to bridge the 'Know-Do' gap in meeting national commitments. In addition to translating the ROAM Handbook into various languages, a series of animated videos outlining the various steps in ROAM was created. Outreach activities were further supported by a series of capacity-building programs at international, national and sub-national levels. Further, IUCN also invested significantly in establishing and strengthening regional FLR hubs in Latin America, Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia. The main achievement of this multi-pronged approach was increased ownership and use of ROAM outputs by key stakeholders. MAINSTREAMING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN FLR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION. In 2015, responding to the demands from countries, IUCN piloted gender-responsive ROAM in Brazil and Malawi. The objective of the pilot was to apply gender-responsive ROAM at national and sub-national level. To fully understand and involve both women and men's specific roles, priorities, and needs in the assessment, we organised capacity-building sessions on 'Defining the path on gender and FLR' for partners and stakeholders in Brazil (March 2016) and in Malawi (June 2016). Additionally, in Brazil, an assessment of national policies and intervention opportunities was undertaken, and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) were identified as a prime entry point and opportunity for collaboration to further enhance the gender-responsive approach to FLR and conservation. A tailor-made GPoA was created for Brazil as a part of these workshops, including a list of "Gender Golden Procedures," that is, global and widely-applicable best practices for mainstreaming gender in FLR. In Malawi, as part of ongoing assessments, gender focal points have been assigned to each working group under the task force. These focal points are providing guidance on incorporating the stakeholder-developed GPoA in each of the activities. SUPPORTING DRC AND BURUNDI IN DEVELOPING ROADMAP FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BONN CHALLENGE COMMITMENTS. IUCN, in partnership with WRI, assisted the DRC with producing FLR opportunity maps which revealed that more than 10 million hectares is suitable afforestation. These maps were approved during a national workshop organised in November 2015 and were used during COP21 to advocate for the mobilization of technical and financial partners for the implementation of DRC's restoration commitment. Similarly, Burundi shared the progress of its FLR implementation at COP21 to garner technical and financial support for their work. Following this, the World Bank expressed interest in providing financial support valued at 50 million dollars to Burundi for FLR projects. IUCN and the World Bank are currently developing a project that should contribute to implementing Burundi's commitment to the Bonn Challenge. The Governments in both countries have also established a multi-sector national taskforce to monitor implementation and coordinate with IUCN and other partners. <p>PROFOR</p> <p>The deep-dive case studies, prepared under the KNOWFOR evaluation, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India Watersheds deep-dive, which illustrates how a dedicated champion is crucial to taking a high-quality knowledge product (originally crafted for Indian policymakers) to policy-makers in three other countries—Haiti, Malawi and Nigeria. Forest Governance deep-dive, which demonstrates how a governance diagnostic exercise feeds into the design of a \$60+ million forest project in Mozambique; brings a non-traditional stakeholder (the chainsaw loggers) to the table in DRC; and disseminates forest governance assessment approaches via e-learning, to would-be users and decision-makers. Forests-Poverty deep-dive, demonstrates how producing evidence-based KPs have influenced a spectrum of policymakers and decision-makers in India, Philippines and Turkey. A manifestation of the impacts is clear in India in the shape of increased investment lending in forest projects. A similar impact will likely ensue in Philippines and in Turkey. <p>Summaries of outcome stories are included later. Full reports are available upon request.</p> <p>CIFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DFID led a survey of knowledge users, 85% of these users had accessed forest-related knowledge from CIFOR. 88% of respondents (table 5) said that CIFOR support was either quite relevant (44%) or highly relevant (44%) to their work. In 2014, projects under KNOWFOR planned to maximize the chances of target audiences finding work accessible, credible and relevant by: employing active engagement strategies which involved working in partnership and interacting directly with target audiences to build relationships spreading the message by publishing and presenting research working through online networking tools Four projects in this year received feedback from target audiences, all of which was positive. On an organizational level, CIFOR made a conscientious effort through its reporting in this year to reflect upon what was learned about successful engagement with target audiences, and where efforts should be directed for improvement. Notable lessons about successful engagement include: - Making use of networks and engaging relevant stakeholders throughout the research process to increase buy in of outputs and extend reach; hosting focus group discussions with target audience at conception to identify research gaps and needs, building trust Critical reflections include: Insufficient capacity building with local partners to implement suggestions, Difficult to identify target groups ad-hoc, Large multi-stakeholder forums beneficial for reaching large audiences, but not most suitable because the message is not targeted During interviews with 10 CIFOR project leaders, they saw the increased emphasis on and support for understanding, reaching and effectively engaging knowledge users as most significant changes resulting from the KNOWFOR investment. 	Met (but narrowly for gender)	<p>Overall rating medium</p> <p>IUCN - Medium-High level: Evidence supporting: putting ROAM into practice in Rwanda and pledge to BC in DRC and Burundi ranked high in confidence, evidence supporting the gender consideration in FLR ranked medium.</p> <p>PROFOR- Medium: Evidence sourced from informants who provided information on relevance for PROFOR case studies as well as available documentation.</p> <p>CIFOR- Medium: This indicator was developed in Phase 2 of KNOWFOR, and as such, information pertaining to it was inconsistently reported on throughout KNOWFOR. Relevance addressed by evidence sources in case studies as well as KEQ2 MSC stories.</p>

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
			<p>products did not 'hit the mark' in terms of relevance these cases provide valuable learnings (see 'Learnings').</p> <p>There is limited data on the enhancement of knowledge practices through feedback and learning, however there are a number of promising practices in this regard including ongoing refinement of the ROAM guidelines by IUCN, the inclusion of gender into the Brazilian NBSAP through a critical review and feedback process (IUCN), adaption of e-Learning Governance modules by PROFOR and the evolution of inter-disciplinary research transfer processes by CIFOR to meet audience needs (see Brazil Nut case study). KEQ2 also provides examples of internal practice change within all three partner organizations to adapt, improve and embed gender and DMEL processes (see KEQ2).</p>			
END OF PROGRAMME OUTCOME	To what extent and how did KNOWFOR equip decision-makers at different levels?	KNOWFOR is rated as 'Meeting expectations' or 'Above expectations' in the Uptake rubric. (logframe EOPO indicator 1.1) And at least 30 outcome stories are captured to demonstrate this. (Logframe EOPO indicator 1.2)	<p>Overall KNOWFOR has equipped a vast range of decision-makers (forestry related policy-makers and practitioners) at multiple scales: globally, regionally, nationally and sub-nationally and at community, group and individual level/s. Actors have been equipped with knowledge, tools, resources as well as with capacity (skills and ability) and a mandate to act. Not all KNOWFOR funded work has resulted in decision-makers being better equipped for a range of reasons – some outside the control of the programme (i.e. political instability, staff turnover etc.) – but there is sound evidence and tangible examples of decision-makers being better equipped because of KNOWFOR output, engagement and effort by partners to bridge the knowledge to action divide within the forestry and land use sectors.</p> <p>Case studies & outcome stories demonstrate that decision-makers are equipped at multiple levels by KNOWFOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Globally and regionally: i.e. 23 countries supported by IUCN under KNOWFOR to undertake ROAM National and sub-national governments: i.e. Peru (CIFOR Brazil Nut), Rwanda, Mexico, Guatemala (IUCN, ROAM), Mozambique (Governance) Development partners: i.e. World Bank investment and priorities in India Nigeria, Malawi, Haiti (Watershed), World Bank LSMS (PEN) Researchers: academics: PEN, Brazil Nut Private sector: i.e. Peru concessionaires & workers (Brazil Nut) NGOs & civil society: i.e. advocacy (Fire and Haze, Guatemala) Limited influence beyond targeted audience in Peru (Brazil Nut), Guatemala and DRC; due to skepticism about FLR (Guatemala), limited private sector involvement (Guatemala), unsuitable timing and insufficient demand (DRC Governance) <p>The majority of activities and projects have exceeded expectation in terms of knowledge uptake. All six thematic areas in which IUCN works were assessed as able to reach the majority of the planned target audiences and equipped them with knowledge and tools to commit to, plan, and initiate forest landscape restoration. IUCN also worked with unanticipated boundary partners and have been able to inform policy debates and influence policies. The audience that were most engaged in uptake of knowledge generated by the 55% of PROFOR activities that exceeded expectation (i.e. beyond reaching audiences) was World Bank staff. KNOWFOR knowledge was used to inform development of some 71 new operations/programs.</p> <p>CIFOR also exceeded its target in the Uptake Rubric, with 74% of KNOWFOR activities meeting or exceeded expectations (Phase 1) with 37% of research activities having significantly informed policy or practice changes, with the figures for Phase 2 85% and 67% respectively. These include 10 research projects that have significantly informed policy debates or contributed to policy or practice changes. CIFOR analysis of success concluded that the most significant factor contributing to achieving outcomes in policy and practice change was effective engagement. In addition, in locations where CIFOR's reputation is highly regarded due to their perception as a neutral actor, uptake was</p>	<p>KNOWFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 outcome stories (all partners); of which 15 clearly identify and substantiate that decision-makers were equipped through KNOWFOR 9 case studies (all partners) all of which to some degree provide evidence that decision-makers were equipped by KNOWFOR. <p>IUCN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thematic areas to which the uptake rubric was applied were: the application of ROAM, development of knowledge products and tools for gender-responsive FLR, green growth and FLR, enhancing food security through FLR, contribution of FLR to Zero net deforestation and sustainable cocoa production demonstrated, contribution of FLR to enhancing resilience demonstrated. Selected illustrations, drawn from the annual reports submitted to DFID by IUCN from 2013-2016, below show how a sample of activities met or exceeded expectations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil's National Restoration Initiative: The background document with key strategies and activities to develop and implement a national restoration plan was assembled Mainstreaming ROAM through the CBD's Capacity-building workshops on ecosystem conservation and restoration to support achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets: Number of countries has given rise to demand for follow up technical support to assist them in applying ROAM or some of its tools to help identify opportunities to restore degraded and deforested lands. Supporting countries that have made a pledge to the Bonn Challenge – the Rwanda and Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact experiences: Forest landscape restoration strategy for Rwanda played a key role in unlocking 3.8 million Euros of support from BMUB IKI for forest landscape restoration efforts in Rwanda. The Rwanda experience has generated demand for restoration assessment activities in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. Development of a web-based database and monitoring system for the AFRP, and the development of a web-portal to support and engage landowners on restoration of "legal reserves". Influencing international climate and development agenda: Integration of restoration into action deliverables for the Climate Summit Forest Action Area in 2014, the Bonn Challenge 2.0 High and the CoP in Lima and Paris. Equipping national/ sub-national levels policy-makers and practitioners: Equipping national and sub-national levels policy-makers and practitioners in more than 15 countries with tools and methods to support policy and implementation on FLR e.g. in Brazil, Rwanda, Uganda, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Costa Rica and North Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. Capacity building of over 2600 people from over 20 countries. <p>Knowledge products and engagement informing policy and practice change at national level: ROAM, developed with support from KNOWFOR, is now being applied in 23 countries to support the national land sub-national level assessment of restoration planning and implementation; in December 2015, the Government of India announced a pledge to restore 13 million hectares of degraded land by 2020 towards the Bonn Challenge. Further, IUCN and key local partners conducted an analysis of the landscape approach and governance in India, which has contributed to India's new draft National Forest Policy of 2016. Unanticipated boundary partners engaged and equipped: UN-REDD countries and others learned about FLR and ROAM through 2 REDD+ Academy sessions; GIZ has commissioned a study for assessing the opportunities for FLR in Ethiopia using ROAM and UNISDR is exploring with IUCN how to assess and plan responses to disaster risk situations through the identification, mapping and analysis of restoration opportunities; while APP is the first private sector company to announce its commitment to the Bonn Challenge, other private sector companies like Kingfisher, The Body Shop, SCA, and Kimberly-Clarke are interested in exploring how FLR could contribute to their sustainability goals.</p> <p>Outcome stories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Equipping national/ sub-national levels policy-makers and practitioners: Guatemala launched the National Strategy for Forest Landscape Restoration (ENRPF) in 2015 that aims to restore 1.2 million hectares of degraded lands in a sustainable manner by 2045. Guatemala launched a new forest law, PROBOSQUES, which provides an expanded set of incentives for reforestation, restoration, and forest management. Additionally, progress was made towards mainstreaming FLR by raising awareness about its multiple benefits e.g. to large-scale water supply projects and food security, etc. Supporting sub-national level planning for restoration activities (Espírito Santo, Brazil): Espírito Santo state in Brazil has made a commitment to restore 80,000 hectares through the REFLORESTAR programme Use of innovative methods such as radio and mobile phone application to reach farmers and landholders on technique and methods for implementation restoration activities (Uganda): Thousands of households in the Mt. Elgon region in Uganda were equipped with information on FLR through an innovative radio programme and mobile phone application. It resulted in 91% of the community using recommended techniques, thereby contributing to the implementation of Uganda's 2.5 million hectares restoration commitment. <p>PROFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> of the 43 completed activities from 2013-2016: the majority (24) were assessed as "exceeding" expectations in the uptake checklist, 13 met expectation and 6 were below expectation of the 24 which <u>exceeded</u> expectations, the incidence of additional rubric categories being met included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> influenced World Bank operations or partners = 19 Policy/practice influenced or changed = 8 Products inform policy debate = 7 Knowledge used in other countries/regions = 5 Unanticipated audiences reached = 4 Of those not meeting expectations, this was mostly due to a lack of evidence that the targeted broader audience had been reached and/or dissemination activities that had been delayed were only planned to commence after activity closure. 71 country led investment operations and 18 policies/practices were influenced (NB a single programme can have influence over multiple operations etc.) Case study examples are provided in the section below <p>PROFOR outcome stories include:</p>		<p>IUCN- Medium: case studies demonstrate uptake through a variety of evidence sources, which range in quality, some of which have been verified (i.e. partner testimony) and others which have not been substantiated (i.e. IUCN reporting).</p> <p>PROFOR- Medium: The uptake rubric is applied to the Completion and Progress reporting done by the TTLs. In many examples, only anecdotal evidence is provided that their work 'informed designs' or 'influenced Bank staff'. While there is no reason to doubt the claims, most do not have additional information sources which verify them. Overall, case studies provide limited but credible evidence.</p> <p>CIFOR- Medium. Case studies and outcome stories provide limited albeit credible evidence. Some uptake claims verified and substantiated while others were not.</p>

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
			more likely and there was a positive influence on achieving outcomes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Congo, DRC-Cameroon, which supported evidence gathering for the domestic wood manufacturing sector (including the informal part) in the two countries and crafted a set of recommendations for reforming the sector, This is under consideration by policymakers, investors and development partners. 2. Tunisia Oases development, which illustrates how PROFOR support to six Oasis Participatory Development Plans (OPDPs) that address local social, economic, environmental and institutional priorities in lagging regions in Tunisia, have influenced national policies and investments. 3. Mexico benefit sharing for REDD+, which illustrates how, through a consultative process with stakeholders, the forestry agency (CONAFOR) has identified the most feasible benefit sharing approach suited to its needs and capacity. 4. Russia forest governance diagnostics, collected inputs from a spectrum of stakeholders and provided inputs into the intended reform of Russia's notional forest policy. 5. Indonesia, where a long period of engagement with different stakeholders and across several sectors such as agriculture, mining and energy, have influenced policies related to forest fire and haze management, lowland and peat-forest development, etc. <p>CIFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: 2013-2015: CIFOR's target in the uptake rubric in reporting year is 50% of activities rated as meeting expectations or above expectations. Results: 14 out of 19 activities (74%) that were mature enough to equip policymakers and practitioners met or exceeded expectations. • Phase 2: 2015-2017: CIFOR has achieved the desired target of 85% of mature subjects achieving or above expectations (67%). Activities that have just started in 2016 and are less mature in terms of outcomes have had inception meetings, developed a theory of change and engagement plans. • 7 research activities have significantly informed policy or practice changes • The 10 research projects that have been assessed as exceeding expectations include: Bushmeat, Global Landscapes Forum, Fire and Haze, SLANT, Climate change, Furniture value chain, Food Security, Corporate Commitments, Forest Landscape Restoration, and the PEN. • produced 9 Outcome Stories to document narrative examples of how policy and practice change has come about as a result of a given research project (i.e. how decision-makers were equipped). The most significant factor contributing to achieving outcomes in policy and practice change was effective engagement. Successfully equipping decision-makers through engagement requires a favorable enabling environment (i.e. the government's priorities give demand to the knowledge being produced) and connections with change agents in a given network. Therefore, in country presence and participatory collaboration with partners is critical in meeting the needs of target audiences, and subsequently equipping decision-makers 		
Shorter-term impacts	What outcomes if any, did KNOWFOR contribute to in terms of changes in policy and practice?	No target for this - but we are expecting to see sufficient instances of knowledge uptake demonstrated in case studies and outcome stories and captured in above expectations level of rubric	<p>KNOWFOR has influenced a range of policy and practice changes, which have been instigated and catalyzed at least in part through KNOWFOR outputs and efforts to engage and equip policy-makers and practitioners (see above). Where policy and practice changes have been effected (see below) partners deliberately planned for knowledge uptake, identified key audiences, used existing networks and fora and delivered research that was both credible and relevant. Impacts were achieved in conducive contexts where research met with national priorities and reform processes, where political will was mobilized, and where clear pathways to action were in place. In addition, timing was critical in all cases where impact was achieved. Typically, policy and practice changes were influenced through a combination of these mechanisms and contextual factors.</p> <p>The level of contribution of KNOWFOR to short term impacts in policy and practice changes varies from case to case. In some cases, the level of contribution is found to be high; such as in the Peru Brazil Nut case study where national forestry policy was influenced by science for the first time. In other changes investigated by case studies, the influence of KNOWFOR is lower because of the multitude of factors influencing the outcome. For instance, KNOWFOR was one factor among many which have led to the securement of an estimated \$200 million in FLR investment.</p>	<p>Analysis of the 19 outcomes stories and 9 case studies of partner contribution to practice and policy changes demonstrate that KNOWFOR has contributed to a wide range of policy and practice changes at multiple levels. Policy and practice changes influenced by KNOWFOR include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • influencing national commitments to the Bonn Challenge; (from 5 (2012) to 40 (2017) countries; 23 countries directly supported by KNOWFOR support); By mid-2016 Bonn Challenge crossed 100 million ha of commitments and became embed in high-level regional policy process • influencing commitments from 13 countries to the Kigali Declaration), • providing inputs to back development investment; i.e. World Bank Forest Investment Programme Mozambique, India-Neeranchal National Watershed Project, FLR finance assisting in unlocking an estimated \$200 Million USD in FLR investments (including (\$54 M USD GEF TRI) • informing National Policy in several countries including: Indonesia Grand Design (Fire and Haze), India (National Guidelines for Watershed development), Guatemala (PROBOSQUE),Peru (Brazil Nut) • establishing support and mobilization for gender mainstreaming as well as informing national policies: i.e. Brazil NBSAP (IUCN) • informing MRV and forest monitoring systems in several countries including Zambia and Brazil (CIFOR) • informing development planning and prioritization; i.e. CIFOR PEN Phase Two informed the World Bank Forest Action Plan (FAP) 16-20 • informing globally used research practices; i.e. CIFOR PEN Phase 2 informed the World Bank Living Standards and Measurement Survey (LSMS) 	KNOWFOR met expectations around this short-term impact by providing multiple examples.	<p>Overall rating: Medium</p> <p>IUCN- Medium: across all three case studies, based on strength of evidence ranking provided within each case study on their respective evidence sources available to support findings.</p> <p>PROFOR- Medium; short term impact claims are supported by multiple sources of evidence. Claims are not fully verified and other factors contributing to practice change are not fully explored.</p> <p>CIFOR- Medium: The majority of impact claims are supported by external references, public statements or citations of CIFOR's work. Four of the cases have been the subject of externally conducted or externally-reviewed outcome assessments</p>
Conclusion	Key evaluation question 1. To what extent did KNOWFOR contribute to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries?	N/A	<p>Overall KNOWFOR was successful in equipping decision-makers and intermediaries with a range of forestry related knowledge tools, information and resources. PROFOR, IUCN and CIFOR KNOWFOR have actively worked with end users and intermediaries to support uptake. As a result, forestry and land use sector policy-makers and practitioners in developing countries are better placed to act on research findings. By extending high quality evidence and research to the global forestry sector KNOWFOR has therefore set a solid foundation for a range of medium to long term development impacts. Each partner has utilized their strengths and position to deliver products and support in order to support. Via KNOWFOR IUCN have lead the effort to establish an international FLR architecture by directly working with 23 countries to undertake inclusive and responsive FLR assessments, which together have enabled the mobilization of over £300 million in funds to support global action on FLR. PROFOR have delivered a high output and value for money by leveraging its unique position within the World Bank to influence a wide range of forest related programs and development priorities. KNOWFOR has contributed to CIFOR's ability to plan for and equip decision-makers and intermediaries within the funded projects (see KEQ2). It is difficult to assess the extent to which CIFOR has equipped decision-makers better as a result of KNOWFOR or whether these results represent an improvement from the time prior to KNOWFOR investment. However, the ability to marshal the evidence to demonstrate these results within KNOWFOR is significantly better than non-KNOWFOR funded projects currently managed at CIFOR.</p>			<p>Medium.</p> <p>Considering the breadth and range of strength of evidence ratings the overall findings are supported by a medium strength of evidence.</p>

	Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
Assumptions			<p><i>The following factors will increase the likelihood that partners' knowledge is able to influence targeted decision-making processes:</i></p> <p>Assumption 1: User-centred design using theory of change, stakeholder analysis and tailoring knowledge products will lead to improved uptake. There is evidence, though somewhat limited at this stage, that clarification of theory of change and a greater focus on knowledge uptake pathways has enabled KNOWFOR project leads to be more focussed and tactical in their efforts to influence change. Case studies and outcome stories demonstrate that linking project activities to a clear purpose and use increases the likelihood of research being used. However, the extent to which this in turn contributed to improved knowledge uptake is hard to categorically demonstrate. There are many variables that influence uptake including timing, capability, networks and experience of the project teams involved, resources, internal (i.e. institutional capacity) and external factors (i.e. political climate). However, we tentatively conclude that this assumption is more likely than not to be true, although more evidence is needed.</p> <p>Assumption 2: Adaptive management and refining the project approaches based on monitoring and reflection will increase uptake. Around half of the case studies and similarly half of the outcome stories provide examples of adaptive management approaches being applied in KNOWFOR funded projects and activities. Yet there are cases where there was no evidence of projects changing or adapting activities in response to changing needs and contexts. However, we conclude that this assumption is not sufficiently evidenced</p> <p>Assumption 3: Dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas and knowledge co-production with decision-makers are crucial to influencing policy and practice. Overall this assumption supported is in practice, experience and by available evidence. Further evidence may be required to confirm. There is some evidence that this assumption may not be always supported; i.e. when the context is not conducive or the timing is not right.</p> <p>Assumption 4: There is an advantage in bringing three complimentary organisations (CIFOR, PROFOR, IUCN) together to maximise knowledge uptake in forest related sectors. With exceptions (DMEL, Gender & other ad hoc examples) this assumption is not widely supported by partner experience and available evidence in the programme. However all partners recognise the value and potential of inter-organisational collaboration with one another. See KEQ3 for more detail.</p>			Low-medium: Limited available evidence to address Assumptions across the programme.

8.4. Annex 4: Evaluation Methodology

8.4.1 Key evaluation questions and sub-questions

The key evaluation questions and sub-questions used to guide this evaluation are set out below. The primary questions that this evaluation sought to answer are KEQ1 and KEQ2, while KEQ3 has been a secondary concern.

1. How and to what extent did **KNOWFOR contribute** to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries? If so, what lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR's approach to translating knowledge for action?
 - 1.1. To what extent were programme outcomes realised and were there examples of KNOWFOR activities contributing to policy or practice change?
 - 1.2. How and under what conditions were decision-makers equipped by our knowledge processes and products?
 - 1.3. What were the positive or negative unexpected outcomes of these efforts?
 - 1.4. What promising practices can be identified through partner experience?
 - 1.5. What lessons have been learned from partner experience?

2. What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake **their core business** and how enduring are these changes likely to be?
 - 2.1. What were the changes and why did this vary between partners (with a particular emphasis on gender, collaboration and DMEL)?
 - 2.2. What were the positive or negative unexpected outcomes of these efforts?
 - 2.3. How sustainable are any changes to organisational practices likely to be and what factors are influencing this?
 - 2.4. Has KNOWFOR incentivised partner collaboration? If so, in what ways and how sustainable is this likely to be?
 - 2.5. What lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR's approach to influencing partner systems?

3. What were KNOWFOR's programme **approach and management processes** and were these effective, appropriate and relevant?
 - 3.1 What are the key features and principles of the KNOWFOR approach?

3.2 How effective and appropriate was this approach?

3.3 Looking forward, how relevant are the KNOWFOR objectives and approach to DFID’s policy context and to the development context more broadly?

8.4.2 Methodology to address questions

Table 16 shows how these questions were answered using different methods. It should be noted that KEQ 1 (essentially about outcomes) took up 80% of the evaluation effort.

Table 16: Methods for addressing the KEQs

Key question	Methods
KEQ1. Did KNOWFOR contribute to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries? If so, what lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR’s approach to translating knowledge for action?	1. Partner-level results charts to synthesise evidence against programme-wide logic
	2. Synthesis of data from partner-level results chart into a summary results chart for the programme
	3. Outcome stories and lessons learned stories from project-level work
	4. Three in-depth case studies per implementing partner
	5. Cross-case analysis of case studies to analyse key success factors and lessons
	6. Judgement of performance, strength of evidence and contribution in an all-partner summit workshop
	7. Agreement on key contributing success factors and lessons for future programmes at summit workshop
KEQ2. What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake their core business and how enduring are these changes likely to be?	8. Case study on how the DMEL process was developed, used and how it influenced business practices (using a performance story approach)
	9. Key informant interviews to understand how collaboration happened, and the extent to which gender was integrated into the programme cycle
	10. Review of project reports and documents to supplement the case study and interview data
KEQ3. What were KNOWFOR’s programme approach and management processes and were these effective and appropriate?	11. Documentation and clarification of the KNOWFOR approach
	12. Semi-structured interviews with key informants to explore the strengths and weaknesses of this approach
	13. ‘Light’ value for money analysis

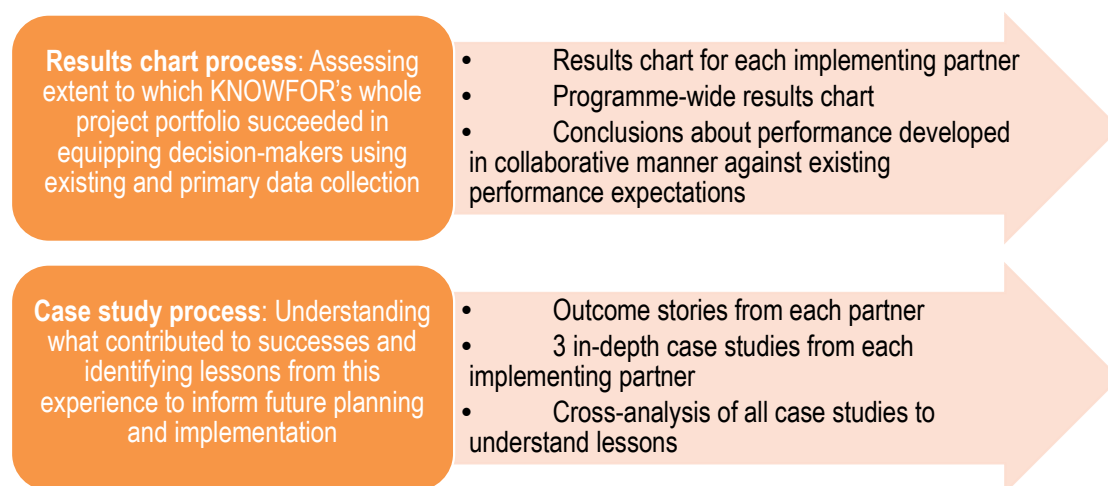
8.4.3 Approach to addressing KEQ 1

Based on the COR approach (Dart and Roberts, 2014), the evaluation took a theory-driven approach (Weiss, 1997) to understanding how partner activities have contributed to programme outcomes. This involved developing a testable, causal model (such as the programme-wide ToC) to demonstrate a clear line of sight between what activities were done and how this contributed to equipping decision-makers, influencing policy and practice, and ultimately supporting wider social and environmental impacts. This approach built on (and tested) the investment KNOWFOR made in developing theory-driven planning, monitoring and evaluation systems and supporting the use of existing data collected through these systems.

Key evaluation question 1 can be usefully broken down into two components:

- An assessment of the extent to which KNOWFOR’s whole project portfolio succeeded in reaching, and potentially equipping, decision-makers using existing and primary data collection. This was tackled by reporting on the results at a broad level against the programme-wide ToC and supplementing these findings with case studies.
- An in-depth analysis of the factors that supported a successful interface with decision-makers. This analysis was based on cross-analysis of partner-developed outcome stories and case studies, which was explored and finalised in a partner workshop.

Two main components were used for this assessment: a programme-wide **results chart**, and **case studies** of specific successful activities. These components are summarised in the diagram below and explained more fully below. While they are depicted as two separate streams of work, the case studies also provided evidence to support the causal relationships between specific activities and outcomes.



Creation of a programme-wide ‘results chart’

A **results chart** is one component of COR (Dart and Roberts, 2014) and is a feature of the KNOWFOR DMEL approach. The table below shows the column headings for a results chart. It brought together our need to understand results against both the ToC and the logframe targets. It also allowed us to note the strength of evidence for each row of the table.

Performance question	Target results for October 2017	Performance summary at each level	Evidence	Performance rating	Evidence rating
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We developed the results chart by first developing a series of performance questions at each level of the ToC – these questions were then ‘answered’ by assembling evidence against the question and drawing a conclusion. The final results chart can be found in Annex 4. The results chart makes reference to targets from the programme logframe and the extent to which they were achieved (column 2). The collective answers to these questions form an evidence-based story about performance against the ToC and logframe, which can then be compared against expected performance to make an assessment of overall programme performance.

The results chart for this evaluation covered the period from March 2012 to October 2016. A separate chart was created for each of the three partners, and at a programme-wide level, which cross-references the case studies. The process steps for developing the results charts are shown in Table 17.

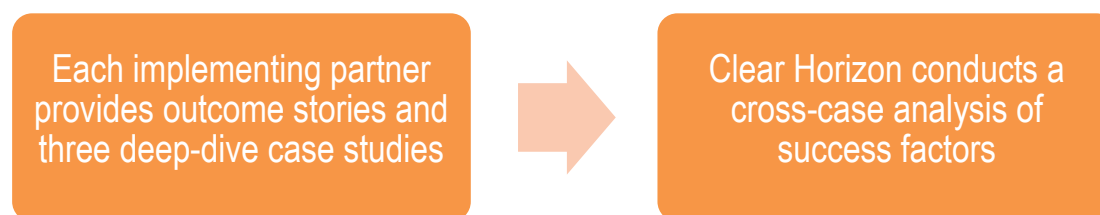
Table 17: Process for developing the results chart

Steps	Who does each step
1. Develop a set of sub-questions based on the programme-wide ToC	Clear Horizon develops questions (see below)
2. Synthesise all existing data against these questions for each implementing partner	Implementing partners
3. Identify and fill data gaps per implementing partner	Implementing partners
4. Complete the results chart for each implementing partner	Implementing partners
5. Synthesise a programme-wide results chart against the questions	Clear Horizon synthesises data at programme-wide level
6. Draw conclusions about the performance in collaborative manner against existing performance expectations	Judgements made together at the programme level during the summit workshop – facilitated by Clear Horizon
7. Draw conclusions about the extent to which the assumptions held true and the strength of the evidence	Conclusions made together at the programme level during the summit workshop – facilitated by Clear Horizon

Case studies and outcome stories

The aims of the deep-dive case studies and the outcome stories are to provide further evidence of contribution to outcomes and to enable cross-case analysis of the factors that enabled this uptake to occur.

Each partner also produced brief outcome stories (looking at what led to successfully equipping decision-makers) as well as three more comprehensive and in-depth case studies. The evaluation facilitator conducted the initial cross-case analysis to explore what contributed to successes and identified lessons from this experience to inform future planning and implementation, and the findings were verified in the final summit workshop.



Methodology for in-depth case studies

Case studies were selected at the partner level using a purposive sampling strategy. This involved partners selecting cases where their work resulted in successfully equipping decision-makers. This

strategy was chosen for the purposes of understanding what contributed to successes and identifying lessons from this experience to inform future planning and implementation. Another important feature of the case studies is that they will explore unexpected positive or negative outcomes. The case studies were developed using one of two approaches:

- **Performance Story Reporting.** The Performance Story Reporting technique is a framework for reporting on contribution to long-term outcomes using mixed methods. The process steps include clarifying the programme logic, developing guiding questions for the social inquiry process and data trawl. Final conclusions about the extent to which an intervention has contributed to outcomes are made collectively by programme teams and stakeholders based on an assessment of the strength of the evidence. An example of how this technique works can be found in the DMEL case study that was prepared in 2015.
- **Episode Studies.** Episode study methodology was developed by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and is designed to investigate the influence of research on policy. The studies typically focus on a clear policy change and trace backwards to establish what factors contributed to this outcome. In contrast to most theory-driven evaluation, an episode study takes the policy change as the starting point for enquiry rather than the intervention itself. ODI argues that the crucial advantage of an episode study is that the process of working backwards gives a more realistic view of the broad range of factors that influence policy.

8.4.4 Approach to addressing KEQ2:

KEQ 2: What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake their core business and how enduring are these changes likely to be?

This evaluation question is somewhat inward looking, and placed a large focus on the extensive work that was done around capacity building and development in DMEL, improving partner collaboration and gender mainstreaming. The sub-questions are shown below.

KEQ 2. What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake their core business and how enduring are these changes likely to be?:

- What influence has KNOWFOR had on how partners undertake **their core business** and how enduring are these changes likely to be?
- What were the positive or negative unexpected outcomes from these efforts?
- What were the changes and why did this vary between partners? (with particular emphasis on gender; collaboration and DMEL).
- How sustainable are any changes to organisational practices likely to be and what factors are influencing this?
- Has KNOWFOR incentivised partner collaboration? If so in what ways and how sustainable is this likely to be?
- What lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR's approach to influencing partner systems?

This question relates to the ‘foundational level’⁶¹ of the KNOWFOR ToC. The ToC assumes that in order for partners to effectively equip decision-makers, they need to have:

- appropriate DMEL approaches
- effective collaboration between partners to support learning and enhance the influence on key target groups
- the ability to appropriately integrate gender into the programme cycle.

This question was answered by drawing on three key methods:

- Case studies on how the DMEL process was developed, used and how it influenced business practices (using a performance story approach).
- Key informant interviews to understand how collaboration happened, and the extent to which gender was integrated into the programme cycle. The interview guide is provided in Annex 6. The guide was adapted during the course of data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all interview participants prior to the interview.
- Review of project reports and documents to supplement the case study and interview data including annual reporting.

Given that a substantial case study was completed in 2015, the DMEL aspects relied primarily on this existing study. The process involved updating the existing results chart for the DMEL case study with new data against the expanded sub-questions that include gender and collaboration. Gaps were identified and Clear Horizon conducted interviews with partners to fill any remaining gaps.

8.4.5 Approach to addressing KEQ3

KEQ 3: What were KNOWFOR’s programme approach and management processes and were these effective appropriate and relevant?

Question 3 was addressed by first clarifying ‘what is the KNOWFOR programme approach’ by articulating the KNOWFOR management structures and processes in consultation with partners. Second, a series of interviews were conducted with DFID and partners regarding the effectiveness and appropriateness of the approaches and relevance of the KNOWFOR objectives in the changing context.

KEQ 3. What were KNOWFOR’s programme approach and management processes and were these effective, appropriate and relevant?

- What are the key features and principles of the KNOWFOR approach?
- How effective and appropriate was this approach?
- Looking forward, how relevant are the KNOWFOR objectives and approach to DFID’s policy context and to the development context more broadly?

Specifically, the evaluation drew on:

⁶¹ These are the internal outcomes needed to facilitate the achievement of partner outcomes.

- articulating and checking the KNOWFOR approach and processes
- key informant interviews with internal partner stakeholders
- key informant interviews with DFID.

Process for addressing key evaluation question 3



8.5. Annex 5: Approach to assessing KNOWFOR’s VFM

The original evaluation plan outlined our commitment to assess the VFM of KNOWFOR. To this end, a concept paper was written in August 2016 that took a novel network-mapping approach to VFM. However, progress was halted when stakeholders could not agree on the methodology. Given these difficulties, a lighter and more pragmatic approach was proposed and agreed together with partners. This approach is somewhat limited due to the missed opportunity to influence data collection at the onset. In March 2017, at a whole-of-partner summit workshop in London we agreed that:

- Clear Horizon would use the ICAI approach to VFM to assemble a ‘case’ for the VFM of KNOWFOR, drawing on the existing evaluation data and the additional data that partners agreed to collect.
- Partners agreed to build on at least one of their case studies by including additional data and analysis concerning cost-benefit analysis. We agreed that partners would select their own methodology with regards to how this is done, but that it needed to include reference to costs (in dollars) and discuss outcomes in relation to these costs. At this workshop we shared the Redstone⁶² approach (Redstone, 2013), which all three partners applied a variant of. This approach includes a step where the contribution of the partners is assessed and expressed as a percentage.
- All partners were also asked to compile data on *additional money leveraged* – this was provided by 2/3 partners – it was not provided by CIFOR.

DFID defines VFM in its programmes as maximising the impact of each pound spent to improve poor people’s lives. According to DFID (2011)⁶³, the purpose of the VFM drive is to develop a better understanding (and better articulation) of costs and results so they can make more informed, evidence-based choices.

⁶² <https://www.redstonestrategy.com/publications/new-approach-global-think-tank-network/>.

⁶³ DFID, 2011, “DFIDs Approach to Value for Money”, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67479/DFID-approach-value-money.pdf
ICAI’s Approach to Effectiveness and Value for Money (2011) Report 1. <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/ICAI-Approach-to-Effectiveness-and-VFM2.pdf>

8.5.1 ICAI approach to VFM

The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) is the independent body responsible for scrutinising UK aid. ICAI’s focus is on maximising the effectiveness of the UK aid budget for intended beneficiaries and on delivering VFM to UK taxpayers.

ICAI’s view is that effectiveness and VFM are inextricably linked. They state ‘*how can a programme be VFM if it is not effective; and if there is poor VFM, is the programme being as effective as it could be?*’ ICAI conducts VFM studies, and when it does this, it frames the study around four key questions which are broken down into sub-questions. It provides a traffic light score for each of these questions. The key questions are:

1. Does the programme have realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan as to how and why the planned intervention will have the intended impact?
2. Does the programme have robust delivery arrangements which support the desired objectives and demonstrate good governance and management through the delivery chain?
3. Is the programme having a transformational, positive and lasting impact on the lives of the intended beneficiaries and is it transparent and accountable?
4. Does the programme incorporate learning to improve future aid delivery?

8.5.2 Sub-questions with indicative approach

Each of the four questions is further broken down into a set of sub-questions. In the table below we indicate how the KNOWFOR evaluation will address each question.

<p>1 Objectives: what is the programme trying to achieve?</p>	<p>KNOWFOR Approach</p>
<p><i>1.1 Does the programme have clear, relevant and realistic objectives that focus on the desired impact?</i></p> <p><i>1.2 Is there a clear and convincing plan, with evidence and assumptions, to show how the programme will work?</i></p> <p><i>1.3 Does the programme complement the efforts of government and other aid providers and avoid duplication?</i></p> <p><i>1.4 Are the programme’s objectives appropriate to the political, economic, social and environmental context?</i></p>	<p>For the first two key questions, Clear Horizon will use the existing evaluation findings as well as drawing from other documents, annual reports and make a first go at providing a conclusion to this statement. This will draw heavily on the findings of KEQ3.</p> <p>There are a few sub-questions where Clear Horizon doesn’t currently have any data or insight. In particular:</p>
<p>2. Delivery: is the delivery chain designed and managed so as to be fit for purpose?</p>	

<p><i>2.1 Is the choice of funding and delivery options appropriate?</i></p> <p><i>2.2 Does programme design and roll-out take into account the needs of the intended beneficiaries?</i></p> <p><i>2.3 Is there good governance at all levels, with sound financial management and adequate steps being taken to avoid corruption?</i></p> <p><i>2.4 Are resources being leveraged so as to work best with others and maximise impact?</i></p> <p><i>2.5 Do managers ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery chain?</i></p> <p><i>2.6 Is there a clear view of costs throughout the delivery chain?</i></p> <p><i>2.7 Are risks to the achievement of the objectives identified and managed effectively?</i></p> <p><i>2.8 Is the programme delivering against its agreed objectives?</i></p> <p><i>2.9 Are appropriate amendments to objectives made to take account of changing circumstances?</i></p>	<p><i>2.4 Are resources being leveraged so as to work best with others and maximise impact?</i></p> <p><i>2.5 Do managers ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery chain?</i></p> <p><i>2.6 Is there a clear view of costs throughout the delivery chain?</i></p> <p>These questions will be picked up by the two additional pieces of work that partners have agreed to do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data on additional money leveraged through the programme • Conduct some form of cost/benefit analysis on at least one case study per partner – this is expected to include an analysis of costs throughout the delivery chain. If partners wish they could use the Redstone strategy approach sent around by John Young https://www.redstonestrategy.com/publications/new-approach-global-think-tank-network/
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<p>3 Impact: what is the impact on intended beneficiaries?</p>	<p>KNOWFOR Approach</p>
<p>3.1 <i>Is the programme delivering clear, significant and timely benefits for the intended beneficiaries?</i></p> <p>3.2 <i>Is the programme working holistically alongside other programmes?</i></p> <p>3.3 <i>Is there a long-term and sustainable impact from the programme?</i></p> <p>3.4 <i>Is there an appropriate exit strategy involving effective transfer of ownership of the programme?</i></p> <p>3.5 <i>Is there transparency and accountability to intended beneficiaries, donors and UK taxpayers?</i></p>	<p>For this question 3.1, Clear Horizon will attempt to draw some conclusions from the cross-case analysis to examine what we know about the impact as well as the contribution of the programme. We can draw on some of the work on gender impacts here too.</p> <p>There was discussion around who are the intended beneficiaries in the case of KNOWFOR. It was agreed that the beneficiaries are the 'decision-makers' rather than people living in poverty.</p>
<p>4 Learning: what works and what needs improvement?</p>	<p>KNOWFOR Approach</p>
<p>4.1 <i>Are there appropriate arrangements for monitoring inputs, processes, outputs, results and impact?</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>Is there evidence of innovation and use of global best practice?</i></p> <p>4.3 <i>Is there anything currently not being done in respect of the programme that should be undertaken?</i></p> <p>4.4 <i>Have lessons about the objectives, design and delivery of the programme been learned and shared effectively?</i></p>	<p>Here we have plenty of data from KEQ2. Clear Horizon will use KEQ3 to form a conclusion to this statement. This will draw heavily on the findings of KEQ3.</p>

8.5.3 Reflection and workshops

The **Evaluation Summit** technique is characterised by the inclusion of a large group workshop process in which a range of stakeholders are encouraged to participate. The Evaluation Summit sees stakeholders analysing data, identifying outcomes, contributing to judgements and developing recommendations. The purpose of the technique is to ensure that judgements made in the evaluation process are based on the values of both the stakeholders and the evaluators. Experience has also demonstrated that it is an effective strategy for encouraging uptake and use of findings by implementers and managers, without the need to wait for a final, polished report.

At the partner level, this process will engage key programme managers and senior leadership as well as key boundary partners or target audiences. At the programme level, this process will see an initial workshop for the three implementing partners and DFID, followed by presentations and sharing with a broader group including appropriate cross-departmental representatives and select members of the KNOWFOR Community of Practice.

Partner-level reflection and judgement

Partners were expected to take part in some analysis and judgement of their performance prior to coming together at a programme-wide level. This included:

1. Case studies being assessed for sufficiency of evidence using the evidence-rating tools and identification of unexpected outcomes.
2. Producing partner-level results charts including judgement of achievement of outcomes against the performance rubrics and targets.
3. Assumptions will need to be assessed for the extent to which they are holding true.

The quality assessor participated in the partner-level sense-making processes.

Programme-wide sense-making

The final conclusions, identification of overarching lessons, promising practices and recommendations for future knowledge programming were discussed during a two-day workshop held in March 2017. **Fourteen** partners attended this workshop.

8.6. Annex 6: Interview Guide (KEQ2 and KEQ3)

Clear Horizon was contracted by the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) to support monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for the KNOWFOR⁶⁴ Programme. KNOWFOR is a partnership between the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Bank Programme on Forests (PROFOR) and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), which aims to increase knowledge uptake by practitioners and decision-makers in the forestry sector. KNOWFOR was implemented between 2012 and 2017.

As part of the final evaluation for KNOWFOR we [Clear Horizon] are conducting a series of interviews with [PARTNER ORGANISATION REPRESENTATIVES] [DFID] [EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS] to ascertain:

- The influence of the programme on the 'core business' of each partner organisation including DMEL, gender and collaboration (KEQ2) [PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES ONLY], and;
- The effectiveness, relevance and appropriateness of the programme approach and management processes (KEQ3).

We would like to invite you to participate in an interview. It should take between 30 and 45 minutes of your time depending on your involvement and familiarity with the programme. Before we begin:

- Is it ok if I record / take notes during this interview? Yes / No
- We won't identify you individually but may associate your comments with your organisation. Is this ok with you? Yes / No
- If there is anything you say that you would prefer not to be associated with just let me know.

1. To begin with, please confirm your:

- Organisation
- Position
- Involvement with KNOWFOR

2. Looking back over your involvement with KNOWFOR what have been the changes (positive and negative, big or small) that you have seen in terms of how projects are planned and implemented?

3. Of these, which do you think was the most important change? And can you tell me about this in more detail?

- How did it work before KNOWFOR?

⁶⁴ Improving the way knowledge on forests is understood and used internationally.

- What happened to influence this change – what was done through KNOWFOR and what were the other influences?
 - How is it done now and what changed – how widespread is this change?
 - Why is this significant or important/ why did you choose this one?
4. In addition to the changes [IDENTIFIED ABOVE] what other changes (positive and/or negative) have occurred in your organisation as a result of KNOWFOR?
- Collaboration
 - Gender
 - DMEL
 - Other
5. What is in place to support these changes into the future?
- Organisational systems / processes
 - Staff capability
 - Resources
 - Leadership / governance
 - Other (identify)
6. Do you know if any of this was adopted outside your organisation? If so by who and how did this happen?
7. What lessons can be drawn from KNOWFOR's approach to influencing partner systems?

Refer to 'Description of KNOWFOR' document'.

8. What do you think are the unique features of the KNOWFOR model? Do you agree with the propositions below?
- a. KNOWFOR places a strong emphasis on improving the design, monitoring, evaluation, learning and gender empowerment. It has invested heavily in improved planning for knowledge use and more deliberate learning and reflection. The theory of change assumes that adaptive management and refining the project approaches based on monitoring and reflection will increase uptake.
 - b. KNOWFOR places a strong emphasis on learning and two-way relationships. The theory of change assumes that dialogue, engagement and exchange of ideas and knowledge co-production with decision-makers are crucial to influencing policy and practice.
 - c. KNOWFOR brings together three international organisations to leverage their comparative strengths and networks. While each of the three partners aims to achieve the same overall outcomes, each has different focuses and strengths. The theory of change assumes that it is an advantage in bringing three complementary

organisations (CIFOR, PROFOR, IUCN) together to maximise knowledge uptake in forest-related sectors.

9. How does this compare with other knowledge-to-policy programmes?

- What are the similarities and differences?
- What is particularly good or strong about this model?
- What further design features could it have integrated?
- What alternative models could have been used?

10. How well managed was the programme?

- What did you see working well?
- What could have been improved?
- What about the governance?

Thank you for your time and input. We will include your responses in the Final KNOWFOR Evaluation. If you have any queries about the programme contact Gaia Alison at DFID (g-allison@dfid.gov.uk) or for any evaluation-related enquiries contact Stuart Raetz or Jess Dart at Clear Horizon (stuart@clearhorizon.com.au or jess@clearhorizon.com.au).

8.7. Annex 7: Strength of Evidence Tool

Table 18. Strength of evidence tool

Rating	Criteria
High strength of evidence	<p>Where the evidence is relevant to the claim and concurs with one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence is provided in the form of a published document available in the public domain that has been peer reviewed. • Evidence is published on an official government website and is directly relevant to the claim. • Evidence is triangulated through three different categories of evidence. For example, expert informants concur with this finding, and there are also two examples of documented evidence of the finding from different sources. • Where directly relevant testimony / user experience is collected with a statistically representative sample, or with the population.
Medium strength of evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where directly relevant testimony / user experience is collected using saturation sampling (over 20 participants). • Where highly credible testimony is provided: for example, an email from a government official who is the target of the knowledge product. • Administrative data that is directly relevant to the claim – such as participant records about who attends meetings to comment on reach or evidence about achievement of a report being published. • Where there is triangulation between at least two weaker forms of evidence (see below).
Low strength of evidence	<p>Low strength of evidence is where there is only one of the following weaker forms of evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that is written in a text provided by a third party. • Evidence that relies on a single respondent's claim. • Evidence that relies on internally produced documents written by the claim maker that offer opinion rather than substantiated observations.

8.8. Annex 8: Gender rubric

KEQ1 includes a sub-evaluation question on gender responsiveness:

- **How well did KNOWFOR products and engagement processes take into consideration or create the space for responding to the needs of women and girls? What was learned, and how could this be improved?**

This question is slightly modified from the original question after consultation with the Gender Working Group.

The purpose of the tool was to provide a clear description of what success looks like in terms of gender-responsive knowledge products and/or engagement processes and outcomes. This tool provides a rubric so that partners could assess whether projects qualify as being counted as gender responsive, gender sensitive or neither gender responsive and/or gender-sensitive. It was also intended to stimulate reflection, learning and improvement.

It was developed and refined through four successive rounds of feedback with partners and their gender advisers.

8.8.1 Gender responsiveness rubric

Level of attainment in terms of gender responsiveness is categorised into three levels: high (gender-responsive), moderate (gender-sensitive) and low (neither gender-responsive nor gender-sensitive). The rubric below provides a description of each level of rating.

How the rubric was used. The tool was devised for use in this partner-led evaluation to determine and count how many/the proportion of KNOWFOR projects that included gender-responsive tools and engagement processes. This information was included in the results chart for Key evaluation question 1, which all partners should compile – one per organisation. The tool and the results chart have been developed in a manner consistent with the logframe outputs. It is hoped they may also be used to help report on the logframe outputs and encourage learning and improvement.

Output indicator 1.1 # and proportion of products and range of categories (of which at least 25% either explicitly respond to the specific needs of women and girls or generates sex-differentiated gender-relevant knowledge). *(This corresponds to a 'highly responsive' level in the rubric)*

Output indicator 1.2 # and type of KNOWFOR supported engagement process/events (workshops, forums, meetings, trainings etc.) Including sex-disaggregated data on participants and % of engagement processes that were gender-responsive. *(This corresponds to an acceptable level of the gender-responsive rubric)*

Output indicator 1.4 # of narrative descriptions identifying targeted audience/s of good practice examples of creating processes and/or products that identified and delivered on audience-specific information needs including at least two examples that delivered on the needs of women or girls. *(Instances that rate as highly responsive would make good case studies for this indicator).*

Output indicator 3.2 # of instances and narrative description identifying targeted audience/s of when partners collaborated to develop shared understandings, products or influence external actors on gender-responsive practice. (The co-design and use of this tool across KNOWFOR partners could constitute one instance).

Table 19. Gender rubric

Rating	Criteria
Gender responsive (High)	<p><i>In addition to achieving at least two of the medium criteria below, one additional criterion must also be achieved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender is explicitly and successfully incorporated into the agenda for knowledge sharing events. Evidence of this would include that participants considered the event to be gender-sensitive and -responsive, beyond equal numbers of women and men attending, and that gender equality considerations have been explicitly factored into event planning and delivery. • Knowledge products explicitly respond to the specific knowledge needs of women and girls. The benefits for women and girls are explicitly identified, considered and reflected in the information products. If successful, these products will have positive benefits for women and girls specifically. An example of this is an approach where women and girls are trained in the use of GPS to map out the landscape/natural resources that they have access to. • Products and/or engagement processes explicitly identify and overcome known gender gaps (i.e. where there is evidence to suggest that women and girls had unequal access to information or resources); sex-differentiated gender-relevant knowledge is produced and reaches key audiences for this information. An example of this is where the results of focus group discussions held separately with women, youths and men on forest and landscape access, use, problems and potential solutions are synthesised, shared and discussed with community members and local government officials. • There is evidence that impacts of gender-sensitive and -responsive programming will be felt beyond the timeframe of the programme; i.e. documented and established systems, tools and processes; capacity and resources are allocated to ensure gender-responsive outcomes endure.
Gender-sensitive (Medium)	<p>To be rated at this level, two of the following criteria must be achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of any potential opportunities for enhancing gender equality has been undertaken for the knowledge product and/or engagement processes, and any downstream effects. If any benefits have been identified, they have been incorporated into the materials or process. An example of this is a knowledge product that was created, and efforts made to include photographs of women playing strong leadership roles (or inclusion of quotes by women) and to ensure that stereotyping was avoided. • Men and women had an equal opportunity to access and participate in activities such as events and product development. Examples of evidence for this include: efforts were made to promote the inclusion and full and effective participation of excluded/marginalised groups; explicit consideration is given to the ability of both men and women to participate, including ensuring that the communication of, timing, location and materials of stakeholder meetings, trainings or workshops are appropriate and safe for women e.g., timing, transport, transport costs, child care issues are taken into account.
Neither gender-responsive nor gender-sensitive (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither of the core criteria is achieved, • Disaggregated sex data collected purely for reporting purposes and not utilised for informing actions or responses,

8.9. Annex 9: Enabling rubrics

'Rubrics' were used in the KNOWFOR monitoring and evaluation tool kit to provide an evaluative description of what below adequate, adequate and above adequate programme performance will 'look like'. Developed in consultation with KNOWFOR partners and informed by the KNOWFOR White Paper on evidence-based policy and practice (Clear Horizon, 2014), two separate rubrics were developed for KNOWFOR. These rubrics describe performance quality in relation to:

- partners planning for knowledge uptake (enabling)
- uptake by intermediaries and policy-makers/practitioners (see Annex 10).

The rubrics were applied at the project, organisation and programme levels.

8.9.1 Theory of Change Level 1.2: Effective design at the project level (enabling)

Rubric to be scored at baseline and in 2016.

Level	Criteria
Above expectations	Some of the criteria have been conducted in an exemplary manner, and all criteria (see below) have been addressed to a reasonable extent.
Project designs/ plans meet expectations	All the criteria that are relevant to the project have been addressed to a reasonable extent. Criteria are that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The knowledge uptake pathway is clearly articulated. • The project has done some work to identify end user information requirements. • Where relevant, partners have been engaged in the project design. • The project has an implicit or explicit dissemination plan in place. In the absence of a written plan, project managers are able to explain how dissemination is intended to occur. They may be planning to make this explicit. • The project has been assessed for gender relevance. Where relevant, the project plans are proactive about considering the needs of women and girls. • An M&E framework for the project has been developed including selection of appropriate M&E tools.
Below expectations	Some of the criteria relevant to the project have not yet been addressed.

8.9.2 Project design across the organisation (Enabling rubric)

Rubric scored at baseline and in 2016.

Level	Criteria
Above expectations	<p>The organisationally relevant criteria below are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 75% of new projects ‘meet expectations’ (or above) for project design and from this at least 20% rate as ‘above expectations’. • There has been some cross-transference of good practice - some projects/initiatives or organisations external to KNOWFOR have adopted KNOWFOR’s project design or M&E standards. • Up to 25% of existing KNOWFOR projects are revised to reflect improved design and M&E standards. • Those projects rating below expectations are able to provide a sound rationale for not ‘meeting expectations’ (or above) and are on track to achieve acceptable performance in the long term.
Meets expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50–75% of relevant⁶⁵ new projects ‘meet expectations’ (or above) for enabling work. • At least half of the projects that rate below expectations are able to provide a sound rationale for not ‘meeting expectations’ (or above).
Below expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 50% of relevant new projects ‘meet expectations’ or above for enabling work. • Of those projects being rated at below expectations less than half are able to provide a sound rationale for not ‘meeting expectations’.

⁶⁵ KNOWFOR partner-led projects for CIFOR, new projects for PROFOR and the Global Forest Landscape Programme as a whole for IUCN.

8.10. Annex 10: Uptake rubrics

8.10.1 Uptake at the project level

Rubric to be scored in 2016.

Level	Criteria
Above expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the majority of targeted audiences (intermediaries and/or end users) have been reached or equipped as articulated in project plans. <p>D EVIDENCE OF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unanticipated boundary partners are equipped or reached Knowledge products inform policy debate Instances of policy being influenced or changed Instances of practice change
Meets expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the majority of targeted audiences (intermediaries and/or end users) have been reached or equipped as articulated in project plans.
Below expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence suggests that substantially less targeted audiences (intermediaries and/or end users) were reached or equipped than was planned.

8.10.2 Uptake at the organisational level

Rubric scored in 2016.

Level	Criteria
Above expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 50% of projects rate 'meet expectations' (or above) for uptake (Level 2 project rubric); and from this at least 30% rate as 'above expectations'. Those projects rating below expectations are able to provide a sound rationale for not 'meeting expectations' (or above) and most are likely to achieve acceptable levels of uptake in the long term.
Meets expectation	There is evidence that more than 50% of targeted audiences (intermediaries and/or end users) have been reached or equipped as articulated in project plans.
Below expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 50% of projects 'meet expectations' or above for uptake (Level 2 project rubric). Of those projects being rated as below standard less than half are able provide a sound rationale for not 'meeting expectations'.

8.11. Annex 11: Evaluation governance

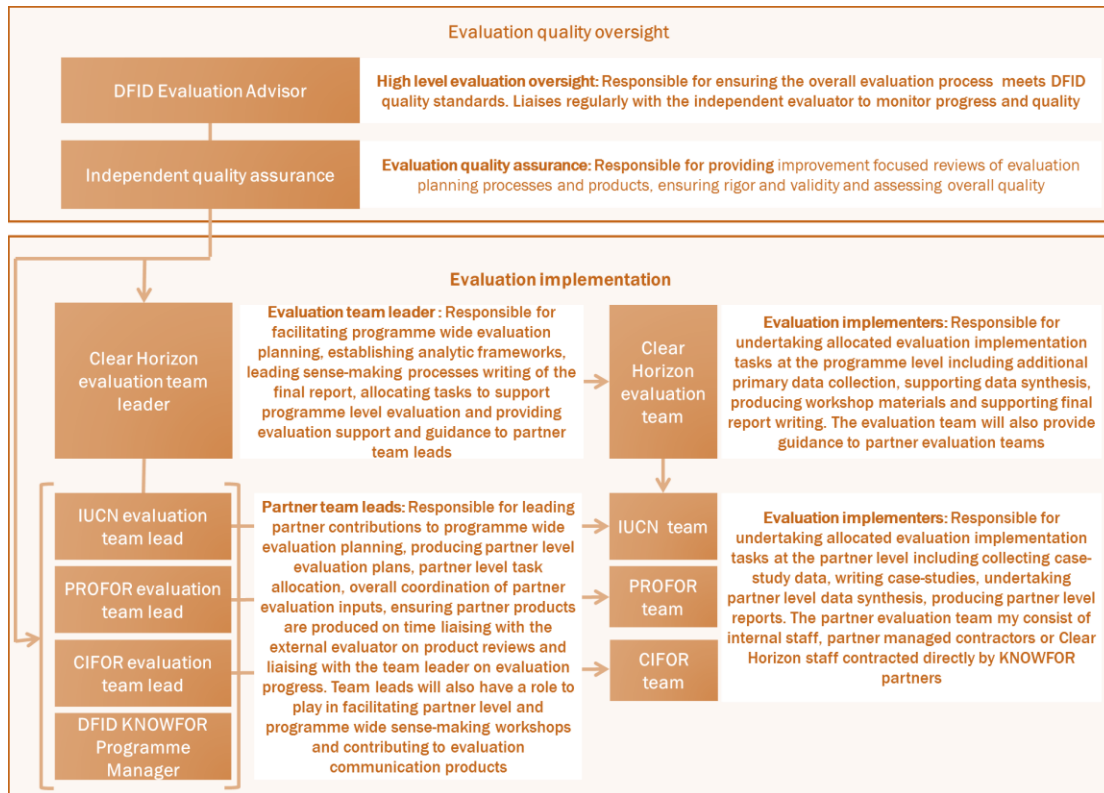


Figure 9. Evaluation governance arrangements

8.12. Annex 12: Outcome story summaries

Table 20. Outcome story summaries

Title	Code	Summary
The use of 'Political economy of fire and haze study' results by Government of Indonesia to discuss on how to combat fire in the long term	CIFOR_OS_1	CIFOR sought to inform decision-makers with an understanding of the on-the-ground dynamics (economic, social, and political) that are resulting in fire. It focussed on several sites that have experienced fires in Riau province, districts of Bengkalis, Rokan Hilir and Dumai. Deliverables included: fire policy and governance, fire events and their typologies, understanding the political economy of fire practices in target landscapes, and outreach and engagement.
CIFOR outcomes in promoting the 3Es in benefit sharing in Vietnam	CIFOR_OS_2	As part of the 'Opportunities and Challenges to Developing REDD+ Benefit Sharing Mechanisms in Developing Countries' project CIFOR undertook a review of the institutional and governance arrangements (non-monetary actions) needed for efficient, effective and equitable REDD+ benefit-sharing mechanisms and a review of existing performance-based distribution and benefit-sharing mechanisms. This story found that the project research outcomes for Vietnam will contribute to the development of options on REDD+ benefit-sharing mechanisms that promote <i>effectiveness, efficiency and equity</i> as well as the institutional and governance arrangements to support benefit sharing.
OUTCOME story about the media training in DR Congo, Outcome Story prepared for the KNOWFOR Final Evaluation. Summarised by: Collins Fai.	CIFOR_OS_4	Media training was conducted in the DRC with the intention of increasing awareness among journalists and editors of the intrinsic interest and importance of forestry issues, newsworthy angles and subject material, leading to improved and increased media coverage and public awareness of forests and climate change. Training was conducted to coincide with a Scientific Event University of Kisangani to leverage outcomes and led somewhat unexpectedly to the formation of an association of journalists (Green Journalists).
The uptake of the ten principles for a landscape approach	CIFOR_OS_4	CIFOR contributed towards a journal publication entitled 'The Ten principles for a landscape approach'. This publication was used to guide the implementation of a major USAID LESTARI project (through the consultancy firm Tetrattech). This landscape-scale intervention at six sites in Indonesia will attempt to deliver positive social and environmental change.
Change practices in MRV strategy by engaging local communities as well as improve capacities of local community in MRV	CIFOR_OS_5	CIFOR Lusaka Office implemented the Nyimba Forest project between 2012 and 2014. The goal of the project was to generate and provide evidence to the National Joint Programme for use in the formulation of a comprehensive National REDD+ Strategy for Zambia. The project was

		implemented with the active support, participation and cooperation of the district's four traditional authorities. Engagement of local communities in MRV led to changes in the MRV strategy as well as the capacity of local community members, which were also enabled through the existing Zambia UN REDD+ Readiness programme.
The Story of CIFOR Policy Influence through Participatory Action Research: The Approval of District Regulation on Confirmation, Recognition and Protection of Ammatoa Kajang Indigenous People	CIFOR_OS_6	The AgFOR-Governance team (CIFOR and Balang NGO, hereinafter called AgFOR-GOV) facilitated a multi-stakeholder collaborative process to develop a District Regulation (Peraturan Daerah/PERDA) that recognises the Kajang Indigenous people of Bulukumba, South Sulawesi. AgFOR-GOV supported the PERDA process through the final approval by the District Legislative Assembly (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/ DPRD). The main outcomes of PERDA approval reach beyond formal designation, and more importantly serve to increase understanding and capacities of key stakeholders to perform participatory governance well beyond the project period.
CIFOR's contribution to monitoring the social co-benefits of jurisdictional REDD+ in the Brazilian Amazon	CIFOR_OS_7	Through a six-year partnership with CIFOR of Module 2 Global Comparative Study (GCS) on REDD+, proponents of jurisdictional REDD+ programmes in the Brazilian Amazon have increased their capacity to measure and monitor the social co-benefits of programme interventions. Outcomes were supported by partnerships, data sharing and dissemination of findings as well as the adaptation of the project during delivery.
Proformal Artisanal Chainsaw Milling in Cameroon	CIFOR_OS_8	CIFOR influenced the drafting and implementation of the new policy manual for organising the national timber market (MIB). The project took advantage of existing literature and technical documents to publish a scientific paper, which then led to the co-development of recommendations with stakeholders. Ongoing engagement and meetings with officials and administrators to support uptake.
Mainstreaming charcoal production and trade into forestry policy agenda in Zambia	CIFOR_OS_9	CIFOR led multi-stakeholder research and iterative consultation processes facilitated a broadening of policy debate in Zambia. CIFOR's effort in framing the issues through consultation led to the importance of charcoal production and trade to livelihoods along with conservation being reflected in the forestry policies of Zambia.
Intensive restoration assessment helps define sub-national PES programme in Brazil	IUCN_OS_10	IUCN, state agencies and other key stakeholders have conducted a sub-national assessment of restoration potential using the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM). ROAM helped structure a landscape-level strategy for the PES programme by using a cost/benefit analysis (that incorporates ecosystem services) to identify priority areas. The analysis provided different scenarios for resource allocation in different watersheds and built an evidence base for the effectiveness of forest restoration. By helping scale up the

		programme, ROAM is ensuring the state achieves its restoration targets.
Climate Change Regional Programme – Pilot Application in Nicaragua and Guatemala	IUCN_OS_11	Under the Climate Change Regional Program (RCCP) IUCN is currently working on ‘priority landscapes’ in the Verapaz regions in Guatemala and the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region in Nicaragua to restore priority landscapes. Through this process IUCN supported free, previous and informed consent; co-management of protected areas, landscape restoration; citizen participation; strategy development and capacity building.
Development of a gender-responsive Brazilian National Biodiversity Strategies Action Plan (NBSAP) in Brazil	IUCN_OS_12	IUCN supported the development of the GPOA for FLR in Brazil. The IUCN GGC undertook a policy review, training in relation to gender and biodiversity, national consultative processes including workshop, and reporting. As a result, the Brazil NBSAP was revised to include 37 gender references, which was presented during the CBD COP 13 in Cancun, while a gender group has been created under PainelBio to follow on the implementation of activities identified under the NBSAP.
M&E FLR protocol in Brazil takes a step forward in ensuring gender criteria	IUCN_OS_13	In the development of the FLR GPoA led by IUCN under the KNOWFOR programme, a key group partner of IUCN Brazil, the Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact (PACTO), expressed its interest in mainstreaming gender into its PACTO Monitoring Protocol for Forest Restoration. The IUCN GGO provided support to PACTO by reviewing the PACTO Monitoring Protocol for Forest Restoration and through participation in consultation processes.
KNOWFOR’s mandate and momentum as a catalyst for gender inclusion in Rwanda’s FLR planning, policy, and implementation	IUCN_OS_14	Beginning in early 2016, IUCN engaged with several of the regional offices and key stakeholders in Rwanda to discuss and share the importance of gender in FLR. The IUCN GGO presented to the Government of Rwanda (GoR) on the linkages between gender, forests and FLR, which has helped spur the development of a gender-responsive FLR approach by GoR, which has led to a review of national forestry policy in light of gender-responsive FLR principles.
A Multi-Faceted Approach to Restoration in Uganda	IUCN_OS_15	IUCN has been working with a range of partners to operationalise Uganda’s 2.5-million-hectare restoration commitment to the Bonn Challenge. This has been supported by a national-level assessment of degraded and deforested areas that will benefit from restoration and through innovative communications media including a 24-week participatory radio show focussed on FLR that was broadcast in Mount Elgon, Uganda.
Congo Basin Timber: Examining the Potential to Boost the Volume of Legal Wood Used in	PROFOR_OS_16	This activity aimed to improve knowledge and prioritise options for policies and targeted investments for improved domestic timber utilization in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Specifically, the study aimed to build on prior

<p>Construction and Furniture Making in the Congo Basin</p>		<p>knowledge to better understand the solutions needed to overcome barriers to expanding the market for legal (and sustainable) timber and processed wood products used in the domestic furniture and construction markets in two countries. The study generated recommendations for priority areas for intervention to improve the usage of domestic timber divided into steps and measures in the short, medium and long term to develop the value-added wood processing industry in Cameroon and DRC.</p>
<p>Developing a Roadmap for Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms by Using PROFOR's OAF – Mexico</p>	<p>PROFOR_OS_17</p>	<p>The major objective of this activity was to develop a country roadmap for benefit-sharing arrangements, for Mexico, using PROFOR's OAF. The OAF employs a participatory approach to analyse and improve benefit-sharing arrangements. The Framework was developed through a separate PROFOR-supported activity. Mexico became the first pilot for the Framework. The activity contributed to the development of an effective benefit-sharing arrangement for REDD+ areas. It identified the benefit-sharing arrangement most appropriate for Mexico. It identified the legal, institutional and capacity gaps to be addressed to set in place the arrangement and it produced a roadmap on how the needed changes would be implemented – under the overall leadership of CONAFOR.</p>
<p>Enabling the Russian Forest Sector to Attain Sustainability through Governance Reforms</p>	<p>PROFOR_OS_18</p>	<p>The Russian Federal Forest Agency agreed to sponsor application of the PROFOR forest governance assessment tool as a first step towards evidence-based reform of forest governance in the country. The basic tool uses stakeholder workshops to score a set of indicators customised to fit the country context. In Russia, the scoring was done in four representative regions, both by stakeholders and experts. As a result of the assessment Russia adopted a new, non-binding policy framework for forest management, published on the government's website. The government enlisted the lead consultant for the PROFOR assessment to be one of the authors of the new policy. Although the policy does not explicitly cite the PROFOR assessment, use of the assessment's consultant assured influence. While based on the Russian experience, Belarus and Armenia have expressed interest in doing their own assessments, but have taken no concrete steps.</p>
<p>Sustainable Management of Oasis Ecosystems – Tunisia</p>	<p>PROFOR_OS_19</p>	<p>PROFOR supported: (a) A comprehensive National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tunisian oases, complemented with a detailed Action Plan, and; (b) Six Oasis Participatory Development Plans (OPDPs) that address local social, economic, environmental and institutional priorities in lagging regions in Tunisia. This work informed the Tunisia Systematic Country Diagnostic and the Country Program Framework by highlighting the importance of lagging regions in Tunisia and the necessity for Bank operations to improve the equality of opportunities and to support those who might be left behind, in particular the youth. While the National Oasis Strategy has informed several other key government strategies: (i) the</p>

		National Strategy for a Green Economy; (ii) the Regional Development Vision for southern governorates; (iii) the Bank and the Government Strategy for Tunisia lagging regions; and (iv) the government's new Five-year Development Plan (2016-2020).
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8.13. Annex 13: Lessons learned story summaries

Figure 10. Lessons learned story summaries

Title	Code	Summary
Managing flexible funding for impact in uncertain times	CIFOR_LS_01	Following a review of KNOWFOR in 2013 lead to changes in funding allocations as performance expectations from the donor (DFID) became clearer. This lead to changes in the mix of projects funded in the CIFOR portfolio within KNOWFOR under Phase 1 when funds were re-aligned to meet donor requirements. Under Phase 2 this story contends that donor expectations could have been strengthened to provide more structure and clearer expectations among researchers implementing Phase 2 projects.
Is there value in being systematic?	CIFOR_LS_02	A reflection of the value of \$US1.8 million funding provided under KNOWFOR to support the production of systematic reviews under CIFOR's Evidence Based Forestry (EBF) initiative resulting in 23 systematic reviews and systematic maps. This story addresses questions regarding the appropriateness and the value of the systematic review approach. It concludes that systematic reviews can have value if applied selectively and that CIFOR now has the experience to undertake this form of research more judiciously following KNOWFOR.
It's never finished and it's never right	CIFOR_LS_03	A reflection of the SMEs and Informal Sector sub-project funded under KNOWFOR Phase 2. In this project a TOC was developed identifying priority issues, which was influenced by political change in Cameroon. The story concludes that: theory-based planning in complex systems also requires flexibility in implementation in response to unanticipated events; and that; applying a theory testing lens to learning from 'failure' can be empowering.
Capacity development for knowledge uptake on forest landscape restoration assessments	IUCN_LS_04	Through KNOWFOR, IUCN's Global Forest and Climate Change Program (GFCCP) has developed a suite of tools and knowledge products such as the ROAM approach that can help countries operationalize their Bonn Challenge commitments. As the KNOWFOR project commenced, it became evident that the GFCCP needed to invest in developing capacity as the bridge between producing knowledge products and ensuring their uptake. Through a series of carefully planned capacity-development workshops, IUCN was able to reach FLR practitioners around the globe and facilitate the effective application of ROAM.
Implementing enhanced Design, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in	IUCN_LS_05	In response to the first Annual Programme Review by DFID in 2013 the KNOWFOR programme undertook a development of

a knowledge uptake setting		a KNOWFOR results framework and associated monitoring approach, which has resulted in structural, staffing changes within IUCN, the inclusion of DMEL in Internal Agreements (IAs), the use of new tools such as outcome stories, TOC and Performance Story Reports (PSR). In reflection this change has taken time and has required extensive engagement. It has required active management buy-in and support from ‘champions’ such as ORMACC.
Mainstreaming Gender in KNOWFOR PROGRAMME	IUCN_LS_06	Building capacity of technical teams leading the assessment and policy formulation has become KNOWFOR footprint in countries whereas such processes didn’t exist. Moreover, KNOWFOR led activities allowed programme to ensure ROAM is gender-responsive, but most importantly, so as the National Strategy and Action Plan for FLR implementation integrates the voices and needs of both women and men. Furthermore, this learning has been extremely valuable in improving quality and availability of information to farmers, but also finding the means for stocktaking of the local knowledge and women involvement in restoration; identifying approaches for monitoring progress in addressing gender considerations just to name the few.
Champions for Change	PROFOR_LS_07	Documents the importance of key individuals or ‘champions’ in influencing project success. Using examples from the India “Watersheds” study (see Case Study), a participatory governance assessment in Laos and in Mexico (see PROFOR_OS_17) to consider the importance of motivation among leaders and the extent to which leadership abilities can be trained.
Supervening forces, persistence, and shelf life	PROFOR_LS_08	Draws on examples to demonstrate the disruption caused by supervening forces. In Liberia the Ebola outbreak of 2014–2015 nullified earlier effort in forest governance, which was then subsequently used in the revised its Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment prepared as part of REDD+ readiness. While in the DRC political forces led to most reforms proposed by a PROFOR governance assessment being left on stand-by. The final example charts efforts to explore timber trade dynamics, which was stalled following political change in Russia.
Moving knowledge across boundaries	PROFOR_LS_09	Discusses the role that PROFOR can play as a knowledge ‘bridge’ within and beyond the World Bank by drawing on examples from the ‘Watersheds’ case study.

8.14. Annex 14: Case study summaries (CIFOR)

8.14.1 Performance Story Report of CIFOR's Fire and Haze project (CIFOR_CS_01)

CIFOR's research project on the political economy of fire and haze consolidated existing knowledge on fires in Indonesia and addressed strategic knowledge gaps related to the drivers of fire events. The project leveraged this knowledge to co-develop national and sub-national policies and regulations and contributed to building a consensus around a coherent approach to reducing the instances of fires in carbon intensive peatland areas. The design of CIFOR's fire and haze project had a clear objective of achieving multi-level, multi-actor policy and practice influence – targeting change in regency and provincial regulations, national fire strategies as well as the private sector and civil society's engagement with fire management. The research conducted was multidisciplinary, combining political economy, geo-spatial, policy and perceptions analysis and involved a multi-national team.

The project drew on existing analysis and knowledge of the policy networks and key actors to develop a user-centric influence strategy with significant investment in direct and indirect engagement and outreach targeted at different actor groups. The research team worked with policy networks and change agents at local and national levels at various stages of the research cycle in order to ensure that the emerging knowledge was timely, targeted and socially as well as scientifically credible. The project engaged national and sub-national policy-makers at the inception stage and throughout the project in order to establish a two-way dialogue that helped ensure the knowledge was well targeted and useful. The private sector and civil society were engaged regularly through established relationships with key peak bodies and frequent multi-stakeholder dialogues were convened throughout the project. At the local level, the project complemented data collection with local trial-sites and tangible action to build trust and credibility. In addition, the project deliberately influenced the profile and characterization of the issue in the popular press by providing media training workshops, and access to high-level government events. The lead researcher was an active communicator, at local, national and international levels, offering a credible and highly visible scientific voice in the popular media.

Project research findings provided a scientific basis and conceptual framing for three national and sub-national policies and civil society and private sector actors acknowledge that the work has informed fire reduction strategies. The eventual, expected return on investment from of the project is in the range of 15.24 - 60.96 in Riau alone, depending on how effectively local authorities are able to translate regulations into action.

Key to the successful outcome of the research investment was the timing, coinciding as it did with the fire crisis of 2015, a Presidential push for action and the emergence a new national body - Peatland Restoration Agency (BRG), and de-centralized government agencies seeking guidance in responding to the crisis. The strong networks and strong knowledge of fire and haze of the lead researcher were crucial in facilitating many of the influence strategies and their success rested his status as a high profile, Indonesian national researcher (CIFOR_CS_02). The complexities of managing a multi-disciplinary team using a range of methods and producing knowledge in different timeframes, did compromise the ability of the lead-researcher to fully represent and capitalize on all

aspects of the project and there is scope to improve CIFOR’s practice in this area. Similarly, there is scope to improve the transparency and consistency of key messages when translating emerging research knowledge for use in stakeholder dialogues and the media. From this experience, CIFOR has identified and critically reflected on the value of positioning key scientists as timely, relevant and high profile experts and in appropriate, well-crafted early engagement around emerging knowledge on hot-topic issues.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown below in Table 22.

Table 21. Quality assurance assessment (CIFOR_CS_3)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
<p>Detailed ToC, wide evidence base (29 interviews representing wide range of actors, document review, event evaluations, citation analysis etc), claims are clearly backed by evidence and the result charts includes detailed information of the each claim, evidence source and strength of evidence, discusses unexpected positive and negative findings in a transparent way.</p>	<p>Draft report so some unclear points but no major effect on the strength of evidence.</p> <p>Other contributing factors mentioned briefly “perhaps most importantly, the political climate was favourable” but could have been probed in more detail.</p>	<p>Not clear, no major QA comments</p>	<p>High</p>

8.14.2 Performance Story Report of Poverty Environment Network (CIFOR_CS_02)

The Poverty Environment Network (PEN) research project was a multi-phase (2004 – 2017), global effort to quantify the contribution of forest and environmental income from natural forests to rural livelihoods across the developing tropics. The project produced and disseminated robust scientific findings, open access methods, tools and data sets with the intention of influencing how data on forest livelihoods was collected, analyzed and used. PEN was initially science-driven, seeking to address key knowledge gaps with rigorous research. The project had an implicit logic that key, high-level decision-makers applying an economic lens required quantifiable information in order to value the contributions of forests to development. In later phases the importance of engagement and strategic plans for enhancing use of the methods and findings become more prominent.

The research findings have been influential in shaping thinking about the issue and engaging audiences who require quantified economic data at scale to inform decision-making. The methods and tools have had widespread use in academia and have been adapted for use by the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) and applied nationally in four countries so far.

PEN's success was facilitated by a number of factors - 1) the focus on addressing a high-demand niche knowledge gap, 2) the highly participatory design and implementation of the research and 3) engagement with strategic 'amplifiers' for use of methods and tools.

At the time when PEN was conceived, there was substantial interest in the role of forest and environmental resources in rural livelihoods and poverty alleviation from the growing environmental accounting/economics movement. At the same time, with the exception of formal employment figures, there is scant information on the number of people that benefit from forests and how.

The logistical and methodological challenges in realizing the ambitious scope of the PEN project on such a limited budget relied on working through network among PhD students and junior scholars (33 in total, supported by 40 institutions external to CIFOR). An interdisciplinary team of 15 professors and senior scientists who were responsible for research design, methods development and global analyses provided guidance to this network. An unintended outcome of this collaborative network approach was extensive exposure to, and understanding of the PEN methods, data-set and findings for all those involved, who then perpetuated their use.

In 2013 a collaborative effort between FAO, CIFOR, IFRI and the World Bank LSMS and PROFOR used PEN methods to develop an LSMS module on forest and wild products, became a significant factor in advancing PEN methods towards influencing policy level decision-making. The LSMS module provided the scope to have the method applied at scale and mainstreamed into national data collection systems.

PEN's experience shows that even in a demand driven context, it takes a long time (10+ years) for truly agenda setting research using these strategies to be mainstreamed into practice and influence development outcomes. In hindsight, there were both planning and funding continuity opportunities that would have expedited the achievement of outcomes. Key lessons from this study relate to the

importance of focusing on strategic, high impact pathways for use by key audiences, the unexpected value of broad-based scientific engagement from design stages.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown below in Table 21.

Table 22. Quality assurance assessment (CIFOR_CS_2)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
Detailed ToC, medium evidence base (10 people interviewed, citation analysis), claims about CIFOR's influence are moderate and the evidence sources are clearly marked in the result charts	Draft report and while the result chart is very detailed, main claims are not that easy to find in the main report.	Not clear, only early report draft available for review (updated version might come soon)	Medium

8.14.3 Performance Story Report of Brazil Nut case study (CIFOR_CS_03)

Brazil nuts are one of the most valuable forest products to the Peruvian export economy and Brazil nut concessions cover up to 1 M ha of Amazonian forest, giving the management of these concessions a high priority locally and at the national level. The Brazil nut tree coexists with dozens of timber species whose exploitation contributes significantly to the household economies of concessionaires. CIFOR undertook a study to explore the levels of timber harvesting that can be conducted with affecting and Brazil nut production. This study capitalized on interest generated by a previous CIFOR study assessing the volume of timber extraction in Brazil nut concessions in Amazonian Peru and sought to take advantage of a window of opportunity to influence the development of new Brazil nut management guidelines focussed on multiple forest use.

CIFOR's research was conceived and implemented as a biophysical project, with an implicit logic that compelling scientific knowledge and timely well-targeted communication of results would successfully influence the drafting of the Brazil nut management guidelines in the concessions. The project sought to influence practice change in concessions through a linear policy pathway by providing technically sound information, which had been lacking since the establishment of the Brazil nut concession system in 2000.

The project quantified the amount of timber per unit area that concessionaires could extract without affecting Brazil nut production. The revised technical norms for managing Brazil nut concessions do referenced these findings, making this one of the first instances where scientific research has influenced forest policy Peru. However, the timber harvesting limits ultimately recommended in the current guidance were not fully in line with CIFOR's findings. This inconsistency was largely the result of opposition to the change in guidance at the local level as concessionaires perceived the new guidelines as too restrictive in limiting the timber extraction. The project asked and answered highly relevant and timely questions and the project team effectively engaged with government at the central level. The mixed success of the project prompted the researchers to reflect on their strategies and provided some interesting insights to guide future work in Peru.

The project did not initially conceive of the intended outcome as requiring a multi-actor, multi-level process and focussed exclusively on influencing national policy-makers directly. This strategy overlooked key aspects influencing policy design and implementation such as the role of the regional government as a decentralized organization and the public participation rights acquired by resource users in decision-making processes in Peru. Peru does not have a strong culture of drawing on scientific evidence to inform forestry policy norms and guidelines. This and the fact that the forest sector is highly regulated and centrally managed through top-down technical guidelines- generated resistance to centrally mandated initiatives from concessionaires. For those actors who practice and enforce multi-use management in Brazil nut concessions to accept and adopt new guidelines, more work engaging these actors would be necessary. The project's evaluation identified additional key actors who would have been ideal boundary partners in socializing the logic, rational and value of the research. This highlights that ensuring scientific legitimacy and social legitimacy and policy relevance require different strategies and that investing in local validation is important for acceptance and use of knowledge.

Additionally, under the new scenario of an increased public participation and decentralization in Peru, the linear policy route may not have been the most effective approach to achieving the intended impact of improved forest management. Working through alternative trusted networks to reach concessionaires may have been more effective. This points to the value of more thorough social-ecological and political economy analysis of key sectors/thematic areas prior to project design in identifying appropriate influence and engagement strategies.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown below in Table 20.

Table 23. Quality assurance assessment (CIFOR_CS_1)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
<p>Detailed ToC, wide evidence base (interviews with 25 people of which only 2 were CIFOR researchers + reports, meeting minutes, web pages etc.), claims about CIFOR's influence are moderate and are backed by evidence (detailed results chart in the appendix gives sources of evidence and strength of evidence for each conclusion reached), weaknesses and negative unexpected outcomes discussed in a transparent way.</p>	<p>Roles of other contributing factors could have been discussed more</p>	<p>Not clear, QA comments were minor except clarifying the role of KNOWFOR funding</p>	<p>High</p>

8.15. Annex 15: Case study summaries (IUCN)

8.15.1 Exploring IUCN's influence on the development and growth of the Bonn Challenge – Performance Story Report (IUCN_CS_04)

As part of the KNOWFOR evaluation this case study specifically assesses the degree to which the following hypothesis holds true: “IUCN used its unique combination of linkage to members, knowledge brokering, technical analysis and convening attributes to play a critical role in the development and growth of FLR”.

The Bonn Challenge is a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. To understand IUCN’s contribution to equipping decision-makers and intermediaries, a long-term perspective that goes back to the origins of the forest landscape restoration (FLR) approach is needed.

The theory of change behind the development and implementation of the Bonn Challenge revolved around three principal strategies: (i) identifying champions within government institutions and using them to communicate internally to political leaders to build political support for the concept; (ii) focussing on mainstreaming the Bonn Challenge into existing international conventions and commitments on biodiversity, land degradation and climate change that countries have already signed up to, as well as communicating how restoration can help advance domestic goals such as increased food and water security, disaster risk reduction and rural development, and; (iii) working with individual countries to plan and deliver FLR action on the ground, using FLR assessments as the foundation.

IUCN was strategic and tactical in identifying multiple entry points, platforms, forums and opportunities for “seeding” the FLR concept, and then helping articulate how FLR could help address the specific goals of that forum. Furthermore, by working at an institutional, rather than project, level senior IUCN forests staffs were able to use their multiple mandates and roles across a range of international as well as national processes, to lobby for the inclusion of FLR concepts. In terms of “equipping decision-makers”, IUCN has demonstrated an ability to develop and deliver a range of target quality knowledge products in a responsive, timely and opportunistic manner, with a view to generating evidence and building an evidence base for FLR. The effectiveness and impact of KNOWFOR funding was maximised through its flexible and adaptive nature.

Finally, the evidence compiled in this case study has shown that the specific contributions made by IUCN to the process leading up to and after the Bonn Challenge were possible due to a number of factors including its wide network of governmental and non-governmental members; the quality, relevance and timeliness of its knowledge products; its broad analysis drawing on grounded field examples that went beyond traditional forest sectorial boundaries and its ability to convene players at global, regional and national levels. IUCN has played a central, consistent and visible role in the conception, promotion and adoption of the FLR approach by northern and southern governments from the perspective of policy, funding and implementation. As such, the hypothesis proposed for this case study is confirmed.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown in Table 23.

Table 24. Quality assurance assessment (IUCN_CS_4)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
<p>Evidence base is presented fairly clearly (13 interviewees, out of which 8 are staff members, document review includes sources other than written by IUCN, result charts provides information on the sources of evidence, and throughout the report coding is being used to indicate when the claims is backed up by interviewees though not always clear whether the source is external or internal)</p>	<p>Difficult topic for a performance story (a global policy process), more internal than external informants, some mixed claims about IUCN's contribution, other contributing factors mentioned but not discussed</p>	<p>Not clear</p>	<p>Medium</p>

8.15.2 Analysing KNOWFOR's Contribution to Forest Management Policy in Guatemala – Episode Study (IUCN_CS_05)

In Guatemala, the evolution towards sustainable forest management is a living reality driven more forcefully since the signing of the Peace accords and the approval of the Forest Law in 1996. Since then, the country has carried out important mobilising actions for change. In recent years, this process has advanced by leaps and bounds and has led to the development of the new Forest Incentive Programme: the PROBOSQUE law.

As part of the broader KNOWFOR evaluation, this case study specifically assesses the degree to which the following hypothesis holds true: “IUCN used its unique combination of linkage to members, knowledge brokering, technical analysis and convening attributes to play a critical role in the development and growth of FLR”.

The KNOWFOR programme has been vital to the creation of a multi-actor FLR platform and the production of quality evidence-based knowledge and information, identified by key actors such as INAB, CONAP, MAGA and MARN among others, as the most powerful impact pathway and mechanism to:

1. Ensuring that the National FLR Strategy became an approved public policy
2. Informing technical discussions with decision-makers and
3. Supporting inter-sectorial coordination.

The products developed through IUCN's Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) were the main inputs to this process.

The evidence compiled for this case study shows that IUCN has played a crucial role in encouraging the adoption of FLR as an approach to sustainable forest management in Guatemala by:

- Providing technical knowledge and tools;
- Strengthening democratic participation of all sectors, especially in the discussion and design of the PROBOSQUE Law's regulation;
- Funding national institutions and key advocacy processes;
- Supporting the creation of the National Forest Landscape Restoration National Roundtable (MNRPF);
- Supporting collaborative research efforts to improve the FLR evidence base and
- Developing local initiatives with high impact at the national level.

Finally, IUCN's linkage to members and its convening attributes are reflected in the way the FLR National Roundtable has been planned and delivered as a national democratic participation and consensus mechanism. IUCN knowledge brokering has been recognised by key actors as an effective way of facilitating bridges between knowledge producers and knowledge users at different levels. As such, the hypothesis proposed for this case study is confirmed.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown in Table 24.

Table 25. Quality assurance assessment (IUCN_CS_5)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
A wide evidence base (20+ external & internal people interviewed), bounded case study, claims about influence are mainly moderate and usually backed up by multiple sources of evidence (i.e. not just staff testimonial)	Other contributing factors (e.g. other organisations working with the issue) are mentioned but not analysed in details	Only minor QA comments given, no major changes needed	High

8.15.3 Understanding IUCN's Role in Unlocking FLR Finance – Episode Study (IUCN_CS_06)

A shift in policy towards unlocking finance to support implementation of forest landscape restoration (FLR) is underway across the globe and operating at different scales.

As part of the KNOWFOR evaluation this case study specifically assesses the degree to which the following hypothesis holds true: *“IUCN used its unique combination of linkage to members, knowledge brokering, technical analysis and convening attributes to play a critical role in the development and growth of FLR”*.

Three scales have been examined in this case study and the key results are:

- At the institutional scale, KNOWFOR contributed to a policy shift by the decision-makers at IUCN to move from a set of projects to FLR as a core long-term programme focus. KNOWFOR funding has been leveraged to secure additional financial resources by IUCN, who have become a global leader in FLR.
- At the country scale, Rwanda is one example where change in domestic policy has supported the development and testing of innovative methods to unlock finance. With a growing number of countries pledging to FLR, the KNOWFOR project contributed to the development of tools and methods that generate information to equip country leaders to developing finance mechanisms that meet their unique context and domestic development agenda.
- Finally, at the global scale, while many factors have contributed to GEF interest in FLR, KNOWFOR's flexibility allowed IUCN to work effectively with GEF and partners to create a policy in support of global FLR.

This case study also illustrates the multi-dimensional nature of policy shifts that are needed to effectively unlock finance for FLR. It points out that FLR implementation has really just begun and that the challenge of unlocking finance requires deep understanding of multi-scale and inter-related systems, engaging multiple stakeholders with vastly different perspectives and expectations, dealing with both short-term and long-term time horizons, and embracing emergent and often unpredictable windows of opportunities that may, or may not lead to desired outcomes. KNOWFOR was a major contributing factor for IUCN to contribute to equipping decision-makers with new knowledge on unlocking finance. Evidence shows that the contribution of KNOWFOR to create and further develop ROAM has been essential in equipping decision-makers with information needed to link FLR with domestic priorities and consider the actions needed to fund and implement FLR. As such, ROAM has been a “game-changer” for the challenge of unlocking finance.

IUCN demonstrated continued engagement with the 1,300-strong membership base and providing those interested in FLR with a pathway and knowledge flow to frame the challenge of unlocking finance. The evidence gathered points to IUCN's role as convenor of and contributor to signature events including partners from governments, private sector and civil society in learning more about the intricacies and opportunities of FLR. The commitment towards gathering evidence through design, monitoring, and evaluation of the KNOWFOR work contributes to the validation of this hypothesis.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is shown in Table 25.

Table 26. Quality assurance assessment (IUCN_CS_6)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
<p>A good number (14) of people interviewed, thorough document review, Rwandan sub-case is based on an existing episode study (evidence base: document review, timeline construction, 6 key stakeholder interviews)</p>	<p>Very difficult topic to cover in a case study, uses mainly internal informants i.e. staff (though that's understandable given the topic) which increases the likelihood of positive bias, claims are not always backed up by other evidence than staff testimonial, other contributing factors discussed in a limited way</p>	<p>Changes made to the methodology based on QA comments</p>	<p>Medium</p>

8.16. Annex 16: Case study summaries (PROFOR)

8.16.1 Forest Governance: Impacts from outreach and implementation of country assessments (PROFOR_CS_07)

Two project development objectives of PROFOR's forest governance work are to deepen knowledge in this area and strengthen capacity to implement governance assessments. For this evaluation, PROFOR reviewed country-specific applications of the PROFOR participatory assessment tool in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Mozambique. In DRC the results of the assessment fed into a Bank Economic Sector Work (ESW). In Mozambique, the results fed into planning for the FIP. PROFOR also reviewed an online training project designed to disseminate FAO and PROFOR's forest governance assessment framework and good practices guide.

DRC. The DRC project held four stakeholder workshops to score governance indicators and produced a final report, including recommendations, disseminated to the participants, stakeholders, and the government (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development). As one of its primary objectives, the report has informed a World Bank piece of Economic and Sector Work (ESW) that is taking stock of the DRC's forest sector and its governance, and which will inform any future interventions in the sector. In parallel, the government is considering the results in the ongoing development of its forest policy.

Mozambique. In 2016, PROFOR supported the application of its forest governance diagnostic tool in Mozambique to better understand the myriad of governance challenges confronting the sector and to identify home-grown, consensus-based solutions. The project held two regional stakeholder workshops to score a customized set of indicators. The findings and emerging implications were channelled into the Forest Investment Program (FIP) project for the country and have significantly shaped its direction. The exercise also identified a handful of priority indicators that the government and FIP will use for periodic assessments of the status of forest governance. Factors contributing to the influence of the project include: high-level government involvement and support; active involvement and support of WWF, which is also taking the assessment protocol and holding scoring workshops in two or three additional provinces; concurrent reform efforts (a concessions review and a pilot application of ROAM, a rejuvenation of the regional Miombo network), which reinforced the sense of commitment to change, and; linkage to FIP, with its potential for providing funding to undertake the identified reforms. These factors are important, but they do not detract from the contribution of the PROFOR assessment. The direction for reform has largely emerged from the results of the PROFOR work.

Online training. From 2015 to 2016, PROFOR co-sponsored a series of eLearning activities about forest governance assessment. These included design and delivery of a five-module online course, three one-hour webinars, and three short podcasts. This project's main objective was knowledge uptake. It is hard to judge these activities' long-term impact of on policy outcomes so soon after their delivery. Regardless, this project shows the potential for using online classes to disseminate forest knowledge. In course quizzes and exercises, participants demonstrated a clear grasp of forest governance concepts. In surveys prepared for this evaluation, most participants completing the five-module course reported that they expected to apply their new knowledge in their careers.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is provided in Table 26.

Table 27. Quality assurance assessment (PROFOR_CS_7)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
E-Learning sub-case provides good and clear evidence of PROFOR's reach, comparing DRC and Mozambique sub-cases provides a good opportunity for learning	Limited evidence base especially with Congo and Mozambique, some quite strong claims about impact that are not sufficiently / clearly enough backed up by evidence (other than staff testimonial).	Not sure	Low to Medium (e-learning stronger than Mozambique and Congo sub-case studies)

8.16.2 Understanding Forests' Contribution to Poverty Reduction (PROFOR_CS_08)

The Understanding Forests' Contribution to Poverty Reduction, programme of PROFOR is focussed on generating knowledge on forests as pathways out of poverty. The research is designed to produce a number of outputs, including: (1) a knowledge review, focusing on synthesizing evidence on the impacts of forestry policies and programmes on poverty reduction in evidence maps. (2) A conceptual framework on the potential pathways out of poverty. (3) A compendium of country case studies, providing information on various facets of the forest-poverty nexus, and (4) Dissemination and outreach targeted to specific internal and external users and audiences. In 2014 PROFOR supported activities in India and Philippines that explored the contribution of forests towards poverty reduction. In 2015 it supported a similar activity assessing linkages between poverty and forest dependence in Turkey. In general, the projects have better equipped decision-makers both within the Bank and in the project countries with knowledge, tools, and identification of potential actions. The stakeholders' ability to develop inclusive forest policies and approaches has been strengthened because of the project.

India. Electronic copies of the report were circulated with practice leaders, the country director, and the task team leaders of the ENR Global Practice. It also presented the findings in one knowledge exchange workshop in New Delhi. The synthesis report has clearly demonstrated to the Bank staff the dependence of poor rural families on forests and answered the challenge posed by the Country Director. As a result, of this "sensitization" the CD has created a space for forestry investments in the Bank's lending pipeline and encouraged the Bank's sector staff to develop new business in India. According to an interview with the TTL, this has been successfully achieved, as evidenced by two projects—Meghalaya forest project and an India forest-fires project. Additional requests from other State governments have been received by the Bank and are under consideration.

Philippines. Still underway, this project has conducted regional dissemination workshops to share the results with local government units. Replication of ecosystems services schemes shows that local units have benefited from the regional dissemination workshops. The project, as yet, has not contributed towards policy-making, but that may change after the project team presents the results to policy-makers. The team will be presenting the project results at the Forest Management Bureau Executive Committee and Foreign Assisted and Special Project Service sometime this year.

Turkey. This project has drawn upon the findings from the socio-economic survey to produce a forest policy note. This evidence-based knowledge product has started promoting a discussion in the DGF and that will likely result in policy reforms and investments in the sector. A knowledge management strategy is being designed in close consultation with the DGF, to reach out to a wider set of stakeholders. A Bank project, to support country efforts on job creation and development of livelihood activities, in the sector, is a likely outcome.

The knowledge generated by the projects has increased the understanding of forests' contribution towards poverty reduction; however, there are no measurable changes in poverty reduction that can be directly attributed to the projects. It will all depend upon how far the project countries will go in terms of using the results, tools, and recommendations in carrying out policy reforms, improving forestry operations and encouraging investments into the sector.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer is provided below in Table 27.

Table 28. Quality assurance assessment (PROFOR_CS_8)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
	<p>Limited evidence base (7 people interviewed for 3 separate sub-cases), main informants are project / WB staff but not clear whether they were the key audience too, Philippines and Turkey case studies are ongoing and thus, some of the impact claims are hypothetical / indicative.</p>	<p>Compared to January draft, KNOWFOR ToC, evaluation questions and assumptions have been added, some of the impact claims that were quite strong but not clearly backed by evidence have been removed / adapted to be more moderate but the evidence base has not been expanded as recommended.</p>	<p>Low (e.g. Turkey sub-case only 1 person interviewed)</p>

8.16.3 Watershed development in India (PROFOR_CS_09)

In 2014, PROFOR supported a study that aimed to gather lessons learned and good practices from three high profile and successful watershed management projects in India--The Karnataka Watershed Development Project, The Uttaranchal Decentralized Watershed Development Project, and the Himachal Pradesh Mid-Himalayan Watershed Development Project.

The main knowledge product was a peer-reviewed high-quality report that outlined the evolution of watershed development policy and practice in India. The report consolidated lessons learnt from best practices, and contributes to improved policies and programmes for watershed development and management. Apart from dissemination of the report, presentations were made at formal launch events, seminars and workshops in India and in Washington DC.

The most tangible outcomes of the report included new studies, projects and influence on project design within India and beyond to Nigeria, Malawi and Haiti. This came about directly because decision-makers (or those who could influence decision-makers) had access to the findings of the study. In India, the recommendations in the report heavily influenced the objectives of the Neeranchal National Watershed Project. In addition, the rationale for the "Catchment Assessment and Planning for Watershed Management" study, comes directly from the discussion in the report of managing upstream and downstream inter-relations.

In Nigeria and Malawi senior Bank staff used material from the report to design the Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP) and the Shire River Basin Management Project respectively. The PROFOR work provides a benchmark to compare the evolution of the Malawi and Nigeria watershed components during implementation. In Haiti, following the formal launch of the report, the World Bank Task Team Leader (TTL) in charge of the HT Sustainable Rural and Small Towns Water and Sanitation Project contacted one of the report authors to discuss how the lessons learned could improve the design of the Haiti project.

The India, Malawi, Nigeria and Haiti examples illustrate the nature of changes in World Bank practice in designing projects, initiating studies and re-aligning implementation processes as a result of the findings of the report. The India work, in particular, is significant in that, from the assorted work done by various agencies and programmes over the years, the best practices have been condensed into revised guidelines for the national watershed program, the IWMP; and technical support has been provided to the main national-level watershed development programme in India, the Prime Minister's Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

Given the size of the IWMP (~USD 500 million/year) and, given that the IWMP is now the watershed component of an even larger nation-wide program, the PMKSY, with an outlay of USD 850 million for 2016-17 alone, its potential impact is very large. Over the course of the 8-year USD 357 million Neeranchal project, this technical support is expected to translate into policy and programme improvements that will affect the Indian watershed management program, for which the Government of India has allocated USD 228 million for 2017-18 alone. Given its objectives to address water resource and watershed management in dryland areas through improved technology and

techniques, the IWMP could have significant impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation and climate change.

Strength of evidence and comments provided by the quality assurer in Table 28.

Table 29. Quality assurance assessment (PROFOR_CS_9)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Changes made since QA review	Overall score on strength of evidence
<p>Though the number of external people interviewed is limited, the majority of them represent the key audience (which was deliberately kept limited), and who also verifies the key contribution claims. The report and/or discussion paper are also referenced in design or planning documents for new WB projects which further support the claims.</p>	<p>The main report is still a bit vague on what comes the sources of evidence and it is sometimes hard to understand e.g. which key contribution claims do key stakeholders verify. However, this information is now included in the Results Charts in the revised case study (in the Annex). Other contributing factors not discussed.</p>	<p>After the first review, KNOWFOR ToC, evaluation questions and assumptions have been added but the evidence base was not expanded and clarified as recommended. After giving the first strength of evidence rating, the report was further revised to include Results Charts which explicitly show which claims are backed up by which sources of evidence.</p>	<p>High</p>

8.17. Annex 17: TOR for Independent Quality Assurance

Introduction

The International Climate Fund (ICF) is a £9.7 billion HMG fund from 2011/12 to 2020/21, managed jointly by the Department for International Development (DFID), the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). ICF programmes are grouped under three broad intervention areas: adaptation, low-carbon development and forestry.

KNOWFOR is a £38 million DFID funded knowledge programme that forms part of the ICF's forests portfolio. It is a partnership between the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Bank Programme of Forests (PROFOR). Titled "Improving the way knowledge on forests is understood and used internationally", KNOWFOR seeks to address the disjuncture between the supply and uptake of knowledge by practitioners and decision-makers in the forestry sector. The programme brings together three significant and complementary organisations in the international forestry development sector to leverage their comparative strengths and networks to improve the uptake of relevant knowledge in priority forest-related practice and policy processes.

KNOWFOR partners are supported by Clear Horizon, a consultancy specialising in theory based approaches to monitoring and evaluation. They have worked alongside KNOWFOR programme partners since early 2014, providing call down support. For the purposes of this evaluation, Clear Horizon is therefore considered to be a programme partner, and will take on a team leader role for the partner-led evaluation process.

KNOWFOR was originally a three year programme (March 2012 – April 2015). In June 2015 KNOWFOR received a cost extension that will see the programme funded until October 2017. Further details on the KNOWFOR programme are set out in the background section at the end of this ToR.

Overview of the KNOWFOR evaluation approach

The KNOWFOR evaluation will be conducted as a partner-led evaluation process. This partner led evaluation will be complemented by an independent quality assurance process.⁶⁶ The evaluation approach will involve iterative engagement between KNOWFOR partners and the external evaluator throughout the four phases of the evaluation.

This ToR is for the ***independent quality assurance element*** of the KNOWFOR evaluation.

For full details of the evaluation approach and the partner-led evaluation process, please refer to *Appendix 1: Partner-Led KNOWFOR Evaluation*.

⁶⁶ This two-component model of evaluation is informed by work undertaken in a range of other sectors and by evaluation approaches adopted by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Australian Department of Foreign and Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Aid Programme. It is a somewhat innovative approach to evaluation that intends to maximise the benefits of internal learning through partner engagement in data collection and analysis while ensuring rigour, transparency and credibility of the evaluation findings.

For a description of the overall KNOWFOR evaluation governance structure, roles and responsibilities please see *Appendix 2: KNOWFOR Evaluation governance structure, roles and responsibilities*

Independent quality assurance role⁶⁷

Purpose and scope

The independent quality assurance component of the overall KNOWFOR evaluation is intended to provide KNOWFOR partners with a “critical friend” throughout the evaluation process. The independent quality assurance role will provide an independent perspective on the partner-led evaluation methodology, approach, findings and recommendations. The role will provide an improvement focussed assessments of:

- Partner-led evaluation methodological rigour
- the strength of partner-led evaluation evidence and findings
- the strength of recommendations relating to future practice in knowledge uptake programme management
- the capacity of partner M&E systems to produce appropriate, learning focussed information on project activities.

The role will also involve leading a participatory consultation process with external programme stakeholders on evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The independent quality assurance role will commence in June 2016 with the majority of work completed by March 2017. Additional inputs will be required between April and June 2017 to contribute to communication products

Audience

The primary audiences for this piece of work are KNOWFOR partner organisations and DFID.

Within KNOWFOR partner organisations the independent quality assurance process will be of primary interest to senior organisational staff, project managers, and internal monitoring and evaluation practitioners. Partners will look to the process to:

- ensure that institutional and partnership assumptions around M&E are challenged
- ensure that recommendations are evidence based and actionable
- provide an improvement focussed assessment of institutional M&E systems and capacity.

DFID will look to the independent quality assurance process to:

- enhance partner learning opportunities by providing new insights and perspectives
- ensure that the partner-led evaluation satisfies DFID’s quality standards
- ensure that the partner-led evaluation generates valid findings to inform DFID future knowledge programme investments.

⁶⁷ See Appendix 2 for a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

Independent quality assurance questions

The independent quality assurance process will be guided by the following questions (to be finalised in consultation with the selected provider):

- How robust and appropriate is the proposed methodology and approach of the partner-led evaluation?
- How could any weaknesses be mitigated in the future?
- How robust are the evidence and findings of the partner-led evaluation?
- Are the claims sufficiently evidence based?
- Did the evaluation miss any potentially important findings?
- How could any weaknesses be mitigated in the future?
- How well equipped are KNOWFOR partners M&E systems to produce appropriate, learning focussed information on project activities?

Independent quality assurance scope

The independent quality assurance role has two components:

1. To act as a critical friend for the partner-led evaluation team
2. To lead an external consultation process on evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations

Although it is important for the quality assurance process to be independent, in line with the learning focus of the overall evaluation the approach adopted should be consultative and improvement-focussed.

The role of the “critical friend”

The concept of the “critical friend” will be used in the evaluation to provide partners with a trusted outsider to challenge assumptions, provide refresh perspectives and offer constructive critiques of both the evaluation process and products. Crucially, this role will require the external evaluator to fully understand the context of the work and the capacity development outcomes that the evaluation is working toward, as well as the evaluation objectives.

In their role as a “critical friend” the independent evaluator will shadow the partner-led evaluation process, provide advice and input throughout the evaluation and produce reflection reports on the process. The independent evaluator will be required to engage with the partner-led evaluation process at planning, sense-making and reporting points. This engagement will facilitate the external evaluator to:

- build an understanding of the programme and partner organisations
- engage partners in learning focussed dialogue regarding evaluation approaches
- provide an integrated, improvement focussed review of key products

- strengthen the quality of the evaluation process overall.

This role will require the external evaluator to:

1. Review relevant background documents
2. Participate in the KNOWFOR evaluation planning processes
3. Produce a work plan to guide their contribution to the evaluation process
4. Review KNOWFOR evaluation plans (this will include the overall methodology and individual case-study plans)
5. Review the partner case study products
6. Observe the internally led evaluation sense-making sessions
7. Review the final evaluation products
8. Produce a report on the validity of the findings in the evaluation report including recommendations for improving the evaluation approach in the future
9. Produce a brief report on the appropriateness and capacity of partner systems to produce useful, learning focussed information for internal use and evaluation purposes

Leading external consultation on evaluation findings

In addition to the role of “critical friend” the external evaluator will undertake a consultation process with evaluation informants and stakeholders on evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. This consultation process is designed to feed into the final KNOWFOR evaluation sense-making process.

The process will be under-taken remotely and provide evaluation informants who are not able to participate in face-to-face sense making workshops, the opportunity to inform the interpretation of results and development of recommendations. The external evaluator will convene this consultation in order to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on results and findings to an impartial third party, rather than directly to partners themselves.

The consultation process will need to be designed and implemented by the independent evaluator, in consultation with the evaluation leadership team (see Appendix 2 for a detailed description of the evaluation team structure and roles). The process will need to be intuitive, engaging, light touch and make use of technology appropriate for stakeholders with limited band-width.

Contribution to communications products and wider learning

As this is a new approach to conducting evaluations for both DFID and partners there is interest in documenting the process for learning and dissemination purposes. The external evaluator will be expected to contribute to translating evaluation findings to a range of accessible formats post evaluation and have input into the development of a publishable article outlining the evaluation experience.

Table 1 summarises the indicative tasks and deliverables for the independent evaluator to undertake quality assurance and reporting tasks alongside the partner-led activities. Inputs will be negotiated with the selected provider.

Table 1: Indicative tasks and timeline for Independent Quality Assurance role*

Task	Timing	Deliverable	Payment trigger
Review KNOWFOR programme and partner specific documentation	June 2016	n/a	
Participate in the KNOWFOR evaluation planning process and review methodology	June 2016	Review of the KNOWFOR evaluation methodology	
Develop a final independent quality assurance process plan	July 2016	Independent quality assurance work plan, including external stakeholder consultation plan	X
Review individual case-study plans	July 2016	Review of case-study methodology	
Liaise and support partners throughout implementation	Jul – Dec 2016	n/a	
Review draft evaluation products and supporting evidence and adjust consultation plans as necessary	Jan 2017	Evaluation review report Revised consultation plan	X
Observe the final KNOWFOR evaluation sense-making processes	Feb 2017	Process review of the sense-making session	
Evaluation informant consultation and validation process	Feb 2017	Validated findings, conclusion and recommendations	
Document the findings of the external quality assurance process including recommendations for strengthening this evaluation and commissioning similar	Mar 2017	Quality assurance report	X
Consult with internal evaluation team in order to finalise KNOWFOR evaluation	Mar 2017	n/a	
Contribute to communication products and publishable article documenting evaluation process	June 2017	Communications products	X

**Please see Appendix 1 for details of the partner-led process and an indication of potential inputs required.*

Competencies and experience

The external evaluator should have experience in over-seeing complex, multi-partner evaluations in relevant sectors. They should have a familiarity with a wide range of contemporary evaluation techniques, with a strong understanding of theory driven evaluation approaches and participatory evaluation processes. Experience in providing quality assurance, capacity development and/or evaluation mentoring would also be beneficial.

Familiarity with the forestry sector and knowledge to policy programmes would be highly regarded.

Risks and dependencies

The success of the KNOWFOR evaluation quality assurance role relies on a number of factors outside the control of the contracted evaluator.

In order to successfully complete their tasks, the external evaluator is dependent on the KNOWFOR partners and Clear Horizon completing their evaluation tasks. The quality assurance role is also reliant on partner's openness and willingness to engage.

Partners have indicated that they see value in the external quality assurance role and have established a learning culture among themselves that should facilitate an open engagement with the role. There is, however, a high likelihood that there will be delays during the implementation of the evaluation. Partners are largely relying on internal resources to implement evaluation activities, and some evaluation tasks will be undertaken by regional or country office staff. The complication involved in managing a dispersed team will undoubtedly slow progress and create delays.

KNOWFOR partners themselves are also geographically dispersed. This means that there are limited opportunities for face to face meetings and group coordination calls need to be conducted across multiple timezones. As a result, communication is often not optimal and it can take time for partners to come to a shared understanding and agreement.

There are many actors involved in the KNOWFOR evaluation and the coordination of the actors and their contributions will be complicated and time consuming. The role of the evaluation team leader (Clear Horizon) will be crucial in managing the communication between partners, the consistency of products and ensuring a shared understanding of the evaluation approach.

Key contributors to the KNOWFOR evaluation have multiple roles and responsibilities within their own organisations, meaning the evaluation responsibilities will be competing with other core functions. The evaluation team leads from each partner organisation also have heavy travel commitments as part of their day to day responsibilities.

Annex 18: Communications Plan

As the KNOWFOR evaluation has an emphasis on learning, it is important to ensure that the findings and recommendations are accessible and well communicated to the key target audiences. The evaluation has adopted a two-track approach to achieving engagement with the evaluation findings. The evaluation has sought to engage key internal and external stakeholders through participatory processes. This draws on a “co-generation” theory of change commonly utilised across KNOWFOR partner activities, this theory suggests that people are more likely to pay attention to information that they have participated in producing and reflects their input. Partners were engaged in the development of findings via a series of ‘Sense-making’ workshops and in a final ‘Summit’ workshop where findings and recommendations were developed through a facilitated interactive process.

In addition to this participatory engagement with findings, the evaluation will be promoted through a range of interested networks and translated into a number of accessible formats for dissemination. Proposed communications activities are outlined in Table 30 below (to be confirmed with partners).

Table 30. Proposed communications activities

Communication product	Audience	Clear Horizon Role	Deadline
1. Graphic design input for the final report, to make the whole report more visually appealing	Readers of the evaluation – DFID, partners, and interested others. Report will be published on DFID site?	Clear Horizon will lead this	Early September
2. Paper on partner led evaluation – 14 pages	The evaluation community. organisations considering whether to use this evaluation approach. Could be presented at evaluation society. On web with blogs tweets and signposting.	Clear Horizon is contributing to this paper along with ODI	End of September
3. YouTube recording explaining the evaluation methodology	Community of practice wishing to understand the evaluation approach.	Clear Horizon	End of September
4. Info graphic on the evaluation – 1 page	People interested in learning a brief amount about the evaluation.	Clear Horizon will create based on findings of the paper	End of September

<p>5. Short five-page think piece on the flexible management approach taken in KNOWFOR</p>	<p>Other development programs – target development practice.</p> <p>Dissemination: each partner can disseminate through their own channels</p>	<p>Initial drafting with input from partners</p>	<p>Finalised by end of October</p>
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8.18. Annex 19: Quality Assurance Report

This Quality Assurance (QA) report is prepared by Tiina Pasanen (Research Fellow) and John Young (Head of Programme) from the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme at Overseas Development Institute.

Introduction

The aim of this QA report is to provide comments on KNOWFOR evaluation products and process, and give recommendations for future evaluations. We have previously provided detailed comments on the key outputs and meetings and, thus, the aim is not to repeat this analysis but to give an overview of key issues and observations. We will focus the discussion on the overall evaluation approach, evidence base for findings, sense-making workshops as key points for synthesis and interpretation and evaluation management, and the roles of different actors involved in the process.

Throughout the report we aim to provide information on and address the following questions laid out in the QA proposal and workplan:

- How robust and appropriate are the proposed methodology and approach of the partner-led evaluation?
- How could any weaknesses be mitigated in the future?
- How robust are the evidence and findings of the partner-led evaluation?
- Are the claims sufficiently evidence based?
- How could any weaknesses be mitigated in the future?⁶⁸
- How well equipped are KNOWFOR partners’ M&E systems to produce appropriate, learning-focussed information on project activities?

1) The overarching approach

Partner-led approach

Overall, we found that the partner-led approach was aligned with and suitable for the learning and capacity-building focussed approach KNOWFOR had previously taken for its DMEL work. In previous

⁶⁸ In our initial plan, we also planned to address the question of ‘Did the evaluation miss any potentially important findings?’. Given that the external evaluation informant exercise was dropped off, we were unable to address the question with interaction solely with the partners, CH and DFID.

years, the DMEL work had mainly focussed on monitoring and planning (reviewing its own Theory of Change [ToC], supporting partners in building systematic monitoring systems etc.) and this was the main evaluative process taken together with partners.

While the evaluation approach was generally compatible with the programme's learning orientation, it was also very challenging, ambitious and time consuming given the structure of the programme (three independent, different types of organisation; no joint projects; and separate contracts with the funder) and a numerous and diverse set of outputs each partner was meant to produce, which were synthesised by Clear Horizon and reviewed by the QA. It became clear during the evaluation process that, though all partners have agreed on the approach and discussed it over several months, not everyone (perhaps anyone) realised just how much time and effort would be required for this evaluation.

This type of partner-led evaluation falls somewhere between an externally led participatory approach and self-assessment. The strengths that these types of evaluations are likely to have were evident in KNOWFOR too, such as:

1. A stronger focus on learning and capacity-building than in a typical externally led or conducted evaluation. For example, it seemed that some partners had not been involved in evaluation analysis and reflection this closely before.
2. Partners' ownership of the process. A significant number of staff in each organisation were engaged in the development of evaluation products and participated in sense-making workshops. Moreover, the management level buy-in was evident – for example, in workshops – something that is not commonly observed yet has a great potential to strengthen the uptake of the results within the organisations.

However, there are inherent biases and weaknesses in this approach that should be considered, especially when reading the evaluation's findings, including:

1. In self-assessment and participatory approaches there is an increased risk for self-bias (compared to independent evaluations) as people have a tendency to present their own work in a more positive light.
2. Focusing only on positive cases. In KNOWFOR, the case study sampling strategy was based on success case sampling. While this is common, the results of these case studies are unlikely to be representable of all projects funded (i.e. 'typical' research projects are often less influential) which might limit the scope of learning as we often learn more when things do not work out or when we can compare 'unsuccessful' and 'successful' cases. In KNOWFOR, only one of the partners (PROFOR) included one not-so-successful sub-case as part of one of its case studies, which gave a good opportunity to reflect the importance of context and enabling factors.

However, the evaluation team made considerable efforts to mitigate the biases and limitations. The mitigation strategies included: i) commissioning an independent QA to review the process and products; ii) having different types of frameworks, tools and guidelines to be used across evaluation outputs – for example, partners were given criteria on how to assess the strength of evidence in case studies; iii) including lessons learnt briefs to discuss less successful projects (though some turned

out to be more focussed on looking at enabling factors across case studies, rather than providing clear comparison points for success cases); and iv) including external people in the process (besides the QA). For example, some of the sense-making workshops included a couple of external people, and the strengths and weaknesses of the approach were discussed with DFID evaluation advisers in a seminar.

The evaluation approach followed the Collaborative Outcomes Reporting (COR) and Performance Story approach that Clear Horizon has developed and used for years. It seemed to work fairly well, though at times partners could have benefited from evaluation methods training or workshops, as the process was new to most of them. But there are also indications that the COR and Performance Story approach might be better suited to assessing more bounded projects instead of one with three independent partners.

Recommendations:

- This approach is most appropriate when the programme has a strong focus on learning and capacity-building, and when there is mutual trust between partners. If the main goal is to produce an evaluation report quickly, this is not the approach to take. This evaluation approach is more about the process than solely about end products.
- Clarity is needed about how much effort, resources and time this approach takes. It always takes more than initially expected as learning and reflection takes time, and delays with one type of product or partner have a domino effect on the whole process.
- Caveats and inherent biases should be discussed in a transparent way and mitigated carefully.

2) Evidence base and findings

This section mainly talks about the evidence base for KEQ1 as this was the primary focus of the evaluation.

Material and outputs that we reviewed and gave comments on include:

- KNOWFOR, Clear Horizon and three partner-level evaluation plans (5)
- Case studies (9)
- KNOWFOR and partner-level results charts (4)
- KNOWFOR evaluation drafts (versions 1 & 2)
- VFM/cost-benefit analysis (3).

In addition, we joined planning and progress meetings, the partner workshops and the summit workshop, and read the outcome stories and lessons learned briefs but did not provide feedback on them. We were unable to review partner-level evaluation reports as partners were not able to produce them on time. It is common that things get delayed and a level of flexibility is needed in these types of evaluations involving a number of partners and a varied set of outputs. However, this means that we cannot verify that all conclusions and claims in the KNOWFOR-level reports are backed up with evidence in the partner-level reports. Yet we have reviewed the case studies and results charts which form the main body of evidence for KEQ1 for both the KNOWFOR and partner-level reports.

Case studies

The quality and scope of the KNOWFOR case studies varied significantly, based on our experience, more so than in a typical independent evaluation where external consultants undertake all of the case studies using a similar approach and style. Most of the case studies were commissioned for consultants but some of them were partly written by programme staff or organisations' long-term associates.

While a significant amount of guidance was provided and additional support was available for partners, there was some variance in the degree and consistency of understanding among partners. Some partners could have benefitted from more one-to-one support on certain aspects of the evaluation to ensure robust methodologies and consistency across case studies. If partners themselves were not 100% comfortable with the Performance Story or Episode Study approach and/or with determining an appropriate level of evidence needed for these types of case studies, it is not surprising that the external consultants they hired did not necessarily bring this confidence either.

The topics and scope of the case studies varied considerably too: while some were bounded studies of specific research projects in country x or y, others included several (independent) sub-cases. In addition, some case studies sought to cover global policy processes and were therefore quite difficult to assess using the same criteria as more bounded case studies.

Case studies on research influence and impact often suffer from several caveats. A review conducted by DFID in 2014⁶⁹ concluded (among other things) that research uptake case studies need to be analysed with caution because of the following:

- i) Case studies are often written to prove positive impact to justify continued investment in research. Thus, the selection of case studies is likely to be biased and likely to lead to an overestimation of the policy impact of the research.
- ii) The symbolic use of research is likely to be underrepresented and instrumental impacts are likely to be overrepresented.
- iii) Quantifying and proving the extent to which research contributed to changes are difficult and claims of contribution need to be viewed with caution.
- iv) According to another review, evaluations of research impact in international development 'stray dangerously close to the line between evaluation and promotion'.⁷⁰ However, the DFID review concluded that case studies can, despite these caveats, provide useful insights into how research can lead to impact (DFID, 2014).

Some of these caveats are evident in some of the KNOWFOR case studies. Success case sampling limits the scope of learning, and the extent of research uptake is likely to be more moderate in many KNOWFOR-supported projects other than those chosen for this evaluation. Success case sampling

⁶⁹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a089aced915d622c000343/impact-of-research-on-international-development.pdf>

⁷⁰ Boaz, A., Fitzpatrick, S. and Shaw, B. (2009) Assessing the impact of research on policy: a literature review *Science and Public Policy*, 36(4).

also limits some of the analysis regarding assumptions and enabling factors. For example, when there are no comparison points, it is almost impossible to say whether the enabling factors present in successful case studies are necessary across the portfolio. But, as all KNOWFOR case studies include lessons learned and promising practices sections, they provide useful insights into the pathways to research uptake.

Each case study was first reviewed with detailed comments and key recommendations. However, it was left up to partners to what extent they incorporated the recommendations. After updates, a strength of evidence rating, along with a very short justification for the rating, was given for each case study. This assessment looked at the evidence base, whether the main claims were sufficiently and clearly backed up by evidence, along with the extent of triangulation. The strength of evidence ratings for the case studies varied from low to high.⁷¹ One partner organisation questioned the ratings given to them which led to a discussion on the use of a strength of evidence tool and what is a sufficient level of evidence and triangulation. This further highlights the need for targeted tools and methods training in the early stages to ensure a common understanding across partners.

While there are multiple sources of evidence to support the main KNOWFOR conclusions, the varied quality and strength of evidence among the case studies undermined some of the more specific conclusions, such as the levels of contribution.

Case study methodology

Case studies were meant to use either a Performance Story or Episode Study approach.⁷² The majority chose the Performance Story approach, though it was applied in an inconsistent manner across case studies and in some it was not used at all or only in a vague fashion. In this regard, the Performance Story approach is a theory-based approach which needs to have a clearly articulated ToC or programme theory as a starting point (this can sometimes be reconstructed before the evaluation). If a case study does not have a ToC it cannot really be referred to as a Performance Story case study. These case studies struggled to explore and identify unexpected negative or positive findings, as it is difficult to report on the unexpected outcomes when the expected outcomes have not been clarified in the first place.

Results charts

Results charts are a feature of the COR approach. In KNOWFOR they were used in the case studies (which we do not comment on here) and at the partner level where they summarised a significant amount of information produced to address questions about reach, relevance and outcomes, for example. They also provide information about whether specific targets set in the logframe have been met. There was some variation in the level of details provided, especially regarding the question of

⁷¹ It should be noted that a low rating does not mean the research failed to have any impact. However, a low rating can mean that it is not clear to the reader where the evidence for the impact claim is coming from, it is not presented in a clear manner or the evidence has not been triangulated sufficiently (e.g. only/mainly based on project staff perceptions).

⁷² While Performance Stories are more likely to capture a wider net of changes in policy or practice resulting from a particular research project, Episode Studies focus on a policy change and are better suited to looking at what other factors have contributed to the policy change. However, both have potential for overestimation of the research impact, if not conducted in a careful way.

meeting end user needs.⁷³ The evidence provided varied from explaining the efforts to improve meeting end user needs and presenting results from a knowledge user survey, to narratives of identifying, targeting and adapting to users' needs and to social media statistics. Partners also assessed the confidence in evidence (from low to high) and, based on the evidence available, there were no obvious overclaims. Assessing gender responsiveness was challenging, mainly because gender targets and assessment tools were introduced partway through the evaluation.

Main report

We generally agree with the main conclusions made in the report. The conclusions and claims are triangulated and justified by multiple sources of evidence. Limitations are discussed, though some aspects – such as relying heavily on case studies with mixed quality, and the possibility that the logframe targets against which KNOWFOR's performance is measured have not initially been set at a realistic level, and not so successful findings (such as the lack of content collaboration) – have been played down slightly. However, these concerns were better addressed in the final version of the report.

VFM/EROI assessments

VFM assessment was included in the evaluation plan but was expected to be conducted in a light-touch way. Two approaches were decided upon: the ICAI's VFM framework⁷⁴ for the KNOWFOR-level work, and a cost-benefit analysis based on an approach designed by Redstone Strategy Group⁷⁵ for selected case studies. The ICAI assessment, conducted by Clear Horizon, is a qualitative assessment of how well the project met the criteria in the ICAI framework and seemed to work. Experimenting with Redstone Strategy Group's approach proved more challenging. Monetaring the impact of research is a highly debated topic and often raises more questions than answers. However, at the same time, an increasing number of organisations are looking for ways to measure impact. The effort and time partners were able to invest in this varied significantly, and thus the outputs varied too. The process and lessons learned will be discussed in the 'evaluation of evaluation' process, and will likely provide important lessons for future projects. However, it would have been more useful for partners and the entire evaluation if the details of this assessment had been decided upon earlier.

Recommendations:

- Conduct workshops or training sessions on certain aspects of the evaluation process e.g. on chosen case study methodology. Providing case study examples is likely to be insufficient if people are not familiar with research evaluation methods and approaches.
- Bring in a QA practitioner sooner to the case studies, rather than commenting on draft end products. This was also mentioned by one of the case study consultants.
- The approach used by CIFOR to construct a detailed ToC for its Performance Story case studies worked well. The CIFOR M&E lead organised a ToC workshop for each case study which included case study consultants, the M&E lead and project researchers. This joint construction and clarification process led to detailed and thorough ToCs, which laid good

⁷³ Were the knowledge products relevant and targeted to the requirements of users? And were these enhanced through feedback and learning?

⁷⁴ <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/report/icais-approach-effectiveness-value-money/>

⁷⁵ <https://www.redstonestrategy.com/publications/new-approach-global-think-tank-network/>

foundations for case studies. Where consultants had come up with ToCs by themselves (if at all), they were usually very general or vague, which in turn affected the quality of analysis.

3) Workshop and meetings

Sense-making workshops were the key instances where evaluation findings were synthesised and analysed.

Partner-level sense-making workshops

Though the aims of the partner-level workshops were the same, they were implemented in quite different ways. For example, their size varied from 5 to more than 20 staff members in attendance. Clear Horizon consultants facilitated two out of the three workshops, and only one of the workshops had time to focus on KEQ2, indicating that perhaps two-day workshops would have been necessary to go through all the material and questions needed.

The workshops focussed mainly on KEQ1 by going through case studies and results charts, and identifying key lessons learned. In many cases, the material was not shared much in advance which in turn significantly limited participants' ability to analyse and reflect on the evidence base and findings. Going through results charts full of information turned out to be quite challenging, especially as participants had not had time to process the information beforehand.

In general, participants were actively engaged (some more than others) and there was a lot of good reflection in each workshop, though in some cases only towards the end. Some participants were initially struggling to think critically about what had not worked as planned or what they could have done differently. However, some did have a critical, self-reflective approach from the start, and it seems that this happened when the management-level people not only accepted the purpose of the workshop but also contributed and led this type of discussion.

Summit workshop

The summit workshop faced similar challenges, such as participants not having access to the relevant materials in advance of the meeting. This led to information overload during the first day and limited participants' ability to participate in the discussion in a meaningful way. It also became evident that people had understood the role of results charts (a key part of discussions) in quite different ways, so clarification (again) of what they are supposed to do and what not would have been useful. Again, some participants struggled to be self-critical from the start. However, during the second day, when focusing on KEQ2 and KEQ3, participants were more engaged and reflective.

While there were some very critical comments about the process and workshop, it was also evident that partners recognised the positive elements such as ownership of the process, management buy-in and the focus on learning. This was evident in the summit workshop. It is uncommon to have such a broad group of people (beyond M&E people) attend sense-making workshops in international development programmes. Having researchers, programme staff and managers involved in the process adds value to the reflection and increases the likelihood of uptake and utilisation of findings and process within the organisation.

Recommendations:

- Invest more time in joint sense-making. It seemed that significant time and effort invested in producing multiple sources of outputs limited the availability of time to spend on analysing the evidence.
- Meeting deadlines and sharing the material well in advance are crucial and have a huge effect on the quality of joint analysis and reflection.
- If the above is not possible, the facilitators will face a difficult task and may need to adapt their approach to allow participants to absorb a massive amount of information while trying to ensure that participants are not simply comparing each other's performance and outcomes.

Good practices we observed that others could benefit from:

- IUCN's workshop started with laying out ground rules (everyone's contribution is as important, there are no stupid questions etc.) which lay a good, 'democratic' foundation for the day.
- CIFOR had collected several personal and institutional stories of change using the Most Significant Change approach. These stories and outcomes were discussed and prioritised during the workshop, inspiring much in-depth analysis.

4) Collaboration and management

Collaboration between partners

The KNOWFOR partnership seems to have started more as a contractual funding arrangement to group independent research programmes under one umbrella programme rather than as a deliberate partnership arrangement. While the collaboration between partners has intensified since the beginning of KNOWFOR, partners are still independent (have their own projects and separate contracts with DFID) and the collaboration is limited to DMEL work and to a small extent gender. While partners collaborated during the evaluation process (such as jointly planning the evaluation approach and attending a summit workshop), evidence production (such as case studies and results charts) was undertaken independently and only partners' final draft reports were shared with each other.

The role of Clear Horizon

Clear Horizon led, coordinated and provided technical oversight to the evaluation. It developed and provided guidance, supported partners, facilitated workshops and synthesised a large amount of information. Overall, Clear Horizon has done a very good job in pulling together varied pieces of evidence while balancing a significant volume of comments and feedback, resulting in a clear report that does not merely synthesise the information but also provides analysis.

Clear Horizon's overall role has not been an easy one. As a long-term DMEL adviser or facilitator and a 'semi-external/internal learning partner', it has good and close contacts with each partner; however, balancing everyone's inputs and feedback (whether related to workshops or outputs) has not been without its challenges.

While this is a partner-led evaluation, at times the evaluation could have been managed more effectively if greater time were spent ensuring that partners had a clear and common understanding of the approach, specific elements and timelines. Drafting guidelines was not enough. In addition, some partners could have clearly benefitted from more proactive support, especially with the case studies. On this, it has to be noted that support was available but not always taken up, which leads to the question of how much support or capacity building can be ‘enforced’ in a partner-led evaluation.

Role of DFID

The DFID Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) had an important role in the evaluation, especially in initiating the partner-led, learning-oriented approach, but was less involved in day-to-day evaluation management as that role was fulfilled by Clear Horizon. Partners commented throughout the evaluation process on the value of having a DFID SRO who understands the content of research, is actively engaged, focuses on learning and is good to work with.

From the QA perspective, we have particularly appreciated how DFID has emphasised the importance of face-to-face interaction and building trust between partners. This is unusual and sometimes it is expected that ‘learning’ will happen by itself in addition to everything else, without anyone making significant efforts. Learning in KNOWFOR has been expanded to include the evaluation process itself. All partners are involved in the ‘evaluation of the evaluation’ and a reflective think piece will be written with inputs from all partners, to be supported by DFID.

The QA role

We had to adapt the QA approach and plans as the evaluation developed but this was anticipated from the start. Though there have been quite a few changes to the QA workplan, all changes have been done in collaboration and after joint discussions. For example, based on several discussions with DFID, Clear Horizon and partners, the external evaluation informant exercise was dropped. However, at times it was difficult to plan the use of our time as deadlines kept shifting. Also, QA could have been brought in earlier. For example, during the first weeks, while we were reviewing partners’ evaluation plans, partners had already moved on to the case study plans and contracting consultants. Thus, our comments on the evaluation plans likely came too late in the process. Further, as previously mentioned, some of the case studies would have benefitted from receiving comments at earlier stages.

The approach was very ambitious, especially in terms of what each partner had to deliver; and while we did recommend removing the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) element, we could have suggested streamlining the process even further when reviewing the KNOWFOR evaluation plan. Furthermore, in hindsight:

1. We should have been clearer in communicating how we wanted partners to report back if and when they addressed our QA comments, rather than merely leaving them to decide whether they would take them on board. It was often quite difficult to identify retrospectively what had been changed in the final versions.
2. We provided substantial and often quite detailed comments on the case studies, which might have been too much for some partners, especially as there was often limited time for

changes. It might have been better to limit the number of recommendations and make it clear which were the most important to address.

3. We could have been more proactive during the summit workshop, but, like partners themselves, we were struggling with the volume of information provided.

Conclusions

We can conclude that the partner-led approach was appropriate and in line with the learning-focused approach KNOWFOR had previously taken for its DMEL work. But this approach was also in some ways ambitious, complicated and time consuming. It seems that several months were spent on planning (QA was not involved in this phase) and this spilled over into the implementation phase which meant that less time was available for data collection and analysis. This may explain some of the challenges observed during the evaluation process. Compared to externally led evaluations, we observed more variation in the quality and scope of case studies, but also a stronger sense of the ownership of the evaluation process and a commitment to learning.

While the key conclusions are generally sufficiently triangulated and backed up by multiple sources of evidence, the varied quality of the case studies and success case sampling, combined with the increased likelihood of positive self-assessment bias found in the self-evaluations, needs to be taken into consideration when reading the evaluation findings.

There has been a strong focus on learning before and during the KNOWFOR evaluation and all partners have clearly invested time and effort into it. However, partners' approach to understanding and capacities for evaluation and learning varied considerably. This presented a challenge for the evaluation and more efforts could have been made to mitigate this. From the management angle, the constantly shifting timelines represented the biggest challenge for delivering the evaluation in the agreed timeframe. The robustness of the approach could have been increased by: i) ensuring that partners take on QA comments and/or explain what is being done to address the concerns raised; ii) providing evaluation training and workshops, as well as proactive one-to-one support, especially in the early stages of planning the case studies; and iii) having a firmer hold on timelines or giving partners more time from the start, especially for the analysis phase.

The KNOWFOR evaluation is a worthy endeavour that puts learning high on the agenda. There are some indications that partners' abilities to conduct and manage this type of evaluation have increased, and that some of the elements of the KNOWFOR evaluation have already been transferred to other evaluations within the partner organisations. While the KNOWFOR evaluation has limitations and caveats, it can contribute to the existing literature on research uptake, and provides important lessons learned on partner-led evaluation approaches that are worth sharing with a wider audience.