

AgriFoSe2030

Agriculture for Food Security 2030

Translating Science Into Policy & Practice



AgriFoSe2030 Phase 2 Extension: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy

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1. Introduction

To increase productivity in smallholder farming systems in the Global South, it is crucial to connect evidence-based knowledge more closely with the processes that develop policies and practices integrating this research. However, researchers are rarely trained to establish these connections. Since the inception in 2015, AgriFoSe has focused on enhancing researchers' capacity to co-produce knowledge with multiple stakeholders, and to effectively translate scientific findings into practice and for societal benefit.

Our experience during the first two phases of AgriFoSe has shown that using a Theory of Change (ToC) approach to strategically design science translation to change practices and/or policies amplifies research impact. The programme's model, which includes training in research communication, impact monitoring, and policy engagement opportunities, has been effective and delivers promising results.

The programme has received a costed extension for a further 3 years, from 2025–2027. The focus in this phase will be to transition the leadership of the work to three partner universities in Africa (**University of Nairobi (UoN) in Kenya; Kyambogo University (KyU) in Uganda and Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT) in Zimbabwe**) and a network hub in South-East Asia (SEA).

The emphasis in both regions is on building localized, sustainable capacity. In SSA, regional hubs of expertise are replacing previous "Challenges", enabling institutionalization as well as more effective, locally driven solutions and enhanced resource-sharing. The extension phase will also use the partner universities' regional networks to *reach out to more universities*. In SEA, the work will focus on sustaining strategic connections and supporting capacity-building efforts, though with reduced scope.

ToC and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) principles continue to guide the initiative, but with a *stronger emphasis on embedding science-translation capabilities within institutional structures* for lasting influence.

The aim is to continue advancing "AgriFoSe Flagship Project" as important flagships through a transparent selection process with university hubs and Swedish team collaboration, *transferring ownership to partner universities* to lead execution with support from the Swedish team, emphasizing institutional alignment, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable impact.

Note on SEA network: To ensure more focused engagement and deeper integration of AgriFoSe2030 methodologies, the programme concentrates its efforts in the phase 2 extension period on African partners in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe, where some progress in institutionalisation had already been achieved. At the same time, the programme continues to maintain a network of Southeast Asian (SEA) researchers and

supports them in sharing AgriFoSe2030 methodologies with regional research and practice networks, while also leveraging activities within collaborating SEA institutions to strengthen the dissemination of AgriFoSe2030 approaches across the region. The overall aim is to build stronger connections among key institutions, networks, and researchers in SEA. This will help drive evidence-based decision-making on critical priorities in Southeast Asia, including smallholder market access, climate resilience among vulnerable farming communities, and the development of innovative extension services.

2. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy – overview

This document describes the MEL strategy for the extension phase of AgriFoSe2030 (2025-2027), including an implementation plan. The strategy aims to support learning by the programme stakeholders and accountability to funders by providing regular analysis and evidence of progress against milestones and emerging outcomes. It will also support external communication of AgriFoSe2030 impact.

This extension phase of AgriFoSe2030 is built on the creation of three Hubs in Africa and transitioning the programme activities.

This means that the MEL strategy needs to enable tracking of the institutionalisation process, the Hub's leadership development, as well as the local set-up and implementation of courses, mentoring and training activities, linkages to the Flagship Project, and regional network-building by the Hubs.

More specifically, the main objectives of the MEL strategy are then to:

1. Provide progress tracking of the establishment of the Hubs and the transition process.
2. To stimulate, encourage, and facilitate participatory self-reflection and learning at Hub, Change Project and programme level.
3. Demonstrate the contribution of the programme toward desired outcomes as formulated in the ToC documents at programme, Hub and Change Project level, in terms of smaller scale outcomes and larger scale outcomes, and ultimately, in promoting impact
4. Document and show-case learning, outcomes and impact from AgriFoSe2030 Extension Phase, in terms of both successes and learning.

3. Design of the Theory of Change- based monitoring, evaluation and learning approach

The programme has adopted a ToC approach as a way of operating and in order to reach impact via its outputs-outcome-impact continuum (see diagram in Figure 1). Based on

the principles set out in annex 1, the AgriFoSe2030 MEL approach is based on tracking emerging change and assessing this against ToCs at three different levels: Programme levels, Hub and Change Project.

The MEL strategy has been designed on the following principles:

- Collaborative and participatory approach that involves Hub partners in the design and delivery of the MEL strategy and tools.
- Providing multiple opportunities for self-reflection and peer-to-peer exchange on the challenges of the transition process, as well as emerging outcomes.
- Generating opportunities for learning-by-doing and building skills in MEL.
- Useful MEL tools that create actionable insights for Hub managers and the programme support team, as well as enabling outcome and impact tracking.
- Using a mix of quantitative indicators for monitoring with qualitative and narrative stories of change.

The Programme, Hub and Flagship Project ToCs provide the architecture for the MEL approach. The ToCs are nested, so that the Flagship ToC's map to the Hub ToC, which in turn, map to the programme level. This enables the programme to trace and map outcomes up to the overall programme level. The MEL strategy will be implemented at all three levels.

A suite of standardised MEL tools and processes (further described below and in appendix 3) will be used at each level, in order to document and track how activities, outputs and outcomes are progressing towards the envisioned impact and catalysing the desired change processes.

The coming sections will unpack each element in the MEL strategy, and how it will be applied.

4. AgriFoSe2030 Phase 2 extension phase structure

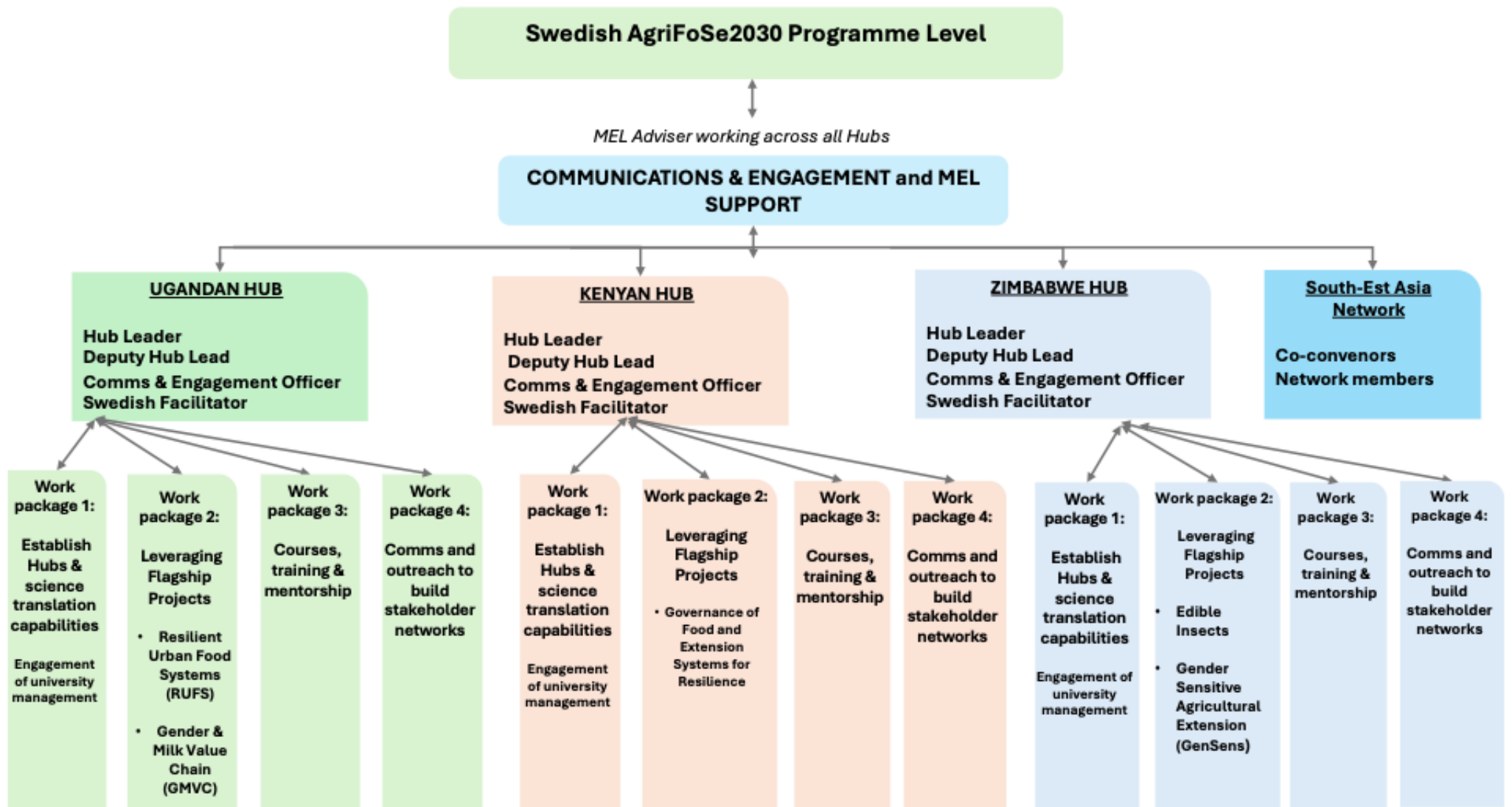
The extension programme brings a new structure to the programme, with the aim of establishing three regional Hubs as focal points for leading science translation for agricultural development for food security in their regions.

Each Hub will take the AgriFoSe2030 model, contextualise it for their region's needs and eventually deliver a work programme from the partner university. Establishing the Hubs securely within their universities, with buy-in and active support from senior and mid-level university management, is a key task for this phase. In parallel, the capabilities to deliver the AgriFise2030 model – the skills, processes, systems and resources – need to be enhanced and developed.

To build strong Hubs, lessons from earlier AgriFoSe2030 phases will need to guide Hub development. This will happen through close collaboration between Hub teams, Swedish facilitators, and the Communications & Engagement team. Monitoring, evaluation and

learning (MEL) will play an important part in capturing progress and sharing learning across all the levels of the programme.

Figure 1 illustrates the programme structure for the Phase 2 extension (*Focusing on AgriFoSe2030 hubs*)



5. Key elements in the MEL strategy

5.1 AgriFoSe2030 Extension programme level ToC

AgriFoSe2030 updated its programmatic ToC in early 2025, to reflect the new Hub partnership and transition strategy.

Following the structure of the Programme ToC, the MEL strategy aims to document emerging results for the 3 years of the extension phase as they emerge along the ToC (as set out in Figure 2).

The primary focus at the programme level in this phase is to document and reflect on the transition process as the Hubs ramp up and become established in the lead universities. Then we will track the short and medium term outcomes that are indicative of emerging longer-term changes, reflecting the short implementation period. Table 1 sets out the ToC change categories and their scope as the overarching architecture for the MEL strategy.

Table 1. ToC change categories and their scope

Category of Change	Scope
Sphere of control – Activities and Outputs (what we do with whom)	<p>Describes how Hub teams and Swedish facilitators work in an integrated way to develop strategies and workplans., e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub teams build the institutional engagement and framework required to establish the Hub securely. • Hub teams and Swedish facilitators enhance capacities, skills, processes and resources for science translation, and to deliver the Hub strategy and share learning with other Hub peers.
Sphere of direct influence – Short term outcomes	<p>Describes the changes in Partner Universities' knowledge, ways of working and relationships, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hubs enhance their leadership of science translation work; implement courses, training and mentoring; leverage the Flagship Projects as demonstrators; build networks locally and regionally.
Sphere of indirect influence – Medium term outcomes (Beyond the current)	<p>Describes the changes in stakeholders' knowledge, behaviours and relationships that we would expect to see as a result of the Hubs' strategies successful implementation, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hubs and their partners integrate science translation for agricultural development into their curricula and research agenda.

funding phase.)

- Mobilisation of a wide range of smallholder farmers, both women and men, agri-innovation stakeholders and governance actors in support of inclusive, evidence-informed policies and practices.
- Extensive communities of scientists, based in the regions are motivated and well-equipped to translate science for policy and practice.

AgriFoSe 2030 Phase 2.5 impact pathway - Revised 23 May 2025

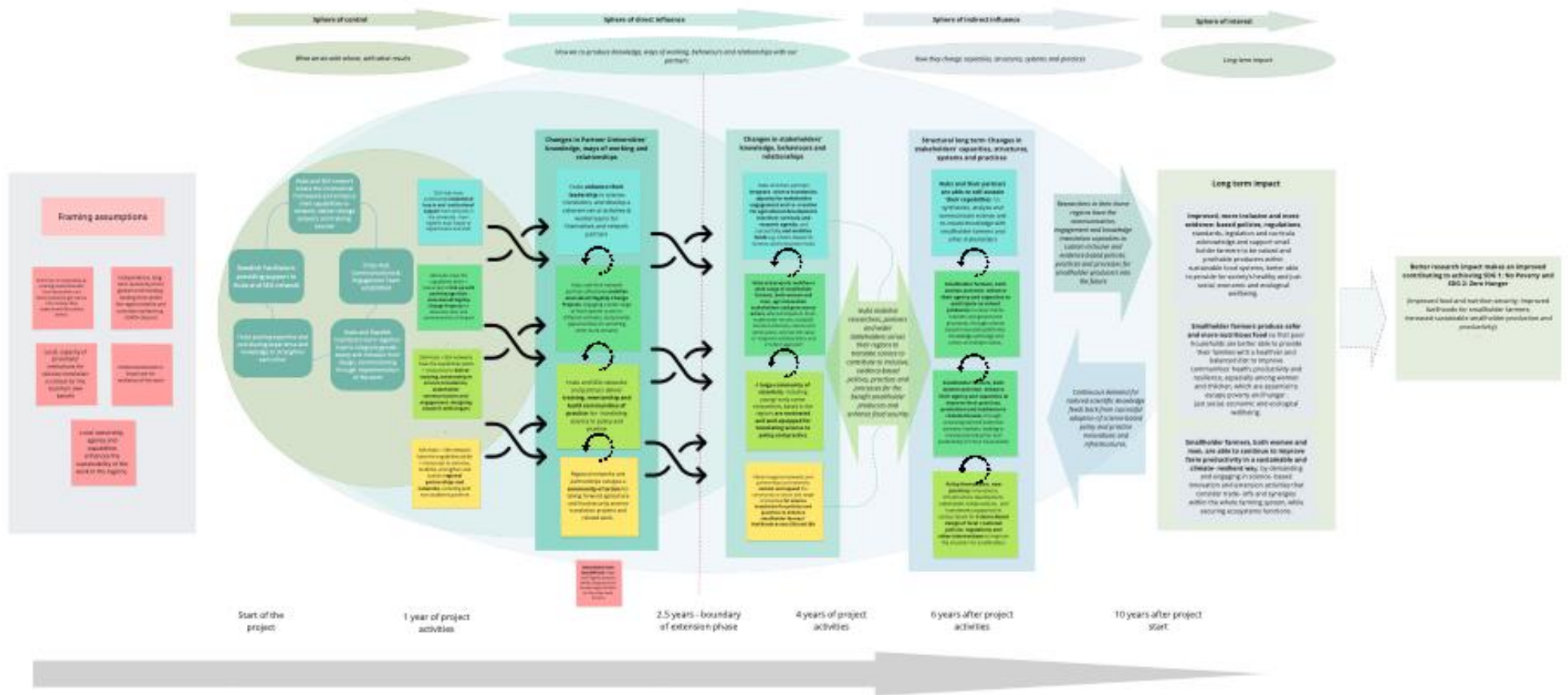


Figure 2. The Theory of Change, AgriFoSe2030 programme level

5.2 Hub level ToCs and strategies

Each Hub is developing their own ToC and Hub strategy and workplan (covering both establishing the Hub securely and implementing the core activities). The MEL strategy will aim to capture change at this level through a number of MEL processes:

- **Hub establishment and development:** This will be tracked through a self-assessment process using rubric scales that reflect the key dimensions of the programme ToC, as well as the specific dimensions of interest for individual Hubs (an example is proved in Annex).¹ The rubrics were co-developed through a participatory process with Hub teams.
- Alongside this, a **peer-to-peer reflection process**, involving other Hub teams and the Swedish facilitators, will promote collective learning within a supportive environment of trust and mutual respect.
Peer-to-peer reflection is valuable in complex situations, as it allows peers to offer fresh perspectives and highlight strengths and weaknesses in a supportive way. By sharing best practices and actionable feedback, participants can address challenges and build new skills. This approach fosters ongoing improvement through collective expertise.
- **Courses, training and mentoring:** The MEL process at Hub level will also involve tracking of the courses – development, communication, student enrolments, student results and feedback. This can be based on existing curriculum and course tracking processes at each partner university, or we can co-develop an approach based on frameworks such as the Kirkpatrick model.²
- **Regional network development:** This will require a tailored approach to MEL for network formation. Networks are challenging to monitor, due to their intangible nature, and the myriad ways of defining membership of a network, e.g. attendance at a few events, newsletter sign-up, payment of a membership fee or joint projects. The C&E team will work with Hub teams to develop a simple and easy to implement network tracking tool.

5.3 Flagship Projects

The projects will continue to use the MEL approach that was used in Phase 2 – a series of six monthly check-ins and reports, framed by their ToCs, with the use of Key Meetings Trackers and Change Stories, plus periodic outcome harvesting to feed into impact reports to Sida.

6. Planning, adaptive management and reporting cycle

¹ Rubrics for qualitative assessment provide structured feedback on non-numeric aspects of performance, focusing on descriptive standards rather than numerical scores. They typically include criteria (what to assess), performance standards (levels like 'good' or 'poor'), and descriptors (detailed explanations of what each standard looks like for that criterion).

² <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/>

The MEL approach has been designed with regard to the format of the reporting cycle of the funder of the AgriFoSe2030 programme, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

There is an annual work planning process in AgriFoSe2030 that sets out activities and planned project objectives and outputs. This plan forms the basis of the annual programme reporting to Sida, which happens in October, and continues on an annual cycle of adaptive management that follows up on progress and outcomes supported over the last year and sets out the forward plan for the coming year in March. Thus, effectively, there are **two reporting points** per year, the annual cycle and a briefer six monthly one.

The MEL strategy will have a similar cycle and is a part of the ToC way of working. The **team responsible for the ToC and MEL approaches and their follow-up is the C&E team, in close coordination with the Hub leadership and Swedish facilitators.**

The periodic Outcome Harvest will compile and analyse combined MEL information from across the programme – Hubs and Flagship projects. This will take place just before the annual planning process, so that it feeds into the planning process and provides inputs to the Sida reports. To feed into the Outcome Harvest, at each AgriFoSe2030 level – programme, Hub and Flagship Project, we will have **an annual reporting and review of the ToCs, including a mid-point review to follow up on the progress.** This **will also be the reporting points for AgriFoSe2030 MEL efforts.**

There will be **two meetings at these points** (and at all three levels) **where ToC and MEL progress and processes will be discussed** with programme management, Hub leaders and project leaders. **The C&E team will be responsible for the meetings, data collection and analysis of the ToC and MEL follow-up, however, with participation from Hub leaders and programme management.**

7. Monitoring framework for MEL

The **monitoring framework** will, in summary, use the following in order to meet the principles of utility and proportionality set out above:

- **a minimal set of high-level framing indicators**
- **narrative (qualitative and quantitative) outcome tracking in 'real-time'** at the project level, using simple templates and processes.

These will contribute a regular set of information to inform the **ToC evaluation and learning approach**, discussed later in this document, and provide an evidence base for future **external evaluation.** Within this framework, there is flexibility for Hubs and Flagship projects to collect their own data through surveys or baseline studies, if they so wish, as well as using the programme monitoring templates that are described in Annex 3.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the types of indicator and the narrative tools to be used in the MEL process, which we shall explain further below.

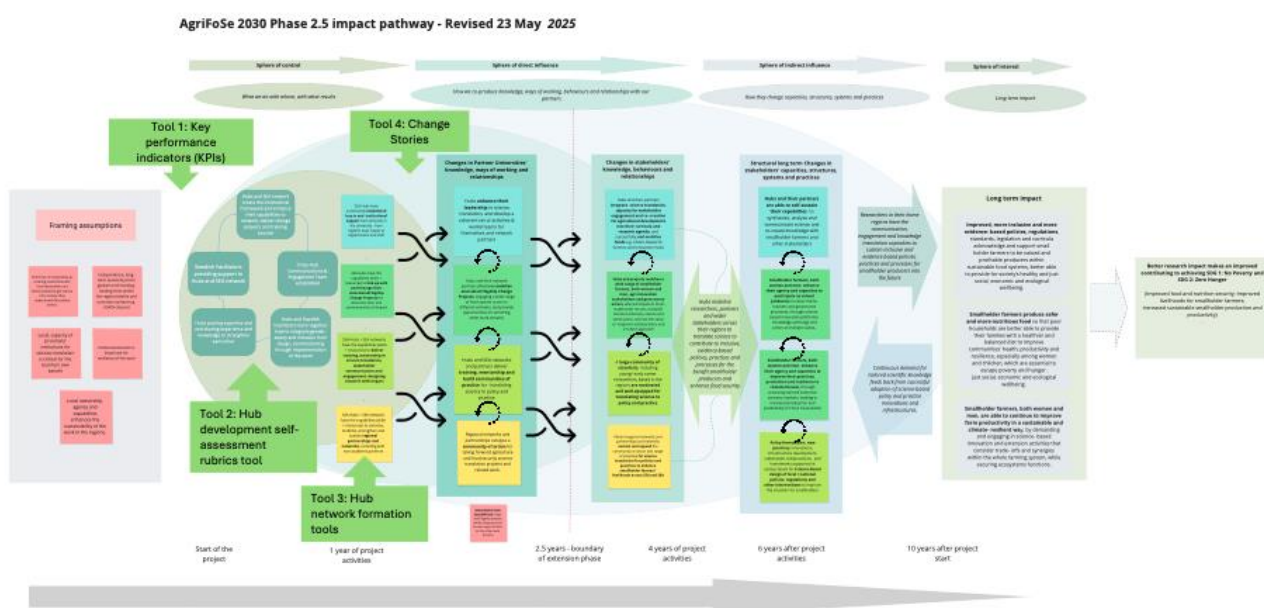


Figure 3. MEL tools, indicators and the ToC

7.1 High-level framing indicators

The programme level ToC offers a framework for identifying a number of high-level framing indicators that provide the anchor points for summarising progress at the different stages of the programme. Indicators are always limited and only provide a simple snapshot of specific elements that the programme has identified as important. They are therefore accompanied by more in-depth narrative reports from across the programme. There are a number of issues to consider, and common pitfalls to avoid, when identifying indicators. Annex 2 sets out a discussion of the considerations and common pitfalls when developing indicators.

For AgriFoSe2030, we have opted to use a set of programme level indicators as ‘framing indicators’ that reflect the key things the programme aims to achieve. They are ‘framing’ indicators because they are broad and not specific enough to be collected directly, but projects can regularly contribute relevant information from their work so that information about these key features can be summarised from across the programme.

Indicator development requires careful thought and discussion to arrive at a set of meaningful and efficient indicators that are feasible to collect with the resources available for MEL. Each agreed indicator then has to be documented with definitions and collection approach.

Table 2 sets out an illustrative set of indicators as a starting point. These are indicators are used as the basis for annual reporting to SIDA.

Table 2. Programme ToC indicators.

Programme ToC level	Framing indicator	Means of reporting
<p>1. Programme level</p>	<p>1.1 All parties have a mutual understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and expectations in the collaboration.</p> <p>1.2 Hub teams follow agreed AgriFoSe2030 ToC and MEL approach</p> <p>1.3 Enhanced capacity of Hub teams in C&E, enabling them to effectively collaborate, share information, and engage stakeholders in support of the programme’s objectives.</p> <p>1.4 Active dialogues are taking place between scientists, policymakers and practitioners in AgriFoSe2030</p> <p>1.5 Increased awareness of AgriFoSe2030 activities and insights among target audiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual report to Sida - Self assessment reports by Hubs - MOU and contract documentation - Workplan delivery progress reports - Hub MEL reports collated - Change Stories
<p>2. Hub development</p>	<p>2.1 The team has successfully gained a clear understanding of how to initiate the institutionalization process.</p> <p>2.2 The new Hub organization has been successfully set up.</p> <p>2.3 Hubs have ToCs, strategies and workplans in place and are implementing them.</p> <p>2.4 Hubs report progress on network formation and course delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self assessment reports by Hubs - MOU and contract documentation - Workplan delivery progress reports - Hub MEL reports collated
<p>3. Flagship Projects</p>	<p>3.1 Flagship projects are implementing their activities according to agreed project plan and ToCs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flagship MEL annual and 6 monthly reports - Change Stories

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7.2 AgriFoSe2030 MEL tools - Narrative outcome tracking

A suite of light touch narrative outcome tracking tools (process and template) has been designed for the AgriFoSe2030 programme. They are intended to be directly useful to project teams in their work, and easily applied by Hub teams and the C&E team at programme level.

All the AgriFoSe2030 monitoring tools have been designed to be a group reflection process plus a simple template for recording the results, to encourage a ‘so what?’ and ‘now what?’ rapid reflection and capture. Over time, if these tools are used by project teams regularly and systematically, they will build up a ‘real time’ evidence base that helps to make visible the projects’ progress along their ToC.

Project teams will be expected to use the tools to track and reflect in their own work. These tools can be complemented or combined with any project specific data gathering such as surveys and baseline studies. Each tool is actually a group process of critical reflection, captured in a simple template. The guidance is provided for the process, and support will be provided for the first round of documentation and reporting . See Annex 1 for the detailed guidance and templates for each tool.

Table 3 provides an overview of the tools, and the templates and process guidance are provided in Annex II.

Table 3. AgriFoSe2030 MEL Tools

MEL process and tool	Description
Periodic Outcome Harvest	This is a process for gathering, compiling and analysing outcomes that have emerged over the previous 1-2 years from both Hubs and projects.
Hubs development process	Qualitative assessment rubrics to self-assess progress of AgriFoSe2030 hubs in attaining their objectives
Key Stakeholder Meetings Tracker	This tool aims to help you to gather systematic information about Key Meetings with significant stakeholders, and record the intentions going into the meeting, and what was gained as a result of it.
After Action Review (AAR)	An After Action Review (AAR) is a structured group review of a major activity or event, e.g. stakeholder workshop:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It enables the individuals involved to analyze what they did, what happened as a result, examine why it happened, what went well, what needs improvement and what lessons can be learned from the experience, to further improve future practice. 2. Such reviews also support institutional memory by capturing and documenting what happened at a particular moment in time and the organizations' analysis of it. 3. A series of After Action Review reports can also be used as a data source for future evaluations and related activities, for example, to populate a timeline of critical events during an advocacy campaign or to inform Outcome Stories. <p>AAR is a useful reflective practice for project teams to adopt as a routine, as it supports an adaptive management approach in an evolving change process.</p>
<p>Change Stories</p>	<p>The Change Story process is designed to capture incremental change, in real time – ‘small but mighty’ intermediate outcomes that are significant, even if the big headline outcome of a policy change, or a commitment has not been achieved yet. So it captures important signs of progress that have come about through stakeholder engagement towards policy influencing goals in a systematic, analytical way.</p> <p>Change Stories can be developed by drawing together various sources of information, as appropriate, e.g., individual observation; After Action Reviews; face-to-face interviews or workshops; findings from surveys; and Key Meetings Trackers. The template encourages transparency about the underlying information and data sources and the extent to which Change stories could be verified by internal or external MEL.</p> <p>Use: An Change Story is a more in-depth reflection, requires more structured input from the team, and from stakeholders. Suggested frequency, every 6 months or annually. At least 1 per year provided as supporting evidence for project reports.</p>

There are two other tools that will be used – the Hubs annual report template, and the 6 monthly ToC review checklist. All tools can be found in the annex.

8. Implementing AgriFoSe2030's MEL approach: Programme, Hubs and Flagship Project

Monitoring, evaluation and learning should be integrated with planning, and MEL cycles should lead on from each other. One element in the MEL cycle is reporting to SIDA. This sets the pace for the rest of the planning and MEL, so this is the starting point for the AgriFoSe2030 MEL implementation plan. The subsequent sections set out MEL tasks plan at different levels, specifying the purpose and approach the level, and roles and responsibilities for that element.

As described above, all the AgriFoSe2030 monitoring tools have been designed to be a group reflection process plus a simple template for recording the results, to encourage a 'so what?' and 'now what?' rapid reflection and capture. Over time, if these tools are used by Hub and Change Project teams regularly and systematically, they will build up a 'real time' evidence base that helps to make visible the projects' progress along their ToC.

Hub teams will be expected to use the tools to track and reflect in their own work. These tools can be complemented or combined with any project specific data gathering such as surveys and baseline studies. Each tool is actually a group process of critical reflection, captured in a simple template.

8.1 Annual reporting to Sida – Workplan and follow-up on activities for projects, hubs and programme

There are two reporting activities at this level: the annual results matrix and an annual narrative report.

Purpose: Annual reporting to Sida – Part 1 Matrix

Level: Programme

MEL tool to be used: Summary matrix

Who is responsible: The reporting is a joint effort between Management Group, Hub Leads and the C&E team to compile the matrix. The Management group lead the process.

Who contributes: Swedish Facilitators and Change Project leaders.

Period and frequency: Reporting is carried out annually in March. The work plan is also reported annually in October

The reporting to Sida uses a standard template which team leaders will use at different levels to summarise the main outcomes for the past year, along with the forward plan of activities for the Programme, Hubs and Flagship Project for the coming year.

Purpose: Annual reporting to Sida – Part 2 Narrative Report

Level: Programme

Task/approach and process to be used: Narrative report template

Who is responsible: The reporting is a joint effort between Management Group, Hub Leads and the C&E team to compile the matrix. The Management group lead the process.

Who contributes: Swedish Facilitators and Change Project leaders.

Period and frequency: Annually (1 x per year)

A narrative annual report will also be produced, to provide context and qualitative information to accompany the summary matrix.

The narrative report will summarise the main highlights from the MEL and ToC processes (indicator and qualitative data capture) from projects and Hubs (see coming sections).

As part of the project MEL approach, light touch templates will be provided at the different levels as needed in order to structure the inputs in an efficient way.

8.2 Monitoring and reporting for Hubs

There is a co-designed tool for the Hubs to report on their progress developing and establishing the Hubs, and progress with their workplans. This is used 6 monthly intervals.

There is also an annual report template for Hubs.

Purpose: Hubs reporting

Level: Hubs

Task/approach and process to be used: Annual report template and AgriFoSe2030 Hub Development Tool (see annex for guidance and templates)

Who is responsible: Hub Leader: An annual project report is produced by the Hub Leader, Hub C&E lead, which includes a review of the ToC, using the Annual Hub Report Template.

Annual reports are supported by the AgriFoSe2030 MEL tools by Hub teams and the reports should include information from two reflections using the Hubs Tracking tool per year including at least one outcome story.

A six-monthly update is required. However, this is not in a report format but can be only highlights or similar, sent to the C&E team in preparation for the mid-point review meeting.

Who contributes: Hub Leaders discuss the draft report with their team, adjust it, and pass it on to the C&E team.

Period and frequency: Annual main report, 6 monthly check in

8.3 Monitoring and reporting for Flagship Project

Flagship Project continue to capture their progress along their ToCs using the tools established in Phase 2.

Purpose: Change Project reporting

Level: Change Project

Task/approach and process to be used: Annual report template and AgriFoSe2030 MEL Tools (see annex for guidance and templates)

Who is responsible: Project team leader: An annual project report is produced by the project TL, which includes a review of the ToC, using the Annual Project Report Template.

Annual reports are supported by the AgriFoSe2030 MEL tools by project teams and the reports should include information from a minimum of four MEL activities per year, including at least one outcome story.

A six-monthly update is required. However, this is not in a report format but can be only highlights or similar, sent to the C&E team and hHub leaders in preparation for the mid-point review meeting.

Who contributes: Swedish Facilitators discuss the draft report with the project team, adjust it, and discuss with the C&E team.

Period and frequency: Annual main report, 6 monthly check in

Detailed guidance is provided for the process. See Annex X for the detailed guidance and templates for each tool, and Annex X for template for projects' six months' report and annual report.

There will be training and support provided to familiarize project teams with each of the tools and how to use them with the ToC as a guide for their own work, and to support annual reports.

7. Learning in AgriFoSe

Learning is crucial in a complex programme like AGriFoSe2030, with uncertainty over outcomes. Learning for course correction and improvement is a key benefit of working with

ToC, and so it is a key part of the AgriFose monitoring and evaluation strategy, and its work with ToCs at Hub and Change project levels.

Light-touch, structured and timely learning helps Hub Leaders and Change Project Leaders maintain flexibility in their decisions, knowing that uncertainties exist and that there is a need to adjust direction to improve progress towards desired outcomes. Learning is therefore a key part of both project and Hub management in the programme, and is closely linked to the monitoring and planning cycle.

At the 6 month point, C&E team members, along with Hub leaders and Swedish Facilitators facilitate a review of the Hub progress, using the ToC as a guide. A ToC review checklist is provided to guide the conversation and capture lessons (See Annex with tools).

Purpose: Generating and capturing learning along the ToC

Level: Programme and Hub

MEL tool to be used: ToC reflection checklist

Who is responsible: The Hub Leaders lead the conversation, with the contributions from Swedish Facilitators, and the C&E team

Who contributes: Hub Team leaders.

Period and frequency: 6 monthly check-in, which includes a project review and ToC reflection

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Principles and theory for the AgriFoSe2030 ToC based MEL approach

ToC based MEL approach

ToC is a systematic approach focusing on pathways to change and the approach is increasingly becoming popular as an applied method toward development planning and MEL. The approach aims to promote critical thinking and learning, and to unpack and challenge assumptions about how change happens. The ToC can be, “a systematic way of clarifying the underlying theories and cause-effect pathways that underpin initiatives working to promote social and economic change, particularly in complex interventions” (Rajala et al., 2021). This would include interventions as those taking place in agricultural research for development.

The AgriFoSe2030 programme has integrated ToC as a way of working at each of its levels- project, challenge and programme, where there are a series of related ToCs. In establishing this approach, the AgriFoSe2030 team has utilised an adapted version of the ToC stepwise-method (for producing ToC approach) and existing guidelines toward using ToCs for research (IDRC, 2017; van Es et al., 2015).

Guided by the ToCs at programme, hub and project level, MEL in the second phase of the AgriFoSe2030 program will be implemented at these three main levels- illustrated in Figure 1: 1) programme; 2) hub; 3) project level.

MEL for the Communication & Engagement (C&E) work which supports all three levels will be integrated into the approach.

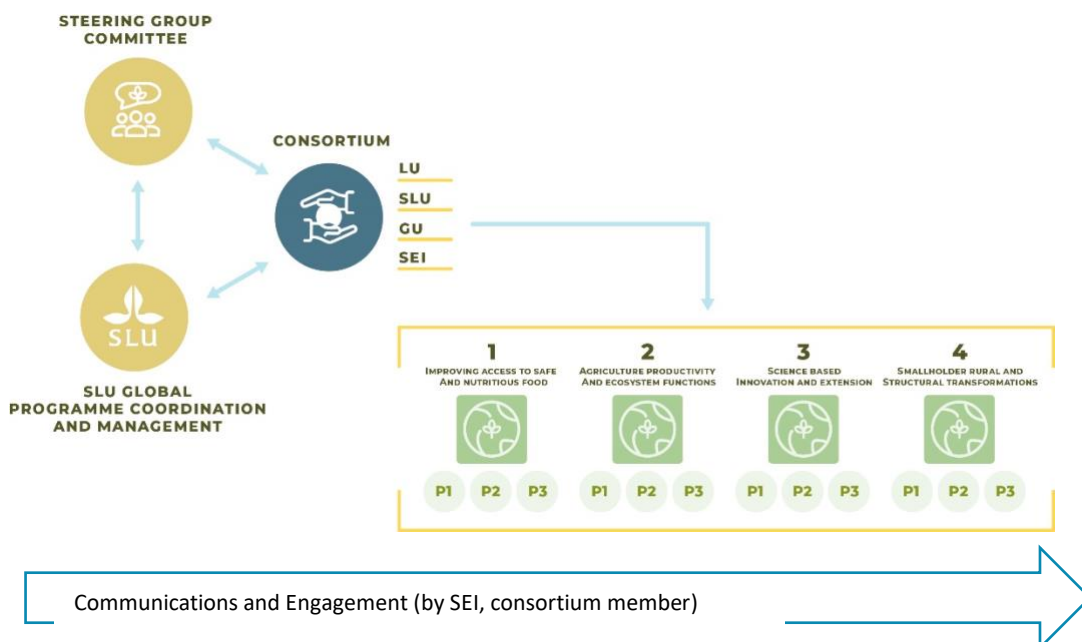


Figure 1. The organization of AgriFoSe2030 programme phase 2. Numbers 1-4 indicate the four challenges and p1-p3 under each challenge represent the projects that fall under a given challenge.

Key principles informing the MEL strategy

The following principles frame our approach to MEL:

- **Accountability and learning:** The MEL strategy has to respond to the dual objectives of accountability and learning. It needs to fulfil an accountability purpose for funders by making the programme efforts more transparent, and support more effective projects. It also needs to facilitate learning about how and why the programme is influencing change to inform project adaptations and inform future designs.
- **Scope – acknowledging uncertainty and unpredictability of research-driven change:** Research for development is an inherently unpredictable process, requiring exploration and intensive stakeholder engagement in diverse countries' policy and practice systems, with high uncertainty over outcomes. Projects cannot 'achieve' outcomes that rely on the actions of other stakeholders, and it is unfair to penalise a lack of progress in areas where the project is dependent on the contributions of stakeholders such as local government (as long as the project has done its part of course).
- **ToC based analysis of contribution to outcomes:** Given that most of the change supported by AgriFoSe2030 is highly qualitative and emerges from a combination of factors, the outcome-level approach is informed by a Contribution Analysis (CA) logic. CA is a ToC-based evaluation approach where diversity in implementation approaches and contexts does not provide the conditions for an experimental design (Mayne 2012; 2011; 2008).³ CA posits if the ToC can be verified with empirical evidence, external influencing factors have been accounted for, and alternative explanations disproved, then it is reasonable to conclude that the intervention has made a contribution to the outcomes in question (Mayne, 2012).⁴ Given limited resources, a wholesale implementation of CA may not be possible at the programme or hub level; however, the CA logic can be infused into the MEL tools and processes, e.g. ensuring that data is collected on contexts, outcomes and project contributions, and that analysis considers alternative explanations. It can inform an iterative evolution of the ToC as part of an annual structured organisational learning process.
- **Capturing information and data in 'real time':** Change is incremental and is often intangible. The AgriFoSe2030 MEL approach is designed to capture incremental

³ Mayne, J. (2012). Contribution analysis: Coming of age? *Evaluation*, 18(3), 270–280.

Mayne, J. (2011). Addressing Cause and Effect in Simple and Complex Settings through Contribution analysis. In R. Schwartz, K. Forss, & M. Marra (Eds.), *Evaluating the Complex*. Transaction Publishers.

Mayne, J. (2008). Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect. *International Learning and Change (ILAC) Brief*, 16.

⁴ CA is based on having a clearly articulated ToC, which is examined and tested via a systematic 'logic of enquiry' that uses evidence to investigate: observed results; various assumptions that underpin the theory of change; other influencing factors, positive and negative; alternative explanations for the outcome.

change, in real time – ‘small but mighty’ outputs and outcomes that are important, even if the big headline outcome of a policy change, or a commitment has not been achieved yet. Thus, the MEL approach aims to capture important signs of progress that have come about through stakeholder engagement towards policy influencing goals, as they happen, but in a systematic, analytical way.

If outcomes are documented systematically and analytically, with details of the context and contributions, this builds up over time to a credible and substantial internal evidence base that can be used for MEL to improve strategies.

- **Use-focused, proportionate and efficient:** Although the scope of the MEL strategy is more ambitious than in Phase 1, it still remains clearly focused on tracking information that will be used in management and decision making, ensuring that this is proportionate in terms of resource and demands on staff. Progress tracking information will be used to provide management information and in the reporting. Outcome information will be used for reporting, and to inform learning to optimise current and future projects, which can be shared with the wider public as well as internally. Over time, the MEL process should contribute to strengthening the learning culture within AgriFoSe and enhancing effectiveness across projects and the whole portfolio of AgriFoSe’s work.
- **Credible self-assessment with integrity:** The AgriFoSe2030 MEL approach is a self-assessment approach, not an independent evaluation, so the expected levels of rigour and quality of data will reflect this, and the MEL resources available. The programme will gather information on progress that will be primarily qualitative, using a suite of standardised MEL tools and processes to promote a consistent and systematic approach. Quantitative data will also be gathered if appropriate, and if opportunity and resources allow.

MEL data and information will be analysed at key points in the programme cycle with integrity and transparency. These values will be realised by encouraging the reporting of set-backs and challenges as well as successes, and by encouraging a practice of critical reflection to drive adaptations and improvements in projects and other levels in the programme. As the MEL approach is being introduced in the first year, we expect that the use of the MEL tools will improve over time, with a resulting improvement in the quality and consistency of the information produced.

Annex 2. Considerations and pitfalls when developing indicators

The programme level ToC offers a framework for identifying some high-level framing indicators that provide the anchor points for summarising progress at the different levels of the programme.

However, there are a number of issues to consider, and common pitfalls to avoid, when identifying indicators. Most importantly, is how indicators at different levels will relate to each other, in order to keep the indicator framework meaningful and manageable. Siminster (2016)⁵ discusses the options, pros and cons for designing an appropriate system of cascading indicators in a programme.

Key issues to consider are the extent to which projects can collect the same indicator in *exactly the same way* in different contexts for this to be aggregated in a numerical way at the programme level. This poses challenges, for example, a programme level indicator such as ‘number of local government policies influenced by projects’ becomes meaningless if ‘local government policies’ are interpreted in a different way in different countries and settings.

An alternative is to use a set of programme level indicators as ‘framing indicators’ – that is, they are broad and not specific enough to be collected directly, but more specific project level indicators can be mapped to them to bring together and summarise related information from across the programme. Table 2 sets out an example.

Framing indicator	Project level
Projects influence government policies and practices at a local and national level	Number of times governments invite project teams to attend meetings to discuss policy
	Evidence of project submissions being copied into government policy documents
	Evidence that projects were successful in lobbying government stakeholders
	Inclusion of project material in training curricula and other materials

This second approach seems more appropriate for AgriFoSe, given the diversity of contexts in which the projects are operating. Further, Siminster advises that only **a limited set of indicators** is identified because the indicator framework can rapidly become unmanageable. Resources and morale are quickly exhausted at this volume of reporting!

However, it should be possible to identify a limited set of indicators that are anchored in the early part of the ToC, and that allow flexibility for hubs and projects to identify their own

⁵ Siminster, N. 2016: ‘Summarising portfolio change: results frameworks at organisational level’, INTRACT January 2016 <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Summarising-portfolio-change-results-frameworks-at-organisational-level.pdf>

limited indicators to help track progress and learn from it. Sometimes indicator development identifies a MEL tool or a process that may need to be implemented to enable the indicator, e.g. a survey if the best indicator is a survey response, e.g. 'number and % of smallholder farmers that are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the support provided by the project.'

Indicator development requires careful thought and discussion with hub Leaders to arrive at a set of meaningful and efficient indicators that are feasible to collect with the resources available for MEL. Each agreed indicator then has to be documented with definitions and collection approach.

Annex 3: AgriFoSe2030 MEL Tools

– **Key Stakeholder Meetings Tracker: Guidance and template for AgriFoSe2030 projects**

1. Introduction

Research influence and advocacy consists of many meetings with key stakeholders ranging from ministers, policy makers, senior policy advisers, parliamentarians, and many other actors who we seek to persuade to take action in support of our overall goal.

Sometimes, this means working very directly with high level political stakeholders, or through personal connections with key stakeholders. Therefore, much of the influencing activity remains 'invisible'. Although advocates may frequently take action and adjust tactics in response to meetings, this is rarely documented, so what happens in significant meetings remains tacit.

A further complication is that the significance of decision or outcomes from a meeting may not become evident until later, so the implications for next steps and strategies, as well as for how these interactions contributed to or hindered our outcomes is not documented.

This tool, the Key Meetings Tracker (KMT) is designed to be a simple template for recording the results of significant meetings with key stakeholders or actors, to encourage a 'so what?' and 'now what?' rapid reflection.

2. How does it work?

This tool aims to help you to gather systematic information about Key Meetings with significant stakeholders, and record the intentions going into the meeting, and what was gained as a result of it.

This tool is a building block towards more in-depth MEL. This is the first 'layer' of information, as it can be used in a number of ways, for example to build up an evidenced timeline of events, to support more in-depth periodic reviews, or to inform de-briefing and adjustment of tactics after an intense period or an unexpected event. This information can also be used as inputs to a Change Story or an After Action Review, and as a reference for the reports.

3. How to use

Use immediately after a significant meeting to document what happened. This template could be used for a write-up of meetings for sharing with colleagues, and as an input into tactics.

Over time, these documents can be analysed to inform Change Stories.

As with other MEL tools, the level of confidentiality and how to record details needs to be agreed internally to ensure data handling complies with AgriFoSe2030 partners' existing data protocols.

- ✓ Individual or team-based
- ✓ Use when de-briefing – 5-20 mins
- ✓ Document key points and save the document – either Excel or Word
- ✓ Review regularly with reference to advocacy strategy and outcomes
- ✓ Periodically collate and review the set of trackers and decide what it means for future action and reporting using the Workbook.

4. When and how often should you use it?

- ✓ After any significant, high stakes meetings, e.g., meetings when you ask for action
- ✓ Relationship building meetings – e.g., cultivating new political or bureaucratic supporters

5. Level of effort

- ✓ 15-20 mins; capture at a minimum 1 KMT in 6 months

6. Note on data storage and analysis

The use of this tool has implications for data management and analysis, which requires some thinking through in the context of AgriFoSe2030 and partners' existing systems. A project team may have dozens of meetings during the course of a year and individual Word documents could quickly get out of hand!

There are a number of options, for example:

- ✓ the content of the form could possibly be transferred to another format for easier storage and analysis e.g., Excel workbook, with a tab for each meeting tracker.
- ✓ many templates could be copied several times into a single Word document, and collated to create a single document with records of all the meetings.
- ✓ or, similarly, you could create a single document for a particular category of stakeholder, with many versions of the template to use for all meetings with that category of stakeholder e.g., political stakeholders, depending on what is a priority for the organization.

- ✓ Excel could be a good format for helping to store and analyse several Key Meetings Trackers.

7. Key Meetings Tracker Template (this could also be set up in an Excel format for easier storage and analysis)

Documentation	
Date/s:	
Meeting date	<i>Record the meeting date.</i>
Meeting objective	<i>Briefly list the main objective (s) of the meeting, and your expectations.</i>

Key Meetings Tracker Template (this could also be set up in an Excel format for easier storage and analysis)

Documentation	
Date/s:	
Meeting date	<i>Record the meeting date.</i>
Meeting objective	<i>Briefly list the main objective (s) of the meeting, and your expectations.</i>
Short description	<i>Provide a brief description of the meeting including who (agency or individual) how and if expected objectives were met.</i>

Key commitments, decisions and actions; next steps and follow-up	<i>List the key commitments, decisions or actions taken in the meeting, and any next steps or follow-up required.</i>
Observed immediate responses, behavior or attitude change	<i>Describe the responses, attitudes or behaviours observed in this meeting, plus any reflections of how this may support or constrain other objectives and activities.</i>
Contribution of observed responses to the development of the relationship with the stakeholder	<i>Note how observed changes contribute to the development of the relationship with the stakeholder, e.g., moving from new/untested ally -> potential for supportive actions -> trusted ally.</i>
Challenges and/or enablers, and significance	<i>Describe any blocks or challenges around the meeting objectives that came up in the meeting, and/or any enabling factors which could help make progress towards AgriFoSe2030 partners' outcomes, and the significance of these for next steps, e.g., Blocker: the stakeholder did not understand the key messages without additional explanation, and so we should review messages for other stakeholders.</i>

How many stakeholders participated in the meeting and from which groups of stakeholders (e.g., local government, private sector or farmer groups)?	
How many women and men participated in the meeting?	
Any other documentation that is relevant to this meeting.	<i>Describe any reports or documents that were shared, or any supporting document e.g., minutes, actions.</i>

– Change **Stories – Guidance and template for AgriFoSe2030 projects**

1. Introduction

The template in this document provides a systematic and analytical structure for recording changes (outcomes) of significance, encouraging a critical reflection on what change has happened, how it has come about, and the contribution of the organisation to the change, alongside other actors and factors.

The Change Story is a more in-depth MEL tool, it encourages the telling of a story behind an outcome in a more analytical and systematic way.¹

The process and template encourage us to critically reflect on the role we played, alongside other actors and factors, and what contribution we made to a particular outcome. It encourages us to provide details of the context, other actors and factors, and a reflection on the significance of the change for our project and strategy.

The Change Story process is designed to capture incremental change, in real time – ‘small but mighty’ intermediate outcomes that are significant, even if the big headline outcome of a policy change, or a commitment has not been achieved yet. So it captures important signs of progress that have come about through stakeholder engagement towards policy influencing goals in a systematic, analytical way.

This qualitative MEL process provides a useful complement to numerical indicator reporting because it helps to capture, in real time, the dynamics of for example a policy engagement process that numerical indicators are less suited to capturing.

A collection of Change Stories can be used to support or challenge a project’s Theory of Change.

The Change Story template is given below, with tips after it, as this is a more complicated approach.

2. How it works

A Change Story helps research teams to take a step back and think in-depth about major steps on the way to their goals of influencing policy or practice.

If outcomes are documented systematically and analytically, with details of the context and contributions, this builds up over time to a credible and substantial internal evidence base that can be used for monitoring, evaluation and learning and learning to improve strategies.

Change Stories can be developed by drawing together various sources of information, as appropriate, e.g., individual observation; After Action Reviews (AAR); face-to-face interviews or workshops; findings from surveys; and Key Meetings Trackers (KMT). The template encourages transparency about the underlying information and data sources and the extent to which outcome stories could be verified by internal or external MEL.

3. When to do it and how often

- ✓ When you have observed significant signs of progress – change in awareness, behavior, commitment, collective action, or policy change.
- ✓ Can be early-stage or late-stage – capture the real-time story
- ✓ Every year, aim to capture 1 outcome story.

4. How to do it² and level of effort

- ✓ Consultation with teams and partners to identify examples through e.g., quarterly review meetings.
- ✓ Open and honest reflection.
- ✓ Collate and review KMTs and AARs for input
- ✓ Draft Change Story
- ✓ Share draft with team and partners for corroboration and supporting evidence

Level of effort: 2–5 hours per Change Story; aim for a minimum of 1 Change Story per year, but depends on scale of project and partners.

5. The Change Story template

Documentation Date/s:

What happened or what has changed?

Basic description of the change or outcome, including what changed, who was involved, and where and when it happened. Aim to give a rich description, with context, dates and places if confidentiality allows.

Include a description of the context, especially if that has changed.

Write here

What is the significance of this outcome?

Why is the change relevant to your policy, practice and/or institutional change goal and outcomes? And what particular behaviour change, issue, challenge or barrier does the change help address? Why is it significant given the context?

Note whether the change was planned or unplanned, positive or negative.

Write here

What was the project's role and contribution?

What role did you play, e.g., where you convening, coordinating, did you provide information? What other actors, factors and influences may have played a role?

Write here

Related evidence and information sources?

*Any documentation, data or other evidence that support this change or analysis.
Please provide a hyperlink to the evidence if possible.*

Please be transparent about the extent or robustness of the evidence base.

Write here

Potential for corroboration or verification

*This is worth noting for any future evaluation activities you may wish to conduct,
such as an impact evaluation.*

Write here

6. Tips and advice

- ✓ **Starting to think about significant changes (outcomes) can be challenging at first - think about what has changed in terms of behaviours, actions and the context.**

An outcome-oriented approach starts with “what has changed” – changed in relation to the issue, the context or the actor in order for the project’s goals to be reached, **NOT** with what you did or your activities.

The focus is on actors, change agents and changes in their behaviour, rather than project activities; the project’s potential role in influencing that change is the last question.

Box 1 defines what we mean by ‘outcomes’ (or change) in this way of thinking:

Box 1: What do we mean by “outcomes”?

An outcome is a change in what a social actor (or change agent) did or is doing, that reflects a significant change in their behavior, relationships, activities, actions, policies or practice which in turn may have implications for partners’ goal.

An outcome might describe an action that reflects a demonstrated change in awareness, commitment, engagement, collaborative action. An outcome might also be changes in policy, funding or implementation of programs.

Thinking about outcomes can be challenging for some people and organisations, particularly in terms of not placing their own efforts front and centre in the analysis. However, an outcome orientation promotes good evaluative thinking and helps to strengthen internal MEL practice.

- ✓ **Finding the right level of detail for a Change Story can be difficult at first – think ‘small but mighty’, and imagine the ‘chapters’ in your impact pathway of the project, forming a full story, especially as contexts are so dynamic.**

It is worth remembering that policy and institutional capacity outcomes are typically incremental and that changes that may appear small today may have a big effect later in time. A major outcome may be made up of several ‘chapters’ of incremental change that preceded it.

The key message is that you should try to document changes regularly, not just those which are impressive or directly linked to your activities. We advise reviewing “what has changed” at least monthly to help you review what is changing, the significance for your strategy and the role you play, and to document this using the Change Story template or any of the other MEL tools available.

- ✓ **Participation and discussion are keys for identifying changes and change processes, challenging our assumptions and enriching Change Stories with a wider range of perspectives and evidence.**

Engaging in a dialogue or wider discussion is essential to help us challenge our own assumptions about our role and contribution, as well as helping to strengthen the evidence base if outcomes can be triangulated and validated by a wider group. As a guide, the process of identifying and developing Change Stories can take up to an hour per observed change, depending on how many people are involved and how clear the changes are.

Structuring information sharing using the Change Story structure could be a good way for partners active in the same geographies to compare their views. Partners could consider engaging coalition partners to reflect on outcomes and the different actors' contributions.

- ✓ **Aim to capture both positive and negative outcomes, planned or unplanned, to help develop a richer explanatory picture of how change happened, and your project's contribution to it, alongside other actors, and factors.**

The template does not presuppose positive or negative change. It is open for you to record whatever outcomes are of significance to your goals, and that may be linked to your activities. Focusing on unplanned change is appropriate to an unpredictable policy influencing process and could help to stimulate deeper critical reflection and learning and create a more robust explanation of what was achieved and how.

- ✓ **Set clear guidelines on the confidentiality of Change Stories, how sensitive information is to be recorded and how stories will be analysed as a collection as part of MEL.**

Some partners have emphasized that some of their work is confidential e.g., work with senior government stakeholders in priority countries. Confidentiality should not be a barrier to documenting stories, but the organization should agree internally on its protocols for anonymizing data while retaining sufficient detail to support a meaningful analysis. These protocols should align with the organisation's existing data handling protocols.

- ✓ **Be transparent about how robust (or not) the evidence is for the Change Story, but be open to opportunities to corroborate and validate Change Stories with evidence from partners and stakeholders.**

Change Stories can be made more robust by validating them with stakeholders, coalition partners and other informed individuals or organisations. However, given available resources, this may not always be possible to do. A transparent reflection on the evidence base, and noting if there is potential for corroboration or validation is a good starting point.

Further reading:

Outcome Harvesting overview, on Better Evaluation:

https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

'Outcome Harvesting', May 2012, Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Heather Britt

<https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/wilson-grau%2C-britt-%282012%29-outcome-harvesting.pdf>

- **After Action Review: Guidance and template for AgriFoSe2030 projects**

1. Introduction

Learning requires continuous reflection on progress, looking at successes and failures, ensuring that learning takes place to support continuous improvement. The **After Action Review** (AAR) is a simple option for facilitating this assessment. It works by bringing together a team to discuss a task, event, activity or project, in an open and honest fashion.

An After Action Review (AAR) is a team-based discussion of an activity or event:

- ✓ It enables the individuals involved to analyze what they did, what happened as a result, examine why it happened, what went well, what needs improvement and what lessons can be learned from the experience, to further improve future practice.
- ✓ Such reviews also support institutional memory by capturing and documenting what happened at a particular moment in time and the organizations' analysis of it.
- ✓ A series of After Action Review reports can also be used as a data source for future evaluations and related activities, for example, to populate a timeline of critical events during a major project activity or to inform Change Stories.

2. How does it work?

An AAR gives a structured approach to de-briefing and information sharing that allows project teams to answer the questions 'so what?' and 'now what?' after a significant event or engagement. It provides a systematic way to do this, so that reflection and lesson-learning can happen quickly, but is captured in a consistent way.

As well as turning tacit learning into a more structured reflection, it helps to build trust among team members and to overcome fear of mistakes or setbacks, and turn these into learning and improvement.

The essence of the AAR is to bring together the relevant group to think about a significant event or task, and work through the questions below in order.

But there are many different ways to conduct AARs. A dialogue between two people is usually helpful, although individual reflection can also be useful. Given the importance of stimulating collective learning, the usual approach is to bring together a small group, either in person or online. An AAR discussion can also be conducted over the phone, using Skype, or even instant messaging if the situation requires it. AARs can be incorporated into team meetings or be conducted immediately after a high stakes event, for example.

The simplicity at the heart of the tool means there is much potential to experiment with the process and find the ways that will work best with the group and the work issue under review. The whole process should be kept as simple and as easy to remember as possible.

The questions do sometimes overlap, but try to be systematic and address each one in turn – the overlapping means that you have to look at things from a different perspective and this helps to build up in-depth analysis.

3. How often should you do an AAR?

- ✓ After any 'big moments', significant or major activity, e.g., events, mobilizations.
- ✓ After high-risk activities or tactics
- ✓ Use as de-brief – digs into the critical questions and gives you new insights
- ✓ At least once a month
- ✓ At end of campaign or project

- ✓ **Aim for min of 1-2 per year.**

4. How should you do it?

- ✓ Involve the whole team
- ✓ Choose a facilitator
- ✓ Open, honest, learning attitude, no blame
- ✓ Document key points and save written outputs
- ✓ Periodically collate and review AARs and decide implications for future action and reporting

5. Level of effort?

- ✓ **15-20 mins for rapid review;**
- ✓ **60 mins for more in-depth review;**
- ✓ **4 hours for annual review.**

6. After Action Review template

Create a new copy for each meeting record and save with an appropriate filename

<p>Optional Pre-Action Check-in</p> <p>What is our reason for doing this action / event?</p> <p>What are we planning to do?</p> <p>What do we hope will happen?</p> <p>What specific responses are we hoping to get and from whom?</p> <p>What do we hope to be able to next and/or differently if we are successful?</p>	<p>Optional pre-action questions: In the event that no formal planning, strategy, or process document has been developed prior to the event or activity taking place the following questions can be explored before an action takes place to help support a more in-depth process of critical reflection.</p>
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<p>1. What were the most significant outcomes of the event/process in relation to projects' priorities or goals?</p>
<p><i>Write here</i></p>

2. What was supposed to happen?

- a. What was the plan?
- b. What changes or responses did we aim to influence?

These questions establish a common understanding of the work item under review. The facilitator should encourage and promote discussion around these questions. Bring in a focus on the changes / responses that we wanted to stimulate or influence with the activity.

Write here

3. What actually happened?

- a. What was the reality?
- b. What changes or responses did we actually observe?
- c. Why was it different to the plan?

These questions prompt a reflection on the reality, with a focus on what changes / responses were actually observed. Why there were differences stimulates reflection on factors that enabled or inhibited the plan.

Write here

4. What went well and less well?

- What worked, what didn't work and why?

These questions help us dive deeper into critical and honest thinking about specific differences to the plan and reasons for this. Important to avoid blame, we are wanting to learn, and that requires honest appraisal.

Write here

5. Who participated in this activity/event?

- How many stakeholders took part of the activity or event?
- Which stakeholder groups participated?
- How many women and men participated?

Add any reflections/challenges on the process of involving these stakeholders. Write here.

6. What next?

- What follow up is needed with involved stakeholders?
- What would we do differently next time?
- What do the observed changes and responses mean for our strategy?

These questions help us to make specific tangible recommendations to improve our approach. Focus on what the observed responses mean for our strategy helps us to make crucial decisions about where to go next. Write here

– Template for projects’ six months’ report and annual report

Project Details

Countries / project	
Start Date	
Completion Date	
Type of Reporting Submitting Here	Annual report or 6 monthly update
Submitted By	
Email	

Summary of project objectives for the period

Project objectives	
Objectives for the period	
ToC areas this relates to	

A. AgriFoSe2030 indicators – for annual report

ToC framing indicator	Select which indicator that is being reported on this period, and provide a summary, and links to supporting documentation
ToC level - Interventions	
1. Project delivery: Expected number of projects meeting their planned milestones on time, and to budget, as agreed annually through adaptive management	
ToC level -Increased researcher capacities	
2. Knowledge exchange and skills building: Number and % of research partners report 'high' or 'very high' levels confidence in ToC and convening and skills after receiving C&E support	
3. Communication products, reach: 4. Number of clicks (partial or full read) of an article or story on the website	
5. ToC level – Changes in capacities, structures and systems (From Year 2)	
6. Total numbers of policies contributed to by the programme – number of policies, strategies, laws, regulations, budgets, investments, training curricula,	

modified in design or implementation, contributed to by the programme.	
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B. Project progress and challenges – six months and annual report

Please provide a summary for the period under the following headings:

1. What have been the principal progress and gains that support the projects objectives and ToC outcomes for the 6 months/year? (summarising information from MEL efforts) Please note if these were planned or unexpected.

2. What have been the main **set-backs** that have held back gains?

3. What have been the **enabling factors, and/or constraining factors** that have supported or hindered gains? E.g. parallel work by allies; coordinated efforts; a high-level policy decision that created a window of opportunity.

4. What is the **significance** of both gains and challenges, given the context? E.g. very difficult political context, so even small gains have been significant.

5. What **challenges and priorities remain** to be tackled to make progress towards the next project milestones?

6. Based on this reflection, how should project plans be **adapted**? What should be the **objectives and workplans** for the coming 6 months/year?

FOR ANNUAL REPORTS ONLY

Overall role and contributions towards the project objectives and outcomes

Please describe your projects' overall contribution to progress referring to your ToC.

Please report on outcomes and significant events, activities, outputs and related outcomes you feel were most impactful, the gains and achievements in your project you are most proud of.

7. What major milestones has your project **contributed to**, given the context?

Lessons Learned

8. What have been the main lessons learned that you will take forward into next year's work programme?

Evidence sources

Please note and attach any documentation, data or other evidence that supports this report,

After Action reviews

Outcome Stories

Additional Information (optional)

If you have any additional information you would like to share, you may provide it here.

e.g. pictures, products and tools

– AgriFoSe ToC 6 monthly review checklist – for the meeting

This check list is provided as a guide for C&E and Swedish support team when they conduct the 6 monthly review meeting with project teams.

The checklist can be shared in advance with project teams, so that they can review their ToC, project progress and consider these questions in preparation for the call. In the call, CLs will go through these questions in order. This checklist complements the report format above.

Part 1: Review changes in relation to the ToC

1. What has actually changed since the project start point?

- Describe changes in the context
- Describe what has changed for different target groups (especially different types of organisations and men/women)?

- Try to provide stories, examples and/or evidence to illustrate these points – we could develop these into Outcome Stories.
- Include negative changes or setbacks that have affected the project, e.g. climate or policy changes.

Examples of highlights and outcomes:

Examples of set-backs and challenges.

2. If you have noted changes for different groups, what have these been, and the implications of them for the project?

- This could be either to the target groups or in terms of programme plans – note: “expect the unexpected” : we are looking for positive, negative and unintended consequences here

3. What do you consider to be the most significant changes and/or outcomes for the project’s goals?

- E.g. the engagement of a specific stakeholder that has been difficult to engage so far, but they open doors for the project. Or it can be a negative change.

Part 2: Thinking about the contributions made by the programme

1. What did the project contribute to these changes?

- This could include some or all of the following and others: money, capacity development, technical expertise, coordination etc. Try to reflect and see everything that the project may have contributed.

2. Who else or what else may have helped or hindered progress in relation to these noted changes?

- 3. In your opinion, what have been the project's most useful and effective ways of working in relation to making these changes happen? Why?**
- 4. What are the main lessons you feel the team has learned about implementation in this period?**

Part 3: Review of assumptions

- 1. Consider the main assumptions in your ToC for this period and these outcomes, to what extent did they hold true?**
 - Were there any that were proved wrong?
 - What do you know now that you didn't then? Are there important insights that you now have from this implementation period?
- 2. Can these assumptions be updated in the light of experience?**
 - How would you update them?
 - What about assumptions for the next phase of the project – do they need updating?
- 3. Overall, were there better/other ways in which the programme could have supported planned changes and/or responded to unplanned ones?**
 - Please explain what they might have been and why they might have worked better?
- 4. What would you do differently next time?**
- 5. What does this critical reflection mean for adjusting the project strategy and plans?**
 - Do any changes need to be made to the plans or implementation approach? E.g. need to work with different groups; plan for different communications etc.

Summarise how your plans need to change based on this review

– AgriFoSe2030 Hubs Progress Tracking Tool

Introduction

This document sets out a qualitative, rubric-based tool for Hubs to track their progress in setting up and establishing their Hub within their universities and partnership networks.

The rubric is designed to enable Hubs to assess their own unique progress, while recognizing that there are common dimensions to establishing a Hub that all teams need to ensure are as well established as possible in their settings to ensure a viable Hub with good potential for future longevity.

Rationale for a rubric

A rubric is a structured framework that provides a clear set of criteria to help define the dimensions of success, and a set of defined ratings for each criterion to guide an assessment of progress. The rubric forms the heart of the Hubs progress tracking tool.

Development process

The tool was developed through a consultative process with the three Hub leadership teams, and the Swedish support team.

During an in-person workshop, each team identified key dimensions of organizational development that they considered critical to a well-established and well-functioning Hub. This was facilitated by using the metaphor of a baobab tree to represent a flourishing Hub with strong roots and connections to the nourishing soil and wider ecosystem.



We then translated these into a series of criteria – which we have called dimensions and sub-dimensions, together with a set of ratings for each to describe the journey from emerging to mature and sustainable Hub.

We then streamlined and consolidated the tool to make it as user-friendly and efficient as possible.

Overview of the tool

The Hubs Tracking Tool is made up of three elements:

1. A very brief summary of the current situation of the Hub, activities undertaken since the last review period, any major opportunities or challenges being faced.
2. Four dimensions and ten sub-dimensions of Hub establishment.

- Ratings of progress as defined by qualitative definitions for each stage.

Table 1. Overview of the Hubs Progress Tool – Dimensions and sub-dimensions

Dimensions and sub-dimensions	Stage			
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
1. Institutional base				
1.1 Senior leadership buy-in, supportive institutional policies & champions for the Hub across the university	For each rubric, there are definitions for each stage to help you understand where you are on the Hub's journey – see detailed rubrics below.			
1.2 Recognition of science translation in university curricula & processes				
1.3 Progress towards establishing a funding base for the Hub				
2. Hub organizational structures and cultures				
2.1 Team structures & systems, cultures and ways of working to support delivery, learning and development				
2.2 Collaboration & learning with other Hubs; collaboration links with govt, extension services, private sector				
3. Team competencies and mindset				
3.1 Mind-sets and skills in facilitating science translation, communication & engagement skill sets				
3.2 Capabilities to design and deliver courses				
4. Research impact				
4.1 Flagships showcasing and communicating their work via the Hub				
4.2 Active outreach to key stakeholders: Policy & decision makers; networks with influencers and other researchers; Hub champions created from training and other activities				

How to use the tool

The Hubs Tracking Tool is designed to be used as a self-assessment tool by Hub teams, facilitated by the Swedish facilitator.

Steps to follow:

- Hub Leaders convene a progress review every 6 months and will update the Hub Tracking Tool accordingly.

2. Hub Leaders meet with Deputy Leads, other relevant team members and the Swedish facilitator and C&E representative to consider their progress.
3. First, the Hub teams will consider the context around the Hub, and summarise any factors and trends since the last review that are enabling or hindering the Hub's progress.
4. Second, the Hub teams will consider their progress against each dimension, rate their progress and capture a summary reason for the rating. The tool also encourages teams to note sources of evidence to support their rating.
5. Finally, the tool asks for a brief overall judgement of areas of strength and areas to prioritise for focus on the next period.

Hubs Tracking Tool Template

1. Summary of assessment

Name of the Hub	Date of review
Summary of the self-assessment	
<p><i>Please provide a brief summary of your self-assessment at this point in time.</i></p> <p><i>Areas of strength:</i></p> <p><i>Areas to work on in the next phase:</i></p>	

2. Context Summary

What has been affecting the Hub progress, both positive and negative factors?

Brief summary of the context around the Hub (500 words max)

3. Assessment of Dimensions and sub-dimensions

Institutional base	
Dimensions and sub-dimensions	Stage

	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
	<i>The seed has been planted and a seedling emerged, but is vulnerable with roots not yet deep enough.</i>	<i>The tree is a sapling, becoming stronger and developing deeper roots.</i>	<i>The roots are now strong and deep, with fruit production beginning and the tree is able to withstand most threats.</i>	<i>The tree continually bears large quantities of fruit and has become viable and permanent part of the landscape.</i>
1.1 Senior leadership buy-in, supportive institutional policies & champions for the Hub across the university and beyond.	<p>Hub team has initiated engagement with leadership on the value of science translation to the university's mission. Leadership is aware and potentially interested but has not yet shown signs of active support.</p> <p>There is no identified coalition for support; key stakeholders are not aligned on the Hub vision. The stakeholders around the Hub leader represent a limited range of people, who may not be relevant to the Hub mission. So the Hub leader is hampered in efforts to mobilise a coalition to "champion" the Hub's efforts and help drive progress.</p>	<p>Leadership is interested, is attending meetings, and is showing early signs of active support, e.g. has allocated someone to help with coordination, has asked for regular updates on the Hub to be given to the management group.</p> <p>University or Department leaderships start reaching out to the Hub for support in embedding science translation into policies, research and teaching, and in boosting researcher capacities for research translation</p> <p>There is an emerging coalition of support from across the university, e.g. vice-deans departmental heads and library staff.</p>	<p>Leadership is bought into the Hub vision, they are attending Hub meetings, a focal manager has been allocated to link with the Hub from the management group.</p> <p>The Hub has a budget and approved staff roles from the university and reports on finances and progress. The Hub leader has strong relationships with a coalition of influential people with a shared understanding of the Hub aspiration and how it will be implemented. The coalition includes the right balance of power, influence, resources and expertise across the university.</p>	<p>The Hub is integrated into the strategic plan for the university, and guidelines for department heads on how to support and be involved in the Hub are cascaded out. It has a good profile amongst students and the community.</p> <p>The supportive coalition includes the right balance of power, influence, resources and expertise from both within and beyond the university. The Hub leader strategically mobilises the coalition to garner support for the Hub and champion its work.</p>

	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension? <i>Mark your stage in one of the boxes to the right.</i>				
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

1. Institutional base	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
1.2 Recognition of science translation in university curricula & processes	Hub team has initiated engagement with the university curriculum authorities to engage them in consultation on the potential science translation courses; the need for the course, potential demand and initial design.	Hub team has started adapting course structures and content to align with university requirements for teaching and accreditation, and accessibility.	Hub suite of science translation courses are finalized, with budget and resource plans and infrastructure and support plan in place. Courses have been submitted for formal approval to the relevant governance bodies.	Hub-led suite of science translation courses are being implemented and the first cohort of students being taught. Funding is provided by the university to support the course. Plan for reviewing and improving the suite of courses is in place. Science translation is recognized by the university as a core competency for all post-graduate students.
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				

Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

1. Institutional base	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
1.3 Progress towards establishing a funding base for the Hub	Hub leadership has mapped potential funding sources but has not yet begun fund-raising activities or linked up with the university's funding development and office.	The Hub leadership has developed a draft funding strategy and links to different types of funders have begun to be established, but fund-raising is done on an opportunistic and piecemeal basis.	The Hub funding strategy has an allocated lead person and is supported by the university development office, it is being implemented on a systematic basis. A diversity of funding sources is being targeted, funders are aware of the Hub and its goals. Funding is being sought for a period of over 12 months.	The Hub funding strategy is fully integrated into university's fund-raising strategy and is being implemented on a systematic basis. The Hub has a profile with a range of diverse funders nationally and internationally, and several proposals have been submitted.
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

Hub organizational structures and cultures

Dimensions and sub-dimensions	Stage			
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
2.1 Team structures & systems, cultures and ways of working (including gender equity and non-discriminatory practices) to support Hub delivery, learning and development	Strategic plan is in development, leadership and team roles have been defined, and recruitment of staff is underway. Resources have been allocated, office space and IT in place. Ways of working and culture are still being shaped.	Processes and ways of working are being established, values and culture are being articulated and encouraged by leadership. Hub strategy and workplans are agreed and in place, and implementation has begun.	Implementation is ongoing, leadership is stable and able to inspire action, team members are supported and coached to ensure they are successful in their roles. Learning and continuing professional development are enhancing staff's ability to deliver and seek out new opportunities for the Hub.	Hub implementation is running well, and meeting milestones in its strategy and workplan, and aligned with its mission. Leadership, team and stakeholders hold regular reviews to identify areas for improvement and innovation. Processes and ways of working are resilient and flexible, able to adapt to new contextual dynamics.
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

2. Hub organizational structures and processes	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
<p>2.2 Collaboration & learning with other Hubs; collaboration links with govt, extension services, private sector</p>	<p>Hubs have begun to discuss their mutual collaboration and learning needs. Planning has only just started, with Hubs identifying each other's resources, challenges, and needs.</p> <p>Stakeholders and potential collaborators in relevant sectors e.g. govt, extension services and private sector have not been fully identified, nor common goals and priorities identified.</p>	<p>Hubs have established a plan for collaboration and mutual learning, based on an understanding of their respective strengths and areas for growth. There is a schedule of activities.</p> <p>Stakeholders and potential collaborators have been identified, with opportunities mapped. A few key collaborators have been contacted, with initial plans in development.</p>	<p>Hubs are meeting on a regular basis to share learning and support each other, with mutual benefits becoming evident.</p> <p>An appropriate number of stakeholders and collaborators from relevant sectors are actively engaged and participating in Hub joint activities.</p>	<p>Hubs are jointly creating a Hub and partnership story, and consistently communicate that story to extend support in the region, or mobilise resources. There is a mutual sustainability plan for the future collaboration between Hubs.</p> <p>Engaged stakeholders and collaborators from relevant sectors are seeing mutual benefits from collaborating with Hubs and have become champions for Hubs within their settings</p>
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
<p>How would you rate progress against this subdimension?</p>				
<p>Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress</p>				
<p>Note any supporting evidence</p>				

Hub Team capabilities, competencies and mindset

Dimensions and sub-dimensions	Stage			
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
3.1 Mind-sets and skills in facilitating the design of research for impact, in science translation, and in communication & engagement	Hub staff, partners and collaborators have an introductory awareness and understanding of the value of science translation and understanding of the skill-sets needed to deliver it to enable them to provide direct support or facilitate/commission others to do so – combinations of scientific literacy, audience awareness, purposeful tailored communication approaches, two-way engagement and co-production.	Hub staff, partners and collaborators have had opportunities to facilitate, commission or directly practice effective science translation - either one product or event or process, perhaps in collaboration with an experienced communication professional, including engagement with selected stakeholders.	Hub staff, partners and collaborators are growing in confidence in implementing, facilitating or commissioning science translation, via ongoing engagement processes involving different stakeholders, and use of different kinds of science-based communication products, alongside co-production of applications of science with stakeholders e.g. community members.	Hub staff, partners and collaborators are confident in developing and/or commissioning a science-based stakeholder engagement strategy and are able to mobilise the skills to implement it. Hub teams are becoming known for their excellence in delivering, facilitating or commissioning science translation among key stakeholders, and are investing in keeping their skills current and innovative.
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>

How would you rate progress against this subdimension?							
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress							
Note any supporting evidence							

3. Hub team capabilities, competencies and mind-sets	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
3.2 Capabilities to design and deliver science translation courses and other support	Hub staff have an introductory awareness and understanding of the value of science translation courses, both administration and thematic content, and understand the skill-sets needed to deliver it in order to provide direct support or facilitate/commission others to do so.	Hub staff have had opportunities to facilitate, commission or directly practice delivery of science translation courses, at least one course, including outreach and marketing to prospective early career and other interested researchers.	Hub staff are growing in confidence in implementing, facilitating or commissioning the design and delivery of science translation courses on the key topics, including ongoing outreach and marketing to participants.	Hub staff are confident in implementing, facilitating or commissioning the design and delivery of science translation courses. Hub teams are becoming known for their excellence in science translation courses among key stakeholders, and are investing in keeping their skills current and innovative.
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				
Provide a brief summary for your				

reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

Research impact				
Dimensions and sub-dimensions	Stage			
	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
4.1 Flagship projects showcasing their research-for-impact work, and the Hub supports wider communication of project successes	Links between Flagship team and Hub team are at an early stage of being established.	Flagship teams and Hubs have established regular communication, and mapped their respective strengths and opportunities for cross-engagement and external communications. There is an outline menu of potential activities.	Flagship and Hubs are meeting on a regular basis to share learning and support each other, with mutual benefits becoming evident.	Flagships and Hubs are jointly creating stories and narratives to showcase the work, and are consistently communicating that story to extend support in the region, or mobilise resources. There is a mutual sustainability plan for the future collaboration between Hubs and Flagship teams.

	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				

Note any supporting evidence				
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4. Research impact and community	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
4.2 Active outreach to key stakeholders to build pathways to impact, and an engaged community interested in using science and evidence to improve policies and practices for smallholder farmers: Policy & decision makers; networks with influencers and other researchers	Mapping of stakeholders and decision makers in relevant sectors has begun e.g. smallholder farmers groups, local and national govt, extension services and private sector, with outline identification of their relevance to the Hub's purpose.	A draft outreach strategy is in development, with identification of priority stakeholders, their knowledge needs, and clear objectives for each target group. Key opportunities for engagement and initial outreach activities identified.	The strategy is adequately resourced, is broken into clear and coherent sets of activities per target group, with a timeline and workplan, and implementation has started.	The outreach strategy is being fully implemented, with a programme of activities being rolled out, supported by a monitoring plan to document stakeholder responses, engagement and next steps.

	<i>Emerging</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Well-developed</i>	<i>Mature and sustainable</i>
How would you rate progress against this subdimension?				
Provide a brief summary for your reasoning – evidence for success, what are challenges with moving to the next stage of progress				
Note any supporting evidence				

– **Guide to AgriFose’s Outcome Harvest**

Introduction

Outcome Harvest (OH) is a participatory approach to identifying and capturing tangible changes in behaviour influenced by an intervention and track how a project, programme or initiative plausibly contributed to them.¹

Outcomes can be positive or negative, intended or unintended and the contribution can be large or small. Both outcomes and contributions, however, must be specific and measurable enough to be verifiable.

Outcome Harvesting defines “outcome” as a change in the behaviour — actions, activities, relationships, policies or practices — of one or more stakeholders. It can also be a change in the natural and physical environment that a changed behaviour or practice has led to.

OH works well with a theory of change (ToC) approach, but it is also about capturing unintended or overlooked outcomes that are not expressed in the ToC.

AgriFoSe will be holding an event for all project partners and teams in Nairobi on November 2023. The Outcome Harvest will be part of this larger event.

This guide provides advice for AgriFoSe project teams to capture and share outcomes as preparation for the Outcome Harvest.

How will the AgriFoSe Outcome Harvest work?

On an agreed date, project teams, hub Leaders, the Communications & Engagement team will come together and reflect on what has been achieved across the programme and within projects and hubs.

Objectives of the Outcome Harvest

- Enable project teams to capture and make sense of the changes supported across the programme
- To exchange learning about what’s worked and why for translating science to policies and practice
- Create energy to build network connections amongst AgriFoSe researchers.

Learning questions to guide the Outcome Harvest

- What changes have we helped to influence and why are they important?
- What was it about our ways of working that helped to influence them?
- What can we learn from each other about effective approaches?

Preparation and gathering of outcomes

From August 2023, as preparation for the workshop, project teams will be asked to reflect together on their ToC and identify outcomes that have emerged as a result of

their work. Outcomes can be in line with the changes proposed in the ToC or they can be unplanned and unexpected but still significant and valuable. Outcomes can also be negative.

We will collect outcomes in three categories.

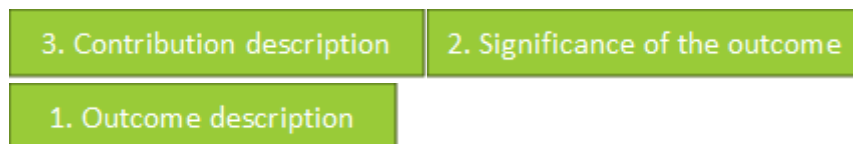
<p>1. Changes in project teams’ own capacities and skill-sets: We will gather and share information on how research teams own skill sets and capacities have changed.</p> <p>The guiding questions for this part of the harvest session are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What capacities did the team bring to the work? • What additional capacities did AgriFoSe contribute? • What other skill-sets are needed to continue work in the area? <p>The programme ToC proposes that researchers have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The scientific knowledge, contextual insights and management tools to implement their project b. The communication and knowledge translation skills to communicate science-based analysis, innovations and applications to 	<p>2. Changes and outcomes in the project communities and settings: We will gather and share information on the outcomes that the project teams have promoted or influenced in their contexts.</p> <p>The guiding questions for this part of the harvest session are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key tangible/intangible outcomes in your project? • What the unintended or surprising outcomes that emerged? • What is the significance of these for your project or hub? <p>The harvest of these should be guided by your ToC but should include unanticipated changes too.</p>	<p>3. Changes in relation to cross-cutting issues</p> <p>How did the projects include gender, climate/biodiversity, and poverty reduction in their interventions and what were the outcomes related to these? How did people build their capacities to deal with these, as they came up in the project?</p> <p>Mapping which project outcomes relate to the cross-cutting themes will be the focus.</p>
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<p>different stakeholders.</p> <p>c. The convening and facilitation skills and networks to identify, engage and convene stakeholders.</p>		
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How do you write an outcome statement for the harvest?

This process is based on the same principles as the Change Stories teams have already produced but it is shorter. An outcome is a ‘change’ in a change in the behaviour – actions, activities, relationships, policies or practices – of one or more stakeholders. It can also be a change in the natural and physical environment that a changed behaviour or practice has led to.

The outcome statements are short and are written in three parts, as below:



<p>Describes what you or your partners did to influence the change (outcome) whether directly or indirectly, intentionally or not. You provide only the facts with no value-judgement, no adjectives. It could be verified by an outsider.</p>	<p>Describes why this change matters in your context in relation to the intended outcomes of your theory of change. Do not use this space to provide more factual information. Rather use it to give your interpretation of significance, in one sentence.</p>
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How to describe the outcome

An ‘outcome’ is when another social actor – an individual, group or community, organization, institution – makes an observable, verifiable change in behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, agendas, policies or practices that was influenced, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally. It can also be a

change in the physical and natural environment and/or among animals that has been influenced by a change in behaviour.

Note that new knowledge or mindset change is not an outcome in itself. When someone uses that new knowledge or attitude to do something different, that observable behaviour change is the outcome, as well as what results from that behaviour change.

How to write significance

Explain in one or two short sentences:

- Is this a positive or negative outcome?
- From your programme’s point of view, why is this outcome significant or worth noting in the current context in relation to what you are trying to achieve as described in your theory of change? Is it a turning point? Is it a set-back? Is it the first time? Is it a step forward in your hoped-for outcomes over time?

How to describe your contribution

‘Contribution’ refers to what you, your partners or other people you have engaged did to influence the new outcome. So, contribution will be a description of the interactions, dialogues, negotiations and activities that your project or a partner did to influence the change.

Example

1. Capacity outcomes (word limit 100 words)

What is the outcome or change? (Outcome description)	What is the significance of this for your work? (Significance)	What contributions, from whom, helped to bring this about? (Contribution description)
New skills developed for synthesising scientific knowledge – systematic review	We had done literature reviews before but applying a systematic methodology deepened the insights we got from existing evidence and gave us confidence to build projects on this basis.	AgriFose provided the systematic review courses that really strengthened this skill.
New skills and practices developed for stakeholder	We had never done a multi-stakeholder process before but	The project team read some literature on MSP, the AgriFoSe Comms and

engagement and mobilisation	the project depended on us doing this successfully.	Engagement team provided some advice, and we mainly learned hands-on, through doing it in the project.

2. Project outcomes (word limit 100 words)

Which aspect or outcome in your ToC does this change relate to, or is unplanned?	What is the outcome or change? (Outcome description)	What is the significance of this for your work? (Significance)	What contributions, from whom, helped to bring this about? (Contribution description)
Relates to the central outcome of 'shifting patriarchal attitudes'	Women were able to travel outside their community to receive training, with husbands' permission.	This is significant as it represents a shift in patriarchal attitudes and high level of trust in the project team, in a very patriarchal community, significant progress from the starting point of the project.	The project team made important contributions through numerous consultative discussions, awareness creation and gender-based sensitization exercises with targeted women, their spouses and local leaders in the four sub counties in Kiruhura District. The consultations encouraged both men and women to value the need for women to be economically empowered since it is crucial for the development of their families.

What needs to be done?

The C&E team will contact project teams and ask them to kindly go back through their MEL documents and also have a team reflection session reviewing their ToC and impact pathway.

Project teams will be asked to identify and ‘harvest’ up to **5 Capacity changes** and up to **10 project changes** that they feel are significant.

Following the guidelines set out above, each project team will document the changes they have identified and send them to the C&E team, using templates that will be provided.

– **Template for AgriFoSe2030 projects’ annual report**

The annual report should include the four MEL activities that have been undertaken during the last 12 months.

Project details

Project name	
Countries/location	
Start date	
Planned completion date	
Type of reporting	Annual report
Submitted by	
Email contact	

Summary of project objectives for the period

Project objectives	
Objectives for the period	
ToC areas or change processes this relates to	

A. Project progress and challenges

Please provide a summary for the period under the following headings **(150-500 words per section)**:

1. What have been the main **progress and gains** that support the project's objectives and ToC outcomes for the last year? (summarising information from MEL activities) Please note if these were planned or unexpected.

2. What have been the main **setbacks** that have held back gains?

3. What have been the **enabling factors, and/or constraining factors** that have supported or hindered gains? E.g., parallel work by allies; coordinated efforts; a high-level policy decision that created a window of opportunity.

4. What is the **significance** of both gains and challenges, given the context? E.g., very difficult political context, so even small gains have been significant.

5. What **challenges and priorities remain** to be tackled to make progress and advance on your impact pathway?

6. Based on this reflection, how should the project ToC and project plans be **adapted for the next year**?

- **ToC and assumptions** changes?

- What should be the **objectives and workplan** for the coming year?

B. Contributions towards the ToC changes and outcomes

Please describe your projects' overall contribution to change processes, big and small, this year, referring to your ToC.

Please provide a short narrative of significant changes and significant events, activities, you feel were most impactful.

7. What has been the most significant change (and other changes) so far that your project has **contributed to**, given the context? And why?

Lessons Learned

8. What have been the main **lessons learned** that you will take forward into the next 12 months' period?

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Evidence sources

9. Please note and attach any documentation, data or other evidence that supports this report, such as, **Key Meetings Tracker, After Action reviews or Change Stories.**

Additional Information (optional)

If you have any additional information you would like to share, you may provide it here.

e.g. pictures, products and tools

– **Template for AgriFoSe2030 end-of-project report**

The end of project report aims to capture overall changes contributed to by the project, and reflections on lessons learned.

Project details

Project name	
Countries/location	
Start date	
Planned completion date	
Type of reporting	End of project report
Submitted by	
Email contact	

Summary of project objectives and outcomes, original, revised

Project objectives – original	Revisions to objective over project lifetime
Summary ToC outcomes/changes ((within the sphere of your direct control) expected to be reached by the end of the project (summarising these from your ToC impact pathway	ToC change objectives actually reached

A. Overall project progress and impact

Please provide a summary of overall progress and impact during the full period of the project, under the following headings (150–500 words per section).

Please highlight the changes that you feel are most significant and why; the achievements you are most proud of and why.

Please also reflect on the context and other factors that have enabled and/or constrained the project's progress.

Financial reporting

The project financial reporting should be done as follows:

- a. The financial reporting should respond to the project budget table presented in the agreement between SLU and the partner institute.

Add two columns to the original budget table: *one for financial outcome* and *one for budget comments*. The Project Investigator will fill in these two columns, with support from the challenge leaders if needed.

- b. A financial statement from the university hosting the project is attached.

1. Overall, what please describe the **outcomes/changes?** that the project has been able to accomplish and the longer-term outcomes the project contributes to (leading towards the long term outcome)

(Please summarise all the outcomes achieved, referring to your ToC – changes for stakeholders and the outcomes expressed in your ToC. Also, please note which changes were planned or unexpected. Please also (in annex A) include how many (roughly) stakeholders you have engaged and worked (possibly we have an annex that they can fill in here, or what do you think?)

I suggest we move this to below to section B

2. How have the **project team's capacities and skills** evolved during the project?

Please capture the full range of skills that have been built, e.g. 'soft' skills like leadership and stakeholder engagement, as well as 'technical' skills e.g. systematic review. Please also reflect on any organisational capacities that the project has contributed to, e.g. new research infrastructure, or new unit.

2.1 What else is needed to enable the team to apply new capacities in future work?

3. What have been the **enabling factors, and/or constraining factors** that have supported or hindered outcomes and progress? E.g. security challenges; coordinated efforts; a high-level policy decision that created a window of opportunity; stakeholders that created momentum.

3.1 How did the project adapt to navigate these?

3.2 What strategies proved effective for addressing challenges and why?

4. What is the **significance** of the gains and the changes in your project, given the broader and larger context? E.g., very difficult political context, so even small gains have been significant; certain stakeholders are key to sustaining the outcomes of the project etc.

5. What **challenges and priorities remain** to be tackled to make progress and advance on your impact pathway, after this project?

B. Reflections and lessons

This section is a reflection on what you have learned about science-led change processes from your project.

1. The project team's capacities and skills

1.1. How have the **project team's capacities and skills** evolved during the project?

Please capture the full range of skills that have been built, e.g. 'soft' skills like leadership and stakeholder engagement, as well as 'technical' skills e.g. systematic review. Please also reflect on any organisational capacities that the project has contributed to, e.g. new research infrastructure, or new unit.

1.2 What else is needed to enable the team to apply new capacities in future work?

1.3. What are three most important insights your team has gained about 'how change happens' when facilitating science-led change processes?

1.4 What are the three most important insights your team has gained about the factors and conditions that can support positive change?

1.5 Did you have to re-evaluate your assumptions? If so, which ones and how did you change them?

2. Lessons Learned

2. What have been the main **lessons learned** that you will take forward into your future work?

2.1. What advice would you give other research teams starting a similar project?

2.2. What advice would you give to programme managers and funders seeking to support this kind of work in the future?

C. Finances

This section is to provide a final position on the finances.

Evidence sources

Please note and attach any documentation, data or other evidence that supports this report, such as, **Key Meetings Tracker, After Action reviews or Change Stories.**

Additional Information (optional)

If you have any additional information you would like to share, you may provide it here.

e.g. pictures, products and tools

– AgriFoSe2030 Annual Report Template

Contents

Svensk sammanfattning (1 page)

1. Overarching progress assessment (1 page)

Summary of progress assessment for 2025 for the entire programme and link to the Programme ToC.

Include a section on sustainability (including insitutionalisation), potential risks and possible mitigation actions.

Focus on changes and outcomes as a direct (and maybe indirect) result of Agrifose: What changes have occurred, and how did they happen? Include also unexpected outcomes where applicable, and relevant mechanisms where applicable.

Include a section on learning, including a link to the assumptions and what we are learning about transitioning a programme to Global South leadership.

Include a condensed work plan as Appendix 1. Also, provide a link to the full work plan.

List of outputs – appendix 2.

2. Programme management (1-2 pages)

Pathways from activities to outcomes

Summary of key activities and outcomes during the year, describing how these activities contributed to the achieved outcomes.

Also include:

- How was the work within the management team organized?
- What worked/ did not work, and how did the team handle that?
- Have there been any major changes/deviations from the original project plan and approved workplan?
- Output table (incl links to published materials, films etc)

Refer to the workplan (appendix 1) and list of outputs (appendix 2).

Assessment of efficiency, progress and conditions for reaching the set goals

Describe whether the set objectives were met during the year. If not, describe why. Focus on the projected outcomes, and include an assessment of the budget.

3. Communication and engagement (1-2 pages)

Pathways from activities to outcomes

Summary of key activities and outcomes during the year, describing how these activities contributed to the achieved outcomes.

Refer to the workplan (appendix 1) and list of outputs (appendix 2).

Assessment of efficiency, progress, and conditions for reaching the set goals

Describe whether the set objectives were met during the year. Focus on the projected outcomes, and include an assessment of the budget.

4. Hub narrative reports (approx. 2 pages/ hub)

Name of HUB

Hub level:

Summary of key activities and outcomes during the year, describing how these activities contributed to the achieved outcomes. Include a description of activities and outcomes related to:

- Buy-in and institutional support from university leadership, including progress towards institutionalisation of AgriFoSe methodology
- Capacity building through courses, mentoring, etc.
- How the hub has engaged with regional partnerships and networks

Also include:

- How was the work within the hub organized?
- What worked/ did not work, and how did the hub handle that?
- Have there been any major changes/deviations from the original project plan?
- A section on learning, including a link to the assumptions and what we are learning about transitioning a programme to Global South leadership.
- Include output table (incl links to published materials, films etc)

Refer to the work plan (Appendix 1) and the list of outputs (Appendix 2).

Change projects:

Summary of key activities and outcomes during the year, describing how these activities contributed to the achieved outcomes. Describe mechanisms where applicable.

Also include:

- Have there been any major changes/deviations from the original project plan
- Include links to published materials, films etc

Refer to the work plan (Appendix 1) and the list of outputs (Appendix 2)

Assessment of efficiency, progress and conditions for reaching the set goals

Describe whether the set objectives were achieved during the year, both at the hub level and within the change project(s). Relate your response to the work plan and comment on whether the work is on schedule. Focus on the intended outcomes, and include a comment on how the hub and projects address the mainstreamed issues: poverty eradication, gender inclusiveness, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity protection.

Briefly comment on the financial outcome vis-à-vis the budget.

5. SEA network (1-2 pages)

Summary of key activities and outcomes during the year, describing how these activities contributed to the achieved outcomes.

- Have there been any major changes/deviations from the original project plan
- Include output table (links to published materials, films etc)

Refer to the work plan (Appendix 1) and the list of outputs (Appendix 2).

Assessment of efficiency, progress and conditions for reaching the set goals

Describe whether the set objectives were achieved during the year. Relate your response to the work plan and comment on whether the work is on schedule. Focus on the intended outcomes, and include a comment on how the work relates to the mainstreamed issues: poverty eradication, gender inclusiveness, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity protection.

Briefly comment on the financial outcome vis-à-vis the budget.

6. Include specific programme wide output(s)/outcome(s) we want to highlight...

7. AgriFoSe2030 web statistics 2025

As a general reflection, include not just what has happened but also why.

For example, include reflections on why the number of visitors has increased or decreased. Also reflect on whether the average number of seconds per page is good, etc.

8. Financial report

9. Financial audit

10. Conclusion

Appendix 1. Follow-up of the work plan 2025

- Mark with "X" in the green/yellow/red columns status of the activities (both for outputs and outcomes).
- In the last comment column, please comment if there were activities that did not progress as planned and how that was addressed
- Add data on numbers of participants for performed activities (including number of male/female/youth if possible).

Appendix 2. Outputs produced by AgriFoSe2030 during 2025

Appendix 3. AgriFoSe2030 Budget 2025

Appendix 4. Budget balance, AgriFoSe2030

