

Task 3.3

Preparing for implementation

Task 3.3.2 Develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

What is this task about?

This task is about formulating the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) plan for your Climate Resilient Strategy and Action Plan. A MEL plan helps you to understand whether your strategy and action plan are being implemented as intended, whether their objectives and outcomes are being achieved, as well as the impacts these are having with respect to the overall vision that you have developed. It helps you to better understand the challenges and roadblocks you may encounter in their implementation, how these have been addressed, their potential intended and unintended (positive and negative) consequences, as well as any of their socioeconomic and/or equity-related outcomes. A well-formulated MEL plan both provides critical accountability to your key stakeholders and allows you to assess and adapt your Climate Resilient Strategy and Action Plan as required during implementation.

These two strands of monitoring converge in the “learning” component, which refers to connecting different monitoring results to questions that can help identify what is working, how, and what is not working; as well as how resilient the various options and activities are in terms of adapting to changing circumstances and new (emergent) challenges. For effective learning, it is important to link your MEL activities to concrete decision points with stakeholders, as well as to design your plan in a way it can flexibly reorganise and adapt to new circumstances.

Note that your MEL plan should be designed according to the capabilities and realities present in your region. While it is important to have a comprehensive MEL plan, it is critical to design an implementable plan that reflects your region’s available resources, institutional setting, and stakeholder needs. The MEL plan should be aligned with each region’s monitoring and reporting cycles.

Your MEL plan should consider two levels:

- A “strategic” level that assesses your high-level planning objectives in relation to your longer-term vision, outcomes, and the principles that you have identified for your Climate Resilience Strategy. It should also include the Monitoring and Evaluation at the level of the Adaptation Pathways.
- An operational level connected to your Action Plan. This includes the Innovation Portfolio, Climate Resilience Investment Plan, and early-stage implementation of the adaptation pathways.

**Task
3.3**

Preparing for implementation

◦ **Task 3.3.2 Develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan**

Why is it important?

At the basic level, your MEL plan allows you to account for whether your climate resilient strategy and action plan are performing as intended, that resources are being used effectively and efficiently, and that goals are being achieved. Your stakeholders, potential donors or funders of your activities, as well as the policy process more all generally demand such accountability. At a more fundamental level, your MEL plan provides you with the evidence needed to adapt your plan and strategy to achieve better outcomes. Climate adaptation is deeply uncertain, and the effectiveness or otherwise of a solution will depend on many factors outside of your direct control. A strong MEL plan allows you to respond quickly to signals of change, re-routing your activities to new contexts and according to new knowledge. This is ultimately, a key component of resilience. Multi-stakeholder learning processes also serve to build regional adaptation capabilities and enhance resilience more broadly.

Some sources of finance (particularly those focused on impact) also require evidence on the use of proceeds as a condition for providing finance. Therefore, ensuring a strong MEL framework which accounts for these needs is also important.

How can you complete it?

- **Define your audience and purpose:** define who is this MEL plan for, who needs to participate in its development and implementation, and who should be informed of its outputs, and what would be the relevant reporting cycles. Based on the outputs from your stakeholder engagement strategy (Task 2.1.2), map those stakeholders to whom you are accountable. Also map those who will need to participate in the learning processes to inform the ongoing implementation of the strategy.
- **Clearly identify your “baseline”.** This baseline describes the current state of your region along relevant dimensions. You can use the information gathered in Phase 1 and complement it with any additional information that is required to understand the current status of your region with respect to its vision and planning objectives, and in alignment with the CR strategy, action and investment plan.

Task 3.3

Preparing for implementation

Task 3.3.2 Develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

Following the two-tier structure introduced before, your MEL plan should include:

At the strategic level:

- **Strategy MEL:** Specify the monitoring and evaluation requirements for the implementation of the Climate Resilience Strategy at the level of its guiding principles, and for the Action Plan, at the level of results and outcomes. Include a Theory of Change for strategic implementation, which can be drawn from Task 2.4.1. This helps to identify a set of quantitative strategic implementation indicators, for which you should define corresponding reporting methods (measurement tool, sample size, etc.) as well as the reporting cycle. Qualitative MEL methods may also be useful here, especially when building understanding for complex and uncertain processes. Indicate to whom, how, and for what purpose you intend to share these results with your relevant audiences.
- **MEL for Adaptation Pathways:** Specify requirements to continually monitor and evaluate your region's adaptation challenges and the performance of your implemented adaptation measures in response to these. This monitoring is carried out at the level of your planning objectives and corresponding performance metrics (particularly for your primary adaptation objectives, from Task 1.1.2); however, these metrics typically will not constitute your complete suite of monitoring indicators. The purpose of this monitoring is to identify suitable (i.e., strong and reliable) adaptation signals that indicate the direction and magnitude of future changes in your uncertain drivers of risk. More importantly, it should provide a timely signal for any approaching adaptation limits or emerging opportunities to trigger implementation of the next adaptation measures in your pathways. Both quantitative and qualitative monitoring methods may be appropriate to determine whether or not to advance further along your preferred pathways.
- **Learning and adaptive management:** Make sense of what the different monitoring data tells you about the state of implementation of your project and the extent to which your intended outcomes are being achieved. Adapt your implementation plan or actions accordingly given what you have learned from the process. The process should not only be informed by “hard” data, such as indicators, but also by contextual factors and experiences of those working on implementation. Such observations can unveil what has worked, for whom, and in which ways; what challenges have been faced and how have these been addressed; as well as new external information or changing circumstances that might impact the (future) feasibility of your plan. Attach these learning cycles to decision-making and adaptation processes and structures, such that your MEL plan helps you more effectively achieve your climate resilience goals. This might include, for example, regular updating and revising your strategy at a regular interval (e.g., every 5 years).

At the delivery level:

- **MEL for your Action Plan:** based on the activities identified in the previous tasks, identify those indicators that can keep track of key milestones in the implementation of your action plan. At this stage the monitoring will be considering short-term results and outputs. If due to funding or other considerations it is required to short impact of your plan, identify “proxy” indicators that can show that you are moving towards addressing your planning objectives.

Task
3.3

Preparing for implementation

Task 3.3.2 Develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

- **MEL for Innovation Portfolio:** Specify requirements for the monitoring and evaluation of the activation of your innovation portfolio with respect to the criteria that you have set up in Task 3.2.3; the suitability of the associated policy and governance mix; and a more qualitative assessment of the intended and unintended outcomes of this innovation portfolio, particularly with regards to your planning objectives. As noted in Task 3.2.3, the innovation portfolio relies on dynamic and adaptive management, for which continuous learning and sensemaking are required.
- **MEL for Investment Plan:** Specify requirements for the specific financial and economic aspects of monitoring for your Investment Plan. This should focus on two key areas – which are monitoring mobilisation of funds for delivery of the strategy and action plan, and ensuring any monitoring of use of proceeds for any external financial sources.

To monitor mobilisation of funds you should set targets for the overall amounts of finance mobilised, and consider what more detail is helpful – for example to break those targets down by pathway, or financial source or instrument. You may also wish to consider monitoring the amount or proportion of finance flowing towards specific objectives of your strategy or action plan, for example, whether finance is flowing towards supporting the citizens who are most vulnerable to climate change.

Monitoring indicators for use of proceeds will be determined by individual sources or funders – for example when using green bonds, there is a requirement to demonstrate impact and this requirement may be satisfied by the broader MEL indicators of the Strategy and Action Plan, or may need supplementing. In contrast, for actions funded by banks or financial institutions, there may be a requirement to show alignment with the EU Taxonomy on Sustainable Finance.

Communicate your MEL plan:

- **Share your MEL plan with relevant stakeholders** and provide space for feedback. It is important that the choices of indicators, tools and methods are relevant to your audience and stakeholders, and everyone involved understands the process of sensemaking, learning and adaptation of the Climate Resilience Strategy and the activities comprising it. Consider funder and policy requirements when applicable. Report on the progress of your strategy and action plan based on the needs of your region.

Task 3.3

Preparing for implementation

Task 3.3.2 Develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

What are key inputs for the task?

Your Climate Resilience Strategy, specifically:
 Shared vision and Theory of Change
 Set of preferred adaptation pathways and corresponding options
 Innovation portfolio
 Stakeholder map and engagement strategy

Your Climate Resilience Investment Plan, specifically:
 Economic case (Adaptation Investment Cycle Task 4.1)
 Financing approach (Adaptation Investment Cycle Task 4.2).
 Conditions for adaptation finance (Adaptation Investment Cycle Task 4.3)

Your Climate Resilience Action Plan

What are the expected outputs?

The key output from this task is a Monitoring and Evaluation plan that clearly identifies:

- The audience for your MEL plan (who are you accountable to, who participates of the learning process)
- Metrics and indicators for each component (qualitative and quantitative)
- Methods for data collection and assessment of these indicators
- Frequency of reporting these indicators, to whom and for what purpose
- How are these results are going to be communicated, and to whom
- Clear descriptions of how your metrics, indicators, learning and adaptation (decision making) processes relate to each of the key components of your strategy as well as to the strategy as a whole.



Before moving on, have you...



Developed a MEL plan for your Climate Resilience Strategy and specific components (pathways, innovation portfolio, investment plan)?



Clearly defined cycles of learning and adaptation for your Climate Resilience Strategy and action plan?



Communicated this MEL plan to relevant stakeholders?