

Case Study

Accountable data for climate mitigation with Conservation International:

the “Our Future Forests - Amazonia Verde” Initiative



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Introduction

[Conservation International \(CI\)](#) has been dedicated to protecting the Earth's climate, ecosystems, and biodiversity, recognizing their importance to the well-being of all people since 1987. Through a blend of fieldwork, scientific research, and innovative financial models, CI works globally to preserve vital ecosystems like oceans and forests, collaborating closely with Indigenous peoples and local communities, valuing their role as owners of their territories in the Amazon, and partner with governments to shape effective conservation policies long lasting for the future.

The organization has set feasible targets that focus on stabilizing the climate through nature preservation doubling ocean protection and promoting nature-positive economies for a sustainable future.

Amazonia Verde (AV) is a pioneering initiative built to support Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) to conserve 12% of the Amazon rainforest by 2025, spanning seven countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, and Suriname.

AV is a regional conservation program with a goal to conserve the Amazon, relying on close collaboration with Indigenous communities and local actors in the previous mentioned countries. Successfully, AV phase 1 secured and strengthened 25 million hectares of Indigenous and local community territories. It supported capacity building of over 2,700 Indigenous leaders in territorial management, conservation, and bioeconomy development.

It strengthened 22 value chains, promoting sustainable resource use by focusing on non-timber forest products, supporting local livelihoods while reviving ancestral practices. USD 863,245 was allocated through 2 financial mechanisms. Over 100 grants and partnerships were established with regional and national Indigenous organizations.

In this case study , we explore how the teams working on Amazonia Verde approached the implementation of the program's MEAL system with ActivityInfo.

Challenges in information management in climate mitigation

Data Integration and Measurement

Challenges: While individual country indicators existed, there was no comprehensive system to consolidate this information or track macro-level progress effectively.

Developing Robust Measurement

Frameworks: To address measurement challenges, the organization facilitated collaborative sessions with experts and stakeholders to identify management priorities and data needs. This inclusive process helped establish scientifically sound and culturally appropriate data collection methodologies.

Managing data across diverse

countries: Monitoring the spill-over effects across such an extensive geographical area and in a setting where a variety of interventions are implemented by different stakeholders is another important challenge that needs to be addressed for a successful implementation.

Different geographical areas and case-based data collection approaches add another dimension to this complexity. In the Amazonia Verde initiative, the geographical areas focused on indigenous territories.

Long-term data management for

impact: Projects dealing with climate mitigation monitor long-term impact that often take decades to materialize. The MEAL system in these cases needs to account for that time-series data collection.

Reporting process:

Amazonia Verde had to address challenges related to multi-donor data management across countries, while there was a need for a system that would integrate seamlessly with existing structures.

Results driven monitoring process:

The implementation of a platform that helps to obtain data driven results is always a plus, offering a glimpse of implementation progress and adaptive management actions are important in a multi-country initiative.

ActivityInfo as a MEAL system for climate mitigation

ActivityInfo has been established as the preferred institutional MEAL information management system for Conservation International (CI) at the organizational level.

Consequently, the Amazonia Verde project developed its MEAL system within ActivityInfo as a pilot, aimed at effectively capturing data across various levels to meet both country and regional data requirements while contributing to overarching institutional goals that are part of the Southern Cross Strategy of CI.

Each country participating in the Amazonia Verde initiative acted as a delivery actor producing outputs designed to achieve outcomes.

These countries utilize individual logical frameworks, represented by distinct forms in ActivityInfo, which are tailored to meet their unique needs.

Component	Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Indicators
Component 1: ...	1.1. Development and implementation of Life or Manage...	# of hectares covered by Life or Management Plans that promote forest...	Outcome 1.1: Support IP... Intermediate Outcome 1.1... 1 records
Component 1: ...	1.1. Development and implementation of Life or Manage...	# of hectares covered by Life or Management Plans that promote forest...	Outcome 1.1: Support IP... Intermediate Outcome 1.1... 2 records
Component 1: ...	1.2 Monitoring systems and activities Implemented	# of hectares of forest that are monitored actively	Outcome 1.1: Support IP... Intermediate Outcome 1.1... 1 records
Component 1: ...	1.2 Monitoring systems and activities Implemented	# of hectares of forest that are monitored actively	Outcome 1.1: Support IP... Intermediate Outcome 1.1... 5 records
Component 1: ...	2.1 Support creation of new conservation areas	# of hectares of newly conserved land	Outcome 1.1: Support IP... Intermediate Outcome 1.1... 1 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.1: Funds awar... Intermediate Outcome 2.1... 1 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 4 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 4 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 3 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 3 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 3 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.2: Strengthen... Intermediate Outcome 2.2... 4 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.3: Train the P... Intermediate Outcome 2.3... 4 records
Component 2: I...			Outcome 2.3: Train the P... Intermediate Outcome 2.3... 2 records

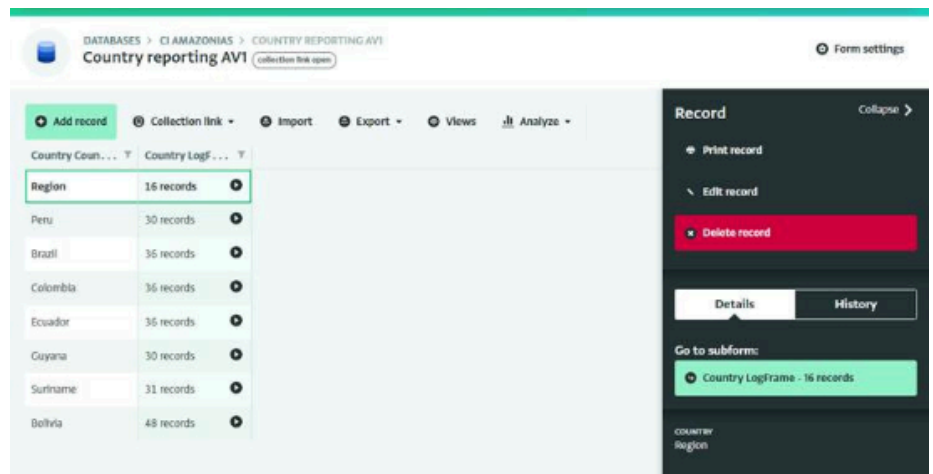
Program Logframe in Table View in ActivityInfo

This approach enables the project to effectively monitor outputs at the country level while maintaining the necessary detail and flexibility for local context.

To collect outcomes at the regional level, the organization collected and aggregated country data. Following the database setup, there was a standard process for indicator tracking:

1. Country technical teams update indicator progress and support documentation.
2. Country Managers validate data.
3. Regional staff review data and propose changes.
4. Country teams make adjustments.
5. Regional staff uses revised data for reporting and monitoring.

In the platform, each stakeholder is assigned specific roles and permissions that reflect their existing roles and responsibilities. Following the projects' indicators updates, ActivityInfo supported the organization with reports and the database available for a comprehensive overview of each Indicator.



Country reporting in Table View in ActivityInfo

Best practices for implementing a new MEAL system for climate mitigation

During the implementation of the new MEAL system, CI identified various best practices:

Involving key stakeholders at the design phase: The organization involved dedicated staff from the regional and country level in the process of developing the data model. The data model aimed to capture information (including relevant outputs and outcomes) about the implementation of the project at country level and then aggregate results from country to regional level.

Change management principles: A solid change management plan can make a great difference when implementing a new information system. People working in the organization are about to change the way they collect, access and analyze data relevant to their work and they need sufficient time and resources to adjust to the change.

Having a clear workflow and roles was key for the successful transition to the system; this included a defined timeline for data collection and the assignment of specific roles and permissions for data access and management. The organization established a regional and a global unit to help all countries make the transition and address any potential lack of capacity or resources within specific countries.

Pilot testing: The organization gathered a group of users to pilot the MEAL system before launching it more widely. This helped them gather feedback and provided the insights needed to develop a manual with step-by-step instructions on how to use the new information system.

Launching with a demo and ongoing support: When the organization launched the MEAL system, ActivityInfo offered a demo session where they showcased how the platform would be used. They also offered ongoing support to country teams.

Feedback and system evaluation: After the first six months of use of the MEAL system, the organization and the ActivityInfo Customer Success team worked together to collect feedback from the countries using it to evaluate and identify areas of opportunity.

Supporting adoptions with ongoing local capacity building: During the adoption phase, the organization followed an interactive approach and offered local capacity building to country teams to ensure not only the continuous improvement of the process and the system, but also ongoing learning.

Participatory processes across all levels: In the meantime, the organization reinforced participatory processes across all levels to promote ownership of the system and to foster adaptive management and the effective use of data, not only for the AV project but also for other projects monitoring within the organization.

Conclusion

All in all, because each MEAL system design has specific ideocracies linked to each particular implementation, it is not possible to address the challenges that arise with a generic solution.

Nevertheless, having a platform/system that helps you to move to a data driven MEAL approach and offers you to innovate the traditional M&E approach helps to improve how you follow up and present your progress/results, for a decision-making process.

For the Amazonia Verde initiative, the adoption of an integrated system, such as ActivityInfo, led to enhanced data accessibility, spanning from local to global level. By seamlessly integrating information from local to national and regional levels the organization maintains alignment with the Amazon Strategic Planning and the global organization goals.

It also becomes possible and much easier to highlight how diverse projects impact specific themes and geographic areas and identify gaps or the impact of a unified effort.

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What is ActivityInfo?



ActivityInfo is provided by BeDataDriven B.V., a private company based in The Hague in the Netherlands.

It is an information management platform used for monitoring & evaluation, humanitarian coordination and case management. For over a decade, the ActivityInfo team has been supporting humanitarian operations and development programmes worldwide with a secure, flexible and cost-effective solution for data collection, data management and analysis.

ActivityInfo is used to centralize and standardize data collection, monitor and display the impact of activities while maintaining complete control on data access and changes.

Non-technical colleagues can quickly start tracking key indicators from project outputs to strategic impact using a user-friendly database and form builder, an intuitive data collection interface and various reporting capabilities.

Using the ActivityInfo mobile app to collect data online or offline, they save time and avoid errors from moving data between tools. Then, built-in analysis tools or integrations with other software allow for rich insights within minutes.

ActivityInfo builds on the company's 15 years of research and practical experience developing information management systems for humanitarian and development projects.

Originally developed for UNICEF's emergency program in eastern DRC, ActivityInfo has evolved into a mature project and is now used daily by hundreds of organizations working in humanitarian relief, reconstruction, and development assistance worldwide.

Learn more about ActivityInfo: <https://www.activityinfo.org/>

You can sign up and try ActivityInfo at: <https://www.activityinfo.org/signUp>

For a customized demo for your organization, never hesitate to contact us at: info@activityinfo.org