



Knowledge generated through Module 13: Monitoring and Evaluation of EbA Initiatives

The Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Community of Practice (CoP) <http://ebacommunity.com/en/> is a group of experts and organizations that share experiences and knowledge on ecosystem-based adaptation. The EbA community of practice around the globe faces similar challenges and seeks to learn how to overcome them by sharing experiences, best practice and lessons learned among three continents – Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Module 13 on Monitoring and Evaluation of EbA Initiatives (November 11 – January 15, 2016) is part of the new season of the community of practice, in partnership with EbA South, reaching out to potential members in Asia and Africa. With this enlargement to Asia and Africa, the community embraces the global South as a whole, where South – South cooperation is essential to strengthen adaptation efforts. This summary reflects on the knowledge shared during the 6-weeks long discussion and the key messages from the webinar in this module.

UNEP REGATTA Programme, the Mountain EbA project in Peru, EbA South, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Practical Action Latin America gratefully acknowledge the contributions of EbA CoP members.

CAN EBA INITIATIVES BE MEASURED AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

There is an increased global demand for evidence-based policy management, whereby public action has a greater demand for good monitoring systems and evaluation practices to show the impact of the work done on many levels.

I believe that monitoring and evaluation should be considered at the macro and micro-levels, and in short, medium and long-term timelines, which then leads us to design indicators for processes and impacts.

José Salomón Martínez Alas, El Salvador

Every process of knowledge generation is based on systematically collected and observed evidence, which is why the generation of information on adaptive processes through monitoring change and progress is important to support.

The module discussion led to a consensus on the feasibility of implementing a system of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for an EbA initiative. To assure that an M&E system is effective in capturing the implementation of good practices, it is essential that it allows to document under what conditions EbA has demonstrated to be most (in) effective. .. Assessing the effectiveness of an EbA intervention

depends on the objectives of the assessment and on the relevance of those objectives to the site-specific context, in which activities take place.

The members of the community highlighted that even though EbA measures do not demonstrate immediate results, it is anyhow valuable to develop and use direct and indirect indicators for monitoring and evaluation of positive short-term changes, that can, in turn, generate corrective measures or proposals to redirect the adaptation intervention, where needed. Nicolas Ibañez from Peru emphasized the importance of developing a clear conceptual framework, which would guide the M&E process and incorporate EbA specific features in it. A key prerequisite for effective M&E is the proper development and use of indicators and, as Jose Salomon from El Salvador added, both micro-level indicators (conservation, restoration measures) and macro-level indicators (e.g. GEI emissions, glacial retreat) are needed for monitoring and evaluation.

FACING CHALLENGES IN MONITORING EBA INITIATIVES

In monitoring and evaluation of EbA practices, physical and biological measures are more feasible to control, because the results can be observed in a relatively short-term. Yet, interventions in the socio-cultural and economic aspect frequently show results in the medium and long term, therefore they are more challenging to monitor and evaluate.

Him Lal Shresth, Nepal

Monitoring and evaluation of activities of EbA projects are essential for assessing the progress made towards defined objectives. Monitoring is more than just collecting information on the project. It is the systematic and continuous assessment of progress over time by collecting and analyzing information and

using that information to improve the work within the project and its performance. On the other hand, it is important to keep in mind that an evaluation entails estimating the performance and impact of the project at one point in time. Monitoring and evaluation are also tools to identify strengths and weaknesses in strategies and activities and to make sound and timely decisions.

When speaking about monitoring and evaluation of EbA processes, Tourad, CoP member from Mauritania, highlighted that although it is important to think about some important factors such as well-established baselines, defined indicators and developed methodology, there are indicators and targets that are different from one country to another one and specific to each case.

José Salomón Martínez Alas, CoP member from El Salvador, added that the EbA strategies that are the easiest to monitor are the actions that focus on more specific geographic areas and that have short-term or medium-term timelines, while actions that are aimed at more complex spaces and that have long-term timelines are more difficult to monitor.

EbA CoP Webinars (11 November to 15 January, 2016): Monitoring and Evaluation of EbA Initiatives

During Module 13, three webinars on EbA and South-South Cooperation took place, facilitated by Juan Torres, Practical Action Expert and moderator of Module 13. The experts Timo Leiter and Mathias Bertram from GIZ, and Aneli Gomez from the Mountain Institute in Peru, shared their experiences on the topic.

Timo Leiter (a member of the GIZ climate policy team) presented the manual on measuring adaptation initiatives and highlighted that there is no universal approach for M&E and there are key considerations to bear in mind: (i) what is the principal objective to undertake M&E?; (ii) Who would use the information?; (iii) What are the resources needed? Timo highlighted the need for baselines, indicators that are feasible to use and fit the specific context of M&E and the need for consensus in the construction of the approach.

Mathias Bertram (EbA adviser at GIZ), presented practical examples from the „Integrated Coastal and Mangrove Protection Climate Change and Coastal Ecosystem Program” with the case of Vietnam’s coast. Mathias showed us the importance of the timing of these processes (the work is projected to 2033). He used the concept of "Saved Wealth" in these ecosystems, and included cultures and concepts, such as resilience and vulnerability, as part of the example presented. He highlighted that:

- Vietnam showed evidence of how EbA measures (mangrove rehabilitation) have the potential to reduce climate risks in a cost-effective way and generate social, ecological and economical co-benefits;
- The challenge is how to measure these evidences at broader scale in a feasible way with limited capacities (financial, technical, human) and data availability.

Aneli Gomez (member of the Mountain Institute of Peru) presented a monitoring and evaluation experience from a project implementing EbA in mountain ecosystems, particularly with a community located in the Landscape Reserve Nor Yauyos Cochabamba in the central Andean mountains of Peru. Aneli highlighted the role of community participation especially in the construction of indicators, as well as the need for consensus

Experiences shared by participants in the EbA CoP

The importance of Monitoring and Evaluation of EbA for flood defense in the Beni region, Bolivia

Luis Aliaga, Bolivia



Monitoring should be applied to all EbA measures that could be included in current programs and/or projects, at both the state level (national programs) and individual (NGOs) because they are efforts that in the end are rewarded with results, where the objectives are achieved and benefit ecosystems, therefore contributing to adaptation efforts. A good example is our experience with prevention of floods in the Beni plains, in Bolivia. One of the pillars that allowed for the incorporation of

EbA measures for flood protection was the monitoring of effectiveness of current preventive measures such as flood defense walls. Through an evaluation of the results and reflecting on a systematization of the experience, it was concluded that corrective measures were needed. At this point EbA measures were considered as an option. Although this experience is not directly reflecting M&E experience with EbA, it is an example of its use in corrective measures after evaluating the effectiveness of adaptation measures and available opportunities.

Challenges in measuring social indicators for EbA

Him Lal Shrestha, Nepal



As EbA practices emphasize the principle of using ecosystem services and management methods to enhance the resilience of community and local ecosystems, therefore M&E needs to be performed at both the levels – ecological and social. While biophysical parameters are easier to quantify, indicators of social characteristics at community level are challenging to monitor as they depend strictly on the local and micro level impacts and contexts. The experience from Nepal reveals that biophysical monitoring of forest growth -forest cover increase and ecosystem restoration- can be easily monitored over the spatial extent as well as temporal variations by using remote sensing data. However, it is challenging to define relevant indicators for the social component of the EbA measures.

UNEP REGATTA Programme, the Mountain EbA project in Peru, EbA South, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Practical Action Latin America thank all EbA CoP participants who contributed to this learning process. We invite you to participate in future EbA CoP modules by enrolling through the following link. This initiative is possible through the support of the Government of Spain. Visit ebacommunity.com/en/

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