



BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund

Standard Indicators 2.2

Guidance

September 2026

This document represents the latest version of the Standard Indicator Guidance and Menu, incorporating updates and refinements since Version 2.1.

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Acronym	Meaning
AR	Annual Report
BCFs	Biodiversity Challenge Funds
DI	Darwin Initiative
DPLUS	Darwin Plus
FR	Final Report
GBP	Great British Poun
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion
ICF	International Climate Fund
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoV	Means of Verification
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
OECD	Other Effective Conservation Measure
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
SI	Standard Indicator
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound

A glossary of key MEL terms can be found in Annex A.

Project Indicators and Standard Indicators

Project Indicators are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) – see our BCFs MEL Guidance, available on our website, for more details <https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/resources/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning/>.

Project Indicators enable rigorous project-level MEL, with each project team being required to select their own highly specific and relevant Project Indicators.

Standard Indicators are more general. In sacrificing some of the specificity and relevance of Project Indicators, Standard Indicators allow us to aggregate the results of a diverse array of projects. This enables a better understanding fund-level contributions to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, and to facilitate a collective contribution to the global

The Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Standard Indicators are closely linked to the Outcome and Outputs in IWT Challenge Fund's own fund level Theory of Change and Logframe and are set out against the funds four thematic areas. Some indicators will be used across the BCFs i.e. you will also find them in the Darwin Initiative Standard Indicators and Darwin Plus Standard Indicators.

The diagram below provides an outline of an idealised process of indicator selection, and shows that your selection of Standard Indicators should be done as the final step in this process.

1. Using the MEL Guidance available on our website, First develop your project logframe (including your Impact statement, your Outcome, Outputs and Activities)
2. Next, develop your project indicators ensuring they are SMART (see the *MEL Guidance* and *How to develop SMART Indicators guidance* on our fund Websites). We recommend consulting the [BCFs Indicator Library](#) and other sources for inspiration and to assist you with developing SMART Project Indicators (see the MEL Guidance available on our fund websites).
3. Finally, we recommend that you select Standard Indicators using this guidance note and menu.

While we have presented these steps sequentially here, it can be helpful to revisit your Logframe following your selection of Project Indicators and Standard Indicators, to ensure that you have alignment between the indicators and your Outputs and Outcome.



1. How to select IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicators

The IWT Challenge Fund menu of Standard Indicators is **designed to help you to select appropriate indicators according to the nature of your project**. The menu also provides guidance on which methodology, units and disaggregation measures to use to **help you plan your monitoring and evaluation** more effectively.

Browse the menu below: The menu is grouped by IWT Challenge Fund thematic area.

Group A: Sustainable Livelihoods and Economic Development Measures

Group B: Law Enforcement and Legal Frameworks Measures

Group C: Behaviour Change for Demand Reduction Measures

Group D: Cross Cutting Measures

- **Select at least three Standard Indicators:** IWT Challenge Fund projects are required to report against a minimum of three Standard Indicators. You should select Standard Indicators that are appropriate and relevant for your project, these can be selected from any of the groups but should ideally align with the IWT Challenge Fund thematic areas selected in your application form (noting that Group D includes cross cutting measures which are more likely to be widely relevant). It may also be helpful to use the Standard Indicators to help inform your selection of the thematic areas your projects will be working on at the design stage. We understand that certain types of projects, including those funded under the Evidence Scheme, may find it impracticable to meet this requirement. If this is the case please include an explanatory note in the relevant section of your Application and Reporting Documents (see the FAQs in [Section 5](#) for more detail).
- **Specify the means that you will use to disaggregate your reporting:** Each of the indicators has either obligatory or optional means of verification suggested in the tables below. You must disaggregate your reporting against the obligatory indicators (for example, sex and IPLC status for people-focused indicators). In addition, we encourage you to disaggregate in whatever ways are meaningful in your project context and learning objectives (for example, you may be interested to demonstrate the participation of youth through age disaggregation).
- **Ensure that you put in place appropriate plans to monitor these indicators:** Develop a MEL Plan to ensure that you are monitoring your Standard Indicators alongside your Project Indicators (see the MEL Guidance on our website detailed guidance). In many cases you can use the same Means of Verification (MoV) for both.

Using Standard Indicators for Evidence projects

Evidence projects should only use the Standard Indicators that are relevant to what they are trying to achieve. These projects are mainly about building knowledge and generating evidence to help design future interventions. Because of this, applicants are not expected to show reductions in environmental crime or longer-term impacts if these are beyond the scope of their project. Applicants should also include their own project-specific indicators where needed. These might measure the evidence produced, how it is tested and shared, and how it will be used in future. Indicators should help show how the project's findings could support the design, testing or scaling of future interventions, and improve understanding of the links between environmental crime, biodiversity, livelihoods and poverty.

2. How to report on IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicators

Reporting process: You will report your progress against all indicators in your Annual Reports and Final Report. The report templates will include tables for you to report your progress on indicators (see Table 1 below for an example).

Table 1. Example reporting table showing disaggregated reporting of results and planned figures

Ref No.	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-A01	Number of people reporting they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training	Number of People	Kenya, Male, non-IPLC	20			20	60
IWTCF-A01	Number of people reporting they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training	Number of People	Kenya, Female, non-IPLC	20			20	60
IWTCF-D12	Number of new or improved site management plans available and endorsed	Number of plans	Cambodia; New	1			1	3
IWTCF-D12	Number of new or improved site management plans available and endorsed	Number of plans	Cambodia; Improved	1			1	3

Timeframe: All indicators under IWT Challenge Fund should be reported in line with the standard reporting timeframe of UK financial years (April-March).

Indicator number: Where IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicators are used, you must always reference the indicator number e.g. [IWTCF-A02]. Please note that we have a few umbrella-type indicators which serve to aggregate a number of sub-indicators (see IWTCF-A03 and IWTCF-A04 for examples). For these indicators, we ask that you try to report against the individual sub-indicators (e.g. IWTCF-A03a or IWTCF-A03b), as well as provide an aggregate figure. In doing so, be careful to avoid double-counting.

Example: In the table below, the project team has reported that 30 people have improved food security as a result of the project. Additionally, the same 30 people also have enhanced access to water. For the aggregate number of people with enhanced wellbeing, we only sum the number of people reported in the sub-indicators when the people included are different. If you are reporting gains across multiple areas of wellbeing for the same people, then the aggregate figure is not the sum and therefore does not include double-counting. However, if the people with improved food security are different to the people with enhanced access to water, then you can add them together to calculate the aggregate figure.

Table 2. Example of Reporting against sub-indicators

Ref No.	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCTF-A03a	Number of people with improved food security	Number of people	Zambia, Female, non-IPLC	30			20	60
IWTCTF-A03b	Number of people with enhanced access to water	Number of people	Zambia, Female, non-IPLC	30			30	60
IWTCTF-A03c	Number of people with improved health	Number of people	Zambia, Female, non-IPLC	30			30	60

Units and disaggregation: The menu provides guidance on what units to use when reporting your progress, and disaggregation measures. You do not need to use all disaggregation measures listed, only those that are feasible and relevant within your project. **You must disaggregate by sex and Indigenous status** in all relevant indicators. In your Project Indicators you may include more resolution in how you disaggregate your targets and reporting (for example, you may be interested to demonstrate the participation of people with disabilities or youth through age disaggregation) but this is not required when reporting against Standard Indicators. Further guidance on disaggregation for specific indicators can be found in the [methodologies on our MEL page](#).

Sex / Gender: Previously, our standard reporting required grantees to disaggregate beneficiary data by gender. To improve consistency and align with global reporting standards, we will be changing this requirement to sex (male and female) for all compulsory indicators. This shift focuses on biological sex rather than gender identity, ensuring comparability across projects while respecting diverse contexts. Where feasible and culturally appropriate, grantees may still collect additional information on gender identity or other intersectional factors, but this will be optional. Please ensure that data collection is based on self-reporting, handled sensitively, and explained clearly to participants to maintain privacy and trust.

Results in annual increments: Reporting against quantitative results should be in annual increments (i.e. Separate results reported for Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, etc.).

Table 3. Example of how to report results in successive years

Ref No	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCTF-A01	Number of people reporting they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training	Number of people	Nicaragua, Male, non-IPLC	20	20		40	60

No double-counting: We ask that you pay close attention to the wording of the indicators. For example, for indicators that measure the number of people who have received training, do not include the same person more than once, even in cases where they have received multiple trainings on different topics. During instances where you are reporting improved capability and capacity, you may report on both the number of people as well as the number of organisations that have benefited. This is not considered double-counting.

Aggregation of logframe indicators into Standard Indicators: When you complete the annual report, where multiple indicators in your logframe contribute to the same standard indicator (SI), aggregate them under a single entry, listing all the outputs / outcomes that are included in the aggregated total, ensuring that no beneficiary, organisation, land

area, or training instance is counted twice. This ensures consistency and accuracy in tracking progress across your project. See Table .

Table 4: Example annual report

SI Number	Name of indicator	If this links directly to a project indicator(s), please note the indicator number here	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-D01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	1.2, 1.4, 2.6	People	Male, non-IPLC	20	10		30	60
IWTCF-D01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	1.2, 1.4, 2.6	People	Female, non-IPLC	30	5		35	60

Percentages vs numbers: When reporting results, please provide absolute numbers rather than percentages. This approach allows for clearer measurement and comparison of actual achievements against targets.

Indicators feeding into Global KPIs: When reporting to Standard Indicators that feed into either the Defra International or International Climate Fund (ICF) KPIs please ensure to review the [methodologies on our MEL page](#) to check that the process for collecting the data meets their requirements.

3. The IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator Menu

Group A: Sustainable Livelihoods and Economic Development Measures

Ref. No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator		Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-A01	Number of people with enhanced livelihoods		Number of people	Aggregates the indicators below	
	a	Number of people with Sustainable Livelihoods created or protected	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹ status (IPLC, other)	DI KPI 7
	b	Number of people with improved income			DI KPI 9
IWTCF-A02	Number of people with reduced multi-dimensional poverty		Number of people	Aggregates the indicators below	
	a	Number of people with improved food security	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ² status (IPLC, other)	DI KPI 10
	b	Number of people with enhanced access to water			
	c	Number of people with improved health			
	d	Number of people with improved security			
	e	Number of people with improved social relations			
	f	Number of people with improved freedom of choice and action			
IWTCF-A03	Number of people whose climate and disaster-resilience has been improved		Number of people	Aggregates the indicators included below	
	a	Number of people supported to cope with the effects of Climate Change	Number of people		ICF KPI 1

¹ Per IPBES (2020) <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary-tag/indigenous-peoples-and-local-communities>

The term “Indigenous Peoples and local communities” and its acronym “IPLC” are widely used by international organizations and conventions to refer to individuals and groups who self-identify as indigenous or as members of distinct local communities. We adopt this terminology with particular emphasis on those who “maintain an inter-generational historical connection to place and nature through livelihoods, cultural identity, languages, worldviews, institutions, and ecological knowledge”.

² See footnote 2 for definition

Ref. No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator		Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
	b	Number of people with improved resilience		Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ³ status (IPLC, other)	ICF KPI 4
IWTCF- A04	Number of people reporting a decrease in unsustainable practices as a result of project activities		Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ⁴ Status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF- A05	Number of cooperatives, enterprises, and credit and savings groups established		Number of organisations	Country; Sex of members or owners (male, female); IPLC ⁵ status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF- A06	Number of cooperatives, enterprises and credit and savings group established that are functioning at project end (at least a year after establishment)		Number of organisations	Country; Sex of members or owners (male, female); IPLC ⁶ status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF- A07	Number of loans provided to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)		Number of loans	Country; Sex of members or owners (male, female); IPLC ⁷ status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-A08	Total value (£) of loans provided to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)		GBP Sterling	Country; Sex of members or owners (male, female); IPLC ⁸ status (IPLC, other)	

³ See footnote 2 for definition

⁴ See footnote 2 for definition

⁵ See footnote 2 for definition

⁶ See footnote 2 for definition

⁷ See footnote 2 for definition

⁸ See footnote 2 for definition

Group B: Law Enforcement and Legal Frameworks Measures

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF- B01	Number of criminal networks and related trade routes identified	Number	Country; Type (criminal network, trade route); Estimated scale of network (small, medium, large)	
IWTCF-B02	Number of illegal wildlife products/shipments detected	Number of products	Country; Kingdom (plant, animal, fungus)	
IWTCF-B03	Number of patrols by law enforcement rangers supported through the project	Number of patrols	Country; Should be used in conjunction with IWTCF-B04	
IWTCF-B04	Cumulative duration of all patrols by law enforcement rangers supported through the project	Hours	Country	
IWTCF-B05	Number of wildlife crime-related arrests facilitated by the project ⁹	Number of arrests	Country	
IWTCF- B06	Value of illegal wildlife commodities and products seized through law enforcement action facilitated by the project	GBP	Country	
IWTCF- B07	Number of wildlife crime cases submitted for prosecution ¹⁰	Number of cases	Country; Case type (illegal extraction, illegal trade, other)	
IWTCF-B08	Number of people charged for wildlife crime	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹¹ Status (IPLC, other)	

⁹ For these indicators, project teams are not required to set targets at the project design stage. Project teams can choose to provide anticipated numbers in their logframes, but only where there is a clear rationale for these and a high degree of confidence that the project team will be able to facilitate them in accordance with appropriate legal and ethical standards.

¹⁰ For example custom agencies, you should consider the number of cases handed to police for investigation.

¹¹ See footnote 2 for definition

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-B09	Number of people successfully prosecuted for wildlife crimes	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹² Status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-B10	Number of charges brought for wildlife crime offences using non-wildlife crime specific legislation	Number of charges	Country	
IWTCF-B11	Number of wildlife crime cases handed to a relevant agency	Number	Country; Case status (handed over; followed-up with action)	
IWTCF- B12	Value of assets seized through non-wildlife crime specific legislation ¹³	GBP	Country	
IWTCF-B13	Number of intelligence reports fed into management decisions on species protection	Number of reports	Country	
IWTCF- B14	Number of intelligence or information reports exchanged with INTERPOL or the World Customs Organisation	Number of reports	Country	
IWTCF-B15	Number of amendments to national laws and regulations in project country(ies)	Number of amendments	Country; Area of law (wildlife legislation, trafficking legislation, organised crime, livelihoods-related, land tenure, other)	
IWTCF-B16	Number of policies and frameworks ¹⁴ developed or formally contributed to by projects and being implemented by appropriate authorities	Number	Country; Policy change (New; Amended); Area of policy (wildlife legislation, trafficking legislation, organised crime, livelihoods-related, land tenure, other)	

¹² See footnote 2 for definition

¹³ This should not include fines or similar punitive penalties.

¹⁴ This includes national and international laws and regulations.

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-B17	Number of databases established that are used for law enforcement	Number of databases	Country	

Group C: Behaviour Change for Demand Reduction Measures

The focus of IWT Challenge Fund projects which are working towards demand reduction should be on affecting behaviour change rather than simply increasing awareness. For that reason, the measures below seek to capture actual behaviour change or indicators of behaviour change.

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Unit	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-C01	Number of unique IWT behaviour change material messages distributed ¹⁵	Number	Country; Language; Media type (print, radio, television, internet, social media, other)	
IWTCF-C02	Number of communication channels carrying campaign message	Number of channels	Country; Media type (print, radio, television, internet, social media, other)	
IWTCF-C03	Number of partners with influence on target audience that have distributed campaign message(s)	Number of partners	Country; Organisation (local, national, international)	
IWTCF-C04	Number of people reached with behaviour change messaging	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹⁶ Status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-C05	Number of government institutions/ departments with enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity and associated poverty issues ¹⁷	Number	Country; Govt. Organisation Type (local, national, treasury, planning, environmental, agricultural, forestry, other)	
IWTCF-C06	Number of consumers that have demonstrated desired behaviour change	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹⁸ Status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-C07	Number of consumers targeted in demand country(ies)	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ¹⁹ Status (IPLC, other)	

¹⁵ Please note two numbers should be provided. The first should be a count of the different types produced, with the second number indicating distribution volume (i.e., 2 billboard posters with 50 copies each).

¹⁶ See footnote 2 for definition

¹⁷ A scorecard approach could be used to guide the assessment of this based on pre-defined criteria.

¹⁸ See footnote 2 for definition

¹⁹ See footnote 2 for definition

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Unit	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-C08	Number of markets trading in IWT products closed	Number of markets	Country; Market type (local, national, international)	

Group D: Cross Cutting Measures

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-D01	Number of people from eligible countries who have received structured and relevant training	Number of People	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ²⁰ Status (IPLC ²¹ , other); Focus area (livelihoods, legal frameworks, enforcement, demand reduction)	
IWTCF-D02	Number of people reporting they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ²² Status (IPLC, other) ; Focus area (livelihoods, legal frameworks, enforcement, demand reduction)	
IWTCF-D03	Number of trainers trained under the project reporting to have delivered further training	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ²³ status (IPLC, other) ; Focus area (livelihoods, legal frameworks, enforcement, demand reduction)	
IWTCF-D04	Number of local or national organisations ²⁴ with enhanced capability and capacity	Number of organisations	Country; Organisation Type (local, national, international) ; Focus area (livelihoods, legal	

²⁰ See footnote 2 for definition

²¹ See footnote 2 for definition

²² See footnote 2 for definition

²³ See footnote 2 for definition

²⁴ Ensure no double counting.

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
			frameworks, enforcement, demand reduction)	
IWTCF-D05	Number of species reference collections made available (known to science, new to science)	Number of collections	Country; Kingdom (Flora/Fauna/Fungi) ²⁵ .	
IWTCF-D06	Analytics for funded project-specific social media posts ²⁶	Number	Country; Analytic type (reach, impressions, engagement, other)	
IWTCF-D07	Number of webinar attendees ²⁷	Number	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ²⁸ status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-D08	Number of decision-makers attending briefing events	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ²⁹ status (IPLC, other)	
IWTCF-D09	Number of Media related activities	Number of activities	Country; Media type (Internet, Print, Radio, Television, Podcast, other)	
IWTCF-D10	Number of records added to accessible databases	Number of records	Country	
IWTCF-D11	Number of threatened species with improving conservation status	Number of taxa	Country; Kingdom (Animal, Plant, Fungi); Scale (Local/ Global)	DI KPI 2
IWTCF-D12	Number of new or improved approaches and tools developed for addressing IWT	Number of tools	Country; Type (new, enhanced)	
IWTCF-D13	Number of new or improved site management plans available and endorsed ³⁰	Number of plans	Country; Type (new, improved)	
IWTCF-D14	Number of new or improved species management plans available and endorsed*	Number of plans	Country; Type (new, improved)	

²⁵ Please note double counting risk around specimen duplications.

²⁶ Potential metrics could include Engagement (including post likes, comments and shares as well as link clicks)/ Impressions

²⁷ Please see our website for more focused guidance on how to communicate the findings of your project

²⁸ See footnote 2 for definition

²⁹ See footnote 2 for definition

³⁰ *Endorsed by a third party to demonstrate an independent assessment has been made, and the plan is considered viable and ready for implementation.

Ref No.	IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator	Units	Compulsory Disaggregation	Global Framework or Fund Impact/ Outcome
IWTCF-D15	Number of new or improved community management plans available and endorsed*	Number of plans	Country; Type (new, improved)	
IWTCF-D16	Number of best practice guides and knowledge products ³¹ (i.e. product identification etc.) ³² published and endorsed ³³	Number of products	Country; Type (Best practice guide, knowledge product); Language	
IWTCF-D17	Number of people with increased participation in local communities or local management organisations	Number of people	Country; Sex (male, female); IPLC ³⁴ Status (IPLC, other); type of participation (Governance, Citizen engagement)	

4. Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I use IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicators?

Our indicators have been designed to help you effectively monitor and report on the progress of your projects. They are aligned with globally recognised standards, and provide guidance on the most appropriate units and disaggregation measures to use. the data generated will feed into the global evidence base on the impact and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction interventions.

I cannot find three Standard Indicators that are relevant or feasible in my project – what should I do?

There are some projects teams who may not be able to find three relevant Standard Indicators to report against. If this is the case, please include a note to alert us in your Application Form, or in your Annual Report or Final Report, in the section where you are required to specify which Standard Indicators have selected/report progress against them.

I was reporting against and/or had adjusted my logframe to incorporate Standard Indicators that have now been removed from the menu – should I continue reporting against them?

If it is clear that these indicators help you to monitor the progress of your project, then we suggest that you continue to report against them as Project Indicators in your Logframe. However, you do not need to include the reference (e.g. IWTCF-A10) within your logframe. You should instead ensure you are reporting to at least three of the latest

³¹ Technical/programmatic guides, for example: working with marginalised communities, gender best practices, etc. Can include written and verbal best practices guides, webinars, briefings.

³² Only final versions are to be included. Manuals produced in more than one language may be counted once per language.

³³ Endorsed by a third party to demonstrate an independent assessment has been made, and the plan is considered viable and ready for implementation.

³⁴ See footnote 2 for definition

Standard Indicators and report on them in the dedicated section of the AR and FR where we ask you to report against them.

Can I edit the IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicators to be more tailored to my project context?

We previously did encourage project teams to do this, but no longer. We now require you to have two separate classes of indicator: Project Indicators and Standard Indicators. While the wording for these two indicator classes may be aligned, Standard Indicators should be worded exactly how they are in this guidance. Project Indicators, however, should be developed and worded specifically for your project.

Can I use my own disaggregation measure(s) if there is not an appropriate one listed in the IWT Challenge Fund Standard Indicator?

Yes. Please specify them in your reporting.

I plan to use the same indicator and same data across two different BCFs projects. How do I report without double counting?

Consider if the change expected is really attributable to the activities of both projects. It may not be the right indicator to use for both, or it might differ in how it is disaggregated between the two projects. If the indicator is applicable to both projects, be clear on the proportion of the result that is attributable to each project in your reporting.

My project was developed before the Standard Indicators were introduced. Do I have to change my indicators?

For those projects that were funded prior to the introduction of Standard Indicators in 2023, there is no need to report against them, unless it is easy to do so anyway. For those projects funded in 2023 or later (i.e. Rounds 9 and 10), we require you to report against a minimum of three Standard Indicators. See the table below for a breakdown of the requirements by Round.

Round	Need to report against Standard Indicators?
8 and earlier	Encouraged to
9 and later	Required to

If you have any questions not covered in this section, please do not hesitate to contact the BCFs team at BCF-IWTcf@niras.com.

Annex A. Glossary of key terms

This glossary explains commonly used Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) terms as applied within the Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs), including the Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund. The definitions are intended to be practical and proportionate, and to support consistent understanding among applicants and grantees.

Activities	The actions carried out by the project to effect the desired change and lead to outputs, outcomes and impact in the results chain.
Adaptive management	The practice of using monitoring, evaluation and learning findings to make informed adjustments to project design or implementation. Adaptive management recognises uncertainty and treats learning as an integral part of effective delivery.
Assumptions	The situations, events, conditions or decisions which are necessary for the success of the project, but are largely outside of the project's control.
Attribution	Assigning a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific activity or intervention.
Baseline	A description or measurement of the situation at the start of a project, against which change can be assessed over time. Baselines may be quantitative or qualitative and should be established early enough to support meaningful monitoring and evaluation.
Biodiversity	"Biological diversity" is the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.
Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs)	Biodiversity Challenge Funds. The collective name for Defra's Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Plus.
Capability & Capacity	Capability refers to the types of ability (skills and knowledge) required for a task; Capacity refers to the amount of ability at a point in time to deliver a task.
Country	Normally refers (unless otherwise stated) to any country on the eligible country list, and not countries such as the UK.
Defra	The Biodiversity Challenge Funds is a programme of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK Government.
Disaggregation	The breakdown of data into sub-groups, for example by sex, age, disability or Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) status. Disaggregation helps projects understand who is benefiting, who may be excluded, and whether results differ across groups.
Evaluation	The periodic assessment and analysis of the relevance, effectiveness and results of a project. Evaluation goes beyond tracking progress to examine what has changed, why changes have occurred, and what can be learned. Evaluation can be internal or external, light-touch or more in depth, and may take place at different stages of a project, for example mid-term or at project completion.
Evidence	Information that supports a claim. Ranges in format and in quality. Includes documented and undocumented experiences, data, studies, policies and practices. Particularly valued when it is reliable and valid.

Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)	Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Gender Equality is about addressing inequalities and transforming the distribution of opportunities, choices and resources available to girls, women and non-binary individuals so that they have equal power to shape their lives and participate in the process thereby increasing equality between people of all genders. Disability Inclusion refers to the process of identifying, removing, and preventing barriers that limit the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society. It aims to enhance their access to opportunities, resources, services, and decision-making, enabling them to influence the social, economic, political, and cultural factors that affect their lives. It ensures that the rights, perspectives, needs, and contributions of persons with disabilities are recognised, respected, and meaningfully reflected in policies, programmes, and practices. Social Inclusion refers to the process of improving the terms of individuals and groups to take part in society, and the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged and historically excluded from decision making and spheres of influence on the basis of their identity to take part in society.
Indicators	An indicator is the quantitative or qualitative measure to track change and the achievement of a project output or outcome.
Inputs	Inputs are what you put in to a project (e.g. time, money, resources) to gain your expected outputs (e.g. increased knowledge, skill, awareness) and achieve your outcome (e.g. behaviour change and improved livelihoods).
Impact	The Impact is your project's long-term objective, and is often a contribution to a wider advance in the field, for example, in conservation and poverty reduction. Note that the Impact will not be achieved solely by the project and will often be achieved outside of the timeframe of the project.
Lead Organisation	The organisation who will administer the grant and coordinate the delivery of the project, accepting the Terms and Conditions of the Grant on behalf of the project.
Learning	The process of reflecting on evidence generated through monitoring and evaluation, and using it to inform decision-making, adaptation and future practice. Learning involves documenting insights, sharing them with relevant audiences, and applying them to improve project design, implementation or policy influence.
Livelihood	A livelihood comprises people, their capabilities and their means of living including food, income and assets. Assets may be tangible (e.g. resources and stores), or intangible (e.g. claims and assets). A livelihood is considered environmentally sustainable when it maintains or enhances the local and global assets on which the livelihood depends, and has net beneficial benefits on other livelihoods. A livelihood is socially sustainable where it can cope and recover from stress and shocks, and provide for future generations ³⁵ .
Logframe	Logical frameworks, commonly known as logframes, are a monitoring tool to measure progress against the Results Chain (Activities -> Outputs -> Outcome -> Impact), comparing planned and actual results using indicators, baselines, and targets.

³⁵ Chambers, R., Conway, G. and Brighton Institute of Development Studies, 1992. Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21st century (Vol. 296). Brighton: Institute of development studies.

Monitoring	The routine and systematic collection of data on project activities, outputs and progress against indicators. Monitoring helps project teams track whether implementation is on course, identify issues early, and provide timely information for project management and reporting. Within BCFs, monitoring is most closely associated with regular reporting against the logframe and Standard Indicators.
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)	A system of processes and tools used by project teams during design and delivery to improve project management, to enable learning, to demonstrate accountability, and to inform future conservation and development strategies.
NIRAS	Biodiversity Challenge Funds Administrator, and first point of contact for projects and applicants.
Outcome	The Outcome is a project's main objective. It is the change you expect to achieve as a result of and within the timeframe of this project. There can only be one Outcome for a project. It should identify what will change, and who will benefit. There should be a clear link between the Outcome and the Impact.
Outputs	Outputs are the specific, tangible results from the completion of more than one activity. Their delivery is totally attributable to your project; they would not happen without your project. Outputs will provide the conditions necessary to achieve your intended Outcome. Most projects will have three or four Outputs in order to achieve the intended Outcome.
Poverty	A pronounced deprivation in a person or group of people's wellbeing. Poverty can arise due to a person's lack of income, land, assets, resources or capabilities required to fulfil their basic needs and achieve their potential in society. Poverty also encompasses deficiencies in healthcare, security, education or the conditions in social relations required to foster cooperation and the collective advancement of sustainable livelihoods.
Results Chain	A tool to show the linear process of what a project is doing and why, through describing or visualising the steps in which inputs and activities lead to the desired change (i.e. through outputs, outcomes and impact).
Scaling	Expanding and sustaining approaches to achieve greater impact.
Stakeholder	A person, organisation or group of people who have an interest or concern in the project and its impact. They are consulted, engaged and/or participate in project activities. They can also be partners, but if not, they would not have a budget management, or a formal governance role, within the project.
Standard Indicator	A Standard Indicator is an indicator that can be used across multiple projects to allow us to aggregate our results across the Biodiversity Challenge Funds. The BCFs Standard Indicators are tightly linked to our fund-level Theories of Change and logframes and will allow us to track the achievements of the funds as a whole.
Theory of Change	A comprehensive tool to describe how a project will lead to a desired change by outlining the problem, the drivers, and the assumptions underlying the project activities and their expected outputs. Its explicit about the causal pathways, links between activities, outputs, outcome, and impact. Includes an analysis of barriers and enablers as well as indicators of success.
Wellbeing	Wellbeing is a concept used to understand and measure the key components necessary for people to live the kind of life that they have reason to value.

	Wellbeing is determined by what people have and what they do, with these being a function of the capabilities afforded to individuals by their environment, their social conditions, as well as differences in relational perspectives ³⁶ . The advancement of people's wellbeing is a means of reducing poverty. Wellbeing can be conceptualised as having several distinct domains and components (i.e. in a Framework ³⁷).
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³⁶ Sen, A. 1989. Development as Capability Expansion, *Journal of Development Planning* 19: 41–58; Nussbaum, M. 2011. *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Harvard University Press).

³⁷ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-being. Chapter 3 in *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: A Framework for Assessment*, Island Press, Washington DC. See also Rekacewicz, P. Bournay, E. 2007. Linkages between ecosystem services and human well-being (Online). Available: <https://www.grida.no/resources/6075>

Annex B. Major Updates to previous versions of the Guidance

In 2023, the Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs³⁸) initiated a pilot phase in the roll-out of Standard Indicators. These were intended to facilitate aggregated reporting across the portfolio of funds. During the first year of the pilot phase, applicants and grantees have provided us with much appreciated feedback on their experience of using the Standard Indicators. We have used this feedback to develop a second version of the Standard Indicator Menu.

Major updates between Version 1.0 and Version 2.0

4. Version 1.0 of the Standard Indicators included 75 Standard Indicators. For Version 2.0, the number of Standard Indicators were reduced substantially, from 75 indicators down to 50.
5. Only the previous 'core' Standard Indicators were retained, with some exceptions, allowing for the 'core' designation to be removed from Version 2.0.
6. All discontinued Standard Indicators have been preserved in the [BCFs Indicator Library](#). This Library includes the current range of Standard Indicators, the indicators previously included in Version 1.0 (with some exceptions), as well as an extended array of indicators that can be adapted to be used by applicants and grantees as specific project indicators.

In September 2024, we published Version 2.1, with the following minor updates:

1. All references to the word *indigenous* have now been replaced with *Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs)*. We define IPLCs in line with IPBES (2020)³⁹: The term "Indigenous Peoples and local communities" and its acronym "IPLC" are widely used by international organizations and conventions to refer to individuals and groups who self-identify as indigenous or as members of distinct local communities. We adopt this terminology with particular emphasis on those who "maintain an inter-generational historical connection to place and nature through livelihoods, cultural identity, languages, worldviews, institutions, and ecological knowledge".
2. Indicator IWTCF-A01 has been moved to Group D, and now has the reference IWTCF-D02. The reference numbers for all indicators in Group A and Group D have subsequently changed.
3. Updated link to BCFs Indicator Library to direct readers to the most recent version of this library.

In May 2026, we published Version 2.2, with the following update:

1. **Sex / Gender:** Previously, our standard reporting required grantees to disaggregate beneficiary data by gender. To improve consistency and align with global reporting standards, we will be changing this requirement to sex (male and female) for all compulsory indicators. This shift focuses on biological sex rather than gender identity, ensuring comparability across projects while respecting diverse contexts. Where feasible and culturally appropriate, grantees may still collect additional information on gender identity or other intersectional factors, but this will be optional. Please ensure that data collection is based on self-reporting, handled sensitively, and explained clearly to participants to maintain privacy and trust.
2. ICF and Defra International KPIs are now included in the menu.

³⁸ The Biodiversity Challenge Funds is the collective name for Defra's Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus.

³⁹ See <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary-tag/indigenous-peoples-and-local-communities>