



Looking to the future

Since 2008, NICFI has served as a catalyst to establish REDD+ as an important component of international climate and sustainable development initiatives. The challenge now is to consolidate and build on the achievements so far. This is crucial to continuous global efforts to protect forest resources, reduce emissions through deforestation and, in doing so, help reduce poverty and promote sustainable development.

The role of evaluation will evolve to continue to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of NICFI objectives.

Strengthening the state of knowledge

Areas where evaluation could enhance understanding and knowledge for the future:

Opportunities to enhance NICFI effectiveness through coordination between donors, institutions and partnerships.	Methods to enhance measurement, reporting and verification and strengthen the link between investment, the private sector and reduction in deforestation.	Strengthening sustainability, such as increasing equitable engagement with local communities, indigenous rights and vulnerable groups.
Improving understanding of the key political, economic and societal factors for successful results based NICFI payments.	Elaboration of overarching theories of change, to refine overall approaches to NICFI programmes.	Consolidating success and expanding the role of NICFI internationally.

Find out more

Follow the links below for more information about evaluation, NICFI, Norwegian development policy and international REDD+ issues.

Evaluation, NICFI & Norwegian policy:

- Information about NICFI: goo.gl/ERxbG7
- Interactive map of NICFI projects: goo.gl/ywoBtl
- Information about evaluation: goo.gl/Dn7HFG
- Phase 1 NICFI evaluation: goo.gl/elqws2
- Information about NORAD: www.norad.no
- Interactive map of all NORAD projects: goo.gl/3kLbJt

International REDD+ issues:

- UN REDD Programme: un-redd.org
- UN REDD Programme evaluation: goo.gl/HymL7y
- Independent information about NICFI funding: goo.gl/dZARsY
- Information on international forestry issues: cifor.org

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Email: EVAL.NORAD-Post@norad.no [@climateforest](https://twitter.com/climateforest) / [@noradno](https://twitter.com/noradno) facebook.com/Norad youtube.com/norad



Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative EVALUATING FOR SUCCESS

Forests and climate change

Forest clearance, overuse and degradation contribute up to 20 per cent of global carbon emissions.

They are also a cause of substantial loss of biodiversity as habitats are destroyed and affect the livelihoods of some of the world's poorest communities. Reducing these emissions could deliver a quarter of the climate change mitigation the world needs to stay within a two degrees warming pathway towards 2030. If they were adequately protected, forests could also absorb 10 per cent of the global carbon emissions projected for the first half of this century.

However, many of the world's forest nations are struggling to maintain these important natural assets, in the face of pressure to develop their economies and raise standards of living. 1.6 billion of the world's poorest people are dependent on forest resources. Yet over the last 10 years, 130 million hectares of the world's forests have been destroyed.

There are many drivers of deforestation, with one common denominator; it has been more profitable to convert a forest to other uses than leave it as a natural ecosystem.

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD and REDD+)

REDD and REDD+ are United Nations (UN) initiatives to incentivise and support developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Established in the 2007 UN Bali Action Plan, the aim is to better protect and manage forests across the developing world.

REDD strategies aim to make forests more valuable by creating a financial value for the carbon stored in trees, payable by developed countries. REDD+ strategies go further and promote the role of conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forests in reducing emissions. Together, these initiatives seek to offer a more attractive and viable development option than destructive uses of forests.

REDD and REDD+ are supported by a number of donor countries – including Norway, the UK, Germany,

the United States and Australia. Donors have so far pledged more than US\$4 billion to support programmes in about 50 partner countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America, at the national, regional and global level.

Norway is the single biggest donor, contributing about 60 per cent of the total pledged, through Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI).

Doing the right thing, in the right way

REDD and REDD+ are more than just climate initiatives. By helping promote environmental and socially sustainable use and conservation of forests, as part of broader sustainable development strategies, REDD and REDD+ seek to help reduce poverty, improve livelihoods and protect human rights.

The value of evaluation

Understanding the effectiveness of REDD+ is essential to ensure investment delivers the maximum sustainable impact. It is also important for building confidence in international climate action. Continuous evaluation of REDD+ initiatives like NICFI in 'real time' ensures programmes are held accountable and provides opportunities to 'learn-by-doing' as they develop. It also enables the sharing of best practice internationally, improving the implementation of REDD+ around the world – vital to ensure the best impact on local communities and the global climate.



Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI)

Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative is the biggest donor supporting REDD+ initiatives.

It is also Norway's biggest development assistance programme, making up three quarters of Norway's 18.5 billion Kroner (NOK) - \$2.1 billion - environmental and sustainable development assistance expenditure since 2009.

Established in 2008, NICFI has pledged up to NOK3 billion – about US\$350 million – per year in development cooperation funding until 2020 to support REDD+. Almost NOK14 billion (US\$1.6 billion) has been invested so far in programmes across Latin America, Asia and Africa, as well as in multi-lateral initiatives and civil society organisations.

NICFI objectives

1. To work towards to the inclusion of emission from deforestation and forest degradation in a new international climate regime.
2. To take early actions to achieve cost-effective and verifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
3. To promote the conservation of natural forests to maintain their capacity to store carbon.

As NICFI is funded through the Norwegian aid budget, a further objective is to contribute to achieving the general objectives of Norwegian development policy.

Programmes under NICFI take a number of forms:

Payments for reduced deforestation.

Support for the establishment of necessary strategies, institutions and reforms.

Assistance in developing national systems for forest and carbon monitoring, biodiversity, conservation, indigenous peoples' rights, good governance and anti-corruption.

NICFI funds are invested in several ways:

Bi-lateral initiatives with partner countries.

Multi-lateral international initiatives.

Civil society climate and forest initiatives.

Theory of change:

NICFI is a complex initiative involving novel approaches and global actors seeking to achieve positive outcomes, against the backdrop of different and difficult national circumstances. There is no one-size-fits-all approach.

To achieve maximum impact, NICFI has pioneered two important and linked principles as the basis of its approach:

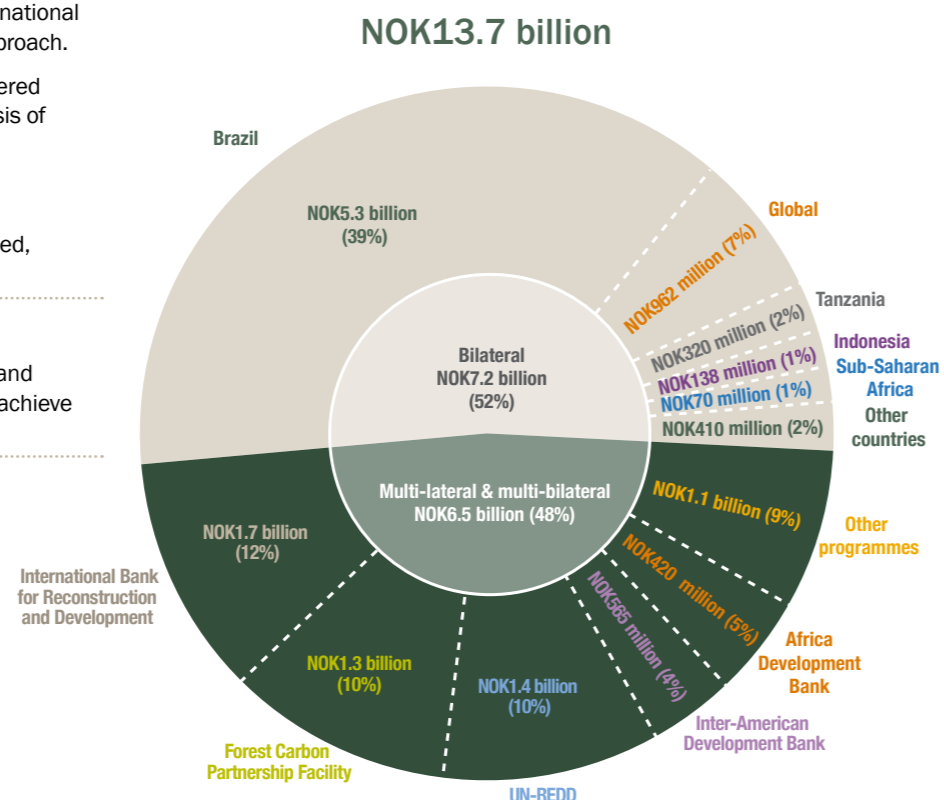
Payment for results

Encouraging partners to focus on clearly defined, measurable, reportable and verifiable goals.

Hands-off approach

Allowing flexibility for different circumstances and empowering partners to find their own way to achieve cost-effective results.

NICFI investment to date:



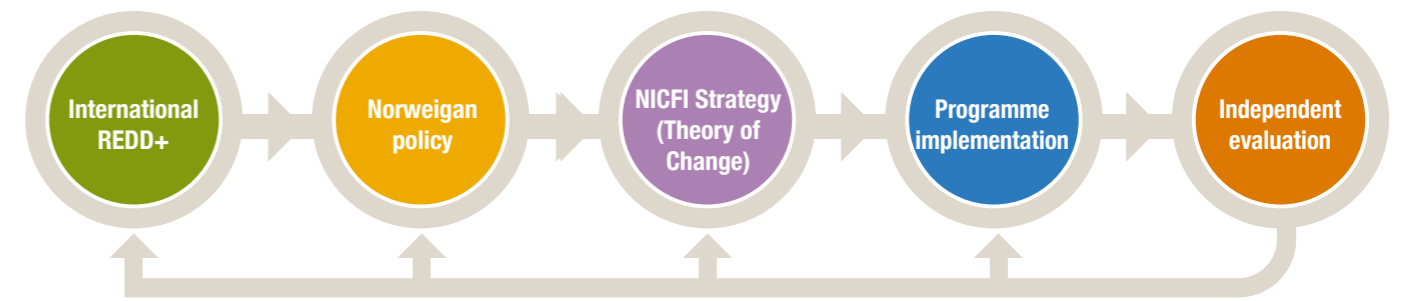
Evaluating for success

Evaluating the effectiveness of NICFI is crucial to ensure investment delivers the maximum impact.

It is important for Norway that NICFI funds are appropriately and verifiably invested. It is important to establish the effectiveness of bilateral and multilateral initiatives and partnerships. As NICFI is the backbone of global REDD+ financing, it is also important for building public confidence in international climate action.

By investigating NICFI's approach and programme delivery, evaluation helps identify improvements in effectiveness and efficiency as programmes progress. In doing so, evaluation can help improve NICFI's theory of change and refine Norwegian development assistance policy. By sharing learning, evaluation can also improve the implementation of REDD+ around the world.

This is an essential feedback loop.



NICFI evaluation to date

The independent Evaluation Department at the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) has commissioned real-time evaluation of NICFI from consultants and experts.

Comprising evaluations and studies on specific topics and themes, the objective is to provide timely information and rapid learning opportunities to improve 'live' projects, as well as informing the strategic direction of Norwegian policy. Evaluations of NICFI apply internationally recognised best-practice to ensure impartial, transparent and evidence-based assessment.

Phase 1 of the real time evaluation was conducted in 2010-2013. In respect to NICFI's core objectives, the evaluation found:

- Through NICFI, Norway is the largest donor to REDD+ and has acted as a driving force behind the successful establishment of a REDD+ framework in international climate change negotiations.
- NICFI has made important contributions to establishing systems that make it possible for countries to measure their emissions and to receive disbursements.
- NICFI has made a solid contribution by including protection in national plans, conducting pilot projects and safeguarding the protection of new natural forests.
- NICFI should draw up an overall strategy that encompasses results reporting. NICFI should also improve its communication of activities and achievements, and assess how collaboration with multilateral organizations within REDD+ can be coordinated and rendered more effective.

Phase 2 of real time evaluation has now been commissioned, starting in 2015.

