WISER Africa

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Guidance

October 2022 (abridged version)

WISER
Weather and Climate Information Services

1. Intended audience and purpose

This abridged Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) guidance is for the project partners of WISER Africa, who will deliver projects in East, West and Southern Africa. Its purpose is to support a coherent approach to monitoring and results reporting, through the generation of robust evidence and learning, of benefit to both individual projects and the WISER programme overall. This abridged guidance is to support projects to better understand the expectations around MEL for WISER. This guidance has been developed by the WISER Programme Team.

2. The WISER Approach to MEL

The WISER programme in Africa is committed to measuring and understanding the impact of each project, and how projects work together to inform achievements for WISER as a programme overall. WISER's approach to MEL focuses on both the **programme** and **project** level, and how they interlink to tell the story we are trying to understand and measure about WISER's influence. An overview of WISER's approach to MEL is presented below.

MEL at programme level

The **WISER Africa programme Theory of Change** (ToC) is a cornerstone document of the programme that provides the starting point from which WISER's approach to MEL has been developed. It articulates the programme's vision and the building blocks required to contribute towards its impact. The WISER Africa ToC aims to see long-term improvements brought about in how weather and climate extremes and events are managed more sustainably to strengthen people's resilience through the use of enhanced weather and climate information services in the decisions different societal actors make, including at policy level.

The WISER programme ToC has gone through several iterations and has been tested with over 30 stakeholders in East, Southern and West Africa between July and September 2022. It also includes feedback from FCDO and the WISER Programme Team at Met Office. The ToC shared in annex is therefore a near final version. Some further (small) changes might be anticipated in the finalisation process between selected WISER project partners, the WISER Programme Team, and FCDO.

The WISER Africa Programme ToC is available in the Annex 1 MEL guidance documents.

The **WISER Africa programme Logframe** also forms a critical part of WISER's approach to MEL and provides the reporting framework for the programme. It compliments and works with the WISER Africa programme ToC. This means that the WISER programme Logframe

has been designed to ensure that WISER tracks progress and collects data essential to proving its ToC. Building on learning from the previous phases of WISER, more qualitative elements such as qualitative data collection methods are included in the programme Logframe. Support to projects with data collection tools is also provided as part of efforts to enhance robust evidence and consistent results reporting across the programme.

The WISER Africa Programme Logframe is available in the Annex 1 MEL guidance documents.

MEL at project level

All project partners are required to familiarise themselves with the WISER Africa programme ToC and Logframe. This is because each project is required to develop their own ToC and Logframe, that links to the WISER Africa ToC and Logframe.

A robust programme ToC and MEL approach that guides and enables critical data collection and reflection is important. Project partners should ensure that their project has both a ToC and a Logframe, and that these align with the WISER ToC and Logframe.

WISER has developed a **ToC 'How to'** to support you develop your ToC for your project, available in the Annex 1 MEL guidance documents.

We are interested to see the degree of alignment between what your project wants to achieve and the impact WISER is aiming to achieve.

The WISER Africa programme ToC provides the building blocks from which project partners can map out their own impact pathway and identify the output(s) and outcome(s) to which your project contributes. This helps in terms of conceptualising and reporting on your project's impact. It also provides an overarching framework to help situate projects within the WISER Africa programme as a whole. As outcomes are supported by outputs, you should ensure the outputs are supporting your project's outcomes, and that of the WISER programme, adequately.

The WISER Programme Team has also developed a **Logframe template** for you to complete to develop your Logframe for your project, available in the Annex 1 MEL guidance documents.

Your Logframe must support your ToC. The template we have provided enables you to link your results at output, outcome and impact level to a corresponding result on the WISER Logframe.

The Logframe template also supports you in developing your indicators for the results that you are aiming to achieve. You can choose indicators developed by WISER, which are used

in the WISER Africa programme Logframe. You can also design your own indicators, as long as they directly link to a WISER result.

These templates will help you to manage the delivery of your project. They also help with ensuring consistent reporting across the whole WISER programme. It will be especially useful when we are doing peer learning and other knowledge exchange events to have all project data in the same format so that you can more easily understand each other's projects. These templates also feed into WISER programme reporting and mean that we will receive your data in a consistent format that can be easily reviewed and reported onward.

Projects will be expected to **collect data using a variety of methods and tools, both quantitative and qualitative** where relevant. This is to ensure that WISER collects data essential to proving its ToC and to track progress against targets set against indicators in the programme Logframe.

To support project results reporting efforts and ensure consistency in results reporting across WISER Africa, we will require projects to collect certain data relevant to the users and communities, outputs and outcomes they are working towards. **Data collection tools** have been developed for projects to use. We anticipate some WISER projects might focus on priority sectors or communities and want to undertake surveys with communities for example, and we have prepared some questions for a survey to support such projects. Data collection tools have been designed to be as user-friendly as possible and provide a lens through which to understand the influence of your project.

Data are collected at least once a year, sometimes more regularly. You need to think about how often you have to collect data from your different stakeholders to determine the performance of your project and respond to your project management needs.

Remember, data also have to be disaggregated for gender, age, disability (where possible), region (e.g. West Africa), and country. You may need to disaggregate your data further for your own needs.

3. What other MEL support will projects receive from the WISER Programme Team?

During implementation, the WISER Programme Team will support projects to collectively reflect on and learn from their project ToC's and Logframes as they relate to the programme level.

There is an expectation that projects will take part in **Strategy Testing** with support from the WISER Programme Team. Strategy Testing is a structured process for project and programme team reflection on the current situation and ToC, to make adjustments as needed in response to reflections on new information, insights and shifts in context.[1] These periodic reflection points (or 'pause points') on your projects and the programme's ToC therefore aim to enhance the evidence base and support adapting project and programme delivery in response to feedback. WISER may use Strategy Testing annually to reflect on the programme's ToC with project partners, guided by your project's progress feeding into the programme level. This may potentially take place at an annual Learning Event that brings partners together.

To support projects with their results reporting, the WISER Programme Team will also facilitate a **Programme Performance Review**, most likely online, to align to WISER's six monthly reporting upwards to FCDO. The focus of these meetings will be on the **programme Logframe**, into which each project's Logframe will feed, to discuss what is and what is not working around data collection and progress towards targets, and to find solutions where needed to any challenges faced. These review meetings will bring projects together, to provide a platform for projects to learn from each other and work together towards the bigger picture of WISER Africa, rather than as discrete projects. The review meetings will also help projects prepare for Strategy Testing (see above) by supporting project teams to approach their MEL work with a more critical mindset.

In addition, there is an expectation that projects will hold their own **Quarterly Review Meetings**, every three months**.** The focus will be on their **project Logframe**, to discuss the performance of the project, the results of which will feed into project reporting to the WISER Programme Team. The WISER Programme Team will be available to provide initial support to help projects set up and run their Quarterly Review Meetings, after which projects will be expected to manage these meetings themselves.

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[1] Ladner, D. 2015. Strategy Testing: An Innovative Approach to Monitoring Highly Flexible Aid Programs. WORKING POLITICALLY IN PRACTICE SERIES – CASE STUDY NO. 3. The Asia Foundation.