



Monitoring social impacts of conservation interventions *without indicators*

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FFI Overview



- Why do we need a different tool?
- What is the tool?
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Case study: Elephant conservation in Cambodia

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Why should FFI monitor livelihoods interventions?



- We claim that our activities “...*take account of human needs.*”
- Significant effort and resources invested
- Improving project management
- Sharing learning throughout FFI...and beyond
- Demonstrating successes and failures





How does FFI monitor its livelihoods interventions?



- Tracking just activities/outputs
- Indicator-based monitoring
 - Household surveys
 - Awareness questionnaires
 - Semi-structured interviews
 - Incident records (human elephant conflict)



Why non-indicator-based monitoring?



Much useful evidence of impact:

- Is not possible to count (*qualitative*)
- Is hard to explain (*intangible*)
- Is unexpected or unplanned
- Needs contextual info to explain the causal link



Why do we need a different tool?



- So much information is as **stories**
(*anecdotal evidence*)

But...

- No systematic capture
- No opportunity to learn from the stories
- No opportunity to demonstrate success



What is MSC? (1)



- “Most Significant Change”
- Developed by development sector
- Participatory M&E
- Systematic collection of stories
- Discussion and analysis of stories



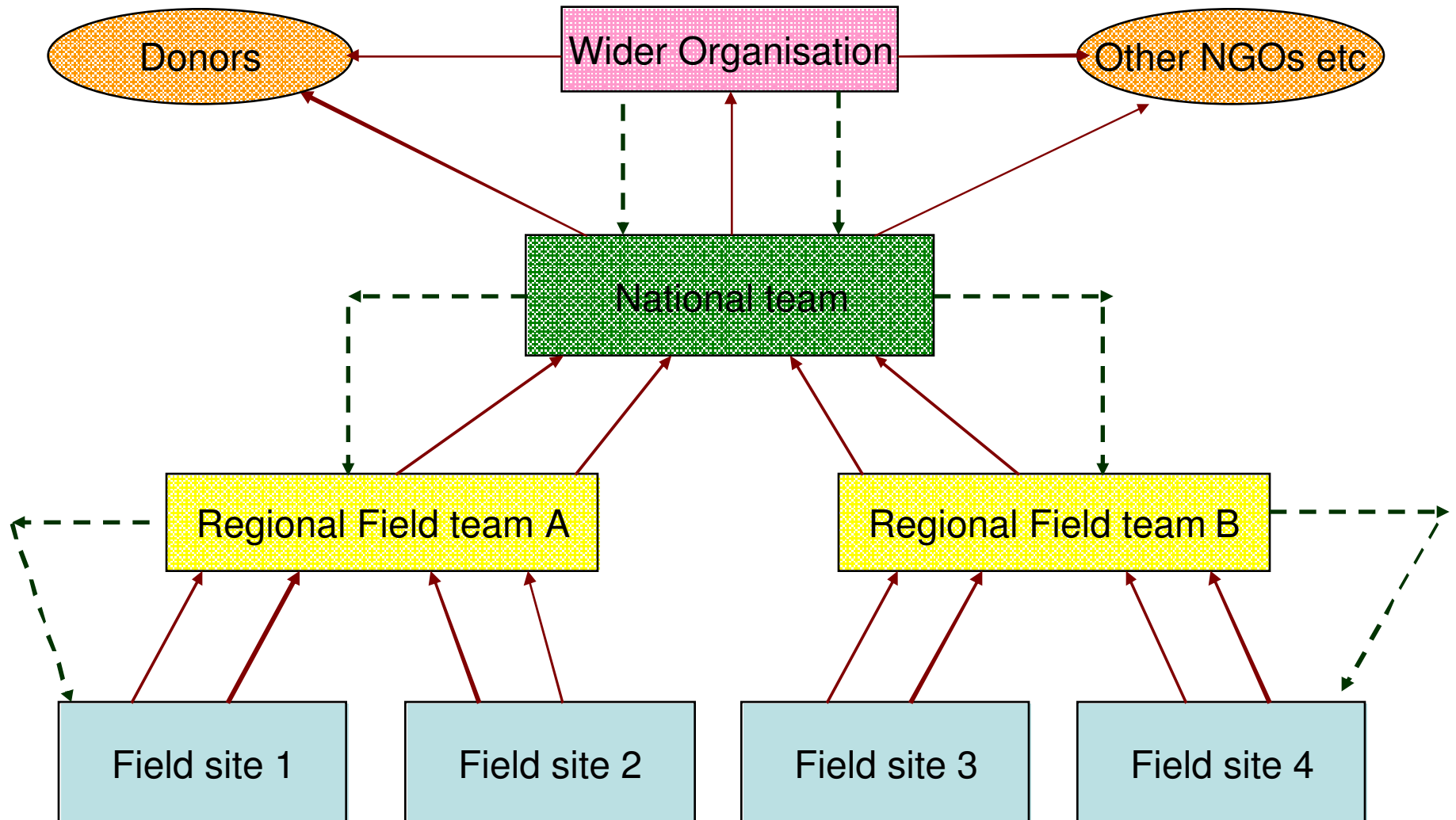
What is MSC? (2)



- Feedback to field
- Uses broad 'domains'; not indicators
- Further analysis possible
- Used in conjunction with other quantitative methods



How is MSC used in practice?



Most Significant Change

Form for collection of stories

Story identification code:

Name of person recording story:

Province:

Date the story was recorded: ... /... /.....

Title of story.....

1) Tell the story. (Write the story, including details about **where**, **when**, **how** and **why** it happened, and **who** was involved.

✓ or 1, 2, 3	<p>Which domain does the story apply to? <i>If the story applies to more than one domain, please indicate which domains it relates to most strongly, using 1, 2, 3 etc.</i></p>
	a) Change in attitudes & awareness of communities to project team & conservation
	b) Change in attitudes & awareness of communities to elephants and their habitat
	c) Change in biodiversity
	d) Change in project methods
	e) Social change (income, social cohesion, capacity, empowerment, etc)
	f) Institutional change
	g) Other sort of change (please specify):

To fill in during the provincial team meeting

2) What can the group learn from this story of change? Are there any recommended actions for the team?

3) Record the reasons for selecting this story

To be filled in during the national CECG meeting

4) What can the group learn from this story of change? Are there any recommended actions for the team?

5) Record the reasons for selecting this story

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What's so good about MSC? (1)



- Compliments other methods
- Intangible, qualitative, unexpected
- Context → causality
- Focuses on impacts, not activities



What's so good about MSC? (2)



- Participatory
- Capacity building
- Opportunities for learning & adaptive management
- Promotes examination of programme goals

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...and the disadvantages?



- Not a strict ‘scientific’ method
 - Stories vs numbers
- Time consuming
 - But it is time well spent in discussion and reflection on project’s progress
- Open to subjectivity
 - But perceptions of staff and stakeholders are valuable for assessing impact and future direction



FFI's experiences of MSC



Cambodian Elephant Conservation Group





CECG – background



- Imperilled elephant population in Cambodia
- FFI in collaboration with government authorities
- Field teams work with farmers
 - Reduced HEC
 - Improved tolerance
 - Reduced threat





CECG and MSC



- Existing database of HEC incidents
 - Quantitative data
- Does not capture important evidence:
 - Lessons about methods: + & -
 - Causality
 - Broader livelihoods impacts



FFI Implementation



- Methodology adapted to local situation
- Training of Team Leaders
- Team Leaders train Field Teams
- Reinforce training
- 1 year review





Challenges



- Natural / Social science barrier
 - Conceptual difficulties
- Identifying *change*
- Identifying *CECG-related* change
- Choosing 'most significant' story
- Data management – next steps

FFI Strengths



- Programme management - feedback
- Capacity building
 - Critical thinking
 - Initiative, independence
 - Team building
- Information sharing
 - Basis for discussion with other teams





Conclusions



- Implementation is resource-heavy
- Language issues
- Management of data is arduous
- Useful data? Or just organisational learning? Effective for capturing certain information
- Benefits are wide-ranging
- Compliments other forms of monitoring

CONSERVING THREATENED SPECIES & ECOSYSTEMS WORLDWIDE

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Thank you





Implementation steps



1. Raising interest
2. Adapting process to local context
3. Collecting Significant Change stories
4. Selecting the most significant stories
5. Feeding back the results of the process
6. Verification
7. Quantification etc
8. Feeding out to other parties (donors etc)
9. Revising the system