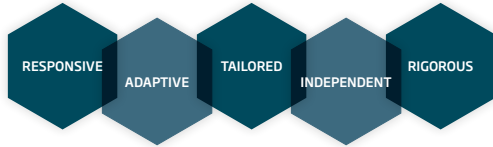


# Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)



To date, the NIRAS MEL team has completed over 1,000 assignments worldwide, providing actionable insights for our clients to support positive impacts for people and the planet. Our breadth of experience includes working at organisational, large-portfolio, programme and project scales. Our in-depth sectoral and thematic expertise encompasses climate change, energy and sustainable land use; agriculture; governance and democracy; civil society support; gender and human rights; peace and security; economic growth (trade and private sector development) and research-for-development. Our client base spans multilateral donor agencies such as the EU and World Bank; bilateral donors including Sida, Finland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NORAD, France’s Agence française de développement, and the UK’s FCDO; philanthropic foundations such as Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Mastercard Foundation; private sector clients; and NGOs.

## KEY STRENGTHS

- + **In-house expertise:** we have over 30 highly experienced in-house MEL specialists located across our offices and hubs in Africa, Europe (including Sweden, Finland, France, UK, Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans), Asia Pacific, and South America.
- + **Established relationships** with a global network of evaluators and technical specialists, allowing us to tailor teams to suit the needs of each MEL assignment.
- + **Excellent mixed-methods capabilities**, working with both quantitative and qualitative data sources and methods. Extensive experience applying formative, developmental and summative evaluation approaches.
- + **Cutting-edge data analytics and digital technology** expertise. We make best use of the latest advancements for collecting, analysing and sharing digital data to support near-real time learning. We are thought leaders in the use of data science approaches for MEL.
- + **Strong track record** of delivering both complex and more modest MEL assignments to a high standard and on deadline, meeting requirements for credibility, independence, and usefulness.
- + **Tried-and-tested expertise and systems** for project managing and delivering operationally complex assignments including multi-country teams, significantly improving value for money and efficiency.

## OUR SERVICES

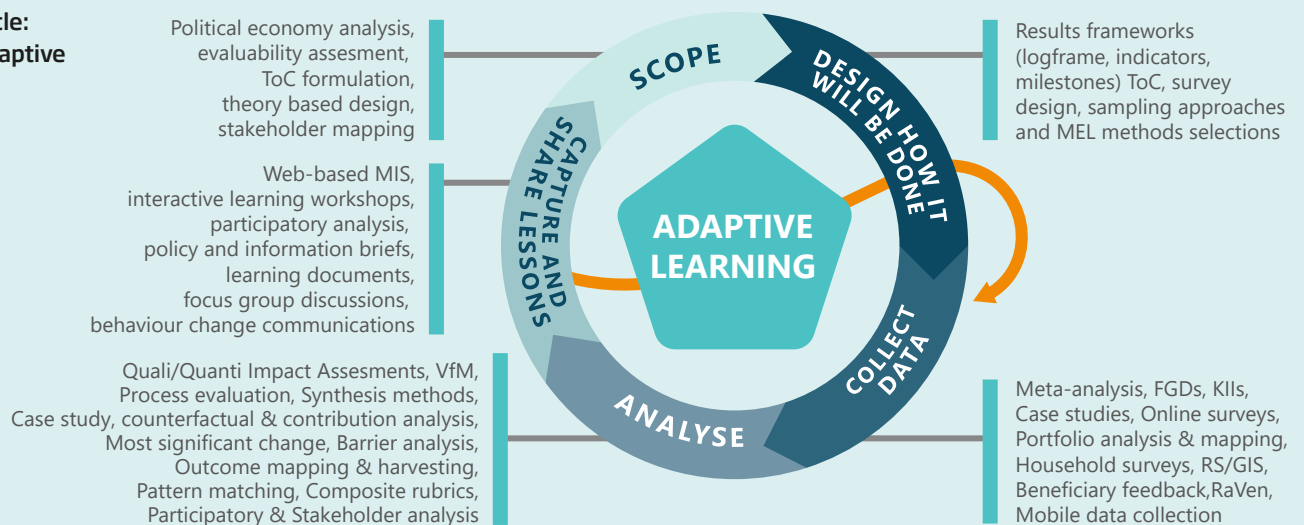
NIRAS’ services are highly tailored to individual requirements and are underpinned by our extensive experience. We prioritise utilisation, methodological rigour, practicality and quality. We pair our deep contextual and thematic expertise with a strong understanding of monitoring and evaluation theories and approaches. Our approach to MEL puts the user’s needs at the heart of our approach, ensuring that evidence is relevant for decision-makers and shared in ways which promote learning.

### Monitoring

We have extensive experience developing robust and timely monitoring systems, supporting near real-time decision-making, adaptation and learning. Our track record includes both de-

livering monitoring services as part of implementation consortiums, as well as providing external, third-party monitoring functions. We help partners strengthen their results-based monitoring systems and to meet donor reporting requirements, by developing robust but easy to use monitoring frameworks (such as logframes, management protocols and learning agendas) and management information systems (such as SMARTME). When appropriate, we combine traditional monitoring approaches with data analytics and digital technology tools to support data collection, analysis and visualisation. We have experience of using innovative digital technology, such as satellite and remote sensing, natural language processing, machine learning, web-crawling, and integrated data visualisation to overcome data collection challenges.

### The MEL cycle: enabling adaptive learning





## Evaluation

Our extensive evaluation track record includes implementation of both impact and process evaluations. We have the capability to draw from a wide range of cutting-edge approaches for assessing the impact of interventions and initiatives including theory-based qualitative, counterfactual quantitative, and mixed methods. We have extensive experience in the management of regional and global evaluation framework contracts, including for Sida since 2011. Our internal quality assurance processes ensure our services effectively meet client needs, and we also provide external evaluation quality assurance services, including for FCDO's Evaluation, Quality Assurance and Learning Service (EQuALS).

## Learning

We work with clients to help them use monitoring and evaluation processes to both improve and scale their impact for short and longer-term learning cycles. We can equally support learning processes at the project/programme level or higher fund/policy levels. We help clients to develop learning agendas, supporting them to identify learning needs, processes (such as rewards and incentives for using evidence), learning products and communications channels. Drawing on our experience of what works in promoting learning, we tailor learning products carefully to different audiences and focus on fostering collaborative learning cultures. We prudently leverage technology such as online learning platforms and online dashboards to increase accessibility and reach.



### Real-time Monitoring and Evaluation Experience in the Sahel Region

NIRAS has a strong track record of providing real-time monitoring and evaluation services in the Sahel region for large development programmes, including peace and stabilisation, infrastructure and education initiatives. We have particular expertise in supporting private clients and regional actors to integrate conflict sensitivity into development programming, strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning activities. Our comprehensive offer includes context analysis, the development of indicators, the design of knowledge management platforms, qualitative and quantitative data collection including population-based perception surveys, data analysis, reporting and facilitation of learning/strategic planning workshops. Our key strength lies in our network of research partners throughout the Sahel region, giving us intimate knowledge of the context, from local communities to national and regional actors.

### Strengthening whole-of-government efforts to contribute to conflict, stability and security outcomes

The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) is a UK cross-Government fund focusing on tackling national security threats to the UK. NIRAS-LTS is a core partner in the consortium contracted, since 2019, to support the CSSF to develop a MEL system at the overall Fund-level. Our work helps the CSSF to develop stronger MEL standards and practice, thereby enabling the Fund to better demonstrate its contributions towards government priorities and to use reliable evidence for decisions. We have worked with the FCDO to build a strategic understanding of the shape and intent of the Fund, through the creation of a Fund-wide MEL system focused on capturing evidence and learning against fund-level outcomes. We also provide thought leadership on key CSSF principles including agility, catalytic effect and high-risk programming and help the Fund to operationalise these.





**Measuring attribution and transformation in the context of UK climate finance**

Together with its partner Climate Policy Institute, NIRAS designed and implemented a theory-based M&E programme to assess the long-term impacts of investments under the 11 year DFID/DECC-funded M&E programme for the Climate Private Public Partnership (CP3) (2015-2026). We piloted an innovative approach to measuring attribution and transformation of climate finance, specifically focusing on the evidence of contribution and additionality of the UK investment in two commercially-run private equity funds. The study, which has informed the design of future climate investment projects, involved a range of products including investment-level deep dives, case studies, thematic portfolio-level evaluative synthesis reports, and a suite of communications and learning materials.

**A participatory, iterative and adaptive developmental evaluation of the Ford Foundation's BUILD model**

The Building Institutions and Networks (BUILD) initiative was a five-year, US\$1 billion investment in the long-term capacity and sustainability of 350 civil society organisations working in the field of social justice. NIRAS conducted a developmental evaluation of the BUILD model, covering grantees in the US and Global South. With a participatory, iterative and adaptive design, the evaluation was able to flexibly respond to the changing contextual environment and the emerging findings. Employing a mixed-method approach, the evaluation placed a strong emphasis on strategic communication to build understanding, evidence, and influence. The evaluation met both accountability and learning objectives, providing real-time feedback programme adjustments, surfacing emerging issues as well as longitudinal impacts, and informed the next phase of BUILD.



**Enabling adaptive management through knowledge management and learning**

NIRAS was Evaluation Manager for the DFID Investments in Forests and 'Sustainable Land Use for Partnerships for Forests (P4F) programme between 2017-2021. We were responsible for developing and implementing an evaluation and learning

strategy. This was focused on the outcome level of the programme and on engendering learning, adaptive management and knowledge management. Our case-based approach to evaluate the theory of change included rubrics and scorecards to provide a consistent means of assessing case study findings and to allow for cross-case comparability.



SAMPLE REFERENCES	LOCATION	CLIENT	YEARS	VALUE (€)
Evaluation of the Building Institutions and Networks (BUILD) Initiative	Global	Ford Foundation (US)	2018-2021	3 021 600
Evaluation of Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development	Sweden	Sida (Sweden)	2018-2019	103 800
Evaluation of the Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2019	Eastern Europe, Western Balkans and Turkey	Sida (Sweden)	2019-2020	146 719
Evaluation of IDRC's Think Tank Initiative II	Global	IDRC (Canada)	2015-2019	731 542
Framework Contract for Technical Advisory Services in Results-Based Management and Adaptive Management	Global	Sida (Sweden)	2019-2022	734 188
Sécurité et Développement au Nord du Mali (SDNM): Evaluation externe de la phase 2 et étude de faisabilité de la phase 3	Mali	AFD (France)	2020-2021	78 950
Evaluation of the United Nations University (UNU) Programmes in Iceland	Iceland	MFA (Iceland)	2016-2017	331 120
Evaluation Management Service Framework Contract Phase II	Finland	MFA (Finland)	2020-2023	1500 000
Evaluation of the Prosperity Fund and Programmes	Global	FCDO (UK)	2017-2021	7 786 500
Global Evaluation of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund	Global	FCDO (UK)	2019-2023	5 561 800
Knowledge, Policy and Implementation Support Manager for the Building Resilience and adapting to climate change in Malawi	Malawi	FCDO (UK)	2020-2023	6 444 700
Climate Public Private Partnership Monitoring and Evaluation, Phase II	Global	FCDO (UK)	2020-2026	1 863 000
Evaluation Manager for Partnerships for Forests (P4F)	Global	FCDO (UK)	2017-2021	1 527 420
Impact Evaluation of the Climate Smart Agriculture Zambia (CSAZ) Programme	Zambia	FCDO (UK)	2017-2022	779 500
Monitoring and Evaluation Support for a National Project for Kenya: 'Enhancing access to weather and climate information for Kenya's coastal region'	Kenya	UK Met Office	2018-2019	111 131
Mid-term Evaluation of Resources of Open Minds (ROOM) Programme - Freedom of Expression in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	Egypt, Lebanon, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda	Hivos	2021	44 970
Evaluation of Sida's Resource Base Programmes	Sweden/Global	Sida (Sweden)	2019-2020	≈ 150 000
Evaluation of Sida's support towards food security as part of a wider food system	Global	Sida (Sweden)	2021-2022	≈ 200 000
Evaluation of country programme support to UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women	Global	Sida (Sweden)	2022-ongoing	≈ 200 000
Evaluation of Sida's support to the African Organisation of English-Speaking Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI-E)	Regional Sub-Saharan Africa	Sida / Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia	2021-2022	≈ 115 000
Impact Evaluation of the Community-Based Psychosocial Support sub-program	Global	Church of Sweden	2021-2022	≈ 100 000



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