

1.8 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is an integral part of Alert's learning and accountability process; it is not a compliance exercise to facilitate reporting. Rather, it is the key means through which programme management information is obtained and understood, strong results delivered, and value for money achieved. Our approach is based on four questions that empower managers to understand and adapt to the challenges in supporting Georgian-Abkhaz dialogue:

- *Effort*. What has been done (i.e. activities) and how much has this cost in relation to each of the outputs?
- *Outreach*. What outputs have been made available, to which stakeholders, and for each output, to what degree of quality, and at what cost?
- *How well*. To what degree of satisfaction are we being judged by stakeholders (i.e. their assessment of the relevance and quality of the process)?
- *Change*. To what effect (i.e. how, how well and to what extent have the target groups responded? Who is beginning to do what differently?)?

These questions will frame our monitoring system for this project, in order to ensure that it builds confidence in a way that responds to needs, the context, and our Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders. Monitoring is crucial to ensuring political and conflict sensitivity of the interventions, as well as learning, innovation and overall project management. Aligning monitoring with learning will be a priority, as loops of learning will allow us to identify opportunities and learn from potential failures. By loops of learning, we mean that the lessons we learn during our activities will feed into our planning on a formative, iterative basis and ensure flexibility and adaptability to achieve the most effective results. These feedback loops will weave between stakeholders, the project team, and the FCO, contributing to a wider culture of accountability. Relationship building will underpin this process to make stakeholders feel valued, consulted and engaged in the process. Findings will be triangulated by interviews, focus groups, and research to build a more complete picture of impact and compared across stakeholder groups and other projects in country.

As activities begin, performance measurement frameworks will be designed for each output to provide a strong evidence base for reporting results. Due to the qualitative, long-term nature of the intervention, these frameworks will take shape gradually to best identify how change can be identified. We envisage developing simple indicators to be able to adapt to potential changes in the political context of Georgian-Abkhaz relations. Collection, analysis and presentation will be objective and transparent: monitoring responsibilities will be undertaken by all members of the team, regularly supported by the Senior Project Design and Assessment Officer (SPDAO) to offer independent, objective advice and recommendations to the Project Officers in particular. We will minimise transaction costs by empowering partners to generate insights and evidence. These sources will be complemented by regular feedback mechanisms (see above), including using periodic dialogue meetings with stakeholders to jointly assess and review strategies.

Results and lessons learned will be shared with FCO and any corrective action required immediately taken. This is expected to enhance the impact of the programme. We will closely integrate planning, implementation, monitoring and lesson learning to support our adaptive approach throughout the lifetime of the project, developing a results framework during inception and adjusting it throughout the programme in a participatory manner involving key stakeholders, including FCO. The framework will be developed and adapted alongside the programme theory of change, responding to information gathered and processed to form a baseline, overall programme strategy and analytical findings. This strategy will enable lessons to be quickly assimilated as a basis for forward programming and decision making, involving key stakeholders.

The SPDAO will lead on internal evaluation and lesson learning, supported by Alert's internal monitoring resources. Evaluation processes will include exploring performance to facilitate learning, lesson sharing and adaptation, as indicated above. FCO will receive quarterly reports on project progress; in addition to monthly meetings there will be a quarterly meeting with core partner groups to review progress. This will be an important mechanism for flexible and adaptive programming, as well as decision making around stopping, adapting or scaling up interventions. We have budgeted for two independent evaluations at the mid- and end-point of the project to ensure that the intervention remains relevant to the FCO's terms of reference and that programming can be adapted as necessary.

Alert has used knowledge management (KM) products on a variety of themes to promote dialogue and build peace in Georgia and Abkhazia, providing access to high-quality knowledge resources and technical expertise on development issues to key stakeholders in decision-making processes in both contexts, as well as the international community. We follow a strict knowledge management quality procedure for both the creation and management of knowledge, assessing (i) the quality of inputs; (ii) quality of implementation; (iii) quality of outputs; (iv) performance feedback. Evidence disseminated through our KM strategy will be evaluated and factored into decision making and provide evidence for capturing programme success.

How we envisage success

VISION: Georgian and Abkhaz officials and policymakers are enabled to constructively engage with each other and with a broader range of stakeholders within each side and across lines of divisions, and have the confidence and motivation to act on shared economic and human security interests. This will broaden avenues for peace at the political level and enable authorities and civil society on both sides and the international community to ground peacebuilding in the societies, positively influencing the conflict dynamic through concrete changes in policy and practice.	
Outputs	Statements of success/indicators
Economic diplomacy track	
Economic diplomacy track launched as a sustained channel for cross-conflict discussion and learning	At least 5-7 more/additional Georgian and Abkhaz key stakeholders (MPs, MFA etc.) express interest in engaging in economic diplomacy by December 2016
Group of Georgian and Abkhaz experts formed with clear insight into the regulation of trade across contested borders	At least 10 key stakeholders' feedback indicates our seminars and study trips have improved their level of analysis of regulation of trade across contested borders by April 2017
Economic connectivity analysis produced	At least 5-10 key Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders engage in the research on economic connectivity by Jan 2017 as the result of consultative/advocacy meetings, with 2 policy briefs produced by April 2017
Support from international mediators, donors and bodies involved in the resolution of the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict and from the Georgian and Abkhaz political leadership consolidated	At least 10 representatives of the new Georgian government are aware of our work and are supportive of the process by September 2017; at least 10 more Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders are engaged in the process by March 2018; 2 policy briefs produced by March 2018; economic and human security track 1.5 dialogue recognised by all sides as beneficial and factored in policy making
New economic development scenarios and frameworks for cooperation in the Georgian-Abkhaz context created	At least 5 Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders actively engage in trans-Ingur/i trade regulation discussions by September 2018; at least 2-3 economic development scenarios selected to begin developing the concept/framework by 31 March 2019; 3 policy briefs produced by April 2019
Concept/framework for Georgian-Abkhaz trans-Ingur/i economic relations created	Draft of the concept/framework for trans-Ingur/i relations developed and discussed with at least 10 Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders by September 2019; international stakeholders provide feedback on the draft by October 2019; policy recommendation and full concept/draft produced and discussed by April 2020
Human security track	
Parallel working groups created through dialogue	Dialogue leads to at least 3 themes being chosen for research (years 1,2,3); Up to 3 working groups created to work on policy advocacy (years 2,3,4); 3 sets of policy recommendations agreed (and how they can be best applied) (years 2,3,4)
Joint research summaries, policy briefs and series of articles/interviews published and disseminated widely	3 research publications will be produced and disseminated by: (i) July 2017, (ii) June 2018, (iii) November 2019; 3 policy briefs will be produced and disseminated by: (i) October 2017, (ii) January 2019, (iii) November 2019; additional papers and articles will be published by the stakeholder research groups, although it is not possible to predict how many at this time
More objective, rational discourse amplified by public discussions in Georgia and Abkhazia at different levels	Positive shift (exact indicators to be determined as project progresses) in narratives in Georgian/Abkhaz media, politicians' rhetoric, dialogue participant feedback, and social media on both sides; references to research publications (positive/negative)
Concrete small-scale improvements in attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours of citizens towards the other side (CBMs)	Each grant provided will have specific indicators and cannot be elucidated at this time; however, the results of each will be orientated towards societal change and positive resonance on both sides. Estimated up to 10 grants across years 2,3,4
Policy recommendations in specific thematic areas pushed forward in Georgia and Abkhazia	Policy recommendations finalised, discussed with at least 30 Georgian and Abkhaz stakeholders by October 2019; international stakeholders provide feedback on drafts by December 2019

Tools to measure indicators will include, e.g. publications, policy briefs, case studies, stakeholder interviews and feedback, direct & participant observation, focus group discussions, questionnaires, gender-aggregated attendance sheets, change and success stories, media, social media and big data analysis, data/document review.