Learning from SUSTAIN

Questions to frame programmatic learning

December 18, 2015 (Update December 2016)

ecoagriculturepartners

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Introduction

The SUSTAIN program is designing an integrated learning process to advance the platform's aim to link implementation on the ground to national policies and action. This process will help to feed local best practice into national decision-making processes in ways that demonstrate an inclusive green growth (IGG) approach to the development of agricultural corridors in Africa and beyond. SUSTAIN has identified recurring "landscape-based" dialogues as a key implementation tool in facilitating this learning process. By convening on-going stakeholder platforms within landscapes, the dialogues are expected to help build trust, understanding and actionable solutions among key leaders and organizations locally, nationally and internationally. The initiation of the dialogue process is expected to be organized around key programmatic learning questions that will be linked to SUSTAIN's overall Knowledge-to-Impact framework. In advance of these dialogues, SUSTAIN commissioned the preparation of this paper to identify candidate programmatic learning questions around which the dialogues might be organized.

This document outlines nine thematic questions which are meant to guide the dialogue process and add value to the platform's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system as part of the overall Knowledge-to-Impact framework. The candidate themes were initially selected though an iterative process that included a review by the EcoAgriculture Partners team of SUSTAIN's Knowledge-to-Impact framework and related background documents, consultations with IUCN and partners in the field, and insight drawn from our previous experiences working in the SAGCOT. Then, after discussions held during the SUSTAIN Partners M&L Workshop in Gland, Switzerland November 16th through 18th 2015, partners decided on nine thematic questions to carry forward.

For each theme we distinguish three types of learning questions: 1) Monitoring the status of project interventions against planned objectives, outputs and outcomes to see what was achieved; 2) Process and project management, including learning about what program strategies and outputs are leading to the desired outcomes, which ones are not, and why, to inform adaptive project management options; and 3) Testing assumptions/understanding impacts, including learning about which assumptions proved correct or incorrect and why, as well as technical learning and learning about unforeseen effects and outcomes. Specific questions within each of these themes are meant to be demonstrative and may need to be tailored to the specific local context.

Theme 1: What does inclusive green growth look like to different stakeholders?

Justification and situation

While the M&E Framework outlines the broad vision for the SUSTAIN program as creating sustainable and inclusive green economy in Africa's growth corridors, understanding what this means in practice will require significant discussion and learning. Because the terms "inclusive" and "green" may have different meaning for business groups, government ministries and agencies, NGOs and CSOs including women's organizations and networks, and producer organizations, among others, dialogue around these terms and what the implementation of an inclusive, green growth (IGG) vision looks like in practice will help to promote understanding, commitment and action, as well as help to refine and enrich SUSTAIN's IGG framework. By emphasizing this theme in its programmatic learning, the SUSTAIN program can help to advance the dialogue at the landscape, national and international levels.

There are several important considerations when posing questions around this theme. First, it is important to look at how different groups are interpreting the meaning of "inclusive." The SUSTAIN program highlights the importance of forming close partnerships among the public and private sectors, as well as rural communities for finding and implementing a climate-resilient, green economy in Africa. However, the specifics of implementing this "socially inclusive" approach need to be further discussed and elaborated. Does a focus on inclusion mean SUSTAIN's efforts target disadvantaged/ disenfranchised groups, such as women, youth and the landless? Or, does inclusion mean that businesses and private finance should be included as a key component of the solution? Are both meanings valid for SUSTAIN? Furthermore, in which specific processes should these groups be included? Is it necessary for all groups to be involved in decision-making for a green growth approach to be considered inclusive? Or, is it enough that all targeted groups benefit in some way from the actions? Finally, what mechanisms will be used to ensure these inclusive processes are carried out?

A similar discussion needs to take place around the meaning of "green." Operationalizing a sustainable growth strategy will likely require solutions that promote integrated water, land and ecosystems management, and the SUSTAIN program emphasizes the importance of ensuring a sustainable and climate-resilient supply of water for livelihoods, production, health and ecosystems, as well as promoting climate change adaptation, mitigation and food security through improved land resource management. However, the specifics of implementing this vision of environmentally-responsible growth can mean different things to different stakeholders. For example, one group may prioritize investments in water conservation over food security. Which dimensions of sustainability will be prioritized and how will trade-offs between these objectives be mitigated? Similarly, actions that promote environmental benefits at the farm scale in the short-term can sometimes lead to environmental problems at larger scale in the long-term. For that reason, discussions around the meaning of "green growth" should also seek to develop a consensus about the spatial and temporal scales on which environmental outcomes will be planned, monitored and evaluated.

To address these issues, we propose that a key learning theme include questions related to understanding what an inclusive green growth vision would look like in practice, with a focus on

understanding the interpretation of the terms "inclusive" and "green" by all relevant stakeholders. Examples of key sets of learning questions, categorized by the type of learning, which may help to query this theme, are outlined below.

There are several outcome indicators in the current MEL system that could help to answer questions about the "inclusivity" of green growth, including: 1.1, 3.1, 3.3, and 4.3. Similarly, outcome indicators that could help to answer questions about the "green" dimension of SUSTAIN's strategy include: 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, and 2.2. However, none of the indicators sufficiently tracks how different stakeholders interpret the meaning of inclusive, green growth, nor the degree to which their various interpretations converge to form a coherent vision for the cluster or corridor. To address these issues additional tracking and learning mechanisms are likely to be needed.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
  - Are disenfranchised populations adequately prepared to participate effectively in decision-making forums and processes– information needs to be disagreed by sex and age?
  - Are disenfranchised populations adequately represented in decision-making forums and processes – information needs to be disagreed by sex and age?
  - Are businesses (small, medium and large) adequately engaged in decision-making forums and processes?
  - Are the roles that businesses are playing suitable to their capacities and potential contributions?
  - Are land, water and ecosystems being managed in ways that lead toward green growth outcomes (i.e. are these ecosystem services being adequately valued and managed accordingly)?
- Process/project management
  - How can SUSTAIN help disenfranchised populations become better prepared to meaningfully participate in decision-making forums and processes?
  - How are ecosystem services being valued and by whom- – information needs to be disaggregated by sex and age ? How is SUSTAIN influencing this process to better achieve green growth outcomes?
  - How can SUSTAIN facilitate dialogue around and consensus about different stakeholders' visions of inclusive green growth?
- Testing assumption/understanding impacts
  - Does including diverse stakeholder groups result in better green growth outcomes?
  - Does the promotion of gender-responsive actions result in better green growth outcomes?
  - Does implementing an inclusive green growth strategy in the Corridors improve water management? If so, how?
  - How does promoting an inclusive green growth strategy impact land management?

       ○ Are there any unintended consequences of promoting business engagement/investment in a green growth strategy?

       ⭘ What is the impact of promoting an inclusive green growth strategy on smallholder farmer's (women and men) resilience?

Theme 2: What is the business case for investment in inclusive and sustainable growth?

Justification and situation

Effectively engaging businesses as a leading partner in the development of socially-inclusive and environmentally-responsible growth, is an important pillar of SUSTAIN's approach. Accordingly, it is important to understand how the private sector can be most effectively engaged in green growth partnerships and the impacts of that engagement. Programmatic learning in this theme will help to develop, test, and document the business case for investing in inclusive and sustainable growth, which will allow it to be successfully scaled up in other areas.

Several important factors should be considered when addressing this question. First, SUSTAIN posits that businesses can operate in ways that benefit biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as local livelihoods and that business participation is essential to adopting an IGG strategy. Documenting the role the private sector plays, the benefits and costs of its participation, and what incentivizes the private sector to participate will be essential for testing this assumption in practice.

SUSTAIN also posits that for the private sector to have a positive impact on promoting IGG, nature-based businesses and supply chains that deliver ecosystem services will need to be scaled up by facilitating partnerships between businesses and community-based organizations. Much learning is needed around these issues. In addition to documenting the impacts of nature-based businesses and supply chains on local livelihoods and well-being (including any unintended impacts), the mechanisms by which partnerships between the private sector and communities are formed, negotiated, and regulated needs to be studied. It will also be important to understand how individual business partnerships can be coordinated to accomplish landscape level goals. Learning about how businesses can most effectively participate in an IGG strategy will be essential to making the case for increased private sector involvement.

Finally, at a policy level (see Theme 5: What national and sub-national policies are needed to enable inclusive green growth?) understanding what types of incentive mechanisms are effective for stimulating the participation of the inclusive-green-growth-friendly private sector actors, as well as what types of regulations or screens are required to effectively limit private sector activities that are not aligned with the inclusive green growth strategies will be essential. Land tenure policies, for example, will be very important in this regard.

To address these issues, we propose that a key learning theme include questions related to understanding the business case for investment in sustainable and inclusive green growth, with a focus on understanding how business engagement can best be catalyzed and the impacts of this engagement.

Examples of key sets of learning questions, categorized by the type of learning, which may help to query this theme, are outlined below.

Several of the outcome indicators outlined in the current MEL strategy can help to guide learning in this theme.   These include: 1.1 (especially the target on instruments enabling new nature-based business models); 1.2 (especially the target on investor's investment plans incorporating reducing solutions); 2.1 (especially the target on developing and endorsing collaborative management agreements between public, private sector and local communities and the target on amending/developing investment plans that better integrated landscape management and restoration, climate resilience and ecosystem services); 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3.

Key sets of learning questions:
- Monitoring the status
    - Are value chains that link agricultural and nature-base production to markets being developed in the landscapes? What do they look like?
    - Are some of those value chains gender-responsive? Is their impact different from other initiatives?
    - Are incentives for the involvement of socially inclusive businesses being created? What do they look like?
    - Is public, private and social investment in water, land and ecosystem management being leveraged? From what sources?
- Process/project management
    - How can business partnerships with public and civic entities that support sustainable practices best be facilitated, brokered, cemented, strengthened, and sustained?
    - What specific processes, mechanisms, and tools can help to bring about effective partnership agreements? Is the Green Business Innovation Hub working?
    - How can high-level business commitments be effectively translated into local-level partnerships?
    - How can the longevity of partnerships be ensured?
    - How can we ensure business partnerships support the broader strategy for the development of the pilot Cluster? In the Corridors?
    - What kinds of agreements need to be in place? How are they enforced?
    - What specific entitles/organizations should businesses/companies partner with in the pilot Clusters to most effectively realize the benefits of green growth?
- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
    - Does developing partnerships between businesses and communities (through nature-based enterprises and green value chains) enhance the local livelihoods and well-being of women and men? If so, how?
    - What are the most effective incentives for businesses/investors to participate in IGG?
    - What are the most effective incentives for businesses/investors to support gender-responsive actions in IGG?

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- o How can public investments and policies be designed to mobilize private sector investment and finance in green growth partnerships?
- o How can the design of improved investment screening criteria lead to those criteria actually being adopted and used in investment decision-making?
- ○ What are the most strategic ways private sector finance can be used to help scale or increase the effectiveness of green growth partnerships?

Theme 3: How can the evidence base for integrated approaches best be developed and communicated?

Justification and situation

While integrated approaches to conservation and sustainable development are becoming widely employed throughout the world, to date little empirical evidence is available to demonstrate that these approaches are effectively improving outcomes. This dearth of evidence does not mean that integrated landscape approaches are not working, rather it points to the methodological, operational and financial challenges involved in conducting the type of analyses that can prove an integrated approach works better than conventional approaches to realizing desired livelihood, human rights, conservation, production and institutional outcomes.

In this context, SUSTAIN's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system stands to play a valuable role in expanding the evidence base for an IGG approach to corridor development while also providing a robust knowledge resource and learning platform for steering the SUSTAIN initiative. Framing the MEL system around a specified theory of change that is meaningful to stakeholders in the system, while ensuring that a selection of performance criteria, indicators and means of measurement are context-specific (while others are universal) and that learning questions used to query the system are relevant at the respective levels of intervention (landscape, cluster, corridor, program-wide), should provide a sound base of evidence for what works, what does not work as well, and why.

On the other hand the MEL system as designed may be challenging to implement due to its complexity (large number of candidate indicators for example), the long time frame required before convincing evidence about outcomes can be generated, and therefore its cost. To help overcome these challenges in using the MEL system to generate convincing evidence about integrated approaches, SUSTAIN may want to prioritize measuring the *process* of implementing the approach and also the *enabling conditions* that have to be met in order to achieve outcomes.

The following components of the implementation process may be especially valuable to measure and assess:
- Have clear goals been negotiated and communicated?
- Is there a clear theory of change? Does it include gender considerations?
- Is there a rigorous process of periodic review and reflection for internal learning and adaptive management as change proceeds?
- Is there a rigorous and equitable process for continuing stakeholder engagement-taking into account sex and age?

The following attributes might be considered in measuring enabling conditions that need to be met to achieve outcomes:
- Property rights and resource access (disaggregated by sex);
- Capacity (disaggregated by sex); ;
- Connection to policy processes and key actors; and
- Transparency.

Based on the foregoing considerations for how the evidence base for integrated approaches can best be developed and communicated in the context of SUSTAIN, learning questions might relate to the choice of metrics for the monitoring, evaluation and learning system (what is being measured), how measurement and monitoring is proceeding, and how well the evidence base is being developed and communicated from the MEL system. Key sets of learning questions around these topics, categorized by type of learning, are outlined below.

Furthermore, the indicators associated with strategic objective 4, especially indicator 4.1 in the current MEL framework, can help to inform how monitoring data is being developed and then used to influence policy and communicate progress with other stakeholders.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
    - How is success in moving from the current status to the desired change in status defined by stakeholders (disaggregated by sex, as pertinent)?
    - How are outcomes (e.g. water quantity and quality, climate change vulnerability, mitigation, food security, sustainable/secure livelihoods) currently being monitored? (disaggregated by sex?)
    - What evidence will convince respective stakeholders that change is moving in the right direction?
    - What factors in addition to stakeholder preference are important to the selection of indicators and means of measure?
    - What suite of process and outcome metrics are selected for developing the evidence base for integrated IGG approaches?
- Process/project management
    - Who (what actors, disaggregated by sex,) are involved in measuring indicators and how well is the measurement process going?
    - What are the problems, how are they being remediated, and what are implications for data quality and relevance?
    - What indicators seem most reliable and useful?   Are there some that seem to have little meaning and value? (disaggregated by sex and age)
    - How is the indicator set changing over time? What are implications of these changes for developing a robust evidence base for the validity of the approach?
- Testing assumption/understanding impacts
    - What is the MEL system teaching us about the requirements for the effective implementation of IGG approaches?
    - What is the MEL system teaching us about the value of conducting gender-responsive actions?
    - What is the evidence for success?
    - What is the evidence for failure?
    - What process management factors are essential to success?
    - What enabling conditions are essential to success?

      o   How do people and institutions move from silo mode to integrated mode?

      o   What are the triggers and incentives for moving in a positive direction?

      O   What are challenges and liabilities in transitioning from silo to integrated approach?

Theme 4: What institutional foundations are needed for inclusive green growth?

Justification and situation

Understanding the institutional foundations for stimulating and scaling green growth that is socially inclusive, gender responsive, and builds resilience to climate change is essential to the SUSTAIN program. Local institutions will be largely responsible for stimulating economic development and livelihood security while also controlling forest conversion, water abstraction and pollution. Furthermore, effectively engaging with existing governance structures both within and beyond the Cluster level, will be important to effectively scale up the impacts of these partnerships and ensure their sustainability in the long-term. Examples of effective local institutions and multi-level governance systems, and the strategies used to strengthen and support them, need to be documented, analyzed and shared to scale up the impact of SUSTAIN's efforts.

For inclusive green growth to be effectively developed and maintained, the SUSTAIN program posits that close partnerships among public sector actors, private sector actors, and rural communities will be required. However, this assumption needs to be tested in practice. Moreover, much learning needs to take place around the systems of governance within these partnerships. For example, because public, private and civil society actors come from different backgrounds and are often not on equal footing, accounting for power imbalances, incentivizing participation, and facilitating trust-building will be essential. Understanding how specific local institutions/partnerships are currently functioning and how they can be strengthened and transitioned into systems that better facilitate cooperation and understanding among different actors and knowledge systems will be an important component of learning throughout the project.

Moreover, because stakeholders have different preferences that reflect their unique values, sophisticated rules for decision-making will be required that take into account multiple objectives (including the value of ecosystem functions, services and goods), help to identify synergies between objectives, and equitably negotiate tradeoffs. For example, land use conflicts between irrigators, wildlife conservationists, and hydropower interests are already apparent in the SAGCOT corridor; as investment in the corridors increases and the population grows, these types of conflicts will only become more acute. Significant experimentation and on-the-ground learning will be necessary to determine the best strategies for mitigating conflict and achieving multiple objectives.

Finally, the SUSTAIN program hypothesizes that an effective governance arrangement for promoting inclusive green growth must span multiple levels, and this assumption must be tested and evaluated in practice. As a result, it will be important to think about and learn from the relationships between local level institutions and other key institutions at the landscape, corridor and national levels, including local governments and indigenous governance systems.

To address these issues, we propose that a key learning theme include questions related to identifying and strengthening the institutional foundations for green growth, with a focus on modes of partnership, incentives for stakeholder participation, rules of decision-making, roles and responsibilities, as well as strategies for negotiating trade-offs and identifying synergies at the local level. Relationships between these institutions and those at broader scales will also be important to track. Key sets of learning questions, categorized by type of learning, are outlined below.

Several outcome indicators identified in the current MEL framework could provide information on this learning theme. Indicator 1.1 provides information about the establishment and strengthening of community level natural resource user groups and collaborative, multi-sectoral planning at local and national levels. Indicator 1.2 provides information about natural resource conflict mitigation mechanisms. Indicator 2.1 provides information about the development of landscape management plans (i.e. use of participatory methods) and the structure of collaborative management agreements.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
  - How are institutions/partnerships at local level currently functioning across a set of pre-defined criteria (i.e. resources, capacities, coordination with others)? How are key decisions currently being made by the relevant institutions? How has this changed over the course of the project?
  - Is the authority for water and/or forest management changing? How are roles/responsibilities of key institutions changing? What are the specific roles of water users associations (sex disaggregated, if relevant,) in the process of water allocation, monitoring, and application of new technologies?
  - What institutions/actors (disaggregated by sex) are at the table to make water allocation decisions? Are new coordination mechanisms required to facilitate the collaboration of these actors/institutions? What are the incentives for actors/institutions to participate? How are decisions being made? How inclusive and sustainable are water allocation decisions?
  - How are the roles of key actors/institutions changing regarding land management? What is the impact on more equitable distribution to/of land ownership? Are new coordination mechanisms being developed to facilitate the collaboration of these actors/institutions? What are the incentives for actors/institutions to participate? How are decisions being made?
- Process/project management
  - How is SUSTAIN forming and strengthening Water User Associations and catchment committees? How can this process be improved?
  - What processes/tools/mechanisms are most effective for building and strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships around key value chains?
  - What processes/tools/mechanisms are most effective for building and strengthening women's and youth participation in key value chains?

- o How is local government being strengthened? What are the best methods for engaging with local government officials?
- o How are partnerships and convenings between investors, economic development authorities, and civil society at the Cluster level being facilitated? How can they be improved to ensure trust and equitable outcomes?
- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
  - o Are partnerships between public, private and civil society actors necessary for inclusive green growth?
    - If so, what are the specific features or characteristics of viable public-private-civic partnerships? Are they multi-stakeholder partnerships? Bilateral partnerships? When are informal arrangements needed, and when are formal agreements needed to bind the partners? Which modalities of decision making work best and why?
    - What is needed to enable such partnerships to develop without external facilitation/support?
  - o Are multi-level governance systems needed to promote inclusive green growth?
    - If so, what does this system look like?
    - What is the nature of the relationships between various institutions across scales?
  - o Is integrated planning across institutions possible?
    - If so, how does it happen?
    - What makes it sustainable?

Theme 5: What national and sub-national policies are needed to enable inclusive green growth?

Justification and situation

Public policy frameworks provide the foundation for interactions between various stakeholders, as they define the incentives, rules, and resources that various institutions use. Understanding what policies are needed to enable IGG will be essential to SUSTAIN's long-term objectives. However, because formal, written policies and laws often cannot be changed quickly, it will also be important to understand how to work within the existing policy framework to accomplish the objectives of an IGG strategy.

The SUSTAIN project posits that implementing and scaling inclusive green growth in the corridors requires national and sub-national policies, laws, regulations and strategies that are coherent across sectors and aligned with green and inclusive growth objectives. Throughout the implementation of SUSTAIN, it will be important to test the degree to which this assumption is true in practice and determine what policies are needed. For example, policy frameworks can help to support stakeholder engagement and cooperation. This is especially important for SUSTAIN as it seeks to include the participation of all relevant stakeholders, and especially civil society organizations and with special attention to women's organizations, in the design, promotion and implementation of IGG in the long-term. Understanding how the current policy framework supports civil society participation, as well as how it can be improved, will be an important component of learning throughout this project.

Similarly, land tenure is an especially important issue for SUSTAIN, as secure land rights are central to promoting economic development in the Corridors and guaranteeing that smallholder women and men farmers and pastoralists benefit from that growth. Furthermore, women and other minority groups have unequal access to land under traditional tenure arrangements. If SUSTAIN is to ensure that all groups are included in the benefits of green growth in the Corridors, it will be important to address these concerns through changes to both policies and cultural assumptions. Learning about the impacts of current tenure policies and practices on the promotion and adoption of IGG, as well as viable methods for improving tenue security and inclusivity will be important.

Finally, because rapid intensification of investment in the corridors may outpace the implementation of policy reforms, it will also be important to understand what steps can be taken within the current policy context to ensure socially inclusive and environmentally responsible green growth is developing. This could include ensuring better implementation and enforcement of current policies through building civil society awareness and strengthening local and national government agencies. SUSTAIN provides an important environment for learning about the effectiveness of these mechanisms and short-term solutions, and the degree to which they lead to longer-term policy changes.

Based on these considerations, we propose a key learning theme focus on public policies and their impact on promoting an effective IGG strategy. This could include questions to help evaluate the status of the current policy framework and determine what policies are needed to successfully promote IGG, as well as questions to understand the tools and processes that are most effective in promoting policy

change and those that help to promote IGG while working within the existing policy context. Key sets of learning questions, categorized by type of learning, are outlined below.

Several of the outcome indicators already identified in the MEL framework can help to provide useful information about these questions. For example, indicator 1.1 provides information about levels of awareness and compliance with laws, regulations and policies around sustainable water and land use; indicator 1.3 tracks the endorsement of legal and policy reviews relating to water quality; indicator 2.1 provides information about the degree to which landscape management plans take into account resource user rights and security, as well as if by-laws and collaborative management agreements supporting landscape management are formulated and endorsed by the public sector; indicator 2.2 tracks the amount of public sector investment in restoration and sustainable land use, as well as the endorsement of investment screening criteria and guidelines; indicator 3.1 provides information on the application of improved regulatory and risk management measures, as well as the incorporation of policy recommendations that better incorporate the values of natural capital; indicator 3.2 tracks the endorsement of policy recommendations regarding market-based mechanisms and financing streams; and, 4.2 tracks the influence of knowledge generated during SUSTAIN on national and corridor-level policies and strategies more broadly.

Key sets of learning questions:
- Monitoring the status
    - How does the current policy framework in Tanzania and Mozambique currently align with IGG objectives? In what ways can it be improved?
    - What agencies/organizations have responsibilities for land tenure security? How well are they equipped to implement current land tenure policies and modify policies to better align with IGG? How well are they equipped to incorporate gender equality considerations in current land tenure policies and modify policies ? What are the policy instruments available for influencing land tenure security in practice?
    - Are [gender-responsive] dialogues about policy among civil society, business and local and national governments being facilitated? Are public-private-civic partnerships influencing policies? Is monitoring data (sex disaggregated, where applicable,) being used as evidence to influence policies?
    - Are government agencies, regional bodies, and businesses framing new policies and strategies based on SUSTAIN's experiences?
- Process/project management
    - How can the national and sub-national policy contexts best be assessed and evaluated?
    - What mechanisms best facilitate policy change? Does facilitating consensus building, knowledge sharing, joint action, and dialogue between civil society, business and local and national governments help to facilitate policy change? Why?
    - What tools, methods, procedures, strategies help to work within the existing policy context to pursue/realize integrated green growth? What tools, methods, procedures, strategies help to work within the existing policy context to pursue/realize integrated gender-responsive green growth?

- How is SUSTAIN facilitating the use of existing land tenure tools like village land use planning? How can this be improved? How can the principles of gender equality included? How can evidence on the impacts of improving land tenure security be used to improve the policy context and enabling conditions for IGG?
- How can water policies best be implemented, enforced, changed? How can water policies best respond to gender equality and women empowerment principles?
- How can policies around the forestry, agriculture and wildlife management sectors best be aligned, implemented, enforced, changed? How can policies around the forestry, agriculture and wildlife management sectors best respond to gender equality and women empowerment principles?

- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
  - What policies are needed to enable/support/scale up inclusive green growth? Do policies need to be coherent and integrated across sectors? Which policies are needed to incentivize participation of civil society and private sector actors?
  - What is the best way to influence policy at the sub-national, national and international levels?
  - Can an inclusive green growth strategy be advanced without significant policy change? If so, how?
  - Is equitable and gender-responsive land tenure security an essential condition for inclusive green growth? Does improved land tenure security lead to more inclusive green growth?

Theme 6: How can capacities for integrated and inclusive green growth best be developed?

Justification and situation

The realization of an IGG approach to agricultural commercialization and intensification in the Corridors will require that capacity be developed for stimulating green growth innovations and for planning, implementing and monitoring the actions needed to bring about the necessary changes in practice and policy. Farmers, farmers' organizations, community groups, including women groups, NGOs, government agencies, businesses and policy makers alike will need to assume roles and responsibilities in an IGG strategy that require them to do things differently than they have in the past. SUSTAIN anticipates that a broad spectrum of capacities will be needed and that diverse modalities will be required to meet these diverse needs. In this context, programmatic learning about which capacities are needed by which stakeholders (with special attention to women and youth) to best support an IGG strategy will be needed, as well as learning about which modalities work best for delivering the necessary capacity development.

While capacity development will likely be needed in complementary realms of activity, stakeholders will have specific capacity development needs. For example, investment will be needed to enable women and men farmers to knowledgably access and apply agro-ecological production practices and participate in profitable markets, local forest associations to confidently prepare and implement sustainable management plans, and water resource groups to manage new techniques for water harvesting and use efficiency. Capacity for "soft skills" such as facilitating shared or 'distributed" leadership of multi-stakeholder learning and action platforms will also be needed to help ensure that planning and management of land and water resources is well integrated. In the policy arena, additional capacities will likely be required to effectively use spatially-informed dialogue and negotiation methods to optimize the integration and implementation of policies. To help ensure the most cost-effective and impactful targeting of resources and modalities, a systematic examination of capacity needs-taking into account sex and age criteria will likely be required, and it would be beneficial to document and learn from this process.

Additionally, a wide variety of capacity development mechanisms and modalities will likely be required to meet these diverse capacity needs. These modalities should range from informal to formal and from local to corridor-wide to help ensure the program captures the breadth and depth of capacity development resources that could be tapped. Understanding which modalities work best and in which settings will be an important component of programmatic learning, especially as they are scaled up to other areas. Furthermore, given the anticipated range in both need and modality for capacity development in the Corridors, a wide variety of organizations will likely be involved in delivery including local CBOs, national NGOS, INGOs, public sector technology and business training institutes, and science and policy research and training centers including universities. Understanding which organizations are the most effective in delivering which modalities to which stakeholders, as well as how individual capacity development activities can be coordinated to ensure a cohesive curriculum development and delivery program will also be important.

To address these assumptions and assertions we propose that a key learning theme include questions related to how capacities for integrated and inclusive green growth can best be developed. They would focus on what, how and how well capacity development needs are identified, inclusive green growth curricula is developed, and courses and other capacity development modalities are delivered and received. Key sets of learning questions, categorized by type of learning, are outlined below.

Several outcome indicators already established in the current MEL framework can help to provide information about this learning question. For example, indicator 3.1 tracks the adoption of new curricula on green and inclusive growth by universities; indicator 3.3 tracks the participation of small businesses, smallholders businesses and youth in the Green Business Innovation Hub; and, indicator 4.2 tracks how partners and stakeholders respond to the services provided by the Technical Support Facility, as well as their engagement in the peer-to-peer learning platform and the degree to which knowledge products are relevant, accurate and utilized.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
    - What capacity development needs have been identified for women and men farmers' organizations, community groups, private sector actors, local governments, multi-stakeholder platforms and policy makers to enable them to design, promote and/or implement integrated and inclusive green growth?
    - Do actors/institutions need additional capacities to play their new water and land management roles?
    - What curriculum development materials and learning modalities have been developed and put to use for addressing the capacity development needs identified?
    - What capacity development materials and courses have been delivered to which audiences (disaggregated by sex and age), how (e.g., methods) and by whom (what organizations)?
    - How have recipients/beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age), of capacity development activities evaluated the knowledge and skills they derived from participating in them?
- Process/project management
    - How can new capacities in water management best be developed?
    - How can new capacities in forestry, agriculture, and wildlife management, and the integration across the sectors best be developed?
    - What opportunities are there for building on existing curriculum and capacity development resources and initiatives? To what extent can existing extension modalities be employed and how can they best be augmented to deliver effective capacity development activity?
    - Which organizations can play effective leadership roles in identifying and developing excellent curricula and delivery modalities for capacity development of women and men farmers and local communities? For agriculture and natural resource management professionals? For policy makers?

- o How can SUSTAIN most usefully catalyze investment and mobilize leadership for implementing effective capacity needs assessments, curriculum design, and learning material and modality development?
- Testing assumptions/understanding
    - o What capacities are needed and by whom, to adapt, adopt and scale up help realize IGG outcomes (i.e. agro-ecological farming practices; forest, water and other natural resources management; development of, facilitation of, and engagement in multi-stakeholder partnerships; coordination and implementation of policy) ?
    - o What is the content of effective curricula around which capacity development activities can best be organized?
    - o What are effective delivery methods and modalities for developing capacities of individuals, groups and multi-stakeholder platform needed to advance an IGG strategy?
    - o What are effective modalities for sharing experiences, learning, and building capacities across organizations and regions? Peer-to-peer approach? Landscape learning networks? Landscape Academy? Other? What aspects of these innovations work well? What appears not to be working? How can they be shaped to work better?

Theme 7: What are the most promising technical and institutional innovations for advancing inclusive green growth?

Justification and situation

For SUSTAIN to succeed it will require quick wins for communities and investors that can help to make progress on the path toward inclusive and sustainable green growth. These innovations can be technical, like infrastructure to improve water use efficiency, tools to improve the integrated management of water, land and ecosystems, or practices to implement climate smart agriculture. Or, the innovations can be institutional, like the development of more gender inclusive water resource users association or the development of local bylaws or covenants to improve the management of forests. In addition to identifying innovations, it will also be important to have a transparent process for prioritizing, piloting, and then, if they are successful, scaling them up throughout the corridor (see Theme 8: How can knowledge and action that supports inclusive green growth best be scaled up in the Corridors and beyond?).

The SUSTAIN MEL framework identifies many possible technical and institutional innovations to help strengthen sustainability, food security, climate change resilience and water use efficiency at the cluster level. These include water management interventions, climate change vulnerability assessments, erosion control activities, sustainable range land management systems, landscape restoration tools, sustainable irrigation schemes, biogas and renewable energy technologies, climate smart agriculture practices, and the development of new green value chains, among others. Agro-ecological innovations will be especially important for accomplishing integrated water, land and ecosystem management goals.

Because there are so many possible opportunities for innovation and because it is likely that not all are "ripe for investment," the process of identifying and prioritizing which innovations are piloted and where will be an important component of learning in the SUSTAIN program. This could include analyzing linkages to local and international research institutions, documenting the stakeholders present in discussions about feasibility, and analyzing the screening process used to select the priority innovations and the locations in which they will be piloted.

SUSTAIN's theory of change proposes that implementing these promising innovations, in conjunction with other proposed actions, will help to improve local livelihoods and well-being, climate change resilience, as well as water and land management at the Cluster level. This assumption will need to be tested in practice (see Theme 3: How can the evidence base for integrated approaches best be developed and communicated?). Additionally, the SUSTAIN program emphasizes the importance of implementing these innovations through joint action by the public, private and civil society actors. Accordingly, programmatic learning about the process of implementing the innovations, including the process of attracting investors and securing financing, as well as the process of evaluating the impacts of the innovations would also be beneficial.

Finally, there are a number of institutional innovations that will be implemented across the Corridors and at a programmatic level, such as the development of multi-stakeholder platforms, a micro-credit facility, and a technical support facility. The process of implementing these innovations, as well as their

impacts on the development of inclusive green growth will also need to be documented and understood. Key sets of learning questions around the theme of identifying, prioritizing, implementing, and evaluating innovations are outlined below.

Several indicators currently specified in the MEL framework can provide information that may be useful in answering these questions. For example, indicator 1.1 can provide information about the development of innovative instruments to enable new nature-based business models; indicator 1.2 tracks the development and implementation of innovative water allocation mechanisms; indicator 1.3 tracks the adoption and implementation of innovative actions and technologies to protect water systems; indicator 2.1 measures the development of innovative collaborative management agreements for forest and biodiversity protection; indicator 2.2 measures the adoption of sustainable and climate smart on-farm solutions; indicator 2.3 tracks the adoption of innovative nature-based value chains; and, indicators 3.1 and 3.2 provides information on the development and implementation of innovative business models and market-based mechanisms.

Key sets of learning questions:
- Monitoring the status
  - What technologies are being implemented (by men and women)to improve water use efficiency? Water monitoring? Pollution prevention/clean up? Who is paying for the investment in these technologies?
  - What technologies are being used (by men and women) to improve the management of land resources for climate change adaptation, mitigation and food security?
  - Are other promising technical innovations being identified, prioritized, implemented, and evaluated?
  - Are other promising institutional innovations being identified, prioritized, implemented, and evaluated?
- Process/project management
  - How are innovations being identified?
  - What criteria are being used to evaluate promising innovations?
  - How are women involved in the identification and evaluation of innovations?
  - Who is deciding what practices should be invested in and where?
  - How can green growth opportunities best be characterized and conveyed to prospective investors?
  - How can existing methods of extension and applied research be improved to advance innovation in green growth?
- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
  - Do the institutional innovations improve governance for sustainability, food security, climate change resilience, and/or water use efficiency in the corridor?
  - Do the technical innovations (i.e. agro-eocological practices, wildlife corridors, water capture, etc.) improve sustainability, food security, climate change resilience, and/or water use efficiency (i.e. green growth outcomes) in a gender-responsive matter in the corridor?

     ○   Does joint action between public, private and civil society actors improve the implementation and impact of the innovations?

Theme 8: How can knowledge and action that supports inclusive green growth best be scaled up in the Corridors and beyond?

Justification and situation

IGG is an innovative and comparatively new and untested approach to agriculture and natural resources-driven economic development. For the approach to gain traction, technical and institutional innovations that exhibit characteristics of IGG must be scaled up beyond the initial "discovery" or "pilot-testing" levels in order to spread and have impact. The process of scaling up or "mainstreaming" green growth innovations, with a goal of demonstrating the viability of the IGG approach and its ability to deliver livelihood security, ecosystem conservation, and agricultural productivity benefits, is the central business of SUSTAIN.

Mainstreaming IGG through the Corridors will likely require action at the level of individual farms and businesses, and at the policy level. At the farm level, sustainable crop and livestock intensification is a core strategy. A wide range of technical and institutional innovations for operationalizing these agricultural production, natural resource management and marketing innovations have been hypothesized, identified, and some are currently being tested (see Theme 7: What are the most promising technical and institutional innovations for advancing inclusive green growth?). However, understanding how to effectively scale up these practices will an important component of learning throughout the SUSTAIN program.

Several strategies for scaling up these pilot innovations, and the knowledge gained through the process of implementing them, have been identified in the MEL framework. These include developing a peer-to-peer learning platform for CSOs and then connecting them to relevant government agencies and investor networks; developing a learning strategy for capturing and synthesizing lessons, evidence, cases and best practices from the local level to ensure learning is linked between clusters, as well as within the corridor and region; and, forming partnerships with knowledge institutes and scientific organizations to enable information sharing. It will be important to learn from these strategies to understand their effectiveness in scaling up knowledge and action, as well as how best they can be implemented.

Additionally, SUSTAIN's MEL system is being designed and initiated with an explicit aim to promote the scaling up of these innovative and promising practices. It appears to be a valuable tool for this purpose, but the assumptions and objectives that underlie it need to be routinely evaluated. The questions below may be useful in querying the MEL system for information about the status, processes and effects of SUSTAIN's scaling effort, and, in the process, help to shape the MEL system for this key purpose.

Several indicators in the current MEL framework could provide information around this process of scaling up. Indicator 4.2, for example, specifically tracks how experiences and knowledge generated by SUSTAIN are being scaled up to influence broader national and corridor-level policies and processes. Indicator 3.2 provides information about policy recommendation emerging from piloted market-based

mechanisms, and indicator 1.2 tracks how much local and national development plans reflect and enable improvements in integrated water resources management.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
  - Where are the centers of knowledge and learning that can be applied to scaling up?
  - How effective are existing methods of extension and applied research for assuming key functions in scaling?
  - How, when and under what conditions are pilot activities being scaled up?
  - Who (what actors-disaggregated by sex and age, organizations) are assuming key responsibilities in scaling up and what are these roles?
  - To what extent and how is SUSTAIN interacting with the SAGCOT Center, the Green Reference Group and other entities in Tanzania that are explicitly concerned with scaling up IGG across landscapes in clusters and across clusters within the corridor?
- Process/project management
  - How can pilot activities be designed for effective scaling?
    - What processes are needed to scale up pilot activities in clusters for corridor-level impact (e.g. development of landscape plans, private sector engagement, policy engagement, financing plans, knowledge sharing strategies, etc.)?
    - What processes are needed to document, learn from and communicate the outcomes of these activities?
  - How can existing and new knowledge be compiled/made accessible? What is the best communication strategy?
  - How can activity and knowledge generated through SUSTAIN be optimally documented and communicated in knowledge products and communication strategies?
  - What are optimal ways for leadership in SUSTAIN to interact with the SAGCOT Center, the Green Reference Group and other entities concerned with scaling up green growth innovations in the corridor in Tanzania?
  - How can SUSTAIN stimulate leadership in country-specific corridor initiatives to engage in cross-corridor learning and action to advance scaling up?
- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
  - What are optimal knowledge sharing modalities for learning within pilot areas, between pilot areas, within the pilot corridors, across the pilot corridors, internationally?
  - How can cross landscape and cross-corridor learning networks best be designed and managed to contribute optimally to scaling up?
  - How can SUSTAIN's MEL system be queried to help form the knowledge base needed for effective scaling up?
  - What research topics and methods can best be used to address questions about the management processes and enabling conditions needed for effective scaling up?
  - What are optimal roles for core partners in SUSTAIN in facilitating scaling up?

- o What are optimal roles for women and menfarmers' organizations, water and forest management groups and other landscape level stakeholders in scaling up green growth innovations?
- o What are optimal roles for businesses engaged in SUSTAIN in facilitating scaling up?
- ○ What are optimal roles for policy makers in enabling and facilitating scaling up?

Theme 9: What are strategic and effective roles for IUCN and other lead partners in SUSTAIN?

Justification and situation

With the advent of SUSTAIN, IUCN and its key partners are positioning themselves to assume central roles in stimulating and operationalizing an integrated, IGG approach to development in SAGCOT, Beira and other corridors. As leading actors in demonstrating the viability of IGG as an approach to corridor development in Africa and beyond, the SUSTAIN partnership may want to think deliberately about how it prioritizes and executes its various roles. Programmatic learning about these types of management decisions can also be structured to help better understand how a program like SUSTAIN can be used to achieve IGG outcomes in African growth corridors.

While IUCN is an exceptionally well established and respected actor in the realm of conservation, how it manages its own activities, coordinates with others organizations, and leverages funding for scaling up actions will be vital to the success of SUSTAIN and its mission. Several management strategies including convening participatory inception workshops and regular partner meetings, as well as promoting adaptive cluster-level program design and gender-responsive actions have been proposed. As the implementation of the SUSTAIN program progresses, it will be important to understand which of these methods are working and how they can be improved upon in the future.

Furthermore, optimizing the roles that SUSTAIN assumes in relationship to other actors will be important in building institutional efficiency in corridor development. Tracking the effectiveness of these relationships and how they are perceived by all parties will be important to document through the MEL system. Such a measure could help position the SUSTAIN partnership as an institutional actor committed to overcoming the 'reinvention of the wheel' syndrome.

IUCN and its lead partners in SUSTAIN have prominent roles to play in guiding the implementation of the MEL system and shall be looked to for leadership. Already they have established themselves as the originators and promoters of the system, and as facilitators of a partner and stakeholder-engaged process of integrating the system into the SUSTAIN implementation strategy. It will be incumbent on them to maintain visibility in their care-taker roles as the system becomes integrated into the SUSTAIN implementation strategy. Maintaining inclusivity and transparency in using and adapting the system to serve the objectives of SUSTAIN, as IUCN and its partners have exhibited in formulating and socializing the learning questions and their correspondence with other components of the MEL, should ensure the perceived validity and value of the system that is needed for its effective implementation.

Several questions outlined below may be useful in guiding planning, reflection, and learning about the most strategic and effective roles for IUCN and other lead partners in SUSTAIN. Furthermore, indicator 4.3 in the current MEL can help to provide information on the roles of IUCN members, businesses, knowledge institutes, and civil society partners, as well as how effective current management structures are at delivering results and achieving desired outcomes at the cluster, corridor and national levels.

Key sets of learning questions:

- Monitoring the status
    - What strategic roles are IUCN and its core partners in SUSTAIN playing in advancing an IGG approach to development in the corridors including implementation of the MEL?
    - What strategic roles are IUCN and its core partners in SUSTAIN playing in advancing an IGG gender responsive approach to development in the corridors including implementation of the MEL?
    - How are these roles described and defined?   (Convener, Facilitator? Nudger? Mobilizer of other strategic actors? Financer? Broker? Conflict Manager? Demonstrator? Knowledge generator? Communicator? Advocate? etc.?)
    - How is SUSTAIN's assumption of these roles being communicated to other actors to help ensure realistic expectations by others?
    - How is SUSTAIN perceived by other actors?
- Process/project management
    - How is the SUSTAIN partnership operationalizing the roles it decides to assume in advancing IGG in the Corridors?
    - How is the SUSTAIN partnership adjusting the roles it plays over time relative to the roles that other key actors are playing, including for example the SAGCOT Center and other partnerships that may form to help operationalize IGG in the Corridors?
    - How can SUSTAIN improve the way it is perceived by other actors?
    - How can the SUSTAIN partnership play its chosen roles in the most effective possible way?
    - How should the SUSTAIN partnership hand over some of its roles to others as the SUSTAIN program progresses?
    - Which management strategies are working best for the implementation of the SUSTAIN partnership? How can management be improved?
- Testing assumptions/understanding impacts
    - What roles are IUCN and lead partners in SUSTAIN playing exceptionally well?
    - How are the roles that IUCN and lead partners are assuming in implementing the MEL system affecting the internal and external perceptions of SUSTAIN and its impacts?
    - What is the apparent impact of SUSTAIN's roles on advancing IGG in the Corridors?
    - What is the apparent impact of SUSTAIN's roles on advancing gender-responsive IGG in the Corridors?