



Job Aid: Strategies to Minimize Monitoring Costs & Ensure that Monitoring and Evaluation Gets Done

Strategies to Minimize Monitoring & Evaluation Costs

To minimize costs and staff time for tracking the identified indicators and metrics, a number of strategies can be used:

- **Government data** – Identify existing data monitoring efforts that produce data of interest (e.g., ongoing government-/taxpayer-funded data collection such as the Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, or ongoing monitoring in federal or state-owned nature reserves);
- **Academic/expert monitoring** – Draw on long-term monitoring by academic or non-profit institutions (e.g., long-term ecological research stations, ongoing monitoring on protected land);
- **Citizen science** – Use data collected through citizen science (e.g., the Audubon Society's bird counts);
- **Local science institutions** – Make use of data collected by local science institutions (e.g., aquariums, science centers);
- **Partnerships** – Partner with teachers and researchers at local high schools, colleges and universities who may share interests, have necessary expertise and data collection equipment as well as eager students to conduct the data collection; many students find applied work that makes a real-world contribution exciting and meaningful;
- **Use or modify existing data collection/reporting** – Adjust existing or integrate additional data collection into already existing monitoring and reporting systems (e.g., annual reporting, post-workshop surveys, performance reviews);
- **Simplicity** – Keep data collection as simple as possible (e.g., use online/electronic data collection for simple compilation, integration, analysis, and display; but pen and paper will always do);

Strategies to Ensure Monitoring & Evaluation Get Done

To ensure that monitoring of identified indicators and metrics gets done, a number of strategies can be used:

- **Reporting requirements and mandates** – Some funding, regulatory and public health programs mandate reporting, such as for air and water quality, the incidence of certain diseases and so on. While not originally designed for adaptation, maintenance of certain public health and environmental conditions even as climate change worsens may be important outcome indicators that is already being tracked;
- **Policy and budget directives** – Directives from an organization's leadership or from higher-level authorities typically carry with them the obligation to regularly (e.g., quarterly, annually or event-driven) report back on achievements or progress toward set targets; thus, to the extent adaptation efforts are formalized in a policy, plan or associated budgets, tracking of certain data becomes part of people's day-to-day work;
- **"Carrots and sticks" and other incentive-based approaches** – Insurance programs, credit rating systems and other incentive-based programs encourage tracking in that achievements of certain standards, levels of protection or engaging in resilience-building measures can lower costs, insurance premiums, or involve reputational benefits that decision-makers see as advantageous for their operation;



This job aid was created to serve as a reference for individuals interested in indicators and metrics to help communities define and track progress on their climate adaptation goals. Additional background and resources are available on the website: www.ResilienceMetrics.org. This website was developed in partnership with the National Estuarine Research Reserve System with funding from NOAA.



- **Paying for data collection** – In the absence of mandates, reporting requirements or incentives to monitor data internally, decision-makers may wish to ensure indicators are tracked by allocating a budget line or paying an external partner or consultant to collect the requisite data; when done by an external partner, this can be designed as an “independent/external monitoring and evaluation” and thus add to the entity’s reputation as being transparent and accountable to its constituents; and
- **Appointing/dedicating staff or volunteers** – Clarifying and assigning responsibility for data collection to one or more staff in an organization, for whom monitoring of certain indicators becomes part of their regular job responsibilities is yet another mechanism to ensure the work gets done.