

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

## Public M&E System Report, Version 4.1

March 2018

Submitted for compliance with ISEAL Impacts Code v2



## 1. Scope and boundaries of the UTZ M&E system

In January 2018, UTZ has merged with the [Rainforest Alliance](#) and has started to build the new organization. The new organization is called “the Rainforest Alliance”, carrying forward the strong public-facing name. Companies can continue sourcing and labeling UTZ certified products at least until the publication of the new certification program in 2019.

**This 2018 public M&E system report reflects only the UTZ certification program. As the merger progresses an integrated public M&E system report will become available.**

The M&E system monitors at a global level the commodities/sectors for which UTZ offers certification (cocoa, coffee, tea, rooibos, hazelnut) and traceability services (palm oil). In the sectors where UTZ offers certification, we monitor at producer level as well as at supply chain level. In the sectors where UTZ only offers traceability services, we only monitor at supply chain level (e.g. traded volumes).

In terms of issues, the scope of the M&E system is in line with the scope of the UTZ program, reflected in the Theory of Change and the [M&E framework](#). The M&E framework reflects the issues the UTZ program addresses, our long term goals, desired impacts, expected outcomes and strategies. It has been used as the basis to develop our [Theory of Change](#), which has more detail on *how* we expect our strategies will lead to the expected outcomes and impacts (causal pathways).

UTZ is currently implementing the Sector Partnerships Program (2016-2020), funded by the Dutch Government, which has been integrated in the overall UTZ program. The goal of this program is to contribute to an improved policy environment for male and female smallholder farmers in the coffee, cocoa and tea sector in 9 countries, in partnership with local civil society organizations (CSOs). This program has a generic Theory of Change (ToC) of its own, laying out the 6 impact pathways for the program. Additionally, we developed country specific ToC's for selected themes in the countries covered by the program. The themes include child labour; living wage, productivity, producer group strengthening, climate change and gender. Based on specific ToC's, the 6 general key pathways/strategies were identified. These pathways allow for strategic learning and reporting on program level. Our program monitoring indicators and learning and evaluation questions are linked to these 6 pathways. With the Sector Partnerships Program UTZ has expanded the scope of its M&E system beyond certified farmers and supply chain actors to CSOs, companies and governments. It also requires monitoring changes on policy level, CSO capacity and improvements in the level of service provision to farmers. Additional data collection systems and monitoring and evaluation methodologies were developed accordingly. UTZ publishes results of the SP program in the IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative) Registry. A senior M&E Officer is dedicated to this program.

In 2017 UTZ made progress implementing the First Mile (1M) program, which aims to digitize farm level data to improve farm practices, farm group management and certification. Pilots were implemented in Ivory Coast, Indonesia and Turkey a.o. Digitized data collection is meant to enhance the group management (e.g. to conduct internal risk assessments) and ease the certification process. Data is also be used for M&E purposes. A data analyst in the M&E team takes charge of this work.

On behalf of Nestlé and Cargill, UTZ has organized the data collection on CocoaAction productivity indicators. CocoaAction is an overarching sustainability program of the cocoa industry. Its goals, interventions and data needs partially overlap with those of certification programs. Data was collected by several certification bodies in Ivory Coast in combination with the UTZ audit. UTZ prepared the data collection tools, trained the surveyors, cleaned and analysed the data. The experience with CocoaAction data collection provides learnings in the area of performance measurement. Together with Mars and the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), UTZ also started up a project to get more insights in the quality and effectiveness of Child Labour Monitoring

Systems which are being implemented by third parties (suppliers, NGOs or coops) in Ivory Coast. A dedicated Senior M&E officer for customized services implements this work.

Since 2017, UTZ also started to look for the possibility of using remote sensing and open source data in evaluating the effect of UTZ code of conduct on farm and environment by detecting some of the non-compliances through satellite imagery, drone images, and open source data (Protected planet - WDPA), Global forest watch (GFW) and Red list of threatened species (IUCN). For example by overlaying the protected areas layer (from WDPA) with farms plots (polygons) layers, we were able to detect farms located within protected areas or buffer zones.

In terms of reach, the UTZ monitoring system (level 1) covers the full reach of the program. Thematic and impact studies (levels 2 and 3) are geographically and thematically focused on a number of countries and/or issues. The choice of countries and topics is based on their relevance for the UTZ program (e.g. major producing countries, critical issues, knowledge gaps) and geographical spread. Impact studies focus on specific evaluation questions and use a range of designs to measure changes and to explain how and to what extent the UTZ program contributes to those changes.

Not every issue defined in the M&E framework can be monitored, and not every causal relationship in the Theory of Change can be tested. The M&E budget and work plan also has some 'free space' for inquiries outside the M&E focus areas, e.g. into emerging issues.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The M&E staff in 2018 has a capacity of 11,0 FTE. The M&E budget is approximately 5% of the total UTZ budget. Resources and capacity are sufficient to implement our M&E system. The merger with Rainforest Alliance is a major change for both organizations, with repercussions for the M&E systems. In the preparation of the merger, the M&E teams of both organizations analyzed both Theories of Changes to assess how much these converge, identify critical differences, and drafted a new common ToC. For composition of the team (functions and responsibilities) as of January 2018 see annex 1.

## 3. Defining the Intended change

The M&E framework is based on the [Theory of Change](#). The [M&E framework](#) is the generic backbone of the of the UTZ M&E system; it provides a clear description of the specific issues the UTZ program wants to tackle, the long term goals, the desired impacts, the expected outcomes and the strategies used to achieve them. The [Theory of Change](#) has been updated in 2017 to account for the enlarged scope and new strategies of the Sector Partnerships program. An update of the [M&E framework](#) is pending, but the [list of indicators](#) has been updated. This new list of indicators includes new indicators, for instance related to the outcomes on sector level, and to the outputs of the different UTZ activities and services.

## 4. Performance Monitoring

On the basis of the Theory of Change, critical pathways for change and key evaluation questions have been formulated. Based on these key questions, indicators were selected for monitoring and evaluation. The [list of indicators](#) is available on the website. For each of the indicators, a data collection protocol has been developed. The data collection protocol is available upon request.

Level 1 indicators are collected for all certificate holders. These indicators are integrated in UTZ systems and processes such as the online traceability system (Good Inside Portal) and the audit process. UTZ collects data directly from certificate holders when they register for the program, and from certification bodies each time they audit a certificate holder (this is called "assurance process"). Assurance process data is collected annually, following the audit cycle.

Certifying Bodies upload all audit summary reports to the Good Inside Portal, where UTZ staff reviews and approves them and issues a trading license. UTZ provides guidance to Certifying Bodies to improve the

quality of the audits and the ensuing data. In addition, UTZ consults CB's regularly to discuss interpretation issues that auditors may be facing in their auditing practice. Auditors were also consulted about the M&E questions included in audits. E-learning courses for lead auditors and field auditors are available on the [UTZ Academy Online](#). Some trainings are mandatory, others are optional. [Checklists](#) with integrated M&E and audit questions, alongside explanatory guidance are made available to facilitate the data collection and reporting process.

## 5. Outcome and impact evaluations

UTZ regularly commissions impact studies to third parties. These impact evaluations usually have a longitudinal design to capture changes over time, and include a baseline and a control group. Evaluations are decided upon by the UTZ executive management after internal consultations, considering needs, priorities and available resources. Evaluations are then included in the year plan and budget, which are approved by UTZ' supervisory board.

One or two impact evaluations are undertaken every year, following a multiyear evaluation agenda to ensure consistency, learning and comparisons. In 2017 impact evaluations on cocoa in Ivory Coast and on coffee in Central America were commissioned. Reports are due in 2018. Additionally, a study was commissioned into the functioning of the Internal Management Systems of certificate holders.

Terms of reference for evaluations are drafted in consultation with partners implementing the standard, as well as external researchers and other stakeholders. Draft evaluation reports are validated with UTZ and local stakeholders, and compared to the agreed terms of reference. Final reports are published on the UTZ website<sup>1</sup>. UTZ also keeps anonymized datasets for future referral and meta - studies. Such datasets are occasionally shared with independent researchers and stakeholders for secondary analysis.

By engaging with different communities of practice, knowledge platforms and academic researchers UTZ exchanges knowledge with other practitioners and researchers. This engagement serves to shape the broader research agenda and also gives UTZ an outsider's perspective on our program, assumptions and practices.

## 6. Improving the effectiveness of the M&E system

In the development and improvement of the M&E system, external stakeholders are regularly consulted. On the M&E webpage, stakeholders are invited to give feedback on the M&E system documents, such as the M&E framework, indicators or Theory of Change, via ([ME@utz.org](mailto:ME@utz.org)). We also welcome feedback on this public report.

We collect, analyse and report on data systematically, following the planning and reporting cycle of UTZ.

The following checks and balances in the M&E system reduce bias and enhance impartiality:

- Seeking input from internal and external stakeholders before, during and after (evaluation) research.
- The M&E year plan needs approval from the Board of Directors and Supervisory Board.
- Terms of reference of specific M&E studies need approval from the Innovation and Technology Director.
- The UTZ response to evaluation reports is drafted after internal consultations and approved by the Board of Directors.
- Terms of reference, evaluation proposals, evaluation reports and UTZ responses are published on the UTZ website to enable external scrutiny.

Learning and improving is an important goal of the M&E system. Learning is first and foremost the result of an organizational culture characterized by mutual trust, personal responsibility and the recognition that mistakes are part of learning and innovation. The M&E way of working includes the following:

- Answering to questions from the organization relating to data, performance indicators and impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.utz.org/what-we-offer/measuring-impact/commissionedstudies/>

- Training users on where to find and how to interpret and use available data and reports.
- Participating in planning sessions of other teams to get a better understanding of learning questions and underlying evidence needs.
- Engagement with companies to align and create synergies between our M&E systems.
- Stakeholder consultations (internal and external) and scoping trips in the planning stage of (evaluation) research enables us to understand the actual interventions, identify issues and learning questions and align with implementers on how evaluations can be made useful for them as well;
- A “Digest group” of internal stakeholders jointly reflects on the findings and recommendations of each evaluation report, to draw conclusions and formulate follow up actions for the management response, which is always published alongside impact report.
- Results of M&E reports and key insights from performance monitoring are periodically shared and discussed inside UTZ at the bi-monthly “Strategy Café” meetings, allowing a broad participation.
- Collaboration in ISEAL M&E peer learning group, working groups and communities of practice to further the alignment and collaboration between standards.

The UTZ M&E team makes active use of ICTs and face to face meetings to share knowledge within the organisation. A new joint intranet (Confluence) is currently being implemented by RA and UTZ to accelerate knowledge sharing.

## 7. Opportunities for engagement

Evaluation reports and management responses are published on the UTZ website (M&E page)<sup>2</sup>. The management response informs stakeholders about UTZ’s view on the findings and conclusions, as well as the planned follow up measures. Impact reports and the management response are proactively shared with UTZ staff and key stakeholders before publication. They give feedback on the findings and recommendations and help to formulate follow up measures. Each report has an executive summary written by the researchers themselves, enabling readers to go straight to the main findings and conclusions without having to read the full report.

Stakeholders are invited (via this report and the website) to give feedback on evaluation reports and the M&E systems report. Feedback is also welcomed on the M&E system documents, particularly the intended impacts and outcomes, unintended effects and the scope and boundaries of the M&E system. Feedback and comments are taken into account during the further development and implementation of the M&E system. Please contact us via [ME@utz.org](mailto:ME@utz.org).

## 8. List of publically available M&E documents

- 1) [UTZ Public System Report](#) (this report)
- 2) [UTZ Theory of Change](#)
- 3) [M&E Framework](#)
- 4) [List of indicators](#)

These and more documents, as well as contact details for reaching the M&E team can be found on the [M&E section](#) of the UTZ website.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.utz.org/what-we-offer/measuring-impact/>

## Annex 1 M&E staff per 01.01.2018

Name	Function	Responsible for
Daan de Vries	Innovation & Technology Director	Responsible for innovation and technology pillar, part of the RA leadership Team
Peter Konijn	M&E Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and lead the M&amp;E department; control budget &amp; year plan</li> <li>• M&amp;E vision &amp; strategy; Organizational Learning</li> <li>• Oversee the development and implementation of UTZ's M&amp;E system</li> <li>• Represent the M&amp;E department at UTZ's Head of Departments and liaise with other departments</li> </ul>
Henk Gilhuis	Senior M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall M&amp;E; lead on level 3</li> <li>• Knowledge management</li> <li>• Research Partnerships</li> <li>• ISEAL compliance</li> </ul>
Rens Rutten	Senior M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall M&amp;E; lead on level 2</li> <li>• Theory of change expert</li> </ul>
Adeline Paule	Senior M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commodity analyst; lead on level 1</li> <li>• BI-tool and data warehouse</li> </ul>
Tessa Witte-Laan	Senior M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall M&amp;E; lead on Sector Partnerships</li> </ul>
Karen Reijnen	Senior M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise CocoaAction data collection</li> <li>• Development of customized M&amp;E services</li> </ul>
Laybelin Dijkers	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Mile data analyst</li> <li>• Remote sensing expert</li> </ul>
Anne Dullemeijer	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analyst</li> </ul>
Fares al Hasan	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analyst, Remote sensing expert</li> </ul>
Ha Phan	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analyst</li> </ul>
Hans Bakker	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analyst – RSPO program</li> </ul>
Nathalia Ramos	M&E Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analyst</li> </ul>

A description of the expertise and background of each of the team members can be found on the [UTZ website](#) ('who is who' page). The M&E team can be contacted via [ME@utz.org](mailto:ME@utz.org). A link with this email address is also available on the M&E Webpage<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Central America, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.utz.org/what-we-offer/measuring-impact>