

Rights and Resources Initiative

2011 Independent Monitor's Report

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Rights and Resources Initiative 2011 Independent Monitor's Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2011, the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) supported its fourth Independent Monitoring (IM) exercise. Given that the organization had just completed a Mid-Term Review, the IM exercise was less ambitious than in previous years. It focused on validating RRG's reported progress toward realizing the Initiative's Strategic Outcomes, and it also reviewed RRI's implementation of its internal monitoring and evaluation system.

During 2011, RRI reported on eight Milestones that, for the Initiative, represented significant progress toward the achievement of one or another of its Strategic Outcomes. Table 2, below, summarizes the hypothesis behind each of the Milestones and the results of the Independent Monitor's review of the data presented by RRI to support that hypothesis.

**Table 2
RRI Implementation Milestones, 2011**

SO	Identification	RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	IM Validation*
SO1	African Community Rights Network (ACRN)	Through its support for the creation and development of an African Community Rights Network , RRI has helped strengthen the African organizations participating in the network, and contributed to concrete results in the area of the promotion of community tenure rights.	Strengthening of voice of participating organizations clear. Concrete contributions to other outcomes present, but less clearly established. Validated.
SO1	Indonesia CSO Tenure Coalition	In 2011, under pressure from a number of sources inside and outside of Indonesia, the Ministry of Forestry publically expressed an awareness of the connection between forest tenure and climate change, and a willingness to consider recognizing the tenure rights of indigenous and other forest communities. Among the most important factors contributing to this outcome was ongoing work of a group of Indonesian NGOs that came together around RRI's work in Indonesia and helped coordinate the Lombok Forest tenure conference. Whether or not the hope generated by the Ministry's comments turned out to be justified will be determined, in large part, by the ability of this network to continue to advance the cause of recognition of forest rights in Indonesia.	Critical advocacy platform clearly established and playing important role. RRI contribution on various levels. Ultimate reform outcome promising, but requires close ongoing attention. Strongly Validated.

SO	Identification	RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	IM Validation*
S02	Next Generation	Through MegaFlorestais , RRI has gained access to an emerging generation of national level forestry leaders. A series of “Next Generation” programs organized by RRI have built network connections among these future leaders, increased their awareness of the tenure and governance issues and created the basis for future dialogue in service of a tenure reform agenda.	Important by-product of work with MegaF. Events consistently implemented with evident positive effects on emerging leaders. Emergence of this group as a pro-tenure network still in early stage. Validated.
S03	Influencing Bilateral Aid Policy	Since RRI came into existence, two of the most important bilateral donors to climate change mitigation/adaptation (NORAD/NICFI and DFID) have gained a stronger appreciation for the importance of forest tenure reform to the success of any effort to control deforestation and forest degradation. RRI’s engagement with both institutions has been a factor in the evolution of this perspective.	RRI clearly one of many influences on important institutional policies. Impacts of policy shifts clearly visible in data. Strongly Validated.
S03	UNFF Voluntary Agreement	The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is an important multilateral forest policy body. Over a period of years, RRI has influenced the UNFF Secretariat and some Forum members with its arguments on community forest enterprises and other tenure-related issues. This engagement resulted in the Secretariat inviting RRI to present a policy paper on community forest enterprises at the Forum conference in January 2011. This reflects influence with the UNFF Secretariat and with some member governments.	RRI access and participation clear. Data mixed regarding strategic nature of the contribution and ability to influence key actors via leverage in this space. Validated.
S04	Bolivia Land Legislation	Advocacy work undertaken by members of the RRI coalition influenced legislative debates on the Autonomy Law, the Integral Law on Development in the Amazon and other key legislation in favor of full recognition of the tenure rights of indigenous and <i>campesino</i> communities.	Emerging coherence of RRI voice an important step forward for advocacy work. Some influence on government-driven legislative outcomes established. Validated.
S05	Liberia Community Rights Law	Determined advocacy by RRI collaborators and their allies, led by SDI and Green Advocates, resulted in almost unanimous legislative support for a Community Rights Law, recognizing traditional community forest rights. The president refused to sign that law and had the law re-drafted and passed without many of its strongest provisions. RRI’s local coalition continued to work with the government on implementation and achieved positive changes in the regulatory framework. The struggle continues to compel government implementation of the law.	Change in prospects for community forestry evident. More progress in regulatory framework than in creation of CRLN. RRI contribution established, particularly in the regulatory phase. Validated.

SO	Identification	RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	IM Validation*
SO5	Nepal	Working closely with community forest user groups from around the country, RRI was able to influence the government debate on a set of proposals that would have had the effect of rolling back some existing protection of the rights of forest-dependent communities. Because people practicing community forestry tend to have greater access to markets and resources in other communities, that rollback would have had the effect of limiting that access. As a result, the RRI advocacy intervention had the effect of making community access to resources and markets greater than it would have otherwise been.	Rests on assumption that defeating rollback efforts results in increased resource access for forests communities. RRI contribution to defeat of rollback established, impact on resource access less clear. Validated.

***Strongly Validated**—Data presented by RRI provides convincing validation of all of the essential elements of RRI’s monitoring hypothesis and clearly affirms both the strategic nature of the achievement and RRI’s contribution to it.

Validated—Data presented by RRI satisfactorily validates RRI’s monitoring hypothesis and provides evidence of both the strategic nature of the achievement and RRI’s contribution to it.

Not Validated—The data presented by RRI does not adequately support the Initiative’s monitoring hypothesis.

In addition to identifying its most important Strategic Outcomes, RRI established indicators that would allow it to determine whether or not these outcomes were achieved and benchmarks or progress markers to allow the Initiative to determine, at key points in time, whether or not it was on track to realize its strategic intentions. Table 3 demonstrates RRI’s progress, vis a vis the benchmarks it had established for the end of Year 4 of the framework proposal period.

Table 3
RRI Milestones Achieved vs. Benchmarks Established
For the end of 2011

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Progress Marker For 2011	Achieved as of end of 2011	Needed in 2012*
SO1	Number of effective value-added joint actions facilitated/organized	14	10	10
SO2	Number of engaged networks becoming more capable of influencing tenure policy	5	5	1
SO3	Number of key tenure policy institutions changing policies or practices	3	4	1
SO4	Number of countries adopting/advancing legal/legislative reforms	4	4	2
SO5	Number of countries in which more equitable tenure/enterprise models increase community access to markets/resources	3	4	1

*According to the goals established by RRI, the level of achievement required in 2012 in order to meet the five-year benchmark for each Strategic Outcome.

Table 3 indicates that RRI is well on track to realizing its Strategic Outcomes (as defined by RRI's identified indicators), except for Strategic Outcome #1. We see this as a challenge related more to documenting "value-added collaborations" than actually stimulating such collaborations. The monitoring finding represented in Table 3 is more likely to lead to a change in RRI's approach to documenting collaborations than it is to stimulate a rush to collaborate before the end of year 5.

The more important monitoring finding is not evident from Table 3. Strategic Outcome 5 is packed with at least three key outcome areas for RRI. While it has established and documented the desired number of milestones for that outcome, some of those milestones have been less convincingly supported than those related to some of the other outcomes. As part of reviewing its Strategic Outcomes in preparation for the next framework proposal period, RRI will give special attention to its strategic intent and real capacity to contribute to change in each of the areas contemplated in Strategic Outcome #5.

For an organization under as many demands as RRI, the Initiative has been highly attentive to its commitments around monitoring. The internal monitoring system involves analysis and documentation in several areas of organizational life and we find clear evidence that each of these areas did important work to monitor RRI programs in 2011. Our main questions concerning RRI's internal monitoring commitment are four:

1. Does the timing of most monitoring work in the midst of a very busy program planning period allow staff and others to devote sufficient time to it?
2. Is RRI's monitoring work sufficiently integrated with its equally impressive effort in the areas of planning and evaluation?
3. What adjustments need to be made to allow RRI's monitoring work to take account of and analyze both unintended outcomes and strategic failures?
4. Is the significant amount of data emerging from RRI's monitoring work being collected and analyzed in a way that helps senior management in their consideration of possible mid-course corrections to the organization's priorities?

The report is more a call to reflect on these questions rather than a source of definitive answers.

Based on the series of reflections made possible by the support of all of the many faces of RRI, the 2011 Independent Monitoring exercise arrives at the following recommendations for action by RRG senior management. As always, we stand ready to discuss these recommendations with anyone associated with RRI, and we, of course, thank RRI for one more opportunity to witness, from short range, the work of a unique collection of people and organizations.

Recommendations

1. RRI should take all necessary steps to insure that the appropriate government and civil society parties in Indonesia follow-up on commitments made relative to creating and implementing a road map to forest tenure reform in Indonesia.
2. As part of the development of a new Framework Proposal, RRI should give additional consideration to the idea of multi-year contracts with Partner and Collaborators, where appropriate.
3. RRI should build upon the improvements in Global Program restructuring achieved in 2011 by further rationalizing program structure and implementing a planning and internal monitoring structure that more closely approximates that of Country and Regional Programs.
4. At least three important outcome areas appear within RRI's Strategic Outcome #5. As it develops a strategy for the next period, RRI should give special attention to its real capacity to contribute to enduring change in each of these areas (rights-sensitive conservation models, pro-community governance regimes and alternative enterprise models) and lay out clear lines of intervention to achieve that change.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is a diverse coalition of organizations united behind a mission of promoting greater global commitment to forest policy and market reforms that increase local household and community ownership, control, and benefits from forests and trees. In addition to the 14 coalition members (Partners), RRI also relies upon the active participation of a large number of organizational and individual collaborators, as well as a core group of committed and knowledgeable donors.

RRI Partners have established a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a set of Institutional and Business Arrangements (IBA) or operating principles. The MOU and IBA were put in place in July 2008, and, since that time, have been updated and amended, as necessary, by the RRG Board of Directors. Changes to the MOU occur through a formal process, which includes consultation with Partners. Ordinarily, changes to the IBA are based on proposals from RRG and occur with the input from Partners. The IBA includes the coalition's core value proposition that **"with a limited incremental investment in improved coherence and coordination, existing organizations can dramatically increase their contribution to the rights, dignity and development of forest dependent people globally as well as to forest conservation and more equitable economic and social development."**

These documents further establish an RRI Secretariat, the Rights and Resources Group (RRG). RRG is a nonprofit organization based in Washington DC with the dual functions of coordinating coalition operations and carrying out value-added activities in the name of RRI. In establishing RRG, the MOU and IBA outline its functions and establishes its relationship with RRI.

In 2008, as a critical step in the formation of the coalition, members of the eventual core leadership of RRG created a "Framework Proposal" (FP) as a public presentation of RRI's mission, strategic goals and operational approach. In addition to serving as an important internal reference, the FP has been used as a tool to facilitate discussions with potential financial supporters of the project and a frame for guiding their funding. By all accounts, it has served these purposes very well.

In this document, RRI's monitoring and evaluation commitments are first made explicit. According to the Framework Proposal, RRG was to establish its own internal monitoring information system and engage an Independent Monitoring Team to complement RRI's own internal monitoring work and provide an annual report to RRI Partners, RRG's Board of Directors and major donors to the project. The FP also commits RRI to mid-term evaluation of the coalition's achievement of its desired strategic outcomes. The clearest statement of the role of the Independent Monitoring Team is that, "In collaboration with RRI, the monitoring agency will develop a set of indicators and measurements to monitor the progress and ensure learning by all involved."

To date, RRI has facilitated independent monitoring exercises in 2008, 2009 and 2010. By June 2010, RRI's own internal monitoring system was fully operational. In early 2011, RRI engaged a team to carry out a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE), and that evaluation was completed in the fall of that year.

Despite its commitment of considerable material and human resources to the MTE in 2011, RRI demonstrated its commitment to independent monitoring by commissioning a modified Independent Monitoring Exercise in fall 2011.

The Terms of Reference developed by RRI for this exercise focus the energies of the Independent Monitoring team quite differently than in previous exercises. Specifically, RRI has charged the Independent Monitor with:

- Validation of the conclusions of the reports presented by staff to document progress on RRI's Strategic Outcomes.
- Review of all Country and Regional monitoring reports with an assessment of the extent to which this part of the internal M & E exercise is serving its purpose.
- Review of the Global Program Monitoring Report, with an assessment of the effect of the change in the way in which RRI organizes its Global Programs.
- Review of RRG's Response to the Recommendations of the 2010 Independent Monitor's report, with a comment on RRG appropriation of the recommendations of last year's report.
- Comments on the extent to which the internal M & E system was implemented in 2011.

Given the amount of field work undertaken by the MTE team, this year's IM exercise did not include attendance at select country planning meetings or field-based validation of those selected. Likewise, it did not include validation of the monitoring conclusions of one or two of RRI's Global Programs, as has been the case in past years.

Based on RRI's mission and value proposition, as well as the personal commitments of everyone involved with the Initiative, RRI is determined to affect both the tenure regimes applying to large expanses of the world's forested areas and the socioeconomic conditions of millions of people living in forest-dependent communities. It is aware that it, alone, cannot achieve such ambitious transformations, but is determined to demonstrate that, through its work, it is contributing to real progress in both of these areas.

In hopes of knowing, and demonstrating to others, that it is making progress on the huge tasks before it, RRI has specified the most important Strategic Outcomes that it desires from its work and committed itself to levels of achievement that it believes will indicate that it is on track to achieve the changes that motivated the establishment of the Initiative.

Identifying and measuring the results of the sorts of strategic analysis, capacity building and policy advocacy work that are RRI's stock in trade is difficult. Aware of these challenges, RRI has expended considerable human and material resources to gather and organize the data necessary to report its level of achievement in relation to each of its Strategic Outcomes. One of the critical functions of the Independent Monitor is to help RRI organize this process of data collection, and then play a role in the analysis of that data against RRI's strategic intent. The current report is the primary product of our review of the data collected for 2011.

II. METHODOLOGY

Despite the changes outlined above in the nature of the 2011 Independent Monitoring Exercise, the monitoring approach remained consistent with that of the exercises undertaken in 2009 and 2010. The primary elements of the methodology included:

1. Preliminary interviews with RRG senior management;
2. Attendance, with active observation, at the RRI Global Program Planning Meeting;
3. Attendance, with active observation, at the 11th RRI Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change, held October 12th in London, England;
4. Review of documents provided by RRG;

5. Review of key monitoring inputs created as part of RRI's own internal monitoring system;
6. Individual interviews with RRG staff and RRI Partner Representatives;
7. E-mail consultations and interviews with RRI network participants and external actors in a position to comment on RRI's own monitoring conclusions regarding progress on Strategic Outcomes;
8. Development of Working Findings and consultation of those findings with RRG senior management; and
9. Creation of a Draft Monitoring Report and consultation of that report with RRI Partners, RRG Board Members and Donors at the January 2012 RRI Governance meeting.

This methodology relies heavily on the staff of RRG and RRI Partners and Collaborators as primary sources of information. Those same groups had just been called upon to provide very similar support to a rigorous Mid-Term Evaluation taking place during most of 2011. As in previous years, the IM takes this opportunity to thank the entire staff of RRG for the seriousness with which they continue to engage the Independent Monitoring process, and for their unconditional willingness to respond to the occasionally perplexing requests of the IM for information and direction. In addition, we wish to recognize the cooperative and collaborative attitudes of RRI Partners, Collaborators, the RRG Board of Directors and numerous allies of the Initiative who unselfishly gave of their time and knowledge in an ongoing effort to learn the lesson of this unique experience.

III. MONITORING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RRI'S STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

As part of the process of developing clarity around the objectives of RRI's first five years of work, RRG developed a Logical Framework (LF) expressing the strategic intent of the project and indicating how leadership might affirm over time that it was on the way to achieving intended outcomes. (See Appendix One.) When the Initiative established the contours of its own monitoring and evaluation system in 2010, it restructured that LF in ways that enhanced its value as a management tool. The resulting revised LF clarified five Strategic Outcomes that highlighted what RRI saw as the primary outcomes that it wanted to achieve over the five-year planning period.

For each Strategic Outcome, RRI attempted to specify an indicator, with the idea that ongoing data collection and analysis in relation to the indicator would allow the Initiative to determine whether or not it was on the right track.

Table 1
Rights and Resources Initiative, Strategic Outcomes and Indicators of Progress
June 2010

STRATEGIC OUTCOME	INDICATOR STATEMENT
<u>SO1</u> : Complementary global, national, regional and local organizations effectively synergize to achieve significant breakthroughs in tenure reform processes	Facilitate at least twenty new, value-added joint actions and activities between Partners and collaborators w/ a demonstrable effect on the other strategic outcomes.
<u>SO2</u> : A select set of strategic networks are better-informed, more active and effective in promoting reform nationally, regionally and/or globally	At least six existing or new networks increase their capacity to influence policy related to forest tenure at all levels.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME	INDICATOR STATEMENT
SO3: Key strategic actors at the global level are committed and engaged in promoting major reforms in existing tenure, regulatory and governance arrangements	At least five inter-governmental and multilateral institutions (multilateral banks, ITTO, and other UN institutions) alter their position on forest tenure and actively support tenure and related reforms in their narrative and portfolios.
SO4: Changes in tenure legislation and regulatory or policy framework in favor of local communities in a subset of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America	In six countries where RRI is active, structural tenure reforms (legal, regulatory, policy) are adopted/advanced.
SO5: More equitable forest governance, enterprise and conservation models are identified and disseminated and/or more broadly supported as a viable approach to support social and economic development.	In at least five cases, these models lead to an increase in community access to resources and markets.

Once identified, these Strategic Outcomes and Indicators become the basis for RRI affirming that its work is “on track” in a global sense. During 2010, RRI presented data related to a series of achievements that had taken place during the first three years of the Framework Proposal period. RRI understands these achievements as “Milestones” that indicate that RRI is on the path to bringing about the outcomes for which it was established. During 2011, the Initiative identified and reported on eight more such Milestones. These Milestones are summarized in the Table 2, below.

Table 2
RRI Implementation Milestones, 2011

SO	Identification	RRI MONITORING HYPOTHESIS
SO1	African Community Rights Network (ACRN)	Through its support for the creation and development of an African Community Rights Network , RRI has helped strengthen the African organizations participating in the network, and contributed to concrete results in the area of the promotion of community tenure rights.
SO1	Indonesia CSO Tenure Coalition	In 2011, under pressure from a number of sources inside and outside of Indonesia, the Ministry of Forestry publically expressed an awareness of the connection between forest tenure and climate change, and a willingness to consider recognizing the tenure rights of indigenous and other forest communities. Among the most important factors contributing to this outcome was ongoing work of a group of Indonesian NGOs that came together around RRI’s work in Indonesia and coordinate the Lombok Forest tenure conference. Whether or not the hope generated by the Ministry’s comments turned out to be justified will be determined, in large part, by the ability of this network to continue to advance the cause of recognition of forest rights in Indonesia.
SO2	Next Generation	Through MegaFlorestais , RRI has gained access to an emerging generation of national level forestry leaders. A series of “Next Generation” programs organized by RRI have built network connections among these future leaders, increased their awareness of the tenure and governance issues and created the basis for future dialogue in service of a tenure reform agenda.
SO3	Influencing Bilateral Aid Policy	Since RRI came into existence, two of the most important bilateral donors to climate change mitigation/adaptation (NORAD/NICFI and DFID) have gained a stronger appreciation for the importance of forest tenure reform to the success of any effort to control deforestation and forest degradation. RRI’s engagement with both institutions has been a factor in the evolution of this perspective.

SO	Identification	RRI MONITORING HYPOTHESIS
SO3	UNFF Voluntary Agreement	The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is an important multilateral forest policy body. Over a period of years, RRI has influenced the UNFF Secretariat and some Forum members with its arguments on community forest enterprises and other tenure-related issues. This engagement resulted in the Secretariat inviting RRI to present a policy paper on community forest enterprises at the Forum conference in January 2011. This reflects influence with the UNFF Secretariat and with some member governments.
SO4	Bolivia Land Legislation	Advocacy work undertaken by members of the RRI coalition influenced legislative debates on the Autonomy Law, the Integral Law on Development in the Amazon and other key legislation in favor of full recognition of the tenure rights of indigenous and <i>campesino</i> communities.
SO5	Liberia Community Rights Law	Determined advocacy by RRI collaborators and their allies, led by SDI and Green Advocates, resulted in almost unanimous legislative support for a Community Rights Law, recognizing traditional community forest rights. The president refused to sign that law and had the law re-drafted and passed without many of its strongest provisions. RRI's local coalition continued to work with the government on implementation and achieved positive changes in the regulatory framework. The struggle continues to compel government implementation of the law.
SO5	Nepal	Working closely with community forest user groups from around the country, RRI was able to influence the government debate on a set of proposals that would have had the effect of rolling back some existing protection of the rights of forest-dependent communities. Because people practicing community forestry tend to have greater access to markets and resources in other communities, that rollback would have had the effect of limiting that access. As a result, the RRI advocacy intervention had the effect of making community access to resources and markets greater than it would have otherwise been.

It is important to note that these are not annual milestones highlighting implementation exclusively taking place in 2011. Instead, these are five-year achievements that RRI is reporting in 2011. Normally, implementation leading to these achievements would have taken place over a number of years.

Validation

For each Milestone, RRG staff collects monitoring data over the course of implementation. When the Milestone is reported, staff completes a Monitoring Data Report, describing the nature of the achievement and listing the forms of data being presented in support of the report. The Independent Monitor:

1. Reviews the report;
2. Asks clarifying questions of staff, as necessary;
3. Analyzes all data presented in support of the report;
4. As feasible and appropriate, contacts additional internal and external sources (recommended by RRG) to corroborate report conclusions; and
5. Attempts to identify the sources of RRI's influence on the outcome, especially when that intervention involved synergy among network members.

Milestone 1: ACRN (S01)

The formation of an African Community Rights Network (ACRN) has definitely been an important step forward for African organizations engaged in national-level advocacy around community tenure rights. Interactions with ACRN have certainly strengthened the analysis of member organizations and increased their capacity to act with a consistent, pro-reform perspective at the national level.

Since the network does not often act together, it is difficult to identify the specific national-level results to which the network has contributed, but, in the case of Liberia, encouragement from the network stimulated the Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) to work with communities to re-negotiate the Social Agreements under which forest concessions take place. Similarly, at one point, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo removed some national NGOs from the process of preparing an important law on indigenous people. Joint protest by ACRN members succeeded in getting those organizations reinstated in that process. While it is difficult to point to a “tenure breakthrough” resulting from network intervention, we are convinced by the analysis that suggests that the network has produced important results and can be expected to produce more results in the future.

RRI has certainly had a role in the emergence of ACRN, but there is some difference of opinion as to the nature of this role. RRI sees its support for ACRN as being entirely consistent with its core value proposition of using minimal additional financial inputs to increase coordination among tenure reform advocates, and, hence, enhance the results of their work. In the context of a generally positive assessment of the role of RRI in the development of ACRN, one external source contacted for this analysis suggests that the primary role of RRI has been that of funder of certain ACRN gatherings, whereas RRI defines its own role more broadly. For that RRI ally, as a funder of the process, RRI must take care to ensure that network members control the internal dynamics of the network. For example, as a matter of principle, concept notes for network gatherings should emerge from discussion among members, rather than from interactions between RRG and RRI members within the network.

In any event, it seems that RRI's work with ACRN reflects progress toward the sorts of results desired by RRI in its Strategic Outcome #1. RRI Partner, Civic Response, was instrumental in the formation of ACRN. In the recent period, a new RRI Partner, The Centre for Environment and Development (CED) has assumed an important leadership role within the network.

Milestone 2: Indonesia Tenure Reform Coalition (S01)

Given the immense size of the national Forest Estate, the scale of deforestation occurring in Indonesia and the low level of legal recognition of the forest tenure rights of indigenous and other forest communities there, the Indonesian reform process has taken on special significance in the global debate concerning REDD. A number of Indonesian CSOs have joined forest communities in demanding the formal legal recognition of *adat*, or customary forest lands, but the Indonesian government has shown little interest in responding to these demands.

In view of all of these factors, RRI has considered Indonesia a high-priority country. That designation led the Initiative to convene a country-level network, including RRI Partners and several Indonesian Collaborators of the Initiative. The collaborative work of the network took a

leap forward in 2011, driven in important ways by RRI's vision of the possibilities of tenure reform in the country.

Well before 2011, RRI agreed to co-sponsor—with the ITTO and the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry—an International conference on Forest Tenure, Governance and Enterprise to be held in Lombok Indonesia in September 2011. Based on its reading of the pressures facing Indonesia and its relationships established with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry via MegaFlorestais and elsewhere, RRI saw the conference as a potentially fruitful venue for dialogue with the government on the necessity of tenure reform. Some of the CSOs in the country-level RRI network expressed a degree of skepticism about the conference idea and, in particular, the notion of fruitful dialogue with the government. In the end, the entire network decided to support RRI participation in the conference.

As part of their preparation for the conference, CSOs identified a set of four issues regarding tenure reform in Indonesia and developed white papers on each of these issues to be presented at the conference. Mr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Head of President's Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight, acknowledged the importance of this analysis in his keynote speech, entitled, "Importance of Land and Forest Tenure Reforms in Implementing a Climate Change Sensitive Development Agenda." This groundbreaking speech set the stage for later comments by a Ministry of Forestry representative, committing the government to a reform process, the details of which were to be worked out during the months following the conference.

This potentially historic outcome was the result of the confluence of many factors. Among those factors was certainly the intervention of RRI, both in terms of helping to convene a CSO platform to create the momentum for change from below. But equally important was RRI's ability to cultivate relationships with Indonesian policy makers that could help create an openness to change from above. The existence of a well-developed strategy with a strong basis in analysis and evidence certainly made it easier for government officials to adopt elements of the CSO argument.

This milestone focuses on RRI's ability to facilitate synergistic networking among local actors to drive tenure reform, and we are convinced that the Indonesian case is a strong example of how, in the right circumstances, RRI's model can bear fruit at the national level. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine how the convening of the CSO platform in Indonesia would have gotten the same results in the absence of the patient work being done by RRI with senior Indonesian forestry officials in the context of MegaFlorestais and elsewhere.

One external observer of the process commented that, given the historical attitudes of the Indonesian government toward tenure reform, it would be premature to conclude that the Lombok conference represented a real shift in the government approach. That said, the Indonesian NGO platform following up on the conference and the Ministry of Forestry have agreed on a road map to implement the assurances given during the conference. Until now, the Ministry has kept its word and has followed the steps outlined in the "road map" in the several meetings held with the NGOs. RRI is providing ongoing support to this effort through its Strategic Response Mechanism (SRM) window.

While this has been a prime example of the potential of RRI to help facilitate synergy among a broad array of actors, at least two Indonesian organizations have assumed key roles at important points in the process. The Samdhana Institute, an RRI partner, played a pivotal coordinating role during the early stages of the formation of the CSO platform, and in organizing related to the Lombok

Conference. In the wake of the conference, The Epistema Institute has stepped forward to coordinate CSO efforts.

Milestone 3: Next Generation Network (SO2)

One of the Milestones identified and validated in last year's Independent Monitor's report concerned RRI's pivotal role in establishing and then facilitating the creation of the MegaFlorestais network. Some within the RRI network continue to question the relevance of the work with MegaFlorestais to RRI's core mission, but the relationships established through MegaFlorestais continue to play an important role in moving the RRI agenda at multiple levels.

During their own network gatherings, MegaFlorestais members surfaced the idea of RRI facilitating events that could expose emerging leaders in the member organizations to some of the same learning opportunities available through MegaFlorestais. After discussing proposals for such events at the 2009 meetings, network members prioritized the themes, "Global Issues in Governance" and "Rethinking Regulations." The former would be addressed in a peer learning session for mid-level career officers in the various forestry organizations, while the discussion of regulatory issues would be designed as trainings for technical staff. RRI facilitated both types of sessions in 2010 and 2011.

The data provided in support of this milestone provides ample proof that the sessions have had an extremely positive impact on the majority of participants. Written evaluations provide the sessions with extremely high ratings, and, even more importantly, the less formal post-event exchanges among participants and between participants and RRI staff affirm the notion that these sessions are opening the eyes of participants to the importance of forest tenure rights in national-level approaches to forest policy, management and regulation.

Another important measure of the success of this sort of event is the willingness of senior forestry officials to invest in the participation of their staff. The budget data provided confirms that officials seem more than willing to invest in these programs.

In its reporting, RRI connects this Milestone to its work with networks. They see this Next Generation group as a "new peer learning network." The participants in a training program do not necessarily constitute a network, but the participants in these training experiences have taken important steps to build communications links among themselves in ways that lay the building blocks of a new network. RRI's Strategic Outcome #2 commits the Initiative to work in support of networks in ways that leave network members "better-informed, more active and effective in promoting reform nationally, regionally and/or globally." There is no doubt that the participants in the Next Generation network are better informed about tenure issues, and some members appear to be more active in promoting reform from the positions within national forest bureaucracies. We have no doubt that most of the participants in the Next Generation program are benefiting from these experiences, and becoming better forestry officials, as a result. That, alone, defines an important achievement for RRI. It is, however, still too early in the life of this network to know if Next Generation participants will sustain their interest in relating to each other as members of a peer learning network, or, most importantly, to what extent their exposure to new information and relationships through RRI will help them become more active and effective reform proponents. It is such long-term outcomes that will eventually define the contribution of this program to the RRI mission.

The incubation of the Next Generation has primarily been an RRI Global Programs activity led by RRG staff and Megaflorestais.

Milestone 4: Influencing Bilateral Aid Policy (S03)

While change in something as complex as national aid policy can be quite easily observed from the outside, determining the drivers behind such change in complex aid bureaucracies is never a simple matter. There is little doubt that, since 2008, aid priorities related to forest tenure and REDD have evolved in ways that are generally positive for tenure reform within both the British and Norwegian bilateral aid establishments.

NICFI officials consulted for this report insist that Norwegian policy on REDD has been quite consistent since prior to 2008, but do acknowledge some changes in aid delivery priorities. They see that RRI has emerged as one of the most influential actors on REDD-related policy, and the Initiative and its various Partners have been important partners for NICFI in implementing its strategy. They stopped short, however, of suggesting that the interaction with RRI has resulted in any policy change in the Norwegian establishment. This puts us in the difficult position of noting significant circumstantial evidence suggesting that RRI has been among those external actors who have influenced the positioning of Norwegian aid institutions on forest tenure issues, alongside an institutional insistence to the contrary. It seems safe to say, at a minimum, that the relationship with RRI has contributed to the coalescence of NICFI's quite progressive position on forest tenure reform.

DFID was much more amenable to the idea that interaction with RRI was one factor in important policies within both the British aid structure and the British government. As an example, they cite the joint ministerial pronouncements in the wake of the 11th RRI Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change. These processes were certainly underway independently of RRI's intervention, but RRI's timely intervention in October in London certainly catalyzed an important change in REDD policy. The shifts that came to fruition around the October Dialogue were not the simple result of a single action. The speech given by British Minister of State for Climate Change, Gregory Barker, at the February Dialogue (also in London) suggests that the results of the October Dialogue reflect the coming to fruition of a complex strategy implemented over a period of time.

The specific case of the work with DFID reflects a relationship with broad effect over an extended period. Prior to 2008, there was an awareness of the importance of tenure reform within DFID, but that awareness was very much restricted to the professional foresters of the Department. The relationship with RRI has been one important factor in the emergence of a sensibility across DFID and the Ministries involved in setting climate change and forest policy, including DECC and DEFRA. Our consultations on the question of aid policy quite powerfully validate RRI's reporting of an important achievement in this area.

Since influence of institutions such as DFID and NORAD generally takes place in complex ways over a long period of time, it can be difficult to identify the roles of all key contributors to the effort. We highlight here just a few of the many sources of RRI effect on bilateral aid policy. RRI publications created credibility for the organization that key individuals then parlayed into strong personal relationships that increased access and opportunities for influence. Senior RRG staff members were among those developing such relationships, but many Partners also contributed in this way through their own relationships. In many cases, these relationships pre-dated RRI, but were enhanced by the Initiative's credibility. RRG also facilitated the creation of an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to the UNREDD Policy Board. Over a period of years, IAG stimulated much discussion among Policy Board members and was certainly an important channel of influence. In addition to RRG, RRI Partners ACICAFOC, Forest Peoples' Programme (FPP), The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), and The Indigenous People's International Centre for Policy Research and Education

(Tebtebba) have all played important roles in IAG. The RRI Global Dialogues were one more important source of institutional influence for RRI. Primarily organized and supported by RRG, the Dialogues have involved all RRI Partners and several collaborators. Both Forest Trends and Forest Peoples' Programme formally co-hosted one or more dialogues with RRG. FECOFUN, PRISMA and Tebtebba co-hosted regional dialogues and many additional organizations provided speakers or participated in other ways.

Milestone 5: Influencing the United National Forum on Forests (S03)

A core element of RRI's strategy has been to identify key institutions that influence forest management policy and practice at the global level. Having identified such an institution, RRI develops a strategy to influence institutional positioning over a period of time. These influence strategies—which form an important part of RRI's advocacy agenda—almost always involve a combination of direct influence through relationships with select actors within the institution and indirect influence by work with civil society or other networks, which in turn advocate for changes in institutional positioning. Over the Framework Proposal period, RRI has been quite successful in this regard.

For this Milestone, RRI reports on its attempts to influence the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The reporting suggests that RRI identified UNFF as one of these key institutions, and then used its influence within the Forum to influence its positioning on the question of national-level promotion for community forest enterprises. The primary vehicle for this influence was a Voluntary Agreement, for which the Secretariat is attempting to secure the support of UNFF member states.

The data presented to support this Milestone confirms that RRI has influence within the UNFF Secretariat. The Secretariat invited RRI to co-sponsor a side event at the UNFF meeting in January 2011. At that side event, RRI presented its paper on CBFs. RRI also used its influence to help create space for the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests and the Global Alliance of Forest Communities. In collaboration with RRI Partner, The Central American Association for Coordination of Indigenous and Small Farmer Community Agroforestry (ACICAFOC), these organizations were also able to put forward their perspective in a side meeting. What is less clear is whether or not the participation in the January event influenced in any demonstrable way the positioning of key countries represented within UNFF.

The RRI report suggests that the UNFF Secretariat has not yet been able to secure member support for the voluntary agreement. We could find no data that suggests significant progress has been made on this effort.

The larger question that arose in our analysis is whether or not UNFF should be considered among "key forest institutions that influence forest management policy and practice at the global level." Among the external sources suggested by RRI to corroborate the evidence on this Milestone, only one responded and she confirmed the quality of RRI's inputs to UNFF, but wondered whether or not the efforts to influence the institution were well-considered. For this source, the fact that the RRI side event was scheduled at a lunch hour when delegates had to leave the UN complex in order to get food speaks volumes about the priority placed by UNFF on the important issues being raised in this (and other) side events. For this person, among the UN-sponsored spaces addressing forest issues, the UNFF has lost profile and UNFCCC has become a more dynamic and influential space.

Based on the evidence at our disposal, we cannot conclude whether or not the UNFF is the sort of institutional space to which RRI should be devoting its scarce resources. It has evidently lost profile

and importance to UNFCCC and others in the last period, but remains an important space for countries without a strong voice in those other spaces. We can conclude, however, that RRI's relationships give it excellent access to the UNFF Secretariat. That access provided an opportunity in January 2011 to produce direct inputs to the UNFF membership. While RRI's inputs to UNFF were of very high quality, the data presented in relation to this Milestone do not confirm that those inputs have yet achieved the desired results in terms of the content of an accepted Voluntary Agreement or other re-positioning of key UNFF member states. As in the case of any complex institution, achieving the desired results with UNFF would require sustained strategic engagement over a period of time, and it is not clear that the potential benefits of such engagement would justify the required investments.

Milestone 6: Bolivia Legislative Reform (S04)

In early 2009, Bolivian voters approved a new Constitution, thus creating a huge opportunity for both the recognition and realization of community forest rights in Bolivia. The new Constitution contained some very progressive language on community rights, in general, and indigenous rights and autonomy, in particular. After achieving the Constitutional reform, the Bolivian government made it a priority to create or reform a whole series of laws that needed to be made consistent with Constitutional guarantees.

RRI's work in Bolivia arose in this context, which was and is seen as a great opportunity to advance the rights of indigenous and *campesino* communities. To its credit, RRI attracted many of the Bolivian NGOs—both in La Paz and in the eastern lowlands—who are most closely connected to the lowland indigenous communities whose lands encompass much of the nation's forest estate. The coordinating bodies of those indigenous communities have also been involved with RRI, but perhaps not as directly or fully as some of the aforementioned NGOs. Bolivian Collaborators of RRI have taken leadership on this work, including the Santa Cruz-based, Center for Legal Studies and Social Research (CEJIS) and two La Paz-based organizations, the Institute for Humanity, Agriculture and Ecology (IPHAE) and the Center for Labor and Agrarian Studies (CEDLA).

In this year's monitoring exercise, RRI reports its contribution to notable gains in the legislative process as an achievement that rises to the level of a milestone indicating that "structural tenure reforms" have been advanced at the national level.

There is little question that structural reforms have been "advanced" during the recent period, but many people question whether or not indigenous communities and their advocates have taken full advantage of the opportunity provided by the constitutional reform. In both 2009 and 2010, the legislative process has been both accelerated and extremely chaotic. RRI coalition members in Bolivia acknowledge that they have often been in a position of reacting to rapidly-shifting government priorities. In addition, communication and coordination among RRI Partners has been a challenge, making it difficult to clarify positions and leverage those positions at key moments of opportunity.

The 2011 Country Monitoring Report, generated by RRI Partners and Collaborators at their annual planning meeting, points to continuing challenges related to the chaotic nature of the legislative process and the capacity limitations faced by RRI Collaborators. All the same, we agree with the assessment that this was the first time that civil society has managed to carry out a coherent policy advocacy campaign on these issues at the national level in Bolivia, and that this step forward might be every bit as significant as the content of the emerging legislation.

While it is clear that important work was done in support of the efforts of lowland indigenous groups to influence legislative process, the tone of the APMR prepared out of the country planning meeting is not quite optimistic as RRG's report on this milestone. During the debate on the Ley de la Madre Tierra, five organizations representing forest communities formed the "Pacto de Unidad," which developed joint proposals to bring to negotiations with the government. RRI contributed to and supported this development, which was seen as an important advance in the process. The upcoming debate of the Forestry Law, perhaps the most important of the many forest-related laws under consideration, will be a good test of the influence wielded by RRI, and others promoting a pro-tenure-reform.

The recently-completed Mid-Term Evaluation is another important source of information available on RRI's advocacy work in Bolivia. While generally favorable about RRI's role at this important legislative moment, the MTE points out that taking complete advantage of this opportunity will require building a broader coalition of groups supporting the rights of lowland indigenous groups and creating a communications strategy that addresses the low level of public understanding—including among members of the government—of lowland indigenous communities and their current and potential contribution to *el Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia*. Absent such a broader coalition, and an accompanying commitment to address public attitudes, it may still be possible to gain partial formal recognition of community forest rights, but full realization of these rights on the ground will remain elusive.

The cause of structural tenure reform has definitely been advanced in Bolivia over the past 2-3 years and there is no question that the local presence of RRI has contributed to this result. In that narrow sense of fulfilling the requirements of the indicator language, this milestone can be easily validated. It may be a bit early, however, to say that the current legislative debate has been settled in favor of recognition of the rights of forest communities, especially those indigenous and *campesino* communities who inhabit Bolivia's plentiful lowland forests.

Milestone 7: Liberia Community Rights Law (S05)

As another example of its ability to influence changes in tenure and governance regimes at the national level, RRI reports on recent changes achieved in Liberia. With RRI support, activists drafted a progressive Community Rights Law and achieved legislative support for the law. The president, however, refused to sign the law, apparently on the recommendation of the Forest Development Administration and private timber operators. A new version of the law removed many of the more progressive elements of the first version, but did preserve the notion of community ownership of the forest.

After some debate, RRI's local coalition decided to continue working with the government to fashion a regulatory framework to allow implementation of the flawed law. They have achieved important victories in the construction of regulations, including recognition of the legitimacy of the traditional practice of pitsawing. Even with these positive regulatory steps, implementation of the law continues to be a major issue.

All of those consulted in relation to this Milestone agree that the environment for the realization of community forest rights has improved considerably as a result of the adoption of the Community Rights Law. These observers from inside and outside of RRI also agree that the initiative has played an important role. One participant insists that the expertise and resources that RRI brought to the Liberian process completely changed the dynamic there and allowed organizations to involve forest communities in the national debate in ways that had been impossible previously. While not

questioning that RRI has made important contributions, one participant cautions against attributing to RRI too significant a role in the drafting of the original law, suggesting that FERN may have been the most important catalytic actor in that early period. That said, RRI's contribution to the process at all stages is not in doubt.

In most references to this Milestone, RRI connects it to Strategic Objective 4, which would emphasize the achievement of the legislative reform. However, the actual Data Monitoring Report detailing the rationale for this Milestone refers to Strategic Objective 5, which puts more emphasis on the achievement of a progressive regulatory framework. Taking into account all data provided in relation to this achievement, work on getting the government to adopt progressive regulations does appear to have been the area of the most significant RRI participation.

The adoption of the Liberian Community Rights Law and the regulatory framework to allow its limitations was not a smooth, linear process. In that, it mirrors legislative processes everywhere. RRI's support was present from the very earliest stages of the process, although it seems that its influence increased in significance as the process advanced. The realization of the tenure rights of Liberian forest communities remains a work in progress, but important steps have been taken. RRI contributed to those steps in ways that provide one more example of the ways in which the Initiative can make a difference at the national level.

Three dynamic RRI Collaborators have led the work on the CR, and continue to follow-up on the law's implementation: The Foundation for Community Initiatives (FCI); Green Advocates and the Sustainable Development Initiative (SDI)

Milestone 8: Access to Markets and Resources in Nepal (S05)

In 2010, RRI reported on the work of the national coalition in Nepal, which came together to help turn back a government effort to rollback previous gains of the community forestry movement there. Our validation of the data presented in that reporting accepted that RRI had played an important role in the defeat of the government initiative. We also accepted RRI's contention that successfully opposing an attack on community rights was tantamount to advancing rights in that context.

In this year's report, RRI utilizes essentially the same data to suggest that, since an attack on community forest rights would undermine the living standards of forest communities, then defeating such an attack would amount to increasing community access to markets and resources and would, therefore, represent evidence that RRI was making progress on the poverty alleviation part of its mission.

The major new data introduced in relation to this milestone were the results of an important study conducted by DFID among community forest user groups in communities affiliated with one of Nepal's community forest federations. The study demonstrates quite convincingly that household incomes in these communities increased substantially and that community forestry made an important contribution to that increase.

In terms of RRI's contribution to efforts to defeat the government rollback efforts, our finding this year mirrors last year's conclusion that RRI had made a very important contribution. It is, however, a bit more difficult to conclude that this successful effort resulted in increased access to resources and markets for forest communities. Although incomes increased over time in many communities practicing community forestry, it does not necessarily follow that the set of policies being

advocated by the government would reverse that trend. Intuitively, this conclusion seems logical, but one would need a bit more analysis of the government proposals and their likely effects on forest communities to make this connection definitive.

It may well be, therefore, that RRI’s contention concerning the likely results of policies like those advocated by the Nepalese government is true; nonetheless, this is not a strong case to demonstrate that RRI is making progress on the poverty aspect of its mission.

All RRI Partners and Collaborators active in Nepal contributed to this milestone. Of particular note was the role of RRI Partner FECOFUN in leading the Initiative’s advocacy strategy at both the national and local levels, and the work of another RRI Partner Lelvetas/Swiss Intercooperation in providing coordination for the overall effort.

Strategic Outcome Milestones: In Summary

While 2011 marked the fourth year in RRI’s 2008-2012 Framework Period, it is only the second year in which the Initiative has systematically gathered data related to advances toward the realization of its Strategic Outcomes, and presented that data to its Independent Monitor. In fact, this was the first year in which expectations around data collection were clear from the beginning of the year. Having gone through this exercise once, staff now clearly understands the importance of documenting the Initiatives key achievements. The data presented this year in support of the proposed Strategic Outcome Milestones was more carefully chosen and complete than in the previous year.

Since RRI has gone to the effort of establishing “Progress Markers” that specify the level of progress that the Initiative hoped to make toward each of its Outcome Indicators by the end of 2011, one obvious way to assess the Initiative’s progress is to look at how actual implementation compares to those Progress Markers. Table 3, below, provides that analysis in a summary form.

**Table 3
RRI Progress Markers vs. Actual Implementation
As of end of 2011**

Out- come	Outcome Indicator	Progress Marker For 2011	Achieved as of end of 2011	Needed in 2012*
S01	Number of effective value-added joint actions facilitated/organized	14	10	10
S02	Number of engaged networks becoming more capable of influencing tenure policy	5	5	1
S03	Number of key tenure policy institutions changing policies or practices	3	4	1
S04	Number of countries adopting/advancing legal/legislative reforms	4	4	2
S05	Number of countries in which more equitable tenure/enterprise models increase community access to markets/resources	3	4	1

*According to the goals established by RRI, the level of achievement required in 2012 in order to meet the five-year benchmark for each Strategic Outcome.

Even a quick glance at the table shows that RRI has either met or exceeded its own expectations related to all outcomes except Strategic Outcome #1. For that outcome, RRI is asked to document the added value of the RRI coalition by collecting data on “joint actions that achieve results that represent progress toward the Initiative’s other Strategic Outcomes.” The idea here is that, because of the existence of RRI and its programmatic interventions, participating organizations will take part in collaborations that might not have attracted their participation in the absence of energy and direction provided by RRI. It is not enough that such actions take place, but they must be able to demonstrate results that represent one of the Initiative’s other Strategic Outcomes.

Given that such collaborations are the lifeblood of RRI’s work, the Initiative set a fairly ambitious set of benchmarks in this area. To date, they have documented ten such joint actions, with some cases stronger examples than others. RRI will need to document another ten successful examples of collective synergy to reach their projected level of achievement by the end of 2012.

There are many possible explanations for RRI apparently falling short of its own projections in relation to this outcome. It could be that, given the multiple demands on its own resources, RRG—which is best positioned to catalyze such collaborations—has simply not prioritized sufficiently the facilitation of joint actions among Partners and Collaborators. We have pointed out elsewhere the sometimes excessive demands on RRG’s resources, but we have also seen an increasing awareness on RRG’s part that the only way for the Initiative to achieve its mission is for it to activate its Partners and Collaborators in just this way.

Alternatively, it could be that some Partners and Collaborators view RRG more as a source of funding than the Secretariat of a coalition and, therefore, are more focused on their own implementation of contracted activities, rather than collaborations that might require the investment of significant resources of their own. To justify the continued transfer of RRI funds, Partners and Collaborators must continue to carry out contracted activities, and this is a priority. At several points, we have commented on the ways in which RRG’s role as a “funder” impacts—positively and less positively—relationships within the Initiative. We do not, however, find this to be a compelling explanation for RRI’s apparent shortcoming related to Strategic Outcome #1.

A third explanation might be that data gathering and presentation is a time-consuming activity that only began during the third year of the Framework Proposal period. As a result, while there have not really been a shortage of “joint, value-added activities,” there has been a shortage of time and capacity to carry out this task to the extent required. Each of these three explanations has some relevance to this discussions, but given the obvious existence of collaborations on which RRI has not reported to date, we find this last explanation the most compelling. If RRG had begun gathering data and reporting on milestones during the first, or even the second year of the current period, we believe that the reported compliance with the benchmarks established for Strategic Outcome #1 would be significantly different.

Table 4, below, collects all of the Milestones reported by RRI for the period 2008-2011. Analyzing these together opens the door to a few comments beyond the useful comparison of strategic projections and actual achievements.

Table 4
RRI Strategic Outcome Milestones for the period 2008-11*

Out-come	Identification	Summary of RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	Yr. Rep.
SO1	National Forestry Alliance in Guatemala	RRI helped facilitate the formation of an unprecedented alliance of forest communities from the Western Highlands and from the Petén, a large lowland department in northern Guatemala.	2010
SO1	Tenure reform coalition in Cameroon	With RRI's help, an important coalition of NGOs and forest community groups has emerged in Cameroon with the goals of protecting traditional community rights and advocating for a rights-sensitive national Forestry Law. The RRI-sponsored forest tenure conference in Yaoundé in May 2009 boosted the coalition's efforts to influence debate on a new Forest Law.	2010
SO1	Global Rights and Climate Dialogues	In concert with a variety of other actors, RRI has organized a series of global policy dialogues highlighting the centrality of the rights agenda to any serious effort to address forest degradation. These dialogues helped reinsert rights issues into REDD debates and placed the question of REDD safeguards on the screens of key REDD actors.	2010
SO1	Pro-Tenure Rights Coalition in Bolivia	RRI has facilitated the creation of a coalition committed to inject the rights-based concerns of Bolivia's lowland forest communities in national debates concerning forest governance. The coalition immediately helped channel indigenous concerns into the consideration of a new Autonomy Law.	2010
SO1	Tenure Champions in Burkina Faso	Under challenging conditions, RRI has helped identify a number of "tenure champions" committed to developing a joint agenda to advance tenure reform in Burkina Faso.	2010
SO1	NRM Federation in Nepal	Primarily through its national Partner, FECOFUN, RRI supported an effort to broaden the coalition of forest user groups coming together to defeat government efforts to "rollback" tenure rights.	2010
SO1	Yaoundé Tenure Reform Conference	RRG worked closely with the entire Africa Regional Program of RRI to deliver a regional tenure conference in Cameroon that not only influenced the tenure debate within that country, but resulted in the formation of a regional network of women community forest activists and raised the profile of the tenure reform debate, regionally.	2010
SO1	African Community Rights Network (ACRN)	Through its support for the creation and development of an African Community Rights Network , RRI has helped strengthen the African organizations participating in the network, and contributed to concrete results in the area of the promotion of community tenure rights.	2011
SO1	Indonesia Rights Debate	In 2011, under pressure from a number of sources inside and outside of Indonesia, the Ministry of Forestry publically expressed an awareness of the connection between forest tenure and climate change, and a willingness to consider recognizing the tenure rights of indigenous and other forest communities. Among the most important factors contributing to this outcome was ongoing work of a group of Indonesian NGOs that came together around RRI's Indonesia coalition to plan and coordinate the Lombok Forest tenure conference.	2011

Out-come	Identification	Summary of RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	Yr. Rep.
SO2	MegaFlorestais	RRI facilitated the creation and staffing of a network of senior forestry officials from many of the world's most-forested countries. The network has provided an informal platform for international dialogue on issues at the center of RRI's agenda, and has allowed for the formation of relationships that have influenced national tenure reform debates in several key national contexts.	2010
SO2	Network of Women Forest Activists in Africa	Among the attendees at RRI's Yaoundé conference in 2009 were a number of women activists interested in forming a regional network to provide information exchange and a forum for information exchange and joint action. While facing many challenges, REFACOF has continued to raise the profile of women's rights within the regional debate on the recognition of customary forest rights across Africa.	2010
SO2	Global Alliance of Community Forestry	RRI and some of its Partners came together to form this global network of community-based forestry organizations. The network provides a vehicle for the voice of forest communities in a variety of international spaces.	2010
SO2	Civil Society Advisory Group	After becoming a formal participant in a fairly ineffective network, RRI put energy into re-invigorating CSAG and making it a more effective voice for forest tenure reform within the ITTO structure.	2010
SO2	Next Generation	Through MegaFlorestais , RRI has gained access to an emerging generation of national level forestry leaders. A series of "Next Generation" programs organized by RRI have built network connections among these future leaders, increased their awareness of the tenure and governance issues and created the basis for future dialogue in service of a tenure reform agenda.	2011
SO3	ITTO	Over a period of years, RRI, both directly and through the Civil Society Advisory Group has developed strong relationships with a variety of key people within the ITTO. ITTO has teamed with RRI on a number important international events, and its policies and publications have evolved to show a much greater awareness of the contributions of community forestry.	2010
SO3	REDD Programme Policy Board	Seeing the importance of influencing the director of the UN REDD Programme, RRI has developed strong relationships with the Policy Board. Inputs from both RRI and the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) have contributed to notable shifts in the degree of sensitivity around safeguards and the importance of secure tenure rights to the REDD agenda.	2010
SO3	Influencing Bilateral Aid Policy	Since RRI came into existence, two of the most important bilateral donors to climate change mitigation/adaptation (NORAD/NICFI and DFID) have gained a stronger appreciation for the importance of forest tenure reform to the success of any effort to control deforestation and forest degradation. RRI's engagement with both institutions has been a factor in the evolution of this perspective.	2011

Out-come	Identification	Summary of RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	Yr. Rep.
SO3	UNFF Voluntary Agreement	The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is an important multilateral forest policy body. Over a period of years, RRI has influenced the UNFF Secretariat and some Forum members with its arguments on community forest enterprises and other tenure-related issues. This engagement resulted in the Secretariat inviting RRI to present a policy paper on community forest enterprises at the Forum conference in January 2011. This reflects influence with the UNFF Secretariat and with some member governments.	2011
SO4	Brazil	RRI engagement in Brazil, especially in relation to the 2007 conference co-sponsored with ITTO and GACF, was one factor in creating support in the Brazilian forestry administration for the creation of a Federal Program to provide economic support to community-based forest enterprises.	2010
SO4	China	Building on a long history of work by RRI Partner, Forest Trends, RRI has continued to contribute to the momentum for forest tenure reform there. Chinese officials have been active participants in MegaFlorestais, and events co-sponsored by RRI and Chinese institutions in 2008 and 2009 helped advance the pace of reform.	2010
SO4	Bolivia Land Legislation	Advocacy work undertaken by members of the RRI coalition influenced legislative debates on the Autonomy Law, the Integral Law on Development in the Amazon and other key legislation in favor of full recognition of the tenure rights of indigenous and <i>campesino</i> communities.	2011
SO5	Nepal	The local RRI coalition in Nepal, which includes the largest of the Federations of community forest user groups has played a key role in promoting the pro-tenure-reform position in the country's constitutional debates. The coalition has also led efforts to stand against government efforts to create new national parks or amend forestry laws to limit the existing rights of forest communities.	2010
SO5	Tenure reform and small-scale enterprise in China	Support for highly professional research has been a key RRI strategy in China. Over time, the research has supported the case for tenure reform in ways that have attracted the attention of policy makers and influenced policy outcomes.	2010
SO5	Liberia Community Rights Law	Determined advocacy by RRI collaborators and their allies, led by SDI and Green Advocates, resulted in almost unanimous legislative support for a Community Rights Law, recognizing traditional community forest rights. The president refused to sign that law and had the law re-drafted and passed without many of its strongest provisions. RRI's local coalition continued to work with the government on implementation and achieved positive changes in the regulatory framework. The struggle continues to compel government implementation of the law.	2011

Out-come	Identification	Summary of RRI Monitoring Hypothesis	Yr. Rep.
S05	Nepal	Working closely with community forest user groups from around the country, the RRI coalition was able to influence the government debate on a set of proposals that would have had the effect of rolling back some existing protection of the rights of forest-dependent communities. Because people practicing community forestry tend to have greater access to markets and resources in other communities, that rollback would have had the effect of limiting that access. As a result, the RRI advocacy intervention had the effect of making community access to resources and markets greater than it would have otherwise been.	2011

*Note that because reporting on Strategic Outcome Milestones began in 2010, RRI reported on Milestones for 2008, 2009 and 2010 in 2010

1. By any measure, this represents a highly significant body of work undertaken by a large network of organizations under the coordination of an efficient Secretariat (RRG).
2. For the Milestones related to “value-added joint activities” RRI is often more successful documenting the existence of the collaboration than the tenure-related results of the joint actions.
3. The Milestones reflect a good mix of achievements driven by national-level collaboration, RRG-led Global Programs and some combination of the two. RRI seems most effective when Global and Country programs can work together to achieve a given result.
4. There exists great variety in the significance and the scope of the reported milestones.
5. The current monitoring approach seems to be good at identifying, documenting and categorizing results predicted by the Logical Framework, but may not be as effectively taking into account the unplanned achievements of the Initiative.
6. These results represent a satisfying geographic diversity of accomplishment.
7. The reported results suggest that some of the current Strategic Outcomes identify the real results desired by RRI (legal and regulatory reform, new governance regimes, new models of conservation and community-based forest enterprises), while others focus attention on key intermediate strategies of the Initiative (networks, institutional influence, coalition work).
8. While results in S05 are “on track” in a quantitative sense, the Milestones reported there are not the strongest cases for RRI achievement. Especially in the area of new enterprise models, there may be a need to develop new strategies to reinforce the Initiative’s interventions.

Many of the issues raised in this section will be revisited below.

IV. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL MONITORING AT THE COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVELS, AS REFLECTED IN THE QUALITY OF 2011 COUNTRY AND REGIONAL MONITORING REPORTS

RRI’s founding documents, including the Initiative’s Framework Proposal, emphasize that an important source of RRI’s impact would result from its ability to create effective networks of organizations committed to influencing tenure policy and legislation, forest governance regimes,

and development of community forest enterprises at the national level in key forested countries. Strong national networks would also allow the Initiative to extend that influence to the regional level. To that end, RRI has consistently devoted at least 60% of the resources available to it to work led by its Partners and Collaborators at the country and regional levels.

In the design of both its independent monitoring exercises and its internal monitoring and evaluation system, RRI gave thought to the challenge of how to monitor and demonstrate the effect of this broad and diverse body of work. The monitoring work at the country and national level has had two primary elements.

First of all, RRI has taken steps to strengthen the ability of the country and regional planning teams to monitor their own progress. The principle here is that RRI's overall mission will be greatly strengthened if the local coalition in Nepal is better able to assess its own progress and adjust its priorities accordingly. Since RRI formed the national planning teams, those teams have had annual planning meetings. That planning has involved both assessing the successes and challenges of the past period and planning the coalition's work for coming year.

RRI's internal planning and monitoring system has included an effort to bring more attention to that part of the annual planning meetings where the participants take stock of their work over the past year. In 2010, RRI introduced an Annual Program Monitoring Report (APMR) to be completed by RRG staff and the country/regional planning teams, based on the results of the annual assessment of progress. The biggest and most important use of the report is for the planning purposes of the planning group, itself. Done with some care, the APMR creates an organizational memory that builds relationships among group members and help annual planning efforts. RRG's regional facilitators/coordinators also use the reports to keep a handle on the advance of the work at the country and regional level and to remain aware of the obstacles being faced by RRI's Country and Regional Programs. Once completed, the reports are placed by RRG in an electronic directory accessible online to anyone associated with the Initiative. Finally, these reports are an important input for the work of the Independent Monitor.

In addition, there is another way in which RRI monitors the progress of Country and Regional Programs. At least in 2009 and 2010, the Independent Monitor (IM) carried out field research to validate the monitoring findings of the country planning groups in a subset of the countries where the Initiative is active. For example, in 2009 members of the Independent Monitoring Team conducted monitoring visits to Cameroon, Guatemala and Nepal. The results of this research are seen as complementary to the monitoring data generated by the planning teams, in the constant effort to document the real effect RRI is having on the world of tenure reform.

Given that the Mid-Term Evaluation conducted by RRI in 2011 included field visits to several of the major RRI country programs, the 2011 independent monitoring exercise does not include that effort to validate select country programs. Instead, we were asked to review all 2011 Annual Monitoring Reports and comment on the extent to which this monitoring work is having the intended effect.

First of all, the RRG coordinators and facilitators interviewed about the APMRs all agreed that the effort to formalize the part of the planning discussion that assessed the results of the work was having positive effects. One coordinator felt that it would be good to review the questions asked of the planning teams in the creation of the APMR to be sure they were generating the best possible assessment of local results, but even that person felt that the current process was worthwhile. For everyone involved, the key challenge for the country and regional monitoring is the timing of the

monitoring moment. The monitoring discussion often happens only a few months after contracts have been approved and resources released for the year's country and regional work. This year, RRG made the important change of giving the monitoring process some autonomy from the contract cycle by extending the period monitored back in time to cover a full year. This helps make the monitoring discussion much more meaningful, but this timing remains an issue in that minority of cases when contracted activities shift significantly from one year to another. The other timing issue is that the results of the discussion must be organized into the written report at precisely the time of year when coordinators and facilitators are very engaged with the planning process for the following years' activities.

Our review of 9 country APMRs (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Liberia, Mali, China, Indonesia, Nepal, Bolivia and Guatemala) and three regional reports (Africa, Asia and Latin America) leads us to the following observations:

QUALITY OF DATA PRESENTED: The quality of the information provided in the APMRs increased noticeably between 2010 (the first year that the instrument was used) and 2011. The improvement in the reporting in the column on "Lessons Learned/Unexpected Outcomes" was especially significant. For example, the Indonesia APMR notes,

"We should not forget that the national transmigration program remains a key driver of forestland reallocation even if it has now got a new mechanism under a decentralized structure. The new model scales up existing processes - Jakarta felt original sites were too small and economically unsustainable. This work highlights potential linkages to industrial agriculture, mining and other extractives, and points to the need to pursue district-level (rather than site-specific) landscape transformation."

This is exactly the sort of deeper reflection that the internal monitoring system hopes to provoke. Analysis of this sort has certainly always been present in the planning meetings, but devoting more time to the assessment part of the planning meetings and documenting the results of that discussion should increase the value of those reflections. If the APMRs produced in 2011 reflect the real quality of the team monitoring discussion, then the quality of the discussion has definitely improved.

It is also worth mentioning that, in 2010, the planning teams had very little introduction to the APMRs before they were expected to answer a set of questions in their already-very-packed annual planning meeting. In 2011, both RRG staff and the planning team were presumably better acquainted with the purpose and the process for creating these reports.

IDENTIFYING AND MONITORING OUTCOMES: The core of the country and regional monitoring commitment involves members of the planning teams identifying and monitoring progress on outcomes. To be successful, this process requires a shared definition of the notion of an "outcome" and some idea of what makes a good one-year outcome. In 2010, the planning teams were clearly working with a clearer shared definition of "outcome" than in 2009, but there is still some variation in how teams are treating this important concept.

For example, some of the stated outcomes are clearly "potential effects or results of the work of an organization or program that move that organization toward the achievement of its strategic aims." The country in Burkina Faso lists as an outcome, "*National capacity is strengthened for conducting studies on NTFP value chains, gender and tenure issues.*" While it might not be specific enough to be considered a strong one-year outcome, this is certainly worded as an outcome. Similarly, this

outcome from the Liberia APMR identifies a potential result of the work. *“Communities use their achievements or successes in this project as leverage in their future dealings and engagements with FDA, logging companies and other actors in the forest sector.”*

Other stated outcomes are less clear. The Mali team stated as one of its outcomes, *“Disseminate tools on national and sub-regional levels.”* In most cases, this would be seen more as an output or activity carried out by one of the Mali groups.

Identifying a one-year outcome is a tricky exercise. Many monitoring and evaluation experts insist that it is unrealistic to expect a result over a one-year period, and that one year plans should try to identify a plan for outputs that will move the organization toward the achievement of strategic (longer-term) outcomes. In truth, many of the teams concluded that their one-year outcomes were too ambitious and could not be concluded in a year. In many cases, where outcomes were deemed to have been achieved, they were vague or unspecific outcomes such as “capacity increased” or “recognition of rights increased.”

BALANCING REALISM AND AMBITION: The main outcome of the RRI annual country and regional planning process in a given country or region is a workplan for the coming year. The Annual Monitoring report has become a second tangible outcome of that process. The workplan is then reviewed by RRG as part of the annual process to determine budget allocations to each country and regional program. The main determinant of those allocations is the availability of funds, but people quite naturally believe that the scope and the ambition of the plan has some effect. Such a process carries with it a built-in tendency to be ambitious on the assumption that more ambition will result in more resources moving toward the work. In 2010, RRI programs proposed an average of 8.5 annual outcomes per program, which feels like quite a number of outcomes for a coalition effort like that of RRI. In addition, from our perspective, many of those outcomes were quite ambitious in scope.

RRI is generally unable to fully fund the workplans resulting from this sort of planning system. Those proposed activities not funded by RRI then often receive inadequate implementation attention due to lack of funding. Even those that receive funding are often framed in such a way as to make full implementation challenging. The annual assessment then concludes that the plans were too ambitious. This pattern was evident in the 2011 reports. Of the 75 annual outcomes identified by RRI Country and Regional planning groups in 2010, by 2011 28 of these were deemed to be fully achieved, 33 were considered partially achieved and 24 did not show substantial progress. Some monitoring reports directly state that the outcomes for which there was not substantial progress were related to activities not funded by RRI. We expect that was the case for most of these outcomes.

A “good” outcome (or output) is one that is specific, can be reasonably achieved in the period in question, and moves the organization toward the strategic results it desires. In the RRI system, there are strong incentives to be “strategic” in the sense of identifying outcomes consistent with strategy, but few incentives to state specific outcomes that can be reasonably achieved in the time available. In fact, planning groups appear to believe that being “realistic” might result in less resources being available for the work, as is the case in many of their funding relationships.

SUPPORTING DATA: When the RRI’s internal monitoring system was put in place, it did not require that the organization collect or generate data to support the findings of APMRs. It was assumed that, at least in the early stages of implementation, the demands of collecting data to support claims about Strategic Outcome Milestones would stretch the organization’s capacity to gather such data.

The 2011 APMR format included a column for teams (or RRG staff) to identify “sources,” or data that support the team’s assessment of its progress. For twelve reports, this turned out to be a considerable and impressive collection of data points. In most cases, the data provided clear support for the team’s assessment of progress on one of its outcomes. Such data is extremely useful and definitely increases the value and reliability of any assessment. Gathering the data, however, places another heavy burden on staff at a time when such burdens are plentiful. Such a burden is probably justified when the assessments of a given program in its APMR are being validated by the Independent Monitor or through some other process, but gathering that supporting data for all APMRs would only be justified in other cases if the planning team in question expressed a need for it, or saw a particular value in having access to it, after the fact.

RRG STAFF AND ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS: From the point of initiation of RRI’s internal monitoring system, it was assumed that RRG Staff (either the Facilitator or Coordinator) would create the APMR from the official notes of the assessment discussion. The key purposes of a monitoring document are to (1) inform any possible mid-course corrections and (2) provide information for whatever evaluation exercise will be carried out by the organization. In this case, the APMRs also provide an important programmatic record for RRI’s Facilitators and Coordinators.

The 2011 APMRs are fully developed documents in English with data sources, etc. They represent an improvement over the 2010 versions and one expects that the improvement will continue as staff and planning teams become more familiar with the process of creating them. Such documents are an excellent resource, but place yet another heavy burden on staff. There may well be an argument for a “re-conditioned” version of the APMR in English as a matter of course. More important is a version in the language of the meeting that captures the real conclusions of the meeting in a way that is accessible to the planning team, and can aid them over the course of the year’s implementation and during the next planning cycle.

ANNUAL OUTCOMES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS: The Country and Regional Programs each developed some sort of five-year plan in the early stages of the Framework Proposal Period. Annual outcomes, therefore, are always put together in the context of this strategic approach, and should, somehow, reflect that approach.

A review or “refreshment” of the five goals to assure their continuing relevance is part of each annual planning process at the country and regional levels. In some countries, however, these goals have shifted very little over the four years of the Framework Proposal period. Reinforcing this part of the process to be sure it does not become a formality could help increase the relevance of the five-year goals and, therefore, strengthen the strategic content of the annual plans designed to achieve them.

Another way to approach this question of “refreshing” strategies is to organize a single “Mid-Term Review Session,” that takes place at some point during the third year, away from the planning meetings. The purpose of this meeting is to review overall progress to date and to make mid-term corrections to the strategy.

In addition, each annual planning meeting should ask itself the question, “Do we see opportunities this year that justify annual outcomes that don’t directly track to our strategy?” Such a reflection insures that the planning groups are able to be opportunistic, without needing to alter the five-year strategy every year. Again, it seems that several groups are already doing this and attaching the

“opportunistic” annual outcome to one of their strategic goals, even when the connection between the two is not evident.

In addition to these general comments, we also offer a few observations on the information provided in individual country and regional program monitoring reports.

BURKINA FASO: This country report suggests a high level of success in the program in Burkina Faso. Most outcomes were either fully achieved or on track to be achieved by the end of November, the deadline for submitting financial reports to RRI. The national platform is focused on ensuring broad public understanding of regulations around community forest management, and on creating gender-sensitive rural land charters. The coalition reports significant progress in each of these areas. The outcomes that don't show substantial progress were the ones for which funding from RRI was not received. The connection between program assessment and the RRI funding cycle is particularly evident in this report.

CAMEROON: This report suggests that some progress was made on each of 10 outcomes, even those which did not receive funding. Prominent among the achieved outcomes were work on a joint proposal for reform of the country's forest law, and work with a parliamentary commission on the drafting of a position paper on community rights. The report is particularly good at documenting perceived opportunities, and the data presented with this report is especially relevant and complete, although, again, the IM did not have the expectation that such data would be generated with these reports, unless there will be field validation of the Annual Program Monitoring Report.

LIBERIA: According to the APMR, RRI in Liberia has become an important interlocutor between forest communities and the national government. The coalition helped communities express their concerns about land-grabbing and several other abuses in forested areas. The strength of this report is the richness of the “Comments” section where background is offered on the nature of the reported achievement. Liberia identified the largest number of annual outcomes (12) of any country, including as many as three outcomes for each strategic goal. The team, nonetheless, reports some progress on each outcome, regardless of whether or not that area of work received funding from RRI.

MALI: The Malian team reports much more progress here than it did during the field validation visit in 2010. The country team reports having achieved important gains in the area of documenting and gaining support for “local conventions” or customary rights, as practiced in Mali. The “Lessons/Learned” section is much stronger on the challenges faced than it is on perceived opportunities. This report takes advantage of the opportunity to report on positive feedback regarding its work by a participant in the program. It is difficult to provide much of this information in this format, but it is always good to include some example of this in the report. This is the sort of thing that would be very good to record in an outcome journal or other “real time” instrument for recording outcome-related data.

REGION: This report documents the commitment to develop gender-sensitive analysis and action throughout the regional program, which echoes throughout the country reports. In addition, through the African Community Rights Network and similar regional coordinating bodies, the coalition reports having helped tenure networks in the region move toward a common understanding of the links between REDD, rights and climate change. The report suggests a lower general level of attention to regional programming in comparison to national programming. The “Lessons Learned” column captures relatively less shared sense of opportunity or challenge at the regional level.

CHINA: The China report is extremely informative on the work undertaken during 2011. We do not have access to the 2010 APMR, but it would be interesting to compare the content of the two. If this level of detail was present in the planning team's assessment discussion, it was a very in-depth discussion regarding accomplishments. The country team supported important research on forest tenure reform, but its most impressive achievement was the July 2011 International Conference on Forest Tenure, Governance and Enterprise. According to the APMR, the conference was a turning point for the visibility and credibility of RRI in China. The five-year Strategic Goals for this program are not as specific as in some country plans, which may reflect the uncertainty that surrounds the program. This annual outcomes tend to echo this relative vagueness. Outcomes are generally stronger when they identify the actor who will be transformed by a certain outcome and specify the change, as much as possible. "Support legal reforms through analysis, draft legal text and initiation of dialogue" is more of a set of activities to be undertaken by RRI in China than an outcome of the work.

INDONESIA: The 2010 monitoring field visit to Indonesia and, especially, the report on the 2010 country planning meeting portrayed a program with several very active Partners who had not really jelled as a collaborative actor. The projections regarding program results reflected that assessment. The 2011 APMR tells the very different story of a program that came together around the challenge of planning and carrying out the Lombok conference. Again, the content of this report is particularly rich, and we hope that the report will be made available to the country team for comment. The real value of the Lombok conference will be made evident through tenure reform gains in 2011 and beyond. It is clear from this that Indonesia CSOs will continue to forge the "road map" to tenure reform in Indonesia. It is less clear how the RRI country program will continue to contribute to that work.

NEPAL: This report reflects relatively less progress on outcomes than other reports—in Asia and globally. However, it is impossible to say to what extent this reflects different criteria of success among members of the planning team. Among the most important achievements were the concrete results of ongoing campaigns against corruption at the local level, especially in Terai. The supporting data provided with this report provides an unusually rich window on the situation of community forestry in Nepal, and the "Lessons Learned" section of the report contains some very interesting reflections on the work. It is here that the report highlights the importance of extending the national campaign against corruption to some of the users' groups networks that make up FECOFUN. We hope that these reflections have been socialized throughout the local coalition.

REGION: By only reviewing the various reports, one gets the sense that the regional work is more developed in Asia than in the other regions. The ample information provided in the "Comments" section focuses more on activities carried out regionally by individual coalition members, rather than the concrete changes in regional actors' policies, practices and relationships as a result of these actions. This is generally true in these reports, but more evident here because of the richness of the details provided. Many of the regional accomplishments reported are related to work in Indonesia, including FPPs work on the impact of the expansion of palm oil plantations on indigenous rights and the Lombok conference, which is seen to have had regional implications.

BOLIVIA: The 2011 annual planning meeting was curtailed because of the emergency created by the conflictive situation existing between indigenous groups, settler populations and the government around the TIPNIS case. The APMR, nonetheless, provides an important update of information available in both the 2010 IM report and the Mid-Term evaluation. According to the report, the national coalition has made progress in the very complex challenge of generating legal proposals

that have the support of the diverse indigenous communities of the eastern lowlands. Without such a process, the overall goal of legislative influence will be difficult to achieve, regardless of the government's legislative agenda. The report further affirms the continuing challenge of effective advocacy given the fact that the government drives the legislative agenda and its own agenda is inconsistent and highly responsive to short-term political exigencies. The "Lessons Learned" section emphasizes both the importance of intentionally-planned moments of coordination and collaboration among coalition members and the need to postpone certain coordination efforts because of the explosive political situation.

GUATEMALA: Again, the level of detail provided in the report is well beyond what was generated last year and probably beyond the expectation for these reports. We hope that this version reflects the discussion among members of the planning team, and that the team will have access to this version in advance of the next planning session. The fact that 2011 was a national election year in Guatemala seemed to paralyze national legislative processes and, therefore shifted the focus of much of the national work to internal consultation among coalition members concerning the development of proposals to influence the various important national processes now underway. Among the "Lessons Learned," the report reflects on the importance of the Guatemalan team exchanging experiences related to collective rights with other countries in the region and beyond. RRI seems to be in a good position to facilitate that sort of learning across experiences.

REGIONAL: The report includes in-depth information concerning a variety of projects underway at the regional or sub-regional levels. Among those is a project to encourage a regional approach to the overall issue of territorial governance. There was a plan to develop a regional project in this regard, but that proposal did not gain the support of regional Partners. Other important regional projects focus on regional networking of various types, such as the effort by Forest Trends, under the auspices of RRI, to establish a regional network of leaders with experience in the area of Payment for Environmental Services and efforts across Latin American to map significant third-party investments in forested areas. Data sources presented in support of the regional APMR were particularly valuable in understanding the regional dynamics.

V. RRI RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 2010 INDEPENDENT MONITOR'S REPORT

As part of each Independent Monitor's Report, the IM makes a number of recommendations to the Senior Management of RRG. Observations and suggestions for possible adjustments occur throughout the document, but a small number deemed to be the most significant recommendations are given more prominence as "Strategic Recommendations." This is something of a misnomer, as none of these recommendations suggest a reorientation of RRI's strategy.

Senior Management reviews the recommendations and acts on them or not, according to their own assessment. At year's end, Senior Management prepares a document explaining what action, if any, was taken in response to each recommendation and providing a rationale for the management response. In the Independent Monitoring Report, the IM acknowledges and comments on that response.

Recommendation #1: Management Capacity—RRG should commission an in-depth, external analysis of its management structure, including recommendation adjustments in current management capacity.

In response to this recommendation, RRI made changes in the structure and composition of senior management, including the approval of an Executive Director and the appointment of Arvind Khare to fulfill that role. In addition, senior management was completely re-structured, with a particular emphasis on re-engineering the management of RRI programs. Finally, management promoted two existing managers to the Director level.

The thorough restructuring of management seemed like a sensible response on RRI's part. We did not conduct major interviews to solicit views on the new management structure, but, from the outside the new structure seems to have eliminated some sources of confusion and possible duplication of effort. The creation of the Executive Director position and the reorganization of Global Programs seem particularly important in this regard. We still believe, however, that there would be value for RRI in an external review of the requirements of managing such a complex entity. Perhaps such a review could best take place as part of an overall effort to pave the way for implementation of a re-tooled strategic vision in the context of the next Framework Proposal.

Recommendation #2: Program Design—Global Programs should be re-designed around the strategic themes of the organization, with staff responsible for leading on each theme and an overall Director of Global Programs.

After appropriate deliberations, RRG implemented this recommendation, in large part. The budget centers for Global Programs now include the four themes (including Tenure Analysis) and two programs, Communications and Networks. While we remain convinced that these "Programs" are better seen as cross-cutting core strategies of RRI, this general program structure should, over time, prove to be a significant improvement. After working with the structure for only part of a year, the Director of Global Programs reported that he saw improvements in program management. He further reported that the new way of structuring program had clarified the fact that implementing a program plan on the scale of what RRI envisioned for 2011 would require a significant increase in budgetary authority. The Global Program planning process for 2012 is taking place on the basis of this structure, which should lead to a clear idea how the work in each thematic area will be taken forward.

Recommendation #3: National Facilitation—During 2011, RRG should conduct an internal study of "internal facilitation" needs within each regional program. The 2012 planning process should include a discussion of national facilitation options for each country and region.

RRG considered this proposal, but it was rejected by each Regional Team. According to the "Response..." document, "The proposed model for RRI during this 5 year period 2008-2012, rests heavily on building consensus, a shared strategic analysis and program of work among the Partners and Collaborators in each country, not the expansion of RRG staff." This is a true and important statement, but the recommendation in question did not propose an increase in RRG staff. There might be situations in which existing RRG staff is best positioned to provide national facilitation support, but that would rarely be the best option. We did not have direct contact with country programs as part of this monitoring exercise, but it hard to imagine that this issue is less of interest to Partners and Collaborators than it was a year ago. If RRI decides to maintain its existing structure of Secretariat, Partners and Collaborators, we hope that the Initiative will give serious consideration to this issue as part of the program design for the next five-year period.

Recommendation #4: Partner Assembly—As part of a larger effort to redefine the terms of engagement between Partners and RRI, the RRG Board should approve the creation of a

Partner Assembly, which would formalize the mechanisms of Partner input to the Board of RRG and the organization, as a whole.

This notion, referred to in the Mid-Term Evaluation as a “radical idea” is the one IM recommendation for 2011 that could probably not be implemented unilaterally by RRG. The RRG Board would not likely consider such an idea unless it came to it as a proposal from RRG, which is at it should be. The Secretariat has rejected the idea, with the rationale that the MOU and IBA already define relations between RRI and its Partners, and there is a specific process in place to change each of those documents, as required.

RRI’s Institutional Business Arrangements mandate a separate meeting of Partners during Initiative gatherings. Those meetings take place, and certainly result in input to the RRG Board. There is no question that RRI is fulfilling the IBA mandate through the current arrangement. The IM recommendation was only that a formalization of the Partner meeting into a Partner Assembly, with specific prerogatives and responsibilities, could, over time, increase the quality of Partner input to the Board, while energizing Partners and increasing their sense of overall ownership of the initiative. While neither the IBA nor the MOU require such a structure, we see no way in which it would violate the intent of either document.

Recommendation #5: Indonesia Expertise—Given the importance of Indonesia to any serious effort to curb forest degradation in the world and the critical RRI activities happening there in 2011, RRI should engage additional external expertise on that country to help the Initiative manage the complexity of the forest sector there.

RRG considered this suggestion and then decided that additional expertise was unnecessary. Given the results achieved in Indonesia during 2011 and reported elsewhere in these pages, it is difficult to argue with the RRG assessment.

Recommendation #6: Planning Timeline/Contract Cycle—RRI’s one-year project cycle creates all sorts of difficulties for it as well as its Partners and Collaborators. Given these difficulties, RRI should seriously consider proposing a two-year planning cycle in its next Framework Proposal.

RRI has decided to table this proposal until the next Framework Proposal period, which is actually consistent with the content of the proposal. In tabling the proposal, RRG notes that the current one-year cycle was adopted in order to allow the funding element of RRI to be as agile as possible in responding to emerging opportunities (and, presumably, disengaging from situations where the time of opportunity may have passed). The fear is that lengthening the Planning Timeline would serve to make RRI much less agile.

This statement is not without merit, but if agility is the driving value behind RRI’s structure then it would make more sense to scrap much of the current contracting model in favor of a greatly expanded Strategic Response Mechanism. As long as the current contracting model is the vehicle for the distribution of the majority of RRI funds, then a two-year cycle makes much more sense than the current one-year cycle.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF RRI’S INTERNAL MONITORING SYSTEM

On balance, RRI has shown a strong commitment to Monitoring and Evaluation for most of the current five-year Framework Proposal period. Beginning in Year One, it has implemented an

Independent Monitoring exercise each year, even in Year Two, when the disappearance of the consulting group responsible for Year One could have justified a hiatus and in the current Year Four, when the implementation of the Mid-Term Evaluation strained resources and provided an even more solid rationale for skipping a year. Not only has RRI implemented these exercises, but they have actively cooperated with them at every step...at the cost of considerable human and financial resources.

RRI's Framework Proposal also committed it to put in place an internal monitoring and evaluation system to complement the work of the Independent Monitor. The monitoring work of RRI is designed to:

- Allow Senior Management and other staff to design evidence-based mid-term corrections to the Initiative's strategies and priorities;
- To facilitate reporting to outside organizations (including donors) on the Initiative's progress toward achieving its goals; and
- Serve as a source of useful, organized and at least partially validated information for RRI's Med-Term and Final Evaluations.

RRI was closely monitoring its work from the very early stages of its existence, but it did not put a formal internal system in place until the middle of Year Three. Since that system came into being, RRG has assigned a director-level staff member to oversee the system and is on track to fully implement it in 2011, as it did in 2010.

The elements of that system are:

1. A formal monitoring meeting as part of each Country, Regional and Global Planning meeting and the creation of an Annual Program Monitoring Report for use as a reference by the planning team and the use of RRG and the Independent Monitor, as necessary.
2. Monitoring of progress on the Initiative's Strategic Outcomes and the gathering of data to document that progress. This data is presented for validation to the Independent Monitor, and catalogued for institutional use.
3. Serious review of the recommendations of the Independent Monitor and preparation of an annual report detailing the institutional response to those recommendations, if any.
4. The creation and monitoring, by RRG Senior Management, of RRI's Annual Organizational Priorities. These priorities, which are included in the Governance Book each year and discussed with the RRG Board, are primarily used as a planning tool for Senior Management.

This system is designed to be manageable for RRG, but is still a very significant commitment for the Initiative. The earlier sections of this report speak to the compliance with Steps (1) through (3) in 2011, and Senior Management has informed the IM that Step 4 will take place in December 2011, as usual, and that the Organization Priorities emerging from that discussion will be discussed with the Board in January.

Based on the experience of the IM with the implementation of this system in 2010 and 2011, we offer the following observations, some of which echo comments made in earlier sections of the report.

1. The system, as it stands, stimulates reflection on whether or not outcomes desired for a given year were achieved. It has been less strong at getting Staff, Partners, Collaborators and Board Members to capture those unexpected outcomes or missed opportunities in a

given period that can sometimes be of more significance than the achievement of planned outcomes;

2. The gathering of data to support monitoring claims and conclusions has certainly improved from 2010 to 2011. It is not clear to what extent those responsible for gathering data have internalized the important discipline of “real time” data collection through outcome journals or similar instruments;
3. It is not clear how Senior Management, RRI evaluators or people responsible for reporting to outside organizations on RRI achievements are using monitoring data, if at all;
4. Feedback loops between those collecting data for the system and/or conducting planning meetings and those managing the system certainly exist, but they seem somewhat informal and anecdotal. Structural changes introduced by RRI in the last period are intended, in part, to strengthen this feedback, which is critical to the functioning of the internal M & E system;
5. Those conducting the Mid-Term Evaluation of RRI certainly read the reports of the Independent Monitor and incorporated some of the findings of those reports into their evaluation, but organic links of complementarity do not yet exist between these two processes; and
6. While, in 2011, staff, Partners and Collaborators were all much better prepared to provide inputs for the monitoring system than in 2010, ongoing training of all of these groups in the purpose and the processes of RRI’s internal monitoring will continue to bear fruit.

VII. ANALYSIS/CONCLUSIONS

The primary areas of monitoring contemplated in the 2011 Independent Monitoring exercise were: (1) Validating the conclusions of RRI’s internal monitoring of concerning the Initiative’s progress on its Strategic Outcomes; and (2) RRI’s level of implementation of its internal monitoring and evaluation system. As a result, the conclusions of this report center on those two areas RRI’s work.

RRI Milestones: Markers on a Path to Tenure Reform?

As reported above, in 2011 RRI reported on eight “milestones” that, for those RRG staff members doing the reporting, indicate progress toward the kinds of changes in forest tenure arrangements that RRI wants to see across a wide variety of contexts. The reporting includes both a description of the claimed achievement and a presentation of data that both supports the claim and makes the case that the achievement is, in fact, moving RRI toward its highest-level aims as an Initiative. That these milestones were reported in 2011 does not mean that the work to achieve them occurred exclusively, or even primarily, during this year. These are strategic achievements that might well have resulted from work carried out during the entire life of the initiative and, in some case, before RRI came into formal existence.

As expected, there is great diversity in the nature of the milestones being reported and the degree to which the evidence presented supports RRI’s claim. In general, however, we find the achievements selected by RRI to be relevant and the evidence provided to be quite convincing that the Initiative is making progress in most of the areas that are most important to it.

Two or the milestones reported in 2011 seem to us to be of particular significance: the reported influence on the policies of important bilateral aid organizations in both Norway and England and RRI’s suggestion that its work with a coalition of Indonesian CSOs opened up the possibility of a real advance in the struggle for tenure reform there.

One cornerstone of RRI's apparent theory of change is that enduring forest tenure reform requires demonstrable and sustainable shifts in the positioning of a set of key national and international institutions on the question of tenure reform. It is not sufficient, from RRI's perspective, to generate pressure from below forcing key institutions to make policy changes for which there is not support within the institution. RRI makes a convincing case that a relatively small number of bilateral aid agencies fall into that category. The data provided by RRI focus on the Norwegian and British bilateral agencies in this regard. RRI contends that the Initiative's highly intentional relationships with these agencies helped solidify a pro-forest tenure perspective across in key areas of each institution and that this perspective resulted in important steps to provide financing and other support to pro-tenure rights actors in a variety of contexts. Perhaps the most important of these contexts has been the global discussion of REDD and, eventually, REDD+, where each of these institutions has acted with a growing awareness of the centrality of the issues of rights and safeguards to any effort to reverse forest degradation.

That these institutions have become more active in promoting tenure reform in the global context during the Framework Proposal Period is beyond dispute. Interestingly, while acknowledging the importance of RRI and its relationship to the Initiative in the global discussion of rights and climate change, the Norwegians resist the notion of RRI influence on its internal policy discussions. It seems quite possible to validate RRI's claim that it has made important progress along this line of intervention, in the context of the Norwegian view of the evolution of institutional views on this issue.

DFID has been more amenable to the RRI view on this issue, acknowledging the important role played by RRI in the evolution of its view on the centrality of tenure rights from a position safely held by foresters in their corner of the institution to a much more broadly held tenet of DFID's strategy to support climate change mitigation and adaptation. Important organizational sources suggest that via the relationship with DFID, RRI has had a corollary impact on the thinking within British government ministries engaged in the climate change discussion.

A second milestone reported by RRI in 2011 that seems particularly significant to us is the one related to the Indonesian Tenure Reform Coalition. Here, RRI reports a successful effort by Indonesian civil society organizations to take advantage of an opportunity to create, with the Ministry of Forestry, a "road map" outlining the path to recognition of community forest rights in that critically important country. From its inception, RRI identified Indonesia as a Tier One priority country, and brought together a platform of local and international NGOs to promote tenure reform. As was the case in some countries where RRI is active, the Indonesian group produced mixed results during the early period of the Framework Proposal period.

In 2011, RRG saw a Forest Tenure and Enterprise conference that it would be co-sponsoring with ITTO and the Indonesian Forest Ministry as a key opportunity to promote a reform process that, to many local actors, seemed "stuck" with limited opportunity to advance due to government intransigence. RRG then helped convince the local coalition of the potential offered by the conference, and those local actors then broadened the civil society platform to include several organizations that had not previously collaborated with the RRI work in Indonesia. That platform then developed a strategy to engage and influence government through the conference, which included the development of well-researched white papers on a number of key reform issues.

To the surprise of some, a key government representative then opened the conference with an explicit recognition of the importance of tenure reform to Indonesia's national climate change

agenda, and the Ministry of Forestry followed by proposing further meetings with to work out the road map to reform.

This is an over-simplified rendering of an extremely complex, but it does capture RRI's sense of its own role in catalyzing "value-added joint actions" among key forest tenure actors. RRI's claim of having achieved such a catalyst role in the Indonesian case—as opposed to a "breakthrough"—on tenure reform legislation seems quite well justified. In fact, the Indonesian case seems to exemplify RRI's ability to facilitate not just value-added collaborations by civil society and other actors, but in special cases, RRI is able to help orchestrate, at least in the short-term, the sort of "multi-stakeholder platforms" that bring together often incompatible actors to discuss and act together on tenure reform. These platforms, of which the Lombok conference is a clear example, sit at the very center of RRI's theory of how enduring tenure reform takes place.

These two milestones—influence on tenure reform policy within Norwegian and British bilateral aid establishments and helping to spark a potentially effective CSO collaboration for tenure reform in Indonesia—point directly to what we see as two of RRI's core strategies. These are: (1) international conferences co-sponsored with influential institutional actors and bringing together a range of important actors on tenure reform; and (2) global climate change dialogues offering key actors an opportunity to exchange views in a low-risk, semi-formal environment. Throughout the Framework Proposal period, RRI has repeatedly used these core strategies—or cross-cutting lines of intervention—to great advantage. It has been at these and other similar moments that RRI has most successfully catalyzed the energies of the unique combination of actors co-existing under its own tent. This monitoring observation seems to have powerful implications for the construction of the Initiatives strategy in the next period.

While the two milestones highlighted above point us toward obvious areas of strength within RRI, others suggest areas of reflection and possible reinforcement for the Initiative. Strategic Outcome Five amalgamates three critically important areas of desired impact for RRI: forest governance regimes; community forest enterprise models and alternative models of conservation. From a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning perspective (not to mention a Program Management perspective) grouping three such important areas of desired impact in a single Strategic Outcome is challenging, to say the least.

Table 3 is reproduced below for reference in this section of the analysis.

Table 3
RRI Progress Markers vs. Actual Implementation
As of end of 2011

Out-come	Outcome Indicator	Progress Marker For 2011	Achieved as of end of 2011	Needed in 2012*
SO1	Number of effective value-added joint actions facilitated/organized	14	10	10
SO2	Number of engaged networks becoming more capable of influencing tenure policy	5	5	1
SO3	Number of key tenure policy institutions changing policies or practices	3	4	1
SO4	Number of countries adopting/advancing legal/legislative reforms	4	4	2
SO5	Number of countries in which more equitable tenure/enterprise models increase community access to markets/resources	3	4	1

*According to the goals established by RRI, the level of achievement required in 2012 in order to meet the five-year benchmark for each Strategic Outcome.

Table 3 suggests, in a purely quantitative sense, that RRI is on the way to achieving its indicated five-year level of achievement within Strategic Outcome Five. We have found, however, that the milestones documented in relation to this outcome are, on balance, less compelling than in some of the other outcomes. That is, they are less convincing as markers on a path to tenure reform and the full realization of forest tenure rights. The lines of intervention connected to this outcome relate to the notion of translating rights formally recognized by governments into improved conditions of life for forest-dependent communities. No sweeping generalization can survive scrutiny in a context as complex as RRI, but monitoring data reported by RRI suggests that the initiative has been more effective in areas such as injecting the rights agenda into the global climate change debate, facilitating platforms for multi-stakeholder action on tenure reform and advancing specific pro-reform legislation than in the areas of endeavor (governance regimes, community enterprise and rights-sensitive conservation models) gathered under Strategic Outcome #5. These areas of endeavor were not “throw-ins” included to round out the RRI Framework Proposal. From RRI’s creation, each of these areas has been seen as integral to the Initiative’s mission to promote the recognition and the realization of the rights of forest-dependent communities.

A mechanistic, purely quantitative view of Table 3 would suggest that, during the coming final year of the Framework Proposal period, RRI should re-double its efforts to facilitate and document value-added collaborations among key tenure actors in the coming year. In truth, it must document ten more of these to meet its self-identified benchmark in this area. These collaborations are integral to RRI’s theory of change, so continuing to make them happen is a line of action that deserves attention. Furthermore, documenting its achievements in this regard is an important capacity for the Initiative to reinforce. However, even more important could be a careful assessment of what strategic opportunities exist in the areas of work represented by Strategic Outcome 5, and, given the resources at its disposal, what contribution RRI realistically can hope to make in these areas over the next period.

Is Monitoring Worth the Trouble?

The other main area of monitoring activity related to this report was the Independent Monitor's review of RRI's implementation of its own internal monitoring system. That system was put in place in June 2010, and the 2011 program year marked the Initiative's first effort to fully implement all aspects of the system. Given the amount of time and energy that Staff, Partners and Collaborators are asked to invest in monitoring activities, it is important to assess the implementation of this system after a full year of monitoring work.

The internal monitoring aspect of the M & E system has two main objectives:

1. To provide information—concerning both the Initiatives and its shortcomings—in support of organizational planning and evaluation processes, such as the recently-completed Mid-Term Evaluation; and
2. To provide information necessary to allow management to make mid-course tactical adjustments.

There is no question that the internal monitoring system is gathering important information to document key organizational achievements. Much of this information comes in the form of documentation of assessment conversations taking place in a variety of spaces within a complex network of actors. In addition, the monitoring process is organizing existing documentation—both internal and external—in ways that increase the relevance of that information to RRI's internal assessment processes. For example, each Monitoring Data Report references a set of sources that provide information in support of the conclusions of the report. Systems—such as outcome journals—are not yet in place to encourage the “real time” documentation of important organizational outcomes.

Effective monitoring systems are great at collecting information related to the desired outcomes of the monitoring organization. The best systems also do two additional things: (1) they capture information about important outcomes that were simply not intended or planned; and (2) they document and promote learning related to organizational failures.

RRI's internal monitoring system is not yet strong in either of these areas. For example, a global dialogue was planned for 2011 to involve some of the leading conversation organizations in a dialogue with rights advocates about how alternative conservation models might better take into account the rights of forest communities. Such a dialogue might have contributed to Strategic Outcome #5 in the same ways that the London Dialogues in 2011 contributed to progress on Strategic Outcome #3. For a variety of reasons that dialogue did not take place. Documentation of that experience might well contribute as much to organizational learning and outcomes as the Monitoring Data Report on the Indonesia Tenure Reform Coalition.

The instruments now being used to collect data for monitoring purposes definitely prioritize the collection of information related to the achievement of identified objectives. With relatively minor adjustments in the instruments and in the format of assessment discussions, it should be possible to capture data related to these other events (unplanned outcomes and important failures).

Reporting is another matter. Few organizations are good about documenting those situations in which they invest considerable resources and effort, but do not achieve the desired outcomes. There exist ample incentives (real and perceived) to move on from failure quickly, but a wealth of organizational development experience suggests that this is a lost opportunity of some importance.

To perceive failure as a learning opportunity for the entire organization is a cultural change that requires changes much more profound than an adjustment to data collection instruments. This question of how to address failure is one vantage point from which to view the difference between implementing an internal monitoring and evaluation system and become a learning organization.

As suggested above, monitoring is meant to provide a database for deeper strategic assessments, such as the recently completed Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE). Since there was no contact between the Independent Monitor and MTE Team, it is difficult for us to say to what extent monitoring data, including the results of the various Independent Monitoring exercises, played this role in the MTE. The MTE report refers to IM reports on several occasions, but it is noteworthy that the MTE team made field visits to a number of countries, including several of those in which IM exercises had taken place, so there might have been some duplication of effort. The selection of a team separate from the IM to do the MTE was entirely appropriate (although the principal MTE consultant was involved in the team that carried out the first Independent Monitoring exercise), but the isolation of the two processes seems to have been excessive. There was little possibility for the two processes to inform each other and it is difficult to discern the extent to which RRI monitoring has served the function of providing a body of data on which to base more strategic assessment efforts.

Monitoring and Management Decision-Making

The second main purpose for internal monitoring outlined above is to produce information to enable evidence-based “mid-course adjustments” by senior management. There is no question that senior management is adept at making mid-course adjustments in program priorities and the deployment of resources. Perhaps the best example of this has been the decision to make global dialogues a primary line of intervention of the organization, especially over the past two years. Another good example is the story of the Initiative rising to the opportunity to create and sustain the work of MegaFlorestais. How are such decisions made within RRI? What is the role of internal monitoring in building the evidence base to support such adjustments?

As is usually the case in effective organizations, monitoring activity at RRI is not limited to the formal monitoring system. RRG senior management use their contacts, experience and knowledge of the forestry sector to continuously monitor the context (internal and external) in which the Initiative operates. This constant “scoping” of the context serves at the basis for their own individual and collective conclusions about the opportunities open to RRI and how to best deploy resources to take advantage of those opportunities. They certainly reference and rely heavily upon a sense of “strategy” in that process, but that strategy is much more a set of shared principles about how to achieve forest tenure reform than any Logical Framework or other pre-conceived plan.

Other factors drive the strategy of RRI’s Country and Regional programs, but it is this set of principles—always interacting with an evolving sense of opportunity—that drives the program choices behind RRI’s Global Programs, as well as RRG strategic inputs on Country and Regional programs. One of the strengths of the Initiative is the ability to make rapid tactical adjustments to take advantage of perceived opportunity. Ironically, while it is difficult to imagine the achievements of RRI taking place outside of the context of its “coalition” structure, this structure also inhibits this agility in a variety of ways.

RRG was developing and leading RRI Global Programs based on this combination of principles and constant environmental scoping long before anything called an internal monitoring system was in place. Management continues to operate this way even as the more formal “Internal M & E System” has come into being. Data gathered and presented via the various reports that make up the internal

monitoring inform various internal processes (the Country and Regional planning processes, Independent Monitoring, internal program management, reporting to donors and Global Program planning, to a degree), but, to date, that data has had a limited impact on senior management decision-making.

Thankfully, RRG senior management is never going to use the Annual Program Monitoring Reports, or other monitoring instruments, in the way political candidates use focus group data. There should, however, be ways in which management's permanent scoping regimen can be extended to include data generated by the organization's own internal monitoring system.

Our review of the staff's internal monitoring work arrived at the following conclusions:

1. To the extent that could be determined by the IM, Staff, Collaborators and Partners charged with carrying out various aspects of the internal monitoring system are successfully completing that work, despite the demands of time and energy implied by it.
2. While people generally believe that there is value in the monitoring work they have undertaken, almost all point out the problem that they are asked to carry out and report on the year's monitoring activity at precisely the same time that they also face extremely high demands related to annual planning of RRI efforts.
3. The RRG staff responsible for doing annual reporting on progress toward Strategic Outcomes have quickly learned what is required of them in that process and are producing Monitoring Data Reports of satisfactory or high-quality supported by data that is both appropriate and reliable. They are not doing "real-time" data gathering which might increase the quality of the reports and ease the demands of gathering externally-produced data.
4. While we did not attend country or regional planning meetings this year, the available data suggests that, in coordination with RRG Staff, Partners and Collaborators are setting aside a more formal space for monitoring progress in each of the annual planning meetings. The quality of the Annual Program Monitoring Reports certainly increased 2011, but it is less clear to what extent the reports reflect the quality of the monitoring discussion (vs. the views of the person preparing the report).
5. Since the planning and budgeting processes for Global Programs are less formal than those for Country and Regional Programs, GP monitoring also seems to take place in a slightly less formal way. Also, the decision to restructure the way Global Programs are organized and reported on complicates the monitoring process. A Global Program Monitoring Report was, nonetheless, completed in 2011 and the information included in it was of great value to the IM. There is a single Annual Program Monitoring Report prepared for all programs, rather than one per program, as in the case of country and regional programs.
6. While RRG Senior Management it is well-informed regarding all programs of the Initiative, we do not see evidence that senior management is making systematic use of program monitoring data as it makes tactical decisions regarding the allocation of RRI resources in pursuit of the Initiative's Strategic Outcomes.
7. The setting and monitoring of Annual Organizational Priorities is established essentially as a management tool for the RRI senior management. The program materials prepared for the January 2012 governance meetings include both an assessment of achievement related to the 2011 priorities and identifies a set of priorities for 2012.
8. RRG continues to report on its response to the recommendation of the Independent Monitor, including an explanation for those cases in which the recommendations are rejected or tabled pending other developments.

Integrating Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Since its inception, RRI has shown a strong commitment to the famous triad of planning, monitoring and evaluation. The Initiative spends more time on planning than any similar network with which we are familiar. RRG staff and, especially, its leadership, are extremely knowledgeable about the context in which they work and are gifted interpreters of important developments in that context. Similarly, the organizations that work with RRI as Partners and Collaborators have risen to prominence in part because they possess elements of that same capacity to understand and adapt to changes in their own context. Encouraged by the donor community, RRI has hopefully added something to their own ability to monitor events around them by incorporating the figure of an Independent Monitor into the Initiative's internal process. The IM has accompanied RRI in the process of establishing an internal monitoring system to further complement the shamanistic qualities of its leadership. Finally, the Framework Proposal commits RRI to Mid-Term and Final Evaluations conducted by external teams, and it has invested considerable human and material resources in carrying out the former.

In short, RRI has fulfilled all of its commitments to planning, monitoring and evaluation, and has accomplished more in this area than one could reasonably expect, given the resources at the Secretariat's disposal.

Despite all of these evident commitments and accomplishments, our experience suggests that there is room for improvement in this area, primarily in integrating these three key elements of the organization's commitment to learn as an organization from its experience. In addition, RRI could make this process more intentional and participatory in a couple of areas. Such integration is often achieved in counter-intuitive ways, so we employ an example to illustrate how such shifts might occur in the case of RRI.

As we prepare this report, RRI is well into a critical planning process that will result in a second Framework Proposal for consideration by donors. During 2011, it conducted a series of Blue Skies meetings involving dialogue between RRI and experts from a range of fields relevant to the work of the Initiative. We were not present at any of these meetings, but having interviewed participants about them and read the proceedings, these represent an unparalleled example of the analysis process that we believe should be the first step in any strategy building exercise.

How will the input from those sessions join other sources of knowledge and analysis in a process leading to a strategy for the next five years, a Framework Proposal and a Logical Framework or other expression of the intent of the RRI plan? RRG Staff, especially senior management, and the RRG Board will drive that planning process, but the process must create the space for other key stakeholders to contribute to a new strategy. Assisted by senior management, the RRG Board must decide who are the key RRI stakeholders, and then ensure that RRG devises creative ways for those stakeholders to participate in meaningful ways that can influence both the principles and the statements of intent reflected in the plan. Such strategy-building need not be an onerous process requiring external support and crowding out the "real work" of the Initiative. It does, however, need to be a process that is both efficient and adequately participatory.

Given RRI's culture, the resulting plan will be straightforward and direct, while emphasizing the ways in which existing strategy and practice must shift over the next five years if RRI is to stay on the cutting edge of forest tenure reform. RRI is not beginning the next period with anything resembling a blank slate. The strategy would include a set of principles and ideas about how to apply those principles: A filter to aid in the making of key decisions, rather than a road map that

must be followed at every turn. Any Framework Proposal or Logical Framework resulting from such a plan should faithfully reflect those principles and ideas of desired results. Most importantly for the integration of planning monitoring and evaluation, a plan for the next five years must include clear outcomes desired from the work of the initiative, as well as time-bound indicators or progress markers that will allow the RRI to determine that it is on the path to realization of those outcomes. Whenever possible, these indicators/progress markers must lend themselves to both quantitative and qualitative assessment.

The process by which the existing plan, Framework Proposal and Logical Framework were developed approximated these characteristics in many respects, but fell short of them in important ways, as well. The development of such a plan through such a process would not immediately and automatically address the challenges of integrating planning, monitoring and evaluation at RRI, but it would make those challenges much more manageable. Much more importantly, it could result in a plan that reflected, to the degree possible, the ambitions held for RRI by those groups that the RRG Board and executive leadership determine to be its key stakeholders.

Finally, since the original framework proposal established the contours of the Independent Monitoring role and formalized RRI's commitment to support that role, the elaboration of a new framework proposal for the next period provides the Initiative with an excellent opportunity to review that role. Systems have been put in place for RRI to gather evaluative information about its work, to have that information selectively validated through the IM process and more systematically evaluated through periodic external evaluations. RRI at all levels and RRG, in particular, have shown their level of commitment to this aspect of the work through their engagement in it, even when information gathering tasks competed for time with other mission-critical activities. RRG senior management has evidenced the same commitment to the process, but have openly admitted that they do not systematically use monitoring data (or, for that matter, external evaluation results) as they make the decisions to allocate scarce resources and position RRI for maximum effect. This important finding suggests the need for a close examination of what changes in management practice and/or data collection protocols would make the data gathered by the internal monitoring system and the findings generated by the Independent Monitoring process more useful to senior management and other centers of decision-making in the organization.

Recommendations

As in previous years, the report is replete with suggestions for RRI, particularly in relation to its internal monitoring and planning work. In addition, the IM team offers the following recommendations for action, primarily by RRG Management. As always, the scope of the recommendations mirrors the scope of the 2011 independent monitoring exercise..

1. **RRI should take all necessary steps to insure that the appropriate government and civil society parties in Indonesia follow-up on commitments made relative to creating and implementing a road map to forest tenure reform in Indonesia.** As reported above, RRI played a pivotal role in the process leading to the government declaring its wish to agree on a road map to reform, so it is important that the Initiative remain involved in the follow-up. The 2012 RRI country planning process in Indonesia did not allocate funds to support the continued operation of the CSO platform that helped move this discussion forward in Indonesia, so RRI must encourage a re-thinking of the country program and/or find other ways to supplement national efforts (perhaps using the Strategic Response Mechanism).

2. **As part of the development of a new Framework Proposal, RRI should give additional consideration to the idea of multi-year contracts with Partner and Collaborators, where appropriate.** RRI delayed consideration of this recommendation until this year, when the new Framework Proposal will be prepared. If RRI is going to consider transferring resources to Partners and Collaborators according to the current modalities, then it should open the possibility of multi-year contracts, where appropriate. The current arrangement creates certain obstacles to “agility” in resource decisions, and multi-year contracts would not dramatically change that reality.
3. **RRI should build upon the improvements in Global Program restructuring achieved in 2011 by further rationalizing program structure and implementing a planning and internal monitoring structure that more closely approximates that of Country and Regional Programs.** Global Program structure should further distinguish between areas of program development (Rights and Climate Change, ATEMs, Realizing Rights, etc.) and core strategies or lines of intervention that may apply to all programs (Network Building, Forest Tenure Conferences, Dialogues, Advocacy/Policy Influence, Local Capacity Building, etc.). Communications is clearly one area that could be managed as either a program or core strategy. Whatever it decides its programs are, RRI should create a budget for each program, assign a cross-functional team to take responsibility to realize program outcomes and establish a monitoring protocol for the program like those being followed by each Country and Regional program (Annual planning meeting with strong assessment component, Annual Program Monitoring Report, Annual Budget Proposal). If RRI has identified the correct program areas, then progress in program areas is mission-critical and the Core Strategies are strategies for achieving that progress. With such a structure, managing and defining relationships within the three dimensional matrix formed by Country and Regional Programs, Global Programs and Core Strategies/Key Approaches emerges more clearly as a key element of senior management function.
4. **At least three important outcome areas appear within RRI’s Strategic Outcome #5. As it develops a strategy for the next period, RRI should give special attention to its real capacity to contribute to enduring change in each of these areas (rights-sensitive conservation models, pro-community governance regimes and alternative enterprise models) and lay out clear lines of intervention to achieve that change.** RRI will certainly reach the projected number of Milestones related to this very broad outcome, but, while generally acceptable, the substantiation of those achievements has been less compelling than what exists for some other outcomes. The Initiative has rightly identified the importance of each of these areas to progress on tenure reform, but for a variety of reasons, has had difficulty focusing sufficient resources on these areas to generate demonstrable change. If this is simply a capacity question, then RRI should not identify Strategic Outcomes for itself in these areas. If there is capacity to move forward in all of these areas, then the emerging strategy must point the way to that forward movement with very specific strategies and progress markers.