Exercise 1: Components of the mainstreaming process

The first activity is to describe the logical framework of your approach. This means following the logic from problem definition, to approach/intervention and finally to impact. Think about an elevator pitch where you have no more than five minutes to convince someone that your approach is the right one. You will need to tell them about the issue, why it is a problem and why they should care. You will then need to tell them about your solution and you will need to convince them that there is a logical pathway from the approach/intervention you propose and the impact you expect to achieve. The impact you describe should be linked directly to the initial problem and should demonstrate that your approach/intervention has addressed it. Be realistic; if you promise to solve all of the world’s problems and fail to deliver, it will impact on your reputation and reduce future opportunities to play an influential role.

**The Problem**

The problem should be described in no more than four or five sentences. In this context, the primary problem is likely to relate directly to biodiversity. But conservation for the sake of conservation will rarely convince decision-makers of the need to invest in a solution. You should consider wider issues and how the biodiversity problem might relate to “the mainstream”, which often means economics and livelihoods. This is not necessarily about putting a dollar sign on biodiversity, but it is about identifying who will benefit and who will lose out in any given situation.

**The Approach**

The proposed framework for this exercise is to first understand what the demand for biodiversity information is. This could be done at great expense, or on the back of an envelope, but the key is to try to appreciate the relevant context. Context analysis, also known as political economy analysis, is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time (Collinson, 2003). So which policies are coming to an end of their cycle, who might be susceptible to your ideas, and where can biodiversity information be truly influential in a decision-making context? The supply part of the equation is what it says on the tin – what data exists and how can it be combined to generate information that can be easily digested by a non-technical audience? Does your target audience have any formal or informal rules about what data they can officially recognise and use in a decision-making context? Finally, think about how to sustain what you have achieved. In some contexts a one-off intervention may have the desired effect, but if you are going to all the effort of developing constructive relationships with a catalogue of stakeholders, and you are developing an information product that addresses a specific agreed need, then finding a way to formalise the information flow adds value to everything you have done in perpetuity.

**The Impact**

So, you’ve convinced the right people that a problem exists and that they should care about it. You have come to an understanding of the context within which you are operating, you have sourced trusted data and transformed it into information that has been used by decision-makers. What has changed? This is about outcomes rather than outputs, so it is not about things that you have produced, but it is how people behave differently. Have decisions been made? Have policies been developed? If so, how will that effect the problem, both in terms of biodiversity and wider economic issues.

**The Exercise**

In this exercise and all future exercises you will use the Truffula Use Case described above. Discuss and agree the problem, your approach and your desired impact, and describe them. Feel free to use the post-its and flip charts to develop your thinking, then nominate someone to type in the table below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| The problem | |  |
| Your approach | Demand |  |
| Supply |  |
| Sustain |  |
| The desired impact | |  |