

# RTRS Monitoring and Evaluation system Procedure

## Version 1.0

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Produced by This document was developed by the Technical Unit of the RTRS in collaboration with E4tech in 2019.

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The RTRS official languages are English, Spanish and Portuguese, however in case of any inconsistency between different versions of the same document, please refer to the English version as the official one.

## 1. Scope

The RTRS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System aims to ensure that the RTRS achieves its expected mid-term and long-term impacts and outcomes. The RTRS M&E System, including the Theory of Change, is designed to comply with ISEAL Impact Code.

The M&E system was conceived to respond to two main objectives:

- Understand, measure and monitor the actual impacts (both positive and negative) of the implementation of the RTRS Standard on the environment, economic operators in the soy supply chain and local communities;
- Adapt and steer the RTRS strategy, standards and procedures in light of the results of the M&E System;
- Communicate on the outcomes and impacts of sustainable soybean production towards RTRS stakeholder and the public.

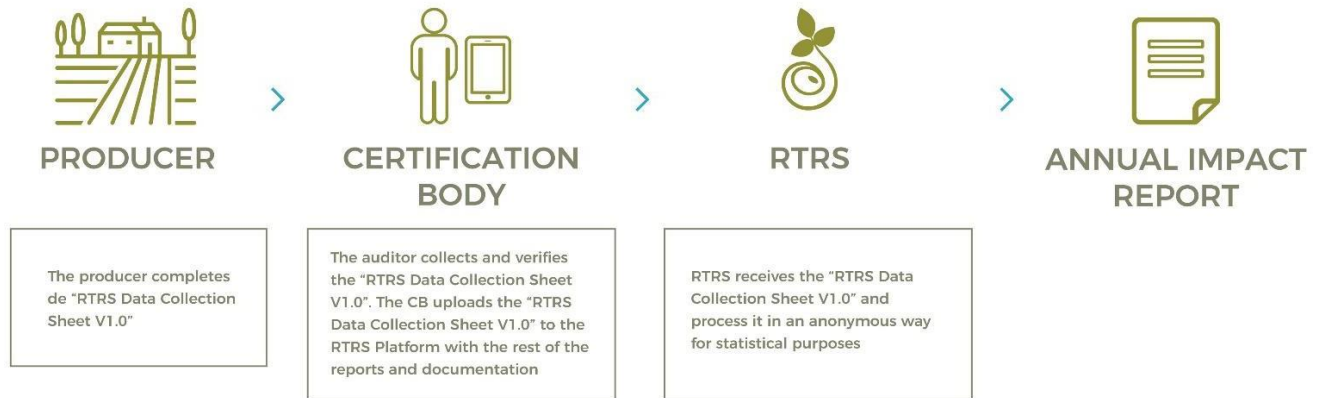
The M&E system will be reviewed at least once in 3 years, or earlier upon decision by the General Assembly or as required by ISEAL membership requirements.

## 2. Boundaries

The RTRS M&E system aims to measure environmental and socio-economic impacts of RTRS certification in relation to the sustainability criteria included in the RTRS Standard. These include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring legal compliance of economic operators and promote good business practices;
- Promoting and enforcing responsible labor conditions, incl. the prevention of child labor and slave labor, providing a fair remuneration, health and safety, gender equity, the right of association, etc. ;
- Ensuring that local communities are not negatively impacted by soy production and/or processing, and benefit from the implementation of the RTRS Standard;
- Protecting important conservation and biodiversity areas, important ecosystem services and high carbon areas;
- Protecting water, soil and air resources through the implementation of responsible agricultural practices;
- Ensuring that RTRS-certified soy and soy-derived products are traceable throughout the supply chain through a robust chain-of-custody system.

The RTRS will report and communicate about the outputs of its M&E System on a regular basis towards its constituencies and beyond.



Basic data is collected during the audit process from all the certified farms, individual, groups and multisite located around the globe, from Argentina to India. This program, which includes variables such as number of workers, certified tons, geographic location, high conservation value areas, amongst others, are analyzed and documented, providing the information that will then result in the Annual Outcome and Impact Report, which will be publicly available in our website.

### 3. Components

The RTRS M&E System consists of several components, which include:

- The RTRS **Theory of Change (ToC)**, which describes the mid and long term objectives and expected outcomes/impacts from the implementation of the RTRS Standard;
- The RTRS **Impact Indicators**, which are used to measure the actual environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implementation of the RTRS Standard against the objectives and mid/long term expected outcomes and impacts. Impact indicators will be ;
- The **data collection process**, which is used to feed data into the impact indicators. Data may come from RTRS audits and/or dedicated research;
- The **impact evaluation and reporting process**, whereby the RTRS will regularly inform its constituencies and the larger public about its actual (vs expected) outcomes and impacts.

The above-mentioned components are further described in separate documents, which are being developed and continuously improved, following ISEAL membership schedule. Outcomes will be shown in an annual report, publicly available in RTRS website, which will indicate the current status of our certified producers and will help us show their evolution through the years.

Information collected from certified operators throughout the audit process will be used within the strict limits of confidentiality.

#### 4. Intended and unintended effects

Strategy/Activities	Intended Outcomes	Intended Impacts	Unintended Effects
Development, implementation and continuous improvement of a comprehensive set of environmental and socio-economic requirements.	Promote and support the implementation of responsible practices throughout the soy value chain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legal compliance</li> <li>- Environmental protection</li> <li>- Fair labor conditions</li> <li>- Shared economic benefits (local communities)</li> </ul>	The standard may be too far reaching and lose attractiveness, thus reducing the number of certified operators and ultimately its impact on soy supply chains.
Development, implementation and continuous improvement of traceability requirements.	Ensure that RTRS-certified batches of products can be tracked back to the origin.		Additional costs for certified operators might decrease their competitiveness in certain markets.
Development, implementation and continuous improvement of a robust assurance system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that RTRS certificates are only delivered to operators having successfully completed the process.</li> <li>- Control claims and use of other RTRS trademarks.</li> </ul>	Build credibility and trust in the RTRS system over the nature and origin of RTRS-certified products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional costs for certified operators might decrease their competitiveness in certain markets.</li> <li>- Additional complexity increases the likelihood of non-compliance.</li> </ul>
Ad hoc support to more vulnerable economic operators (e.g. smallholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase market access.</li> <li>- Enhance the use of responsible practices to a wider target.</li> </ul>	Improve economic conditions widely and contribute to a poverty alleviation and empowerment instrument.	

<p>Implementation of an open, transparent and participatory Standard development process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase participation of a wide range of stakeholders.</li> <li>- Make decisions transparent and accessible to all.</li> </ul>	<p>Enhance the credibility and legitimacy of RTRS standards and outputs from implementation among the private sector and civil society.</p>	<p>Transparency may allow competing standards to anticipate strategic moves and remain ahead.</p>
<p>Creation and maintaining of a non-for-profit association (incl. a general assembly and executive board) for the general monitoring of RTRS standards, procedures and M&amp;E System.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share responsibilities and liabilities.</li> <li>- Create ownership by stakeholders of final products and outcomes.</li> <li>- Avoid conflicts of interest over profitability.</li> </ul>		<p>Lack of commitment or availability from members (volunteers), thus reducing the credibility of decisions or preventing a quorum to be reached (deadlocks).</p>

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

The M&E System is developed and maintained by both staff in RTRS Secretariat and external consultants. The M&E Manager and main contact for the general public in regards to the overall M&E system is Ana Laura Andreani ([ana.andreani@responsiblesoy.org](mailto:ana.andreani@responsiblesoy.org)), who works with the Technical Unit Officer, Pablo Nicolini ([pablo.nicolini@responsiblesoy.org](mailto:pablo.nicolini@responsiblesoy.org)).

None of the RTRS staff members work exclusively on the M&E activities.

The percentage of the budget of the Technical Unit assigned for the development and maintenance of the M&E System will be decided on annual bases, which will first be approved by the RTRS Executive Board and afterwards endorsed by the RTRS General Assembly.

## 6. Outcome and Impact Evaluation

The RTRS will monitor the functioning of its M&E system on a continuous basis. An outcome and impact evaluation will be conducted on an annual basis and shall include:

- Facts and figures about RTRS certification and certified organizations (e.g. volumes of RTRS certified soy, hectares of land in cultivation, etc.)
- An evaluation of the outcomes/impacts of the implementation of the RTRS standard against the expected outcomes/impacts. In case significant deviations from the expected outcomes/impacts are observed, the RTRS shall propose improvements in the RTRS strategy and/or a revision of the mid/long term expected outcomes and impacts.
- An evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the M&E system, along with suggestions for improvement.

The results of the evaluation shall be compiled in an Annual Impact Report, which shall be approved by the Executive Board. Upon approval, the report shall be distributed to all RTRS members, certified organizations, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, and made publicly available on the RTRS website.



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