SDG IMPACT TOOLS – Q&A

Version 1.0
March 2022

Below are answers to questions posed during the webinar on the SDG Impact Tool from 01 March 2022. We have edited the questions for clarity, reorgansed per topic, and removed names for privacy. More information on the SDG Impact Tool is located on our *Gold Standard for the Global Goals website*

USE OF THE SDG IMPACT TOOL

1. Can more than one impact be reported through the SDG Impact Tool?
   Yes, the SDG Impact Tool has space for reporting up to 10 indicators

2. Which SDG is missing from the tool and why?
   "SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" is generally excluded from monitoring, as it concerns partnership between countries

3. Has Gold Standard considered some sort of benchmarking of SDGs with project types?
   We have considered this, but we understand that SDG impacts are very context specific. Therefore, we have decided not to provide such benchmarking for now. Should you have any ideas or feedback on this topic, please contact us at standards@goldstandard.org

ENTRY INTO FORCE AND APPLICABILITY OF THE SDG TOOL

4. If a project that has undergone Preliminary Review a while ago, but will go under design certification after 14 March 2022, will it need to use the SDG Impact Tool?
   It depends. A stand-alone project would need to apply the SDG Impact Tool. A VPA/CPA under a design-certified PoA would not need to apply the tool. A Rule Update has been released to provide further clarity on the applicability of the tool.

5. Please clarify how the SDG Impact Tool applies to new VPAs from PoAs already registered?
   The SDG Impact Tool application is optional and not mandatory for the following projects:
   a. Design certified projects and VPAs/CPAs until the end of the ongoing Crediting Period (after which application is mandatory) and

b. New VPAs/CPAS will be included in design certified PoAs until the end of the ongoing Crediting Period of the PoA.

Such projects may apply the SDG tool on a voluntary basis by making applicable changes in the monitoring plan by submitting a design change request at the time of next issuance.

Please note that this clarification was included in a Rule Update, published on 14 March 2022.

USE OF THE SDG IMPACT TOOL AFTER DESIGN CERTIFICATION

6. Can ex-post inclusion of another SDG impact be included in the Monitoring Report (if not stated in the PDD)?

   After design certification, if a particular SDG impact is not stated in the certified PDD, the project developer needs to do a Design Change as per the Design Change Requirements. After this, the SDG impact can be included in the monitoring report as well.

7. Do (stand-alone) projects that are already listed but not yet design certified need to perform a design change to use the SDG Impact Tool?

   No, these projects can just apply to generate the monitoring plan to be validated.

8. Do projects that are already design certified need to perform a design change to use the SDG Impact Tool?

   If a project is already design certified, that means that its monitoring plan is set in that certified design. For these projects it is only mandatory to use the tool as of the time of crediting period renewal. If a project wishes to use the tool earlier, then a design change is required to include the changes in the monitoring plan in the certified design.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

9. **How is 'requesting for preliminary review' defined?**

   A project is considered submitted for preliminary review once all required documents are uploaded and the preliminary review fee is paid.

10. **Who will assess the SDG Impact Tool? VVBs or only SustainCERT?**

   The VVB shall assess the SDG tool. VVBs shall evaluate a project's proposed/actual contribution towards sustainable development, as reported in the SDG tool/project documents. In doing so, VVBs shall assess (based on certification step):

Validation assessment	Verification assessment
Whether the SDG tool has been filled completely and accurately (as per the certification step).	
The appropriateness of established baseline scenarios and impact quantification methods.	
Whether all SDG impacts are an intentional and direct effect of project implementation.	
	Compliance of monitoring activities with the established monitoring plan and related requirements.
	The suitability of all supporting documentation used.
	The accuracy of all data and assumptions by cross-checking with relevant sources.

11. Shall the VVB ask project developers to submit the SDG Impact Tool for projects under assessment and expected to issue final validation/verification report post 14 March 2022?

    It depends. Stand-alone projects and PoAs submitted for design certification or crediting period renewal after 14 March 2022 shall submit a validated SDG Impact Tool, hence the VVB shall ask the PP to submit an SDG Impact Tool for validation.

    VPAs under a process of inclusion or projects and programmes in verification need not submit an SDG Impact Tool to the VVB for verification.

    This is clarified in the Rule Update from 14.03.2022.

12. Must the certified SDG Impact Tool be publicly available?

    Yes, the SDG Impact Tool must be publicly disclosed through the Gold Standard Impact Registry along with other public documents. This is now clarified in the Rule Update, which is to be read in addition to what is already stipulated in paragraphs 5.1.11 and 6.1.2. of the Principles & Requirements, and in addition to the Rule Clarification Public disclosure requirements for project documentation.

INCLUSION OF NEW MONITORING INDICATORS IN THE SDG IMPACT TOOL

13. Do project-specific indicators have to be submitted via the template and accepted by the Gold Standard to be included in the Validation and Verification process or do the project developers have the possibility to include their own indicators?

    New project-specific monitoring indicators are proposed by filling and submitting the template (here) which is further reviewed by Gold Standard for inclusion in the SDG Impact Tool. Project developers cannot include new monitoring indicators on their own.

14. What happens if we are in the middle of a verification review and the monitoring indicator is not available for reporting?

Please note that the use of the SDG Impact Tool is not mandatory during verification. If the project wishes to apply the SDG Impact Tool nevertheless during verification, and if the indicator is not among the ones listed in the tool, please:

- Request a design change to modify the monitoring plan
- Propose a monitoring indicator for inclusion in the SDG Impact Tool, using this template