



GEF/LDCF.SCCF.28/ME/Inf.01
May 6, 2020

28th LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting
June 4, 2020
Virtual Meeting

LDCF/SCCF ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2020

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2020—prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)— analyzes outcome, sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) ratings. It also assesses innovative approaches, gender considerations, and lessons learned. This seventh Annual Evaluation Report covers 29 completed projects, having a combined value of \$118.6 million in LDCF/SCCF funding, and \$280.8 in materialized cofinancing.
2. The most represented theme in the AER 2020 cohort, with approximately a third of the projects including work in the area, is climate early warning systems, with this intervention being the main focus of seven projects in the cohort, and a component of three other projects. Nine projects (a third) addressed impacts of climate change on rural areas, with interventions in infrastructure, agriculture, rural livelihoods, and community resilience. Four projects focused on the impacts of climate change on coastal communities. Other areas of work covered by the AER 2020 cohort include adaptive capacity in water supplies and the water sector, adaptation in the areas of watershed management and water retention, a pilot initiative in irrigation technology, a project focused on resilience of tourism-reliant communities, and a project focused on strengthening the resilience of post-conflict recovery and development to climate change risks.
3. For projects with ratings available, 78 percent were rated moderately satisfactory or higher on quality of outcomes achieved at completion, consistent with the performance of the overall cohort of completed projects. Sixty percent of projects were rated in the moderately likely or likely range for sustainability of project benefits. M&E design at entry for the AER 2020 cohort of LDCF/SCCF projects is strong, with 83 percent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or higher. Ratings were lower for the cohort for M&E implementation, in which only 18 of 28 projects with ratings available, or 65 percent, were rated moderately satisfactory or higher. Although comparison over time is difficult as the majority of completed projects are from the GEF-4 phase, M&E design and implementation ratings have both risen in the GEF-5 phase, for the small share of projects with ratings available (n=27 for M&E design and n=25 for M&E implementation).
4. A review of the discussion of innovations in projects reveals the benefits and complications of introducing innovative techniques or technology. Terminal evaluations for five of the projects included lessons learned that focused on challenges to consider when piloting innovative methods. These included the need to keep other design elements simple when introducing innovation, and to consider the context and purchasing power of intended beneficiaries when introducing new technology.
5. Projects were reviewed for inclusion of gender considerations and given a rating at entry and completion. Approximately three-quarters of projects either maintained the same gender rating at completion as at entry or improved on them, while one-quarter received lower ratings at completion than at entry. In the case of projects that saw a downgrade in the gender rating, it was often the case that activities or provisions designed to mainstream gender into

the project failed to take place as planned. In the case of projects that received a higher rating at completion than at entry, project terminal evaluations report on high levels of participation from women, with efforts made to ensure a gender balance in activities and in project benefits.

6. Lessons learned from terminal evaluations were classified deductively into the main categories identified through past AERs: namely communications and stakeholder involvement lessons related to project design and management, climate change adaptation or content technical issues, and monitoring and evaluation. Only lessons with potential applicability in other contexts were classified, whereas those narrowly specific to one project were excluded. A summary of these lessons is provided below:

Communication and Stakeholder Involvement

- (a) Effective stakeholder engagement, including engagement of capable national institutions, can also contribute to sustainability.
- (b) Consistent and effective capacity development can be achieved through activity-based capacity development.

Project Design and Management

- (a) Empowerment of project staff as a key to success.
- (b) An exit strategy that carefully considers post-project financing needs and calibrates operation and maintenance costs to the context of low-income countries is a critical factor for sustainability.

Climate Change Adaptation or Content Technical

- (a) A community-based effective early warning system can generate greater livelihood opportunities at the community level, including tourism and investment.
- (b) It is important to factor in increasing rainfall variability in the timing for construction or planting initiatives for effective bioengineering.
- (c) Adaptation interventions are learning processes that must build on lessons learned, and therefore require long-term engagement; as a specific example, the utility of ecosystem-based adaptation solutions is an efficient and cost-effective measure for flood risk reduction, but only with dedicated support.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- (a) Detailed and effective monitoring and reporting of data can be a driver of success because it supports adaptive management.

- (b) Community engagement should be initiated right at the start of the project for success of M&E systems.

7. The AER ends with a summary of the GEF Management Action Record tracking of the level of adoption of two LDCF/SCCF Council decisions: the June 2016 decision on recommendations of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF; and the May 2017 decision on recommendations of the Program Evaluation of the SCCF. The progress of adoption of both decisions is rated substantial. The IEO will retire the decision on the Program Evaluation of the LDCF, as a new decision will be made on the 2020 Update of the evaluation in December 2020. The IEO will continue to track adoption of the decision on the Program Evaluation of the SCCF.

BACKGROUND

1. The Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2020—prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)—presents an assessment of project outcomes and sustainability, and quality of project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and innovative approaches. The assessment is based on an analysis of the ratings and information provided in 29 terminal evaluations that are first reviewed by the IEO or the evaluation offices of the GEF Agencies, or both. See annex A for details on the terminal evaluation report review guidelines.

2. A review of experiences in implementation of innovative approaches is presented. Terminal evaluations were mined for a discussion of challenges and considerations necessary to take these approaches into account. Projects and approaches are regarded as innovative if they are deliberately applied to tackle an issue, and these approaches (1) have not been used before in the project area or (2) to tackle this specific issue, or both. An innovative approach needs to be (3) widely replicable, and this should be possible (4) at low economic cost.

3. Gender considerations and a synthesis of lessons learned from the AER 2020 cohort of completed projects is also part of this year's AER. The focus of the gender assessment was on: (1) gender disaggregation of indicator data, (2) explicit gender considerations in the description of the project activities, and (3) the existence of an overarching inclusion and empowerment of women or gender mainstreaming strategy/approach, or both. This assessment formed the basis for project gender ratings at completion.

ASSESSMENT OF TERMINAL EVALUATIONS

4. This is the seventh year that completed LDCF/SCCF projects are reported on in the IEO terminal evaluation dataset used for the annual performance reports to the GEF Council and the LDCF/SCCF AERs to the LDCF/SCCF Council. The AER 2020 includes 29 projects, 21 financed by the LDCF and eight financed by SCCF, with a combined value of \$118.6 million in LDCF/SCCF funding, and \$280.8 in materialized cofinancing.¹ The full list of 29 projects is included in annex B.

5. In the Annual Performance Reports 2020 cohort of the terminal evaluations, there are 10 completed projects funded by LDCF and four funded by SCCF. Eleven projects funded by LDCF and four funded by SCCF and covered in the Annual Performance Report 2019 were received too late for analysis and inclusion in the LDCF/SCCF Special Study of Completed Projects reported on in AER 2019, and are instead presented in this report for the first time.² Twenty-one of the 29 projects were implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the remaining eight projects implemented by the World Bank (three

¹ N=18 projects with information on realized cofinancing available.

² Four LDCF and one SCCF projects from the *Annual Performance Report 2019* cohort were included in the special study, these were GEF IDs 3716, 3979, 4368, 4447, and 4570.

projects), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (three projects), African Development Bank (AfDB) (one project), and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (one project). All were national-level projects, with 16 implemented in countries in the Africa Region, 12 in the Asia region, and one in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Six of the projects were implemented in small island developing states. Eight of the projects reported were approved during GEF-4, and 21 were approved during GEF-5.

6. **The most represented theme in the AER 2020 cohort is work on climate early warning systems**, with this intervention being the main focus of seven projects in the cohort, and a component of three other projects, or approximately a third of the cohort. All seven of the projects that focused on developing or strengthening early warning systems were implemented in countries in the Africa region, namely Lesotho (GEF ID 3841, UNEP), Tanzania (GEF ID 4991, UNDP), Ethiopia (GEF ID 4992, UNDP), Uganda (GEF ID 4993, UNDP), Malawi (GEF ID 4994, UNDP), Zambia (GEF ID 4995, UNDP), and Burkina Faso (GEF ID 5003, UNDP). Other projects in the AER 2020 cohort focused on disaster risk management more broadly and contained components or activities focused on early warning systems. These include a project in Timor Leste that aimed to strengthen community resilience to climate-induced disasters (GEF ID 5056, UNDP), a project in Bhutan designed to enhance national and local capacity to address the risk of climate-induced disasters (GEF ID 4976, UNDP), and a project in Nepal focused on community-based flood and glacial lake outburst risk reduction (GEF ID 4551, UNDP).

7. Nine projects, or approximately another third, addressed impacts of climate change on rural areas, with interventions in infrastructure, agriculture, rural livelihoods, and community resilience. These include four SCCF projects: Strategic Planning and Action to Strengthen Climate Resilience of Rural Communities in Nusa Tenggara Timor Province of Indonesia (SPARC) (GEF ID 4340, UNDP); Scaling up Adaptation in Zimbabwe, with a Focus on Rural Livelihoods, by Strengthening Integrated Planning Systems (GEF ID 4960, UNDP); Mongolia Livestock Sector Adaptation Project (GEF ID 3695, IFAD); and Scaling up Risk Transfer Mechanisms for Climate Vulnerable Agriculture-based Communities in Mindanao (GEF ID 4967, UNDP). Two LDCF projects implemented in Southeast Asia focused on rural infrastructure. These were the projects Effective Governance for Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate (GEF ID 4554, UNDP) implemented in Lao, and Strengthening the Resilience of Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Local Government Systems to Climatic Variability and Risk (GEF ID 4696, UNDP) implemented in Timor-Leste. The remaining three projects were all implemented in the Africa region and focused on rural livelihoods and agriculture, including Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA) (GEF ID 3302, AfDB) implemented in Malawi; Strengthening Resilience of Farming Communities' Livelihoods against Climate Changes in the Guinean Prefectures of Gaoual, Koundara and Mali (GEF ID 4692, UNDP); and Scaling up Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) in Niger (GEF ID 4701, UNDP).

8. Four projects focused on the impacts of climate change on coastal communities. Two projects aimed to develop local adaptation capacity, one in the coastal zones of Mozambique (Adaptation in the Coastal Zones of Mozambique; GEF ID 4276, UNDP) and another in Sao Tome and Principe (Sao Tome and Principe Adaptation to Climate Change; GEF ID 4018, World Bank),

whereas a project in Kiribati focused on strengthening coastal infrastructure and freshwater supply, Increasing Resilience to Climate Variability and Hazards (GEF ID 4068, World Bank). An SCCF project implemented in Egypt focused on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Nile Delta through Integrated Coastal Zone Management (GEF ID 3242, UNDP).

9. Other areas of work covered by the AER 2020 cohort include adaptive capacity in water supplies and the water sector with the projects Adaptation of Nicaragua's Water Supplies to Climate Change (GEF ID 4492, World Bank) and Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau's Agrarian and Water Sectors (GEF ID 4019, UNDP), and the Climate Change Adaptation Project in the Areas of Watershed Management and Water Retention (GEF ID 4234, IFAD) in Senegal. Other projects covered this year are a pilot initiative in Jordan, TT-Pilot (GEF-4) DHRS: Irrigation Technology Pilot Project to face Climate Change Impact (GEF ID 4036, IFAD); a project in Samoa, Enhancing the Resilience of Tourism-Reliant Communities to Climate Change Risks (GEF ID 4585, UNDP); and a project in Sri Lanka, Strengthening the Resilience of Post Conflict Recovery and Development to Climate Change Risks in Sri Lanka (GEF ID 4609, UNDP).

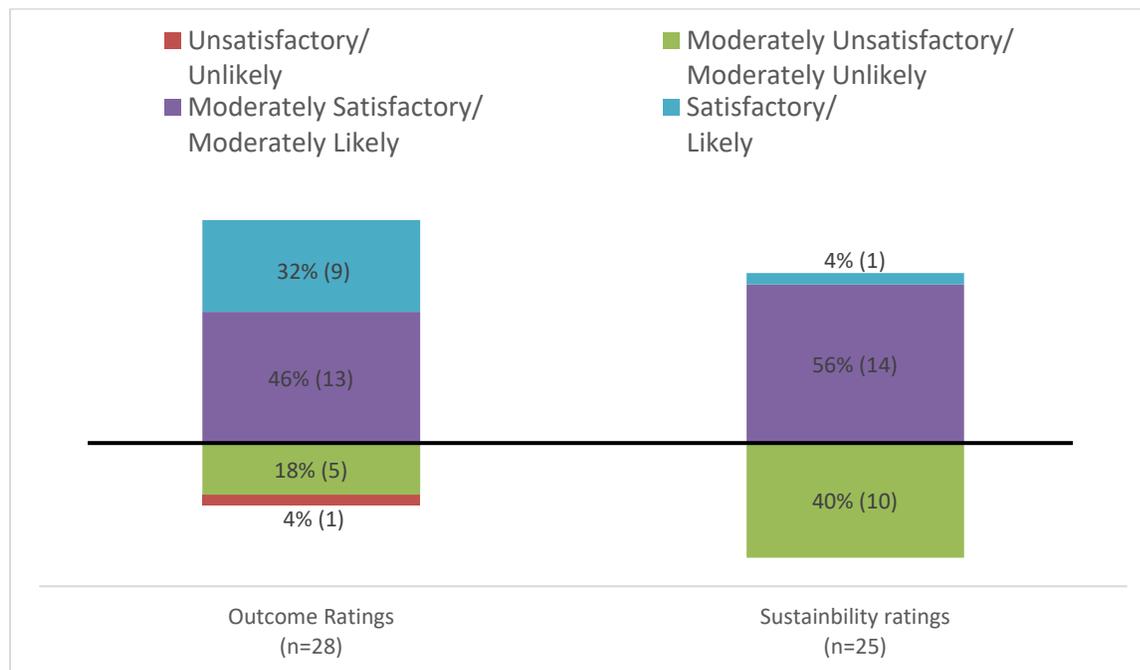
Outcomes and Sustainability

10. **Seventy-eight percent of projects were rated moderately satisfactory or higher on quality of outcomes achieved at completion**, consistent with the performance of the overall cohort of completed projects. Figure 1 presents the distribution of outcomes and sustainability ratings in LDCF/SCCF projects in the AER 2020 cohort. Outcome ratings are available for 28 of the 29 projects covered for the first time in AER 2020. The share of projects rated in the satisfactory range for outcomes at completion is in line with past performance and compares with 79 percent of all project previously covered in the AER rated in the satisfactory range. Among projects in the AER 2020 cohort with ratings of moderately satisfactory or higher for quality of outcomes, nine were rated satisfactory, and thirteen were rated moderately satisfactory. Among the projects rated in the unsatisfactory range for quality of outcomes, five projects were rated moderately unsatisfactory, and one project was rated unsatisfactory. No project received a rating of highly unsatisfactory or highly satisfactory for quality of outcomes achieved at completion.

11. **Sixty percent of projects were rated in the moderately likely or likely range for sustainability of project benefits**, with 14 of these rated moderately likely, and one rated likely. This compares to 65 percent of all projects previously covered in the AER. Ten projects were rated moderately unlikely for sustainability of project benefits, and four were not rated for sustainability of benefits.³ Ratings on project sustainability, or the likelihood of continuation of project benefits after completion, are available for 25 of the 29 projects covered this year.

³ The World Bank Independent Evaluation Group has discontinued providing a rating for risk to development outcomes (or likelihood of continuation of project benefits) in its implementation completion reports reviews written after July 1, 2017.

Figure 1: Distribution of outcome and sustainability ratings in LDCF/SCCF projects in the AER 2020 cohort



Source: GEF IEO terminal evaluation review data set

12. Six of the seven projects focusing on early warning systems were rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes at completion; however, likelihood of continuation of benefits is rated in the likely range for four of the seven. A similar trend is true for the set of projects focused on impacts of climate change in rural areas, where 11 of 12 projects are rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes achieved, and eight of the 12 are rated in the likely range for continuation of project benefits.

13. Two of the four projects with interventions focused on coastal zones were rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes at completion. Sustainability ratings were only available for two of the projects, one of which was rated moderately likely and the other moderately unlikely. For projects in other categories, a project focused on piloting a new irrigation technology in Jordan (GEF ID 4036, IFAD), and a project in Samoa focused on enhancing the resilience of tourism-reliant communities (GEF ID 4585, UNDP) were both rated moderately unsatisfactory for achievement of outcomes and moderately unlikely for sustainability of project benefits. A project implemented in Sri Lanka focused on strengthening the resilience of postconflict recovery and development to climate change risks (GEF ID 4609, UNDP) was rated moderately satisfactory for quality of outcomes achieved and moderately likely for sustainability of project benefits. Six of the eight GEF-4 projects in the cohort were

World Bank IEG, *Draft Guidelines for Reviewing World Bank Implementation Completion and Results Reports. A Manual for IEG ICR Reviewers*. July 25, 2017. Available at: https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/More-on-IEG/icrr_evaluatormanual_august2018.pdf, p. 77.

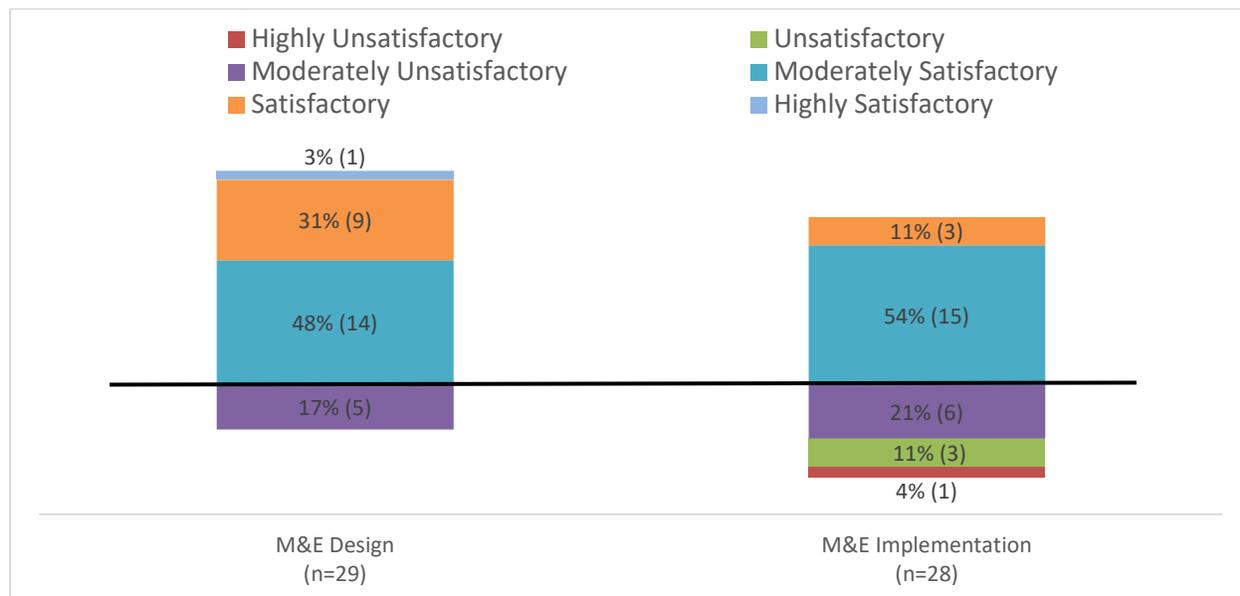
rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes and all but one with ratings available for sustainability were rated in the likely range for sustainability of project benefits (n=6). Sixteen of the 20 GEF-5 projects with ratings available were rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes, and 10 of the 19 with ratings available for likelihood of sustainability of benefits were rated in the likely range.

14. By region, 80 percent of projects in the Africa region (12 of 15 with ratings available) and 75 percent of projects in the Asia region (9 of 12 with ratings available) were rated in the satisfactory range for quality of outcomes at completion, whereas the only project implemented in the Latin America and the Caribbean region with ratings available was rated in the satisfactory range. For sustainability, or likelihood of continuation of benefits, 64 percent of projects in the Africa region (9 of 14) and 55 percent of projects in the Asia region (6 of 11) were rated in the likely range (the project in the Latin America and the Caribbean region was not rated).

Monitoring and Evaluation Design and Implementation

15. **M&E design at entry is strong; ratings were lower for the cohort for M&E implementation.** Figure 2 presents the distribution of M&E design and M&E implementation ratings for projects in the AER 2020 cohort. M&E design ratings are available for all 29 projects in the AER 2020 cohort, and M&E implementation ratings are available for 28 of the 29 projects. M&E design at entry for the AER 2020 cohort of LDCF/SCCF projects is strong, with 83 percent of projects rated moderately satisfactory or higher. One project, Strengthening Resilience of Farming Communities' Livelihoods Against Climate Changes in the Guinean Prefectures of Gaoual, Koundara and Mali (GEF ID 4692, UNDP), was rated highly satisfactory for M&E design.

Figure 2: Distribution of M&E design and M&E implementation ratings in LDCF/SCCF projects in the AER 2020 cohort



Source: GEF IEO terminal evaluation review data set

16. Ratings were lower for the cohort for M&E implementation, for which 18 of 28 projects with ratings available, or 65 percent, were rated moderately satisfactory or higher. Four projects with ratings in the satisfactory range for M&E design were rated in the unsatisfactory range for M&E implementation. One of these cases was the Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA) (GEF ID 3302, AfDB) project, which received a satisfactory rating for M&E design but did not recruit an M&E expert and received a highly unsatisfactory rating for M&E implementation. All five projects rated in the unsatisfactory range for M&E design were also rated in the unsatisfactory range for M&E implementation. Most completed LDCF/SCCF projects in the AER portfolio were approved in GEF-4 (49 out of 82, or 60 percent), making it difficult to draw conclusions on trends over time, due to limited observations outside of GEF-4. However, for the small share of projects with ratings available in GEF-5, both M&E design and implementation ratings are higher compared with GEF-4, with 93 percent of GEF-5 projects (n=27) in the satisfactory range for M&E design, compared with 63 percent in GEF-4 (n=49), and 72 percent of GEF-5 projects in the satisfactory range for M&E implementation (n=25), compared with 60 percent in GEF-4 (n=48).

17. The role of M&E in project success was highlighted in some cases, even in instances where the system contained flaws. The terminal evaluation for Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau’s Agrarian and Water Sectors (GEF ID 4019, UNDP) noted deficiencies in the project’s indicator framework, which were corrected after the midterm review, but also noted that monitoring results played an important role in adaptive management.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

18. Innovation is a central component of many LDCF and SCCF projects, as it is emphasized in the first strategic objective of the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation.⁴ A review of the discussion of innovations in climate change adaptation projects reveals the benefits and complications of introducing innovation. Terminal evaluations for several of the projects reviewed include lessons learned, focused on challenges to consider when piloting innovative methods. This section presents a summary of challenges or considerations for piloting new approaches brought up in these projects, as well as examples of innovative approaches in AER 2020 projects.

19. **Piloting of new approaches requires building in extra time and attention to enable success.** The terminal evaluation for an SCCF project in Nicaragua (GEF ID 4492, World Bank), which introduced an innovative approach to the installation of rural water supply systems, noted as a lesson learned that in projects attempting to pilot innovative approaches, other project elements should be kept as simple as possible. In this case, a participatory community selection process led to site selections for the pilot that were geographically remote or with houses that were dispersed, contributing to actual costs for installation while benefitting less households. A simpler site selection process focused on ready access or lower dispersion of houses could have yielded greater returns on investment by avoiding additional costs and benefiting more households. In a similar way, an SCCF project implemented in Egypt focused on adaptation to climate change in the Nile Delta through integrated coastal zone management (GEF ID 3242, UNDP), experienced delays for various reasons, one of which was the innovative nature of interventions to protect vulnerable coastal lagoons, which added time to the process of reaching agreement with stakeholders.⁵

20. **Careful consideration of context, including beneficiaries' capabilities and purchasing power, is important when piloting new technology.** The terminal evaluation for the project Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Malawi to Support Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change (GEF ID 4994, UNDP) includes a lesson learned that state-of-the-art technology-based projects and even standard solutions used in rich and developed countries may not always work in the context of low-income countries, and that better prospects for sustainability may come from low-tech solutions with low operating and management costs. This lesson also applies to the SCCF project implemented in Jordan, DHRS: Irrigation Technology Pilot Project to Face Climate Change Impact (GEF ID 4036, IFAD). This project aimed to upscale innovative irrigation technologies to reduce the vulnerability to climate change of the agricultural system in Jordan, with the main beneficiaries being small-holder farmers. The terminal evaluation for this project highlights technology innovation as one of the project's most notable successes, as work developed by some contractors "provided considerable improvements for the hydroponic equipment and for the

⁴ GEF/LDCF.SCCF.24/03.

⁵ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 3242, p. 4.

solar water desalination system” that “yielded promising results in terms of the preliminary environmental and socio-economic benefits.”⁶ However, the project was ultimately rated moderately unsatisfactory for quality of outcomes achieved, in part because the innovative technology produced was beyond the purchasing power of the small-holder farmers who were the project’s target beneficiary group. This led to the lesson learned that “innovation in technology development should be conditioned both by the environmental constraints to be adapted and the socio-economic context of the poor smallholder farmers.”⁷

21. Finally, strong knowledge management and M&E is of particular importance with innovative approaches, so that their viability and value for future interventions is understood. An LDCF project that focused on adaptation in the coastal zones of Mozambique (GEF ID 4276, UNDP), introduced a microfinance innovation to support livelihood enhancement and diversification and reduce vulnerability to climate change. Although the terminal evaluation points to the innovation on microfinance integration as a “specific strong contribution” made by the project, it notes that “in the absence of a more detailed documentation and possibly evaluation of the approach, limited evidence can be presented on its novelty and effectiveness.”⁸

22. In addition to the projects discussed, other notable examples of innovation in the AER 2020 cohort include a project in Mongolia (GEF ID 3695, IFAD) that employed a mass-messaging technology traditionally used for news dissemination for a natural hazard and a pest outbreak early warning system, supported rolling out of a photo-monitoring technology in pasture management, and supported use of smart technology to address permafrost constraints for maintenance of water wells using solar power. The Scaling up Risk Transfer Mechanisms for Climate Vulnerable Agriculture-based Communities in Mindanao (GEF ID 4967, UNDP) project successfully built on an innovative approach using weather index-based insurance, which had been ground-truthed in the pilot project Climate Change Adaptation Project, Phase I (GEF ID 3243, World Bank). A project in Zimbabwe on scaling up adaptation with a focus on rural livelihoods (GEF ID 4960, UNDP) promoted the uptake of energy efficient stoves and biogas digesters, technology that was new in some project areas.⁹

23. Finally, some projects used innovative participatory techniques to engage project beneficiaries. A project in Sao Tome and Principe (GEF ID 4018, World Bank) piloted an innovative participatory approach using risk maps to identify risks and vulnerabilities of communities and to develop coastal adaptation measures. Similarly, an LDCF project in Samoa on enhancing resilience of tourism-reliant communities to climate change risks (GEF ID 4585, UNDP) employed an innovative participatory 3-dimensional modeling technique introduced in the country by a previous LDCF project (Integration of Climate Change Risk and Resilience into Forestry Management, ICCRIFS) (GEF ID 4216, UNDP).

⁶ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4036, p. 45.

⁷ Ibid, p. 52.

⁸ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4276, p. 43.

⁹ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4960, p. 63.

GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

24. All projects were reviewed for inclusion of gender considerations and assigned a rating both at entry and completion, detailed in annex C. Gender ratings at entry or completion, or both, as assessed as part of the 2016 LDCF program evaluation and 2020 update to the evaluation, and the 2017 SCCF program evaluation, were used where available. Figure 3 presents the distribution of gender ratings in the AER 2020 cohort at entry and completion. Annex D includes the gender ratings at entry and completion for all projects covered in AER 2020.

Figure 3: Gender-rating distribution at entry and completion in the AER 2020 cohort



Source: GEF IEO terminal evaluation review data set

25. Approximately three-quarters of projects either maintained the same gender rating at completion as at entry or improved on them, while one-quarter received lower ratings at completion than at entry. Both projects that were rated gender-blind at entry improved upon their scores. For the 10 projects rated gender-aware at entry, five received higher scores at completion, four remained the same, and one project was downgraded to gender-blind. Of the 16 projects rated gender-sensitive at entry, ratings for three were upgraded at completion to gender-mainstreamed, ratings remained the same for seven projects, and ratings were downgraded for the remaining six, with five rated gender-aware at completion, and one rated gender-blind. The one project rated gender-mainstreamed at entry, a flood and glacial lake outburst risk reduction project in Nepal, was also rated gender-mainstreamed at completion.

26. In the case of projects that saw a downgrade in gender rating, it was often the case that activities or provisions designed to mainstream gender into the project failed to take place as planned. For instance, a project in Mongolia on pasture management development (GEF ID 3695, IFAD) included plans at entry to hire a social and gender officer, who was never recruited. In other cases, while project documents at entry included plans for gender analysis or integration of gender-disaggregated indicators in the project's M&E system, at completion there was no evidence a gender analysis took place and indicators disaggregated by gender were not available. An example of this is the project in Lesotho, Improvement of Early Warning System to Reduce Impacts of Climate Change and Capacity Building to Integrate Climate Change into Development Plans (GEF ID 3841, UNEP), which received a rating of gender-sensitive at entry and gender-aware at closure, and for which the terminal evaluation noted: "Although the project attempted to report along gender lines wherever possible, this was made difficult by the fact that the project design was not informed by a gender analysis, the project did not have a strategy to mainstream gender in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation."¹⁰ In other cases, project activities that were expected to have a major impact on women ultimately did not take place, such as trainings and workshops planned as part of the SCCF project in Jordan (GEF ID 4036, IFAD).

27. In the case of projects that received a higher rating at completion than at entry, project terminal evaluations report on high levels of participation from women, with efforts made to ensure gender balance in activities and in project benefits. An LDCF project in Timor-Leste (GEF ID 4696, UNDP) that was rated gender-sensitive at entry and gender-mainstreamed at completion, conducted a gender analysis and developed a gender action plan during implementation, and used the findings to ensure that gender was a central consideration in most activities. The terminal evaluation for this project did note that this should have come earlier in the project and highlighted the importance of including gender-mainstreaming action at an early stage, because it can provide a roadmap for more targeted gender-equity provisions.¹¹ Another project implemented, Strengthening Community Resilience to Climate-induced Disasters in the Dili to Ainaro Road Development Corridor, Timor-Leste (GEF ID 5056, UNDP), also received a rating of gender-mainstreamed at entry compared with closure. The terminal evaluation for this project argued that high participation of women helped to ensure success because they were more serious in their engagement in project activities.¹²

SYNTHESIS OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM COMPLETED PROJECTS

28. Lessons learned from terminal evaluations were classified deductively into the main categories identified through past AERs: namely, communications and stakeholder involvement lessons related to project design and management, climate change adaptation or content technical issues, and monitoring and evaluation. Only lessons with potential applicability in

¹⁰ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 3841, p.16.

¹¹ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4696, p. 42.

¹² Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 5056, p. 46.

other contexts were classified, whereas those narrowly specific to one project were excluded. Categories of lessons are discussed in order of frequency for AER 2020.

Communication and Stakeholder Involvement

29. Sixty-two percent of the projects (18 of 29) point to effective stakeholder engagement as a key to success in their lessons learned. Examples include the terminal evaluation for the Climate Change Adaptation Project in the Areas of Watershed Management and Water Retention in Senegal (GEF ID 4234, IFAD), which noted that the project's involvement and empowerment of farmer organizations, and the establishment of a network of intuitional entities around concrete and immediate objectives of the project, were keys to the project's success and to the "rapid dissemination of innovation and good practices introduced by the project." Other examples include the Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau's Agrarian and Water Sectors (GEF ID 4019, UNDP) project, which also noted effective stakeholder engagement strategies as a key to the project's success. The Community Based Flood and Glacial Lake Outburst Risk Reduction (GEF ID 4551, UNDP) project implemented in Nepal noted that the engagement of capable national institutions can also contribute to sustainability. The Nepalese army was engaged in activities for lowering the water level in Imja Lake, which helped to both ensure timely completion and high quality of work, and "enhanced the capacity of a national institution, which is at the forefront in the immediate aftermath of disasters."¹³

30. Other projects focused on the importance of both considering stakeholder capacity in design and prioritizing it in implementation. For example, the terminal evaluation for the project on Addressing the Risk of Climate-induced Disasters through Enhanced National and Local Capacity for Effective Actions (GEF ID 4976, UNDP) in Bhutan highlighted the importance of consistent and effective capacity development through activity-based capacity development, as exercised in several of the project's activities.

Project Design and Management

31. Issues related to project design or management were included in terminal evaluations for eleven of the projects (37 percent) reviewed. Subcategories included the importance of considerations of staff capacity and empowerment, lessons on introducing innovative techniques or technology (as noted in the section, "Innovative Approaches") and the importance of considering sustainability of benefits in design.

32. Two projects listed empowerment of project staff as a key to success; these were the projects Climate Change Adaptation Project in the Areas of Watershed Management and Water Retention in Senegal (GEF ID 4234, IFAD) and Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau's Agrarian and Water Sectors (GEF ID 4019, UNDP).

¹³ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4551, p. 12.

33. Building in an exit strategy, and other design considerations to ensure sustainability, was also brought up in terminal evaluations, including the project in Malawi on early warning systems (GEF ID 4994, UNDP), which noted that “Post-project financing needed to sustain project achievements, and to keep installed equipment operational, is a typical critical factor for project sustainability, especially in low-income countries. Even an increase in operation and maintenance costs negligible from a perspective of a rich country may be an insurmountable obstacle to project results sustainability in low-income countries.”¹⁴

Climate Change Adaptation or Content-Technical

34. Several lessons that were focused specifically on considerations to take into account climate change adaptation, or technical aspects of specific interventions, were included in terminal evaluations. Some of these related to targeting for different interventions. For example, the project in Nepal that worked on flood risk reduction (GEF ID 4551, UNDP) found that a community-based effective early warning system generated greater livelihood opportunities at the community level, including tourism and investment.

35. Other lessons learned related to timing. The terminal evaluation for the project implemented in Timor Leste, Strengthening the Resilience of Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Local Government Systems to Climatic Variability and Risk (GEF ID 4696, UNDP), noted that it is important to factor in the increasing rainfall variability when timing construction or planting initiatives for effective bioengineering. The terminal evaluation for the project in Sao Tome and Principe on adaptive capacity in coastal communities (GEF ID 4018, World Bank) found that adaptation requires long-term engagement as they are learning processes and must build on lessons learned, giving as specific example the utility of eco-system based adaptation solutions as an efficient and cost-effective measure for flood risk reduction, but only with dedicated support.

36. Context related lesson learned from the Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA) (GEF ID 3302, AfDB) project in Malawi include the finding that treadle pump technology and motorized pumps are not suitable for smallholder farmers, as the former is labor intensive, and the latter is costly and environmentally unfriendly. Other lessons from this project is that beneficiary farmers prefer individual woodlots to communal woodlots, and that environmental and conservation measures in catchment areas (upstream) are key to sustained use of irrigation infrastructures developed downstream.

37. Other climate change adaptation specific considerations noted in terminal evaluations include the importance of mainstreaming climate change efforts into national policy frameworks (Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Eastern and Southern Africa for Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change – Zambia; GEF ID 4995, UNDP) and including knowledge and awareness programs in local communities (GEF ID 5056, UNDP in Timor-Leste).

¹⁴ Terminal Evaluation GEF ID 4994, p. 57.

Monitoring and Evaluation

38. Finally, projects also included lessons focused on the importance of monitoring and evaluation. As noted in the section on monitoring and evaluation design and implementation above, the terminal evaluation for Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau's Agrarian and Water Sectors (GEF ID 4019, UNDP) listed detailed and effective monitoring and reporting of data as a driver of success, as it supported adaptive management. The terminal evaluation for the Effective Governance for Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate (GEF ID 4554, UNDP) project implemented in Lao noted multiple lessons learned for monitoring and evaluation, including the need for community engagement to be initiated right at the start of the project, and for indicators that measure quality as well as quantity.

MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD

39. The GEF Management Action Record tracks the level of adoption by the GEF Secretariat or the GEF Agencies, or both (together here referred to as GEF Management) of GEF Council and LDCF/SCCF Council decisions that have been made on the basis of GEF IEO recommendations. The Management Action Record serves two purposes: "(i) to provide Council with a record of its decision on the follow-up of evaluation reports, the proposed management actions, and the actual status of these actions; and (ii) to increase the accountability of GEF Management regarding Council decisions on monitoring and evaluation issues."¹⁵

40. The 2020 Management Action Record for the LDCF/SCCF tracks two LDCF/SCCF Council decisions: June 2016 decision on recommendations of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF; and May 2017 decision on recommendations of the Program Evaluation of the SCCF.^{16 17} Management was invited to provide a self-rating of the level of adoption of Council decisions on recommendations and to add comments, as necessary. After management's self-rating, the Office verified actual adoption and provided its own ratings and comments. The rating categories for the progress of adoption of Council decisions, listed below, were agreed on through a consultative process of the IEO, the GEF Secretariat, and GEF Agencies. Categories are as follows:

- (1) **High.** Fully adopted and fully incorporated into policy, strategy, or operations.
- (2) **Substantial.** Decision largely adopted but not fully incorporated into policy, strategy, or operations, as of yet.

¹⁵ GEF, [Procedures and Format of the GEF Management Action Record](#), November 2005. Council Document GEF/ME/C.27/3, p.1.

¹⁶ GEF IEO, [Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund](#), June 2016. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02.

¹⁷ GEF IEO, [Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Evaluation](#), May 2017. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02.

- (3) **Medium.** Adopted in some operational and policy work, but not to a significant degree in key areas.
- (4) **Negligible.** No evidence or plan for adoption, or plan and actions for adoption are in a very preliminary stage.
- (5) **Not rated or possible to verify yet.** Ratings or verification will have to wait until more data are available or proposals have been further developed.
- (6) **N/A.** Not applicable.

41. Both LDCF/SCCF Council decisions tracked in the 2020 Management Action Record were rated substantial by both Management and GEF IEO, and are described below.

42. For the LDCF evaluation, the LDCF/SCCF Council decision, taken in June 2016, stated that “the LDCF/SCCF Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02, Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund,¹⁸ and GEF/LDCF.SCCF/20/ME/03, Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund,¹⁹ took note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorsed the recommendations taking into account the Management Response.”²⁰ The LDCF evaluation’s recommendations are as follows:

- (a) **Recommendation 1.** The GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing of the Fund.
- (b) **Recommendation 2.** The GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender-mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan to the LDCF.
- (c) **Recommendation 3.** The GEF Secretariat should ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate.

43. Building on efforts described in AER 2019, in September 2019, Germany, together with the LDC Group and the GEF, co-organized a pledging event at the margins of the United Nations Secretary General’s Climate Action Summit where additional resources for the LDCF were pledged by several donors. The IEO welcomes the Secretariat’s efforts in co-organizing a successful pledging event to ensure the predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing of the LDCF. The IEO continues to encourage the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism.

¹⁸ GEF IEO, [Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund](#), June 2016. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02.

¹⁹ GEF, [Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund](#), June 2016. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/03.

²⁰ GEF, [Joint Summary of the Chairs 20th LDCF/SCCF Meeting](#), June 2016.

44. The GEF Policy on Gender Equality that came into effect in July 2018 applies to LDCF projects. The implementation of the policy is being assessed by the IEO in the ongoing 2020 update to the LDCF Program Evaluation.
45. Work on the transition from GEF Project Management Information System to the GEF Portal has included efforts to address historical data inaccuracies. However, it is not clear whether the systems in place to ensure that portal data, including project status, key dates, and financial figures, are continually updated and kept accurate moving forward.
46. The overall rating of adoption of the LDCF/SCCF Council decision regarding the LDCF Program Evaluation is substantial. As a new decision will be made on the 2020 update of the evaluation in December 2020, the IEO will retire the decision.
47. For the SCCF evaluation, the LDCF/SCCF Council decision, taken in May 2017, stated that “the Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02, Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund²¹ and GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/03, Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund,²² takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorses the recommendations taking into account the Management Response.”²³ The SCCF evaluation’s recommendations are as follows:
- (a) **Recommendation 1.** Reaffirming and strengthening a recommendation from the previous SCCF Program Evaluation in 2011, the GEF Secretariat should prioritize the development of mechanisms that ensure predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing for the Fund, given its support for, and focus on innovation.
 - (b) **Recommendation 2.** The GEF Secretariat should articulate and publicly communicate the SCCF’s niche within the global adaptation finance landscape, to include an explicit statement regarding the SCCF’s relation with—and complementarity to—the Green Climate Fund.
 - (c) **Recommendation 3.** The GEF Secretariat should ensure that Project Management Information System data are up to date and accurate.
48. In response to the first IEO recommendation, the Secretariat has made efforts to systematically provide information on the resource constraints and requests donor support at Council meetings and at donor consultations. The IEO welcomes these efforts and encourages the Secretariat to develop a more systematic mechanism.
49. The second recommendation has been addressed through the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and the SCCF, presented to the Council

²¹ GEF IEO, [Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Evaluation](#), May 2017. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/02.

²² GEF, [Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund](#), May 2017. LDCF/SCCF Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.22/ME/03.

²³ GEF, [Joint Summary of the Chairs 22nd LDCF/SCCF Meeting](#), May 2017.

in June 2018, which articulates the SCCF's niche in the climate finance landscape. The IEO will track the implementation of the GEF adaptation strategy.

50. Work on the transition from the GEF Project Management Information System to the GEF Portal has included efforts to address historical data inaccuracies. However, it is not clear whether the systems in place to ensure that portal data, including project status, key dates, and financial figures, are continually updated and kept accurate moving forward.

51. The overall rating of adoption of the LDCF/SCCF Council decision regarding the SCCF Program Evaluation is substantial. The IEO will continue to track the adoption of the decision.

ANNEX A: OUTCOME, SUSTAINABILITY AND M&E RATINGS OF COMPLETED LDCF AND SCCF PROJECTS PART OF THE AER 2020 COHORT

GEF ID	Fund	Agency	Project Title	Country	LDCF/SCCF Grant (M\$)	Outcome Rating	Sustainability Rating	M&E Design at Entry Rating	M&E Plan Implementation Rating
3242	SCCF	UNDP	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Nile Delta through Integrated Coastal Zone Management	Egypt	4.00	MU	ML	S	MS
3302	LDCF	AfDB	Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA)	Malawi	3.00	MS	ML	S	HU
3695	SCCF	IFAD	Mongolia Livestock Sector Adaptation Project	Mongolia	1.50	S	ML	MS	MS
3841	LDCF	UNEP	Improvement of Early Warning System to Reduce Impacts of Climate Change and Capacity Building to Integrate Climate Change into Development Plans	Lesotho	1.74	MS	L	MU	MU
4018	LDCF	World Bank	Sao Tome and Principe Adaptation to Climate Change	Sao Tome and Principe	4.15	S		MU	MU
4019	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Guinea-Bissau's Agrarian and Water Sectors	Guinea-Bissau	4.00	MS	ML	MS	MU
4036	SCCF	IFAD	TT-Pilot (GEF-4) DHRS: Irrigation Technology Pilot Project to face Climate Change Impact	Jordan	2.00	MU	MU	MU	U
4068	LDCF	World Bank	Increasing Resilience to Climate Variability and Hazards	Kiribati	3.00	S		MS	MS
4234	LDCF	IFAD	Climate Change Adaptation Project in the Areas of Watershed Management and Water Retention (PAFA)	Senegal	5.0	UA	UA	MS	UA

GEF ID	Fund	Agency	Project Title	Country	LDCF/SCCF Grant (M\$)	Outcome Rating	Sustainability Rating	M&E Design at Entry Rating	M&E Plan Implementation Rating
4276	LDCF	UNDP	Adaptation in the Coastal Zones of Mozambique	Mozambique	4.43	MU	MU	S	U
4340	SCCF	UNDP	Strategic Planning and Action to Strengthen Climate Resilience of Rural Communities in Nusa Tenggara Timor Province (SPARC)	Indonesia	5.00	S	ML	MS	MS
4492	SCCF	World Bank	Adaptation of Nicaragua's Water Supplies to Climate Change	Nicaragua	6.00	MS		MS	MS
4551	LDCF	UNDP	Community Based Flood and Glacial Lake Outburst Risk Reduction	Nepal	6.30	MS	ML	MS	MS
4554	LDCF	UNDP	Effective Governance for Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate	Lao	4.70	MU	MU	MS	MS
4585	LDCF	UNDP	Enhancing the Resilience of Tourism-Reliant Communities to Climate Change Risks	Samoa	1.95	MU	MU	MU	MU
4609	SCCF	UNDP	Strengthening the Resilience of Post Conflict Recovery and Development to Climate Change Risks in Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	3.12	MS	ML	MS	MS
4692	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Resilience of Farming Communities' Livelihoods against Climate Changes in the Guinean Prefectures of Gaoual, Koundara and Mali	Guinea	3.72	S	ML	HS	MS
4696	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening the Resilience of Small Scale Rural Infrastructure and Local Government Systems to Climatic Variability and Risk	Timor-Leste	4.60	MS	MU	MS	S
4701	LDCF	UNDP	Scaling up Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) in Niger	Niger	3.75	S	MU	S	MS

GEF ID	Fund	Agency	Project Title	Country	LDCF/SCCF Grant (M\$)	Outcome Rating	Sustainability Rating	M&E Design at Entry Rating	M&E Plan Implementation Rating
4960	SCCF	UNDP	Scaling up Adaptation in Zimbabwe, with a Focus on Rural Livelihoods, by Strengthening Integrated Planning Systems	Zimbabwe	3.98	MS	ML	MS	MS
4967	SCCF	UNDP	Scaling-up Risk Transfer Mechanisms for Climate Vulnerable Agriculture-based Communities in Mindanao	Philippines	1.05	S	ML	S	S
4976	LDCF	UNDP	Addressing the Risk of Climate-induced Disasters through Enhanced National and Local Capacity for Effective Actions	Bhutan	11.49	MS	MU	S	MS
4991	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Tanzania to Support Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change	Tanzania	4.00	MS	ML	S	MS
4992	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems to Support Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change	Ethiopia	4.90	MS	MU	MU	U
4993	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Africa to Support Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change	Uganda	4.00	MS	ML	MS	MU
4994	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Malawi to Support Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change	Malawi	4.00	U	MU	MS	MU
4995	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Eastern and Southern Africa for Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change – Zambia	Zambia	4.00	S	MU	S	S
5003	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Africa for Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change - Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso	4.00	MS	ML	MS	MS
5056	LDCF	UNDP	Strengthening Community Resilience to Climate Induced Natural Disasters in the Dili to Ainaro Road Development Corridor, Timor Leste	Timor Leste	5.25	S	ML	S	MS

Note: For Outcome, M&E Design, & M&E Plan Implementation ratings: HS= highly satisfactory, S= satisfactory, MS=moderately satisfactory, MU=moderately unsatisfactory, U=unsatisfactory, HU=highly unsatisfactory. For Sustainability ratings: L=likely, ML=moderately likely, MU=moderately unlikely, U=unlikely.

ANNEX B: TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT REVIEW GUIDELINES

1. The assessments in the terminal evaluation reviews will be based largely on the information presented in the terminal evaluation report. If insufficient information is presented in a terminal evaluation report to assess a specific issue, such as, for example, quality of the project's monitoring and evaluation system or a specific aspect of sustainability, then the preparer of the terminal evaluation reviews will briefly indicate so in that section and elaborate more, if appropriate, in the section of the review that addresses quality of report. If the review's preparer possesses other first-hand information, such as, for example, from a field visit to the project, and this information is relevant to the terminal evaluation reviews, then it should be included in the reviews only under the heading "Additional independent information available to the reviewer." The preparer of the terminal evaluation review will take into account all the independent relevant information when verifying ratings.

B.1 Criteria for Outcome Ratings

2. Based on the information provided in the terminal evaluation report, the terminal evaluation review will make an assessment of the extent to which the project's major relevant objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved,²⁴ relevance of the project results, and the project's cost-effectiveness. The ratings on the outcomes of the project will be based on performance on the following criteria:²⁵

- **Relevance.** Were project outcomes consistent with the focal area/operational program strategies and country priorities? Explain.
- **Effectiveness.** Are project outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes (as described in the project document) and the problems the project was intended to address (that is, the original or modified project objectives)?
- **Efficiency.** Include an assessment of outcomes and impacts in relation to inputs, costs, and implementation times based on the following questions: Was the project cost-effective? How does the project's cost/time versus outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects? Was the project implementation delayed as a result of any bureaucratic, administrative, or political problems and did that affect cost-effectiveness?

3. An overall rating will be provided according to the achievement and shortcomings in the three criteria, ranging from highly satisfactory, satisfactory, moderately satisfactory, moderately unsatisfactory, unsatisfactory, highly unsatisfactory, and unable to assess.

²⁴ *Objectives* are the intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development results to which a project or program is expected to contribute (OECD DAC 2002).

²⁵ *Outcomes* are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Outputs are the products, capital goods, and services that result from a development intervention; these may also include changes resulting from the intervention that are relevant to the achievement of outcomes (OECD DAC 2002). For the GEF, environmental outcomes are the main focus.

4. The reviewer of the terminal evaluation will provide a rating under each of the three criteria (relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency). Relevance of outcomes will be rated on a binary scale: a satisfactory or an unsatisfactory rating will be provided. If an unsatisfactory rating has been provided on this criterion, the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than unsatisfactory. Effectiveness and efficiency will be rated as following:

- **Highly satisfactory.** The project had no shortcomings.
- **Satisfactory.** The project had minor shortcomings.
- **Moderately satisfactory.** The project had moderate shortcomings.
- **Moderately unsatisfactory.** The project had noticeable shortcomings.
- **Unsatisfactory. The project had major shortcomings.**
- **Highly unsatisfactory.** The project had severe shortcomings.
- **Unable to assess.** The reviewer was unable to assess outcomes on this dimension.

5. The calculation of the overall outcomes score of projects will consider all three criteria, of which relevance criterion will be applied first; the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than unsatisfactory. The second constraint that is applied is that the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than the effectiveness rating. The third constraint that is applied is that the overall rating may not be higher than the average score of effectiveness and efficiency criteria calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Outcomes} = (b + c) \div 2$$

6. In case the average score is lower than the score obtained after application of the first two constraints, then the average score will be the overall score. The score will then be converted into an overall rating with mid values being rounded up upwards.

B.2 Impacts

7. Has the project achieved impacts, or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the expected impacts? Impacts will be understood to include positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention. They could be produced directly or indirectly and could be intended or unintended. The terminal evaluation review's preparer will take note of any mention of impacts, especially global environmental benefits, in the terminal evaluation report, including the likelihood that the project outcomes will contribute to their achievement. Negative impacts mentioned in the terminal evaluation report should be noted and recorded in section 2 of the terminal evaluation reviews template in the subsection on "Issues that require follow-up." Although project impacts will be described, they will not be rated.

B.3 Criteria for Sustainability Ratings

8. Sustainability will be understood as the likelihood of continuation of project benefits after completion of project implementation (GEF 2000). To assess sustainability, the terminal evaluation reviewer will identify and assess the key risks that could undermine continuation of benefits at the time of the evaluation. Some of these risks might include the absence of or inadequate financial resources, an enabling legal framework, commitment from key stakeholders, and enabling economy. The following four types of risk factors will be assessed by the terminal evaluation reviewer to rate the likelihood of sustainability of project outcomes: financial, sociopolitical, institutional frameworks and governance, and environmental.

9. The following questions provide guidance to assess if the factors are met:

- **Financial resources.** What is the likelihood that financial resources will be available to continue the activities that result in the continuation of benefits (income-generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that in future there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project outcomes)?
- **Sociopolitical.** Are there any social or political risks that can undermine the longevity of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership is insufficient to allow for project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?
- **Institutional framework and governance.** Do the legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes pose any threat to the continuation of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency, and the required technical know-how, are in place.
- **Environmental.** Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits? The terminal evaluation should assess whether certain activities in the project area will pose a threat to the sustainability of project outcomes. For example, construction of a dam in a protected area could inundate a sizable area and thereby neutralize the biodiversity-related gains made by the project.

10. The reviewer will provide a rating as follows:

- **Likely.** There are no risks affecting that criterion of sustainability.
- **Moderately likely.** There are moderate risks that affect that criterion of sustainability.

- **Moderately unlikely.** There are significant risks that affect that criterion of sustainability.
- **Unlikely.** There are severe risks affecting that criterion of sustainability.
- **Unable to assess.** Unable to assess risk on this dimension.
- **Not applicable.** This dimension is not applicable to the project.

B.4 Criteria for Assessment of Quality of Project M&E Systems

11. GEF projects are required to develop M&E plans by the time of work program inclusion, to appropriately budget M&E plans, and to fully carry out the M&E plan during implementation. Project managers are also expected to use the information generated by the M&E system during project implementation to improve and adapt the project to changing situations. Given the long-term nature of many GEF projects, projects are also encouraged to include long-term monitoring plans that measure results (such as environmental results) after project completion. Terminal evaluation reviews will include an assessment of the achievement and shortcomings of M&E systems.

- **M&E design.** Project should have a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress in achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, and so on), SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified. Questions to guide this assessment include: In retrospect, was the M&E plan at entry practicable and sufficient (sufficient and practical indicators identified; timely baseline; targets created; effective use of data collection; analysis systems including studies and reports; practical organization and logistics in terms of what, who, and when for M&E activities)?
- **M&E plan implementation.** The M&E system was in place and allowed the timely tracking of results and progress toward project objectives throughout the project. Annual project reports were complete, accurate, and with well-justified ratings. The information provided by the M&E system was used to improve and adapt project performance. An M&E system should be in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure that data will continue to be collected and used after project closure. Question to guide this assessment include: Did the project M&E system operate throughout the project? How was M&E information used during the project? Did it allow for tracking of progress toward project objectives? Did the project provide proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure?
- **Other questions.** This includes questions on funding and whether the M&E system was a good practice.

- Was sufficient funding provided for M&E—in the budget included in the project document?
- Was sufficient and timely funding provided—for M&E during project implementation?
- Can the project M&E system be considered—a good practice?

12. A number rating 1–6 will be provided for each criterion according to the achievement and shortcomings, with highly satisfactory = 6, satisfactory = 5, moderately satisfactory = 4, moderately unsatisfactory = 3, unsatisfactory = 2, highly unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = no rating. The reviewer of the terminal evaluation will provide a rating under each of the three criteria (M&E design, M&E plan implementation, and M&E properly budgeted and funded) as follows:

- **Highly satisfactory.** There were no shortcomings in that criterion of the project M&E system.
- **Satisfactory.** There were minor shortcomings in that criterion of the project M&E system.
- **Moderately satisfactory.** There were moderate shortcomings in that criterion of the project M&E system.
- **Moderately unsatisfactory.** There were significant shortcomings in that criterion of the project M&E system.
- **Unsatisfactory.** There were major shortcomings in that criterion of the project M&E system.
- **Highly unsatisfactory.** There was no project M&E system.

The rating for M&E during implementation will be the overall rating of the M&E system:

Rating on the Quality of the Project Monitoring and Evaluation System = b

B.5 Criteria for Assessment of Quality of Terminal Evaluation Reports

13. The ratings on quality of terminal evaluation reports will be assessed using the following criteria:

- The report presents an assessment of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives in the context of the focal area program indicators, if applicable.
- The report was consistent, the evidence presented was complete and convincing, and ratings were well substantiated.
- The report presented a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes.
- The lessons and recommendations are supported by the evidence presented and are relevant to the portfolio and future projects.

- The report included the actual project costs (totals, per activity and per source) and actual cofinancing used.
- The report included an assessment of the quality of the M&E plan at entry, the M&E system used during implementation, and whether the information generated by the M&E system was used for project management.

14. A number rating 1–6 will be provided for each criterion according to the achievement and shortcomings with highly satisfactory = 6, satisfactory = 5, moderately satisfactory = 4, moderately unsatisfactory = 3, unsatisfactory = 2, highly unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = no rating.

Each criterion to assess the quality of the terminal evaluation will be rated as follows:

- **Highly satisfactory.** There were no shortcomings in the terminal evaluation on this criterion.
- **Satisfactory.** There were minor shortcomings in the terminal evaluation on this criterion.
- **Moderately satisfactory.** There were moderate shortcomings in the **terminal evaluation on this criterion.**
- **Moderately unsatisfactory.** There were significant shortcomings in the terminal evaluation on this criterion.
- **Unsatisfactory.** There were major shortcomings in the terminal evaluation on this criterion.
- **Highly unsatisfactory.** There were severe shortcomings in the terminal evaluation on this criterion.

15. The first two criteria (of all relevant outcomes and achievements of project objectives, and report consistency and substantiation of claims with proper evidence) are more important, and, therefore, have been assigned a greater weight. The quality of the terminal evaluation reports will be calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report} = 0.3 \times (a + b) + 0.1 \times (c + d + e + f)$$

The total number will be rounded and converted to the scale of highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory.

B.6 Assessment of Processes Affecting Attainment of Project Outcomes and Sustainability

16. This section of the terminal evaluation review will summarize the factors or processes related to implementation delays and cofinancing that may have affected attainment of project results. This section will summarize the description in the terminal evaluation on key causal linkages of these factors:

- Cofinancing and project outcomes and sustainability. If there was a difference in the level of expected cofinancing and actual cofinancing, what were the reasons for it? To what extent did materialization of cofinancing affect project outcomes or sustainability, or both? What were the causal linkages of these effects?
- Delays and project outcomes and sustainability. If there were delays, what were the reasons for them? To what extent did the delay affect project outcomes or sustainability, or both? What were the causal linkages of these effects?

ANNEX C: GENDER RATING

1. The gender-mainstreaming description as part of the Gender Equality Action Plan glossary states that “Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities.” And “It [gender mainstreaming] is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.”²⁶

2. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality, and the goal of projects taking into account gender is to mainstream gender according to the above description. It was decided to “relax” the gender-mainstreaming description a little in the gender rating and not aim for gender perspectives and gender equality being central to all activities, but to most, if not all, activities.

3. The gender rating applied makes use of the following five scales:

- **Gender-blind.** The project does not demonstrate awareness of the set of roles, rights, responsibilities, and power relations associated with being male or female.
Gender is not mentioned in project documents beyond an isolated mention in the context description, gender is not tracked by the tracking tools and M&E instruments, no gender analysis took place, no gender action plan or gender strategy was developed for the project.
- **Gender-aware.** The project recognizes the economic/social/political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations socially assigned to men and women, but it might work around existing gender differences and inequalities, or does not sufficiently show how it addresses gender differences and promotes gender equality.
Gender is mentioned in the project document, but it is unclear how gender equality is being promoted. There might be one or two gender-disaggregated indicators, but it is unclear whether and how that data informs project management. Gender might be mentioned in a social assessment, but it is unclear what is done with that information. No gender action plan or gender strategy was developed for the project.
- **Gender-sensitive.** The project adopts gender-sensitive methodologies to address gender differences and promote gender equality.
A gender analysis or social analysis with gender aspects is undertaken, gender-disaggregated data are collected, gender-sensitive indicators are integrated in

²⁶ GEF, [Gender Equality Action Plan \(GEAP\)](#), October 2014. Council Document GEF/C.47/09/Rev.01, p.16.

monitoring and evaluation, and the data collected informs project management. But the gender focus is only apparent in a limited number of project activities.

- **Gender-mainstreamed.** The project ensures that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to most, if not all, activities. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in any area and at all levels.

Like gender-sensitive, but there are gender-relevant components in most, if not all, activities.

- **Gender-transformative.** The project goes beyond gender-mainstreaming and facilitates a critical examination of gender norms, roles, and relationships; strengthens or creates systems that support gender equity; and/or questions and changes gender norms and dynamics.

Like gender-mainstreamed, but the way gender is addressed might result in behavioral changes towards gender norms and dynamics in the systems targeted by the project.

- **Not gender-relevant.** Gender plays no role in the planned intervention. (Note that *in practice it is rare for projects to not have any gender relevance. If a project touches upon the lives of people, either directly or indirectly, it has gender relevance*).

ANNEX D: GENDER RATINGS AT ENTRY AND COMPLETION

GEF ID	Location	Gender Rating	
		Quality-at-Entry	Upon Completion
3242	Egypt	Gender-aware	Gender-aware
3302	Malawi	Gender-aware	Gender-aware
3695	Mongolia	Gender-sensitive	Gender-aware
3841	Lesotho	Gender-sensitive	Gender-aware
4018	Sao Tome and Principe	Gender-blind	Gender-aware
4019	Guinea-Bissau	Gender-sensitive	Gender-aware
4036	Jordan	Gender-aware	Gender-blind
4068	Kiribati	Gender-blind	Gender-sensitive
4234	Senegal	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4276	Mozambique	Gender-aware	Gender-sensitive
4340	Indonesia	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4492	Nicaragua	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4551	Nepal	Gender-mainstreamed	Gender-mainstreamed
4554	Lao	Gender-aware	Gender-aware
4585	Samoa	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4609	Sri Lanka	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4692	Guinea	Gender-sensitive	Gender-aware
4696	Timor-Leste	Gender-sensitive	Gender-mainstreamed
4701	Niger	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4960	Zimbabwe	Gender-sensitive	Gender-mainstreamed
4967	Philippines	Gender-sensitive	Gender-sensitive
4976	Bhutan	Gender-aware	Gender-sensitive
4991	Tanzania	Gender-aware	Gender-aware
4992	Ethiopia	Gender-aware	Gender-aware
4993	Uganda	Gender-aware	Gender-sensitive
4994	Malawi	Gender-sensitive	Gender-aware
4995	Zambia	Gender-aware	Gender-mainstreamed
5003	Burkina Faso	Gender-sensitive	Gender-blind
5056	Timor-Leste	Gender-sensitive	Gender-mainstreamed