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PROGRESS TOWARD IMPACT



FOURTH OVERALL PERFORMANCE STUDY OF THE GEF

APPROACH TO ASSESS QUALITY OF SUPERVISION

METHODOLOGICAL PAPER #6

Methodological Approach to Assess Quality of Supervision

The methodological approach followed by the GEF Evaluation Office for the FY2008 quality of supervision review was similar to the first quality of supervision review carried out in FY 2006. The review was conducted in three phases:

- The first phase included detailed review of 15 full-size GEF projects by the World Bank's Quality Assurance Group's (QAG's) as part of its Quality Assessment of Lending Portfolio (QALP¹) review for FY07-08. Since the methodology followed in this exercise is consistent with that followed by the Evaluation Office, the results of this review have been incorporated in the GEF Evaluation Office quality of supervision review to represent the World Bank implemented GEF projects. To ensure consistency in the reviews conducted by QAG panels and those conducted by the GEF EO panels, the EO staff participated in some of these reviews as panel members or observers.
- The second phase comprised a desk review of supervision for 38 projects to complement those already selected for the QAG review.

The third phase entailed conference calls with IA program managers and others knowledgeable about the projects to discuss implementation issues and what had been done in supervision during FY 07-08. These conference calls were conducted by a panel and in all such calls were made for 34 projects and the assessments were prepared for 33 of these (the reasons for dropping some projects from the review have been discussed separately in this section). This phase also included the revision of documents provided by the Implementing Agencies with regards to changes in project supervision systems and Implementing Agency guidance in the incorporation of social and gender issues in project design, monitoring and supervision.

The sample Universe for this review comprised of all the GEF supported full size projects, and UNDP and UNEP implemented medium size projects, that were being implemented by a single agency and were under implementation during FY 07-08. The data downloaded from the PMIS in September 2008 was used as a basis to determine the sample universe. To ensure that the review was conducted in time and through cost effective use of resources, some of the categories within the GEF portfolio were excluded from the review. The projects that are jointly implemented by the implementing agencies were excluded from the review because of inherent complexities in managing logistics for reviewing such projects. For agencies other than UNDP and UNEP the medium size projects were not included in the review because medium size projects comprise a small proportion of GEF investment. They were, however, included for UNDP and UNEP because for these agencies such projects comprise an important part of their GEF project portfolio. None of the enabling activities supported by the GEF were included in the review because, given the relatively short duration of implementation, very few are represented in the active portfolio of the GEF. After the above mentioned exclusions, the remaining portfolio still comprises 81 percent of all the active GEF projects and 83 percent of GEF investment in such projects. Overall, the GEF EO Quality of Supervision review FY 2008 was more inclusive than the first review conducted in FY 2006 because in the FY2008 review also considered the full size project being implemented by the other GEF agencies such as ADB, IADB, IFAD and UNIDO, for sample selection.

The GEF projects for this review have been selected following a stratified random sampling approach. A sample for each agency was determined priori. The projects implemented by UNEP, ADB, IADB, IFAD and

¹ QALP is a modified version of the Quality of Supervision Assessment (QSA) that was conducted by the QAG till FY 05-06. Although QALP is more comprehensive than its predecessor the components focused on assessing quality of supervision have remained the same. For the GEF EO Quality of Supervision Assessment 2006 QSA finding for GEF projects were used.

UNIDO were over sampled. This is especially important for UNEP, where over sampling facilitate the Office in drawing more robust conclusions at the agency level. For ADB, IADB, IFAD and UNIDO, given the small size of their active portfolio, even after oversampling it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions at the agency level. The main objective of oversampling for these agencies was to have a better sense of the quality of supervision for projects being implemented by the GEF agencies under expanded opportunities. In all 53 projects (with replacements) were selected in the sample. This includes the 15 projects reviewed by QAG. The effect of oversampling of projects from some of the categories was corrected for by using probability weights.

As mentioned before the sample from the World Bank implemented projects was reviewed in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Group of the World Bank. This process was initiated in September 2008 and the final results of this review were available in April 2009. The GEF EO staff participated in some of these panels as panelists or observers.

For the projects implemented by other agencies the review process was initiated in November 2008 and completed in July 2009. A total of 14 panelists comprising both GEF EO and GEF Secretariat staff and other area specialists and consultants participated in the review. For each of the panels the team comprised of two or more panelists. For each sampled project the project appraisal documents and the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) were accessed through the PMIS. In addition, the respective agencies were requested to provide the documentation on the supervision activities undertaken by them for the sampled project. Such documentation included audit reports, emails, management letters, field mission reports, and where applicable the mid-term review reports and the terminal evaluation reports. The panel members reviewed these materials to gather information on supervision related aspects and to identify issues on which more information was required. The conference calls to the project management team focused on gathering more information on the issues identified through the desk review and on further clarifications on such issues and on new information gathered through these interviews. The information thus gathered was recorded in an instrument that was adapted from the one used in FY 2006. While making modifications in the instrument, precautions were taken to allow comparability in ratings between these two assessments. Wherever required, the project management team was re-contacted to fill up the missing gaps in the draft assessments.

During the review process, five projects were dropped from the sample. The three projects sampled from the ADB implemented portfolio were dropped because the agency did not reply to the GEF EO requests for facilitating the review. A project being implemented by IFAD was dropped when during interactions with the agency it was discovered that although the PMIS had listed the project to have been under implementation for more than an year, its actual implementation had started only a couple of months back. Thus, it did not meet the requirement for being under implementation for at least some days during both FY07 and FY08. Since IFAD had only two active projects as per the PMIS database – and both had been sampled – it was not possible to replace the dropped project. A project from UNEP had to be dropped because the EO panel convened for this project did not complete its report in time.



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