STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10176	
Project Title	Enhancing pastoral farming producers resilience in South East watershed of Mauritania	
Date of Screening	6 May 2020	
STAP member screener	Edward R. Carr	
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	Minor issues to be considered during project design. STAP acknowledges UNEP's project "Enhancing pastoral farming producers resilience in South East watershed of Mauritania". This project aims to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable rural populations by improving agriculture and livestock sector planning and the application of innovative practices at the catchment level. While it is clear that the project will operate in an area of significant climate stress, the connections between the climate stresses (temperature increase, declining annual precipitation, significant variability), the environmental impacts of these stresses (desertification, disappearing waterways, soil degradation, increased flooding), and other socio-economic stresses (increasingly sendentarized agriculture, changing herd composition) are not clearly connected. STAP recommends that the project developers establish clear relationships between climate stresses, environmental degradation, and socio-economic stresses, to assess the character of the threat being addressed. In the current project iteration, it is difficult to understand the nature of the threats. Additionally, STAP recommends developing a theory of change to establish the pathways of change necessary to reach the project objective. Characterizing the social ecological systems will be an important part of organizing the causal logic of the project, including identifying interactions (e.g. feedback loops) and interventions	

Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary	What STAP looks for	Response
between the three variables discussed above. STAP's systems-based theory of change is a resource the project team can rely on for practical guidance. Below, STAP describes its guidance further.		
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	The project objective is unclear, but appears to center on addressing the negative impacts on rural livelihoods emerging at the intersection of climate change impacts with unsustainable resource management practices. While rarely stated clearly, this appears to be the unifying objective.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	The project will generate cooperation around catchment governance while creating a framework of land and resource use planning. This work will include organizing communities into steering committees and professional user groups and introducing locally-appropriate conflict resolution tools. These committees and user groups will design and operationalize community-based land and resource plans that identify and prioritize technical innovations to address local challenges that emerge at the intersections of land use practices and climate impact. Identified technologies will be transferred to beneficiaries through agro-pastoral field schools. Finally, the results of the project will inform policies at the commune, regional, and national levels. Broadly speaking, these activities support the project's objectives.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	The expected effects include: 1) Increased uptake of locally-appropriate climate-smart technologies for pastoral and agricultural production

		2) Increased capacity for land and resource use planning at scales from the community to the national government 3) Lower rates of conflict between pastoralists and agriculturalists, and increased cooperation at the basin level. These planned outcomes represent important adaptation benefits
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
1. Project description. Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	The project objective is somewhat vague, but appears to center on addressing the negative impacts on rural livelihoods emerging at the intersection of climate change impacts with unsustainable resource management practices. While rarely stated clearly, this appears to be the unifying objective.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	While it is clear that the project will operate in an area of significant climate stress, the connections between the climate stresses (temperature increase, declining annual precipitation, significant variability), the environmental impacts of these stresses (desertification, disappearing waterways, soil degradation, increased flooding), and other socio-economic stresses (increasingly sendentarized agriculture, changing herd composition) are not clearly connected. While the PIF notes that these interact with one another in ways that force local communities to alter traditional livestock production methods, without establishing clear relationships between these three areas, it is difficult to assess the character of the threat being addressed by this project.

| | | The climate stresses are substantiated by data and references. The environmental impacts and socio-economic factors are not.

Barrier 1 is well-described, but the claims about conflict assume that environmental stress will inevitably lead to conflict. The literature on environmental security, and on climate change and conflict specifically, notes that such a relationship is not inevitable, and that stress can also lead to cooperation. The following resources can be useful to the project developers when designing the project, and considering the causal links between environmental stress and conflict:

Adger, W.N., Pulhin, J.M., Barnett, J., Dabelko, G.D.G., Hovelsrud, G.K.G., Levy, M., Oswald Spring, U., Vogel, C.H., Spring, Ú.O., Vogel, C.H., 2014. Human Security, in: Field, C.B., Barros, V.R., Dokken, D.J., Mach, K.J., Mastrandrea, M.D., Bilir, T.E., Chatterjee, M., Ebi, K.L., Estrada, Y.O., Genova, R.C., Girma, B., Kissel, E.S., Levy, A.N., MacCracken, S., Mastrandrea, P.R., White, L.L. (Eds.), Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Working Group II Contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 755–791.

Tubi, A., Feitelson, E., 2016. Drought and cooperation in a conflict prone area: Bedouin herders and Jewish farmers in Israel's northern Negev, 1957–1963. Polit. Geogr. 51, 30–42. |
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		Gemenne, F., Barnett, J., Adger, W.N., Dabelko, G.D., 2014. Climate and security: Evidence, emerging risks, and a new agenda. Clim. Change 123, 1–9. doi:10.1007/s10584-014-1074-7
		Salehyan, I., 2014. Climate change and conflict: making sense of disparate findings. Polit. Geogr. 43, 1–5.
		Barrier 3 appears to focus on learning to drive policy engagement and the upscaling of good practices. The project is proposed as a demonstration of the value of "an integrated, participatory and knowledge-based approach to land use planning organized at the watershed level where competition is most severe."
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	Does not apply
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	The baseline identifies three critical institutions, seven laws, and participation in four multi-country projects. However, none of these are presented in a manner that allows for the quantification of project benefits. The institutional framework and laws and policies are not connected to the climate change, broader environmental, or socioeconomic data to establish a baseline scenario for adaptation. STAP suggests working the climate, environmental, and socioeconomic data into the baseline scenario. The PIF also presents four baseline projects, which it will build on. STAP recommends describing in further detail how the baseline projects will contribute to scaling out lessons, and generating data (if applicable). During the project design, STAP recommends describing the methodology

		that will be used to collect data and monitor the project's progress.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	It does not at this stage. However, STAP expects for this information will be included in the final project document.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes, the baseline is sufficiently defined at this stage. However, STAP recommends applying its advice stated above on indicators and methods.
	For multiple focal area projects:	
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	Does not apply
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Does not apply
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Does not apply
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The project theory of change appears to be: by providing innovative tools to manage risk, the project will strengthen the ability of vulnerable communities to identify, plan for, and implement innovations to address emerging climate challenges. This will produce increased resilience and improve food security and nutritional outcomes. STAP suggests writing a theory of change narrative to clarify the connections between activities and outcomes.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	The project will introduce Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and Agro-pastoral Field Schools (APFS) tools to the project. Specifically, under component 1 the VGGT will assist communities to implement a management system for informed and cooperative decision making. This process will inform the design of component 2, which will use technology transfer and innovation to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience. Specifically, technology transfer will be integrated with APFS to enhance farmer and agro-pastoralist learning. Component 3

		will capture and scale up the best practices derived from components 1 and 2.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Under component 1, the use of VGGT will generate cooperation around catchment governance while creating a framework of land and resource use planning. The project will develop community profiles, and use these to 1) facilitate the organization of communities into steering committees and professional user groups and 2) support the introduction of locally-appropriate conflict resolution tools. These committees and user groups will design and operationalize community-based land and resource planning, and update these plans annually after evaluating of current management trends and emerging climate impacts. These plans will identify and prioritize technical innovations to address these impacts. The outputs include four gender-balanced steering committees and twelve professional user groups, who will involve several hundred stakeholders, as well as improved capacity for community-based management agreements among at least 40 local government and technical staff. Other outputs are four basin-level land and resource management plans. Under component 2, project will utilize Agro-pastoral Field Schools (APFS) to transfer technologies and build producer capacity to implement innovative practices prioritized under the planning process developed under component 1. They will also Outputs include several dozen APFS, and at least 10,000 private and highly vulnerable farmers and livestock producers, including women and youth, benefitting from innovations and technology transfer. Under component 3, the results of the project will inform policies at the commune, regional, and national levels. The project will develop a strategy

		for capturing and communicating best practices. The project will be monitored to facilitate adaptive management and promote the uptake of project lessons. STAP recommends refining the logic of this component by describing more clearly the connections between the outputs and outcomes. Furthermore, the project could use a theory of change, where this component can be linked to the other activities. STAP's theory of change primer is a valuable resource for the project team to use: https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	The mechanisms of change are plausible, but the underlying assumptions about the barriers to change that this project will overcome, and the ways in which these activities will overcome them, are not clearly informed. STAP suggests writing a theory of change narrative to clarify these mechanisms and assumptions. Please refer to STAP's theory of change primer: https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Aside from a general mention of the need for adaptive management, there is no discussion of what adaptations might be required.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Does not apply.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	It is likely they would.
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	There are likely to be adaptation benefits from this project. However, in the PIF project benefit measurements focus on improved processes and planning capacities, without linking those clearly to direct measures of well-being that might be used to measure adaptation benefits. In addition to the core benefits, STAP suggests developing a clear theory of change that links these processes and

		capabilities to developing indicators that capture adaptation benefits to rural livelihoods, and proposing indicators to measure these benefits.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	It is difficult to assess the plausibility of the scale of adaptation benefits, as these are not clearly articulated in the PIF.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	No, they are not. STAP recommends describing the adaptation benefits in further detail. It would be valuable to add the following information when detailing the adaptation benefits: What is the likely business as usual development for the targeted sector, in the absence of climate change? What are the climate change vulnerabilities? What are the specific adaptation activities to be implemented to increase the climate resilience of the baseline, or to contribute to the business as usual development activity?
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	No, they are not. As aforementioned, STAP encourages the project team to describe the methods that will be used to monitor the core indicators and indicators affiliated with the proposed theory of change.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	The PIF mentions adaptive management of the project informed by annual assessments of trends in climate impact.
7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	The project connects a number of well-established technologies, planning processes, and participatory processes into a country-specific model. The PIF notes that the proposed project is very similar to work being conducted in Sudan under the LDCF/FAO Project: "Resilience of Pastoral and Farming Communities to Climate Change in North Darfur." Innovation in this project is most likely to emerge either in a localized sense, better tailoring these tools and methods to the Mauritanian context, or through learning across these projects.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	The vision for scale-up is not clear. The project team is encouraged to refer to STAP's paper on enduring outcomes and the theory of change

		primer, which offer practical guidance on the opportunities and constraints to scaling the project should keep in mind during its design and implementation: https://www.stapgef.org/achieving-enduring-outcomes-gef-investment https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	The PIF suggests that any adaptation will be incremental.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		One very general map of the project area within the country is presented. STAP suggests updating this map to represent key hydrologic features referenced in the proposal, and if possible some representation of the basins in which the project will work. STAP's guidance on earth observation is also a valuable resource for the project team to apply when detailing the project coordinates (refer to page 64): https://www.stapgef.org/earth-observation-and-gef
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	Yes, the current stakeholder list, along with the processes proposed to identify a wider set of stakeholders at the project level, appears appropriate. When community mapping is conducted and resource use planning undertaken, STAP recommends describing the actors' roles in relation to how they will contribute (individually and collectively) to achieving the adaptation outcomes.

	What are the stakeholders' roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?	See above.
3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision-making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Specific gender-differentiated risks and opportunities are not discussed in the activity descriptions in the PIF. In this part of the document, references to gender are broadly limited to component 1, where it is noted that planned community profiling will "entail a thorough gender differentiation regarding challenges and opportunities," suggesting the project is aware of the need for attention to gender-differentiated risks and opportunities. The PIF becomes much more specific in the section on gender equality and women's empowerment, noting that women have limited access to services for agricultural support, training, and loans, as well as legal and financial assistance. However, the PIF does not note any gender-specific climate- or environmentally-related risks. In terms of responses, the PIF suggests that the steering committees to be established under component 1 will be gender-balanced, and notes that training materials produced under component 2 will include specific materials targeted to women to support gender-specific capacity improvements – all of which should build on the assessments in component 1.
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	The PIF is not clear on this point. It appears that women will have some challenges accessing the benefits of this project, given the PIF mention of their limited access to services and assistance, but the character of these limitations is not clear.

5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures: • How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? • Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? • Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? • What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	The risks listed are valid, though there is some confusion in the probability ranking for climate risk – the narrative says appreciable climate changes are not likely in the project cycle, but the probability is scored as 5. There are some risks outside the project's control (such as political interference), but there are reasonable plans for addressing them. There are social risks, particularly the risk that women will not have the time to implement activities. The project does not mention social stress as a risk, even though it has a conflict mitigation component. It seems that the project could create social stress within households (as roles and responsibilities related to the project change) and between pastoralists and farmers (as they come together to work on resource management) that might challenge the project, but these issues are not mentioned. The PIF does not discuss how the project's objectives and outputs will be affected by climate risk. It also does not assess the sensitivity of the project to climate change and its impacts. While the PIF does not discuss exactly what capacity and information will be needed to address climate risk and resilience, the proposed project is aimed at building locally-appropriate planning capacity and innovations to achieve both.
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	Yes
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Yes
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	The PIF cites activities more than lessons, but it is clear this project will draw on existing projects for learning

	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	Yes
	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?	Yes
8. Knowledge management. Outline the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, and how it will contribute to the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	The knowledge management approach is unclear. STAP suggests developing a clear knowledge approach, which ties to the learning from monitoring the theory of change.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	The PIF generally notes plans to mainstream results through a variety of government structures, and to connect findings to those of the Sudan LDCF project.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
1. **Concur**	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
	* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that *"STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design."*
2. **Minor issues to be considered during project design**	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;
	(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.
	The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.