STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE

GEF ID	**11100**
Project title	**Climate change adaptation of Cabo Verde's agri-food systems for improved food security and livelihoods**
Date of screen	**4 June 2023**
STAP Panel Member	**Edward Carr**
STAP Secretariat	**Virginia Gorsevski**

1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

STAP welcomes the project "Climate change adaptation of Cabo Verde's agri-food systems for improved food security and livelihoods." The project identifies a clear need for adaptation in the agricultural sector of Cabo Verde, offers a clear and compelling theory of change, and develops a robust set of interventions addressing barriers to adaptation at scales ranging from the field to government/civil society capacity.

The PIF may under-represent the potential to achieve adaptation benefits, as it focuses on increased adaptive capacity but does not note that many proposed interventions would reduce the sensitivity of activities and livelihoods to climate variability and change.

The PIF could be strengthened by better accounting for the uncertainty of future conditions through simple narratives and by considering a wider set of actors and processes that shape food security and agricultural livelihoods outcomes, such as conditions in the global food system. The project would also benefit from clearer plans for the management of climate-related risks to implementation.

Note to STAP screeners: a summary of STAP's view of the project (not of the project itself), covering both strengths and weaknesses.

STAP's assessment*

X Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit

□ Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design
□ Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design

Please contact the STAP Secretariat if you would like to discuss.

2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?

See annex on STAP's screening guidelines.

Overall, this is a well-constructed project that clearly identifies both the climate challenge and the adaptation benefit (increased adaptive capacity) it seeks to deliver. If anything, the PIF undersells the potential adaptation benefits associated with the project, as several proposed interventions (for example, introducing agro-ecological approaches, improving the management of water resources, introducing of climate-resilient crop species and varieties) would also lower the sensitivity of agricultural activities and livelihoods to climate variability and change. STAP suggests that in the PPG stage the project make both increased adaptive capacity and reduced sensitivity explicit goals of the project, which will make the theory of change more robust while facilitating future M&E.

The PIF baseline captures parts of the system within which the problem sits, for example noting explicitly that land scarcity is one of the challenges that must be managed through agricultural adaptation. However, it only briefly references the country's connections to global food markets, acknowledging that the Ukraine war's

impact on the global food system has been felt in Cabo Verde. As a result, proposed project activities speak clearly to the land scarcity issue, but make no assessment of how they would perform under different global food system conditions. Given one of the project's proposed activities is to set up priority agricultural value chains, it is important to consider how those chains might not only create local opportunity, but also introduce new challenges if such value chains are challenged by actors or events in the larger global food system. The project should consider if connections to larger agricultural markets and systems will present new barriers to change, or if they might become enablers of change. STAP notes that focusing the development of these value chains on currently unproductive land makes any benefits additive to exisiting activities and thus might mitigate some of the potential challenges. However, over a longer term the successful establishment of such value chains will create dependence on them for livelihoods and well-being, and therefore the risks of challenges to the participants in such value chains will likely increase over time.

Neither the rationale nor the description capture how uncertain futures could unfold in Cabo Verde. While the PIF makes a compelling case for the end of business as usual in the country's agricultural system due to projected changes in the climate, it does not lay out any competing futures that might emerge. This makes it difficult to assess the robustness of the proposed activities across possible futures and the durability of their outcomes.

The PIF does a very good job explaining how the project will build on existing and previous projects without duplicating their activities. The focus on women and youth, including support for incubation hubs for entrepreneurs is welcome, as is the prioritization of activities aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability such as seed banking and the development of nurseries for endemic and climate-resilient species which can also have benefits for biodiversity which is clearly threatened (see Duarte, M.C. *et al.* (2022). Diversity of Useful Plants in Cabo Verde Islands: A Biogeographic and Conservation Perspective. *Plants* 11, 1313).

In contrast, while private sector engagement is mentioned throughout the PIF, examples of specific enterprises, etc. are not provided, nor is information on what incentives exist for businesses to engage in partnerships and in supporting value chains and financing, as stated in the PIF.

The project claims to be aimed at transformative change, but it is not clear what is being transformed or if, in fact, transformation is necessary in all aspects of the project's work. It is clear from the PIF that Cabo Verde has limited government and civil society capacity in the context of climate change adaptation. Some of the proposed activities have the potential to transform capacity in Cabo Verde, for example by creating partnerships that enhance academic capacity to prepare individuals for work in this arena. Such capacity building would likely create a durable foundation for local ownership of adaptation and agricultural activities, which would be a clear transformation from the current situation.

Less clear is the transformative character of the proposed adaptation/agriculture interventions. All of these interventions appear to be appropriate and well-targeted (though, as noted above, they cannot be tested across a range of plausible futures on the basis of the information in the PIF). However, it is not clear that they would transform Cabo Verdian agriculture as much as introduce incremental changes (improved water management, new varieties of existing crops) that render it more resilient to current variability and likely future change. The PIF would benefit from more clarity regarding what aspects of the project are transformative, and which are (appropriately) incremental, to ensure that expectations are properly established and future M&E captures the extent to which these goals were achieved.

Note: provide a general appraisal, asking whether relevant screening guideline questions have been addressed adequately – not all the questions will be relevant to all proposals; no need to comment on every question, only those needing more attention, noting any done very well, but ensure that all are considered. Comments should be helpful, evaluative, and qualitative, rather than yes/no.

3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions

1. STAP suggests that this project note that it will deliver adaptation benefits (Carr and Nalau 2023) not only in the form of increased adaptive capacity, but also through reduced sensitivity of agricultural activities to

climate variability and change. Including this second benefit in the theory of change will not result in significant changes, but might allow the project to claim a wider set of positive outcomes, demonstrate increased likelihood of achieving some of the agricltyure and food security goals of the project, and clarify future monitoring and evaluation of the project to ensure that the reduced sensitivity benefit is also being achieved.

2. STAP suggest the project clarify which activities will produce outcomes and impacts that are transformative in character, and which are incremental. It appears that the aspects of the project aimed at increasing government and civil society capacity to work on climate change could be transformative, while the agricultural interventions are more incremental. This is not to suggest that the incremental activities are inappropriate or less valuable – they appear to be well-targeted to the needs of Cabo Verdian agriculture under a variable and changing climate. However, it is important to identify which activities are transformative and which are incremental to establish clear expectations for outcomes and facilitate monitoring, evaluation, and learning. STAP has offered advice on how to assess the transformative character of projects and activities that can assist in this effort.

3. STAP recommends that the project develop simple narratives that integrate critical aspects of the Cabo Verdian agricultural system into plausible future that represent uncertainty in the range of ways they might play out. These narratives would include, at a minimum, different climate scenarios (though the divergence of these scenarios up to 2040 is minimal), different states of the global food system that might introduce divergent challenges and opportunities for Cabo Verdian agriculture, different trends in the amount of arable land in Cabo Verde, and perhaps different trends in the overall economy of Cabo Verde, as tourism is a significant portion of the economy and is itself driven by a range of factors outside the control of the country. These narratives will help the project designers determine which of the proposed interventions are likely to be robust to a range of future conditions, and therefore likely to deliver durable benefits. Such narratives will also provide an opportunity to test the theory of change against a range of possible futures to ensure that outcomes and impacts address the range of challenges and opportunities that might arise.

4. STAP notes that while the PIF identifies climate risks to project preparation and implementation as substantial, it offers very little by way of plans to mitigate that risk. The section on climate risks to the project focuses heavily on how project activities will address climate risk for the people of Cabo Verde, but only offers a single sentence regarding how it will manage the risks of climate variability and change to the project itself: “Moreover, the project will seek to establish local point-people for project management in case there are any storm-related disruptions.” It does not seem that the project has carefully considered the ways in which climate-related events might disrupt implementation, ranging from damage to newly-introduced crops to secondary effects, such as farmers experiencing a single negative event and deciding that the new technologies are not robust to conditions, leading them to drop out of the project. STAP recommends that, in the PPG stage, the project carefully consider a wider set of climate risks to implementation and how to mitigate them.

Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant. Completed screens should be no more than two or three pages in length.

*categories under review, subject to future revision