STAP guidelines for screening GEF projects

Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10997	
Project Title	Strengthening the Resilience of Climate-Smart Agricultural Systems and Value Chains in the Union of Comoros	
Date of Screening	June 9, 2022	
STAP member screener	Ed Carr	
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Concur.** STAP welcomes the project "Strengthening the Resilience of Climate-Smart Agricultural Systems and Value Chains in the Union of Comoros." STAP particularly notes the extensive engagement of the project designers with the intended beneficiaries of the project at the PIF stage, which enabled extremely detailed discussions of the problems to be addressed and the potential activities that will do so. STAP suggests the project more clearly explain how the proposed activities will move beyond/complement those of the many projects the PIF references. At times, this complementarity/additionality is vague, making the additional value of the project less clear. STAP also suggests the project work on a more detailed dissemination plan for its lessons learned and results during the PPG stage. STAP looks forward to the gender assessment to be undertaken in the PPG stage and expects it will be of the same detail and high quality as the initial engagement with beneficiaries seen in the PIF.	
Part I: Project Information **B. Indicative Project Description Summary**	**What STAP looks for**	**Response**

Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Yes.
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Yes.
	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.	The project has a detailed theory of change diagram. The theory of change is very well articulated with clear articulation of how project components seek to overcome well-researched barriers
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?	Yes. STAP appreciates the inclusion of multiple plausible climate futures in the future scenarios presented in the PIF, as these speak to the range of conditions in which proposed interventions will have to operate and will help inform the selection of interventions that work across as wide a range of conditions as possible.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	These are extremely well-defined.
	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?	n/a

2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Between the problem statement and the baseline section of the PIF, the baseline is very clearly articulated.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes – though much of this is in the problem statement, not the baseline section. What is not clear is the extent to which the proposed project builds on or moves beyond some of the baseline projects, particularly the IFAD PREFER and AfDB PASAICV projects. This could be clarified to further support the incremental cost reasoning.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.
	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;	n/a
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	n/a
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	n/a
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	Farmers and other actors in value chains are less vulnerable and more resilient to disruptions caused by climate change thanks to more diversified, adapted and profitable production, professional supervision encouraging the adoption of climate-smart practices, more autonomous supply of inputs, better risk management and better access to knowledge and training. The project will thus reduce dependence on imported food, and increase access to better quality, locally produced food. STAP appreciates that a much more detailed articulation of the theory of change is found on pages 30-32 of the PIF.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	See below

	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	Component 1: Systemic, institutional and individual capacities for climate-resilient agriculture Output: Capacity development plans elaborated and implemented to increase the institutional skills required to plan, develop, disseminate, and support the adoption of climate-resilient agricultural practices among smallholder farmers, and value chain actors Output: Training packages developed and delivered by CRDEs to farmers and agriculture value chain actors to enable the implementation of climate risk reduction measures Output: Guidance plans and tools to support the adoption of climate-resilient agriculture are designed, assessed, and disseminated Outcome: Enhanced capacity of national institutions and value chain actors involved in agriculture development to guide, plan, supervise and implement climate-resilient practices Component 2: Diversification of climate-resilient value chains Output: Identification of climate-adapted agricultural varieties and livestock breeds to develop climate resilient and profitable value chains. Output: Capacity development plan elaborated and implemented to strengthen INRAPE's capacities to characterize new climate-adapted Comorian agrobiodiversity products, and control the quality of export products Output: Web and mobile trading platforms developed to connect agricultural producers and buyers in national and

		international markets and ensure timely access to market information for climate resilient agricultural products Output: Awareness campaign conducted to enhance understanding by institutional and private actors of the sector of the climate change risks and adaptive measures Output: Negotiation and signature of agreements ensuring fair benefit sharing among actors in climate-resilient value chains Outcome: Increased resilience of agricultural actors through the identification and promotion of new climate-resilient value chain options with good prospects for profitability, increased access to national and international market information and equitable benefit sharing Component 3. Implementation of agroecological practices adapted to climate change in targeted intervention areas Output: Agronomic approaches and practices (e.g. water and soil conservation, crop diversification, mixed production systems, fodder cultivation and conservation, protective structures) developed and piloted by CRDEs to reduce climate vulnerability of the agricultural sector. Output: Financial products developed and made accessible to smallholder farmers to support the adoption of climate-resilient practices Output: Local supply of agricultural inputs, small-scale equipment and climate-resistant varieties seeds developed Output: Agricultural practices to strengthen agriculture and pastoral resilience, including the provision of

		climate-adapted crop varieties and breeds, implemented Output: Incentives (traceability and certification) in place to foster the adoption of climate resilient and sustainable practices across traditional and new value chains Outcome: Increased adoption of climate-resilient practices and crops/varieties by smallholder farmers and value chain actors facilitated by support systems and adequate provision of inputs and resources Component 4: Knowledge Management, Monitoring-Evaluation, and Gender and PWDs' Inclusiveness Output: Lessons learned from the project interventions documented and disseminated Output: Agro-climatic knowledge for climate adaptation developed through strengthened monitoring and research-action involving farmers Output: Tools for experience and knowledge-sharing among CRDEs and actors in value chains are developed and operationalized Output: Gender and PWDs action plans based on comprehensive analyses are implemented, monitored, and evaluated to promote an inclusive approach to the adoption of a climate-resilient agriculture Outcome 4 Improved development, management, and dissemination of knowledge related to adaptation of the agricultural sector to climate change to support the replication of climate-resilient solutions among CRDEs, and at national and regional scale

	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes, they are both plausible and assumptions are identified and addressed.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	In the risk section of the PIF there is a discussion of climate risk to the project, but it is not detailed enough to make it clear the project knows what adaptations might be needed to respond to changing conditions.
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?	n/a
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	Yes.
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?	The expected benefits are adaptation benefits.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	There are indicators to measure results in the theory of change.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	
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 PIF clearly identifies the ways in which the project is innovative for the Comoros. It is not necessarily innovative beyond the project context.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Yes.

	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	The project is focused on incremental adaptation – significant changes to existing activities, rather than transformational changes to lives and livelihoods.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		There is no map, but there are georeferenced Rural Economic Development Centers where the project will be implemented. STAP suggests a map would be helpful for better visualizing project activities.
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. STAP particularly notes the depth of engagement with farmers and community organizations on the ground, which greatly informed the proposed activities and theory of change of the project.
	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?	Table 5 presents an extraordinarily detailed list of stakeholders and their roles.
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.	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Yes. The PIF offers a detailed understanding of gendered differences at the household level and the structures that reinforce such differences. The project plans an exhaustive gender analysis at the PPG stage. Given the depth of engagement at the household and community level in the PIF, STAP is confident this gender analysis will identify

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		relevant gender dimensions and appropriate means of addressing them.
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	The PIF suggests that there are legal and customary structures that limit women's participation in agriculture, at the very least. Other gender considerations with similar impacts will likely be identified through the gender analysis.
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?	The risks are valid and include climate risks – though not to 2050. The sensitivity of project interventions to climate change impacts is not detailed enough to inform shifts in practice that might be needed. The mitigation measures to protect the project are vague and rely on successful early implementation to be effective. The project should consider how it will mitigate the risk of major events or stressors in the early stages of implementation, when changes have not yet been made to practices.

	• 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?	
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?	Yes, in various parts of the PIF
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	It appears so.
	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?	It appears so.
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 project will focus on participatory monitoring and evaluation/action research involving beneficiaries to monitor, evaluate, and document the effectiveness of interventions, and the dissemination of tools and best practices. The metrics to be used are spread throughout the PIF, but the specific metrics emerging from this approach will be developed through the participatory process.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	The plans for sharing results are vague in the KM section, mirroring a vague discussion in the scaling up section. STAP encourages the project to develop a more detailed dissemination plan in the PPG stage.

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.