

# Enhancing the resilience of vulnerable coastal communities in Sinoe County of Liberia

**Review PIF and Make a recommendation**

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10376

**Countries**

Liberia

**Project Name**

Enhancing the resilience of vulnerable coastal communities in Sinoe County of Liberia

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

10/11/2019

**Review completed by PM**

4/9/2020

**Program Manager**

Jason Spensley

**Focal Area**

Climate Change

**Project Type**

FSP

## **PIF**

### **Part I – Project Information**

#### **Focal area elements**

**1. Is the project/program aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes, the program is aligned with the Climate Change Adaptation Programming Strategy of the GEF for LDCF for the GEF-7 period.

## Agency Response

### Indicative project/program description summary

2. Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project/program objectives and the core indicators?

### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 27March2020:

The substantive edits are well noted. Please also note the further minor comments requiring clarification:

In Output 4.1, please spell out the acronym "SMMEs". Is this meant to be "MSMEs", referring to Micro and Medium Sized Enterprises?

Output 4.3 reads "national and country"? What is the difference? Or is this meant to read "national and county"?

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Partially. Please seek to strengthen the components, outcomes and outputs in Table B, including with the following considerations:

-Please ensure complementarity with Liberia's National Adaptation Planning process currently under implementation with support from the GCF, and which is being implemented by UNDP.

- Please ensure all County level ICZMs include comprehensive consideration of climate hazards and their impacts on coastal infrastructure, livelihoods and human health, as well as prioritise and plan adaptation and resilience strengthening actions. (Component 1, output 1.1)

- Please include activities to incorporate County-level adaptation and resilience priorities into both County and National budgeting processes. (Component 1, Outcome 1)

- Please clarify all outputs under component 1 be for all Counties in Liberia.

- Please consider how to broaden impact of the outcomes and outputs under Components 2 and 3 to all Counties in Liberia, thereby greatly increasing the scale of expected results (e.g. # of beneficiaries; land under resilient management; policies/plans; people with enhanced capacity). E.g. How can County-level knowledge hubs on climate hazards, impacts and risks be created and knowledge shared among them across Liberia (output 2.2)?
- Given focus in on both coastal defence communities for both sea and river communities indicated in output 2.4, please broaden Component 2.4 to include all counties with coast and rivers, to include all Counties.
- Please ensure interventions identified and prioritised, particularly as part of components 3 and 4, directly focus on solving climate problems (climate hazards and their impacts). Doing so will require explicit criteria and processes for identifying, prioritising and planning adaption and resilience solutions directly oriented to solving the climate problems. Please make reference to this in the PIF.
- Please identify ways to significantly increase the number of beneficiaries and through output 3.3 and reflect this in the revised PIF.
- Please ensure business identification and development of businesses for a direct focus on their adaptation and resilience impact potential, with use of explicit climate change adaptation and resilience criteria and process (component 4).
- Please expand on how access to finance for climate adaptation and resilience impact will be achieved. We encourage including substantive focus with National Financial Institutions, microfinance institutions, matchmaking of adaptation entrepreneurs with impact and sustainable investors, and/or others. Output 4.3.
- In general, the PIF could benefit from increased focus directly on outcomes and outputs that are central to the project objective; and increasing scale of impacts through those.

## **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

Revisions have been made to the PIF to spell out full acronym and also to reflect “national and county” under Output 4.3

M.C. 16/03/2020

The PIF has been revised in Table B and in the Project Description to reflect the comments above. Specifically, we have ensured:

1. Greater impact by increasing the level of ambition (target beneficiaries), taking into consideration the populations of the coastal countries in Liberia. While protection measures will have a focus on Sinoe county, other resilience-building activities have been expanded to other Coastal Counties.

2. The project benefits all coastal counties in the areas of capacity, policy and institutional strengthening, learning and knowledge, while maintaining Sinoe County as the main focus for physical adaptation measures. We ensured that the project is not spread too thin in this aspect to avoid failure.
3. The focus of the Outcome and Outputs under Components 3 and 4 is more explicit in that these are addressing climate change risks, and focus on climate change adaptation and reducing climate vulnerability.
4. Additional details on access to finance, based on the finance landscape at national and county levels. Greater linkages will be made with UNDP's existing work on "Micro-finance."
5. Linkages and complementarities with the GCF-funded NAPs project are built on for greater efficiency and to reduce duplications
6. Overall, some outputs have been removed to streamline the scope of the PIF (1.3, 2.5 and 3.1 in the original PIF)

#### **Co-financing**

**3. Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**GEFSEC 21 April 2020:**

**Cleared**

GEFSEC 20 April 2020:

As indicated in the previous two comments, where co-financing is provided by a GEF Agency that is not the implementing Agency of the project, please use "Donor Agency" rather than "GEF Agency" in the co-financing table.

Said another way, please correct the 2nd line of table C on Co-financing (the line that refers to \$15m from World Bank) by changing the source of Co-financing from "GEF Agency" to "Donor Agency". Please correct this mistake and resubmit.

GEFSEC 17 April 2020:

Within table C (Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type), the name of each co-financier is still showing as blank for two of the entries. Please address this.

In addition, as indicated in the comment send on April 15th, when co-financing is provided by a GEF Agency that is not the implementing Agency of this project (which is UNDP in this case), please indicate "Donor Agency" (rather than "GEF Agency"). Please consider if this is the case for the second entry for \$15m and correct as needed.

GEFSEC 15April2020:

The co-financing table includes incomplete entries. Please provide the name for each co-financing. Note that where co-financing is provided by a GEF Agency that is not the implementing Agency of the project, please use "Donor Agency" rather than "GEF Agency" in the co-financing table. In the "Name of Co-Financier" field, please provide the name of the entity that provides the co-financing, rather than the name of the project with which it is associated (West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Program).

**C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type**

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Government	Government of Liberia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	10,000,000
GEF Agency	[REDACTED]	Grant	Investment mobilized	15,000,000
GEF Agency	[REDACTED]	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000
Others	West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Program (WBICC)	Grant	Investment mobilized	28,000,000
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Investment mobilized	200,000
<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>				<b>53,700,000</b>

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared. Please note that it will be important to include detailed explanation WABICC and other co-finance sources at PPG stage.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Please provide description of the WBiCC co-financing of \$28 million. For example, what is the focus of this financing; is this with Conservation International; and why do you consider this to be "in-kind" co-financing?

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Insufficient information has been provided in the initial PIF submission. Please include information on how "Investment Mobilized" was identified. Please also provide explanation on co-financing indicated as recurrent expenditures.

### **Agency Response**

JP, 21 Apr 2020 - the source of co-fin of WB is changed to Donor Agency as requested.

M.C.16/04/2020 & JP, 20 April 2020 - same comment as below.

1. The table on co-financing (Table C) has been corrected and completed as requested. We have also provided the name of the co-financier where WABICC is currently indicated.

2. At the PPG stage, we will include details of all co-financing sources.

M.C. 08/04/2020

WABICC is seen as a strategic partner in this project as they bring in regional (West Africa) lessons to the project, and their finance in Liberia will support wider uptake of climate change adaptation in Liberia, supporting the efforts of this project. The co-financing is specifically envisaged to support ecosystem based adaptation, a component that is key to this project. This co-finance is not with Conservation International. It has been incorrectly labelled as "in-kind" and this has been corrected in the PIF.

Information on co-financing has been provided in the revised PIF

**GEF Resource Availability**

**4. Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes, the proposed GEF financing is in line with GEF polices and guidelines. LDCF allocation is sought to be used. \$10 million is currently available for Liberia from the LDCF in GEF-7.

**Agency Response**

**The STAR allocation?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

N/A

**Agency Response**

**The focal area allocation?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):



N/A

**Agency Response**

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes

**Agency Response**

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

N/A

**Agency Response**

Focal area set-aside?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

N/A

**Agency Response**

Impact Program Incentive?

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

N/A

**Agency Response**

**Project Preparation Grant**

**5. Is PPG requested in Table E within the allowable cap? Has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated? (not applicable to PFD)**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes, the PPG requested (\$219,000 inclusive of fees) is within the allowable cap for a Full-Size project.

**Agency Response**

**Core indicators**

**6. Are the identified core indicators in Table F calculated using the methodology included in the correspondent Guidelines? (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared as sufficient at the PPG stage. Maintaining or increasing these levels will be important during the PPG stage for CEO endorsement.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

The increase in indicator levels are well noted. Please consider opportunities to increase the indicator level of # of hectares under resilient management. We note the indicator framework indicates 5,000 hectares, while output 3.2 mentions 10,000 hectares. Please clarify and identify ways to increase.

Also, given the project scope encompasses all coastal Counties, and population of Liberia is approximately 5 million, please consider feasibility of increasing the indicator level of number of beneficiaries beyond 120,000.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Please ensure all relevant information is completed in the Core Indicators Table, and calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding guidelines.

Please identify ways to significantly increase the ambition indicated in the indicators table, including on number of direct beneficiaries; area of land managed for resilience; number of policies/plans and number of people trained. Ways to do so can include by ensuring outcomes and outputs derive impacts across all Counties of Liberia, as well as increasing impact within individual Counties, strengthening access to capital for adaptation oriented-enterprises, as well as other strategies that you may identify with partners.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

We have aligned the target area under resilient management between the indicator framework and the PIF. We have also increased the target area to 20,000ha, subject to confirmation at PPG stage.

Following consultations at the country level, the number of beneficiaries has been increased to 200,000 subject to further confirmation at PPG stage with Government counterparts and County authorities.

M.C. 16/03/2020

The Core Indicators Table has been completed with updated targets reflecting the reach of the project to all the 9 Coastal Counties of Liberia, and within the scope that is feasible at project implementation.

**Project/Program taxonomy**

**7. Is the project/ program properly tagged with the appropriate keywords as requested in Table G?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared. Given references to Indigenous Peoples in the PIF, it will be important at CEO endorsement to have this box checked as well.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Incomplete.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Not clear. Please upload table G on project/pogram taxonomy to the project roadmap and documents section of the portal.

**Agency Response**

M.C.16/04/2020

This comment is well noted.

M.C. 08/04/2020

Table G has been updated to be consistent with the Taxonomy worksheet

**Part II – Project Justification**

**1. Has the project/program described the global environmental / adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers that need to be addressed?**

## Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC 9 April 2020:

Cleared as sufficient at the PIF stage. As indicated in UNDP's response of 8 April, in the PPG stage it will be important to bolster the information on current and anticipated climate impacts, and how specific activities through this project will result in adaptation and strengthened resilience to those impacts.

GEFSEC 27 March 2020:

Thank you for the addition to the project description which indicates the climate hazard of Sea Level Rise (SLR) of (2.8 to 3.6mm/y from 1993 to 2010). However, improved information and project design is still required to articulate the climate adaptation rationale and theory of change of how this project will address specific climate hazards, their impacts of these hazards, and their anticipated tendencies in the years ahead.

For example, please use existing information (can be global or regional data sets, if national or sub national specific data is not available) to provide indication of future scenarios of the extent of the stated hazard of sea level rise and the corresponding extent to which its impacts are anticipated to increase, and will therefore be designed to address through the outcomes and outputs of this project.

Furthermore, please clarify and expand on other climate hazards that are generating negative impacts and their anticipated future scenarios, that this project aims to address. For example, flooding and erosion are mentioned in general terms. To what extent is flooding due to increase rainfall patterns (a climate hazard) another reason? If this is due to increased rainfall, please briefly explain if this is observed to be extreme rain in short periods causing flash floods, or otherwise. It will also be important to seek and provide any available information (drawing from global and regional or more localized data sets as available) on the extent to which there has been increased rainfall and what the anticipated scenarios, so the project can be designed to address this anticipated future. Please make any relevant adjustments to the outcomes and outputs based on this more focused information on the current and anticipated future climate problem this project will adapt to. Extreme whether is also mentioned only briefly.

In effort to support you in your resubmission, we also flag the importance of improving the following paragraph, which twice makes only vague reference to climate issues, by adding "exacerbated by climate change": "The population of Sinoe County is heavily dependent upon local economies associated with agriculture, fishing and local construction (including mining). Whilst these sectors employ and involve males and females, the societal impacts, exacerbated by climate change, can have significant ramifications for livelihood and family roles. Rice remains one of the most important economic crops, closely followed by cassava and plantain. As a consequence of a number of factors, including climate change, during the current cropping seasons, there appears to be a lack of seed rice, the implication of which manifesting itself in the migration of many male productive workers to alluvial gold mining areas within the county. There remains a potential for increased rice and cassava production though production constraints including poor road infrastructure making the region inaccessible during the rainy season. The lack of alternative market opportunities, exacerbated by climate change, is now being felt at the local level." Please explain specifically what is being exacerbated by climate change,

specifically how they are exacerbated by climate change. Only then can we understand if the outcomes and outputs will address the specified climate change adaptation problems.

With regard to the newly added Barrier #7 “Limited Access to options and local finance credit for Low Income Coastal Communities to diversify income and build resilience to climate change”, please expand on the short paragraph about how the project will improve access to capital through microfinance institutions. Is the UNDP work on microfinance already active in Liberia, and if so what does it involve and is it included as co-finance? Please consider opportunities to support (through a combination of technical assistance and guarantees) the creation of lines of credit for microfinance institutions (MFIs) to provide loans to MSMEs at more accessible terms than usual market rates, for these MSMEs to invest in climate resilient business and adaptation actions. In doing so, it may be useful to also consider any relevant learning from other institutions in including <http://unepmeba.org/en/>.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Partially.

This section includes a wealth of information on the Liberian context. However, please provide more focus on the most significant and specific climate change impacts in Sinoe and other Counties (e.g. erosion resulting in loss of agricultural land, etc) that currently being caused -and are likely to be exacerbated- by the climate change hazards mentioned (e.g. sea-level rise and increased frequency and intensity of storms), which this project will focus on addressing. Further identification of the climate change impacts from these hazards will help focus the proposed interventions/solutions. Please consider the extent to which coastal erosion is being caused by sand mining versus the aforementioned climate hazards, and therefore what the most appropriate solution is. Furthermore, the section on new innovation and technologies indicates that beach sand mining is now prohibited and suggests it is no longer commonly practiced. If this is correct, then even if it can be linked to climate change vulnerability, please do not consider it as a current threat or focus to be solved.

For example, with regards to sand harvesting for construction, given the PIF notes there are currently no alternatives on offer to use other sources of sand except for beach sand, will this project propose an alternative that directly reduce climate impacts, or focus on other climate adaptation and resilience strategies? In doing so, during both the PIF and in more depth during the subsequent project preparation stage, please consider what is causing the coastal erosion (e.g. sand mining, other non-climate pressures, the aforementioned climate hazards, or a combination), and how this coastal erosion is impacting people's resilience to climate change, and therefore what the highest impact solution(s) will be to address the problem.

Please clarify which GCF Readiness projects are being referred to in this section and what sort of data is anticipated from these to inform this GEF LDCF project.

With regards to technologies, please consider how these will be identified and prioritised to ensure greatest impact on climate change adaptation and resilience.

Please expand on the extent to which access to capital, insurance and other forms of finance is a barrier and solution to climate resilience in the face of the climate hazards and their impacts that have been touched on in this version of the PIF. What are the root causes of this barrier and how they may be addressed in this project? For example, please provide a sense of the extent the access to finance and capital for adaptation action is a feature of entrepreneurship skills; markets maturity for adaptation goods and services; access to loans; unfavorable terms of loans that are available; etc?

### Agency Response

M.C. 16/04/2020

The comment is noted with appreciation, and the PPG stage will provide greater detail and information on current and anticipated climate impacts, and how specific activities through this project will result in adaptation and strengthened resilience to those impacts

M.C. 08/04/2020

Thank you for indicating the need to strengthen the adaptation rationale for the project, in addition to the information already provided, which will be further bolstered and specified at PPG stage. To address the comment, the following revisions have been made to the PIF.

1. Greater details on the climate rationale has been provided, highlighting the complex dynamics and transmission mechanisms between climate change, sea level rise and coastal erosion at play on the Liberian and West African coastal zone, and how these translate into specific impacts given the coastal terrain and socio-economic context of coastal Liberia. This builds on IPCC studies as well as most recent coastal risk and vulnerability analyses for Liberia. Solutions for addressing the hazards presented in the revisions, largely flooding, erosion and accretion still lie in the project Outcomes and Outputs identified, details of which will need to be carefully worked out through more extensive consultations and designs at PPG stage.
2. The paragraph making reference to “exacerbated by climate change” has been revised to make it clear how climate change worsens the constraints that local communities are already facing in the project areas.
3. We agree with the observation that addressing Barrier #7 requires more detail. We also appreciate reference to the UNEP/GIZ project as one of the initiatives to learn from. The relevant paragraph addressing this barrier has been revised to indicate, with some detail, the focus of this work, and is based by UNDP’s experience in Liberia as well as ongoing consultations with one of the key players in the micro-finance industry of Liberia.

M.C. 16/03/2020

1. The PIF has been revised in the Project Description section to ensure that there is clarity on the climate change impacts in Sinoe, and also in the context of the now expanded focus of the project Outcomes and Outputs beyond just Sinoe County. The project description makes a stronger linkage to the GCF-funded NAPs project especially in as far as it is generating climate change risk and vulnerability data for the coastal counties, some broad potential coastal adaptation solutions, and how this project will build on that.

2. With regards to the GCF-financed NAPs project, there is greater clarity on how this project will link with the GCF project in terms of implementing its findings in the coastal areas. The GCF project will yield critical data on the risks and vulnerabilities of Liberia's coastal zone, the specific hazards and recommend higher-level adaptation options ranging from green (ecosystem-based), grey (hard and soft engineering options) and soft (policy, awareness-raising options). It is also strengthening institutional frameworks and coordination for mainstreaming and implementing adaptation at national level, and formulating frameworks for scaling up adaptation for public and private financing. This project will implement these findings, with greater specificity and with direct impact on vulnerable beneficiaries.
3. The revised PIF now places greater clarity and focus on the application of technologies for climate change adaptation, and how the specific technologies will be identified based on climate risks, vulnerability and building resilience in a consultative process.
4. The barrier on access to finance has been expanded on, with a focus on the challenges that especially households and small scale entrepreneurs, especially women, have challenges to access finance that enable them to embark on sustainable alternative, market oriented solutions. The risks associated with lending to these small-scale players is a key issue considered by potential financiers.

**2. Is the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects appropriately described?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Thank you for the additional information on intended complementarity and avoidance of overlap with the GCF support for adaptation planning, by focusing the LDCF support on Coastal Counties. However, the proposed solutions to barrier 3 on "Limited capacities in scientific, engineering and knowledge systems to support the design and implementation sea and river defense management for effective climate change adaptation in coastal counties" include national communication and a national knowledge hub. Please clarify the difference between national level support for adaptation planning from GCF and any national level activities through this LDCF project; as well as complementarity of any support for adaptation planning in coastal areas through the GCF project, and/or adjust activities accordingly.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Partially. Please include the two GCF supported Readiness activities in Liberia which are both currently under implementation and being implemented by UNDP (adaptation planning and NDA strengthening and programming). In particular, please consider opportunity to build on and avoid overlap with sub-national planning and programming.



## **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

It is correct that the LDCF project will focus efforts at the County level, but will use the approaches that work at county level to inform national level planning systems and knowledge hubs systems so that they reflect the strategies and approaches that work in different counties. The GCF NAPS project focusses on strengthening national capacities to coordinate climate change adaptation, including the national ICZM. The national platforms, such as the ICZMP platform does not specifically include sea and river defense management systems. The LDCF project will not establish the national hub but will support the national hub to integrate sea and river defense management systems. Clarification on the linkage with the proposed GCF project is provided in the PIF under Barrier #3.

M.C. 16/03/2020

The two GCF projects have been added to the PIF, with the synergies identified in the discussion of the baseline projects. These will be built upon at the PPG stage.

**3. Does the proposed alternative scenario describe the expected outcomes and components of the project/program?**

## **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 27March 2020:

Please note the further comment above on Section 2, question 2, with regards to complementary with the GCF supported national adaptation planning activities.

Please also note the further comment above on Section 1, question 1, with regards to supporting access to finance for climate adaptation oriented investments of MSMEs and small holder farmers.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Partially.

The point indicated in the PIF is well noted that "Any coastal interventions need to recognize the linkages between coastal and inland social and ecological systems". This underscores the importance of all components of this project focusing on planning and investment across all Countries of Liberia (not just coastal ones with ICZM Plans, but also those interconnected by rivers and other ecosystem features), in an more integrated manner.

Please consider the extent to which outputs of this GEF-LDCF project serve as an expansion of the national adaptation planning process supported by GCF by deepening planning at the County level? Moreover, to what extent can this GEF-LDCF project strengthen identification of programming priorities for the GCF supported by the Programming project supported by GCF Readiness, with the leadership of the EPA as National Designated Authority (NDA) to the GCF?

As referred to in Section 1 - comment 2, and Section 2 - comment 1 above, please more explicitly articulate how enterprise and livelihood activities supported by this project will be identified, prioritised and strengthened to purposeful drive to climate adaptation and resilience impacts, by directly addressing specified climate impacts.

Please also expand on specif opportunities and strategies to increase access to finance for climate adaptation and resilience oriented enterprises, in order to achieve more transformative and broader scale impacts.

### **Agency Response**

M.C 08/04/2020

1. The comment on complementarity with the GCF Adaptation Planning project is noted, and as indicated, been addressed under Question 2 of Section 2
2. This comment is noted, and the question raised in Section 1 (Question 1) has been addressed

M.C. 16/03/2020

The description of the alternative scenario, and the associated components have been revised in light of this and previous comments to include specific opportunities and initiatives especially on financing, that this project will build on. This includes UNDP's micro-finance work targeting rural women as well as AfDB's previous support to financial inclusion, and existing microfinance institutions. The PIF is now more deliberate on access to finance for adaptation.

**4. Is the project/program aligned with focal area and/or Impact Program strategies?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes, it is aligned with the LDCF Climate Change Adaptation Focal Area.

### **Agency Response**

**5. Is the incremental / additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 27March2020:

In response point 4 below, please clarify which "GCF project" is being referred to?

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Partially. As mentioned above, this reasoning can be strengthened, including by increasing focus on how the additional investment from this project will catalyze:

1. Adaptation action through increased Country and District level adaptation planning within ongoing broader processes (including ICZM Plans) throughout Liberia, at an greater scale and with more targeted focus on addressing climate problems than will otherwise be achieved with current investment.
2. New and larger scale finance for local adaptation actions. E.g. How will the access to finance briefly mentioned in 4.3 be achieved? What are the opportunities to work with regional and/or national finance institution, commercial banks and microfinance institutions to develop new lending products with accessible terms, and lines of credit, for a set of commercially viable adaptation solutions? Is there opportunity to create Green Bonds for investing in climate resilient agriculture practices or other enterprises and will produce adaptation impact?
3. Please consider relevance of the outcomes and outputs for all Counties of Liberia.

4. Please ensure EbA solutions are considered on an equal playing field with other options, ensuring objective prioritisation of climate change adaptation solutions based on explicit criteria for cost-effectiveness and impact, and support different approaches based on this analysis. Please also consider supporting opportunities for EbA solutions to be integrated with other approaches.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

The GCF project referred to is the National Adaptation Project titled “Advance the NAPs process for medium term investment planning in climate sensitive sectors (i.e. agriculture, energy, waste management, forestry and health) and coastal areas in Liberia.”

M.C. 16/03/2020

1. Through this comment and previous ones, the ICZM Output of the project has been strengthened to focus on the county-level planning, and supporting its orientation towards climate resilience by integrating climate risks.
2. Stronger linkages to financing has been made. However, we recognize that given the economic and market context of Liberia, there are limits to which larger market-oriented approaches to financing adaptation can be applied. We therefore place greater emphasis on working with the microfinance institutions (large and small) in Liberia to keep the project offer feasible.
3. The Outcomes of the project will be targeted at all coastal counties, except for the physical coastal protection interventions and livelihoods that will focus on Sinoe County, again to ensure that the LDCF resources are not spread too thin. The project is however now designed to facilitate greater shift across all counties through capacity building, ICZM and adaptation plans and their implementation, planning and budgeting.
4. The PIF has been adjusted to clearly reflect an equal consideration of all adaptation solutions, integrating ecosystem based approaches, hard infrastructure and behavioral approaches. These will be informed by current studies being done through the GCF project (which are much broader rather than specific), and will be supported by local consultations at PPG stage.

**6. Are the project’s/program’s indicative targeted contributions to global environmental benefits (measured through core indicators) reasonable and achievable? Or for adaptation benefits?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Please see the comments above in section 1, question 6, as related to core indicators.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

As indicated above, please increase the scale of results for the set of core indicators contributing to global environmental benefits.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

Based on the comment in Section 1 (Question 6), the targets for the core indicators have been adjusted, and integrated into the revised Core Indicator sheet.

M.C. 16/03/2020

The scale of the results has been increased in terms of:

1. Number of beneficiaries
2. Area of coastal land under sustainable management for adaptation to climate change
3. The reach of the project to all coastal counties

**7. Is there potential for innovation, sustainability and scaling up in this project?**

## **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared as adequate at the PIF stage. As indicated in UNDP's response on 1 April 2020, it will be important to deepen the strategy to address barrier #7, by addressing access of local vulnerable populations to finance to invest in adaptation solutions and adaptation-oriented enterprises, including through microfinance.

GEFSEC 27March2019:

Please consider and address the point above in section 1, question 1 on barrier 7, as it relates to innovation and sustainability by providing accessible credit to MSMEs and small scale farmers through loan and micro insurance products, through microfinance institutions (MFIs). In doing so, please consider feasibility of guaranteeing lines of credit for MFIs to provide loans at accessible terms for localized investment in ecosystem based adaptation solutions and businesses, as has been successfully piloted in other countries and regions.

With regards to scaling up, given the scope of this project is now all coastal Counties of Liberia, please consider opportunity to adapt relevant learning and methods gained through this project to (i) non-coastal Counties in Liberia, and (ii) coastal areas of other countries in the region.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Please strengthen innovation, sustainability and scaling up of this project, including by considering several of the comments above on strategies to increase finance for climate change adaptation and resilience. As mentioned above, what is the potential to work with national financial institutions, micro-finance institutions and others to develop lending products for commercially viable adaptation actions; and/or creation of a green bond for climate resilient investments in the agriculture sector?

Please also ensure sustainability strategies for Country and District level adaptation planning, including linked with public resources and the ongoing national adaption planning process.

In addition, please consider and clarify if and how monitoring and valuation of coastal and river ecosystems, including with the use of drone technologies, will be focused to contribute directly to the outcomes of enterprise development for climate adaptation and resilience, as well as increased finance for adaptation and resilience. If these activities are maintained in a revised version of the PIF, please ensure there is a robust system for using this information at both County levels and nationally, for both public and private sector investments in adaptation and resilience. If these activities are maintained, please also ensure a sustainability strategy for continuing to undertake this information generation and its use after the project ends.

## **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

1. This comment is appreciated. In addition to addressing the question related to Barrier #7, we have also made the micro-finance component come out more explicitly in various parts of the project including in the framing of the “Alternative Scenario,” in the narrative for Outcome 4 and in the innovation and learning sections of the PIF. This positions it to receive specific attention at PPG stage, where the project will engage a financing/private sector expert to support design of the project.
2. The proposal for widening knowledge management beyond coastal counties is most welcome, and has now been reflected in the PIF under “knowledge management” and also under innovation and scalability, and collaboration with regional organizations working in West Africa and Liberia has been integrated as well.

M.C. 16/03/2020

The sustainability section has been strengthened to include embedding adaptation in national and local planning and budgeting processes, including the County Development Agendas, as well as linkages with diversified livelihoods and adaptive business opportunities that the project will facilitate.

We have also revised the PIF on the application of technologies to ensure that the technological applications, though innovative in the context of Liberian coastal counties, are sustainable and within the reach of the users without continuous external support.

### **Project/Program Map and Coordinates**

**Is there a preliminary geo-reference to the project’s/program’s intended location?**

## **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Two maps are provided. Please also provide a country scale map of all Counties of Liberia, to help illustrate their interconnections in the scope of this project.

## **Agency Response**

M.C. 16/03.2020

A country scale map has been included in the revised PIF.

### **Stakeholders**

**Does the PIF/PFD include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF/PFD include information about the proposed means of future engagement?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**GEFSEC 17April2020:**

**Cleared.**

GEFSEC 15April2020:

The Agency ticked all the boxes regarding stakeholders that were consulted during the project development, indicating that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, civil society and private sector participated in those consultations. However, a description about those consultations is missing, as required by the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement (“Agencies provide a description of any consultations conducted during project development...”).

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared as sufficient at the PIF stage.

GEFSEC 27March2019:

Please explain the extent to which Counties beyond Sinoe, as well as microfinance institutions and insurance providers, have already been consulted. If they have not yet been consulted, please provide appropriate justification. In addition, please include information about the proposed means of future engagement of Counties beyond Sinoe, as well as microfinance institutions and insurance providers.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Please ensure consultation with Country and District officials beyond just Sinoe county.



Please also ensure consultation with regional and/or national financial institutions, commercial banks including microfinance institutions on potential for providing investment products for a set of commercially adaptation actions.

We note the reference to consultations with InsuRelience, and we encourage further discussions with any current or potential insurance providers in the country on potential for insuring property and livelihoods in the face of climate related risks.

## **Agency Response**

M.C.16/04/2020

The PIF reflects the stakeholders who were consulted in project identification, and now includes a description of this consultation. Of importance is to note the participation of local NGOs and CSOs in the national dialogue, who represent the interests of local communities where Indigenous Peoples are found as well as those of special interest groups.

M.C. 08/04/2020

Counties beyond Sinoe have not been consulted during the PIF, largely because the original PIF did not cover the substantive involvement of these Counties. It is however noted that the issues to be addressed by this PIF represent the needs expressed by these Counties in previous consultations for other initiatives, including the 2019 consultations under the GCF National Adaptation Planning project. Extensive consultations were also carried out in the context of a UNDP-led support to establish an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Unit.

It is planned that the PPG stage of developing this project will start with an inception workshop that will bring together representatives from counties, to be followed by in-depth consultations at the County level. The EPA, the lead agency for this project, and the Ministry of Mines and Energy will facilitate the process of ensuring that all Counties are involved in the project design process, and are aware of the expanded focus of the project.

Consultations with finance institutions is also planned to expand during the PPG stage, with initial consultations having been carried out with Access Bank, a key player in the micro-finance industry in the Liberia working with farmers and small businesses in Liberia. As mentioned earlier, UNDP plan to engage an international finance expert for strategic engagement with these partners.

M.C. 16/03/2020

Consultations beyond Sinoe County is noted. With the explicit expanded scope of the project to all coastal counties, the consultations at PPG stage will include all coastal counties. These consultations will build on the work that is underway on coastal risk and vulnerability assessment under the GCF project.

Additional financial institutions have been identified, including microfinance institutions, which will be engaged at PPG stage.

## **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

**Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes. Please continue to ensure gender balance in District and County level planning practices, as well as enterprise development support training.

**Agency Response**

M.C 16/03/2020

This is noted, thank you. This will build on the UNDP micro-finance project in Liberia targeting women.

**Private Sector Engagement**

**Is the case made for private sector engagement consistent with the proposed approach?**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

Cleared as sufficient at the PIF stage.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Please see comments above on deepening the outcome(s) and output(s) on microfinance.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

The case for requiring private sector engagement is made in the PIF, particularly for identifying, incubating and financing MSMEs focused on climate change adaptation and resilience investments. As indicated in comments above, please strengthen the role of the finance sector, including regional and/or national finance institutions, commercial banks and microfinance institutions. Please also consider potential for engagement of insurance providers. Please also consider motivations and potential role of buyers of agricultural products and other products that are particularly vulnerable to climate change.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

This is well noted, and Outcome 4, specifically 4.3. has been strengthened to include specific actions on micro-finance, which is intended to lead to broader change in the way they develop and implement their lending schemes.

M.C 16/03/2020

This is noted, and will be implemented at PPG stage, with the leadership of a Private Sector expert (with a focus on financing and investment as well as value chains) who will be in the PPG technical team. At PIF stage, preliminary engagement with players in the finance sector was initiated, and will be deepened at PPG stage.

### **Risks**

**Does the project/program consider potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting from project/program implementation, and propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

**GEFSEC 17April2020:**

**Cleared.**

GEFSEC 15April2020:

Environmental and social safeguards: Section 5 of the PIF show that some risks screening has taken place. However, please also attach by documents upload the completed UNDP Social and Environmental Screening (SESP) Checklist, and/or provide more indicative information (in line with the GEF Policy on Environmental

and Social Safeguards) regarding any Environmental and Social Risks and potential Impacts associated with the proposed project or program as well any measures to address such risks and impacts.

GEFSEC 9April2020:

We note the useful table on risks, including risk ratings and associated mitigation measures. We also note the reference to ICZM plans addressing risks on vulnerable populations, as well as vulnerability and risk assessments including a focus on households run by women with a preparation of a baseline and to capture the differentiated roles, needs and priorities of women and men in relation to the project objectives. We encourage continuing to advance consideration of ESS risks and associated considerations during the PPG stage.

GEFSEC 27March:

Cleared as sufficient at the PIF stage.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

With regards to the high risk of extreme weather events occurring during the project implementation and affecting the project target communities, please clarify how this would directly prevent the project objectives being achieved. Additionally, please strengthen the mitigation measures for this risk, including ensuring all project investments in infrastructure, businesses or other assets are designed to withstand climate shocks. Please also ensure all consultation, planning and training activities are designed to allow for interruptions due to extreme weather events.

Please also consider risks and risk mitigation measures associated with limited capacity of national actors, including the EPA, to engage with and integrate County and District level planning and investment in the national adaptation planning process.

Additionally, please consider risks associated with the access and motivation of finance institutions having the capacity or interest to invest in climate adaptation and resilience oriented activities.

## **Agency Response**

M.C. 16/04/2020

The guidance to consider ESS risks at PPG stage is noted. UNDP will assess the risks identified at PIF stage through the pre-screening in greater detail and come up with management measures to be included at implementation.

The risks identified at PIF stage are included in the Social and Environmental Safeguards Procedure (SESP), which is now included with this submission. These risks will be verified and validated with stakeholders and experts as the project details are developed at PPG stage.

M.C. 16/03/2020

The mitigation measures for extreme weather-related risks have been strengthened in the PIF, and additional risks associated with the capacity of EPA and response by the financial sector have been added.

#### **Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project/program coordination including management, monitoring and evaluation outlined? Is there a description of possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project/program area?**

#### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Cleared at the PIF stage. Towards the beginning of the PPG stage and well before submitting the CEO Endorsement, please indicate and seek approval from the GEF Secretariat as to the options that UNDP are pursuing for project execution by an independent institution other than UNDP.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

As the agency knows, the implementation and execution roles on GEF projects are meant to be separate per policy and guideline. The GEFSEC will analyze any requests for dual role playing by an agency at the time of CEO endorsement and only approve those cases that it deems warranted on an “exceptional” basis. We strongly encourage the agency to look at third party options as a preferred way forward. We also strongly encourage the agency to discuss any and all options for execution that do not include the government with the GEFSEC early in the PPG phase. The technical clearance of this PIF in no way endorses any alternative execution arrangement.

As such, please explore all options and seek solution(s) for the government and/or alternatively a non-governmental national or international institution to execute all aspects of the project, including these areas listed in the PIF as requiring require particular support:

- Identification and recruitment of the project personnel

- Identification and recruitment of the project consultants
- Identification and facilitation of training activities, conferences, and workshops
- Procurement of services and equipment, and disposal/sale of equipment
- Provision of progress reports and cost reimbursed in providing such services
- Payments, disbursements and other financial transactions
- Travel authorizations, visa requests, ticketing, and travel arrangements
- Shipment, custom clearance, vehicle registration, and accreditation

Please also clarify if any other areas or support are foreseen to require for execution beyond those listed here, and seek to identify an institution to serve in that support capacity.

Additionally, please ensure coordination and complementarity with all relevant components of both GCF Readiness projects.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 08/04/2020

This is well noted and will be addressed at PPG stage.

M.C. 16/03/2020

This has been noted, and additional clarification has been added in the PIF on the process that will be followed to ensure that support to implementation is designed to take into account the consideration in this comment. Any exceptional situation observed at PPG stage will be communicated early in the PPG process.

### **Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project/program cited alignment with any of the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

No. Please complete this section.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 16/03/2020

This section has now been completed in the PIF.

### **Knowledge Management**

**Is the proposed “knowledge management (KM) approach” in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations; and contribute to the project’s/program’s overall impact and sustainability?**

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Cleared

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Please ensure the knowledge management approach, and the relevant learning and sharing activities, involve all relevant Counties and national actors, and are not limited to just one County. Please ensure learning and knowledge sharing activities also include business development, financing instruments and adaptation-oriented MSME investment practices.

### **Agency Response**

M.C. 16/03/2020

The section on knowledge management has been revised to include all coastal counties, and expanded the scope of knowledge sharing as well.

### Part III – Country Endorsements

Has the project/program been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF data base?

#### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC 21April2020:

The current context is duly noted.

GEFSEC 17April2020:

Thank you for attaching the email from the Interim Executive Director of the EPA, Mr. Randall M. Dobayou II, which clarifies the intent is to use LDCF Funds for this project. However, it is important for this to be sent by the Focal Point. Please address this or provide an explanation to be considered.

GEFSEC 15April2020:

The Letter of Endorsement indicates LDCF in the paragraph before the table, but in the table it includes GEF Trust Fund (GETTF) – while evidently this is a typo, we need the confirmation of the OFP that indeed her/his intent is to use LDFC funds instead of GETTF. This can be confirmed by the OFP sending an email to the Agency and then forwarded to the GEF Secretariat. Once the email is received, it needs to be uploaded in the documents' section in Portal.



The total financing (from GEF LDCF) being requested for this project is US\$ 10,000,000, inclusive of project preparation grant (PPG), if any, and Agency fees for project cycle management services associated with the total GEF grant. The financing requested for Liberia is detailed in the table below.

Source of Funds	GEF Agency	Focal Area	Amount (in US\$)			
			Project Preparation	Project	Fee	Total
GEFTF	UNDP	Climate Change	200,000	8,932,420	867,580	10,000,000
Total GEF Resources			200,000	8,932,420	867,580	10,000,000

Please accept the assurance of my highest esteem and consideration as we strive for environmental sustainability for now and successive generation.

Kind regards

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Yes, a letter of endorsement has been provided by the GEF OFP indicated in the GEF database, and signed in September 2019.

### Agency Response

JP, 20 April 2020.

The government is in process of issuing confirmation on the OFP Ad Interim. We will provide such confirmation once it is available.

M.C. 16/04/2020

The OFP has written an email to UNDP confirming the intent to use LDCF funds for this project, and the email is included with this submission. Please note that the email was sent by the Acting Director of EPA, who is also acting as OFP in the absence of the Director.

**Termsheet, reflow table and agency capacity in NGI Projects**

Does the project provide sufficient detail in Annex A (indicative termsheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table in Annex B to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. After reading the questionnaire in Annex C, is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

N/A

### **Agency Response**

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Is the PIF/PFD recommended for technical clearance? Is the PPG (if requested) being recommended for clearance?

### **Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 20April2020:

Please note the point related to co-finance table C which still has to be corrected.

GEFSEC 17April2020:

Please note and address the remaining two comments highlighted in light blue text, related to co-finance and LoE.

GEFSEC 15April2020:

Please note and address the additional comments highlighted in light blue text, for consistency with GEF policies.

GEFSEC 9April2020:

All technically comments have been cleared, pending further review for policy considerations.

GEFSEC 27March2020:

Please address the further comments highlighted in yellow above, which correspond to the responses and new text provided in the first Agency re submission.

GEFSEC 24Oct2019 (Jason Spensley):

Please address the points indicated above and resubmit the PIF for further consideration. The comments and suggestions indicated above will need to be addressed for this PIF to be recommended for technical clearance.

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.**

**Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion**

GEFSEC 9April2020:

For future re submissions, as a way to contribute to timely review it would be helpful to highlight all new text inserted in the PIF.

**Review Dates**

	<b>PIF Review</b>	<b>Agency Response</b>
<b>First Review</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

**PIF Recommendation to CEO**

**Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval**

This PIF is recommended to be technically cleared, pending any further policy-oriented comments.