

Strengthening Endogenous Capacities of Least Developed Countries to Access Finance for Climate Change Adaptation

Edit and Submit CEO Endorsement

Basic project information

GEF ID

10525

Countries

Global

Project Name

Strengthening Endogenous Capacities of Least Developed Countries to Access Finance for Climate Change Adaptation

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

4/30/2021

Review completed by PM

Program Manager

Katya Kuang-Idba

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

MSP

PIF ☐

CEO Endorsement ☐

Part I ? Project Information

Focal area elements

1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/13/2021 - Yes, this project is aligned with GEF CCA-3.

Agency Response N/A

Project description summary

2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 -

Table B is ok. Please see Part 2 under Item 3.

Agency Response

Please see response to Part 2 Item 3

3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

Co-financing

4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/13/2021 - No. Based on previous informal discussions with the agency, the Secretariat understands that some co-financing is still being finalized. While the LDCF does not have a portfolio level co-financing target or requirement, **some** level of co-financing is preferred.

Agency Response

We have identified sources of co-financing from external partners, from the LUGCC members, and also from the executing agency. The specific amounts are described under each outcome and in the co-finance budget. Please refer to highlighted text in these sections for additional information added on co-financing.

GEF Resource Availability

5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/13/2021 - Not clear - a brief elaboration on the cost effectiveness of the global approach in comparison to alternatives would be appreciated.

Agency Response

The primary alternative to the global approach utilized by this project would be to implement separate capacity strengthening projects targeting individual countries/universities or regional groupings. The global approach offers several advantages with respect to cost effectiveness. The global approach exploits economies of scale, with a single project management unit coordinating all activities across multiple countries. In addition, the project takes advantage of the LUGCC's existing institutional infrastructure to support coordination between the universities and knowledge sharing. Please see additional justification on cost effectiveness and value for money in highlighted text in section 5 of the CEO endorsement request.

Project Preparation Grant

6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/13/2021 -
Yes.

Agency Response N/A
Core indicators

**7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E?
Do they remain realistic?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 -
This is OK for a global project.

Agency Response N/A

Part II ? Project Justification

**1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems,
including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request
GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - More information requested. These root causes and barriers are well articulated, however the emphasis is too heavy on LUCCC universities. LUCCC members are not the only universities in LDCs, and the problems expressed should relate to LDCs in general but not exclusively benefit LUCCC universities.

Agency Response

The comment is acknowledged and appreciated. We have developed a comprehensive response to the GEF's concerns about the project's engagement with the LUCCC; this response has been included in the revised CEO endorsement request. To briefly address this particular point, we understand that the LUCCC members are not the only universities in the LDCs, but the issues that the LUCCC members face can be considered representative of the challenges facing LDC universities in general. Moreover, as discussed in our response, the LUCCC was founded in part to address these common issues, and so the very existence of the LUCCC reflects the general challenges facing LDC universities. Membership in the LUCCC is open to all LDC universities, and as discussed in our response, there are no barriers to entry, and the LUCCC has plans to expand to all the LDCs by 2025.

The distinguishing characteristic of the LUCCC is that all of the member universities have already made a commitment to building capacity in universities to address climate change, to advancing gender equity and equality as they relate to climate change, and to strengthening coordination with and support for LDC governments. These are all central to the objectives of this project. Hence working with the LUCCC allows the project to build upon a foundation that has already been established.

As to the benefits accruing only to the LUCCC universities, the LUCCC is a representative group that represents tertiary institutions in all LDCs, and so the project will not just benefit the LUCCC members, but eventually all universities. The knowledge products, curricula, webinars, and short courses will be made available to all universities through the LDC capacity building hub.

The rationale for working with the LUCCC has been added to Section 6: Institutional arrangements, and highlighted.

2. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Not clear. The baseline which supports the rationale for the development of this project makes sense -- however, please clarify whether there are some initiatives providing co-financing or if there are ongoing projects which constitute the baseline investments relating to this project, including their main objective(s) and activities.

Agency Response

We have provided additional information on baseline and parallel co-financing initiatives in the revised CEO endorsement request. Please refer to highlighted text in section 1.3 the proposal alternative scenario.

3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

GEFSEC, 5/13/2021 - Clarifications requested:

1) The Secretariat appreciates the explanation regarding the change in the selection process for the host universities. However, in the interest of transparency, it seems to be better if there is some open call for applicants and or a more inclusive, equitable and transparent way to select the host institutions. This project was not developed to serve the interests of any one group, and placing all the power for selection with the LUCCC and the Elders Group undermines fairness and accountability. If the project wishes to establish a committee with the LUCCC and the Elders / LDC Group as members, this would be a more appropriate set up OR opening the selection process to other universities in LDCs. Additionally, at CEO endorsement stage, it is expected that this type of information would already be decided, to ensure that participating countries are

on board and informed. Because of this concern, the way the first component is structured is problematic, as it focuses mainly on LUCCC.

2) Output 1.1.1: The LDCF supports general capacity building activities, but not specifically to support forthcoming GCF programming. Please keep that in mind and remove any references specifically referring to the GCF.

3) Coordination: While the articulation of the root causes and barriers of the global adaptation problem includes coordination, it seems that this project will strengthen the coordination between the LUCCC and the participating countries; whereas the problem identified is intra and interministerial coordination within LDC governments. How will this project strengthen coordination within LDC governments?

Agency Response

1) This comment is appreciated. As noted in our response to comment 2 (above), we have included a comprehensive rationale and justification for working with the LUCCC. Aside from the benefits to the project's effectiveness, reach, efficiency, and sustainability, among the most compelling reasons for working with the LUCCC was that the LDC Group had requested we do so in the stakeholder consultations.

As noted above, the LUCCC is not an exclusive group, and there are no barriers to entry. Any LDC can join the LUCCC by submitting a letter of intent and a support letter from the host country's higher education authority (if legally required). Therefore, the activities in component 1 can be accessed by additional universities. The project is designed so that the short courses, webinars, and other products developed through the project can be disseminated widely to additional universities, as they will be maintained beyond the life of the project by the capacity development hub. Working through the LUCC will also ensure sustainability and ownership of the products from the project which can be disseminated to other universities that join the group at a later stage.

2) This comment is acknowledged and understood. We have removed the references to GCF. Any references that remain are part of the overall context and exist to illustrate general issues.

3) The coordination aspect of the overall problem refers to coordination between universities and government agencies. This is one of the issues that the project addresses. We have revised the problem formulation on this point. Intra and interministerial coordination within LDC governments are indeed an issue; it is expected that by strengthening the human and institutional capacities of universities and enabling them to more effectively work with governments, that eventually the "convening power" of the university will help to improve interministerial coordination by building bridges between different agencies, and making it easier to envision and design initiatives that work across agencies, but that is not the focus of this project.

4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021, Yes. This project also supports the LDC Work Programme, as mandated by the COP.

Agency Response N/A

5. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and co-financing clearly elaborated?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - No. At the moment, the Agency still needs to provide some information regarding expected ongoing investments that will make up the baseline and contribute co-financing, if any.

Agency Response

Additional information has been provided on co-financing in the revised CEO endorsement request. Please see responses to comments 2.

6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

5/17/2021 - More information requested. This seems to be missing.

Agency Response

We acknowledge that this section was missing from the original submission; a new section addressing this has been added. Please see section 6: 'Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits LDCF/SCCF)? highlighted text.

7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - More information requested. While this project demonstrates good potential for scaling and is innovative for the LDC context, the section on innovativeness, sustainability, and scaling seems to be missing from the portal submission. Please include a brief and succinct summary of these three elements in the appropriate section of the proposal.

Agency Response

We acknowledge that this section was missing from the original submission; a new section addressing this has been added. Please see highlighted text under section 7: 'Innovativeness, sustainability, and potential for scaling up?', directly after section 6 on global environmental benefits.

Project Map and Coordinates

Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response N/A

Child Project

If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response N/A

Stakeholders

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase?
Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - More information requested. The stakeholder engagement summary in Annex J is appreciated, however, there is no detailed stakeholder engagement plan for the implementation phase -- currently the table is vague and does not offer specificity in terms of the which entities and the exact modality of enagement. Please provide.

Agency Response

We have further strengthened the stakeholder section and stakeholder engagement plan and provided details on the implementation phase. Please refer to highlighted text under section

2. of the CEO endorsement request.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so,

does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - No. There is no gender analysis included in the portal submission, please provide.

Agency Response We acknowledge that a gender analysis was missing from the original submission; we have included an annex that includes the gender analysis and gender action plan.

Private Sector Engagement

If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - This project doesn't directly work with the private sector.

Agency Response N/A

Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - This is OK for now, but may need to be updated if the project changes. There are potential issues of transparency and equity as well.

Agency Response

This comment is acknowledged.

Coordination

Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - More information needed. As indicated elsewhere in this review sheet, there are potential issues of transparency, equity, and inclusion at play here. The first bullet says that the LUCCC representatives will be chosen by the LUCCC. This seems to grant disproportionate power to one entity and disadvantages LDCs that may for whatever reason not have universities in the LUCCC currently.

Agency Response

Thank you for this comment. As noted elsewhere, the LUCCC is an arm of the LDC Group and as such represents all of the LDCs. The LUCCC has a plan to bring in members from all of the LDCs by 2025. There are no barriers to entry, and becoming a member of the LUCCC is a simple process.

The rationale for working with the LUCCC has been added to Section 6: Institutional arrangements and highlighted.

Consistency with National Priorities

Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - This is a global project and is well aligned with individual countries' NAP priorities, as listed (except Sudan and Afghanistan - why?). However, more information regarding how this project is aligned with the LDC Work Programme would be appreciated.

Agency Response

We have included a description of how the project aligns to the LDC work programme. Please refer to highlighted text under this section.

Afghanistan doesn't have a NAP yet, but there is a section on Afghanistan. The linkages section also includes linkages to Sudan's NAP.

Knowledge Management

Is the proposed Knowledge Management Approach for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Yes, this section is well articulated.

Agency Response N/A

Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately documented at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

5/17/2021 - No, please provide.

Agency Response

The UNEP Social Risk Identification For (SRIF) has been completed and the project was rated as low risk by our Environmental and social safeguards team. The SRIF has been attached to the resubmission package.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Yes.

Agency Response N/A

Benefits

Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Yes, the socioeconomic benefits are clear.

Agency Response N/A

Annexes

Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Please confirm this is the FULL Budget table, in line with the updated GEF Project and Program Cycle Guidelines

Agency Response

We have included the complete budget in the GEF template.

Project Results Framework

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Yes

Agency Response N/A

GEF Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - In process

Agency Response N/A

Council comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

STAP comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

Convention Secretariat comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

Other Agencies comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

CSOs comments

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

Status of PPG utilization

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021- Yes.

Agency Response N/A

Project maps and coordinates

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request GEFSEC, 5/17/2021- This is a global project.

Agency Response N/A

Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

N/A

Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response N/A

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

GEFSEC, 5/11/2021 - Not yet. Please refer to flagged items and resubmit for consideration. Additionally, please consider the following:

- 1) Please include a section elaborating on COVID-19 related risks specifically pertaining to this project, and how this project can support global/national "building back better" and green recovery, underpinned by increased climate resilience.
- 2) Where is the prodoc? Prodoc must be uploaded onto the roadmap.
- 3) The FULL budget table must be included both on the portal and Annex E
- 4) Executing Agency must be selected before a full review can be undertaken
- 5) The two contractors mentioned under the PMU -- salaries will be paid out of where?

Review Dates

	Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review	5/17/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		