

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

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

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

8/27/2021

Program Manager

Tshewang Dorji

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, 8/27/2021 - Cleared

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021, update: There is no proportionality in the co-financing contribution to PMC ? it should be around 10% as it is for the GEF contribution. Hence, for a co-financing of \$2,041,528 the expected contribution to PMC must be around \$204,152 instead of \$32,896 (which represents 1,6%). Please note that the GEF contribution to PMC might be

decreased and the co-financing contribution to PMC might be increased to reach a similar level. Please amend either by increasing the co-financing portion and/or by reducing the GEF portion.

GEFSEC, 8/23/2021: Cleared.

GEFSEC, 8/13/2021: Thanks for the updated information. While the project is now expected to include all 15 LUCCC member universities, the Output 1.1.1 mentions that only 13 LUCCC universities will formulate engagement plans with host government. Please clarify

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Table B is ok. Please see Part 2 under Item 3.

Agency Response

08/26/21: The co-financing contribution has been increased for PMC. See revised CEO endorsement document green highlights.

08/20/21: GEF has required UNEP to obtain letters of support from all of the participating universities as well as all of the host governments, which has added a significant level of complexity to the design process. UNEP, through its own channels and also through the LDC Group and the LUCCC has worked diligently and exhaustively to obtain the required letters from all of the universities. At the same time, many of the universities are struggling to operate amidst budget crises and lockdown conditions due to COVID-19. This has made communication and coordination difficult on both sides. Despite these efforts, one member university has not responded. Therefore, this university has not been included in the targets for the project. In addition, the current situation in Afghanistan creates additional and unforeseen risks to implementation in that country; it simply cannot be known if Kabul University will be able to participate in the project.

If it is legally, technically, and logistically possible to work with Kabul University, the project is committed to doing so. Likewise, if at some point in the future the non-responsive university can be engaged, the project will work with them.

This information has been added as an update at the beginning of PART II Project Justification

06/23/21: 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, 8/30/2021 - Cleared. Thanks.

GEFSEC, 8/28/2021, update: Thanks for additional clarification. However, please provide further clarification on the following:

- a) The co-financing letter from Bhutan has not been updated (or the table ? depending on which one is correct)
- b) The Co-financing table remains the same: if no desire to single out each co-financing that's fine but please request to have the detailed tables correct (i.e. EU Erasmus grant or in-kind)
- c) The co-financing budget table under Annex E is off the margins. Kindly adjust it.

GEFSEC, 8/27/2021 - Cleared. Thanks.

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021, update: Please provide necessary documentation and clarification on the following:

- a. Kindly note that we could not find a co-financing letter supporting the \$100,896 in-kind from START. The letter attached only stipulated the \$454,124 Grant.
- b. The total amounts corresponding to LUCCC University Members do not match to what we have found in the co-financing letters. Since these two items bring together 7 universities (Bhutan, Gambia, Liberia, Pokhara, Addis, Burkina Faso and Malawi) it might be more clean to individualize each co-financing per university.
- c. Kindly note that the letter from Malawi is missing
- d. The letter from Bhutan stipulates co-financing of 99,200 and 56,000 are in kind but the table in ProDOC stipulate these are grants (EU ERASMUS)

GEFSEC, 8/23/2021: Cleared

GEFSEC, 8/10/2021 - Please clarify co-financing status from rest of the participating Universities. Also, kindly reflect the role of the Commonwealth Secretariat in the relevant section of the document.

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

08/30/21:

- a) A revised letter for Bhutan has been uploaded which clarifies the distinction between grant and in-kind co-finance
- b) With the revised co-finance letter from Bhutan, the tables now add up.
- c) The margins of the co-finance budget table in Annex E have been adjusted as requested

08/26/21:

- a. The START co-financing letter includes reference to both the in-kind contribution and grant contribution. Please refer to the second paragraph of the letter which states ?Through this co-financing letter, START international confirms its contribution of US\$100,896 over the two years of the project as in-kind co-finance to support the implementation of the proposed LDCF project and the achievement of its objectives.? The letter then describes the grant co-finance contribution as well.
- b. We have reviewed the letters and co-finance figures and have found that they match what appears in the CEO endorsement request. The co-financing contributions have been split and described clearly in two tables under Part II, Section 2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects, under ?co-financing initiatives.? As previously stated, the list of current co-financing is an indicative list of what the Universities will be providing as co-financing for the universities that will end up fully participating in the mechanism, which we have estimated to be five. If additional universities take up full participation in the project, co-finance would be higher.
- c. UNEP is following up on the co-finance letter from the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- d. A new letter of co-financing has been requested from University of Bhutan

08/20/21: The Commonwealth Secretariat will not be providing co-financing for this project, as the baseline commitment required by the Commonwealth Secretariat from the project was not feasible given the budgetary constraints of the project. However, UNEP and the implementation team will continue to coordinate and liaise with the Commonwealth Secretariat and work to identify points of collaboration, and will explore the possibility of the Commonwealth Secretariat providing support for the thinktanks once the project is complete. Reference to coordination with the commonwealth and CFAN have been moved to a separate section below the co-financing initiatives section ? please refer to blue highlighted text.

With respect to the six (out of 13) universities that are not listed in the co-financing table, these universities have not committed to providing in-kind or parallel financing at this time due to the fact that during the design phase, most of the universities were dealing with lockdowns and were essentially shut down. This made the task of identifying co-financing and obtaining the necessary letters of support difficult. The list of current co-financing is an indicative list of what the Universities will be providing as co-financing for the universities that will end up fully participating in the mechanism, which we have estimated to be five. If additional universities take up full participation in the project, co-finance would be higher.

06/23/21: We have identified sources of co-financing from external partners, from the LUCCC 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, 8/10/2021 - Cleared. Thanks

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 LUCCC'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, 8/30/2021 - Cleared. Thanks.

GEFSEC, 8/28/2021-update: Thanks for additional clarification. We would like to inform you that Annex A does not seem to reflect half of the indicators in Table B. If Table B's indicators are really going to be monitored during implementation, please reflect in Annex A which should provide the full results framework

GEFSEC, 8/27/2021 - Cleared. Thanks

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021, update: - While the Afghanistan issue is clearly marked upfront in the project template, it is not indicated as a potential risk in the dedicated Section 5. Please consider addressing this risk in this section.

- Table B includes many more dedicated output indicators than Annex A, which should be more comprehensive than Table B. Please consider addressing as appropriate.

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - This is OK for a global project.

Agency Response

08/30/21:
Output indicators have now been included in Annex A. Please refer to revised Annex A in resubmitted CEO endorsement request highlighted in green

08/26/21: A risk on political instability in participating countries has been included in the risk table in section 5 see green highlighted text.

- Annex A ? results framework only includes indicators relating to outcomes and not outputs. As per practice in all other LDCF programming, project results are at objective and outcome level and are measured by the indicators. Outputs are delivered as a

means of achieving the Outcomes. Implementation on both outputs and Outcome is closely monitored and reported on in the annual PIR reports.

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, 8/23/2021: Cleared. Thanks for clarification

GEFSEC, 8/10/2021 - Cleared, but please note that the reference to section 1.3 is not clear. Please confirm the section

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

08/20/2021: *Reference has been made in the previous response to changes in Section 6 and not to Section 1.3. More clarification is requested.*

06/23/21: 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, 8/23/2021: Cleared, Thanks for clarification

GEFSEC, 8/10/2021 - Cleared, but note that the reference to section 1.3 is not clear. Please confirm the section

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

*08/20/21: The highlighted text appears under the heading ?co-financing initiatives? which appears under **Part II, Section 2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects**. Additional information on baseline co-finance can also be found in highlighted text under **Part II, Section 3 The proposed alternative scenario with a description of outcomes and components of the project***

Reference to section 1.3 was an error. Kindly refer to blue highlighted text within the revised CEO endorsement request.

06/23/21: 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, 8/10/2021 - Cleared, Thanks for additional information.

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 will 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, 8/10/2021 - Cleared

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

GEFSEC, 8/11/2021 - Cleared.

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 LDCE/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, 8/11/2021 - Cleared.

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, 8/11/2021 - Cleared.

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, 8/11/2021 - This is Okay for now, but please clarify some acronyms such as GESI in the Annex document.

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

Agency Response

08/20/21: We have spelled out GESI and other acronyms in the gender analysis and gender action plan annex, and uploaded the revised version.

06/23/21: 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, 8/11/2021 - Cleared. However, it will be useful to clarify how the institute hosting LUCCC Secretariat will be or will not be engaged in the project.

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

08/20/21: It is envisaged that ICCCAD will host the capacity development hub for the project (output 1.1.2), which is expected to increase the level of institutionalization of the LUCCC, however this will be formalised and agreed upon with all participating LUCCC members at the inception meeting.

06/23/21: 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, 8/11/2021 - Cleared. However, would appreciate more information regarding its alignment with the LDC Work Programme

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

08/20/21: Additional details have been added to indicate the projects alignment with specific elements of the 2021-2022 Work Programme for the Least Developed Countries Expert Group. Please refer to text highlighted in blue under this section.

06/23/21: 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
GEFSEC, 8/11/2021 - Cleared. Thanks for additional information

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, 8/30/2021 - Cleared. Thanks.

GEFSEC8/28/21-update: Thanks for correctly charging M&E and PMC budget. However, please provide each budget line in the budget template to enable Secretariat to analyze which items (consultants, travel, etc.) are going to be paid from which sources (Project's components, M&E, PMC).

GEFSEC, 8/27/2021 - Cleared. Thanks.

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021 - update: On the Budget: M&E and PMC have been charged to the components. We request you to kindly charges in the M&E and PMC table

GEFSEC, 5/17/2021 - Yes.

Agency Response
08/30/21:
Additional details/ a description of how the funds will be used is included in the revised budget, please refer to green highlighted text in the GEF project template budget

08/26/21: This has been revised in the excel version of the budget. See revised budget.

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, 8/11/2021. This is okay for now. Thanks

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, 8/28/2021 - In process

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021 - In process

GEFSEC, 8/13/2021 - In process

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, 8/30/2021 - Cleared with thanks for additional clarification.

GEFSEC, 8/28/2021: Update, please address additional comments under Co-financing, Core indicator and M&E budget templates

GEFSEC, 8/27/2021 - Cleared with thanks for additional clarification.

GEFSEC, 8/26/2021: Update, please address additional comments under Project description summary, Co-financing, Core indicator, M&E budget

GEFSEC, 8/23/2021: Recommended for CEO endorsement

GEFSEC, 8/13/2021 - Not yet. Would appreciate, if you can address the flagged item and resubmit for consideration.

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)	8/13/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/23/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/26/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	8/28/2021	

CEO Recommendation

Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations

CONTEXT

Least Developed Countries (LDCs) suffer disproportionately from impact of climate change. This is due to limited adaptive capacity, including persistent lack of endogenous capacity to conduct essential tasks related to policy formulation and project design and implementation of climate change adaptation action. The overall impact of this situation serves to curtail the resources available to LDCs from domestic public sources, international climate change financiers, and the private sector, despite the projected needs of US\$ 93 billion for climate action annually. This in turn undermines scaled-up adaptation action and the transformative change that is necessary to move LDCs into climate-resilient economic and social development pathways. The project is designed to address key capacity gaps.

COMPONENTS AND RESULTS

The project has three mutually supporting components aimed at enhancing coordination and cooperation among LDC universities and also for creating a strong foundation for the LDC-based technical services providers: The components are as follows:

- Component 1: Collaborative mechanism for sustained endogenous capacity on climate change adaptation finance
- Component 2: Establish thinktanks to produce demand-led technical products that provide decision-support and policy-relevant information to the LDC governments
- Component 3: Scaling up establishment of the LDC thinktanks with additional Least Developed Countries Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC) members and LDCs

The project is innovative as it envisions a long-term, sustained institutional approach to addressing the underlying capacity gaps. Through institutional strengthening and mentoring, the project aims to move the locus of capacity development from development partners to the LDCs themselves. Lessons learned from previous projects, notably GEF-funded National Adaptation Plans Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP), the LDCF-funded project Building capacity for LDCs to participate effectively in intergovernmental climate change processes, and the European Union-funded projects Low Carbon Cities Lab programme are expected to be incorporated.

The project is also consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) guidance to the GEF, specifically in decision 11/CP.22.

The project is designed with a strong focus on gender equality and empowerment. Overall, it will directly build capacity of 300 people (40% women). In addition, it is expected to work directly with LUCCC while closely liaising with the LDC Governments.

On COVID-19, the project is designed during an unprecedented global pandemic and some of the participating countries are still experiencing lockdowns or other restrictions. Online and web-based work were used for mitigating such risk. Because of the continuing situation, the project envisages to prepare country- and institution-specific covid-19 risk management plans. Where possible, the project is expected to conduct activities online.