

TERMINAL EVALUATION

Project ID:	9213
Project Name:	Zambia Integrated Forest Land Project (ZIFLP)
Countr(ies):	Zambia
Implementing Agency:	World Bank

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name

Zambia Integrated Forest Land Project (ZIFLP)

Country

Zambia

GEF ID

9213

Implementing Agency

World Bank

Executing Entity

Ministry of National Development Planning (MNDP)

Trust Fund

GET

Project Type

FSP

Objective

To improve landscape management and increase the flow of benefits for targeted rural communities in the Eastern Province

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval

3/29/2017

Agency Approval

5/4/2017

Implementation Start

5/4/2017

First Disbursement

8/2/2018

Expected MTR

MTR Submission

9/18/2025

Actual MTR

6/14/2021

Expected Completion

2/29/2024

Actual Completion

2/29/2024

Actual TE

2/29/2024

TE Submission

9/18/2025

Final Disbursement

C. Disbursements

Project Financing

8,775,000.00

Cumulative Disbursement

8,050,458.00

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main Terminal Evaluation Findings

The project development objective (PDO) was deemed highly relevant during the appraisal and this status was maintained throughout the project. The PDO's high relevance stems from its strong alignment with sectoral challenges, government priorities, and strategies and the World Bank Country Partnership Framework (CPF) FY13-16 (Report No. 75089-ZM) and FY 19-23 (Report No. 128467-ZM), and the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) 2018 (Report No. 124032-ZM).

At appraisal, the project aligned with Zambia's Vision 2030, which aimed for gender-responsive sustainable development and the incorporation of productive natural resource management principles to achieve sustainable socioeconomic progress by 2030. It aligned with the 7th National Development Plan, which promoted economic growth through small-scale agriculture to increase job opportunities and enhance livelihoods, in addition to sustainable land use planning and management in policy formulation. The project was designed to address significant environmental and developmental challenges. It emerged as a response to Zambia's unsustainable agricultural expansion and severe deforestation—estimated at 250,000–300,000 ha annually—predominantly due to the expansion of agriculture, settlement development, and the reliance on firewood for energy. It also aligned with the Zambia Climate Change Response Strategy and responded to the strategic objectives of GEF. The project's relevance was rooted in its holistic approach that integrated land use, environmental sustainability, and socioeconomic development through participatory planning and targeted interventions. The project objectives facilitated the transition from REDD+ readiness to actual implementation to address drivers of deforestation.

The project was adeptly tailored to address the intertwined issues of poverty and environmental degradation in the Eastern Province (EP) by promoting sustainable agricultural and forestry practices to conserve natural resources and improve rural economic conditions. Recognizing forests as vital for the vulnerable, it aimed to reduce poverty through forest conservation and management. The project emphasized the importance of supportive policies and frameworks to enable community-based forest management and enhance local opportunities for shared prosperity.

At appraisal, the project was aligned with the World Bank's Zambia CPF for FY13–16, extended to 2017, Objective 1. At project completion, the project remained relevant under the CPF FY19–23 (meeting Objective 1.1 and Objective 1.2) as it continued to respond to agricultural priorities aimed at reducing regional disparities and boosting main livelihoods of the poor, particularly in rural areas. The project's target area aligned with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ)'s requests for investments in the twangle circles for rural development and growth. Additionally, the project was consistent with the World Bank's Forest Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan.

The efficacy of the project is assessed as High. The project's efficacy was evaluated by measuring the attainment of the development objectives through the PDO and the intermediate indicators in the Results Framework. It synthesized information from a variety of sources, including the Borrower's Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR), end-of-project evaluation, impact studies, Aide Memoires, progress reports, and the findings of the World Bank ICR team's missions. To enrich the evaluation, additional data and evidence from analytical works were integrated. Productivity metrics, primarily sourced from the Results Framework, were augmented with district-level agricultural statistics as well as qualitative feedback obtained during the project closure mission.

The project demonstrated remarkable success. It overachieved all its four PDO indicator targets and mostly achieved its intermediate indicators. The project aimed to benefit approximately 214,955 individuals, with a goal of 30 percent female participation. Over the course of 6.5 years of implementation, the project reached 224,071 beneficiaries (104 percent achievement) with women making up nearly half (47 percent) of this total. The overachievement of targets is noteworthy, especially given the initial slow progress observed at the

Midterm Review (MTR) and the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Post MTR, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) played a key role in accelerating activities, leading to this success.

B. Stakeholder Engagement

PDO Outcome 1: Improve landscape management for targeted rural communities in the EP

The project aimed to enhance landscape management in the EP by expanding the forest area under sustainable forest management and conservation practices, in addition to improving wildlife management. It successfully met its PDO indicator increasing the forest area under sustainable management by 72,840 ha (110.4 percent) of the targeted 66,000 ha and exceeded the goal for its intermediate indicator on Community Forest Management Agreements (CFMAs) with the Forestry Department (FD) by 187 percent, that is, 28 agreements against the target of 15. This was achieved through activities such as the development and implementation of participatory land and resource use planning, the establishment of community forest management groups (CFMGs), creation of alternative incomes (crop diversification, community vegetable gardens, apiculture, and livestock rearing) capacity building, equipment supply, and infrastructure development (offices, storage facilities, nurseries, and greenhouses for agroforestry). The project supported and facilitated stakeholder consultations for the development of forest management plans, which in turn resulted in the revision of these plans in 25 forest reserves, and piloted forest restoration in places such as the Mphomwa Local Forest. By the end of the project, most of these communities were implementing the forest management plans and had set governance structures for their operationalization.

The project empowered communities to combat deforestation through activities such as re/afforestation particularly with indigenous species, management of woodlots of exotic species to control potentially invasive non-native species, and management of fires through community-led fire management planning. It established tree nurseries in four forest areas and the construction of offices and accommodations for forest officers within the same locality. In addition, the project reduced dependence on traditional biomass fuels through the promotion of energy-efficient alternatives such as fuel-efficient cookstoves. A comprehensive outreach campaign educated communities on fuel-efficient cookstoves, leading to the distribution of 156 cookstoves to public institutions, which are major consumers of wood fuel; training 157 individuals in cookstove construction; and other community members in construction of cookstoves which in turned resulted in them cumulatively constructing 4,805 cook stoves for community households, empowering them to adopt more sustainable practices.

Local resource management was further strengthened through the transfer of land rights, training of honorary forest officers (HFOs), and Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices such as agroforestry. Transfer of land rights totaling 64,944 ha aimed to empower communities with the authority to manage and benefit from their natural resource was achieved. This was complemented by partnership agreements for 7,808 ha within state forest reserves including 642 ha in Lunga Local Forest, 468 ha in Lutembwe Local Forest, and 6,698 ha in Mphomwa Local Forest. Climate-smart practices such as the incorporation of nitrogen-fixing trees, such as *Gliricidia sepium* and *Faidherbia albida* into farming, led to the planting of 5.26 million seedlings. This approach not only assisted in combating soil erosion and flooding but also enhanced soil fertility necessary for increased carbon sequestration. Furthermore, the project involved training 599 HFOs to support the protection and management of forest areas in their respective communities alongside the FD and the Zambia Police Services. The HFO training manual was adopted nationwide, and the HFOs were institutionalized, formally recognizing and empowering them for forestry supervision and continued landscape management.

In addition, the promotion of crop diversification, alternative income generation (discussed in subsequent sections), and agricultural intensification over expansion all contributed to reduced deforestation. Performance incentives tied to the management of community forests and benefit-sharing mechanisms that were set up encouraged legal and sustainable use of forest resources. The project developed a benefit-sharing guide to promote the equitable distribution of benefits for continued cooperation beyond the project's lifespan. The project activities led to an increase in forested areas across most of the 14 districts, demonstrating a notable improvement in the management and conservation of natural resources. For example, tree coverage in the

Malambalala forest area increased from 204.75 ha in 2017 to 215.14 ha in 2022, representing a growth of approximately 4 percent.

Given that wildlife resources are an important part of the rural landscape, the project strengthened the management of protected areas. This was achieved through infrastructure development, such as administrative offices, camp houses, guard houses, entry gates, and the upgrading of existing loop roads to facilitate park management and ecotourism. Additionally, the project provided for six water holes, boundary clearing, beaconing, and fencing to curb issues of encroachment and human-wildlife conflict. It also involved the procurement of equipment, including patrol vehicles, global positioning system (GPS) and GPS-tracked phones, tractors, graders, and road compactors to increase the parks footprint for more effective patrols to reduce poaching. Furthermore, a community eco-lodge was set up from the project financing to capitalize on ecotourism in the area. Overall, the project took a holistic approach to landscape management by integrating community engagement, infrastructure development, and environmental conservation.

PDO Outcome 2: Increase environmental benefits for targeted rural communities in the EP

The project provided subgrants, built local capacity, and ensured equitable benefit-sharing to reduce environmentally harmful practices and promote sustainable livelihoods. A total of 81 community groups received subgrants worth US\$5.3 million, supporting diverse enterprises in agriculture, forestry, and wildlife sectors, such as beekeeping, fish farming, goat rearing, horticulture, poultry, ecotourism, briquette making, avocado farming, agro-processing, and pig production. Almost 308,014 ha were placed under landscape management practice, including 72,840 ha under sustainable management practices benefitting biodiversity. Improved landscape practices included transitioning farmers from mono-cropping to climate-resilient agriculture by introducing CSA techniques and training programs to reduce land degradation. Agricultural extension officers were educated in these methods and passed their knowledge to Lead Farmers (LFs), who then trained follower farmers. Demonstrations, mentorship, workshops, and networking events supported the widespread adoption of practices (61 percent of project beneficiaries) such as mulching, intercropping, and water management among small-scale farmers.

While the PDO did not explicitly refer to preparing Zambia for sale of emission reductions, the groundwork laid for the preparation of Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) provided a significant environmental benefit. The development of the agreement was an extensive process, involving meticulous technical preparations on crucial elements such as defining emission reduction volumes, reporting periods, unit pricing, and conditions of effectiveness, including legal ownership and benefit-sharing frameworks. The project supported capacity-building workshops to ensure all stakeholders were well prepared and informed about the agreement's requirements. Further, the project also developed the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system, essential for collecting and managing data to produce high-quality, measurable, reportable, and verifiable estimates of emissions reductions. The development of the MRV system included a comprehensive review of the MRV framework, capacity building in GHG accounting, and the establishment of a climate change web portal. Additionally, the project completed three critical technical instruments: the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment Report, the GHG Baseline Report, and the Benefit-Sharing Plan (BSP). All of these laid the foundation for the EP Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Project (EP-JSLP) which was approved by the World Bank in May 2024.

Despite a delay, the ERPA was signed on June 17, 2024, marking a significant environmental and economic achievement for Zambia, transforming the ZIFLP initiative into the continent's largest carbon farming project, allowing communities to earn carbon credits, and providing both environmental and economic benefits.

PDO Outcome 3: Increase economic benefits for targeted rural communities in the EP

The project overachieved its target to increase economic benefits. The target number of beneficiaries with increased monetary and nonmonetary benefits was overachieved (an actual of 162,063 over the 40,000 target). The end line evaluation of the project reveals that 15 percent of the direct project beneficiaries, equating to 33,611 households, experienced an increase in monetary benefits, thereby enhancing their financial livelihoods. The project's impact was not solely financial; a significant 73 percent of the direct project beneficiaries, or 163,572 households, reported nonmonetary benefits. These benefits included improvements in knowledge (for example, CSA and soil fertility), skills, social capital, health, and nutrition, which, while

less tangible, are crucial for the overall adoption of technologies, resilience, and future economic opportunities.

Economically, the project played a role in reducing the reliance of local communities on environmentally harmful activities such as deforestation for income as well as the expansion of agricultural land into forests. The project facilitated the diversification of livelihood options through the provision of subgrants, enabling initiatives such as beekeeping, fish farming, and the rearing of small ruminants (poultry, goats, and sheep) via a pass-on system. The Borrowers' ICR details the project's collaboration with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, which enabled the establishment of pasture, fodder banks, and rangelands. This initiative had a dual purpose: to increase feed production, with farmers establishing 678 ha of pasture and fodder banks using seeds supplied by the project, and to reduce the vulnerability of communities to climate variability and shocks that often affect common property rangelands. Additionally, the project supported communities with a vaccination program to mitigate livestock diseases, benefiting a total of 1,568 farmers with poultry and small ruminants.

The project was successful in meeting its PDO indicator 'Agricultural area brought under CSA practices' by bringing 162,334 ha of agricultural land under CSA practices, far exceeding the target of 59,000 ha. It also surpassed its goal of reaching farmers, with 73,052 farmers adopting CSA practices, well above the target of 59,103. These CSA practices included agroforestry with fertilizer-fixing trees, ISFM, water harvesting through mulching, and the establishment of Farmer-Led Irrigation Schemes (FLIS), which led to the diversification into both food and cash crops such as maize and horticultural products. The adoption rate of CSA practices across the province was 61 percent of beneficiaries and was achieved through extension support and capacity building throughout the project's duration as noted in the end line evaluation and mission findings. The Beneficiary Impact Assessment Report (2022) indicated that 81.6 percent of the agricultural households had access to agricultural extension services.

The project achieved its PDO indicator of 'Crop yield increase for selected crops (maize and soybean)'. The crop yield increase for these two crops was 31.3 percent compared to the target of 30 percent. Over four seasons (2018–19 to 2021–22), maize yields increased albeit with fluctuations from a baseline of 1.6 MT/ha to a peak of 2.4 MT/ha, which surpassed the target of 2.08 MT/ha. Soy yields were more consistent, starting at 0.9 MT/ha and reaching 1.16 MT/ha by the end of the period, albeit slightly below the target of 1.17 MT/ha. The project interventions lead to increased yields (+30 percent) and gross margins (between +20 percent and +70 percent, depending on the crop), while incomes per ha increased by 48 percent. These improvements allow smallholder farmers to increase their home consumption and avoid reducing their intake to save cash. The activities promoted by the project resulted in a return to labor of US\$5.1–9.1 per day.

C. Gender Equality

The project prioritized gender mainstreaming, focusing on women's involvement in forestry management and CSA activities for agricultural production. It made a considerable achievement of reaching 47 percent female beneficiaries, 17 percentage points above the intended target, further underscoring its positive impact on inclusive participation. Overall, the project has created a win-win situation, where women benefit from improved economic opportunities, reduced household burdens, and enhanced decision-making power.

Women's rights and well-being were actively safeguarded during project implementation. Gender equality and women's empowerment were promoted by ensuring their participation in decision-making processes and addressing their grievances at the community level. Capacity-building programs, disaggregated by gender, and the establishment of community grievance committees were key initiatives in this regard. The knowledge and skills gained from their engagement with the project can also be leveraged for effective implementation and monitoring of forest management initiatives, maximizing the project's impact for both women and the community. For example, the Sinda Women's Association, supported by the ZIFLP funding, has significantly advanced gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in forestry management and agricultural activities. Women have gained agency and influence through active involvement in the project design and decision-making processes. This empowerment extends to economic status, as women transition from

subsistence to commercial crop cultivation, earning substantial incomes. Access to loans has facilitated entrepreneurial ventures, while the introduction of energy-efficient cookstoves has alleviated time poverty and enhanced control over family finances. Despite challenges like machinery breakdowns, the association has made strides in food security via sunflower production and business operations improvement. Key lessons include the importance of technical support, machinery maintenance, and financial management workshops to ensure sustainable growth and expansion goals achievement. The association's experience highlights the critical role of financial support in women's empowerment. Feedback emphasizes teamwork, capacity building, and market research for initiative success. Encouraging value addition and networking with similar groups can further amplify the association's positive impact on the community, showcasing the transformative power of women's economic independence.

D. Knowledge Management

The project demonstrated that focused training in CSA and sustainable forest management significantly enhances adoption rates and in turn agricultural productivity and resilience. This was evident through above-average yields in maize and soybean by project beneficiaries compared to provincial averages even during climate shocks, facilitated by tailored education and the Lead Farmer (LF) model. It is important to expand training programs for LFs and extension workers, emphasizing continuous education and support tailored to the local contexts. This will help reduce public expenditure especially on fertilizer which represents the greatest cost for government support to agriculture. It is recommended that introduction of CSA practices be accompanied by appropriate funding, planning, and execution of related training effort.

The LF model exemplifies a community-centric approach to agricultural education and CSA practices. It leverages experienced farmers to mentor their peers, fostering trust and collaborative learning. Integrating mentorship programs, workshops, and networking events ensures the knowledge shared remains current and relevant. It is recommended that the Government and cooperating partners continue with mentorship programs that connect new farmers with experienced LFs for ongoing support and knowledge sharing. The project's integration of a people-centric and outcome-oriented approach in landscape restoration, emphasizing collaboration, inclusive planning, secure land tenure, capacity building, and investments, alongside the empowerment of women, is crucial for sustainable forestry development. This approach guarantees that restoration efforts are community-driven, economically viable, and socially inclusive. It is recommended that from design to implementation, attention is paid to ensuring the process is participatory and ensures community ownership that can lead to lasting project outcomes.

The project activities coupled with capacity building were necessary to set the building blocks for the Easter Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Program (EP-JSLP). The ZIFLP demonstrates the complex steps, processes, and investments involved in setting an ERPA. These include developing an MRV system, engaging communities in benefit sharing, integrating existing climate projects, ensuring private sector participation, and establishing legal frameworks and institutional arrangements. Finalizing and signing the Chiefdom Emissions Reduction Performance Agreement (CERPA) and the Nested ERPA required legal reviews and formal agreements by the respective parties. These steps highlighted the need for collaboration and careful planning. World Bank projects establishing ERPA must prioritize the development of a comprehensive MRV system to ensure accurate measurement and reporting of emissions reductions. This is critical for performance-based rewards and maintaining the integrity of the emission reduction process. It must establish clear legal frameworks and institutional arrangements early, invest in local stakeholder capacity building to enhance engagement and sustainability, and streamline processes for smoother negotiations and improved operational efficiency.

The project highlights the importance of inclusive collaboration among diverse stakeholders for large-scale environmental initiatives. It demonstrated the value of buy-in at the subnational and national levels by working with chiefs and district and provincial officers and sharing information at the permanent secretary levels. The project showed effective collaboration across government programs and ministries. For successful

ERPAs, it is recommended to engage stakeholders early, secure senior leadership buy-in, and maintain consistent communication to build trust and alignment toward shared goals.

III. Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	297400		297400

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
	297400		297400

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Luambe				25,400.00	0.00	25,400.00	46.00	58.00	71.00
Lukusu zi				272,000.00	0.00	272,000.00	30.00	51.00	62.00

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
		6219	6219

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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		6,219.00	6,219.00
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Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	191000	214882.5	308014

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	66,000.00	20,324.70	72,840.00

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	125,000.00	194,557.80	235,174.00

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female		64,487	47,290	105,313
Male		150,469	167,665	118,758
Total	0	214,956	214,955	224,071

IV: Co Financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Anticipated at CEO(\$)	Materialized at MTR(\$)	Materialized at TE(\$)
GEF Agency	IDA credit to GRZ	Loan	Investment mobilized	12,200,000.00		17,000,000.00
Donor Agency	BioCF trust fund grant to GRZ	Grant	Investment mobilized	8,000,000.00	4,215,203.00	8,050,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Emissions reduction purchases from BioCF	Other	Investment mobilized	30,000,000.00		30,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Government of Zambia	In-kind	Investment mobilized	5,000,000.00		4,500,000.00
Other	IDA	Loan	Investment mobilized		9,802,896.00	
Total Co-financing				55,200,000.00	9,802,896.00	59,550,000.00

Comments

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
		High or Substantial	Low

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

The project was classified as Category B (Partial Assessment) and triggered several safeguards, including Environmental Assessment, Pest Management, Forests, Natural Habitats, and Physical Cultural Resources, due to risks from forest landscape management and infrastructure construction. The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) provided clear guidelines and procedures for environmental and social screening, planning, review, approval, and implementation. Regular updates to the ESMF ensured it remained effective for the ZIFLP subprojects.

The project's focus on capacity building ensured that government staff, contractors, and community members understood and adhered to compliance issues. Despite some initial blind spots in compliance monitoring in contractor adherence and community safety, these issues were resolved through regular M & E.

The project's proactive approach to updating its ESMF after three years, considering changing environmental contexts, including the post-COVID period, is commendable. The update in November 2021 and the disclosure on the ZIFLP and Zambia Environmental Management Agency websites reflected the project's dedication to transparency and accessibility. The project's environmental and social safeguards were effectively managed.

The project triggered OP/BP 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement due to a legacy issue related to the Lukusuzi Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), which was a pending government action to protect Lukusuzi National Park. The policy was activated to ensure proper resettlement of individuals moved from Lukusuzi, maintaining environmental sustainability, and mitigating social impacts. The RAP provided relocated families with land for farming, settlements, and social infrastructure, leading to more secure land tenure and improved livelihoods.

The safeguards rating at the close of the project was Satisfactory for all triggered safeguards policies.

This rating is justified by the comprehensive Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) that was provided, outlining the necessary measures and guidelines to mitigate potential environmental and social impacts throughout the project lifecycle. The ESMF included effective screening tools, risk assessment procedures, and potential mitigation measures for subproject activities, which guided the preparation of site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) ensuring a systematic approach to managing risks.

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category	Title
M and E Document	9213-P157521-P161490-2024-TE-ICR-WB-Zambia