



Enhancing Integrated Watershed Management and Climate Resilience for Vulnerable Communities in the Nam-Poui, Nam-Poun, Nam-Lay and Nam-Houng Basins in Lao PDR

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

11573

Countries

Lao PDR

Project Name

Enhancing Integrated Watershed Management and Climate Resilience for Vulnerable Communities in the Nam-Poui, Nam-Poun, Nam-Lay and Nam-Houng Basins in Lao PDR

Agencies

WWF-US

Date received by PM

3/22/2024

Review completed by PM

4/14/2024

Program Manager

Tshewang Dorji

Focal Area

Climate Change

Project Type

FSP

GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

1. General Project Information / Eligibility

- a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?
- b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments 3/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

2. Project Summary

Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected results?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/13/2024: GEFSEC:

Please confirm that the key problem that project wishes to address is ?impacts of climate change on declining crop yield, affected mainly through water availability for irrigation.

Otherwise, please clarify the problem and sharpen the intended objective of the project. The current objective as provided here ? climate resilience of the local community? is very vague

On the strategies to deliver, outcomes and outputs under respective components are still inconsistent (For example, refer to section 3.1)

On the result, please see if the results could be enhanced, possibly through extending the geographical scope beyond 6 districts.

3/29/2024; GEFSEC: No. The project is unclear about the problems it intend to address and its objectives. The proposed interventions are disjointed. The Agency is kindly requested to review and present a concise storyline.

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

04/26/2024

The proponents have articulated the key problem the project wishes to address, in a more succinct and simplified manner, namely, communities are facing reduced crop yields and crop loss due to floods, droughts, delayed monsoon, and uneven access to freshwater. See amended and pared down text in paragraphs 1 and 2 in the Project Summary section. The objective has been revised to be more specific to the problem. Note, all changes are in red font.

The strategies align to the main problem statement. See amended text in the Indicative Project Overview Table and narrative.

The target project area was identified through government and community surveys and consultations across Sayaboury province at the outset of the PIF and includes 4 river basins. Priority sites, and therefore also the targeted districts, will be revisited during the PPG through additional consultations and surveys when there is more runway to do so, including consideration of extending the geographical scope. The results and preliminary adaptation benefit targets are provisional at this juncture and will be reassessed in consultation with national, provincial and local government and other partners in early PPG.

3 Indicative Project Overview

3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?

b) Are the components, outcomes and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/13/2024: GEFSEC:

- a) As mentioned above in section 2, the current objective that says "climate resilience of the local community" is very vague. Please
- b) Components, outcomes and outputs are still inconsistent.

For example, under the Component 1: Mainstreaming CCA in IWRM: It suggest that the outcome of this component is the capacity enhancement, instead of the generating policies and process that ensure resilience to impacts of climate change as the integral part of the IWRM and its process

For Component 2, the issue is with pre-identification of the NbS and "grey" solutions. Ideally, types of intervention can be determined based on its priorities defined by the mainstreaming process or during the PPG phase. Also, it is unclear what will constitute "grey" solutions.

3/29/2024; GEFSEC: No. The project doesn't clear a logical flow of its objective and its linkages with various components. The proposed interventions are disjointed. The Agency is kindly requested to review and present a concise storyline. There are too many assumptions that questions the overall rationale of the proposal.

The climate rationale of the project is also weak.

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

Objective has been changed to "Enhance adaptation capacity of agriculture-dependent communities to floods, droughts, seasonal variations, and uneven access to freshwater in key river basins in Sayaboury province", in order to make linkages to problem statement more explicit.

- Outcome 1.1 has been changed to read "CCA integrated into IWRM/RBMP policies and process at the provincial/district/basin level".
- Agreed that types of interventions can be determined through consultations and assessments during PPG and in more detail through the component 1 IWRM planning and prioritization process. As such Output 2.1.1 has been revised to "Local government and community-identified gender-responsive IWRM

interventions to reduce the impact of floods, drought, seasonal variation and reduced water access on small scale and subsistence agriculture?.

04/12/2024

Thank you for your suggestions. The climate rationale, baseline (including IWRM baseline), and project strategy has been re-drafted in this re-submission

3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/13/2024: GEFSEC:

On Gender, the project has important gender dimensions that are not currently captured or reflected in the project description and in all existing project components. Please ensure that women, women's organizations and gender experts are engaged and targeted as stakeholders in forums and decision-making processes, and in any capacity-building and training activities. This will help ensure that the plans, policies, programs (including early warning systems), financing and other economic considerations incorporate women's specific needs and benefit them. Please incorporate gender perspectives into the revised Outputs. In component 4, please ensure that KM outputs integrate gender dimensions, including lessons learned and best practices. In the development of the Gender Action Plan, please ensure that it is budgeted, monitored and reported on.

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

The reviewer's points are well-taken. Reference is made to the addition of gender-responsive references in (i) Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 under Outcome 1.1; (ii) in Outcome 2.1, including Output 2.1.1; (iii) in Outputs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2; and (iv) in Output 4.1.1. The changes to the Outcomes and Outputs in the Project Results Framework now also align with the narrative descriptions.

Please also note that women's groups had already been identified as a key stakeholder and beneficiary of the project in the PIF. Reference is made to Table 1 under "Community-level stakeholders". That said, roles and responsibilities will be explored and documented

in more detail during the PPG stage, upon further consultation and through a Gender Action Plan.

3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?

b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?

c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision.

4/13/2024: GEFSEC:

a). Please review the component based on the comments under section 2 and 3.1

b). Thanks for significantly higher PMC contribution from co-financing

c) Yes

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

No change to component budget based on amendments to the results hierarchy. A detailed budget with accompanying budget notes will be prepared during the PPG phase as is standard practice.

Well-noted. No change.

4 Project Outline

A. Project Rationale

4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?

b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Please provide the additional information as follows:

•a)

•On the Observed rainfall, please confirm that rainfall for the project area (12 mm) is not consistent with national level?

Clarify figure 1 (y-axis label)

Figure 2: Provide similar graphics as figure 2 for temperature and under different RCP scenario as discussed under para 12 &13, if available.

Please streamline the information provided under para 9 and 11 for better clarity of the rationale.

Para 10 and elsewhere in the document mentions that Sayaboury is facing moderate climate impacts. This brings up the question on whether it is an efficient use of the LDCF resources, if there are other areas that has a pressing needs for climate adaptation. Please clarify

A snapshot of responsible agencies for RBMP at the local level would be very useful.

b) Barrier:

Under Barrier 1:What does "sub-mechanism" mean?. Please clarify

Barrier 2: description that says "Local communities in the Sayaboury province may lack a complete understanding" suggest that project developer is unaware about it as a barrier.

Barrier 3: It would be useful to provide information on why it is challenging to upscale past investment and practices

Barrier 4: Please strengthen the linkages between the KM and Planning. Current formulation that says "can potentially lead" isn't affirmative.

3/29/2024; GEFSEC: No. The climate rationale of the project is weak, especially on how it intends to link with the interventions.

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

Please see additional text and clarification of both the x and y axis. Sayaboury province is mountainous topography, with large differences in elevation between different areas causing a severe rain shadow effect (large amounts of rainfall in one area and very little on the opposite side of the mountainous terrain). Therefore, small changes in precipitation have disproportionate impacts to communities.

See new Figure 2 added to the PIF.

The previous paragraphs 9 and 11 have been joined together and streamlined for clarity. Thank you for this comment ? the text should have read Sayaboury is facing moderate climate changes or climate hazards; and this has been revised. The impacts are high given the climate changes and hazards, high sensitivity (marginalized, subsistence agriculture ethnic groups in an upland area), and low adaptive capacity. Surveys and consultations undertaken at the outset of the PIF (see section on community observation and trend analysis) have confirmed that the communities in these districts are already experiencing declining crop yields/losses, and without increased adaptive capacity, these impacts will increase with the future climate projections. As such, there is a strong justification and business case for investing in this landscape.

See additions to paragraphs 10 and 16.

Reference is made to additional stakeholders involved in the development, approval and implementation of RBMP at the provincial level, such as PoNRE, PAFO, PPI, LWU and PPWT. See additions under the Section on ?Provincial and district-level IWRM Baseline?.

Barriers:

1: The sub-mechanism identified in the PIF is a provincial and district governance mechanism for IWRM and RBMP, and the document has been updated to clarify this, in the baseline and barriers sections.

2: This barrier has been revised to clarify that adaptive capacity is varied across the communities, and this is further detailed in a newly added paragraph 15 earlier in the PIF.

3: This explanation has been included in the document:

A desktop analysis revealed that previous projects did not focus on integrating adaptation measures with the agricultural practices and methods used by the local communities. If the

PPG phase uncovers new information on the challenges of upscaling and expanding past investments, the PPG Team will assess its significance and decide if it should be included in the scope of this project.

4: Clarified in the document as follows:

Without effective knowledge management, decisions on farming activities for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management are impaired, which results in ineffective planning and coordination as well as suboptimal and unsustainable solutions and the inefficient use of limited capital and resources.

WWF GEF Agency Response:

04/12/2024

Thank you for your suggestions. The climate rationale has been re-drafted in this re-submission

4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?

b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?

c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?

d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/14/2024; GEFSEC:

a) No. Please provide the justification of the approach

b) No. Please review how the proposed/amended intervention will be robust for future climate change

c). Yes. Thank you

d). Yes. Thank you

3/29/2024; GEFSEC: No

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

Additional text in "without the GEF scenario" section has been added, in red font, and notes the project potential to integrate CCA into the process, policies, and plans for IWRM and RBMP, and implementation of same, and to support improved crop yields and increased livelihood options to impoverished, subsistence-oriented and agricultural-based vulnerable communities in four basins in Sayaboury.

See additional text in "without the GEF scenario" section as follows:

The project will be robust for future climate change, as it addresses the climate impacts that are anticipated to increase, namely floods and drought causing loss of/reduced yield of crops. The project will integrate climate change adaptation into IWRM processes and plans at the provincial level, and filter this down to ground level IWRM interventions and interventions with communities to mitigate the impacts of climate change on crops. An underlying principle of the project is to enable local communities to transition from the current reactive approach to a more proactive approach that anticipates and accelerates the implementation of future climate change adaptation measures.

No further changes warranted.

5 B. Project Description

5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE

a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?

b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared. However, please note that assumptions needs to be reviewed during the PPG phase and present stronger ToC

4/14/2024; GEFSEC:

ToC has too many assumptions, of which most should have been confirmed during the PIF stage. For example assumption 1 should have been confirmed to ensure local ownership of the intervention. The current level of 12 assumption suggests a weak Theory of change

b) No, it needs to be consistent as mentioned under section 3.1

3/29/2024; GEFSEC: No. Please refer to comments under 3.1

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

The Theory of Change was drafted following a facilitated consultative workshop with prospective project stakeholders and the assumptions were documented as a product of this review. That said, the project development team has pared down the number of assumptions from 12 to 9. Assumptions are indicative of, and an input into, risk management. The Theory of Change and accompanying assumptions will be revisited further during the PPG stage

b) Outputs have been reflected in the ToC diagram in Figure 4 and are consistent with both the Project Overview table and narrative.

WWF GEF Agency Response:

04/12/2024

Thank you for your suggestions. The climate rationale, baseline (including IWRM baseline), and project strategy has been re-drafted in this re-submission

5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING

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

Secretariat's Comments 4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?

b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).

c) is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area

d) are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC:

Cleared with thanks for the revision

4/14/2024; GEFSEC:

b). The Letter of Endorsement does not mention an executing agency so please reflect this in the Portal

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

The portal entry has been updated to ?to be determined? to match the Letter.

5.4 a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?

b) Are the project's indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC: Cleared

4/14/2024; GEFSEC:

Please see if there is a chance to enhance the result figure

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

Reference is made to the comment above that the target project area and therefore, the benefit targets will be revisited during the PPG stage, based on additional due diligence on the ground and consultation with local community and government. No changes at this juncture.

5.5 NGI Only: Is there a justification of financial structure and use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

5.6 RISKS

- a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?**
- b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?**
- c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately screened and rated at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024: GEFSEC: Cleared

Agency's Comments

5.7 Qualitative assessment

- a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?**
- b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?**
- c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?**

Secretariat's Comments 4/29/2024: GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Cleared. However, please note that the project might be more relevant to as follows:

CCA 1.1	Supporting implementation of Climate change adaptation solutions in priority themes
CCA 1.3	Strengthening innovation and private sector engagement
CCA 1.4	Fostering partnership for inclusion and whole of society approach

4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

However, please clarify which are the CCA objectives that project can be linked to

Agency's Comments

WWF GEF Agency Response:

4/26/2024

The project is linked to the following CCA objectives:

CCA-2 Mainstream climate change adaptation and resilience for systemic impact

CCA-3 Foster enabling conditions for effective and integrated climate change adaptation

This has been added in section C.

6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors)

Secretariat's Comments 4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e. BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

7 D. Policy Requirements

7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?

Secretariat's Comments 4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?

Secretariat's Comments 4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

8 Annexes

Annex A: Financing Tables

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

STAR allocation?

Secretariat's Comments 4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Focal Area allocation?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat's Comments 4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

SCCF A (SIDS)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Focal Area Set Aside?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?

Secretariat's Comments 4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

8.3 Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?

Secretariat's Comments 4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex B: Endorsements

8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country?(ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat's Comments4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?

Secretariat's Comments4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?

Secretariat's Comments4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Annex C: Project Location

8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project's intended location?

Secretariat's Comments4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating

8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?

Secretariat's Comments4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex E: Rio Markers

8.8 Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat's Comments4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Yes

Agency's Comments

Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

9 GEFSEC Decision

9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?

Secretariat's Comments

4/29/2024; GEFSEC: Recommended for technical clearance

4/14/2024; GEFSEC: Not yet

Agency's Comments

9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval

Secretariat's Comments

Agency's Comments

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	3/29/2024	4/12/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/14/2024	4/26/2024
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/29/2024	
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		