

REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE, OCTOBER 2022

GEF ID	11055
Project title	Vulnerable 20 Group funding programme to leverage adaptation by averting and minimizing impacts of climate change
Date of screen	11 November 2022
STAP Panel Member	Ed Carr
STAP Secretariat	Virginia Gorsevski

1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

The objective of this project is “To boost adaptation by building resilience at the community level to avert and minimize impacts from climate change amongst members of the V20.” The project proposes to do this by creating “a V20 Funding Programme (VFP) that will directly support a range of innovative adaptation interventions.” LDCF-SCCF funding is being requested to design and manage a separate fund to support ~50 demonstration projects from MSMEs and CSOs with ‘proven and high-impact innovative climate change adaptation-oriented technologies and solutions and have loss and damage co-benefits.’

In its current form, the PIF is poorly structured and provides limited information on the connection between climate change impacts and specific countries, sectors, or populations, making it difficult to assess overall scientific and technical merit; on face value, this would have resulted in a STAP assessment of Major issues with the proposal. As a result and in view of the importance of providing direct access to funding by the Vulnerable Twenty Group, STAP engaged with the GEF Secretariat to clarify how many of STAP's concerns related to this poor articulation as opposed to any fundamental flaws. As a result of this engagement, STAP is satisfied that the underlying intent is reasonable, albeit with some issues that need consideration.

STAP has therefore rated the proposal Minor, on the basis of a strong commitment from the GEF Secretariat to utilize the [STAP decision tree tool](#) and/or similar methods to ensure that projects include a robust adaptation rationale in addition to the criteria outlined in the PIF with regards to innovation, replicability and scaling.

Note to STAP screeners: a summary of STAP's view of the project (not of the project itself), covering both strengths and weaknesses.

STAP's assessment*

- ☐ Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit
- ☐ **Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design**
- ☐ Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design

Please contact the STAP Secretariat if you would like to discuss.

2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?

See annex on STAP's screening guidelines.

The proposed project is difficult to screen. The baseline problem, which implicitly is about the speed and ease of access to climate finance, is never clearly stated in the PIF. Because the PIF does not address the problem head-on, there is no discussion of the funding system for adaptation and how that relates to both the speed and pervasiveness of adaptation needs that might provide greater justification for the fund. There is no real discussion of a baseline under current funding arrangements.

There are existing funds that support needs in LDCs and which could be used to support locally-led adaptation and understanding how this fund might produce different outcomes than those we already see would strengthen this PIF. For example, looking at the proposed theory of change, it is not clear how it diverges from

the existing mandates and screening criteria of the LDCF and SCCF. It is also unclear how this fund will work more quickly than existing multilateral or bilateral sources of adaptation funding. Improved speed and efficiency appear to be assumed in the PIF, but the sources of such improvements are never articulated. This creates the impression that such improvements are assumed to proceed from shifting funding outside the oversight of the GEF and its review processes.

Sidestepping cumbersome review processes might be valuable, but it is not clear that it would result in additionality with regard to GEBs or adaptation benefits. Further, the PIF does not speak to how the new fund would ensure project quality and impact, sidestepping serious questions that any adaptation project should answer. For example, the PIF rates environmental and social risks as low, but does so in the absence of any stated intervention. As STAP guidance on adaptation project design (a.k.a. '[STAP decision tree tool](#)') makes clear, all adaptation projects carry with them social risks that should be accounted for in the design phase. These risks are never low and always require identification and management in project design and implementation. Further, the project suggests that to avoid political and governance risks "project interventions will be limited to regions that are free of conflicts." While perhaps a strategy for managing this sort of risk, it does not speak meaningfully to either where adaptation is most needed or where innovation is most likely to be found.

The PIF makes no mention of how this fund would coordinate with other multilateral and bilateral funders to ensure that its investments result in additional benefits beyond those likely to be delivered by other actors.

Note: provide a general appraisal, asking whether relevant screening guideline questions have been addressed adequately – not all the questions will be relevant to all proposals; no need to comment on every question, only those needing more attention, noting any done very well, but ensure that all are considered. Comments should be helpful, evaluative, and qualitative, rather than yes/no.

3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions

STAP strongly recommends that project designers work with in-country partners to utilize the [STAP decision tree tool](#) to help 1) decide if adaptation is required; 2) identify projects that meet an adaptation need; 3) ensure that projects complement current efforts to manage climate variability and hazards; and 4) maximize synergies and trade-offs between adaptation benefits and other GEBs.

Additionally, STAP recommends that project designers work with in-country partners to utilize STAP's [Adaptation Benefits guidance](#) to establish clear adaptation rationales in individual projects. By connecting policy and institutional goals to specific interventions and the benefits they are intended to produce, project designers can develop rationales that inform larger project theories of change and ensure innovation and additionality.

STAP stands ready to answer further questions and to consult on the design if needed.

Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant. Completed screens should be no more than two or three pages in length.

*categories under review, subject to future revision

ANNEX: STAP'S SCREENING GUIDELINES

1. How well does the proposal explain the problem and issues to be addressed in the context of the **system** within which the problem sits and its drivers (e.g. population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, and technological changes), including how the various components of the system interact?
2. Does the project indicate how **uncertain futures** could unfold (e.g. using simple **narratives**), based on an understanding of the trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers?
3. Does the project describe the **baseline** problem and how it may evolve in the future in the absence of the project; and then identify the outcomes that the project seeks to achieve, how these outcomes will change the baseline, and what the key **barriers** and **enablers** are to achieving those outcomes?
4. Are the project's **objectives** well formulated and justified in relation to this system context? Is there a convincing explanation as to **why this particular project** has been selected in preference to other options, in the light of how the future may unfold?
5. How well does the **theory of change** provide an "explicit account of how and why the proposed interventions would achieve their intended outcomes and goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the interventions and the assumptions underlying these causal connections".
 - Does the project logic show how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are **enduring** and resilient to possible future changes identified in question 2 above, and to the effects of any conflicting policies (see question 9 below).
 - Is the theory of change grounded on a solid scientific foundation, and is it aligned with current scientific knowledge?
 - Does it explicitly consider how any necessary **institutional and behavioral** changes are to be achieved?
 - Does the theory of change diagram convincingly show the overall project logic, including causal pathways and outcomes?
6. Are the project **components** (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change each described in sufficient detail to discern the main thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they address the problem, their justification as a robust solution, and the critical assumptions and risks to achieving them?
7. How likely is the project to generate global environmental benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF project (**additionality**)?
8. Does the project convincingly identify the relevant **stakeholders**, and their anticipated roles and responsibilities? is there an adequate explanation of how stakeholders will contribute to the

development and implementation of the project, and how they will benefit from the project to ensure enduring global environmental benefits, e.g. through co-benefits?

9. Does the description adequately explain:

- how the project will build on prior investments and complement current investments, both GEF and non-GEF,
- how the project incorporates **lessons learned** from previous projects in the country and region, and more widely from projects addressing similar issues elsewhere; and
- how country policies that are contradictory to the intended outcomes of the project (identified in section C) will be addressed (**policy coherence**)?

10. How adequate is the project's approach to generating, managing and exchanging **knowledge**, and how will lessons learned be captured for adaptive management and for the benefit of future projects?

11. Innovation and transformation:

- If the project is intended to be **innovative**: to what degree is it innovative, how will this ambition be achieved, how will barriers and enablers be addressed, and how might scaling be achieved?
- If the project is intended to be **transformative**: how well do the project's objectives contribute to transformative change, and are they sufficient to contribute to enduring, transformational change at a sufficient scale to deliver a step improvement in one or more GEBs? Is the proposed logic to achieve the goal credible, addressing necessary changes in institutions, social or cultural norms? Are barriers and enablers to scaling be addressed? And how will enduring scaling be achieved?

12. Have **risks** to the project design and implementation been identified appropriately in the risk table in section B, and have suitable mitigation measures been incorporated? (NB: risks to the durability of project outcomes from future changes in drivers should have been reflected in the theory of change and in project design, not in this table.)