TERMINAL EVALUATION

Project ID:	10934
Project Name:	Building climate resilience in supply chains for the mobilization of adaptation funding
Countr(ies):	Regional
Implementing Agency:	CI

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name Building climate resilience in supply chains for the mobilization of adaptation funding	
Country Regional	
GEF ID 10934	Implementing Agency CI
Executing Entity Heifer International	
Trust Fund SCCF	Project Type MSP

Objective

Project Objective: Develop and launch the Adaptation Equivalency Index (AEI) in Guatemala and Honduras to ensure decreased loss of habitat, improved ecological resiliency, sustainable living income for smallholder producers (men and women) and an increase in adaptation investment from the private sector through the use of a standardized, quantifiable approach Objective Indicators: Indicator A: Area of land managed for climate resilience Target A: 2,054 hectares managed for climate resilience Indicator B: Livelihoods and sources of income strengthened/introduced (agriculture, agro-processing, reduced supply chain) Target B: 12, 125 producers have strengthened/new livelihoods and sources of income

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval 5/27/2022	Agency Approval 5/27/2022
Implementation Start	First Disbursement
Expected MTR	MTR Submission 10/23/2025
Actual MTR	Expected Completion 7/31/2025
Actual Completion 6/30/2025	Actual TE 2/5/2025
TE Submission 10/23/2025	Final Disbursement

C. Disbursements

Project Financing	Cumulative Disbursement
1,000,000.00	917,431.00

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main Terminal Evaluation Findings

The project *"Building Climate Resilience in Supply Chains for the Mobilization of Adaptation Funding"* was launched in August 2022 as a 24-month initiative, initially set to conclude in July 2024. With Conservation International GEF Agency (CI-GEF) as the Implementing Agency (IA), the project was executed by Heifer International as the lead Executing Agency (EA). The project was financed by a GEF Special Climate Change Fund grant of USD 917,431, with a total of USD 6,469,268 in committed co-financing. The overall **objective of the project** was to develop and launch the Adaptation Equivalency Index (AEI) in Guatemala and Honduras to ensure less habitat loss, improved ecological resilience, sustainable living incomes for smallholders (men and women), and increased private sector adaptation investment by using a standardized and quantifiable approach. The project aimed to achieve this by piloting improved climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices, developing the AEI as an innovative tool, and initiating its integration into premium value chains (coffee, cocoa, and high-value spices). Initially set to close in July 2024, the project received a 6-month no-cost extension, extending the end date to July 2025.

The **objective of the Terminal Evaluation (TE)** was to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the project's performance by assessing its design, implementation, and achievement of objectives. The Evaluation aimed to promote accountability and transparency, facilitate the synthesis of lessons, and contribute to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office's databases. To that end, the TE assessed project implementation activities from its inception in August 2022 to its anticipated conclusion in July 2025. Conducted from February to June 2025 by Cynosure International, Inc., the TE adopted a consultative and participatory approach and employed mixed methodologies, combining qualitative and quantitative data from both primary and secondary sources. The TE was based on an extensive desk review of relevant project documents, followed by 22 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with representatives from the IA, EA, government partners, private sector actors, and civil society organizations, and 6 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with project beneficiaries across three site visit locations in each country.

Overall, the project was found to be ***Highly Satisfactory*** in terms of **relevance**. It directly addressed the urgent need for climate resilience in vulnerable agricultural communities in Guatemala and Honduras and demonstrated strong alignment with national and sectoral climate adaptation and environmental priorities, as well as with CI-GEF and Heifer International's strategic goals. The project was also well integrated with ongoing initiatives and institutional frameworks, leveraged Heifer's long-standing community presence, and responded effectively to local development needs, including gender equity and indigenous inclusion.

A review of the **project design** found it to be highly appropriate, particularly its innovative AEI concept aimed at quantifying adaptation benefits. The project's participatory nature, multi-component structure focusing on CSA piloting, AEI development, and value chain integration, along with its strong emphasis on community engagement and safeguards, were key strengths. However, the original 24-month timeline proved overly ambitious given the complexities of AEI development, multi-level stakeholder coordination across two countries, and inherent political volatilities. Assumptions regarding the rapid uptake of the AEI by the private sector and the ease of institutional integration were also optimistic, contributing to challenges in achieving all Component 3 targets within the initial timeframe.

With regards to **progress towards results**, under **Component 1**, the Evaluation found that the project substantially exceeded its targets. A total of 2,275 hectares were brought under improved climate-resilient management (111 percent

of the 2,054 ha target), and 2,286 producers (1,558 men, 728 women) were identified and engaged (381 percent of the 600-producer target), with all receiving training on new technologies, tools, and skills (508 percent of the 450-producer training target). These interventions, including the establishment of 22 demonstration projects (110 percent of target), led to tangible benefits such as improved soil and water conservation, adoption of organic fertilization, enhanced crop yields, and diversification of livelihoods.

Component 2 successfully achieved its objective with the development, validation, and launch of the AEI framework and the accompanying AgroAdaptación web application in June 2024. The AEI was designed through a participatory process involving diverse stakeholders and identified five categories of climate-smart production practices for inclusion, surpassing the original target of four. The AgroAdaptación tool provides a practical platform for data input and analysis and is currently hosted by Heifer International, with plans for future institutional transfer.

Under **Component 3**, the project made significant progress despite challenges. Five formal agreements were signed with private-sector companies and one government agency (INAB in Guatemala) to pilot the AEI (83 percent of the target of six private entities), initiating AEI application in key value chains. Broader stakeholder interest was demonstrated through fourteen letters of interest. Efforts to increase understanding of the linkages between climate change adaptation and value chains resulted in 69 percent of surveyed stakeholders demonstrating improved knowledge by project end, achieving 92 percent of the awareness-raising target. However, full integration of the AEI into business operations and catalyzing substantial private-sector investment were constrained by the project's limited timeline, the AEI's recent finalization, and the inherent complexities of engaging large-scale private actors.

In line with TE Guidelines, the following outcome ratings are provided for each outcome overall and along the dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Outcome	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Outcome Final Rating
Outcome 1.1	HS	HS	HS	L	HS
Outcome 1.2	HS	S	HS	L	S
Outcome 2.1	HS	HS	HS	L	HS
Outcome 3.1	HS	S	S	L	S
Outcome 3.2	HS	S	S	L	S
Overall Project Outcomes Rating					S

With regards to **Efficiency**, the **quality of supervision provided by CI-GEF** was rated as ***Satisfactory***, effectively fulfilling its oversight responsibilities, offering technical support, and ensuring compliance with GEF requirements. Heifer International's **execution** was rated ***Highly Satisfactory***, demonstrating strong commitment, flexibility, and adaptive management in response to significant implementation challenges. These primarily included initial delays of approximately five to six months due to governmental transitions in Honduras and later in Guatemala, which necessitated re-engagement with stakeholders and securing new endorsements. The project effectively leveraged Heifer's established presence and adapted its field strategies, such as shifting from a planned virtual engagement model to predominantly in-person activities, to better suit community needs and overcome connectivity limitations. To accommodate these delays and ensure full implementation, a 6-month no-cost extension was approved. The project's **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)** system was well-designed and implemented ***satisfactorily***, providing a reliable framework for tracking progress and informing adaptive decisions, though directly attributing income changes within the project's limited timeframe remained a challenge.

In terms of **financing and co-financing**, the project was funded by a GEF grant of USD 892,431, allocated across three technical components, M&E, and project management. By December 2024, 87 percent of the funds were expended, with the highest execution rates in Component 1 (92 percent) and Component 2 (90 percent). The project demonstrated strong financial performance, achieving 114 percent of its 2024 budget due to scaling up field activities. Co-financing commitments totaled USD 8.83 million, but only 64.36 percent materialized, with key shortfalls from ICADE, CATIE, and others. Despite initial delays, the project successfully adapted, meeting most targets within an extended timeline. Unanticipated contributions helped mitigate co-financing gaps.

The project demonstrated an overall ***Moderately Likely*** level of **sustainability**. At the farm and community levels, sustainability is strong due to acquired skills, tangible benefits such as improved yields and market access, and the establishment of local ownership structures. Heifer International plans to integrate the AEI into ongoing and future regional programs, and the engagement of INAB (Guatemala's forestry agency) reflects potential for public sector uptake. However, broader institutional sustainability remains a challenge, particularly the need for long-term technical support and financing for both the AEI and the AgroAdaptación app, which is currently hosted by Heifer for an initial two-year period with a possible two-year extension. Wider private-sector and government adoption beyond initial pilots will also require additional effort.

Key risks to sustainability include **institutional risks** linked to frequent government turnover and capacity gaps among partners, which hinder full integration of tools like the AEI into national systems and delay the establishment of a permanent institutional home for the AgroAdaptación app. **Financial risks** stem from community reliance on external support for high-cost equipment, the absence of defined long-term funding for technical assistance and platform maintenance, and the resource-intensive nature of AEI application, particularly for potential adopters without clear financial incentives. **Sociopolitical risks** include the continued need for culturally sensitive outreach to ensure inclusive adoption. Lastly, persistent **environmental risks**, such as drought, erratic rainfall, and pest outbreaks, pose ongoing threats to the coping strategies developed during the project.

In terms of progress to **impact**, the project generated significant direct and indirect benefits across environmental sustainability, social equity, economic development, and institutional capacity. **Environmentally**, the adoption of CSA practices contributed to improved soil and water conservation. Socially, the project enhanced equity through increased women's participation in cocoa and allspice value chains and the strengthening of community-level organizations. **Economically**, producers experienced improved yields and diversification of income sources. **Institutionally**, the development of the AEI tool and the strengthened capacity within Heifer and its partner organizations positioned the project for future scale-up. However, the full catalytic impact of the AEI on private-sector adaptation investment remains an area requiring continued effort beyond the project's conclusion.

The TE further found that the project proactively applied its ***Environmental and Social Safeguards*** framework, including the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), and Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM), all of which were rated ***Satisfactory***. The project ensured culturally appropriate engagement with **Indigenous Peoples**, including the Q'eqchi' Maya in Guatemala and the Pech and Tawahka in Honduras, through Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes, translated materials, and the involvement of Indigenous staff. **Gender** considerations were effectively integrated through the GMP, resulting in increased participation of women in specific value chains and the provision of targeted support, although achieving full gender parity in economic benefits and decision-making remains a work in progress. **Stakeholder engagement** was broad and inclusive, involving a diverse range of actors across both countries. The **AGM** was well-designed and accessible; while no formal grievances were lodged, most concerns were reportedly resolved informally through direct engagement with Heifer's field staff.

Key **lessons learned** from the project underscore that the development of innovative tools like the AEI requires sufficient time for iterative refinement, user testing, and contextual adaptation, often beyond fixed project timelines. Engaging the private sector in adaptation finance necessitates a targeted strategy based on clear business drivers and accessible incentives. External shocks, such as political transitions, highlight the importance of flexible project management and strong local partnerships to sustain progress. The long-term sustainability of tools like the AEI also depends on early and deliberate planning for institutional transition, including clearly defined governance structures, technical responsibilities, and financial provisions. Effective government adoption further requires sustained capacity-building and clear integration pathways into national systems. Lastly, community-based interventions, especially those aimed at supporting women, achieve greater long-term success when grounded in local realities, built on trust, and adapted to socio-cultural contexts.

Based on the TE findings, key recommendations include:

Target	Recommendation
Implementing Agency (CI-GEF)	1. Structure future projects involving innovative adaptation tools in **phased stages**: Phase 1 for co-development, piloting, and feedback integration; Phase 2 for scaling, institutional uptake, and sustainability planning. 2. Ensure projects targeting private-sector investment include a **stratified engagement strategy** based on business size/type, with dedicated resources for implementation. 3. Identify early opportunities for **government uptake** of tools like the AEI by aligning with national systems (e.g., NDCs, adaptation monitoring platforms) and providing targeted capacity-building support. 4. Integrate the **AEI and its learnings** into ongoing and future adaptation-related projects to scale the approach. 5. Systematically **document and share** methodologies and lessons on CSA adoption, safeguards, and adaptation finance innovation through CI-GEF networks, publications, and regional events. 6. Strengthen **gender monitoring frameworks** by including outcome-level indicators (e.g., empowerment, decision-making power, resilience) in addition to output-level metrics.
Executing Agency (Heifer International) & Partners	1. Introduce AEI-related outcomes and lessons into **future Heifer initiatives**, such as the *Promesa Café y Cacao* Signature Program, to consolidate results, scale the AEI, and improve tool integration into national systems and value chains. 2. Develop and implement a **sustainability plan** for the AEI and AgroAdaptación app in coordination with public and private stakeholders. The plan should define technical hosting, governance roles, updating protocols, and long-term financial commitments.

B. Stakeholder Engagement

1.1. Progress to Impact

The Evaluation found that the project had notable direct and indirect impacts across the domains of environmental sustainability, social equity, economic development, and institutional capacity, primarily within participating communities in Guatemala and Honduras.

The most immediate environmental benefits emerged from the introduction and adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices under Component 1. Before the project, many farmers faced soil degradation and lacked knowledge of climate-resilient methods. Through initiatives such as practical field schools and input provision, producers engaged in actions that advanced environmental sustainability. For example, communities like Flor de Café adopted new environmental messages, including “If we set fire to the earth, she suffers too,” leading to a reported abandonment of traditional burning practices. Organic fertilization techniques were promoted through training in bokashi and liquid microorganism mix preparation, reducing dependency on agrochemicals. In response to climate shocks, such as the drought that devastated cardamom crops, the Asociación Resurrección Balam shifted to producing organic fertilizer through a vermicompost bio factory, supporting food security and soil health. Further interventions included soil conservation through ground cover and in-situ decomposition, and water conservation via rainwater harvesting systems with geomembranes and spring protection, helping communities better cope with water stress. Nurseries established in areas like Gualaco and Catacamas enabled coffee farm renovation with improved varieties such as Parainema, mitigating pressure on forest areas and reducing habitat loss.

Additionally, the project encouraged transitions to diversified agroforestry systems, evident in communities like Flor de Café, where farmers integrated fruit and timber species alongside cocoa. While some practices had pre-project origins (e.g., FUNDALACHUÁ's agroforestry work), the project reinforced and expanded them by providing targeted support and planning demonstration plots. Reduced deforestation for pastureland was another noted benefit tied to the project's promotion of sustainable land-use practices.

Socially, the project promoted inclusion and strengthened community structures, although some institutional and cultural challenges persisted. Prior to the intervention, many communities lacked organized structures for collective action, and women's involvement in agricultural decision-making was minimal. The project addressed these gaps through its GMP and tailored activities. Gender equity advanced notably in cocoa and allspice value chains, where women actively participated in training, assumed leadership roles, and pursued entrepreneurial ventures. A strong example is the San Luis Tonitzul Women's Group, consisting of 37 women, who received training in cocoa nursery management and grafting, skills they identified as essential for starting their own businesses amid economic hardship often tied to male migration. Similarly, women in communities like Flor de Café reported active involvement as both individuals and family representatives, noting a sense of inclusion and absence of discrimination. The formation of community pruning crews further encouraged collective work and enhanced social cohesion. Furthermore, collaboration with educational institutions like Centro Don Bosco resulted in over 600 students learning within project-supported agroforestry plots and receiving planting materials to share with their families, directly enabling the replication of benefits in their home communities. However, gender inclusion remained more limited in the cardamom value chain.

Indirect social impacts also emerged. Even producers initially hesitant to trial climate-smart practices were influenced by AEI dissemination and training, leading to voluntary actions such as tree planting on degraded lands and exploration of water-saving technologies, extending the project's influence beyond direct beneficiaries.

Economically, the project brought both positive to participants' livelihoods. Farmers previously confronted barriers such as poor market access and low prices. The project helped address these through strengthened market linkages, particularly in Honduras. For instance, smallholder producers connected with associations like APROSACAO gained access to formal markets, selling cocoa at international prices. Yield improvements were significant. Enhanced pruning techniques, taught in field schools and supported by tool provision, enabled producers in Flor de Café to report harvest increases from 150 pounds to over 1,200 pounds per cut, a 700% improvement on well-managed farms. The introduction of solar dryers also elevated cocoa quality, opening access to premium micro-lot markets, with prices rising by 150 to 200 percent from 16–20 HNL/lb. to 40–60 HNL/lb. for some. Diversification strategies bolstered economic resilience. Agroforestry systems were expanded to include crops such as avocado, Persian lime, bananas, cinnamon, and pepper, along with complementary income-generating activities like beekeeping.

At the institutional level, the project strengthened capacities both locally and nationally. Local organizations such as APROSACAO and COCAOL received technical training and support to develop structures for managing nurseries, equipment, and digital tools. The implementation of a 'lead farmer' model fostered localized technical leadership and knowledge sharing. Nationally, a key achievement was the development and validation of the AEI. The AEI's value was recognized by government entities, including IHCAFE, SAG, MARN, and INAB, and its adoption facilitated policy engagement. For instance, Guatemala's Ministry of Environment acknowledged its utility in guiding the 2026 National Adaptation Plan revision and informing NDC reporting. A significant institutional milestone was the formal handover of the AEI and its hosting to the National Promesa Coffee and Cocoa Program in Honduras, supporting long-term sustainability. Additionally, the project enhanced Heifer's internal capacity to design and deliver climate-resilient interventions within its broader programming framework.

In conclusion, the project generated significant direct and indirect impacts on environmental sustainability, social equity, economic development, and institutional capacity at local and national levels. Climate-smart agricultural practices improved land stewardship, livelihoods were strengthened through market linkages and yield gains, and gender equity advanced notably in some value chains. Institutional capacities were enhanced through technical training and the development of the AEI, supporting broader climate adaptation frameworks.

1.1.1. Indigenous People

The project operated in regions with a significant presence of Indigenous Peoples, notably the Q'eqchi' Maya in Guatemala, constituting over 90 percent of the population in the project's intervention areas; and the Pech and Tawahka communities in Honduras' Olancho department, where they represented a smaller proportion of the overall population. In recognition of this demographic context and the potential risks associated with interventions on traditional lands and cultural practices, the project triggered Environmental and Social Standard 4 on Indigenous Peoples. It committed to safeguarding their rights through culturally appropriate engagement, benefit-sharing, and the application of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes. A formal IPP was developed and implemented in line with GEF environmental and social safeguard policies, with a particular focus on demonstration sites under Component 1.

During implementation, the project took deliberate steps to ensure inclusive and respectful engagement with Indigenous communities. Safeguard specialists were hired early in the process for both Guatemala and Honduras to update the IPPs and other safeguard instruments. In Guatemala, project materials were translated into Q'eqchi', the primary language spoken in the intervention areas, and visual formats were used to accommodate varying literacy levels. The FPIC process was conducted through a combination of structured surveys, stakeholder interviews, and a series of dedicated workshops held in communities such as Aldea Setzí (Chisec), Aldea San Luis Tonitzul (Raxruhá), and Aldea Jolomijix II (Panzós). These workshops ensured that Indigenous Peoples were adequately informed and able to provide consent in ways aligned with their cultural norms and governance structures.

In Honduras, a comparable approach was taken to ensure that Indigenous Peoples were engaged through appropriate local channels. Engagement with the Pech communities, including Subirana and Vallecito de Dulce Nombre de Culmí, was facilitated through direct coordination with their representative councils and the Federation of Pech Indigenous Tribes of Honduras. This engagement with traditional authorities and alignment with local governance systems was part of the project's strategy to build legitimacy among these communities. Interviews with Indigenous Peoples beneficiaries, such as the Kao Kamasa Pech group, confirmed their active participation in project activities, including field schools, trainings, and exchange visits. They specifically noted that their access to the project was facilitated through their tribal organization, which enabled targeted and culturally aligned participation.

Building on these efforts, the project's implementation approach emphasized working through existing community structures, such as Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo (COCODES) and local producer associations. These entities served as key intermediaries in coordinating FPIC processes and follow-up engagements. The project's model of engaging existing community structures, such as COCODES and producer associations, was designed to facilitate informed decision-making and localized oversight. Complementing these engagement strategies, the AGM was introduced during FPIC workshops, with a culturally sensitive approach to reporting and redress. Communities were made aware of these systems and were given opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback during open forums.

Under Component 1, Indigenous producers were directly involved in activities such as agroforestry promotion and value chain support for crops like cocoa and coffee. These activities were carried out on Indigenous lands, and the project made efforts to provide training and tools in culturally sensitive ways, such as through translation into Q'eqchi' and the use of local Indigenous staff. A key strength in Guatemala was the project team's composition, which consisted entirely of Indigenous field staff, aligning with principles of culturally appropriate implementation and potentially fostering community trust.

Despite these strengths, the project did face some challenges in fully safeguarding Indigenous Peoples' rights and ensuring inclusive participation. In its early phases, particularly as noted in the Honduran context by a project partner, the project tended to prioritize engagement with organized producer groups, which may have inadvertently excluded less formally organized Indigenous individuals or communities. While this approach facilitated coordination and implementation, it also risked marginalizing those without affiliation to structured organizations. However, in Guatemala, the project demonstrated adaptability by engaging with less formal structures, such as an Indigenous women's group, and adapting language and training approaches to support their participation and capacity-building. Additionally, project rollout in Honduras faced initial delays due to government transitions, which affected early institutional validation and slowed the start of safeguard-related activities.

In conclusion, the project ***satisfactorily*** safeguarded the rights, participation, and cultural considerations of Indigenous communities through the implementation of the IPP, FPIC processes, and culturally adapted engagement strategies. The use of Indigenous languages, local governance structures, and Indigenous staff strengthened trust and inclusion.

1.1.3. Stakeholder Engagement

The implementation of the **SEP** for the project was carried out with clear procedural intent and a structured engagement framework, particularly during the early phases of the project. Approved in March 2022, it outlined distinct engagement strategies for a diverse group of stakeholders, including national government entities, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), academia, the private sector, local communities, and producer organizations in both Guatemala and Honduras. The SEP emphasized inclusive participation of vulnerable groups, particularly women and Indigenous Peoples, with the Q'eqchi population specifically noted in Guatemala.

The Plan was operationalized at project inception with a **stakeholder analysis** that identified key actors, including local producer associations such as Asociacion de Desarrollo Campesina Las Colchas and Asociación para el desarrollo Integral de Raxruhá, Alta Verapaz, Ak' Tenamit (ADIRA), alongside national agencies like MARN, MAGA, and INAB. Initial engagement during the project preparation phase included consultations primarily conducted through calls and presentations to explain the project's scope, secure letters of support and co-financing, and gauge alignment. Throughout the project implementation, stakeholders were involved through consultations, working groups, training sessions, and validation workshops. The project engaged more than 25 communities in Guatemala and similar outreach in Honduras to assess and implement social and environmental **safeguards**. The project's approach benefited significantly from Heifer International's longstanding presence (decades in both countries) and pre-existing relationships, which fostered a high degree of trust with local producer groups and community organizations.

Stakeholder engagement was multifaceted, involving national government bodies, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and critically, direct engagement with local communities and their producer organizations. Stakeholder engagement extended across various levels of government institutions in both countries, including MARN and MAGA in Guatemala, and SERNA and SAG in Honduras. These entities participated in the PSC and supported validation activities such as those for the AEI. SAG in Honduras also played a leading role in supporting the Olancho Cocoa Table. Technical institutions such as IHCAFE and INAB contributed to training, nursery support, and the exploration of forestry incentives linked to AEI adoption. At the local level, municipal authorities provided critical endorsements that supported legitimacy and enabled coordination during key implementation stages. Civil society organizations, including ICADE, and FUNDER, facilitated complementary training and outreach activities, enhancing local ownership and integration with pre-existing community efforts. However, feedback from certain stakeholders, such as SAG in Honduras, indicated that their role was more observational, being informed of progress, rather than participating in substantive co-implementation.

Vulnerable groups were a consistent focus in the engagement strategy. Specific efforts were made to include women and Indigenous Peoples in project activities, training, and leadership opportunities. The project involved local communities with special measures to ensure the inclusion of women and Indigenous Peoples. This was reinforced by the presence of field technicians from Indigenous communities, who helped ensure culturally appropriate engagement.

Engagement with producer associations and NGOs operating within the private sector were also documented. Producer associations like APROSACAO and COCAOL in Honduras, and Centro Don Bosco in Guatemala, collaborated with the project in co-designing workshops and participating in AEI development and validation. However, engaging private companies, specifically for piloting the AEI under Component 3 proved challenging. While discussions were held with several companies, no formal agreements were signed during the project's timeframe. This shortfall was linked to initial project delays which compressed the timeline for AEI rollout and piloting, alongside specific company circumstances, as detailed in the findings for Component 3. Community outreach was strengthened by the field technicians supporting these groups, many of whom came from Indigenous communities, ensuring culturally relevant engagement. Academic institutions, and NGOs like the ICADE supported activities through strategic, non-financial partnerships by providing technical staff and helping co-design engagement sessions to enhance complementarity and avoid duplication.

In addition to inclusive participation, the project also sought to ensure mechanisms for accountability and responsiveness. To address stakeholder concerns and feedback, the project established an **AGM**, which included access to Heifer's global whistleblower system available in multiple languages, as well as local reporting options through project staff or designated community points of contact. The monitoring of stakeholder engagement was conducted through

indicators outlined in the SEP, including the number of people and stakeholder groups engaged and the frequency of engagement events, with reporting captured annually in the Project Implementation Reports.

While the SEP included roles for stakeholder monitoring and grievance handling, the project reporting did not report any specific grievances lodged or show evidence of how general concerns were systematically addressed. Additionally, the interview notes confirmed that while institutional and community engagement occurred, project leadership acknowledged that the frequent turnover of government officials in both countries required continuous re-engagement and hindered consistent collaboration.

In conclusion, the project ***satisfactorily*** implemented the SEP in a structured and inclusive manner, engaging a wide range of actors from government institutions to local communities and producer organizations. Special attention was given to the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and mechanisms for participation and feedback were in place. While there were minor limitations in grievance response tracking and sustained institutional collaboration, the overall approach was aligned with safeguard standards.

C. Gender Equality

1.1.1. Gender

The project demonstrated a structured approach to integrating gender considerations from its inception, guided by a **GMP** approved prior to implementation. This plan was designed to ensure equitable benefits and explicitly recognized the disproportionate vulnerability of women in Guatemala and Honduras to climate change impacts, stemming from structural inequalities in access to resources, land ownership, education, decent work, social security, and participation in decision-making. Cultural norms, particularly machismo, were identified as significant barriers that restricted women's involvement in specific value chains and economic activities outside the home. The project **design** also incorporated sex-disaggregated targets within its results framework and outlined specific actions to address identified gender gaps across participation, benefit sharing, training, and monitoring. These strategic commitments laid a foundation that informed concrete implementation practices throughout the project lifecycle.

Institutionally, Heifer International mobilized its existing structure to support gender integration, including Social Capital Officers and **gender experts**. Notably, female indigenous social capital experts were engaged in Guatemala, with dedicated specialists in Honduras and support from global consultants. The GMP also mandated the early implementation of gender-related safeguards, including culturally appropriate grievance mechanisms and participatory engagement processes. These were operationalized during the environmental and social **safeguard assessments**conducted in communities across both countries. As these institutional measures took effect, they helped ensure that gender inclusion was not only planned for, but actively advanced at the community level.

Efforts to promote both women's and men's participation were evident throughout **implementation**. While the project aimed to equip 12,125 producers including 40 percent (4,850) women, with the knowledge and tools to adapt to climate change using improved farming practices, and aimed to increase the incomes of 6,042 producers including 2,416 women, the project ultimately reached 4,674 men and 1,456 women who reported increased income as a result of their participation. The project aimed to equip 12,125 producers with the knowledge and tools to adapt to climate change, including 40 percent (4,850) women. By the end of the project, 5,167 men and 2,393 women were equipped with climate-smart farming practices, disaggregated by country as follows: 2,185 men and 1,040 women in Guatemala, and 2,982 men and 1,353 women in Honduras. Field visits and baseline assessments explicitly focused on identifying the roles of both men and women in prioritized value chains such as cocoa and allspice. Trainings were tailored to the needs of all participants, with specific consideration for women's need, such as attention to appropriate scheduling, accessible venues, visual materials, and use of local languages, including Q'eqchi translation in Guatemala to improve inclusivity. Men and women actively engaged in field schools, technical training sessions (including cocoa management and organic fertilizer production), exchange visits, and community organizational activities, as confirmed by evaluation interviews with partners and community groups such as APROBIL, COCAOL, and Flor de Café. Men, as primary landholders and often heads of households, were key participants in adopting new agricultural techniques and utilizing project-provided tools, which directly contributed to improved farm management and yields. The project also engaged men in discussions

around social capital and household decision-making, aiming to foster more equitable dynamics. The project also demonstrated adaptive management, initially observing lower female participation but then implementing targeted strategies, such as seeking out and engaging women-only groups where appropriate, particularly in Guatemala. Initiatives such as the formation of women-led groups and inclusion in lead farmer models further demonstrated intentional strategies to enhance women's participation. For instance, the San Luis Tonitzul group in Guatemala was composed entirely of women (37 participants), while the San Isidro Tonzul group included 15 women trained in chocolate-making and nursery practices.

In addition to promoting participation, the project also aimed to ensure equitable access to benefits for men and women participating in climate adaptation activities. Both men and women reportedly received tangible benefits, including training, specialized tools distributed via community lending systems, planting materials, and improved infrastructure such as nurseries and rainwater harvesting systems. Community groups and partners reported improvements in yields and household income due to the adoption of **enhanced agricultural practices**, with benefits accruing to households where both men and women were active participants. In contexts with high male out-migration, such as San Luis Tonitzul, project support reportedly strengthened women's ability to manage land and generate income independently. Women in groups like COCAOL and Flor de Café reported feeling included and benefitting equally from project interventions.

Nevertheless, several **challenges** remained. **Participation** of women in the cardamom value chain was notably lower, reflecting entrenched cultural and gender norms. The pervasive influence of patriarchal norms and restrictive roles, particularly regarding land ownership, which remained predominantly male, continued to restrict women's engagement. Furthermore, while participation was **monitored**, project reports did not consistently provide detailed data on the specific economic benefits for women or fully assess how their participation contributed to outcomes such as enhanced resilience or increased decision-making power.

In conclusion, the project ***Satisfactorily*** demonstrated a committed and structured approach to gender integration, underpinned by planning tools, institutional mechanisms, and inclusive implementation practices. It reached 4,674 men and 1,456 women (24 percent of total beneficiaries engaged in income generating activities) through targeted training and support and was responsive to cultural and linguistic needs. While meaningful participation and benefits for both men and women were evident, gaps remained in fully capturing the depth and effectiveness of gender outcomes, particularly in relation to empowerment and resilience.

D. Knowledge Management

1.1.1. Knowledge Management

Knowledge management was integrated into the project's approach from its inception, with the design outlining an intent to generate specific knowledge products and disseminate them through stakeholder engagement, workshops, and web-based platforms. Central to this was the development of the **AEI**, intended as both a technical tool and a key knowledge product. Its development followed a consultative and iterative process, with workshops conducted in Honduras (August 2023) and Guatemala (September 2023) to engage government representatives and community stakeholders. This process culminated in the validation of the AEI in February 2024 and the subsequent launch of a mobile application, *AgroAdaptación*, in June 2024. This sequence illustrates a phased rollout of the AEI, reflecting a deliberate evolution from stakeholder engagement to tool validation and implementation. The AEI and related resources were also made accessible through a dedicated project webpage, www.agroadaptacion.com, and staff received training to manage and update the platform. These tools enabled the practical application of AEI metrics and were designed to support learning, increase accessibility, and facilitate the adoption of adaptation strategies by producers, companies, and institutional actors. Challenges in integrating AEI-related information into Ministry WebSystems, compounded by political transitions and limited technical capacity, were addressed by engaging consultants and launching the AgroAdaptación application. Efforts to ensure inclusive communication, such as translation into Q'eqchi', supported broader engagement, including 6 workshops in Guatemala (544 participants) and 10 in Honduras (256 participants) during Q4 FY24.

In addition to these digital tools, the project emphasized the development of hands-on materials to complement knowledge dissemination in the field. Complementing the AEI, the project developed four **toolkits** tailored to the targeted value chains, which evolved into user-oriented manuals detailing climate-smart practices such as nursery management and grafting, based on pilot project experiences. A catalog of adaptation practices was also created and utilized by field technicians during community workshops, serving as a hands-on knowledge reference for training and implementation.

The primary mode of knowledge transfer was the field school model, used extensively in both Guatemala and Honduras. These sessions covered a broad range of topics including climate-smart agriculture, livelihoods, the National Adaptation Plan, organic fertilizer production, post-harvest techniques, and organizational development. The trainings were tailored to the targeted value chains, and adapted based on baseline assessments and participant feedback. Peer-to-peer learning was also promoted through exchange visits among producer groups and through the 'lead farmer' model used by partners like APROBIL, which proved effective for community-level dissemination. This multi-pronged approach to dissemination ensured that content was both accessible and contextually relevant.

Field technicians played a central role in facilitating knowledge sharing. Their engagement in community-level work allowed for the contextualization of technical knowledge and enabled a two-way flow of information. They collected local data, identified training needs, and adjusted outreach strategies, accordingly, helping to ground project content in real-time learning. In parallel with these community-level efforts, the project sought to engage institutional actors. The project also engaged with private sector actors and government bodies to raise awareness and encourage use of the AEI, resulting in fourteen letters of interest and the establishment of a specific collaboration with INAB in Guatemala to explore its use in the forestry sector.

Despite these strengths, the project's knowledge management approach had notable limitations. While technical content and guidance materials were developed and shared effectively among direct stakeholders, the website and mobile application served as key dissemination tools, but they did not fully function as centralized repositories for capturing and storing lessons learned, field-level data, or implementation case studies. Although the website included AEI related materials and technical guides, a dedicated system for real-time knowledge capture and comprehensive case study documentation was not established. Additionally, dissemination efforts were primarily focused on project beneficiaries and immediate partners. This limited the project's potential to contribute more broadly to institutional learning and to inform wider climate adaptation discourse.

III. Core Indicators

SCCF INDICATOR

Please provide the culminative total achieved from the inception,if available in the implementation document.

Core Indicator				
CORE INDICATOR 1				
Total number of direct beneficiaries	Total 19,004	Male 12,834	Female 6,170	% for Women 32.47%
CORE INDICATOR 2				
Area of land managed for climate resilience(ha)	2,275.00			

CORE INDICATOR 3				
Total No. of policies/plans that will mainstream climate resilience	4			
CORE INDICATOR 4				
Total number of people trained	5,262	3,680	1,582	30.06%

SUB INDICATOR

OBJECTIVE 1

Reduce the Vulnerability and Increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaption

OUTCOME 1.1

Technologies and Innovative solution piloted or deployed to reduce climate-related risks and / or enhance resilience

OUTPUT 1.1.1

Physical and natural assets made more resilient to climate variability and change

Total number of direct beneficiaries from more resilient physical assets	Total 11,430	Male 7,658.00	Female 3,772.00
Ha of agriculture land 2,275.00	Ha of urban landscape 0.00	Ha of rural landscape 0.00	No of residential houses 0.00
No of public buildings 0.00	No of irrigation or water structures 0.00	No of fishery or aquaculture ponds 0.00	No. of ports or landing sites 0.00
Km of road	Km of riverbank	Km of coast 0.00	Km of storm water drainage 0.00
Others (Specify below) 0	Other(unit)	Comments	

OUTPUT 1.1.2

Livelihoods and sources of income of vulnerable populations diversified and strengthened

Total Number of direct beneficiaries with diversified and strengthened livelihoods and sources of income	Total 7,550	Male 5,157	Female 2,393

Livelihoods and sources of incomes strengthened/introduced			
Agriculture true	Agro-processing true	Pastoralism/dairy false	Enhanced access to markets true
Fisheries/aquaculture false	Tourism/ecotourism false	Cottage industry false	Reduced vulnerability of supply chain true
Beekeeping false	Enhanced opportunity for employment false		
Others (Specify below) false	Comment		

OUTPUT 1.1.3

New/improved climate information systems deployed to reduce vulnerability to climatic hazards/variability

Total number of direct beneficiaries from the new/improved climatic information systems	Total 0	Male 0	Female 0

Climate hazards addressed

Flood false	Storm false	Heatwave false	Drought false
Others (Specify below) false	Comment		

Climate information system developed/strengthened

Downscaled Climate model false	Weather/Hydromet station false	Early warning system false
Others (Specify below) false	Comment	

Climate related information collected

Temperature false	Rainfall false	Crop pest or disease false	Human disease vectors false
Others (Specify below) false	Comment		

Mode of climate information disemination			
Mobile phone apps false	Community radio false	Extension services false	Television false
Leaflets false	Others (Specify below) false	Comment	

OUTPUT 1.1.4

Vulnerable natural ecosystems strengthened in response to climate change impacts

Types of natural ecosystem			
Desert false	Coastal false	Mountainous true	Grassland false
Forest false	Inland water false		
Others (Specify below) false	Comment		

OUTCOME 1.2

Innovative financial instruments and investment models enabled or introduced to enhance climate resilience

OUTPUT 1.2.1

Incubators and accelerators introduced

Total no.of entrepreneurs supported	Total 24	Male 19	Female 5
No. of incubators and accelerators supported	0	Comment	
No. of adaptation technologies supported	0	Comment	

OUTPUT 1.2.2

Financial instruments or models to enhance climate resilienced developed

PPP models false	Cooperatives false	Microfinance false	Risk insurance false
Equity false	Loan false		

Others (Specify below)	Comment
false	

OUTCOME 2.2
Adaptation considerations mainstreamed into investments

OUTPUT 2.2.1
No. of institutions with increased ability to access and/or manage climate finance

No. of institution(s)	Comment
0	

OUTPUT 2.2.2
Institutional coordination mechanism created or strengthened to access and/or manage climate finance

No. of mechanism(s)	Comment
0	

OUTPUT 2.2.3
Global/regional/national initiatives demonstrated and tested early concepts with high adaptation potential

No. of initiative(s) or technology(ies)	Comment
1	

OUTPUT 2.2.4
Public investment mobilized

Amount of investment (US$)	Comment
0	

OUTPUT 2.2.5
Private investment mobilized

Amount of investment (US$)	Comment
0	

OUTCOME 2.3
Institutional and human capacities strengthened to identify and implement adaptation measures

OUTPUT : 2.3.1
Number of people trained regarding climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses

Total no. of people trained	Total	Male	Female
	2,631	1,840	791
Of which total no. of people at line ministries	0	0	0
Of which total no. of community /association members	2,631	1,840	791
Of which total no. of extension service officers	0	0	0

Of which total no. of hydromet and disaster risk management agency staff	0	0	0
Of which total no. of small private business owners	0	0	0
Of which total no. of schoolchildren, university students or teachers	0	0	0
Other (specify)	Comments		

OUTPUT : 2.3.2

Number of people made aware of climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses

no. of people raised awareness	0	Male 0	Female 0
Please describe how their awareness was raised			

OBJECTIVE 3

Foster enabling conditions for effective and integrated climate change adaption

OUTCOME 3.1

Climate-resilient planning enabled by stronger climate information decision-support services, and other relevant analysis, as a support to NAP process and/or for enabling activities in response to COP guidance

OUTPUT 3.1.1

National climate policies and plans enabled including NAP processes by stronger climate information decision-support services

No. of national climate policies and plans 4	Comment

OUTPUT 3.1.2

Systems and frameworks established for continuous monitoring, reporting and review of adaptation

No. of systems and frameworks 0	Comment

OUTPUT 3.1.3

vulnerability assessments conducted

No. of assessments conducted 0	Comment

OUTCOME 3.2

Increased ability of country to access and/or manage climate finance or other relevant, largescale, pragmatic investment, as a support to NAP process and/or for enabling activities in response to COP guidance

OUTPUT 3.2.1	
No. of institutions with increased ability to access and/or manage climate finance	
No. of institution(s) 0	Comment

OUTPUT 3.2.2	
Institutional coordination mechanism created or strengthened to access and/or manage climate finance	
No. of mechanism(s) 0	Comment

OUTPUT 3.2.3	
Global/regional/national initiatives demonstrated and tested early concepts with high adaptation potential	
No. of initiative(s) or technology(ies) 0	Comment `

OUTCOME 3.3

Institutional and human capacities strengthened to identify and implement adaptation measures, as a support to NAP process and/or for enabling activities in response to COP guidance

OUTPUT : 3.3.1

Number of people trained regarding climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses

Total no. of people trained	Total 2,631	Male 1,840	Female 791
Of which total no. of people at line ministries	270	150	120
Of which total no. of community /association members	415	290	125
Of which total no. of extension service officers	520	400	120
Of which total no. of hydromet and disaster risk management agency staff	0	0	0
Of which total no. of small private business owners	1,426	1,000	426
Of which total no. of schoolchildren, university students or teachers	0	0	0
Other (specify)	Comments		

OUTPUT : 3.3.2 Number of people made aware of climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses			
Total no. of people raised awareness	0	Male 0	Female 0
Please describe how their awareness was raised			

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($)
Civil Society Organization	Heifer International	Grant	Investment mobilized	119,420.00		161,113.00
Civil Society Organization	Heifer International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,749,848.00		1,745,159.00
Civil Society Organization	ICADE (Institute for Cooperation and Self Development) – Honduras	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300,000.00		2,400,000.00
Civil Society Organization	CATIE – Honduras	Loans	Investment mobilized	600,000.00		
Civil Society Organization	FUNDER – Honduras	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00		
Private Sector	Banrural – Honduras	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000.00		
Civil Society Organization	Fundacion Defensores de la Naturaleza – Guatemala	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00		500,000.00
Civil Society Organization	Federacion Nacional de Cooperativas de ahorro y credito R.L. – Guatemala	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00		
Private Sector	Nueva Kerala, S.A. – Guatemala	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	450,000.00		

Civil Society Organization	Oro Verde – Tropical Forest Foundation – Guatemala	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	350,000.00		
Recipient Country Government	Municipalidades de Alta Verapaz: Chahal, Cobán, Raxruhá, Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas y Chisec – Guatemala	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000.00		812,549.00
Civil Society Organization	CATIE	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	400,000.00		
GEF Agency	Conservation International	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	161,743.00		100,142.00
Civil Society Organization	ICADE (Institute for Cooperation and Self Development) – Honduras	Loans	Investment mobilized	200,000.00		
Private Sector	Coffee Cooperative of Olancho (COCAOL)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures			16,387.00
Private Sector	Asociación de Productores de Sistemas Agroforestales con Cacao Orgánico – Olancho (APROSACAO)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures			48,264.00
Total Co-financing				**8,831,011.00**	**0.00**	**64,651.00**

Comments

The project had a total committed co-financing of USD 8,831,011 from identified partners. By the project's conclusion, the actual amount disbursed was USD 5,683,472, representing an overall materialization rate of approximately 64.36 percent against these specific commitments. Several co-financiers met or exceeded their original commitments. The Country Recipient Government contributed USD 812,549 against a commitment of USD 500,000, reflecting a materialization rate of 162.51 percent. Similarly, Heifer HQ exceeded its commitment of USD 119,420 with an actual disbursement of USD 161,113, achieving a materialization rate of 134.91 percent. Defensores de la Naturaleza fully met its commitment of USD 500,000. Heifer GBB1 nearly fulfilled its commitment of USD 1,749,848 with an actual disbursement of USD 1,745,159, resulting in a materialization rate of 99.73 percent. One of the key contributors, Conservation International Foundation, had a commitment of USD 161,743, but only USD 100,142 was disbursed, leading to a materialization rate of 61.91 percent. The most significant co-financing shortfall came from the aggregated contributions of ICADE, CATIE, BANRURAL, and BID-LAB in Honduras. This consortium collectively committed USD 4,500,000 but disbursed only USD 2,400,000, resulting in a 53.33 percent materialization rate. Additionally, three organizations that had initially committed co-

financing did not disburse any funds: Federacion Nacional de Cooperativas de Ahorro y Credito R.L. – Guatemala (committed USD 500,000), Nueva Kerala, S.A. – Guatemala (committed USD 450,000), and Oro Verde – Tropical Forest Foundation – Guatemala (committed USD 350,000). These three entities did not contribute any funds, resulting in a 0 percent materialization rate for each. In addition to the planned co-financing sources, two local entities, COCAOL and APROSACAO, provided unanticipated contributions of USD 16,387.23 and USD 48,263.70 respectively. Though these organizations had not originally committed co-financing at the design stage, their support was mobilized during project implementation. An interview with project staff in Honduras confirmed that the five-month delay at the beginning of project implementation, caused by a lack of institutional validation under the new Honduran administration, required Heifer to self-finance operations during this period. This temporary financial commitment helped sustain early-stage field activities and signaled strong organizational dedication to maintaining project momentum in the absence of timely disbursements from other partners. In conclusion, the project achieved a materialization rate of 64.36 percent of the committed co-financing. While key partners like Heifer HQ and the Country Recipient Government exceeded their targets, shortfalls were seen with ICADE, CATIE, BANRURAL, and BID-LAB in Honduras and Conservation International Foundation. Additionally, three organizations failed to disburse any funds, resulting in 0 percent materialization. However, unanticipated contributions from COCAOL and APROSACAO helped mitigate some of these gaps, reflecting a diverse co-financing landscape that supported the project despite challenges.

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
	Low		Low

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

1.1. Environmental and Social Safeguards

The project was screened and classified as Category C, signifying that it was expected to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts. Despite this low-risk categorization, the ESS framework was appropriately and proactively applied, recognizing the complex socio-environmental context of the project sites in Guatemala and Honduras. Key considerations included the presence of indigenous communities, significant gender-based vulnerabilities, and biodiversity-sensitive areas.

As part of project preparation, several core safeguard instruments were required to ensure inclusive and responsible implementation. These included an IPP, GMP, SEP, and an AGM. Together, these plans were designed to promote equitable participation, enable benefit-sharing with vulnerable populations, and establish mechanisms for transparency, feedback, and redress.

While the safeguard design and screening processes were thorough and aligned with best practices, the actual implementation and effectiveness of these measures, particularly regarding the rights of indigenous peoples, gender inclusion, stakeholder engagement, and grievance mechanisms, are further assessed in the following subsections.

1.1.4. Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

The project established an AGM in alignment with CI-GEF policy to provide project-affected stakeholders with a formal, safe, and structured channel to raise concerns and ensure accountability in the implementation of project activities. The AGM was comprehensively documented in the project's **grievance mechanism plan**, which outlined its objectives, scope, procedural steps, and designated roles. It was designed to address a wide range of issues, including discrimination, human rights violations, community participation concerns, and matters related to environmental and social safeguards.

The primary reporting channel under the AGM was Heifer International's existing Global Whistleblower system, a multilingual platform that supported submissions in English and Spanish, among other languages. Recognizing linguistic barriers in project areas, particularly in indigenous communities of Guatemala, the project made specific provisions for local staff to support stakeholders speaking native languages not covered by the system, such as Q'eqchi'. These measures responded to identified needs for language-appropriate communication and were part of broader efforts to enhance inclusivity and access. In addition to addressing language needs, these provisions were embedded within a wider strategy to ensure that the AGM was accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of technological, geographic, or social constraints.

To further increase accessibility, the AGM was supplemented by local reporting options through designated Heifer representatives and project staff. **Community sensitization** on the AGM was integrated into the project's safeguard implementation, with the project leadership tasked with ensuring stakeholders were informed of the mechanism during project initiation and follow-up interactions. Awareness-raising efforts included meetings and training sessions, and physical grievance boxes were introduced within communities to provide an offline alternative for individuals in areas with limited internet connectivity, although the CI-GEF field visit to Honduras noted that the project team there opted not to replicate these boxes, citing stakeholder preference for other channels like direct communication via WhatsApp.

The grievance mechanism plan incorporated key principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and protection from retaliation. It set out a detailed procedure for receiving, screening, assessing, investigating, and resolving complaints within a target resolution timeframe of 30 days. Responsibilities for managing the grievance process were assigned to Heifer's Risk Management and People departments and clearly delineated through a high-level process map and Responsibility, Accountable, Consulted, Informed matrix. The mechanism detailed procedures to manage each grievance from submission to its resolution and closure and also required monitoring the implementation of any action plans arising from investigations. In cases where complainants were unsatisfied with the internal resolution, an escalation pathway to CI's independent EthicsPoint Hotline was available.

The comprehensive and structured design of the AGM was also reflected in the project's performance monitoring approach. The project's results framework included two specific indicators to monitor the performance of the AGM:

(a) number of complaints received, and (b) percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the AGM that were resolved. The end-of-project targets for these indicators were set at one complaint received per fiscal year and 100 percent resolution of reported cases.

However, throughout the implementation period, no grievances or complaints were formally submitted through any of the AGM channels. This finding was corroborated by project reporting. Interviews conducted during the Evaluation confirmed stakeholders were aware of the mechanism but indicated they did not need to use the formal channels. This was attributed to the frequent and accessible presence of Heifer field staff, which facilitated the direct and immediate raising and resolution of any issues through informal interaction, thereby often precluding the need for formal grievance submission. Thus, the absence of formal complaints does not necessarily indicate an ineffective AGM but rather suggests the effectiveness of informal resolution pathways supported by the project team. No major unresolved concerns or dissatisfaction related to the project's implementation or conduct were raised by stakeholders, beneficiaries, or implementing partners during these engagements. However, the Evaluation noted that project reporting did not specify whether general stakeholder feedback, shared informally during other project activities, was documented or addressed through a structured process outside the AGM.

In conclusion, the project ***satisfactorily*** established a well-designed and accessible grievance mechanism aligned with safeguard requirements and took meaningful steps to ensure that stakeholders, including Indigenous and vulnerable groups, were aware of and able to access the system. While no formal grievances were submitted, the mechanism's effectiveness was reflected in the timely resolution of issues through informal channels facilitated by Heifer field staff. However, the absence of formal submissions limits opportunities for documentation and learning, and the project did not specify how informal feedback was tracked or addressed outside the AGM.

In conclusion, the project ***satisfactorily*** applied the environmental and social safeguard framework proactively and with a strong focus on inclusion and accountability, despite its Category C classification. Key safeguard instruments, including the IPP, GMP, SEP, and AGM, were implemented in a culturally sensitive and responsive manner, contributing to meaningful engagement of Indigenous Peoples, women, and other vulnerable groups. Institutional mechanisms and staff capacities supported safeguard delivery across both countries, and informal grievance resolution pathways were responsive and trusted by stakeholders. Minor limitations were noted in the documentation of informal feedback, the monitoring of gender outcomes beyond participation metrics, and the depth of private sector engagement in stakeholder processes.

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category	Title
M and E Document	20250814_SCCF Heifer Adaptation Tracking tool
M and E Document	20250807_Heifer TE_10930_cover sheet
M and E Document	20250807 Heifer TE_10934_CI Management Response Matrix
M and E Document	20250717_Heifer TE Report_GEF ID 10934_Cynosure