

STAP Screen 11550

GEF ID	11550
Project title	Strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers and ecosystems to the effects of climate change
Date of screen	3 June 2024
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1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

The objective of this project is “to promote climate adaptive, viable and resilient enterprises for youth and women that create jobs and are integrated with agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing value chains in Chad.” The proposed “Strengthening the Resilience of Smallholder Farmers and Ecosystems to the Effects of Climate Change” (STRADAP) project seeks to build on the Project to Strengthen Innovation in Youth and Women Agro-pastoral Entrepreneurship in Chad (RENFORT) in three provinces of Chad.

STAP finds that this is a well-intentioned project responding to important food, human and environmental security-related challenges facing vulnerable populations in Chad. STAP appreciates the designation of women and youth as the main beneficiaries of the project as they are disproportionately negatively impacted by the many social and environmental pressures affecting the region, including climate change impacts. The plan to share experiences and lessons learned from IFAD's successful experiences in entrepreneurship for rural youth and women in other regional countries is commendable.

However, while the project adequately describes the projected climate impacts in the targeted areas, the link between these impacts and the project beneficiaries is not well articulated. Nor is the relative importance of these impacts compared to the many other stressors facing local communities such as high levels of poverty, political instability and conflict.

STAP is pleased to see that lessons learned from prior projects were considered in the design of this project. However, the ToC needs to be strengthened to better define the logic behind the causal pathways and include the barriers listed elsewhere in the project document.

STAP provides additional observations and recommendations below.

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.
- X** **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?

- The challenges facing populations in Chad are well understood and described in the PIF. Chad is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change with 80% of the population engaged in smallholder farming

and heavily reliant on agriculture for food security. Climate projections indicate rising temperatures between 2030-2051 under RCP 4.5 for the project area while projections for precipitation are less clear from the map due to missing data; however, it appears that it will mainly decrease. Also missing is the link between these projected changes and impacts on agriculture, fisheries, livestock and therefore livelihoods in the project area. STAP recommends that project proponents make use of STAP's [Decision Tree for Adaptation Rationale](#) to clearly articulate these linkages and the overall climate rationale supporting the project design.

- While climate change clearly poses a threat to livelihoods, there is evidence that much of the degradation facing Chad and the project area is not climate related but stems largely from destructive practices, including in relation to the Chari/Logone River Basin targeted in this project. See, for example, Zhu, W. et al., (2019). Relative contribution of climate variability and human activities on the water loss of the Chari/Logone River discharge into Lake Chad: A conceptual and statistical approach, *Journal of Hydrology* 569: 519-531. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2018.12.015>.
- Conflict and insecurity are frequently mentioned sources of vulnerability for target population; however, there is no mention of the project having used a 'conflict sensitive' lens in the design of this project. STAP recommends that project proponents consult STAP's [Environmental Security: Achieving Durable Outcomes in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations](#), which provides useful guidance on designing and implementing projects in fragile and conflict situations (FCS) based on GEF and non-GEF agency experience.
- This project has two main Components, with the first focused on enhancing the enabling environment and the second on improving silvo-agro-pastoral systems, both of which form the basis of the project theory of change. While many of the essential elements of the project are articulated in the ToC, the linkages between climate adaptation and the various components and associated outcomes and outputs are unclear. STAP highly recommends making use of the [Decision Tree for Adaptation Rationale](#) in the next iteration of this project (i.e. during PPG phase).
- **Component 1** describes numerous policies and plans relevant to the project [e.g. the National Adaptation Plan, the National Strategy to Combat Climate Change, the national environment policy (2017), and the National Strategy for the Great Green Wall of Chad, The National Rural Sector Investment Plan, the 2018 Agro-silvo-pastoral and Fisheries Orientation Law (LOAH), the National Nutrition and Food Policy and the revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 2021)]. Rather than (or in addition to) focusing on addressing the gaps in these policies, this project may wish to consider strengthening overall policy coherence and supporting policy implementation as many of the national policies are likely relevant at the subnational level.
- **Component 2** includes different activities including restoration, integrated business hubs, climate early warning systems, etc. all of which are interesting and have potential, but which appear somewhat random and disconnected. STAP (again) recommends revisiting the ToC to show explicitly how each of the activities and outputs will lead to the overarching objective of the project through clearly defined causal pathways, including how they relate to the seven key barriers described on page 19. If this project is not addressing these barriers, who is?
- It is encouraging to see that the project will bring continuity to current and previous interventions. However, project proponents need to ensure that it effectively builds on learnings and accumulated knowledge to better target interventions and ensure more enduring outcomes.

General Comments:

- For continuity and sustainability, STAP recommends involving local institutions of higher learning (i.e., universities and polytechnics), which may also bring innovations that inform transformational change.

- Proponents may consider using grant financing to share risk and catalyze private sector investments – potentially a good approach considering the context. In addition, proponents should consider other financial mechanisms that could improve the flow of resources towards best-fit interventions.
- Focusing on the subnational level is good as it enables the design of context-appropriate interventions. Nonetheless, proponents should ensure that national and subnational policies are coherent.
- It will be essential to design systems that appropriately curate gained knowledge to inform other initiatives. Moreover, new knowledge will be necessary for transformational change.

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

Based on the issues identified above, STAP recommends the following specific points to be addressed:

- Consult STAP's [Decision Tree for Adaptation Rationale](#). This document lays out key questions for developing an effective adaptation rationale which is needed to ensure that this is indeed a climate adaptation project.
- Carefully consider the relationship between climate change projections and the many other important factors and trends facing vulnerable populations in Chad (e.g. poverty, insecurity, etc.) to design plausible potential future scenarios that will help to inform robust interventions. See the STAP brief on [Simple Future Narratives](#).
- Develop a more robust theory of change that clearly articulates causal pathways that connect the long- and short-term outcomes to outputs needed to achieve the goal (see STAP guidance on a [theory of change](#)).
- Provide a fuller explanation of how this project will address the important reality of working in a fragile and conflict situation (FCS). Consult STAP's recent [guidance](#) on this topic as a first step.
- Clarify the shortcomings of existing national policies that necessitate the need for creating new policies at the sub-national level. Consider potential policy incoherence issues between national and the envisaged subnational policies.
- Explore [timescales of transformational climate change adaptation](#) to reflect on the need to transform agricultural systems or move out of agriculture. The timing of exiting agriculture is important, considering that premature exits from agriculture can be [harmful](#).
- While considering policy and institutional changes at the farm or community scale, there is a need to reflect on the capacity for change. Please see STAP's paper on [transformation](#).

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.)