

30th LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting
June 17, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Agenda Item 09

**FY22 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OFFICE OF THE GEF UNDER THE LDCF AND SCCF**

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.30/E/01, “FY22 Work Program and Budget for the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF under LDCF/SCCF,” approves the annual budget of \$84,000 to carry out the work program for fiscal year 2022. The budget is in line with the term of the evaluation work that spans over multiple years. The approved budget is being distributed as follows:

1. \$37,000 from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and
2. \$47,000 from the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. During fiscal year (FY) 2021 the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) completed the activities of the annual work program approved by the Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council at the 26th Council meeting in June 2019. The IEO prepared the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2022 and the 2020 Program Evaluation of the LDCF; the 2021 Program Evaluation of the SCCF is ongoing.

2. The IEO introduced the first multiannual budget for IEO's FY2016–19 work program for LDCF/SCCF in June 2015. This is in line with the practice of the GEF Trust Fund and accommodates multiyear evaluations such as the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7) and knowledge sharing activities after the completion of evaluations. As the Funds mature, the number of evaluations that are multiyear will grow, whereas the budget is approved on an annual basis. Moving from a year-by-year work program to a four-year work program is in support of the development of a longer-term evaluation vision toward the Funds.

3. The IEO continues to provide quality evaluations on the performance and results of the LDCF and SCCF for accountability purposes, and the FY2020–23 LDCF/SCCF indicative work program is organized around the three objectives of the *GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and Operational Improvements July 2018 to June 2022*: (1) reduce vulnerability and increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation; (2) mainstream climate change adaptation and resilience for systemic impact, and (3) foster enabling conditions for effective and integrated climate change adaptation (GEF 2018). The IEO has also contributed evaluative evidence and lessons to help refine the strategic priorities contained in the GEF programming strategy on adaptation.

4. In June 2020, the LDCF/SCCF Council approved a budget for the IEO of \$117,000 for FY21. The IEO estimates that most of the budget will be used by the end of the fiscal year. This document presents a progress report on the activities completed by the IEO in FY21, and a work program and a budget for activities proposed for FY22.

II. PROGRESS REPORT AND FOUR-YEAR WORK PROGRAM

1. Annual Evaluation Report

5. The IEO has prepared the LDCF/SCCF AER 2021 to report on the performance of the LDCF and SCCF. It presents an assessment of terminal of 18 projects, including 15 financed by the LDCF—of which 3 are multitrust fund projects—and 3 financed by SCCF, 2 of which are multitrust fund projects. This AER is the first to report on multitrust fund LDCF/SCCF projects, which were introduced in the GEF-5 period. The AER 2021 cohort has a shared value of \$98.2

million in LDCF/SCCF/GEF funding, and \$315.8 million in materialized cofinancing.¹ AER 2021 reports on outcome, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) design, and implementation ratings, innovative approaches, and gender considerations in these projects. It also includes a synthesis of lessons learned from the 2021 cohort of completed projects.

6. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on both the global economy and the country context in LDCF/SCCF-supported countries. In an effort to shed light on how outcomes have been affected post completion, AER 2021 includes information shared by GEF Agencies and other project stakeholders on four of the projects from this year's AER cohort.

7. The management action records to track adoption of the LDCF/SCCF Council's decisions across the GEF partnership are also presented in AER 2021. The two LDCF/SCCF Council decisions taken at the May 2017 meeting on the program evaluation of SCCF and the December 2020 decision on recommendations of the Program Evaluation of the LDCF are tracked in AER 2020. AER 2021 is being submitted to Council as an information document (see GEF/LDCF.SCCF.30/E/Inf.01).

8. As the LDCF/SCCF portfolio matures, the submission of an increasing number of terminal evaluations² will permit a more detailed assessment of the portfolio's performance, including project results, processes that may affect project results, M&E arrangements, gender consideration, innovative approaches, lessons learned, and good practice. In FY22, AER 2022 will assess the terminal evaluations that are submitted to the IEO during the 2021 calendar year.

2. Fund Program Evaluations

9. As part of the four-year work program of the IEO approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council at its 26th meeting in June 2019, the IEO conducted the 2020 Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (GEF IEO 2020). The main objective of this evaluation is to assess the progress made by the LDCF since the 2016 LDCF program evaluation (GEF IEO 2016) and the extent to which the LDCF is achieving the objectives set out in the GEF adaptation strategy for 2018–22. The evaluation also follows up on conclusions and recommendations of the 2016 LDCF evaluation and provides the LDCF/SCCF Council with evaluative evidence of the Fund's relevance and emerging results. Evaluative evidence is based on a portfolio review of project and program documentation, interviews with key stakeholders, and field visits to two countries, including two post-completion evaluations. The IEO completed the evaluation in FY21 and it was presented to the December 2020 LDCF/SCCF Council.

10. An update of the 2017 SCCF program evaluation (GEF IEO 2017) was also part of the four-year work program of the IEO approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council in June 2019. The main objective of the evaluation is to assess the progress made by the SCCF since the previous

¹ Grant funding includes LDCF/SCCF/GEF amounts approved at CEO endorsement, plus project preparation grants. Agency fees are excluded. Information on realized cofinancing is available for 14 projects.

² It is estimated that the number of terminal evaluations submitted will grow at an increasing rate.

evaluation and the extent to which the SCCF is achieving the objectives set out in the GEF adaptation strategy. The evaluation also aims to provide recommendations on the way forward for the SCCF. The evaluation is reviewing projects that have reached approval since the previous evaluation at the project identification form (PIF) stage as well as all projects which have reached completion to date. The aim is not to add to the results of the portfolio review presented in 2017, which are unlikely to be much changed by a small number of new projects, but instead to complement them with more in-depth coverage of recent developments in the portfolio. In addition to the ongoing portfolio review the evaluation is conducting interviews with key stakeholders and a meta assessment of other evaluation and academic articles that cover the SCCF. Due to travel restrictions and the COVID-19 pandemic the IEO will conduct virtual interviews with in-country stakeholders in lieu of post-completion project site visits. In FY21 the IEO prepared the approach paper that is available on the GEF IEO website, completed most of the portfolio review, and conducted interviews with stakeholders. The IEO will complete the evaluation in FY22 and present it to the LDCF/SCCF Council in December 2022.

3. Adaptation in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF

11. The IEO has synthesized conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change in the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6) and the Fifth Overall Performance Study of the GEF (OPS5). Adaptation to climate change will be included in OPS7 through various channels. OPS7 will bring in evaluative evidence from the AERs prepared during FY19–22, from the 2020 and 2021 program evaluations of the LDCF and the SCCF, and from GEF Trust Fund evaluations conducted by the IEO during GEF-7. Some of these evaluations have integrated adaptation to climate change including the role of medium size projects in the GEF partnership and the strategic country cluster evaluations (SCCEs), in particular. The LDC SCCE and African Biomes SCCE included LDCF/SCCF projects and findings and conclusions that will feed into OPS7. Adaptation to climate change will also be included in special studies for OPS7 on, for example, performance, strategies, and approaches, and gender equality. Furthermore, the IEO is conducting a study on the mainstreaming of climate change resilience in the GEF portfolio that will inform OPS7. The approach paper for OPS7 was submitted to the Council in June 2020 (GEF IEO 2020b). The work of including adaptation to climate change in OPS7 will continue in FY22.

4. Policy and Guidance

12. The *2010 Monitoring and Evaluation Policy* has been revised and a separate *GEF Evaluation Policy* was adopted by the GEF Council in June 2019 (GEF IEO 2019). In FY20, the IEO started work on updating the *Guidance Document: Monitoring and Evaluation in the LDCF/SCCF* (GEF 2014) to reflect the change to a separate evaluation policy. This guidance document discusses the fundamentals of M&E practices within the context of the Funds' M&E policies and requirements and provides guidance to apply the M&E policy to LDCF/SCCF activities in accordance with GEF policies and practices. A professional peer review of the IEO, conducted in FY20, was submitted to the June 2020 Council meeting as an information document (GEF IEO 2020c). The peer review made recommendations for further revision of the updated evaluation

policy and, therefore, a revised GEF Evaluation Policy will be submitted to the Council after the completion of OPS7 in FY22. Once adopted, the updated LDCF/SCCF guidance document will be finalized.

5. Knowledge Management

13. Evaluative evidence and findings from the IEO work program under LDCF/SCCF are disseminated through several knowledge products and activities. In FY21, the findings and recommendations from the 2020 LDCF program evaluation were shared through a blog on Climate-Eval, an online community of practice hosted by the IEO, and the IEO Learnings available on the IEO website. The graphically edited full evaluation report will be published on the IEO website in FY22. The IEO is reporting on the LDCF program evaluation in the report of the GEF to the twenty-sixth session of conference of parties to the UNFCCC scheduled in November 2021. In FY22 dissemination of evaluative evidence will also take place at conferences, such as Adaptation Futures 2020, contingent on possible virtual arrangements and travel restriction due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

III. MULTIANNUAL EVALUATION BUDGET

14. The IEO introduced the first multiannual budget for the IEO's FY16–19 work program for LDCF/SCCF in June 2015. This is in line with the practice of the GEF Trust Fund and accommodates multiyear evaluations such as OPSs and knowledge sharing activities after the completion of evaluations. The multiannual budget for FY20–23 was approved for a total of \$340,000 in June 2019 (GEF IEO 2019). The IEO work program has been tailored so that the approved budgets will allow for an effective and efficient delivery of the proposed evaluation work.

15. The LDCF/SCCF Council approved a budget for the IEO of \$117,000 for FY21 at its 28th meeting in June 2020. The projected amount to be disbursed by the end of FY21 is approximately 85 percent of the approved budget. Based on the multiannual nature of the budget, any undisbursed funds from the FY21 budget will be rolled over into the FY22 budget, thus continuing and completing the SCCF program evaluation currently under way (table 1). The amounts shown for the activities cover the cost of a senior evaluation officer from the IEO to manage and contribute to the activities, and the cost of other IEO staff to carry out the activities.

16. The IEO requests the LDCF\SCCF Council's approval for the proposed annual budget of \$84,000 for FY22 to cover the cost of the activities in the work program presented above. This amount is within the approved envelope for FY20–23.

Table 1: FY21–22 budget of the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF (thousands \$)

Evaluation activity	FY21 approved budget	FY21 estimated expenses	FY22 requested budget
LDCF			
Annual Evaluation Report	21	21	22
LDCF Evaluation	10	13 ^a	0
Adaptation in OPS7	10	10	15
Policy and Guidance	0	0	0
Sub-total (A)	41	44	37
SCCF			
Annual Evaluation Report	21	21	22
SCCF Evaluation	45	25	10
Adaptation in OPS7	10	10	15
Policy and Guidance	0	0	0
Sub-total (B)	76	56	47
Total (A+B)	117	100	84

Note: a. As the LDCF program evaluation was postponed \$3,000 was carried over from FY20.

IV. REFERENCES

All URLs were checked before publication or as of the access date noted.

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