

GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation 2014: Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania



The seventh Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report (ACPER) provides a synthesis of the main conclusions and recommendations coming from country-level evaluations conducted in the Sub-Saharan

Africa region. These include two country portfolio evaluations—one conducted in Eritrea and one in Tanzania—and one country portfolio study conducted in Sierra Leone. Support from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to these countries began in 1992 in Tanzania and Eritrea, and in 1998 for Sierra Leone through participation in a GEF regional project. ACPER 2014 highlights the result and sustainability of GEF support, particularly at the global environmental benefits level, and its efficiency and relevance to the GEF Agencies and recipient countries.

The GEF country portfolios of Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania collectively include 55 national projects in five GEF focal areas: 23 in climate change, 19 in biodiversity, 5 multifocal, 4 in land degradation, and 4 in persistent organic pollutants. They include no projects in the international waters or ozone-depleting substances focal area. Total GEF financing in the three countries was \$128.3 million, with \$793.9 million in cofinancing.

In addition to the three specific evaluations mentioned above, this ACPER presents a comprehensive analysis of progress toward environmental impact in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. This analysis provides further context to—and in some cases confirms—the conclusions and findings emerging from the three country-level evaluations conducted in the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

Over 54 percent of the 90 GEF projects successfully implemented in this region most or some broader adoption initiatives, compared to 60 percent of the global port-

folio's projects. Across the Sub-Saharan Africa portfolio, environmental impact was reported—either in the form of environmental stress reduction or environmental status change—in 48 percent of the projects (43); the comparable share of projects globally was 65 percent.

Findings

Results

GEF support has played an important role in creating the enabling framework necessary to underpin the development of environmental policy and laws in the three countries analyzed in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. GEF support has been particularly effective in developing institutional and individual capacity for environmental management in the three countries.

Positive results at completion have been achieved beyond foundational support, leading in some cases to progress toward impact. Analysis of postcompletion progress toward impact was conducted for seven terminal evaluations available for projects in Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania. All projects were at least partially successful, with five moderately successful and one highly successful in achieving progress toward environmental impact.

Likelihood of sustainability is mixed; it has been most successful when pursued through the fostering of institutional and individual capacity development and the promotion of livelihood activities through community-based approaches—e.g., the Small Grants Programme (SGP). GEF projects have applied approaches intended to foster sustainability in terms of the continued flow of environmental benefits as well as of overall results achieved. The most successful efforts have been those aimed at developing local capacities as well as linking local community benefits to improved environmental management.

Wider dissemination and uptake of project-derived lessons at the national level has been hampered by language barriers. The Tanzania evaluation highlights the fact that a number of GEF-supported activities, including the enabling activities, have targeted the preparation of important documents for dissemination and use nationally and internationally.

Relevance

GEF support has been and remains relevant to the countries' environmental priorities as well as to their sustainable development needs, with a few exceptions. The three portfolios analyzed confirm strong relevance to national environmental conservation and sustainable development needs and priorities in all the GEF focal areas, with a few exceptions in Eritrea.

Diverse degrees of ownership have been observed in the three portfolios analyzed. The use of the countries' own financial and other resources along with donor funding demonstrates ownership in Tanzania and Eritrea. Both have been successful in mobilizing their own resources as well as cofinancing from international sources. Sierra Leone showed weaker ownership, except for enabling activities.

Efficiency

Project design factors, particularly overly ambitious objectives, have often caused implementation overruns. This conclusion confirms the importance of realistic project design. Unrealistic project design can have a negative effect on achievement of results and likelihood of sustainability.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is mixed in the three portfolios, and efforts are deployed to improve the situation where needed. Despite efforts in specific projects, M&E systems in Tanzania are not yet uniformly regarded as an important asset to the design, management, and adaptation of projects. In Eritrea, M&E systems are in place but have yet to be fully used for adaptive management—although some progress is being made to improve the situation. In Sierra Leone, M&E systems are in place and are appropriate thus far.

Mechanisms for coordination and synergies among GEF Agencies and national institutions, and among GEF- and other donor-supported projects and activities, have been set up, with mixed results. In Tanzania, networks have been developed between GEF projects, national institutions, and other donor-supported projects. While networking mechanisms exist in Eritrea, they have not been fully effective in securing better synergies. Partnership, collaboration, and synergy have been good in Sierra Leone.

Recommendations

- The GEF should explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programs as service providers to implement community-level activities for FSPs and MSPs.
- The GEF should pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in the relevant national languages.

Follow-Up

The Council requested the Secretariat to explore and pursue, where appropriate, the use of established SGP country programmes as service providers to implement community level activities for FSPs and MSPs. The Council requested the Secretariat and the Agencies to pay greater attention to national knowledge exchange and promote dissemination of data and information in the relevant national languages.

The GEF Independent Evaluation Office is an independent entity reporting directly to the GEF Council, mandated to evaluate the focal area programs and priorities of the GEF. The full version of *GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation 2014: Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania* (Evaluation Report No. 95) is available on the GEF Independent Evaluation Office website, www.gefeo.org. Also available on the website are the individual country reports for Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania. For more information, please contact the Office at gefevaluation@thegef.org.