



GEF COUNCIL MEETING 66

IEO Evaluation Update

February 2024



Celebrating two decades of influence

[Website](#)

[Anniversary Video](#)

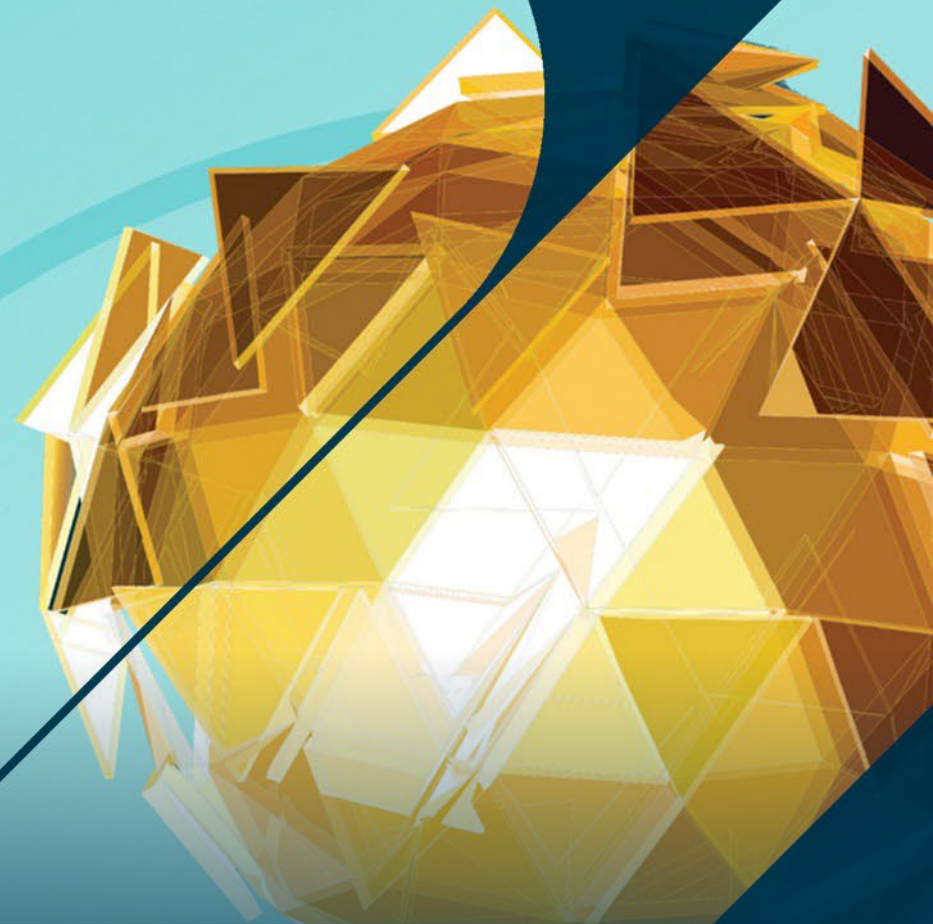
[Anniversary Brochure](#)



Independent
Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

20
ANNIVERSARY

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT



Knowledge Management



BOOKS AND GUIDELINES

- **Open access publication** *Conflict-Sensitive Conservation. Lessons from the Global Environment Facility*
- **Guidelines** on terminal evaluations, completed enabling activities, program evaluation



TRAINING

- **Workshop on Evaluation** at the nexus of the environment and development for the *International Program for Development Evaluation Training*
- **Online training** on environmental evaluation



MEETINGS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **GEF Assembly:** Side event on evaluation use and influence
- **COP28:** Co-hosted events with evaluation units of multilateral climate funds
- **IEG@50 & GEI:** Future proofing national evaluation systems environment



GEF IEO Conference



2024, March 5th - 7th
Washington, DC

INTEGRATING
**ENVIRONMENTAL AND
SOCIOECONOMIC DOMAINS**
FOR **SUSTAINABILITY**





Evaluation Overview

- — ① Drylands
- — ② Community-based approaches
- — ③ Learning from challenges
- — ④ Climate information and early warning systems

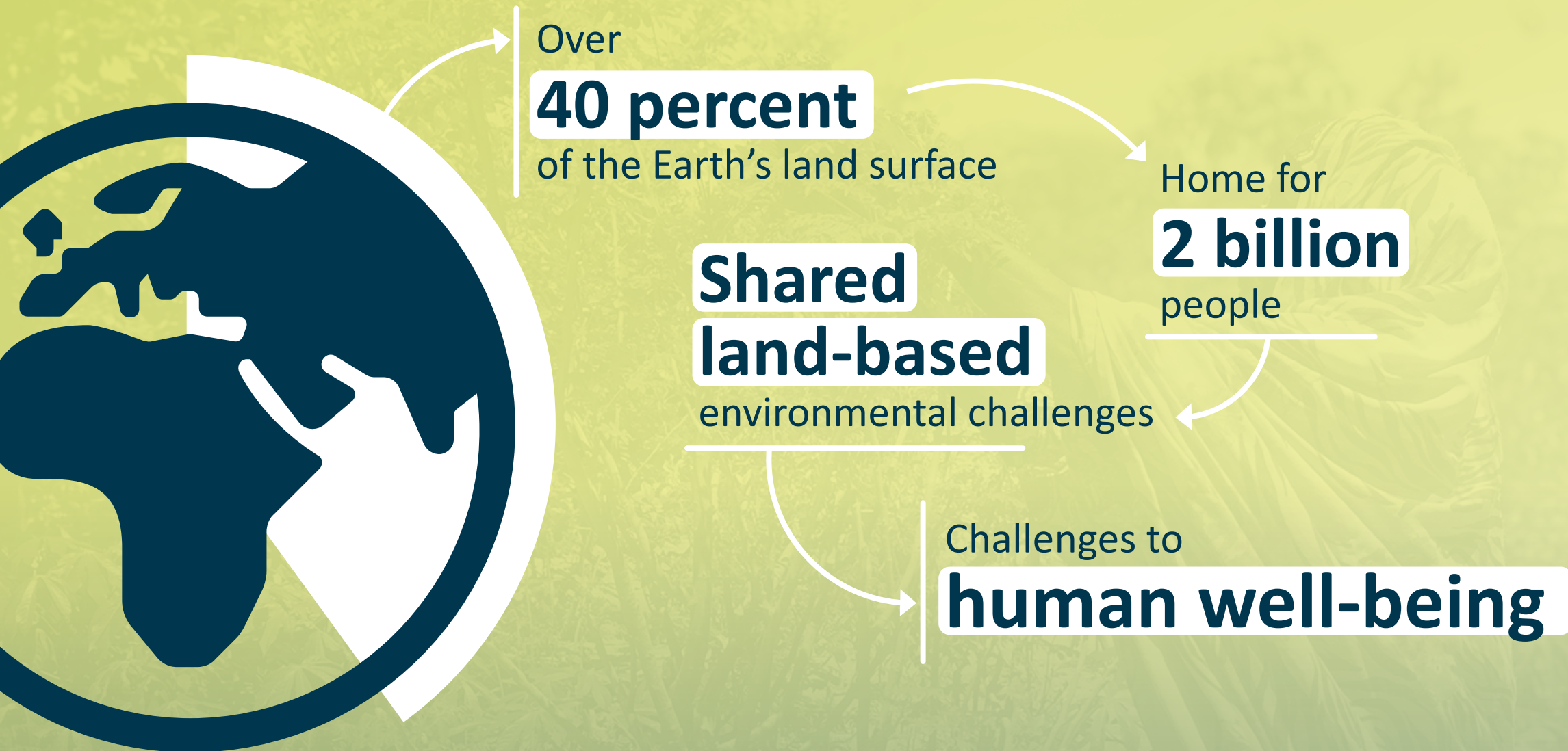
1

Strategic country cluster evaluation

GEF SUPPORT TO DRYLANDS COUNTRIES



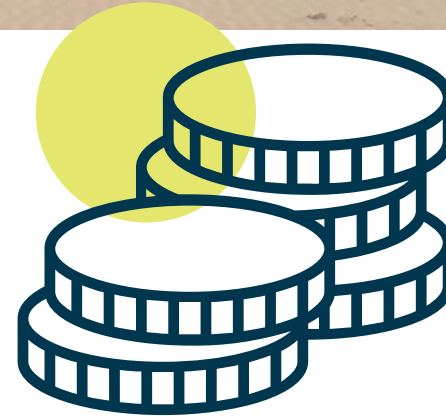
Background and key challenges



GEF support



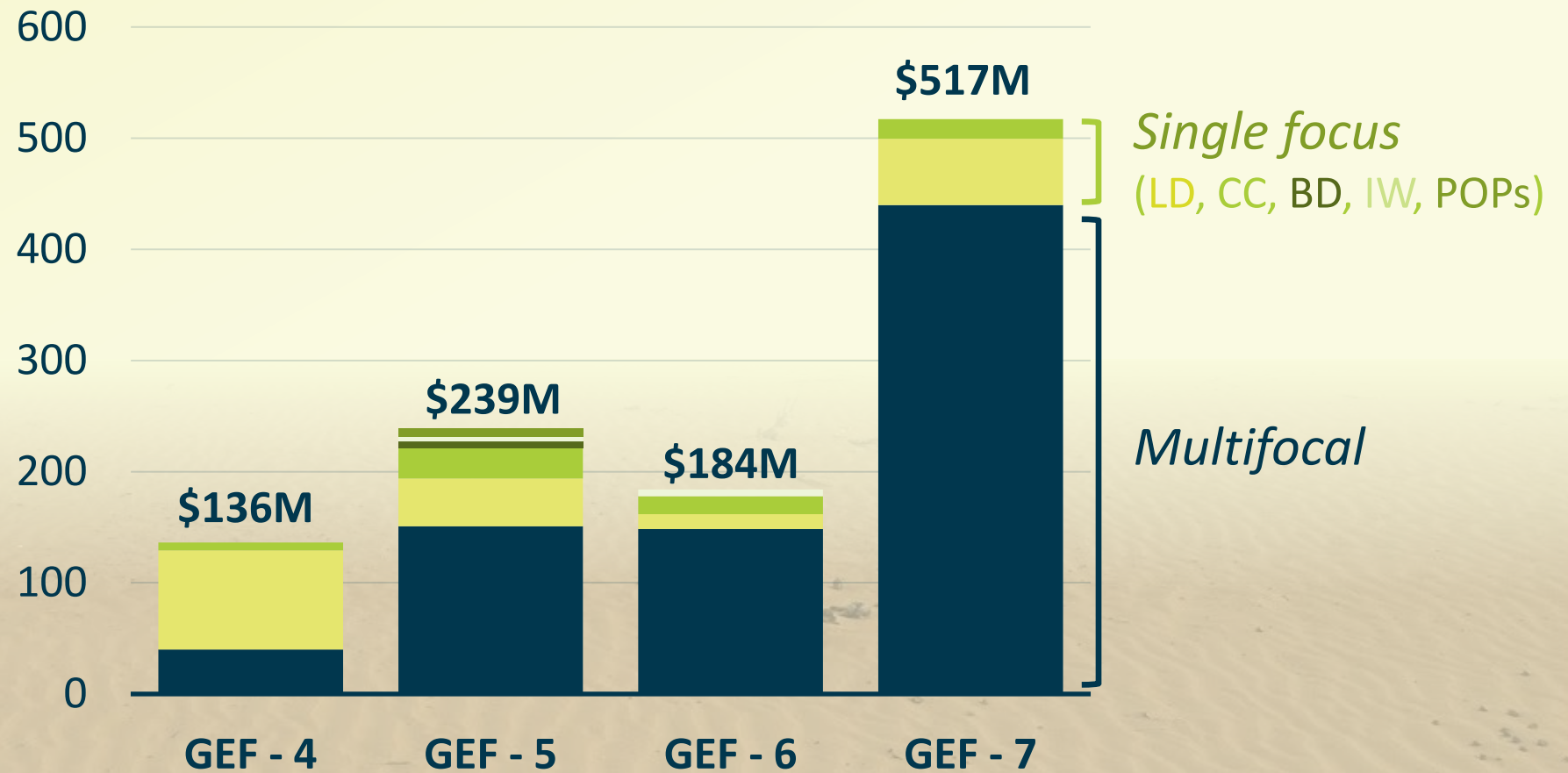
**Land degradation
strategies**



**GEF substantial and
increasing share of
funding in management of
drylands**

Portfolio

**GEF drylands
related funding in
USD million**



Portfolio

*Share of evaluation
portfolio's GEF funding*



**GEF Trust
Fund**

Funding Source

81%



**Full-size
Project**

Project Type

96%



Multi-Focal

Focal Area

72%



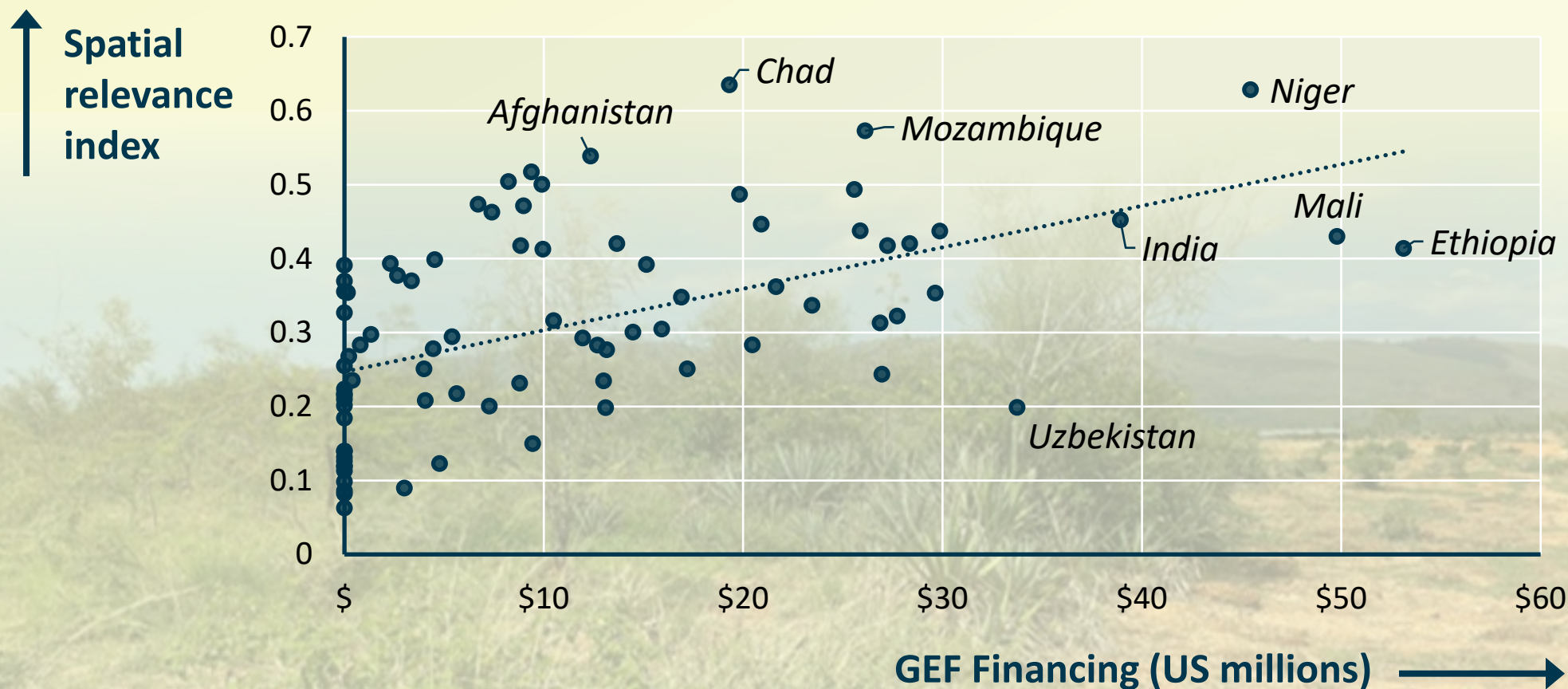
Africa

Region

59%

Relevance and Coherence

GEF has been highly relevant to key environmental challenges in drylands



Relevance and Coherence

**Key drylands
environmental
challenges** targeted
by GEF drylands
projects

Land
Degradation

84% of projects

Threats to
Biodiversity

52%

Climate
Change

42%

Deforestation

32%

Source: GEF/IEO project document review. Confirmed by stakeholder surveys.

1

Relevance and Coherence

- Projects identified **policy misalignments at design** but **didn't succeed** in mitigating their impact on outcomes
- National policy coherence **did not translate** into **local policy coherence** during implementation

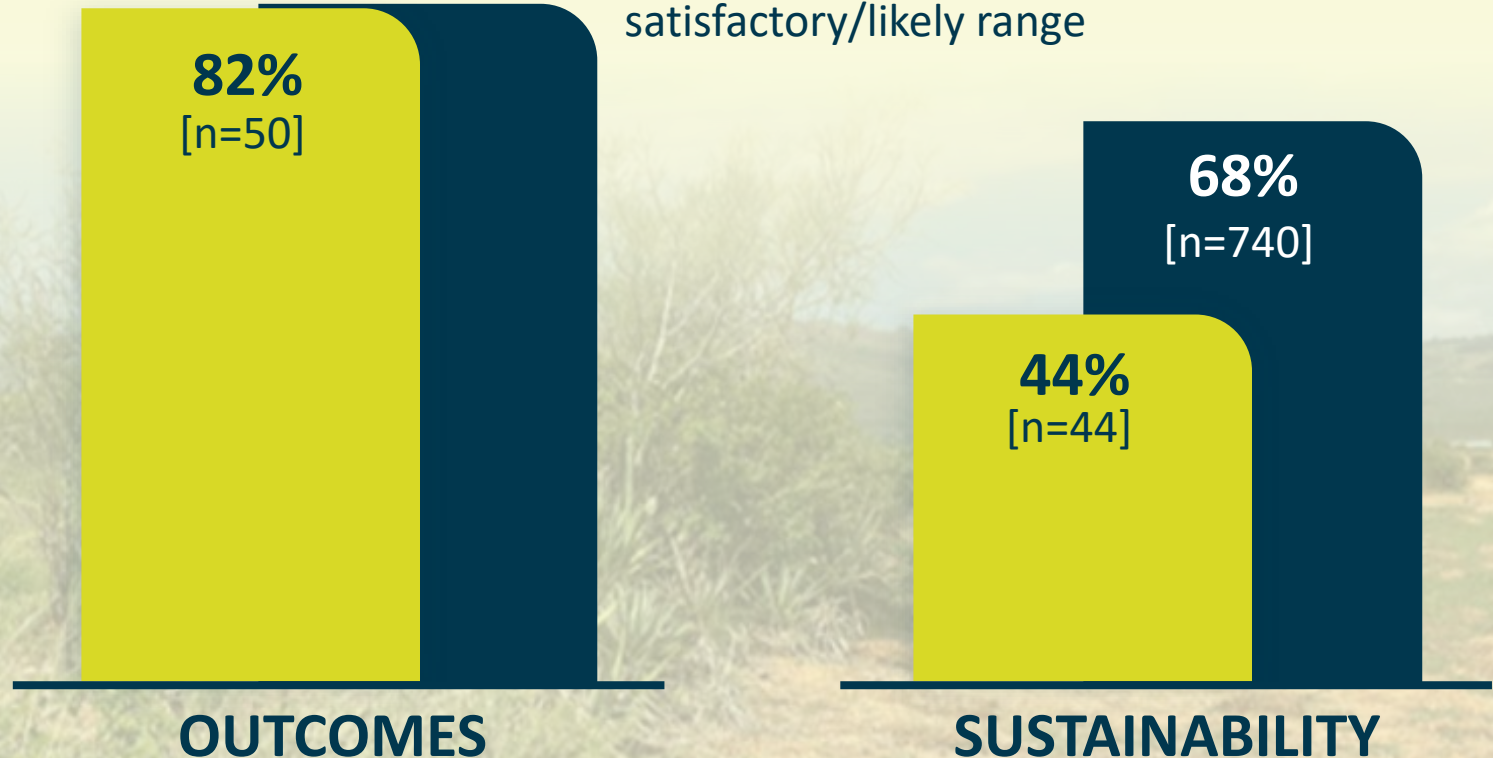
2

Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability: Performance

Drylands vs
Overall GEF portfolio
performance

GEBs and Socio Economic
co-benefits delivered across
dryland sub habitats, less in
pastoral lands

83% of GEF4, GEF5 & GEF6 projects
[n=781] with performance ratings in the
satisfactory/likely range



2

Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability

Reliance on area-based indicators
limits ability to track changes in
Environmental status

Natural resource governance
at design **not translated**
in results

Limited attention to **conflict**
and land tenure in project
design



*Madjekameram and Kosseri
Blabrim districts, Niger: Fixed
land dunes and beneficiary
vegetable gardens (GEF ID 3381)*

2

Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability

Successful in fostering synergies between environment and development



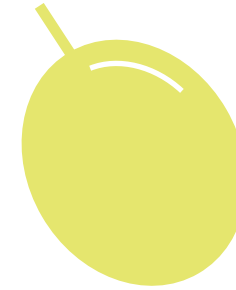
Not enough attention to mitigating trade-offs



Ismayilli region, Azerbaijan:
Pasture pilot sites (GEF ID 4332)

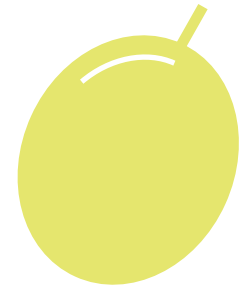
2

Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability



Sustainability
less assured

Involvement of
private sector
more limited
but improving



*Madjekameram and Kosseri
Blabrim districts, Niger: Fixed
land dunes and beneficiary
vegetable gardens (GEF ID 3381)*

Results and Impact (Example)

GEF IDs
3376 &
4625

MALAWI

Improved sustainable landscape management practices and agricultural productivity on 480,000 ha, more than 10% of agricultural lands

Balaka district, Malawi: Stabilizing the Mwayi and Mkasi rivers through riverbank reafforestation (GEF ID 3376)



Results and Impact (Example)



GEF IDs
3382 &
5252

NIGER

Delivered over **250,000 ha**
under improved soil and water
management practices

Sustainably improved vegetation
coverage, reduced erosion and
soil salinity

*Madjekameram and Kosseri Blabrim districts, Niger: Fixed land dunes and
beneficiary vegetable gardens (GEF ID 3382)*

Results and Impact (Example)

GEF IDs
2794 &
5220

ETHIOPIA

Restored about **154,000 ha** of degraded farmland and communal land

Agroforestry and area closures led to a **5%** increase in vegetation cover

Gross primary production grew by **14%** in project areas affected by severe droughts

Dugna Fango district, Ethiopia: Non restored and restored land areas side by side (GEF ID 5220)



Recommendations



- 1 Focus **policy coherence efforts** on subnational and local levels
- 2 Include **land tenure security** and **conflict resolution** at design
- 3 Equal attention to **fostering synergies** and **mitigating trade-offs** between environment and socioeconomic development
- 4 Provide **project level monitoring data** showing associated biophysical changes for relevant area-based core indicators

2

EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY BASED APPROACHES AT THE GEF



Coverage

Involve

**communities
and people**

with both social and
environmental objectives

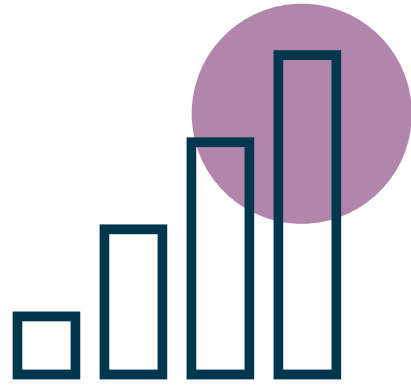


Contribute to the

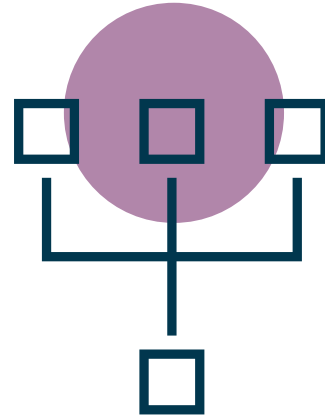
**durability and
ownership**

of investments

GEF Support



**Since GEF-4,
increasing frequency
through GEF-8**



**Whole of Society'
approach in Climate
Change Adaptation
Strategy for GEF-8**



**GEF policies foster
inclusion and prevent
harm to stakeholders
and the environment**



Portfolio

*Share of evaluation
portfolio's GEF funding*



**GEF Trust
Fund**

Funding Source

81%



**Full-size
Project**

Project Type

96%



Multi-Focal

Focal Area

64%



Africa

Region

41%

Asia

30%

Relevance

- **Present in:**
Multilateral environmental agreements;
GEF projects, programs, and policies;
National priorities

*Community-managed forest near
protected area in Indonesia,
supported by GEF ID: 3279*

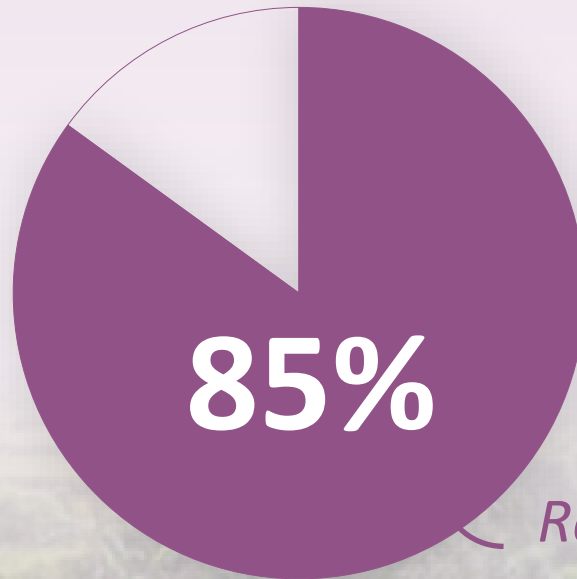
Results and Performance

Effectiveness ratings for CBA projects

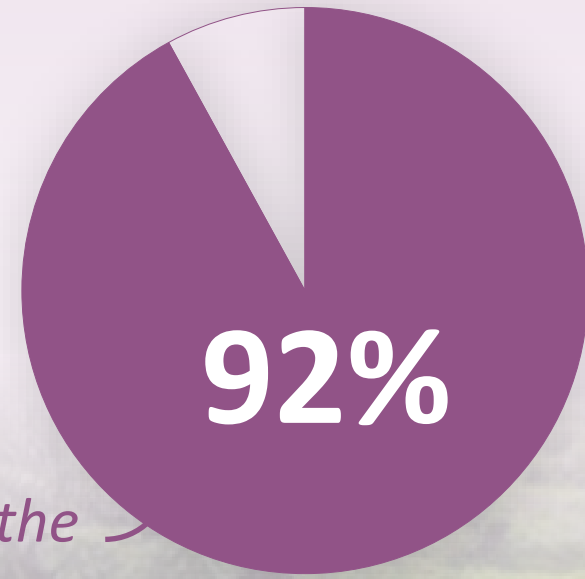
Better performance
ratings

Achievement of
socioeconomic co-benefits
at project close

GEF-4 & 5

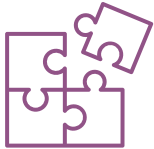


GEF-5



*Ratings in the
positive range*

Results and Performance



Sustainability associated with behavior change, and to some extent alternative livelihoods



Activities related to **capacity building for ecological monitoring** sustained post completion in most sites visited



Results and Performance

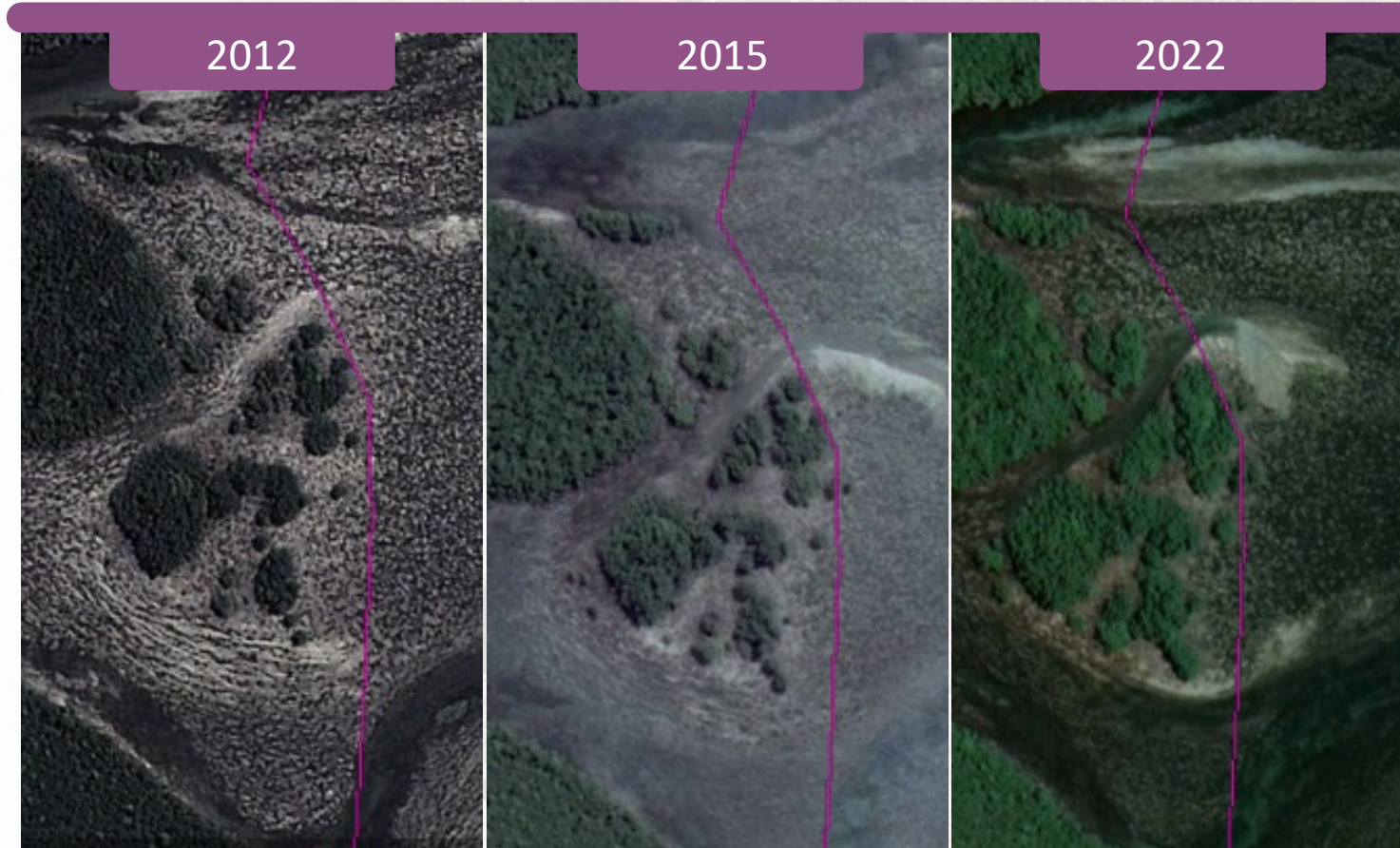
MRPA
(GEF ID
3687)

MADAGASCAR

Decreased rates of mangrove deforestation and expansion of the forested mangrove area

The MRPA project:

- *Strengthened community groups*
- *Fostered legitimacy through a participatory planning process*
- *Recognized community land tenure*
- *Community-selected livelihoods activities linked to private sector, supporting sustainability.*



Inclusion



**More inclusive of women,
IPLCs, and youth over time**



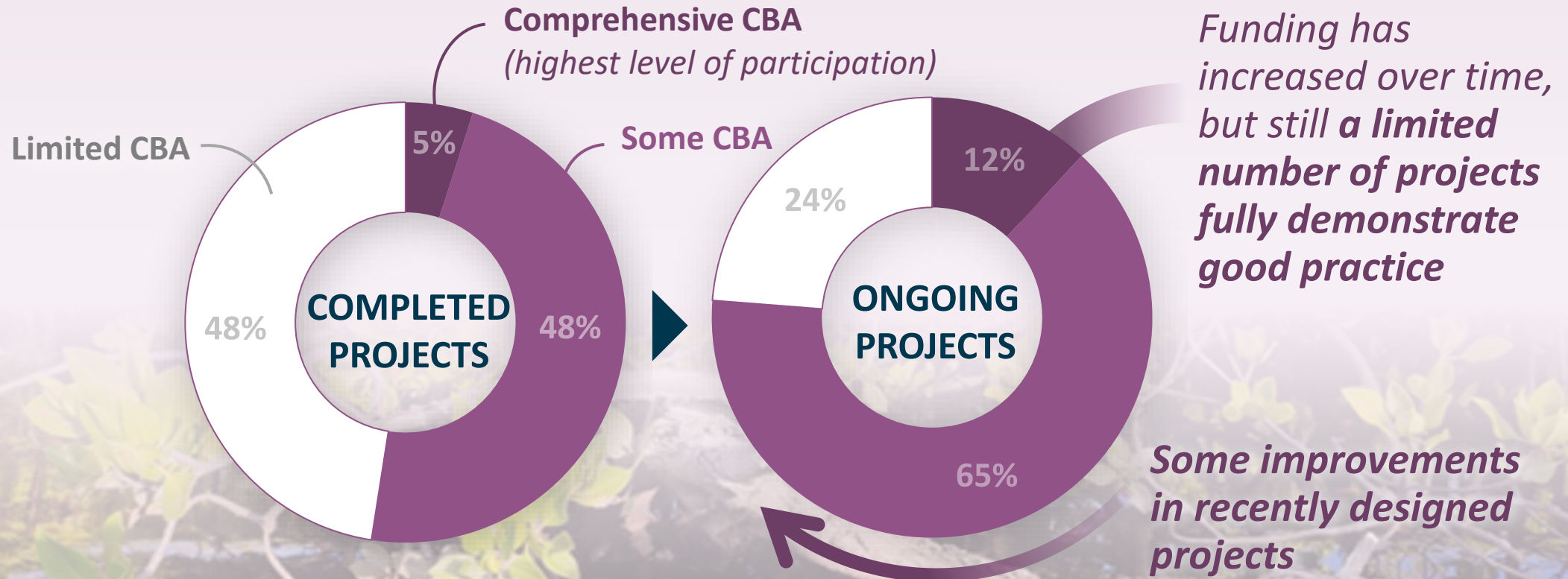
*Voluntary community forest patrol group,
Madagascar (GEF ID: 3773).*

Community-based approaches in the GEF: Community Voices



Alignment with good practice

Comprehensiveness of community based approaches

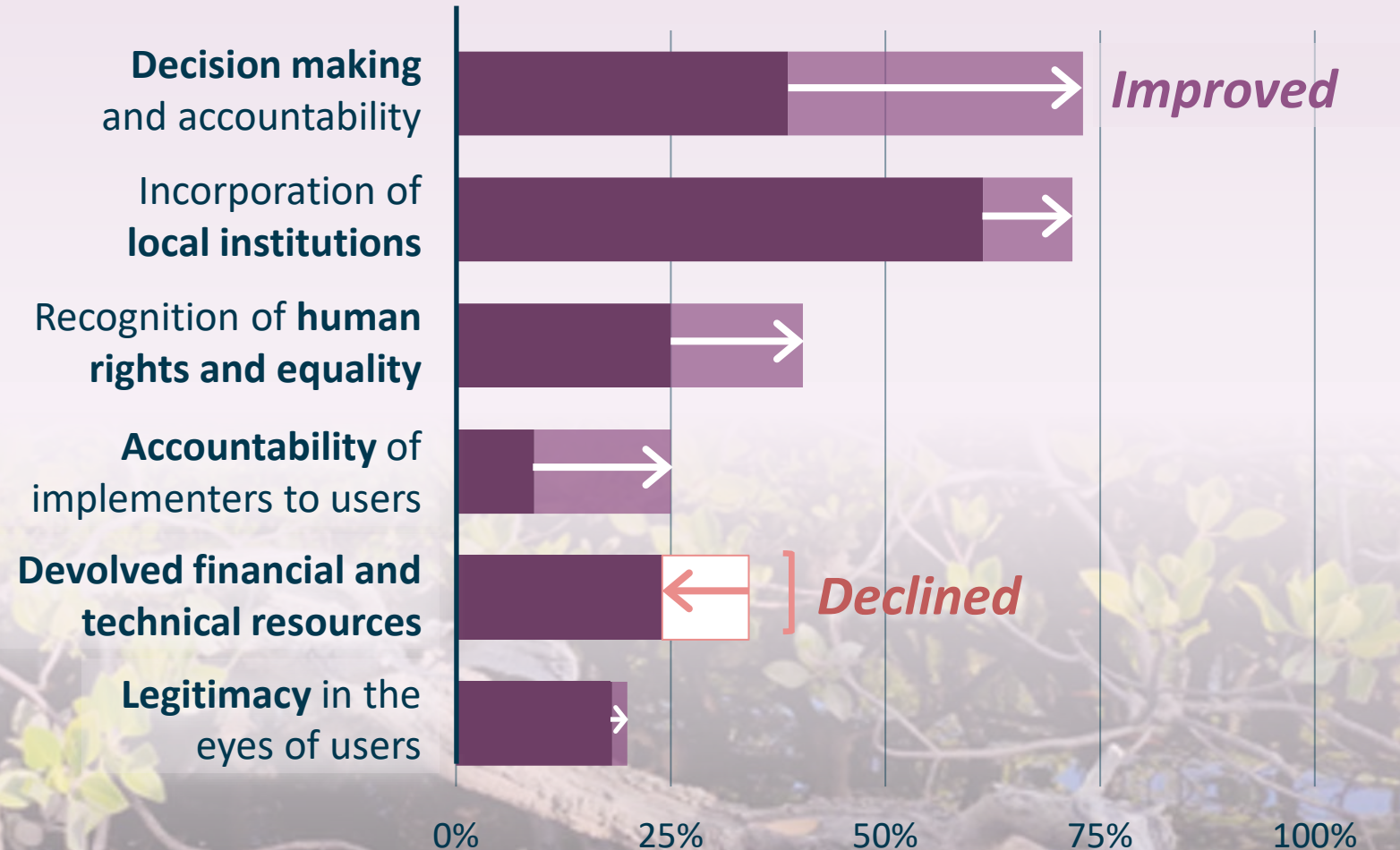


Source: GEF/IEO analysis.

Alignment with good practice

Projects scoring in the top two categories for good practices

6 DIMENSIONS



Community engagement in design, implementation, and monitoring



GEF project cycle presents **challenges for implementing** CBA projects



Lack of indicators limits ability to adaptively manage



Recommendations



- 1 Ensure that **co-design of projects with communities** is possible under the suite of GEF policies and guidelines
- 2 Provide **more clarity and guidance** on when and how CBAs can be used in GEF projects
- 3 Develop an **approach for tracking** of devolved responsibility and/or financial resources to the local level

3

LEARNING FROM CHALLENGES IN GEF PROJECTS



Background



80 percent

of completed GEF projects
are successful

Evidence from less
successful projects
often

overlooked

Enhance
performance
through learning
from both

**successes
and failures**

Purpose — objectives — data sources

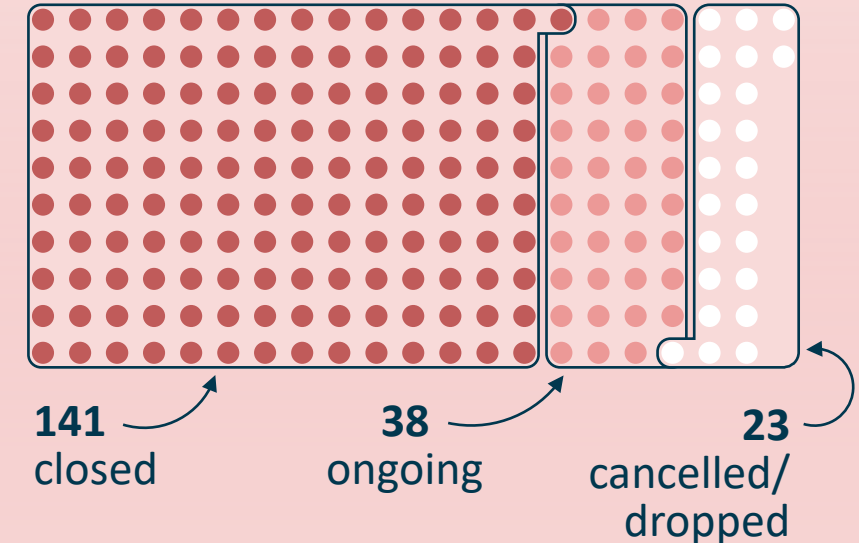
Learn from challenges in underperforming operations

Analyze factors contributing to underperformance

Examine **risk mitigation** and **adaptive management** measures

Provide insights on how the GEF can enhance its role as a learning organization

202 UNDERPERFORMING PROJECTS



12
case studies


Document
and literature
review

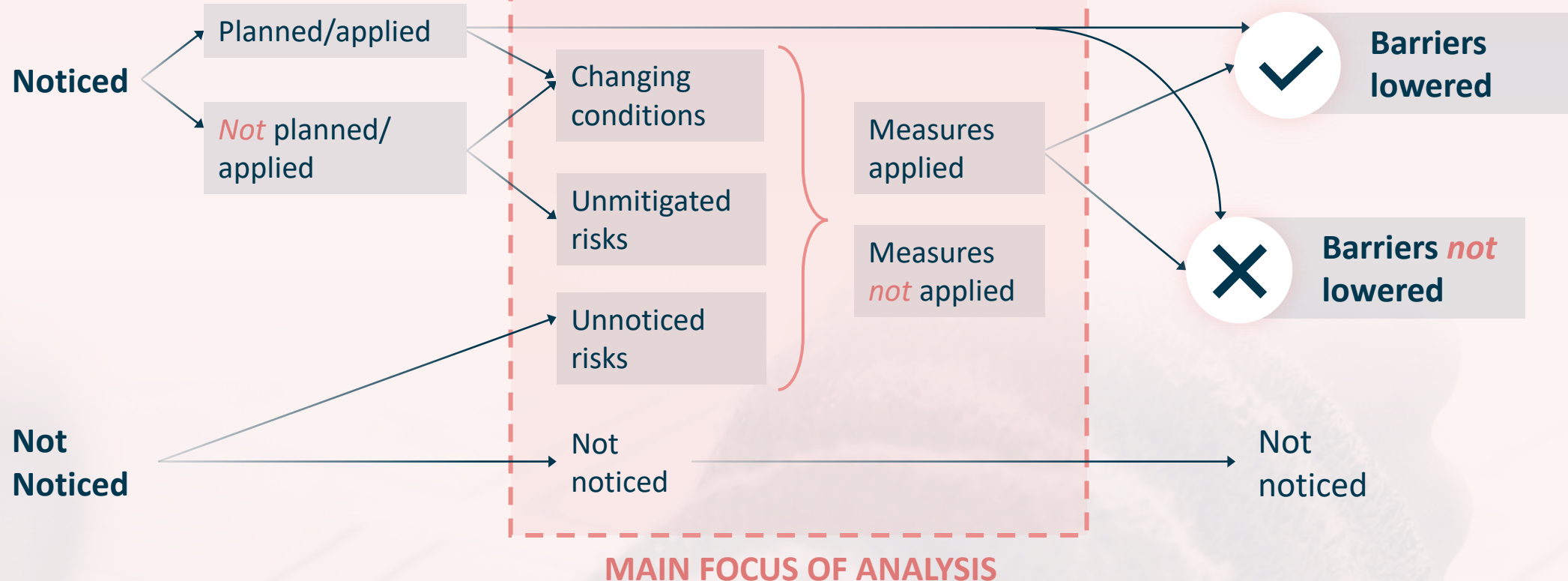

Interviews

Methodological framework

PREPARATION / APPRAISAL

IMPLEMENTATION

CLOSURE / POST-CLOSURE / SCALE-UP

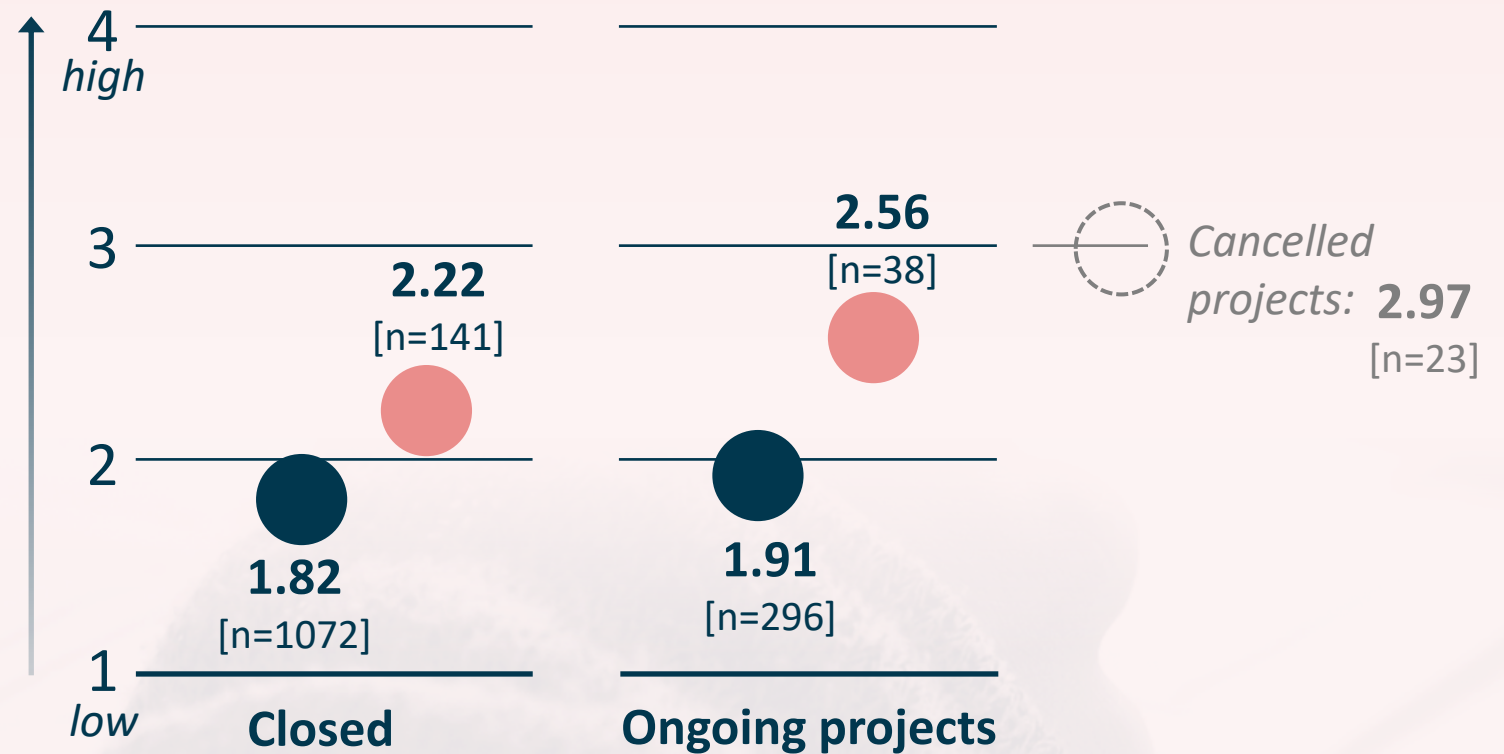
RISKS**MITIGATION****CHALLENGES****ADAPTATION****OUTCOMES OF MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION**

Risks

Underperforming

projects exhibit higher risk levels compared to **all GEF-supported projects**

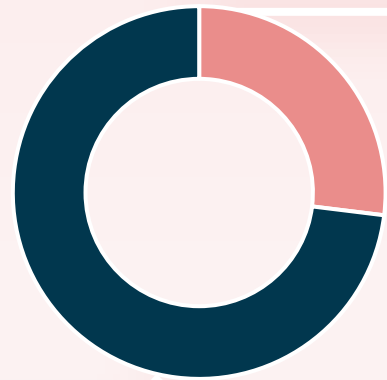
Risk rating



Adaptive Management Measures

Improved projects

implemented
comprehensive
restructuring



Unimproved
[n=103]

Improved

projects
adapted to

82%
of challenges

Unimproved

projects
adapted to

44%
of challenges

Nonlinear, non-uniform impact trajectories

FACTORS

- **Complexity**
- Design **characteristics**
- Diligence in Implementation
- **Known** and **unknown** risks
- **Adaptive management**

LESSONS

- 1 **Something can be learned** even from disappointing projects
- 2 **Effective adaptive management** can generate big wins
- 3 **Modest but thoughtful adaptive management** can consistently deliver small wins



1

Moldova: “Unsatisfactory” performance

GEF ID
5157

Transforming the market for Urban Energy Efficiency
by introducing Energy Service Companies (ESCO)



CHALLENGES

- Low government ownership
- Corruption scandals
- Banking crisis and mistrust
- Inadequate policy and legal framework
- Overly ambitious objectives



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Terminated the project



POST COMPLETION

- Design of a new project with similar objectives but a different approach



2

Paraguay: “Turned-around” performance

GEF ID
2690

Improving the Conservation of Biodiversity in Atlantic Forest



CHALLENGES

- Political crisis
- Economic boom disincentivizing forest restoration
- Limited government support and capacity



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Shifted focus to Indigenous Communities
- Accounted for cultural specifics
- Changed execution arrangements



POST COMPLETION

- Catalyzed conservation of over 1 million hectares through new biosphere reserve
- Lasting partnership with Itaipu for further conservation



3

Liberia: “Turned-around” performance

GEF ID
8015

Enhancing Resilience of Montserrado County Vulnerable Coastal Areas to Climate Change Risks



CHALLENGES

- Political transitions
- Increased coastal erosion
- Disagreement between partners
- Design and budget not based on projections



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Focused on one critically vulnerable site
- Synergized with Green Climate Fund
- Increased government co-financing
- Addressed community concerns



POST COMPLETION

- Demonstrated feasibility of coastal defense structures
- Built local capacity and strengthened institutions
- Catalyzed replication and scaling up in other coastal regions



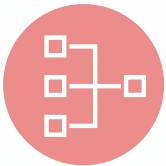
Becoming a stronger learning organization-Guiding Principles



Engaging with **complex problems** through **experimentation**



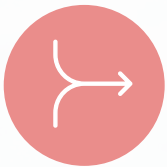
Regarding monitoring as a **learning tool**



Establishing conditions under which outcomes can/cannot be expected



Strategic pursuit of **ambition** and **innovation**



Setting **realistic expectations** aligned with problem complexity



Ensuring **sustained legal** and **political support**



Ensuring that decisions are informed by **contextual analysis**



Developing **credible measures** of the extent to which problems were solved

Recommendation



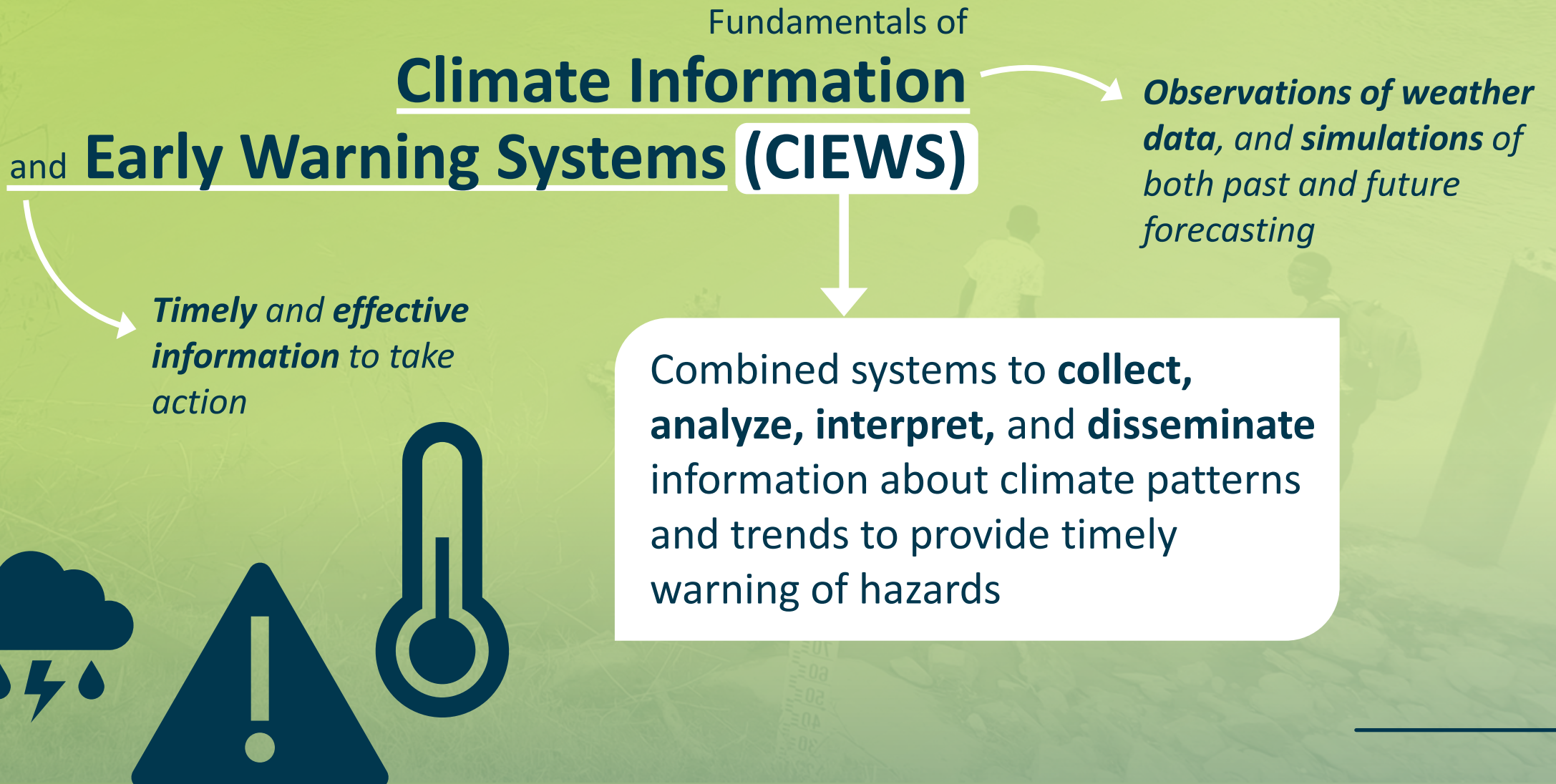
Reflect and apply the lessons/guiding principles relevant to the GEF, in the detailed action plans for knowledge and learning

4

Evaluation of GEF support to
**CLIMATE INFORMATION
AND EARLY WARNING
SYSTEMS (CIEWS)**



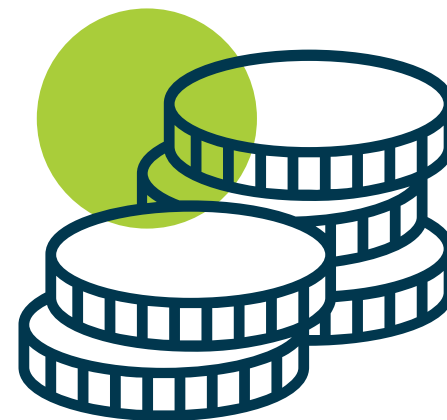
Background and definitions



GEF Support



**Elevated to one of the
four priority themes in
the 2022–2026 strategy**



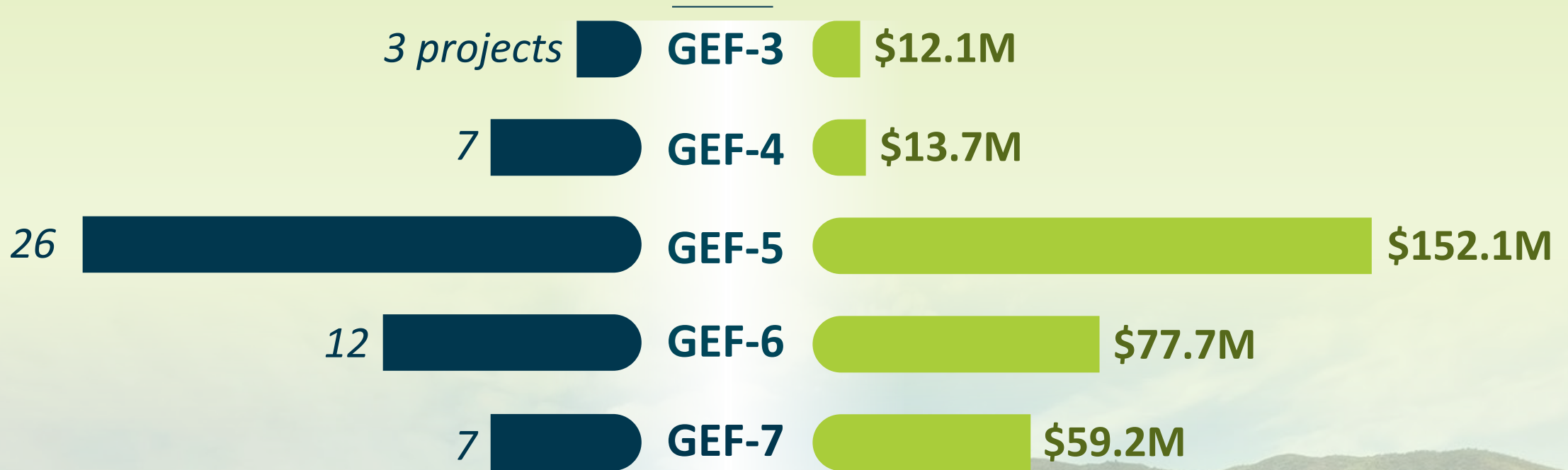
**Investments in CIEWS
for climate-related
hazards**



Portfolio

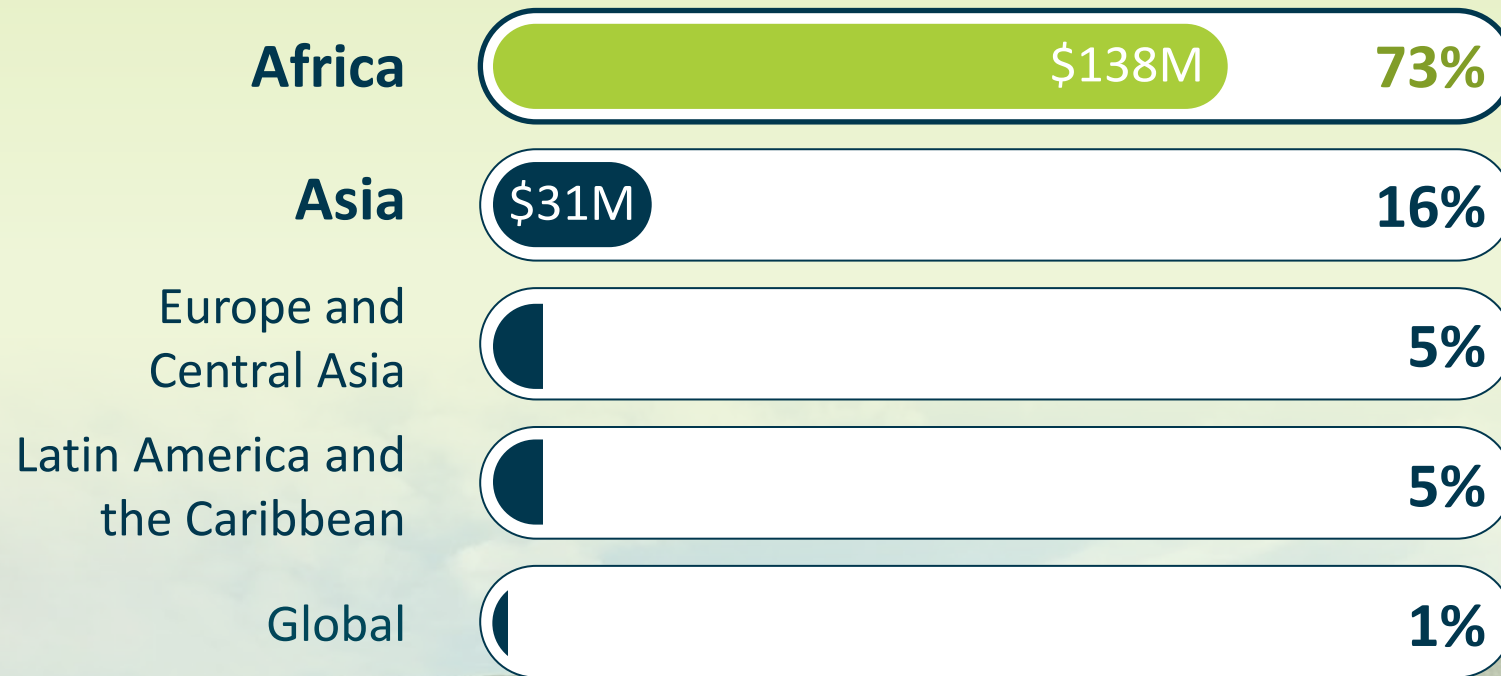
*CIEWS evaluation
portfolio by*

GEF period



Portfolio

*Share of CIEWS
evaluation portfolio's
funding by*
Region



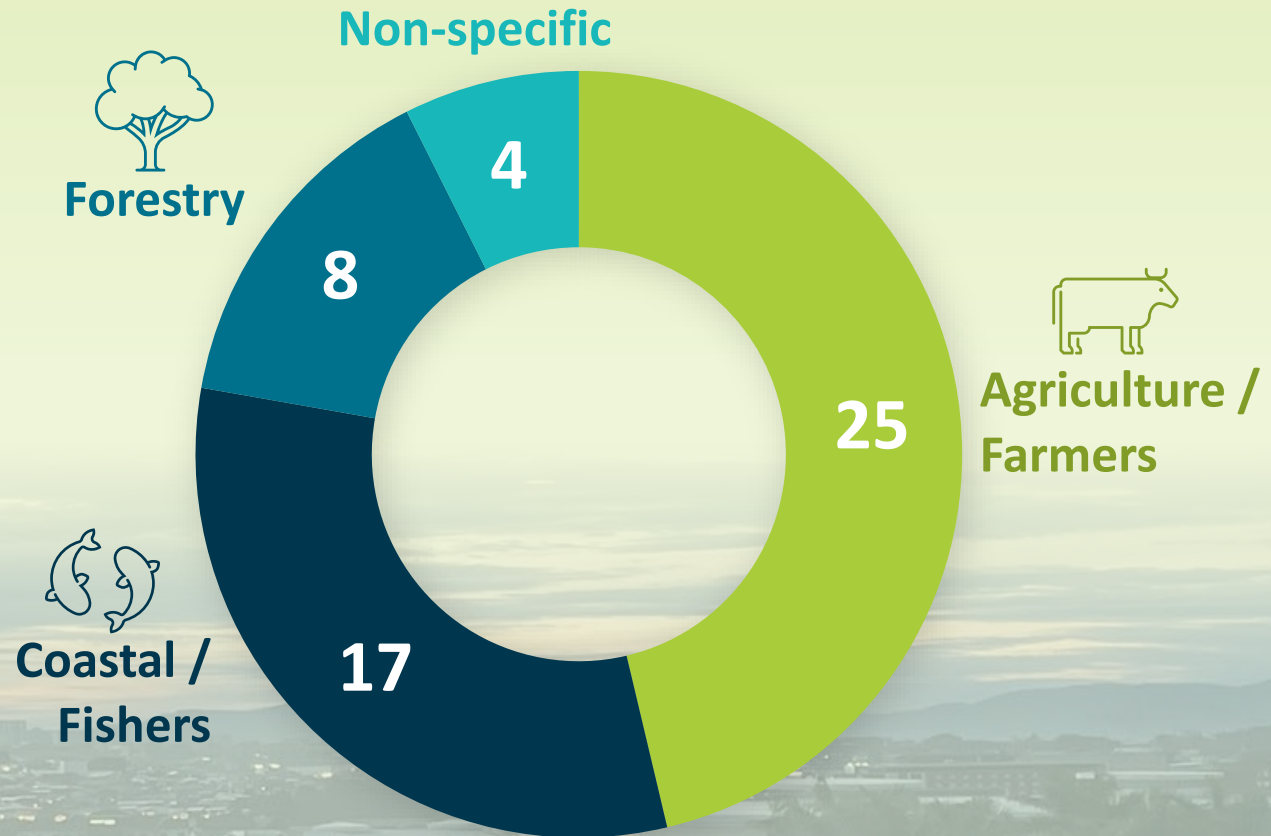
Relevance

- **Strong alignment** with GEF and LDCF/SCCF strategies
- Demand-driven by **countries' beneficiaries**



Relevance

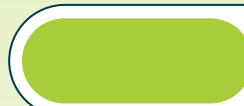
Main beneficiaries concentrated within the **agricultural** and **fisheries** sectors



Effectiveness

Outcome ratings of CIEWS projects

Highly Satisfactory



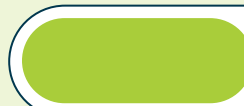
23%

Satisfactory



46%

Moderately Satisfactory



23%

Moderately Unsatisfactory

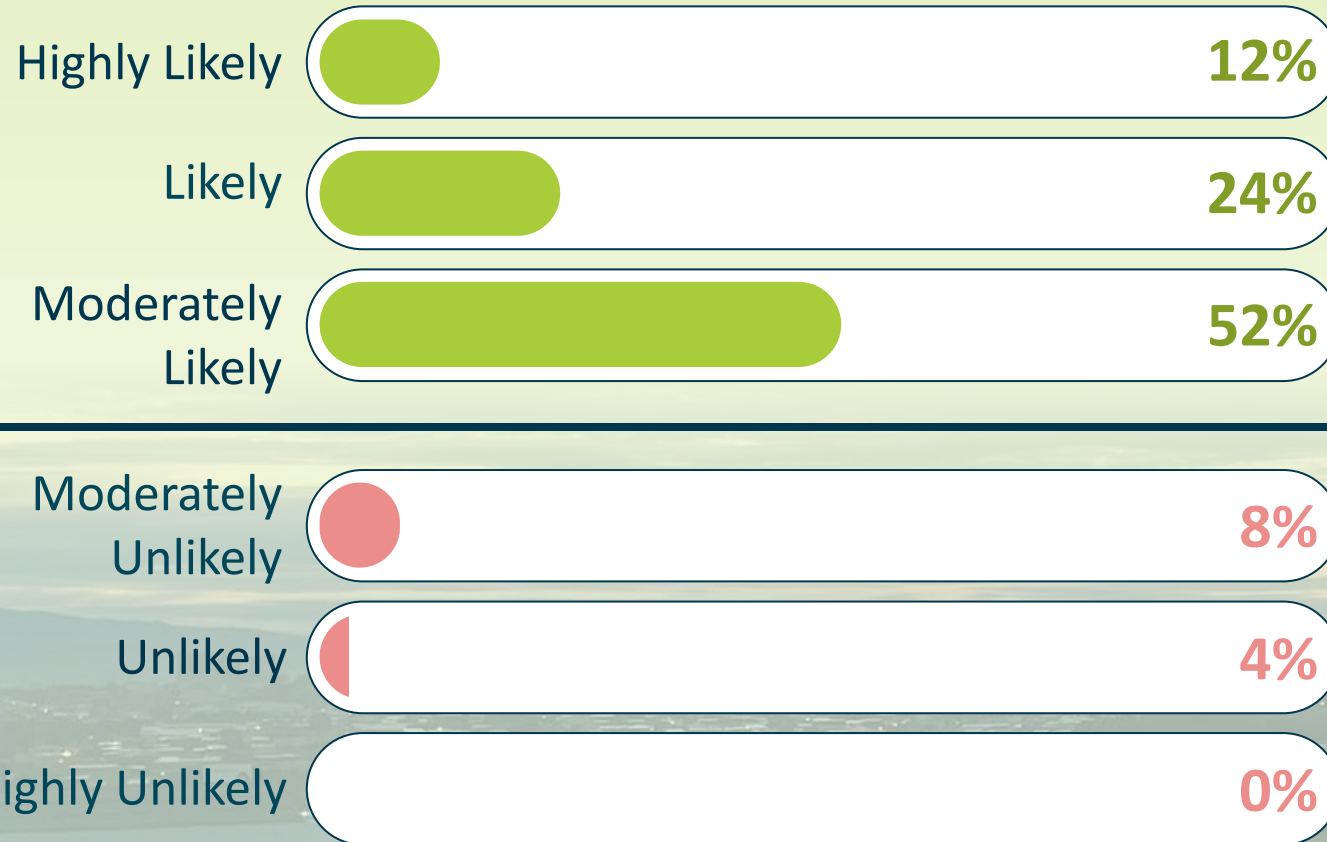


8%

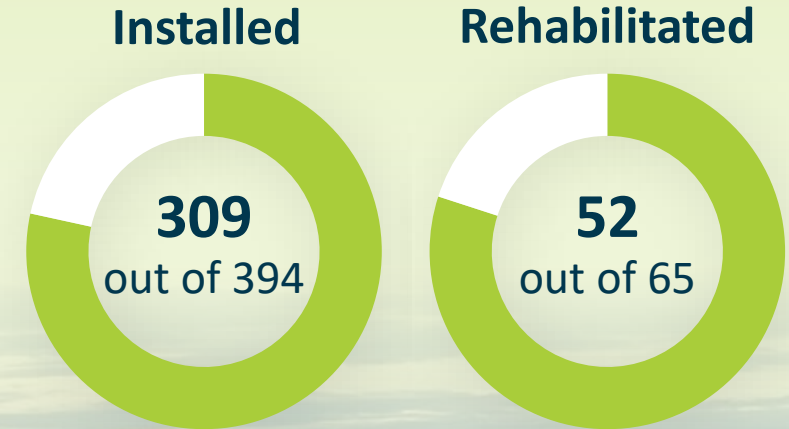


Sustainability

1 Sustainability ratings of CIEWS projects



2 Weather stations functional at completion



3 Critical "last mile" challenge persists



Impact (Example)

(SCCF,
GEF ID
6945)

Costa Rica: Strengthen capacities to address climate change risks

- **Early Warning System implemented** to mitigate the risk of floods in a region inhabited by a population of 55,000
- High level of **decentralization**



Impact (Example)

LDCF,
GEF ID
4991

Tanzania: Strengthen the climate monitoring capabilities and early warning systems

- Installation of **automatic weather stations** increased the accuracy, quality, and timeliness of data
- Farmers **increased their income**



Recommendations



- — **1** Shift focus from solely providing early warning information to **fostering early actions during disaster events**
- — **2** Continue **aligning indicators** with established good practices
- — **3** Continue to explore strategies to **enhance the financial sustainability** of CIEWS components



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What's coming next

