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Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund

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I. Background and Context

a. Introduction

1. The Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council at its 18th meeting in June 2015 approved the Four-Year Work Program of the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO)¹ which includes a program evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) during fiscal year 2016. The IEO will evaluate the LDCF focusing on performance and progress towards LDCF objectives and emerging results. The evaluation will also provide evidence on lessons learned since the Fund was established.

b. Description of context and issues

2. The LDCF was established in response to guidance received from the Seventh Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting in Marrakech in 2001, as one of its climate change adaptation (CCA) financing mechanisms.² The LDCF is mandated by parties to the UNFCCC to, among others, provide support to the least developed countries' (LDCs) climate adaptation efforts, including the preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), the implementation of NAPA priority projects in LDCs, as well as support for the preparation of the NAP process in eligible developing countries.³ A summary of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions towards the LDCF is provided in box 1.

3. The GEF acts as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and was entrusted with the (financial) operation of the LDCF. The LDCF is separate to the GEF Trust Fund and the LDCF and SCCF have their own council. However, the governance structure, operational procedures and policies that apply to the GEF Trust Fund are also applied to the LDCF and SCCF, *unless* the LDCF/SCCF Council decides that it is necessary to modify the procedures in response to COP guidance or to facilitate the operations of the LDCF and SCCF so as to achieve successfully the objectives of the Funds.

4. There are currently 18 GEF Agencies related to the LDCF. They comprise the original three GEF 'implementing agencies' (IAs) (UNDP, UNEP and World Bank) plus the seven former 'executing agencies' – Asian Development Bank (ADB), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). These ten agencies are called the GEF Agencies. Eight newly accredited agencies – Conservation International (CI), Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the Foreign Economic Cooperation Office, Ministry of Environmental Protection of China (FECO), Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade (FUNBIO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), West African Development Bank (BOAD), and the United States World Wildlife Fund (WWF-US) – are called GEF Project Agencies. They have no corporate responsibilities.

Box 1: UNFCCC COP Guidance and Decisions towards the LDCF

The LDCF was established in 2001 as adaptation funding mechanism. Its mandate, objectives and priorities in supporting LDCs has developed over time. A concise overview is provided below:

- FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1, Decision 2/CP.7, Annex B, par. 9, and Annex D, par.22: Capacity building in developing countries as part of the LDC (non-Annex 1) work program, in support of country-driven capacity-building activities with a focus on especially those countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
- FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1, Decision 5/CP.7 and Decision 7/CP.7, par.6: Support the work program for the LDCs, including the preparation of the NAPAs.
- FCCC/CP/2003/6/Add.1, Decision 4/CP.9, par.1a: Support preparation of National Communications to the Convention.⁴
- FCCC/CP/2003/6/Add.1, Decision 6/CP.9, pars. 2 and 3: Support the implementation of NAPAs (the support of NAPA implementation projects) as soon as possible after the NAPA completion.
- FCCC/CP/2003/6/Add.1, Decision 6/CP.9, par. 3 and FCCC/CP/2005/5/Add.1, Decision 3/CP.11, par.1a: NAPAs should be country-driven, in line with national priorities, which ensures cost-effectiveness and complementarity with other funding sources. There should be a focus on urgency and immediacy of adapting to the adverse effects of climate change with a prioritization of activities.
- FCCC/CP/2005/5/Add.1, Decision 3/CP.11, par. 1 b-c: (b) Supporting the implementation of activities identified in NAPAs, in order to promote the integration of adaptation measures in national development and poverty reduction strategies, plans or policies, with a view to increasing resilience to the adverse effects of climate change, and (c) Supporting a learning-by-doing approach.
- FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, Decision 1/CP.16, par. 15: Establish a process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programs to address those needs.
- FCCC/CP/2012/8/Add.2, Decision 12/CP.18, par. 1: To provide funding from the Least Developed Countries Fund for activities that enable the preparation of the NAP process.

5. These 18 GEF Agencies have direct access to LDCF for the preparation and implementation of activities financed by the Fund. As of September 22, 2015, eight GEF Agencies were involved in LDCF operations (ADB, AfDB, FAO, IFAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and World Bank), with UNDP holding the largest share of the portfolio at 48 percent of total funds approved.⁵ The UNDP has assisted a large number of countries in preparing their NAPAs and follow-up NAPA implementation projects.

6. NAPAs provide a process for LDCs to identify priority activities that respond to their **urgent and immediate needs** to adapt to climate change – those for which further delay would increase vulnerability and/or costs at a later stage. The main content of NAPAs is a country-driven list of ranked priority adaptation activities and projects, designed to facilitate the development of proposals for implementation of the NAPA. The focus is on short-term outputs and potential long-term outcomes. As of September 22, 2015, 51 least developed countries (LDCs) had accessed \$12.20 million in support of the preparation of their NAPA. An overview of completed NAPAs can be found in annex 5.⁶ Of the 50 countries that had completed their NAPAs, 49 had accessed a total of \$905.63 million for 161 projects to address their urgent and immediate adaptation needs.⁷

7. NAPs provide a process for LDCs to formulate and implement activities that focus on **medium- and long-term adaptation needs**, building on the experience of the LDCs in addressing “urgent and immediate adaptation needs” through the NAPAs. As of September 22, 2015, two global projects (GEF IDs 5320 and 5868) with LDCF resources amounting to \$9.14 million had been approved to support the preparation of the NAP process in LDCs.⁸

8. One global project (GEF ID 5615) with \$4.54 million in LDCF resources further focuses on the implementation of elements of the LDC work program other than NAPAs, namely the effective participation in climate change negotiations, and access to and use of climate information.⁹

9. Unlike the GEF Trust Fund, which is replenished every four years, the LDCF receives voluntary contributions with no regular replenishment schedule. This leads to a high level of financing uncertainty.

10. The results framework of the GEF adaptation program¹⁰ is provided in annex 3, presenting output and outcome indicators on which implementation projects should report. Core gender indicators¹¹ that apply to NAPA implementation projects since October 2014 can be found in annex 4. The step-by-step NAPA implementation guide of the LDC Expert Group (LEG)¹² contains a list of assessment criteria, which can be used to guide the assessment of implementation projects. Most of these criteria link directly or indirectly to the GEF strategic objectives for adaptation, discussed later.

11. An overview of basic figures regarding budgetary allocation and numbers of NAPAs and NAPA implementation projects is presented in table 1, table 2 and table 3.

Table 1: LDCF Support to NAPAs and NAPA Implementation Projects

Project Type*	No. of Projects	Budgetary Allocation (\$M)#			Co-Financing (as percentage of total)
		LDCF Financing	Co-Financing	Total	
Enabling Activity	51	11.3	1.3	12.5	10
Medium Size Project (MSP)	11	20.3	42.0	62.3	67
Full Size Project (FSP)	151	1,042.4	3,913.8	4,956.2	79
Total	213	1,074.0	3,957.1	5,031.1	79

* Enabling Activities are the NAPAs, while MSPs and FSPs are the NAPA implementation projects. Figures exclude projects that were cancelled or dropped, are pending, or are PM recommended. “No. of projects” only counts parent projects; child projects are not counted individually.

Financial implications of dropped projects have not been taken into account. LDCF Financing numbers include PPG Grants as well as Agency Fees. Individual cell values have been rounded.

Table 2: Project Status by Numbers

Project Status	Project Type (No. of projects)*			Total	Total, excl. EA's
	Enabling Activity (EA)	Medium Size Project (MSP)	Full Size Project (FSP)		
0. Cancelled or dropped	1	5	22	28	23
1. Pending		1	28	29	29
2. PM Recommended			21	21	21
3. PPG Approved			3	3	3
4. Council Approved		1	37	38	38
5. CEO Endorsed / Approved	1	2	73	76	75
6. Under Implementation		4	31	35	35
7. Completed	50	4	7	61	11
Total	52	17	222	291	239
Total, excl. cancelled, dropped, pending and PM recommended	51	11	151	213	162

* Enabling Activities are the NAPAs, while MSPs and FSPs are the NAPA implementation projects.

"No. of projects" only counts parent projects; child projects are not counted individually.

Table 3: Project Status by Budgetary Allocation

Table 3.1: Project Status, Budgetary Allocation				
Project Status	Budgetary Allocation by Project* Status			Total
	(\$M in LCDF Financing)*#			
	Enabling Activity (EA)	Medium Size Project (MSP)	Full Size Project (FSP)	
0. Cancelled or dropped	0.2	6.8	129.8	136.8
1. Pending		2.2	158.9	161.1
2. PM Recommended			156.3	156.3
3. PPG Approved			15.1	15.1
4. Council Approved		3.5	293.7	297.2
5. CEO Endorsed / Approved	0.2	2.4	587.4	590.0
6. Under Implementation		6.5	120.1	126.6
7. Completed	11.1	7.8	26.1	45.0
Total	11.5	29.2	1,487.4	1,525.9
Total, excl. cancelled, dropped, pending and PM recommended	11.3	20.3	1,042.4	1,074.0

* Enabling Activities are the NAPAs, while MSPs and FSPs are the NAPA implementation projects.

Figures exclude projects that were cancelled or dropped, are pending, or are PM recommended.

LDCF financing numbers include PPG Grants as well as Agency Fees, but exclude co-financing.

Individual cell values have been rounded.

12. As of August 31, 2015, cumulative pledges to the LDCF amounted to \$935.69 million, all of which has been paid. In the near term, the demand for LDCF resources considerably exceeds the funds available for new approvals. As of September 22, 2015, the funds available for new funding decisions amounted to \$17.78 million; whereas resources amounting to \$254.48 million were sought for 34 full-size projects and one medium-size project that had been technically cleared by the Secretariat; and another \$72.02 million was sought towards 13 project proposals that had been endorsed by countries' operational focal points and formally submitted.¹³

c. Previous evaluations of the LDCF

13. The UNDP Evaluation Office carried out an independent evaluation of UNDP's work with the LDCF/SCCF resources, published in 2009.¹⁴ The evaluation found that there was justifiable dissatisfaction in the countries concerning the lengthy time periods and complex procedures required to move from the NAPAs to concrete projects. There were also differing expectations amongst the different actors; some countries thought that as soon as the NAPA is completed resources for the follow-up activities would be made available. On the other hand, from the side of the UNDP the NAPAs look more like wish lists and real project identification still needs to be completed. The evaluation's recommendations were not very targeted, stating they concerned "several organizations and actors, at various levels," and it was not always clear whether individual recommendations were aimed at the LDCF or SCCF specifically.

14. A joint evaluation of the LDCF was conducted in 2009 with DANIDA¹⁵ to analyze and document the results and lessons learned from the operations of the LDCF in financing and promoting climate change adaptation. At the time of this evaluation the Fund was still in its first phase and grants to beneficiaries only covered the development of NAPAs. Since then the LDCF has proceeded into a phase of funding the implementation of concrete adaptation activities, as well as supporting the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. The evaluation included 31 recommendations;¹⁶ eight recommendations were aimed at the UNFCCC and focused on UNFCCC COP guidance, five targeted LDC governments, two focused on GEF agencies, four were aimed at the LDCF Council, while the remaining twelve recommendations were directed to the LDCF Administration/LDCF team within the GEF Secretariat. The 7th LDCF/SCCF Council meeting (November 2009) unfortunately did not include a Joint Summary of the Chairs, but at the 9th LDCF/SCCF Council meeting (November 2010) the GEF Secretariat provided an overview of follow up action¹⁷ for the twelve recommendations addressed to them.

15. In 2010 DANIDA funded a follow-up review¹⁸ to assess actions taken by the GEF Secretariat and the LDCF/SCCF Council in response to the conclusions and recommendations presented in the evaluation report, and to provide an account of recent activities under the LDCF. The report concludes that the LDCF has been emerging from a somewhat difficult phase of establishment, early operations and less than convincing performance into a period marked by significant improvement. Efforts have been made – or were in hand at the time of writing the review – to respond in a positive way to most of the recommendations towards the LDCF Council and GEF Secretariat. Nevertheless, the report emphasized that some issues still need further attention including the delineation and cooperation between the LDCF and other adaptation related funds, and the general uncertainty about the future financial regime for adaptation.

16. The 2011 evaluation of the GEF Strategic Priority for Adaptation (SPA)¹⁹ pilot program aimed to provide lessons and experiences from implementation of the first climate change adaptation strategy supported by the GEF. One of the evaluation's recommendations stated that the GEF should continue to provide explicit incentives to mainstream resilience and adaptation to climate change into the GEF focal areas, as a means of reducing risks to the GEF portfolio.
17. The 2012 GEF Evaluation of Focal Area Strategies²⁰ aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the elements and mechanisms that make a focal area strategy successful. The evaluation concluded that, in most cases, the GEF-5 focal areas do not draw on a systematic identification of the envisaged causal relationships between different elements of the relevant strategy. Though causal links between GEF activities and the chains of causality toward the achievement of expected results are implicit in the GEF focal area strategies. Technical Paper 7 of this evaluation²¹ focused on climate change adaptation under the LDCF and SCCF. The paper makes the causal linkages for GEF adaptation activities more explicit, and it affirmed that the LDCF/SCCF strategy on adaptation largely reflects the current state of scientific knowledge and is sound from a scientific perspective on the basis of UNFCCC COP guidance. Technical Paper 8²² provides an overview of COP guidance to the GEF.
18. The Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5)²³, published in 2014, synthesizes conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change. Adaptation to climate change is included in OPS5 through various channels. It has been considered a focal area and included in the IEO's evaluation streams such as country level evaluations and performance evaluations. Adaptation is included through work on focal area strategies, Results Based Management and tracking tools, Multi-Focal Area (MFA) and Multi-Trust Fund projects, and gender mainstreaming.
19. OPS5 Technical Document 3 (2013)²⁴ analyzes the implementation of GEF focal area strategies. It concludes that the proportion of multi-focal area (MFA) projects in the LDCF and SCCF is relatively low since the combining of LDCF and SCCF resources with other focal area resources in Multi Trust Fund (MTF) projects has only been introduced as part of the GEF-5 replenishment period. At the time of the analysis, 14% of LDCF funds went to a total of 5 MTF projects. OPS5 Technical Document 9 (2013)²⁵ focuses specifically on MFA projects. It finds that the share of MFA projects is increasing over time, and LDCF projects are more likely to address multi-focal concerns, compared to GEF Trust Fund projects.
20. OPS5 Technical Document 19 (2013)²⁶ provides preliminary findings of a quality-at-entry review of a sample of projects approved to implement NAPAs to assess the extent to which they respond to key issues identified by NAPAs and project design quality. Following on Technical Document 19 the IEO conducted further quality-at-entry reviews of approved NAPA implementation projects, published in 2014.²⁷ The review concluded that (1) a large majority of NAPA implementation projects is aligned with their NAPA, (2) agriculture is the key adaptation priority area in NAPAs, (3) all projects are found to be consistent with LDCF strategies, eligibility criteria, and priorities, (4) a high percentage of NAPA projects are mainstreaming gender into adaptation initiatives, and (5) include wide stakeholder involvement and have risk assessment and mitigation strategies in place.

II. Purpose, Objectives, and Audience

a. Purpose and objective

21. The overall purpose of the evaluation is ***to provide the LDCF/SCCF Council with evaluative evidence of the Fund's relevance and emerging results.***

22. The main objective of this evaluation of the LDCF, as follow-up to the 2009 joint evaluation, is ***to provide evaluative evidence on the progress towards LDCF objectives, major achievements and lessons learned since the Fund's establishment in response to guidance from the Seventh Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC meeting in 2001.*** The evaluation aims to provide recommendations on the way forward for the LDCF.

b. Stakeholders and audience^a

23. The primary stakeholders are GEF Secretariat staff, staff of the GEF Agencies and LDCF/SCCF Council members. Secondary stakeholders are staff of the STAP, the adaptation task force, staff from Governments, country-level project implementers and other GEF stakeholders and beneficiaries.

24. The evaluation's target audience are the LDCF/SCCF Council members, other LDCF/SCCF and GEF stakeholders, as well as the general public and professionals interested in climate change adaptation, national adaptation processes and development. This evaluation will be presented at the LDCF/SCCF Council in June 2016.

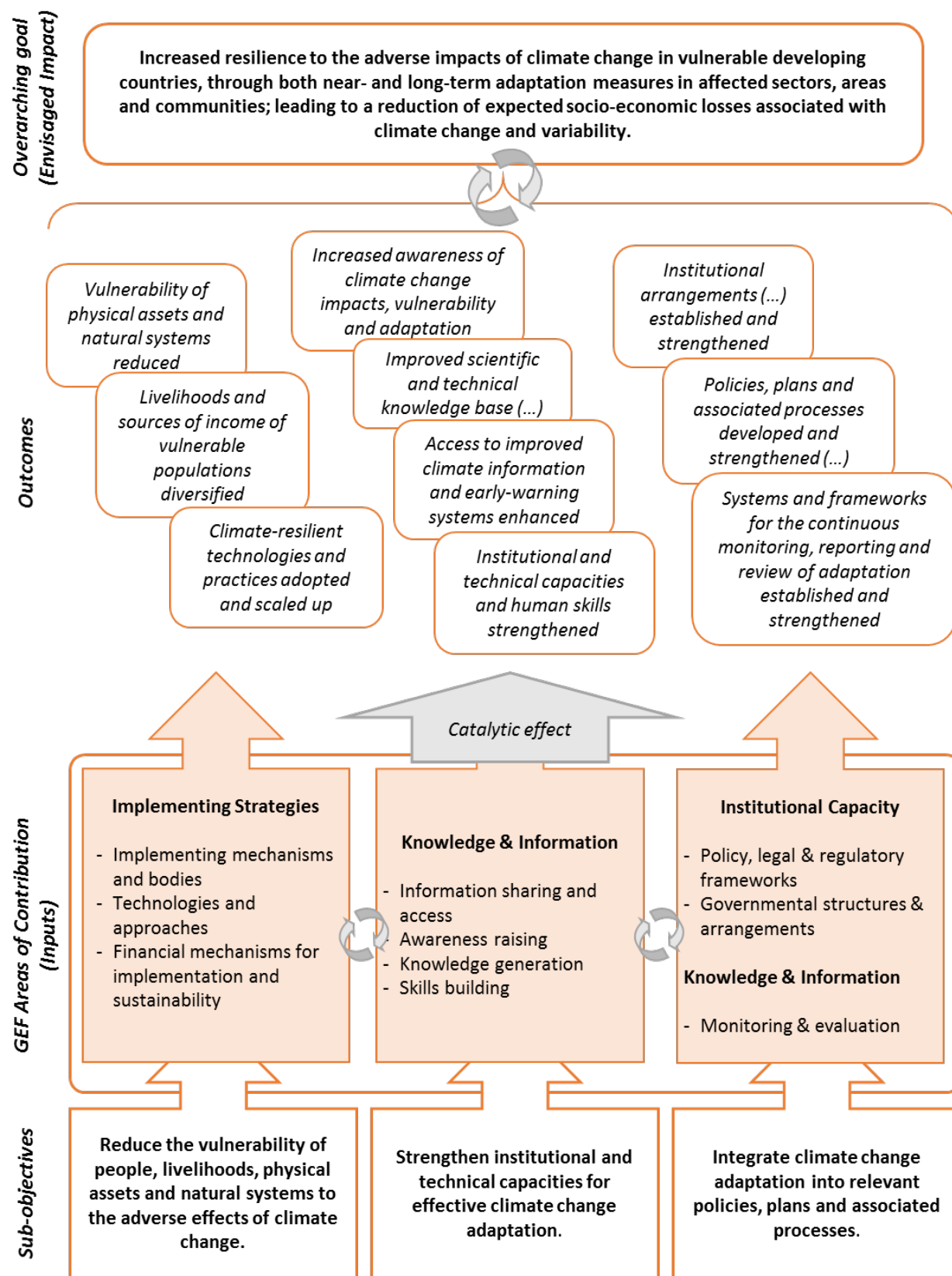
III. Evaluation Questions and Coverage

a. Theory of change

25. In the light of this evaluation a theory of change (TOC) has been developed for the Fund (figure 1), combining GEF's strategic objectives for adaptation (box 2), and objectives, outcomes and overarching goal as identified in the results framework of the GEF adaptation program (annex 3), with the GEF Areas of Contribution as identified in Technical Paper 7 of the GEF Focal Area Strategies (FAS) evaluation, titled "Climate Change Adaptation under LDCF and SCCF."²⁸ The developed TOC informed the development of evaluative questions, will further guide the development of related methods protocols, and will be used to analyze the broader progress to impact through the aggregation of available evidence on broader scale and longer term results.

^a Stakeholders are agencies, organisations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation. (OECD DAC, 2010) The audience are agencies, organisations, groups or individuals who will gain experience and learn from evaluation information and findings (Yarbrough, et al. 2011), as well as those potentially affected by the outcome of the evaluation, are in a position to make decisions about the evaluation, and/or intend to use the evaluation process or findings to inform their decisions and actions (Patton, 2008).

Figure 1: Theory of Change of the LDCF



Box 2: GEF Strategic Objectives and Pillars

The GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF²⁹ has three strategic objectives:

- Reduce the vulnerability of people, livelihoods, physical assets and natural systems to the adverse effects of climate change;
- Strengthen institutional and technical capacities for effective climate change adaptation; and
- Integrate climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes.

The future direction charted by this Strategy is captured in two strategic pillars that are intended to guide programming under the LDCF and the SCCF towards their goal and objectives, namely:³⁰

- Integrating climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans, programs and decision-making processes in a continuous, progressive and iterative manner as a means to identify and address short-, medium- and long-term adaptation needs; and
- Expanding synergies with other GEF focal areas.

These objectives and pillars are used to evaluate the Fund's performance against, and the full results framework of the GEF adaptation program³¹ is provided in annex 3.

Box 3: IPCC Definitions of Key Terms

The UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions towards the LDCF (box 1) and GEF strategic objectives and pillars (box 2) make use of a number of key terms that are defined as follows by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):³²

Capacity building In the context of climate change, the process of developing the technical skills and institutional capability in developing countries and economies in transition to enable them to address effectively the causes and results of climate change.

Vulnerability The propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected. Vulnerability encompasses a variety of concepts and elements including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.

Adaptation The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.

Resilience The capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.

b. Specific questions to be answered by the evaluation

26. The overarching goal and strategic objectives, visible in the TOC and an integral part of the GEF programming strategy on adaptation, translate into three main evaluation questions and a number of sub-questions grouped by the core evaluation criteria.

1) How relevant is LDCF support in the light of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, the GEF adaptation programming strategy, and countries' broader developmental policies, plans and programs?

(See box 1 for UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, and box 2 for GEF strategic objectives and pillars)

Relevance How relevant is LDCF support in relation to the guidance and decisions of the UNFCCC, informing the Fund's mandate?

To what extent is the LDCF portfolio connected to countries' environmental and sustainable development agendas?

2) How effective and efficient is the LDCF in reaching its objectives and emerging results?

(See box 2 for GEF strategic objectives and pillars)

Effectiveness How effective is the LDCF, or how likely is it that the LDCF will be achieving the three strategic objectives of the GEF programming strategy on adaptation to climate change?

Efficiency How efficient is the Fund's project cycle?

What are the main factors that have been affecting the Fund's efficiency?

How has resource predictability, or the lack thereof, affected the Fund's programming?

3) What are the emerging results and factors that affect the sustainability of these results?

Results and sustainability To what extent has LDCF support had a catalytic effect?^b

How does LDCF support relate to other GEF focal areas beyond climate change adaptation?

What are the GEEW (Gender equality and the empowerment of women) objectives achieved (or likely to be achieved) and gender mainstreaming principles adhered to by the LDCF?

To what extent are the emerging results of LDCF support sustainable?

c. Assessing performance

27. The Fund's performance will be assessed at the Fund's macro level as well as the project level. The former would be in terms of the degree to which the LDCF has operated according to the strategic objectives set, informed by the UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions received, and further guided by the developed TOC to analyze the broader progress to impact. This also translates, among others, into evaluating the Fund's performance regarding the mainstreaming of adaptation into broader

^b Catalytic effects are defined as those outcomes directly precipitated by LDCF support to LDC climate adaptation planning and prioritization. Catalytic effects include the documented results of mainstreaming CCA in national and sector development programs, visible in the Initial, Second and Third National Communication (See annex 6 for an overview of Initial, Second and Third National Communication for each NAPA country), as well as improved institutional capability and effectiveness in addressing adaptation to climate change.

developmental policies, plans and programs, and assessing how NAPAs relate to other GEF focal areas beyond climate change adaptation. The latter would focus on performance related to the achievement of emerging project results against stated goals. The core evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results and sustainability) will be applied as outlined in the previous paragraph.

d. Breadth and depth of coverage

28. This evaluation will cover the timeframe from the start of the LDCF, November 2001, up to the 19th LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting in October 2015. The focus will be on the developments since May 2009, which was the cut-off date for the earlier mentioned joint evaluation of the LDCF.

29. Special attention will be given to three cross-cutting topics, being gender, resilience and public involvement, the latter being linked to the development of the NAPAs and national communications.

- **Gender:** The 2009 joint evaluation of the LDCF concluded that the “UNFCCC has so far failed to address how ‘gender issues’ will be effectively addressed in NAPA guidelines. The NAPA guidelines [...] do not provide a structured framework on addressing pressing and priority issues of women as one of the most vulnerable to climate change impacts and how to best integrate gender approaches into NAPA process.”³³ Consistent with the GEF’s operational policies and procedures on gender mainstreaming, LDCF implementation projects will apply GEF’s five core gender indicators (See annex 4) from October 2014 onwards.³⁴ The Results-Based Management (RBM) Framework Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool (AMAT) has recently been updated³⁵ to include GEF’s core gender indicators in accordance with the GEF’s Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), though the RBM framework and AMAT already included gender-disaggregated indicators since the AMAT’s introduction in October 2010.³⁶ The focus of the evaluation will be on evidence regarding the use of these indicators and guidance provided, and early evidence as to whether this translates into improved performance of NAPA implementation projects.
- **Resilience:** Where adaptation focuses on adjustments to the effects of actual or expected climate change, resilience refers to the outcomes of evolutionary processes of managing change in order to reduce disruptions and enhance opportunities. Resilience is defined by the IPCC³⁷ as “the capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.” The 2010 STAP Advisory Document “Enhancing Resilience to Reduce Climate Risks”³⁸ explicitly mentions the various temporal perspectives (current variability, observed medium- and long-term trends in climate, and planning in response to model-based scenarios of anticipated long-term climate change) and broad-based categories of interventions (knowledge-based, capacity-based and ecosystem-based) that – if combined well – can bolster the synergies and perspectives needed for adaptation responses in support of longer-term resilient development. The latest results framework of the GEF adaptation program³⁹ states the overarching goal as: *“Increase resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change in vulnerable developing countries, through both near- and long-term adaptation measures in affected sectors, areas and communities; leading to a reduction of expected socio-economic losses*

associated with climate change and variability.” The three objectives of the results framework feed into this goal. Given the NAPAs’ emphasis on ‘urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change’, the programmatic focus is expected to be on adaptation interventions that capture this immediacy. However, their catalytic effects as well as the NAPs developing might provide information regarding their resilience contribution. Six combined Multi-Focal Area (MFA)⁴⁰ / Multi Trust Fund (MTF) projects as well as three MTF projects in the climate change focal area⁴¹ - of which only one is currently under implementation - could also provide early information on resilience considerations by analyzing their project documents.

- **Public involvement:** Public involvement consists of three related processes: information dissemination, consultation, and stakeholder participation.⁴² Information dissemination of evaluative findings is further discussed under header “IV Expected Outputs, Outreach and Tracking”, while consultation and stakeholder participation regarding this evaluation are discussed under the header “V Quality Assurance.”

The public involvement focus of this evaluation will be on consultation and stakeholder participation in the development of the NAPAs (annex 5) and national communications (annex 6).⁴³ Has national expertise available in the countries’ public, private and civil sectors been used? Was there an opportunity for the general public to comment on the NAPAs and national communications through a broader public engagement and feedback process?

IV. Evaluation Design and Evaluability Assessment

30. The purpose of the evaluation design, and the basis on which its soundness is assessed, is to produce reliable data that allow for valid evaluative judgments useful for learning and decision making. The program evaluation of the LDCF will be a real-time ‘learning evaluation’ since adaptation support is ongoing and most outcomes beyond preparing the NAPAs are forthcoming. The evaluation will provide lessons learned across the experiences from different LDCs, focus sectors, and implementation projects, and will provide recommendations on possible adjustments to LDCF support and supported activities.

31. Given that the NAPA implementation projects are at different stages of implementation (see table 2), the status of the respective projects determines the way and extent in which they will be included in the LDCF evaluation according to the core evaluation criteria. This is visualized in table 4.

Table 4: Inclusion of NAPA Implementation Projects According to Project Status

Core Criteria Status	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Results and Sustainability
Completed	Full	Full	Full	Full
Under implementation	Full	Likelihood	Likelihood	N/A
Approved, but not under implementation	Expected	N/A	N/A	NA

a. Evaluation design

32. The evaluation's methodological approach is expected to include the following main elements:

- **Document review:** Review of documentation will include GEF specific documents on the LDCF and related interventions, as well as additional literature beyond GEF and LDCF/SCCF Council and project documents, and GEF Secretariat's policies, processes and related documents.
 - The review will include an analysis of all prepared NAPAs to assess their overall quality, relevance, and scope for implementation. 50 NAPAs have been submitted to date, the latest having been received November 2013. Ten have been added – table 5 – since the analysis part of the 2009 joint evaluation of the LDCF. A complete overview of NAPAs is provided in annex 5.⁴⁴
 - Linkages between countries' NAPAs and environmental and sustainable development agendas are explored. A review of available terminal evaluations of completed NAPA implementation projects will take place to document potentially replicable key lessons.

Table 5: New and updated NAPAs May 2009-2013

	Country	GEF Agency	Status	UNFCCC Submission Date
1	Afghanistan	UNEP	Completed	September 2009
2	Angola	UNEP	Completed	December 2011
3	Bangladesh	UNDP	Updated version completed	June 2009
4	Chad	UNDP	Completed (French)	January 2010
5	Equatorial Guinea	UNDP	Completed (Spanish)	November 2013
6	Myanmar	UNEP	Completed	May 2013
7	Nepal	UNDP	Completed	November 2010
8	Somalia	UNDP	Completed	April 2013
9	Timor-Leste	UNDP	Completed	September 2011
10	Togo	UNDP	Completed (French)	September 2009

- A database of all NAPA implementation projects will be compiled including basic project information such as project cycle, financing (including co-financing), implementing institutions involved, themes, countries, main objectives, key partners, and implementation status. Every project will be subject to a desk review, in line with table 4, and all project related information available (project documents, PIRs, MTRs, TEs, TERs, etc.) will be analyzed. The data gathered from the project reviews will be aggregated at the portfolio level and used to evaluate the LDCF implementation projects as a whole. A protocol will be

developed to assess the projects in a systematic manner and ensure that project level key questions are addressed coherently.

- The wider document review will include non-GEF IEO evaluation materials, academic and grey literature on the Fund, the NAPA developments, NAPA implementation projects, and the NAP developments
- **Meta-evaluation Review:** Over the last few years, the GEF IEO and other agencies have conducted evaluations that have reviewed the LDCF, the NAPA process as well as individual NAPA implementation projects. The evaluation team will conduct a meta-evaluation review to synthesize lessons, findings and experiences from prior assessments of the LDCF and related activities.
- **Quality-at-entry Review:** Two quality at entry reviews will be conducted; one of the 39 NAPA implementation projects currently under implementation, and a second one of the nine MTF projects, irrespective of their implementation status.
- **Interviews:** With select stakeholders from a) the GEF as the LDCF administrator, b) GEF Agencies, c) relevant government and non-governmental actors in selected LDCs, d) selected donors to LDCF, e) the LEG, and f) the UNFCCC secretariat, regarding the results, operations and management of the LDCF.
- **Field Visits:** Field visits for this evaluation will be combined with field visits planned for other ongoing evaluations and other evaluation activities to the extent possible. The number of LDCF projects visits will as such depend on the mutually beneficial synergies explored between evaluations endeavors. In the absence of such synergies a minimum of two field visits will be conducted.
- **Triangulation:** The evaluation team will conduct an analysis of, and triangulate, data collected to determine trends, formulate main findings, lessons and conclusions. Different stakeholders will be consulted during the process to test preliminary findings. Also see “V. Quality Assurance.”

b. Design limitations

33. The evaluation will be subject to limitations due to the relatively young age of the LDCF portfolio. It will not be possible to conduct an all-encompassing analysis of the impacts and results of the of NAPA implementation projects at this stage, given that only a limited number has reached their mid-term and only five have been completed. Many projects remain in early stages of implementation, which means the evaluation will need to concentrate on an assessment of the strategies and project designs as put forward by the project documents and complement this information with (preliminary) project results when available and appropriate. The analysis will focus in part on highlighting illustrative examples from projects for which sufficient information and lessons have been articulated.

34. Another limitation is that only a small number of projects will be visited during this evaluation, which will be combined with planned field visits for other ongoing evaluations. This limits access to valuable and independent information from stakeholders directly involved in projects in the field.

35. The evaluation is also expected to face problems obtaining up-to-date and precise information on the status of the NAPA implementation projects due to the GEF project database not being regularly updated. The 2009 joint evaluation of the LDCF showed that some country information in the database had not been updated for more than a year. No common tracking procedure exists where the progress of NAPA implementation projects through the LDCF procedures can be observed.

36. The evaluation will not examine adaptation activities supported by the GEF apart from the LDCF.

V. Quality Assurance

37. The draft approach paper as well as the draft evaluation report will both be circulated and validated before finalization through a comprehensive stakeholder feedback process with the key stakeholders. In the case of the draft evaluation report this will take place prior to the June Council in 2016. Comments, feedback and suggestions will be taken into account and the approach paper and final report will be adjusted accordingly.

a. Expected outputs, outreach and tracking

38. The evaluation will result in an evaluation report to Council that will be distributed to the LDCF/SCCF Council members, GEF Secretariat, the climate change task force, STAP and relevant GEF country focal points and GEF Agency staff. A graphically edited version will be published as open access on the GEF Independent Evaluation Office's website and will also be made available to interested parties through email. A two page summary (Signpost) of the report will be produced and disseminated in 3 languages (English, French and Spanish). Findings will also be shared through a Climate-Eval blog post and a webinar will be developed to share the main findings of the evaluation, if interest suffices. The findings might also be presented at key conferences, like the AdaptationFutures 2016 conference.

39. A first level of outreach will take place through existing GEF IEO mailing lists as well as mailing lists of audience and stakeholders that will be developed during the implementation of the evaluation. A second level of outreach will take place through existing external mailing lists, like for example the Climate-L, IPDET and Evaltalk list serves. A third and final level of outreach will take place through Twitter feeds as well as professional M&E and climate change focused LinkedIn user groups.

40. Tracking will take place through web-page statistics on downloads, reactions on blog posts, online activity monitoring of twitter feeds and LinkedIn discussion posts, as well as registration for and attendance of a potential webinar.

VI. Resources

a. Timeline

41. The LDCF evaluation will take place between October 2015 and May 2016. The initial work plan is visible in table 6, and will be further revised and detailed as part of the further preparation.

Table 6: Work Plan

Task	Month:	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
	Responsible	2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
I Evaluation Design										
Draft Approach Paper										
Feedback Process										
Approach Paper										
TORs										
Protocol Development										
II Evaluation Context										
Literature Review										
Meta-Evaluation Review										
Evaluation Matrix										
III Data Collection										
Interviews										
Project Desk Review										
Field Visits										
IV Analysis										
Data Analysis										
Draft Report										
Feedback Process										
V Outreach										
Final Document to Council										
Presentation to Council										
Final Graphically Edited Version of Report										→
Webinar										→
Report Summary										→
Blog-post										→

b. Budget (internal)

42. The LDCF evaluation update is budgeted at 60,000 USD, of which 50,000 USD will be used FY16 and 10,000 USD FY17. A further breakdown of cost elements will be provided.

c. Team and skills mix

43. The evaluation will be led by a task manager from the GEF IEO with oversight from the Chief Evaluation Officer and Director of the IEO. The manager will lead a team comprised of GEF IEO consultants. A senior short-term consultant with technical and policy expertise in adaptation to climate change and evaluation as well as knowledge of the key priority areas as indicated in the NAPAS will be hired to provide guidance and specific inputs at major milestones of the evaluation.

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