

20<sup>th</sup> LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting  
June 09, 2016  
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 06

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND**

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

**Recommended Council Decision**

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/02, *Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund* and GEF/LDCF.SCCF.20/ME/03, *Management Response to the Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund*, takes note of the conclusions of the evaluation and endorses the recommendations.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the GEF, which includes a program evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) during fiscal year 2016. The evaluation focuses on performance and progress towards LDCF objectives and emerging results. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide the LDCF/SCCF Council with evaluative evidence of the Fund's relevance and emerging results.
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. The LDCF is mandated by the Parties to the UNFCCC to, among others, provide support to the least developed countries' (LDCs) climate change 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 National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in eligible developing countries.
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. The 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 49 percent of total funds approved. The UNDP has assisted a large number of countries in preparing their NAPA country reports and subsequent NAPA implementation projects.
4. A meta-evaluation review of relevant evaluations was used as foundation to depart from, taking into account that each evaluation has its specific objectives and thus perspectives, and respecting that previous findings provide a snapshot of the LDCF and its operational landscape at specific moments in time. As follow-up to the 2009 LDCF joint evaluation this evaluation aims to complement the existing evidence base regarding the Fund's performance. As part of this evaluation's methodology, a theory of change (TOC) has been developed for the Fund, combining GEF's strategic objectives for adaptation with the objectives, outcomes and overarching goal as identified in the results framework of the GEF adaptation program. The TOC informed the development of evaluative questions, further guided the development of related methods protocols, and was used to analyze the broader progress to impact through the aggregation of available evidence on broader scale and longer term results. 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. The evaluation team assessed the performance and progress of the LDCF using aggregated data for these questions:

- **Relevance** - How relevant is LDCF support in light of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, the GEF adaptation programming strategy, and countries' broader developmental policies, plans and programs?
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency** - How effective and efficient is the LDCF in reaching its objectives, based on emerging results?
- **Results and Sustainability** - What are the emerging results and factors that affect the sustainability and resilience of these results?

5. A portfolio analysis protocol, including a quality-at-entry review, was developed using a survey tool to assess the projects in a systematic manner to ensure that key project-level questions were addressed coherently. The team applied the portfolio analysis protocol to 280 projects at various stages of implementation and the quality-at-entry review protocol to 116 national projects (MSP/FSP) that were CEO endorsed/approved or under implementation as of October 2015. Given that the NAPA implementation projects are at different stages of implementation, the status of the respective projects determines the way and extent in which they were included in the LDCF program evaluation according to the core evaluation criteria.

6. In addition to the document and project reviews, the team conducted four country field visits (to Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal) and carried out interviews with key stakeholders to cross-check and validate the data collected. Finally, the evaluation team conducted an analysis of, and triangulated, data collected to determine trends, formulate main findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations. The evaluation matrix, summarizing the key questions, indicators or basic data, sources of information and methodology was used to guide the analysis and triangulation.

7. In its evaluation of the LDCF, the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF reached the following 8 conclusions:

**Conclusion 1: LDCF supported activities, for the most part, have been highly relevant to COP guidance, and countries' development priorities.** There is a generally high degree of coherence between the scope of LDCF funded activities and both the guidance and priorities of the UNFCCC and the GEF, and the development priorities of countries receiving LDCF support.

**Conclusion 2: LDCF supported interventions show clear potential in reaching the GEF's three adaptation strategic objectives.** Eighty-eight percent of NAPA country reports (EAs), and 90 percent of implementation projects (MSP/FSP) were from a large to an extremely large extent aligned with the GEF adaptation strategic objectives. The quality at entry review showed that 98 percent of NAPA implementation projects had a high to very high probability of delivering

tangible adaptation benefits. Also the majority of stakeholders interviewed indicated it was very likely that the NAPA implementation projects they were familiar with, or involved in, would reach the GEF's strategic adaptation objectives.

**Conclusion 3: Contributions of LDCF supported interventions to focal areas other than climate change are potentially significant.** It is not within the Fund's mandate to explicitly target focal areas beyond climate change, but given the primary priority areas for LDCF support – agriculture, water resource management and fragile ecosystems – there is clear potential for beneficial synergies with the biodiversity and land degradation focal areas in particular. The Fund's support also has the potential to contribute to some extent to GEF's global environmental benefits, most notably on maintaining globally significant biodiversity and sustainable land management in production systems.

**Conclusion 4: The efficiency of the LDCF has been negatively impacted by the unpredictability of available resources.** Despite employing measures to expedite the project cycle the LDCF's efficiency has experienced negative effects from the unpredictable nature of available resources. There is no formal resource mobilization process and the Fund has to rely on voluntary contributions. Unpredictable funding creates uncertainty for GEF Agencies and least developed countries reliant on LDCF support for the implementation of their primary climate change adaptation priorities. It also negatively influences stakeholders' perception of the Fund's transparency and overall impacts LDCF's efficiency.

**Conclusion 5: LDCF support to NAPA implementation projects has resulted in catalytic effects in completed projects, though extensive replication and upscaling generally demands further financing beyond the projects' timeframe.** Completed NAPA implementation projects developed or introduced new technologies and/or approaches, which were successfully demonstrated and disseminated, and resulted in activities, demonstrations, and/or techniques being repeated within and outside of these projects. Additional catalytic effects, as identified by project stakeholders, were (1) in the generation of significant social, economic, cultural and human well-being co-benefits as a result of NAPA project implementation, (2) the projects having impacts on multiple sectors and at different levels of society, and (3) the projects resulting in the development of foundations for larger scale projects through analytic work, assessments and capacity building. Only 15 percent of completed projects performed well on upscaling. For the majority of projects which received low performance ratings for scaling up, additional financing will be required to ensure scaling up. The technical and institutional capacity building and information sharing activities had good buy-in from national and local-level officials, but projects highlight further financing beyond the project's timeframe as the primary requirement for scaling up.

**Conclusion 6: There is a clear intent to mainstream adaptation into countries' environmental and sustainable development policies, plans and associated processes.** The portfolio analysis found that almost three quarters of NAPA country reports clearly detailed the ways in which NAPA priorities would be linked with existing national policies, plans and strategies.

**Conclusion 7: The gender performance of the LDCF portfolio has improved considerably in response to enhanced requirements from the GEF, though there seems to be confusion as to what it means to be ‘gender mainstreamed’.** Almost 50 percent of projects under GEF-4 lacked a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan, which went down to 8.7 percent under GEF-6. Over 90 percent of NAPA implementation projects financed under GEF-6 address gender concerns to some degree. However, this evaluation rated only 17.4 percent of these projects as gender mainstreamed; more projects need to move from the ‘gender aware’ and ‘gender sensitive’ categories to the ‘gender mainstreamed’ rating. The Gender Equality Action Plan clearly explains what it means for a project to be gender mainstreamed. Some other council documents, more specifically the AMR, show a different interpretation regarding gender mainstreaming.

**Conclusion 8: There are significant discrepancies in project data from the GEF Secretariat’s Project Management Information System (PMIS).** A quality assessment of PMIS information was not a specific objective of this evaluation, but project data harvesting from PMIS revealed 58 broken links to project documentation for 46 projects. Moreover, the cross-checking of the available project data with GEF agencies revealed further discrepancies in the data coming from the Project Management Information System.

## **Recommendations**

8. In its evaluation of the LDCF, the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF reached the following 3 recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund.**

**Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF.**

**Recommendation 3: The GEF Secretariat should ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate**

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council at its 18<sup>th</sup> meeting in June 2015 approved the Four-Year Work Program of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the GEF,<sup>1</sup> which includes a program evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) during fiscal year 2016. The evaluation focuses on performance and progress towards LDCF objectives and emerging results. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide the LDCF/SCCF Council with evaluative evidence of the Fund's relevance and emerging results.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE LDCF

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.<sup>2</sup> The LDCF is mandated by the Parties to the UNFCCC to, among others, provide support to the least developed countries' (LDCs) climate change 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 National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in eligible developing countries.<sup>3</sup> An overview of key terms used, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),<sup>4</sup> is provided in Box 1. A summary of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions towards the LDCF is provided in Box 2.

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.

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<sup>1</sup>IEO, [Four-Year Work Program and Budget for the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF under the LDCF and SCCF](#), May 08 2015. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.18/ME/01/Rev.01.

<sup>2</sup> UNFCCC, [Decision 7/CP.7 Funding under the Convention](#), Document UNFCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1, Decision 7/CP.7.

<sup>3</sup> UNFCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1, Decision 2/CP.7, Decision 5/CP.7, and Decision 7/CP.7; UNFCCC/CP/2002/7/Add.1, Decision 8/CP.8; UNFCCC/CP/2003/6/Add.1, Decision 4/CP.9, and Decision 6/CP.9; UNFCCC/CP/2005/5/Add.1, Decision 3/CP.11; UNFCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, Decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 15-16; UNFCCC/CP/2012/8/Add.2, Decision 12/CP.18, paragraphs 1 and 4.

<sup>4</sup> IPCC, [Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, IPCC Working Group II Contribution to AR5, Glossary](#), October 2014.

### **Box 1: IPCC Definitions of Key Terms**

**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.

**Adaptation needs** The circumstances requiring action to ensure safety of populations and security of assets in response to climate impacts.

**Adaptive capacity** The ability of systems, institutions, humans, and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to consequences

**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.

**Climate change** Climate change refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. The UNFCCC, in its Article 1, defines climate change as: “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.”

**Resilience** The capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, 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.

**Sensitivity** The degree to which a system or species is affected, either adversely or beneficially, by climate variability or change. The effect may be direct (e.g., a change in crop yield in response to a change in the mean, range, or variability of temperature) or indirect (e.g., damages caused by an increase in the frequency of coastal flooding due to sea level rise).

**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. Vulnerabilities are considered “key” if they have the potential to combine with hazardous events or trends to result in key risks. Vulnerabilities that have little influence on climate-related risk, for instance, due to lack of exposure to hazards, would not be considered key.

## **Box 2: Recap of 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, of relevance to this evaluation, 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.<sup>5</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>5</sup> [UNFCCC overview Non-Annex I national communications.](#)

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 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, and they have no corporate responsibilities. Throughout this report, when ‘GEF Agencies’ are discussed it is referring to both GEF Agencies and GEF Project Agencies as described above.

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 48.7 percent of total funds approved and 55.2 percent in number of projects (Figure 1, N=223).<sup>6</sup> The UNDP has assisted a large number of countries in preparing their NAPA country reports (EAs) and subsequent NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP).

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 NAPA country reports (EAs) can be found in Annex 1.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

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

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<sup>6</sup> GEF, [Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund](#) – Par.14, September 25 2015, Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.19/03.

<sup>7</sup> UNFCCC, [National Adaptation Programmes of Action - Index of NAPA Projects by Country](#), May 2013.

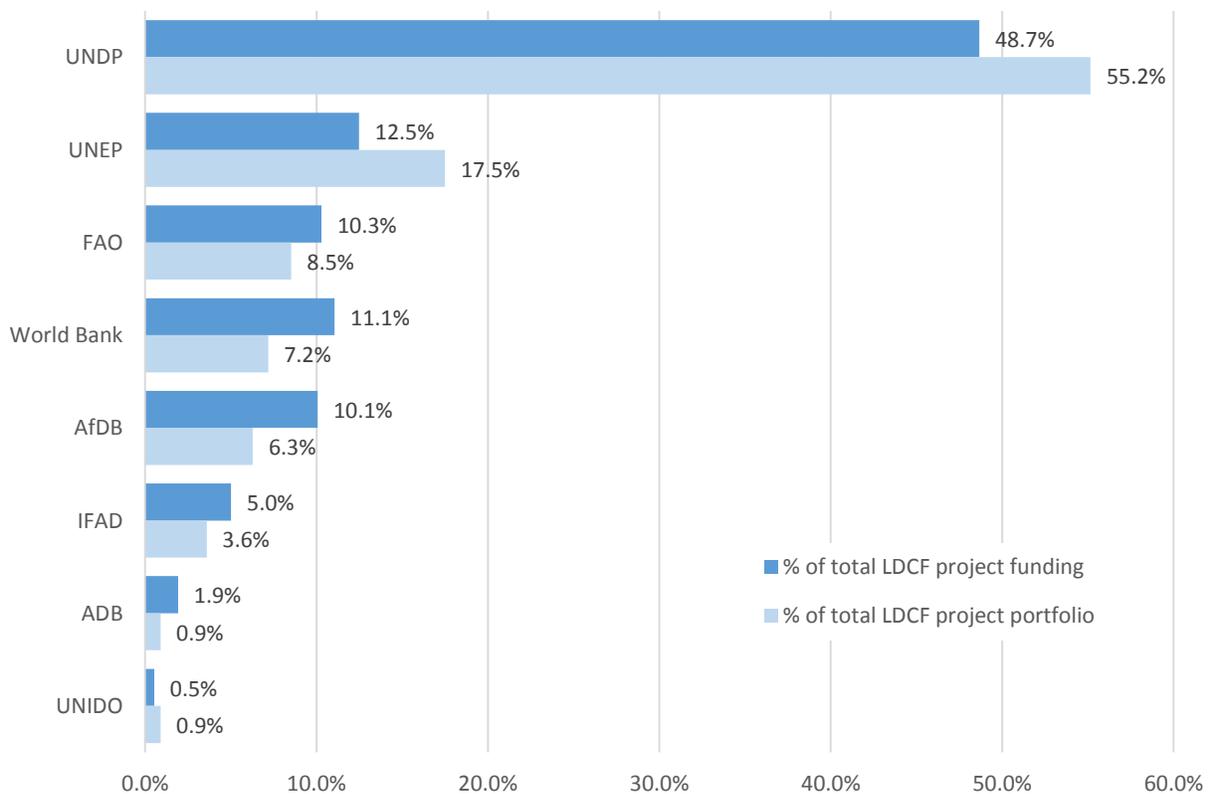
<sup>8</sup> GEF, [Progress Report on the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund - Executive Summary](#), Par.3, September 25 2015. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.19/03.

'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.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup>

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. There is no established resource mobilization process, but the GEF adaptation strategy on climate change adaptation for the LDCF/SCCF introduces two illustrative financing scenarios for LDCF to encourage contributions. Currently there is a ceiling of \$30 million per LDC, based on the principle of equitable access.

**Figure 1: Distribution of LDCF Financing and Projects by GEF Agency**



**Note:** Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Annex 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Par.9 / Annex 1.

### III. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

10. The IEO prepared an approach paper outlining the objectives and methods to be used in the program evaluation of the LDCF. This paper was circulated to key stakeholders and published on the IEO website for comments and inputs. The approach paper and an audit trail of comments received and actions taken are available on the IEO website. The Annexes to this report are also made available on the IEO website.<sup>11</sup>

11. The main objective of this evaluation of the LDCF, as follow-up to the 2009 LDCF joint evaluation (see the meta-evaluation review below), 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 and subsequent guidance provided to the Fund as summarized in Box 2.

#### Theory of Change and Methods

12. In light of this evaluation, a theory of change (TOC) has been developed for the Fund (Figure 2), combining GEF's strategic objectives for adaptation (Box 3)<sup>12</sup> and objectives, outcomes and overarching goal as identified in the results framework of the GEF adaptation program (Annex 2). The GEF Areas of Contribution are identified in Technical Paper 7 of the GEF Focal Area Strategies (FAS) evaluation, titled "Climate Change Adaptation under LDCF and SCCF."<sup>13</sup> The TOC informed the development of evaluative questions, further guided the development of related methods protocols, and was used to analyze the broader progress to impact through the aggregation of available evidence on broader scale and longer term results.

13. 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 (Annex 3). The team assessed the performance and progress of the LDCF using aggregated data for these questions:

- **Relevance** - How relevant is LDCF support in light of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, the GEF adaptation programming strategy, and countries' broader developmental policies, plans and programs?
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency** - How effective and efficient is the LDCF in reaching its objectives, based on emerging results?
- **Results and Sustainability** - What are the emerging results and factors that affect the sustainability and resilience of these results?

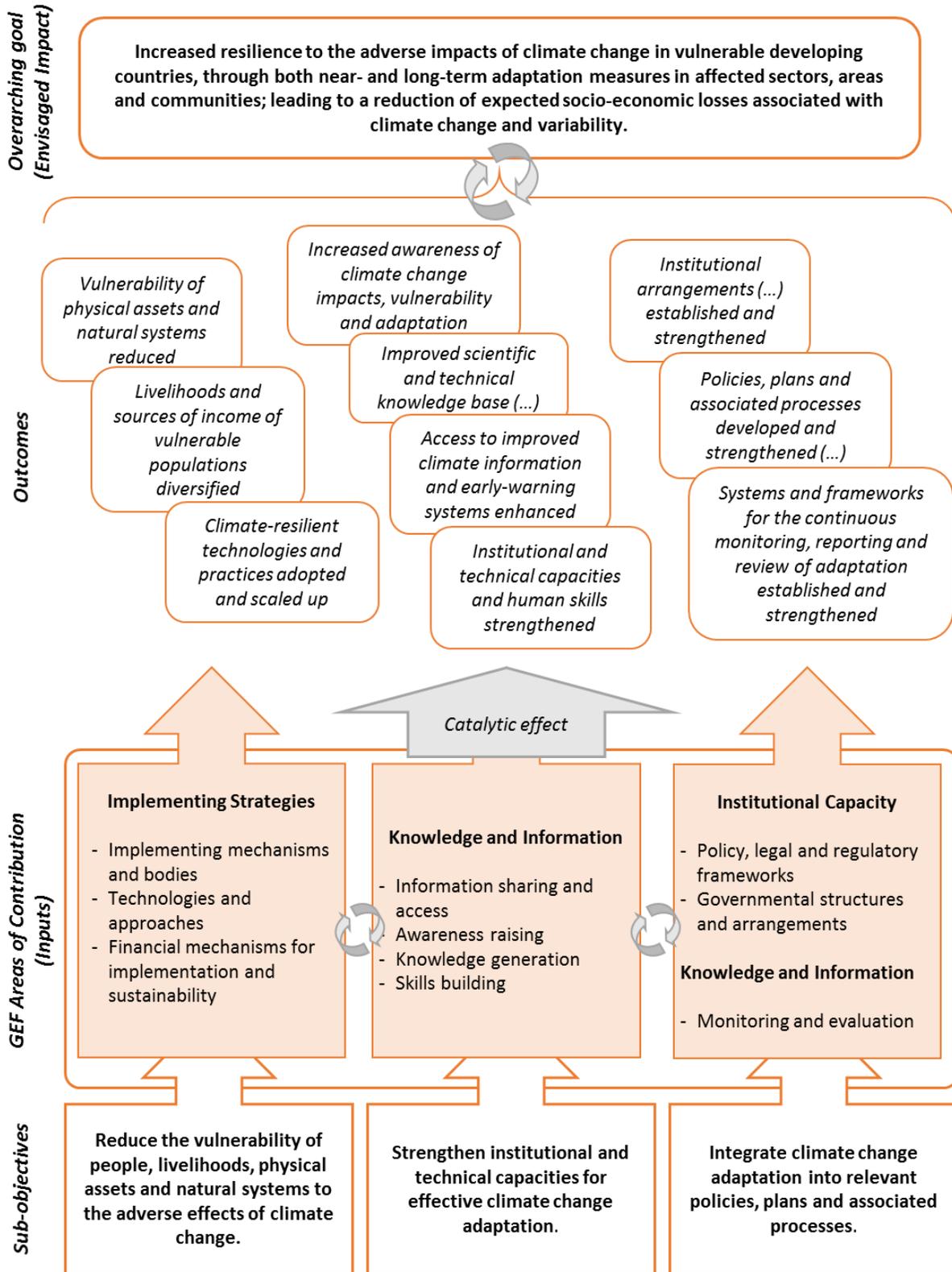
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<sup>11</sup> IEO, [Program Evaluation Least Developed Countries Fund \(LDCF\) 2016 – Approach Paper, Audit Trail and Annexes](#).

<sup>12</sup> GEF, [GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund](#), May 05, 2014. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/03/Rev.01.

<sup>13</sup> IEO, [Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies – Technical Paper 7: Climate Change Adaptation under LDCF and SCCF](#), November 2012.

**Figure 2: Theory of Change of the LDCF**



### **Box 3: GEF Strategic Objectives and Pillars**

The GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and SCCF 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:

- 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. The results framework of the GEF adaptation program<sup>14</sup> is provided in Annex 2.

14. At the evaluation's onset the evaluation team conducted a meta-evaluation review of recent evaluations conducted by the IEO, evaluation offices of GEF Agencies and others that have reviewed the LDCF, the NAPA process and/or individual NAPA implementation projects. The team also reviewed 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 meta-evaluation review is further discussed in the subsequent paragraph.

15. A portfolio analysis protocol, including a quality-at-entry review, (Annex 4) was developed using a survey tool to assess the projects in a systematic manner to ensure that key project-level questions were addressed coherently. The team applied the portfolio analysis protocol to 280 projects at various stages of implementation and the quality-at-entry review protocol to 116 national projects (medium size projects and full size projects - MSP/FSP) that were CEO endorsed/approved or under implementation as of October 2015. Given that the

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<sup>14</sup> GEF, [Updated Results-Based Management Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change under the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund](#), October 2014. Council document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.17/05/Rev.01.

NAPA implementation projects are at different stages of implementation (Table 1), the status of the respective projects determines the way and extent in which they will be included in the LDCF program evaluation according to the core evaluation criteria (Table 2).

**Table 1: Number of LDCF Projects by Project Status**

Project status <sup>1</sup>	NAPA country reports (EAs)	NAPA implementation projects			Grand total
		MSP	FSP	MSP/FSP total	
Completed	50	6	7	13	63
Under implementation		4	97	101	101
CEO endorsed/approved	1		18	18	19
Council approved		1	39	40	40
PPG approved			3	3	3
PM recommended		1	25	26	26
Pending			16	16	16
Cancelled or dropped		1	11	12	12
Total:	51	13	216	229	280
Total, excl. cancelled or dropped:	51	12	205	217	268
Total, from Council approved to completed:	51	11	161	172	223

<sup>1</sup> Cut-off date for portfolio analysis data was 31 October 2015. Project status might have changed since.

**Table 2: Inclusion of NAPA Implementation Projects according to Project Status**

Status	Core criteria			
	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	N/A

16. The evaluation team developed a database of all LDCF projects including information on project status, financing and co-financing, GEF agency, executing agency or institutions, countries, main objectives and key partners. The majority of the information was extracted from the GEF PMIS and verified by GEF agencies. The LDCF project database as well as

information from the portfolio analysis protocol allowed for aggregation at the portfolio level enabling evaluation of the LDCF as a whole.

17. All available project documentation, including project preparation grant (PPG) requests, project identification forms (PIFs), requests for CEO endorsement/approval, project documents (PDs), LDCF/SCCF adaptation monitoring and assessment tools (AMATs) and tracking tools for other focal areas, project implementation reports (PIRs), mid-term reviews (MTRs), terminal evaluations (TEs), and terminal evaluations reviews (TERs), was reviewed during the evaluation process. The evaluation's findings on sustainability are primarily based on data for 11 projects that have been completed and submitted a TE and TER.

18. In addition to the document and project reviews, the team conducted four country field visits (to Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal) and carried out interviews with key stakeholders to cross-check and validate the data collected. These countries were selected in an attempt to cover all LDC regions and to visit countries with larger LDCF portfolios. The field visits are a critical component of this evaluation as they provide in-depth, field-verified inputs to the findings and recommendations.

19. Interviews were carried out with senior management and staff of the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, the UNFCCC Secretariat, STAP, current and former Council members, donors to the LDCF, government officials, project implementers, CSOs, beneficiaries and other country level stakeholders. A full list of people consulted is presented in Annex 5.

20. Finally, the evaluation team conducted an analysis of, and triangulated, data collected to determine trends, formulate main findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations. The evaluation matrix (Annex 3), summarizing the key questions, indicators or basic data, sources of information and methodology was used to guide the analysis and triangulation.

21. The evaluation was led by Senior Evaluation Officer, Ms. Anna Viggh, as task manager, with oversight from the Chief Evaluation Officer, Ms. Geeta Battra, and the Director of the IEO, Mr. Juha Uitto. The evaluation team further consisted of an Evaluation Officer, Mr. Dennis Bours, a Senior Consultant, Mr. Howard Stewart, and three Junior Consultants, Ms. Hayley Gillooly, Ms. Katya Verkhovsky and Mr. Matt McFall. The consultants were hired to undertake specific tasks such as conducting a country field visit, reviewing all project documentation and a portfolio and quality-at-entry analysis for all projects that make up the LDCF portfolio.

### **Meta-Evaluation Review**

22. A 2008 terminal evaluation of UNEP GEF projects examined impacts from the NAPA Enabling Activities (EAs) and assessed project performance and implementation.<sup>15</sup> The evaluation found that all NAPA country reports (EAs) surveyed were relevant to national

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<sup>15</sup> UNEP, [Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP GEF Projects "Enabling Activities for the Preparation of a National Adaptation Programme of Action \(NAPA\)"](#), April 2008. UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit.

sustainable development priorities, though no countries identified specific means by which the NAPA priorities could be integrated into country planning frameworks. All NAPA country reports were consistent with their intended aim of communicating urgent and immediate adaptation needs. However, the evaluation felt that focusing on immediate needs represented a significant missed opportunity to achieve catalytic mainstreaming impacts by addressing long-term adaptation barriers. Evidence of internal capacity building was stronger where the NAPA was considered part of a continuum of enabling activities, including National Communications. In terms of efficiency, the evaluation found that lengthy project approval processes at times resulted in delays and lost momentum for projects. It recommended a more flexible and accelerated approval process.

23. The UNDP Evaluation Office carried out an independent evaluation of UNDP's work with the LDCF/SCCF, published in 2009.<sup>16</sup> The evaluation found that there was justifiable dissatisfaction among countries concerning the lengthy time periods and complex procedures required to move from the NAPAs to concrete projects. Some actors found the approval process adequate, but did not feel sufficiently informed about how decisions were made, by whom, and on what criteria. There were also differing expectations amongst the different actors. Some countries thought that as soon as the NAPA was completed, resources for follow-up activities would be made available. Meanwhile, the UNDP often felt the NAPAs looked more like wish lists, and that realistic project identification still needed to be completed. The evaluation noted that internal capacity gaps and lack of necessary support at various levels in-country impeded catalytic progress. The report's conclusions were not very targeted, and it was not always clear whether individual recommendations were aimed at the LDCF or SCCF.

24. A joint evaluation of the LDCF was conducted in 2009 with the Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (DANIDA) to analyze and document the results and lessons learned from the LDCF's financing and promotion of climate change adaptation.<sup>17 18</sup> At the time of the evaluation the Fund was still in its first phase and only covered the development of NAPAs. Since then the LDCF has proceeded to funding the implementation of adaptation activities, as well as supporting the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. The evaluation included 31 recommendations; eight 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 were directed to the LDCF team within the GEF Secretariat. The evaluation found that the LDCF had catalytic effects in the sense that the NAPA process opened up thinking about climate change and its impacts within LDC governments, in most cases for the very first time; however, much work remained in order to mainstream

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<sup>16</sup> UNDP, [Evaluation of UNDP Work with Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund Resources](#), 2009. UNDP Evaluation Office.

<sup>17</sup> DANIDA, [Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Adaptation to Climate Change](#). October 13 2009. In collaboration with IEO.

<sup>18</sup> IEO, [Executive Summary of the Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Adaptation to Climate Change](#), October 2009. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.7/5.

climate change awareness. LDCF portfolios tended to be quite relevant to national development priorities. Lack of attention to gender-differentiated vulnerability in LDCF-supported activities led to gender being unevenly addressed across the NAPAs. The evaluation reported widespread inefficiency in access to LDCF funds and project approval times. The [7<sup>th</sup> LDCF/SCCF Council meeting](#) in November 2009 unfortunately did not include a Joint Summary of the Chairs, but a year later at the 9<sup>th</sup> LDCF/SCCF Council meeting the GEF Secretariat provided an overview of follow up actions for the recommendations addressed to them.<sup>19</sup> Recommendations to the parties to the UNFCCC included, among others:

- The UNFCCC should reassess the role of the LDCF. What is the niche of the LDCF and what constitutes an appropriate lifespan of the Fund?
- Any replenishment of the LDCF for the longer term should be sufficient to support whole NAPA implementation programs, rather than individual project implementation.
- Future development, re-structuring and updating of the NAPA country reports need to be considered. In order to better serve as a flexible and updated planning tool for governments, adaptation priorities need to be established for the short, medium and longer term, and the sequencing of priority implementation needs to be designed so that effectiveness and synergies between actions are assured.

Recommendations to the LDCF team in the GEF Secretariat included, among others:

- In order for the LDCF to play a complementary role to the emerging other climate change financing mechanisms greater responsiveness and flexibility of procedures will have to be introduced to ensure lack of duplication and complementarity.
- All the NAPA priority projects should use evidence-based inquiry into the ways climate change effects are differentiated between genders, introduce measures that identify women's vulnerability to climate change, and listen to the voices of climate vulnerable women.
- Introduce a common tracking procedure across the LDCF and the agencies, so that the status of a given project may be found irrespective of where it is in the cycle and with which agency it is in the process.

25. In 2010, DANIDA funded a follow-up review of actions taken by the GEF Secretariat and the LDCF/SCCF Council in response to the evaluation report's recommendations.<sup>20</sup> The report concluded that the LDCF had been emerging from a somewhat difficult phase of establishment

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<sup>19</sup> GEF, [Report on Actions Undertaken in Response and Follow Up to Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund \(LDCF\) for Adaptation to Climate Change](#), October 2010. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.9/Inf.6.

<sup>20</sup> DANIDA, [Follow up to the LDCF Evaluation \(Prepared by DANIDA\)](#), October 2010. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.9/Inf.7.

and early operations into a period of significant improvement. Efforts had been made or were underway at the time of the review to respond positively to most of the recommendations for the LDCF Council and GEF Secretariat. The GEF Secretariat had taken steps to address gender inequality via adaptation projects, committing to making gender issues an integral part of the socio-economic aspect of projects, and adopting an updated project results frameworks that included gender disaggregated indicators.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the report found that some issues needed further attention, including delineating cooperation between the LDCF and other adaptation funds, and uncertainty about the future financial regime for adaptation.

26. The 2011 evaluation of the GEF Strategic Priority for Adaptation (SPA) pilot program aimed to provide lessons and experiences from implementation of the first climate change adaptation strategy supported by the GEF.<sup>22</sup> One of the evaluation's recommendations stated that the GEF should continue to provide incentives to mainstream resilience and adaptation to climate change into the GEF focal areas, as a means of reducing risks to the GEF portfolio. A number of factors were flagged that could prevent adaptation mainstreaming, including limited capacity for adaptation throughout the GEF system and gaps in scientific knowledge of specific climate impacts. The evaluation noted that the pilot's early stage allowed for only limited conclusions on effectiveness and efficiency. Alignment with GEF focal areas was strong overall, due to a requirement that all projects address one or more of the focal areas.

27. The 2012 GEF Evaluation of Focal Area Strategies aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the elements and mechanisms that make a focal area strategy successful.<sup>23</sup> The evaluation concluded that, in most cases, the GEF-5 focal areas did not draw on a systematic identification of the envisaged causal relationships between various elements of the relevant strategy, which is an impediment to achieving catalytic results. Were the GEF to more systematically consider paths toward broader adoption, this could improve. Technical Paper 7 of this evaluation focused on adaptation under the LDCF and SCCF.<sup>24</sup> The paper 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 8 provides an overview of COP guidance to the GEF. The evaluation found that the GEF was generally responsive to UNFCCC guidance.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> GEF, [Updated Results-Based Management Framework for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tracking Tool](#), November 2010. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.9/Inf.4.

<sup>22</sup> IEO, [Evaluation of the GEF Strategic Priority for Adaptation \(SPA\)](#), July 2011. Evaluation Report No. 61.

<sup>23</sup> IEO, [Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies](#), January 2013. Evaluation Report 78.

<sup>24</sup> IEO, [Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies – Technical Paper 7: Climate Change Adaptation under LDCF and SCCF](#), November 2012.

<sup>25</sup> IEO, [Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies – Technical Paper 8: Collection of COP Guidance to the GEF for the Four Conventions the GEF Serves as a Financial Mechanism](#), November 2012.

28. The Fifth Overall Performance Study (OPS5), published in 2014, synthesizes conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change.<sup>26</sup> 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.

29. OPS5 Technical Document 3 analyzed the implementation of GEF focal area strategies.<sup>27</sup> It concluded that the proportion of multi-focal area (MFA) projects in the LDCF and SCCF was relatively low since the combining of LDCF and SCCF resources with other focal area resources in multi-trust fund (MTF) projects had only been introduced as part of the GEF-5 replenishment period. At the time of the analysis, 14 percent of LDCF funds had gone to a total of 5 MTF projects. OPS5 Technical Document 9 focused specifically on MFA projects.<sup>28</sup> It found that the share of MFA projects was increasing over time, and LDCF projects were more likely to address multi-focal concerns, compared to GEF Trust Fund projects.

30. OPS5 Technical Document 19 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.<sup>29</sup> Following on Technical Document 19 the IEO conducted further quality-at-entry reviews of approved NAPA implementation projects, published in 2014.<sup>30</sup> The review concluded that (1) a large majority of NAPA implementation projects was aligned with their NAPA, (2) agriculture emerged as the key adaptation need in 96 percent of NAPAs analyzed, followed by water resources management (87%) and natural resources management (78 percent), (3) all projects were found to be consistent with LDCF strategies, eligibility criteria, and priorities, (4) a high percentage of NAPA projects were mainstreaming gender into adaptation initiatives, and (5) a large majority of projects included wide stakeholder involvement and had risk assessment and mitigation strategies in place.

31. This evaluation of the LDCF uses previous evaluative evidence as foundation to depart from, taking into account that each evaluation has its specific objectives and thus perspectives, and respecting that aforementioned findings provide a snapshot of the LDCF and its operational landscape at specific moments in time. As follow-up to the 2009 LDCF joint evaluation this evaluation aims to complement the existing evidence base regarding the Fund's performance.

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<sup>26</sup> IEO, [The Fifth Overall Performance Study \(OPS5\)](#), May 2014.

<sup>27</sup> IEO, [OPS5 Technical Document 3: Implementation of GEF Focal Area Strategies and Trends in Focal Area Achievements](#), March 2013.

<sup>28</sup> IEO, [OPS5 Technical Document 9: Multi Focal Area Projects in GEF Portfolio](#), November 2013.

<sup>29</sup> IEO, [OPS5 Technical Document 19: Adaptation to Climate Change](#), November 2013.

<sup>30</sup> IEO, [The Least Developed Countries Fund: Review of the Implementation of NAPAs – Unedited Version](#), April 2014.

## Limitations

32. Most LDCF projects (MSP/FSP) are still under implementation or in pre-implementation stages. It was not possible to conduct an all-encompassing analysis of the results and sustainability of outcomes of all projects at this stage, given that only 13 projects have been completed. For projects at early stages of implementation the evaluation needed to concentrate on a quality at entry review of the objectives and strategies as put forward by the project documentation and complement this with (preliminary) information on project results when available and appropriate. The analysis focused in part on highlighting illustrative examples from projects for which sufficient information and lessons have been articulated.

33. Another limitation is that only a small number of countries and projects were visited during this evaluation. Field visits took place to Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal, where 26 national projects, three regional projects and one global project are at various stages of implementation. These 30 projects do not fully reflect the specificities and complexities represented by the full portfolio of 280 LDCF supported projects. Nevertheless, discussions with field level stakeholders have provided valuable and independent information, used in the triangulation of findings.

## IV. ANALYSIS OF THE LDCF PORTFOLIO

34. This chapter presents an overview of the LDCF portfolio composition and evolution since the fund was established. Initially the LDCF financed the development of NAPA country reports (EAs) and later in a new phase the Fund started funding concrete adaptation activities through NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP). In February 2008 the GEF Secretariat received the first implementation project submission for CEO endorsement under the LDCF. The October 2013 progress report for the LDCF/SCCF ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.15/03 2013](#)) reported that a medium-size project was approved by the GEF CEO, aiming to support the preparation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in LDCs. At the LDCF evaluation's cut-off date of 31 October 2015, one global project (GEF ID 5320) supporting the NAP process was under implementation, while a second global project (GEF ID 5868) aimed at supporting LDCs in developing country-driven NAP processes was Council approved. Given the small size of NAP focused projects these have been included as an integral part of the LDCF portfolio of implementation projects, and not treated as a separate category of NAP projects.

### Portfolio Composition and Evolution

35. An overview of the LDCF portfolio by number of projects and funding is presented in Table 3. As of end October 2015 the portfolio consists of 223 projects (Table 1, N=223), when taking into account those that are Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed. These projects received a total of \$1.04 billion from the LDCF and \$4.41 billion in co-financing. The 51 Enabling Activities (EAs) financed the preparation of NAPA country reports in 51 countries. The portfolio consists largely of full-size projects accounting for 72 percent of the projects and 96 percent of the LDCF financing.

**Table 3: Number of and Budgetary Allocation for LDCF Projects by Project Type**

Project type <sup>1</sup>	No. of projects (#)	Budgetary allocation (1,000 \$)			Co-finance (as percentage of total)
		Grant value	Co-financing	Total	
EA	51	11,274	1,260	12,534	10.0%
MSP	11	21,874	59,100	80,974	73.0%
FSP	161	1,003,803	4,348,961	5,352,764	81.2%
MSP/FSP total	172	1,025,677	4,408,062	5,433,738	81.1%
Grand total	223	1,036,951	4,409,321	5,446,272	81.0%

<sup>1</sup> Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

### LDCF Portfolio by GEF Replenishment Phase

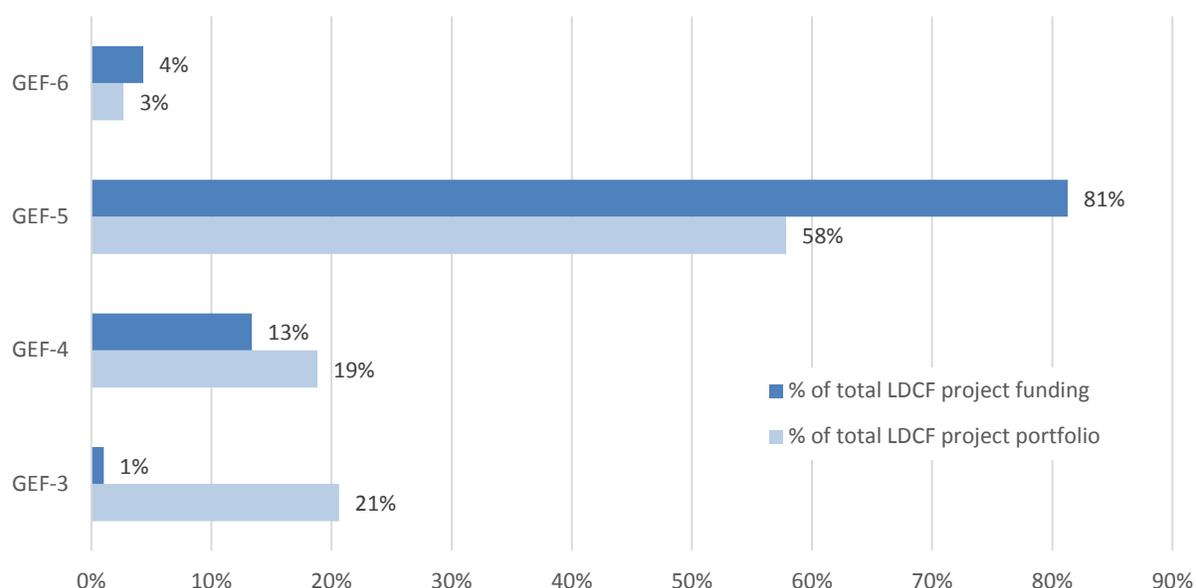
36. The beginning of the LDCF, during GEF-3, involved mainly Enabling Activities (EAs) – financing a large number of small projects to formulate the NAPA country reports (EAs). The financing of NAPA implementation projects increased during GEF-4, mainly FSPs (33) and five MSPs, while the NAPA preparation process was supported in four countries. The GEF-5 phase had the most LDCF activities funded, including three Enabling Activities, four MSP and 122 FSP projects amounting to a total of \$842.83 million accounting for 88 percent of total LDCF funding. Financing of LDCF projects has slowed down during GEF-6, and as of October 2015 has only amounted to \$44.93 million. Due to the cut-off date for this evaluation, pledges made at COP 21 in Paris are not reflected here. (Table 4 and Figure 3, N=223)

**Table 4: LDCF Projects' Grant Value by GEF Replenishment Phase (1,000 \$)**

GEF replenishment phase <sup>1</sup>	NAPA country reports (EAs)	NAPA implementation projects			Grand total
		MSP	FSP	MSP/FSP total	
GEF-3	9,735	928		928	10,663
GEF-4	880	11,218	126,423	137,641	138,521
GEF-5	659	9,728	832,444	842,172	842,831
GEF-6			44,935	44,935	44,935
Total:	11,274	21,874	1,003,803	1,025,677	1,036,951

<sup>1</sup> Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

**Figure 3: Distribution of LDCF Projects by GEF Replenishment Phase**

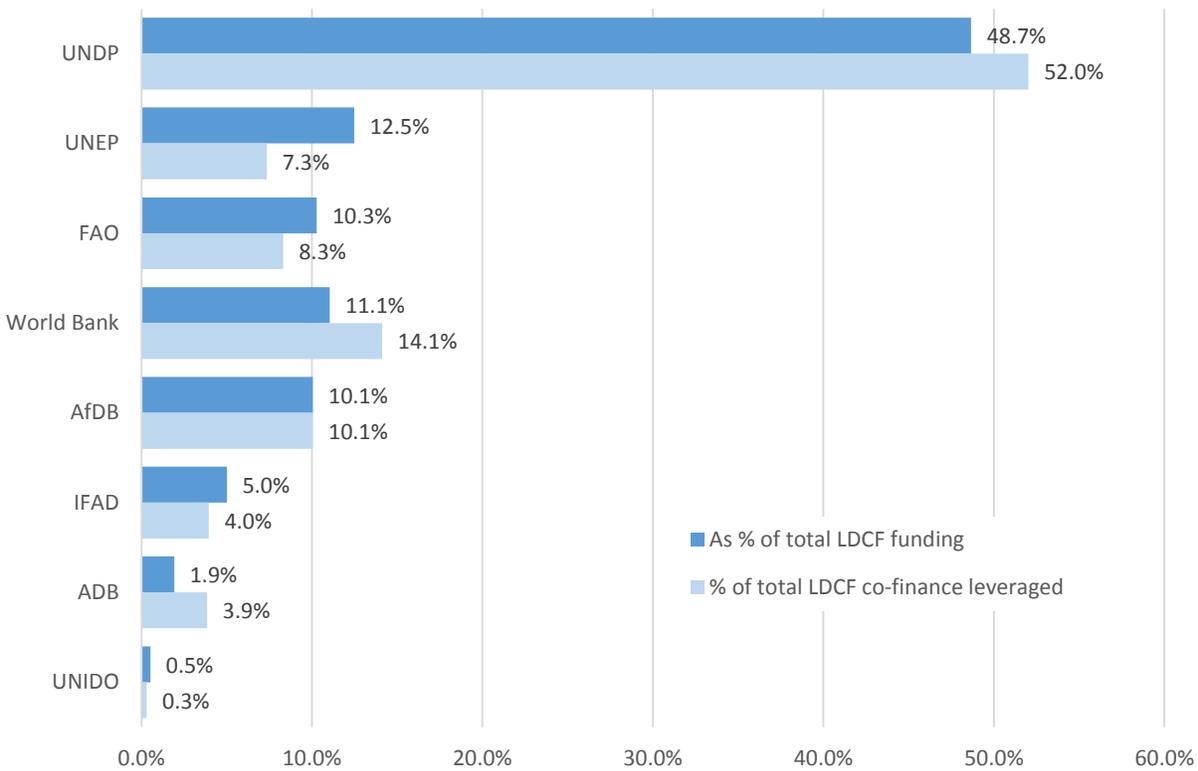


### LDCF Projects and Funding by Agency

37. UNDP is the GEF Agency for the largest number of LDCF projects—123 (55.2 percent), 82 of which are FSPs. UNEP is the GEF Agency for 39 projects, FAO for 19, the World Bank for 16, AfDB for 14, IFAD for 8, and ADB and UNIDO are the GEF Agencies for two projects each. IUCN has one project in the pipeline as of October 2015, and therefore, is not included in the earlier portfolio overview (Figure 1).

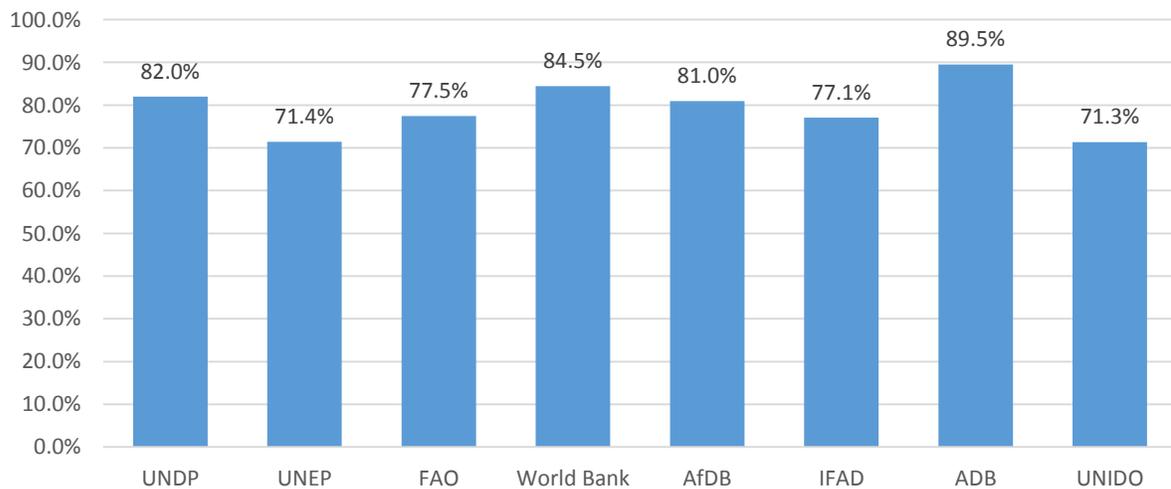
38. A large percentage of the LDCF portfolio is implemented through UN Agencies. UNDP, UNEP, and FAO together account for 81.5 percent of the total number LDCF projects and 71.5 percent of LDCF funding reflecting the prominence of UN agencies as GEF Agencies. UNDP and UNEP have smaller projects, an average of \$4.10 million and \$3.32 million respectively, compared to \$7.16 million for the World Bank, and \$7.45 million for the AfDB. All 11 MSP are implemented through UNDP and UNEP and, with the exception of two, all Enabling Activities were implemented through UNDP and UNEP. The World Bank supported two countries, Madagascar and Sao Tome and Principe, with their NAPA country reports (EAs). UN Agencies generate the larger amounts of co-financing (Figure 4, N=223). UNDP’s LDCF projects leverage the largest amount, at 52% of all co-financing. Figure 5 (N=223) shows co-finance share as a percentage of project budget; for example if a project’s LDCF grant value is \$2.5 million and co-finance is \$7.5 million, then the co-finance share as percentage of project budget is 75 percent. The ADB leverages the most co-financing as percentage of project budget for NAPA implementation projects, while the World Bank leverages the next average largest co-financing amount by project.

**Figure 4: Distribution of LDCF Financing and Co-financing by GEF Agency**



**Note:** Only council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

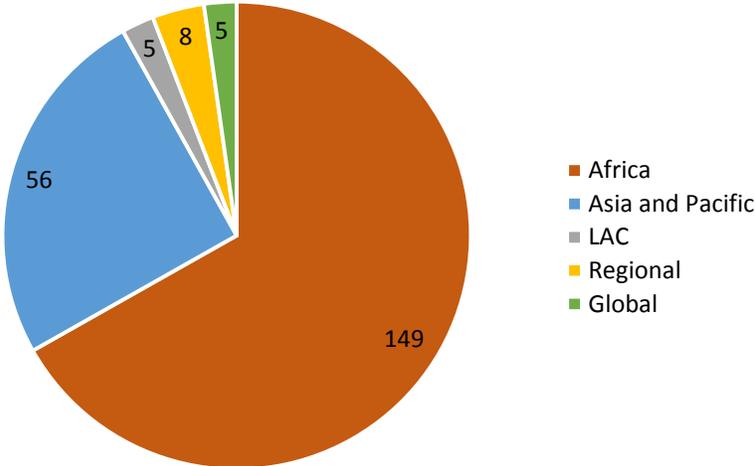
**Figure 5: Co-Finance Share as Percentage of Project Budget by GEF Agency**



39. Figures 6 and 7 (N=223) disaggregate the LDCF portfolio region in terms of number of projects and funding. The data includes 13 global or regional projects, with a combined LDCF allocation of \$106.15 million. As the figures show, the majority of projects in the LDCF portfolio

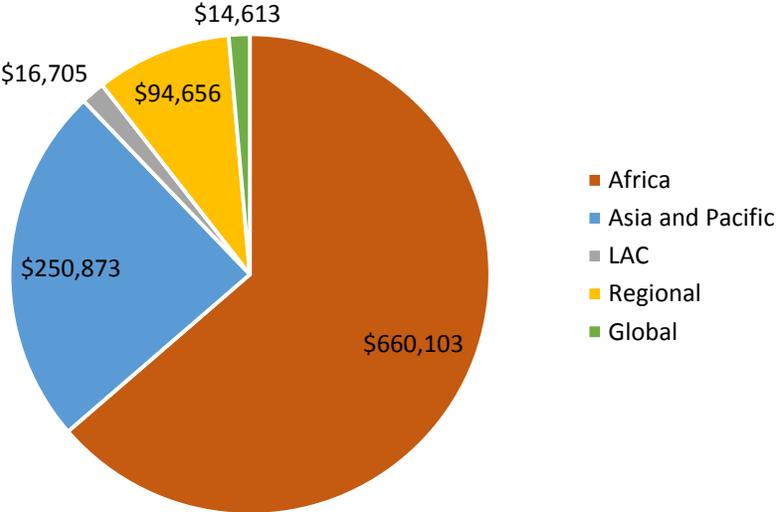
are in the Africa region, whether measured in terms of number of projects (149 or 66.8 percent of the total number of projects) or funding share (\$660.10 million or 63.7 percent of total funding). About 25 percent of the projects are in Asia both in terms of number of projects and funding. In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region the portfolio includes five projects in Haiti, the only LDC in the LAC region. Small island developing states (SIDS) are well represented with 41 projects and totaling a grant value of \$163.34 million. With 36 African and 14 Asian LDCs, the numbers presented are proportional to the geographical distribution of the 51 LDCs.

**Figure 6: Number of LDCF Projects by Region**



**Notes:** Cut-off date for portfolio analysis data was 31 October 2015. Values might have changed since. Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

**Figure 7: LDCF Projects' grant value by region (1,000 \$)**



**Notes:** Cut-off date for portfolio analysis data was 31 October 2015. Values might have changed since. Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects are taken into account.

## Project Status and Portfolio Status

40. The LDCF project portfolio is maturing with virtually all LDCs having completed their NAPA country report and over 50 percent of NAPA implementation projects currently under implementation or completed. Table 1 (shown earlier) and Table 5 (below, N=223) provide a breakdown of the status of the 223 projects in the LDCF portfolio that were council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and/or completed as of October 2015. The majority of LDCF projects are under implementation—101 amounting to \$589.30 million or 57 percent of the approved portfolio. A total of 63 projects have been completed including 50 NAPA country reports (EAs) and thirteen NAPA implementation projects, of which 6 were MSPs and 7 FSPs, accounting a small percentage of total funding (less than 5 percent). Only 12 projects of the entire portfolio of 280 projects have been cancelled or dropped.

41. The evaluation found that, as of October 2015, 26 NAPA implementation projects accounting for \$185.82 million are PM recommended, which signifies they are technically cleared and waiting for resources to be available to finance the project. Technical clearance was first introduced in the October 2014 progress report for the LDCF/SCCF ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.17/03](#)) in order to accept proposals into the pipeline for which there was – at the point of acceptance – no funding available but that were otherwise technically sound. The October 2015 LDCF/SCCF progress report ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.19/03](#)) indicates that resources amounting to \$254.48 million were sought for 35 projects that had been technically cleared by the GEF Secretariat.

42. The evaluation found that 16 projects are classified as pending, though final cross checking against a GEF Secretariat list of PM recommended projects showed three projects (GEF IDs 8010, 8033 and 9131) that were actually PM recommended as of October 2015. Further analysis of the project documentation available for the remaining thirteen pending projects found that the status of some of the projects marked pending deserved a revision. Discrepancies in project data are a recurring finding when it comes to project information from the GEF Secretariat's Project Management Information System (PMIS). The 2009 LDCF joint evaluation also found that some country information in the database had not been updated for more than a year. A quality assessment of PMIS information was not a specific objective of this evaluation, but project data harvesting from PMIS revealed 58 broken links to project documentation for 46 projects. Moreover, the cross-checking of project data with GEF agencies revealed further discrepancies in the data coming from the PMIS. This translates - for example - in differences in the Fund's value of \$1,036 million for Council approved projects, as extracted from PMIS (Table 5, N=223), in comparison to the \$963.66 million figure of total pledges outstanding and contributions finalized as reported by the Trustee in the LDCF/SCCF status and financial reports (Figure 13).

43. The LDCF project portfolio is maturing. Almost all LDCs have completed their NAPA country report (EA), with the exception of South Sudan, and Bangladesh has revised its 2005 NAPA country report. 71.2 percent of the LDCF project portfolio is currently under implementation or completed. For the NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) specifically, 52.5 percent of NAPA implementation projects are currently under implementation or

completed.<sup>31</sup> The LDCF project portfolio also shows a growing number of projects that are technically cleared, but for which funding is not available at the moment at which these projects enter the pipeline.

**Table 5: LDCF Projects' Grant Value by Project Status (1,000 \$)**

Project status <sup>1,2</sup>	NAPA country reports (EAs)	NAPA implementation projects			Grand total
		MSP	FSP	MSP/FSP total	
Completed	11,055	10,292	26,132	36,424	47,479
Under implementation		8,057	581,245	589,302	589,302
CEO endorsed/approved	219		82,013	82,013	82,232
Council approved		3,525	314,413	317,938	317,938
PPG approved			14,467	14,467	14,467
PM recommended		2,190	183,635	185,825	185,825
Pending			82,167	82,167	82,167
Cancelled or dropped		1,463	92,748	94,211	94,211
Total:	11,274	25,527	1,376,819	1,402,346	1,413,620
Total value for projects that were Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed	11,274	21,874	1,003,803	1,025,677	1,036,951

<sup>1</sup> Cut-off date for portfolio analysis data was 31 October 2015. Values might have changed since.

<sup>2</sup> Only Council approved, CEO endorsed/approved, under implementation and completed projects taken into account.

## V. RELEVANCE OF LDCF SUPPORT

44. This section focuses on two key questions regarding the relevance of LDCF support:

- How relevant is LDCF support in light of UNFCCC COP guidance and decisions, and GEF's adaptation strategy?
- How relevant is LDCF support in light of LDCs' own broader developmental policies, plans and programs?

45. The LDCF has supported activities that, for the most part, are highly relevant. There is a generally high degree of coherence between LDCF funded activities and both the guidance and priorities of the UNFCCC and the GEF, and the development priorities of countries receiving LDCF support, although the data in support of the latter dimension are less comprehensive.

<sup>31</sup> Figures exclude cancelled and dropped projects.

## Relevance in Relation to COP Guidance and Decisions of the UNFCCC

46. The evaluation systematically reviewed the degree of alignment between NAPA country reports (EAs) prepared with LDCF support (50 reports, see Annex 1)<sup>32</sup> and subsequent NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) financed by the LDCF (217 projects) on the one hand and, on the other hand: 1) relevant UNFCCC guidance and decisions, 2) GEF’s “strategic pillars” for adaptation, and 3) GEF’s “strategic objectives” for adaptation. The evaluation team also considered the potential of NAPA country reports (EAs) and LDCF funded NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) to make contributions towards GEF focal areas other than climate change. The full data set of the data discussed in this section is presented in Annex 4.

### Alignment with UNFCCC guidance and decisions

47. Regarding the NAPA country reports (EAs) alignment with UNFCCC guidance and decisions (Box 2), the evaluation found that 94 percent of the NAPA country reports (EAs) is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent with four of the eight elements of UNFCCC guidance considered. 89.8 percent of the NAPA country reports is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent with six of the eight elements of UNFCCC guidance. The least alignment was found between NAPA country reports and UNFCCC guidance calling for interventions to be “cost-effective and complementary to other funding sources” (here only 73.9% of NAPAs is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent), and for interventions to have “a view to increasing resilience to the adverse effects of climate change” (where 78 percent of NAPA country reports is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent).

48. Regarding the alignment between LDCF funded projects implementing NAPAs (NAPA implementation projects) and UNFCCC guidance and decisions, the evaluation found a similarly high degree of coherence for most of the seven elements of UNFCCC guidance considered: 95 percent of projects is aligned from a large to extremely large extent with four of the seven elements of the guidance, while 86.2 percent is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent with six of the seven elements of guidance. Once again, the lowest degree of alignment (79.6 percent is aligned from a large to an extremely large extent) related to UNFCCC guidance calling for projects to be “cost-effective and complementary to other funding sources.”

### Alignment with GEF adaptation strategic pillars

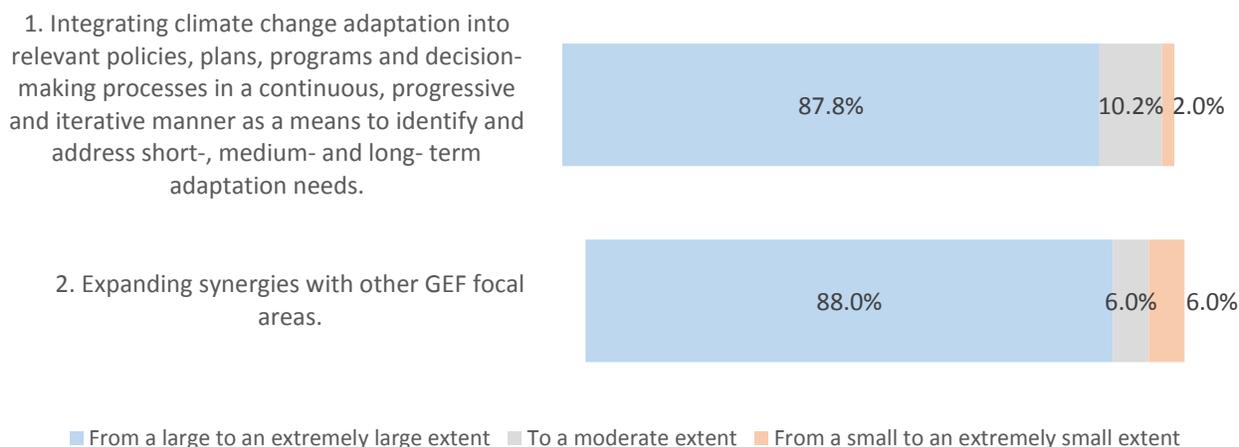
49. The evaluation found that the degree of alignment between NAPA country reports, NAPA implementation projects and GEF’s strategic pillars for adaptation, while also high, is neither as high nor as consistent as with UNFCCC guidance. 88 percent of NAPA country reports (EAs) was found to be aligned from a large to an extremely large extent with both GEF strategic pillars (Figure 8, N=51). 89 percent of NAPA implementation projects is similarly highly aligned with one GEF strategic pillar but only about two-thirds of the projects is aligned from a large to

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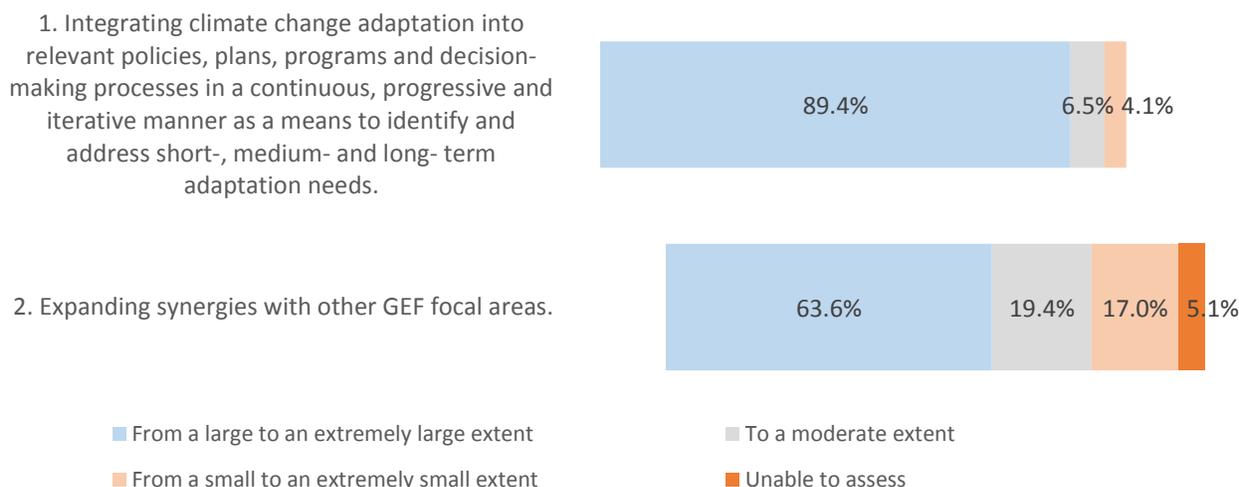
<sup>32</sup> The NAPA (EA) project document was assessed instead of the NAPA country report for South Sudan.

an extremely large extent with the other pillar “expanding synergies with other GEF focal areas” (Figure 9, N=217), which is further discussed in Chapter VII Emerging Results and their Sustainability.

**Figure 8: Alignment of NAPA Country Reports (EAs) with GEF Adaptation Strategic Pillars**



**Figure 9: Alignment of NAPA Implementation Projects with GEF Adaptation Strategic Pillars**



Contributions to other focal areas

50. A final measure of the relevance of LDCF funded activities considered by the evaluation was the extent of these activities’ support for other GEF focal areas outside the climate change focus of the LDCF. Here, 94.1 percent of NAPA country reports (EAs) potentially offers support in the area of biodiversity protection, while 78.4 percent appears likely to provide support in the land degradation focal area (Table 6, N=51). These figures reflect the strong focus among LDCs with supporting the adaptation of their agricultural sectors and related support sectors. The field visits to - and NAPA country reports (EAs) of - Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal

support this. The four key vulnerable sectors identified in Cambodia are agriculture, water resources, coastal zones and public health. Senegal also identified water resources, agriculture and coastal zones as key vulnerable sectors. For Haiti key sectors identified are soil degradation, agriculture, coastal zones and water resources, while in Lao PDR the key vulnerable sectors identified are agriculture, forestry, water resources and public health. The apparent potential for support to other focal areas is far more modest (15.7 percent for international waters, 7.8 percent for persistent organic pollutants - POPs) or insignificant (in case of the mercury and 'ozone depleting substances' focal areas).

**Table 6: Other Focal Areas to which NAPA Country Reports (EAs) Potentially Contribute**

<b>Focal areas<sup>1 2</sup></b>		
Biodiversity	48	94.1%
Land degradation	40	78.4%
International waters	8	15.7%
Persistent organic pollutants (POP)	4	7.8%
Mercury	0	0.0%
Ozone depleting substances (ODS)	0	0.0%
NO FOCAL AREAS OTHER THAN CLIMATE CHANGE APPLY	1	2.0%

<sup>1</sup> Multiple answers possible

<sup>2</sup> Percentages per focal area towards N=51

51. Among NAPA implementation projects, over half has the potential to contribute to controlling land degradation (57.6 percent) or biodiversity protection (46.5 percent) (Table 7, N=217). Once again, potential contributions in other areas are far more modest: six percent for international waters and less than one percent for the other GEF focal areas.

**Table 7: Other Focal Areas to which NAPA Implementation Projects Potentially Contribute**

<b>Focal areas<sup>1 2</sup></b>		
Land degradation	125	57.6%
Biodiversity	101	46.5%
International waters	13	6.0%
Mercury	2	0.9%
Ozone depleting substances (ODS)	2	0.9%
Persistent organic pollutants (POP)	2	0.9%
NO FOCAL AREAS OTHER THAN CLIMATE CHANGE APPLY	67	30.9%

<sup>1</sup> Multiple answers possible

<sup>2</sup> Percentages per focal area towards N=217

52. The results of the LDCF portfolio analysis summarized above corroborated earlier findings of the UNFCCC's Fifth Review of the Financial Mechanism, which found GEF programs and policies, including those related to the LDCF, to be consistent with the objectives of the Convention.<sup>33</sup>

### **Relevance to Countries' Environmental and Sustainable Development Agendas**

53. The evaluation addressed the question of alignment of LDCF supported activities with national policies in several ways. Each NAPA document was reviewed to determine the extent to which its plan for mainstreaming NAPA priorities into national policy was clearly and plausibly described. Then each NAPA implementation project was reviewed to determine the degree to which the project's focus was in line with the primary priorities of its respective NAPA. These two analyses, while helpful, were relatively weak substitutes for a review of relevant national environmental and sustainable development policies themselves, but field visits nonetheless provided some evidence through a wide ranging set of interviews with national government focal points and other stakeholders in four countries where the LDCF is active (Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal), as well as interviews with representatives of GEF Agencies involved with the LDCF, GEF Secretariat staff and GEF Council members. The results of these document reviews and interviews are summarized here.

#### *Alignment between LDCF supported activities and national development policies and agendas*

54. The first of two portfolio assessments looked at the alignment of LDCF supported NAPA country reports (EAs) with the policy agendas of their respective countries. It determined that almost three quarters (72.5 percent) of NAPAs is 'very highly aligned', that is they clearly detail the ways in which NAPA priorities will be linked with existing national policies, plans and strategies. Almost all the rest, (23.5 percent) are judged to be 'highly aligned', in that they describe the mainstreaming of NAPA priorities into national policy agendas in general terms, but do not provide complete descriptions of how these priorities are to be linked with existing or emerging national policies and other initiatives (Table 8, N=51).

55. The second portfolio assessment considered the extent to which NAPA implementation projects reflect the primary priorities originally identified in the NAPA country reports. The analysis of priority areas as identified in NAPA country reports (EAs) determined the top five primary priority areas to be (1) agriculture (96.1 percent), (2) climate information systems (94.1 percent), (3) disaster risk management (90.2 percent), (4) natural resource management and fragile ecosystems (62.8 percent) and (5) coastal zone management (also 62.8 percent) (Table 9, N=51).

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<sup>33</sup> UNFCCC, [Decision 7/CP.7 Funding under the Convention](#), 2001. UNFCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1, Decision 7/CP.7.

**Table 8: NAPA Country Reports' Alignment with Countries' Environmental and Sustainable Development Agendas**

<b>Very high:</b> The mainstreaming of NAPA priorities into the country's environmental and sustainable development agendas is clearly explained, including an overview of linkages with existing and developing policies, plans and strategies	37	72.5%
<b>High:</b> The mainstreaming of NAPA priorities into the country's environmental and sustainable development agendas is mentioned in general terms, but linkages to specific existing and developing policies, plans and strategies are incomplete or lacking	12	23.5%
<b>Low:</b> The mainstreaming of NAPA priorities into the country's environmental and sustainable development agendas is not adequately addressed	1	2.0%
<b>Not:</b> The NAPA does not address ANY linkages between NAPA priorities and the country's environmental and sustainable development agendas	0	0.0%
Unable to Assess	1	2.0%
	51	100.0%

**Table 9: Priority Areas Identified in NAPA Country Reports (EAs)**

Priority areas <sup>1</sup>		
Agriculture (including animal husbandry and fishery)	49	96.1%
Climate information systems	48	94.1%
Disaster risk management	46	90.2%
NRM; fragile ecosystems (incl. mountain ecosystems, mangroves, forestry, wildlife, land degradation and management)	32	62.8%
Coastal zone management (other than mangrove ecosystems/reconstruction)	32	62.8%
Water resource management	30	58.8%
Human health	29	56.9%
Infrastructural development	26	51.0%
Renewable energy / energy efficiency / energy security	23	45.1%
Climate education	19	37.2%
Tourism	16	31.4%
Climate smart urban areas	13	25.5%
Sustainable rural livelihoods (other than agriculture and NRM)	9	17.6%
Other (please specify) <sup>2</sup>	8	15.7%
	51	Total

<sup>1</sup> Multiple answers possible

<sup>2</sup> "Institutional capacity development" mentioned 6 times

56. A similar assessment for the NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) determined that the top five priority areas addressed by these are (1) agriculture (72.8 percent), (2) water resource management (61.8 percent), (3) climate information systems (60.4 percent), (4) natural resource management and fragile ecosystems (55.3 percent) and (5) disaster risk management (50.7 percent) (Table 10, N=217). Coastal zone management was identified as a top five priority area in assessment of NAPA country reports, but the analysis of NAPA implementation projects put it in 9<sup>th</sup> place. Still close to 25 percent of NAPA implementation projects address coastal zone management as a priority area. Water resource management was identified as a 2<sup>nd</sup> place priority area in the NAPA implementation projects, while for the NAPA country reports it did not make the top five of priority areas; though percentage-wise there is little difference with water resource management being mentioned in about 60% of the NAPA country reports as well as implementation projects.

**Table 10: Priority Areas Addressed by NAPA Implementation Projects**

<b>Priority areas<sup>1</sup></b>		
Agriculture (including animal husbandry and fishery)	158	72.8%
Water resource management	134	61.8%
Climate information systems	131	60.4%
NRM; fragile ecosystems (incl. mountain ecosystems, mangroves, forestry, wildlife, land degradation and management)	120	55.3%
Disaster risk management	110	50.7%
Infrastructural development	103	47.5%
Climate education	101	46.5%
Sustainable rural livelihoods (other than agriculture and NRM)	55	25.3%
Coastal zone management (other than mangrove ecosystems/reconstruction)	54	24.9%
Institutional Capacity Building <sup>3</sup>	41	18.9%
Tourism	20	9.2%
Human health	18	8.3%
Renewable energy / energy efficiency / energy security	12	5.5%
Climate smart urban areas	12	5.5%
Other, please specify <sup>4</sup>	9	4.1%
	217	Total

<sup>1</sup> Multiple answers possible

<sup>2</sup> Excludes cancelled projects

<sup>3</sup> The 'institutional capacity building' category came from the 'other' answer category

<sup>4</sup> Included 'technology transfer', 'adaptation mainstreaming', 'financial risk management' and 'weather insurance'.

57. This analysis further determined that the large majority (87.6 percent) of NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) does address primary priority areas identified in that country’s NAPA report. Virtually all the rest of the implementation projects reviewed (10.6 percent), while not addressing areas of primary priority identified within their NAPA, they do address other priority areas that have been identified (Table 11, N=217).

**Table 11: NAPA Implementation Projects' Alignment with NAPA Country Reports' Priorities**

<b>Very high:</b> The implementation projects' outcome areas address primary priority areas as listed / outlined in the NAPA country report	190	87.6%
<b>High:</b> The implementation projects' outcome areas do not address primary priority areas as listed / outlined in the NAPA country report, but address other priorities that are outlined in the NAPA country report	23	10.6%
<b>Low:</b> The implementation projects' might touch upon some priority areas, but do not address specific priorities as outlined in the NAPA country report in a structural manner	2	0.9%
<b>Not:</b> The implementation projects do not address ANY of the priorities (primary or other) outlined in the NAPA country report	0	0.0%
Unable to Assess	2	0.9%
Total, excluding cancelled projects:	217	100.0%

*National stakeholders' perspectives on relevance of LDCF support to national development priorities*

58. The evaluation conducted a series of stakeholder interviews and project site visits in four countries where LDCF supports NAPA activities. There was a remarkably high degree of consensus among interviewees regarding the relevance of LDCF support in these countries. Government stakeholders and others confirmed that LDCF support is highly relevant to national environmental and sustainable development agendas, particularly in rural areas where this support complements national poverty alleviation agendas, for example by increasing the resilience of small holder agriculture and improving small holders’ water management capacities. Concern was expressed in one country regarding the (limited) extent to which the “adaptation agenda” promoted by LDCF may be finding its way into mainstream economic development strategies, as opposed to a more restricted domain of environmental and resource management. But in all countries visited, LDCF support was confirmed to be even more relevant than it was ten years ago when most NAPAs were prepared. In the subsequent decade the need for adaptation efforts has been repeatedly highlighted; longer droughts and more extreme temperatures and rainfall are examples of climatic events LDCs have to cope with and such events further emphasize the need for and relevance of LDCF support. While NAPAs and the projects stemming from them are deemed highly relevant, a number of national stakeholders mentioned the need to update these plans of action to reflect changing circumstances, as accelerated climate change unfolds and as new technologies and approaches for addressing climate change are emerging. This links to the (potential) role of the developing NAP process.

## International stakeholders' perspectives on relevance of LDCF support to national development priorities

59. The various GEF Agencies implementing activities with LDCF support have their own internal systems for ensuring that their programs and projects are clearly and consistently guided by each country's national and sectorial development priorities. This extends to the projects they carry out with LDCF support, which must also be aligned with these expressed national priorities. In this way the GEF Agencies have been able to apply LDCF resources consistently to render priority national initiatives more climate resilient, in ways that reflect the adaptation priorities identified in the countries' NAPA country reports (EAs). This support has been above all in national agricultural sectors, where the production systems of the poorest populations in these countries are typically most vulnerable to accelerated climate change. From the perspective of GEF Council members interviewed, the LDCF has established itself as an important (though underfunded) instrument for responding to the needs of the poorest members of the global community, for whom adaptation to climate change is a far more compelling short-term imperative than mitigation activities.

### **VI. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE LDCF**

60. This chapter addresses issues of effectiveness and efficiency of the LDCF. The evaluation assessed how effective and efficient the LDCF is in reaching its objectives and emerging results through the following questions:

- How effective is the LDCF in reaching the GEF's three strategic adaptation objectives?
- 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?
- How efficient is the Fund's project cycle?

#### **Effectiveness in Achieving Objectives**

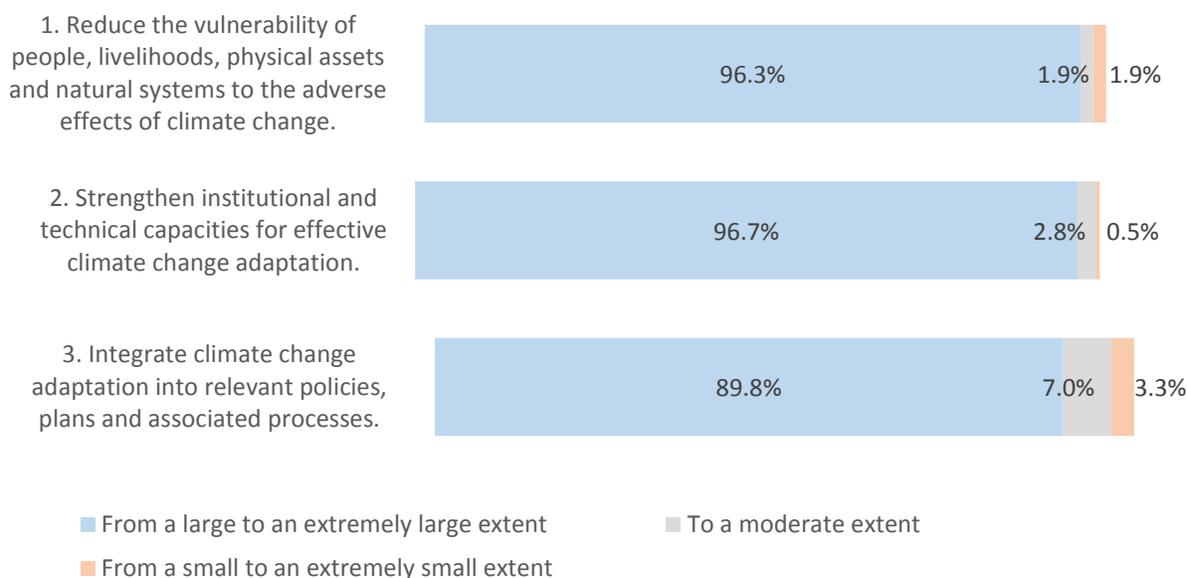
61. The assessment of the effectiveness of the LDCF focused on the supported interventions achieving the three objectives of the GEF programming strategy on adaptation (Box 3):

- 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;
- Integrate climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes.

62. The evaluation assessed the alignment of NAPA country reports (EAs) and NAPA implementation projects (MSP/FSP) with the objectives to reduce vulnerability, build adaptive capacity, and integrate adaptation into relevant plans, policies and related processes. NAPA

implementation projects showed a very high degree of alignment with all three objectives, with the highest alignment (96.7 percent aligned from a large to an extremely large extent) on strengthening institutional and technical capacities for effective climate change adaptation (Figure 10, N=217).

**Figure 10: Alignment of NAPA Implementation Projects with GEF Adaptation Strategic Objectives**

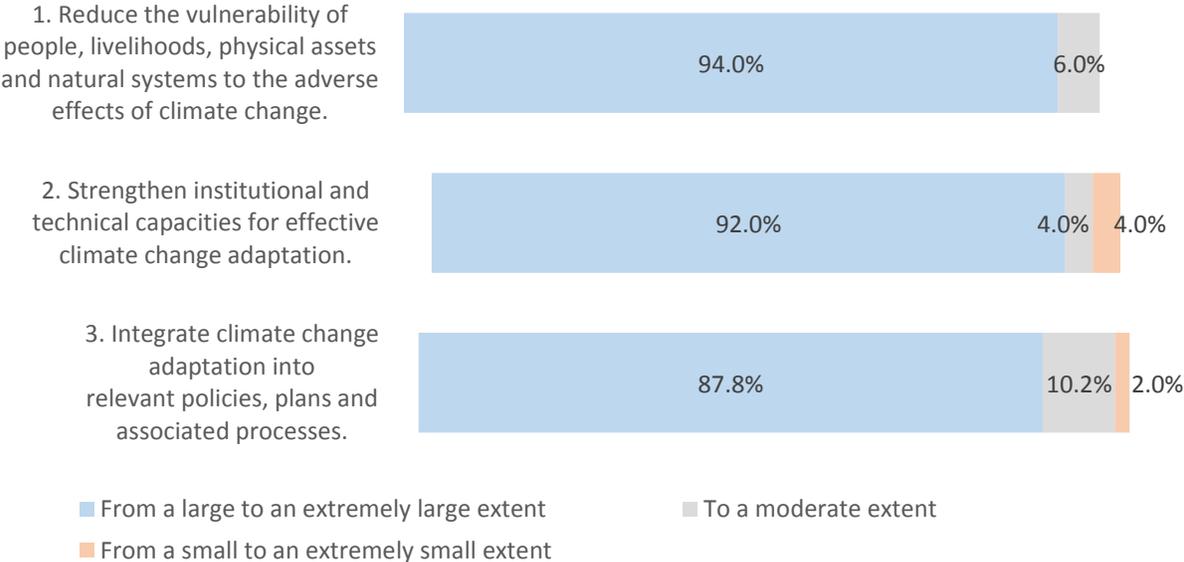


63. A similar assessment of the NAPA country reports showed similar trend (Figure 11, N=51); 87.8 percent of NAPA country reports (EAs) was aligned from a large to an extremely large extent with all three of the GEF’s strategic objectives. The similarity of results, comparing NAPA country report with NAPA implementation project data, translates in a very high correlation coefficient between the variables ( $r = 0.96$ ).

64. Completed projects have contributed to achieving the objectives of the strategy. For example, a Congo DR project (GEF ID 3718) helped reduce vulnerability in rural populations in four selected sites by promoting the renewal of agro-genetic material through the contribution of genetic material more suited to expected weather conditions. Similarly aimed at vulnerability reduction was the Bhutan project (GEF ID 3219); it reduced the risk of glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) from the Thorthormi Lake by lowering the water level by 5 meters, and an automated GLOF early warning system (EWS) was installed, covering more than 90 percent of households in the 21 vulnerable communities downstream of the Punatsangchu River in the Punakha-Wangdue valley. In the case of Rwanda (GEF ID 3838) the human and institutional capacity was strengthened to effectively utilize the hydro-meteorological network and to conduct climate risk assessment and forecasting. Another example of strengthening institutional and technical capacities for effective climate change adaptation is the Gambia project (GEF ID 3728); the Gambia’s hydro-meteorological network was rehabilitated, upgraded

and equipped, and human capacity enhanced through the training and recruitment of hydro-meteorological staff to use the strengthened network. Similarly the number of institutional agreements designed to improve climate information networks in Niger (GEF ID 3319) was 325 percent greater than planned, and the project in Samoa (GEF ID 3358) proved instrumental in strengthening cross-sectorial collaboration and setting the foundation for climate early warning systems application in subsequent NAPA implementation projects. The same project is also a good example regarding the integration of climate change adaptation into relevant agriculture and health policies, which was the primary purpose of the project, leading to informed decision making as to best adaptation options. The previously mentioned Rwanda project resulted in all of Rwanda’s 30 districts having integrated climate change adaptation activities in their District Development Plans (DDPs). Climate change mainstreaming guidelines were produced for four sectors: agriculture, energy and infrastructure, environment and natural resources, and health.

**Figure 11: Alignment of NAPA Country Reports (EAs) with GEF Adaptation Strategic Objectives**



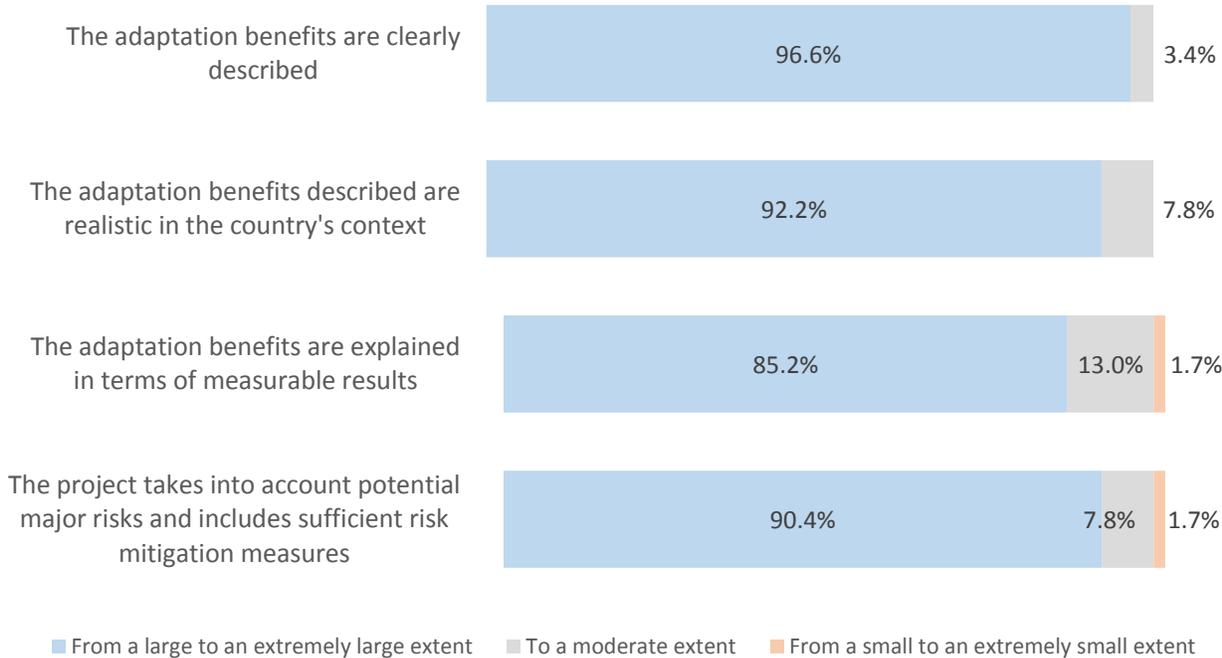
65. One of the interview questions also related to the likelihood that LDCF supported interventions will achieve the GEF adaptation strategic objectives. The majority of stakeholders interviewed indicated that it is very likely that the NAPA implementation projects they are familiar with, or involved in, will reach their objectives in line with the GEF strategic objectives, because they feel these projects have been designed well and are aligned with local priorities and context. Country level stakeholders confirmed the likelihood of reducing vulnerability mostly at the project level. For example in Senegal, reducing vulnerability is especially likely at the community level where activities are targeting the most urgent vulnerabilities of rural communities, including the progressive salinization of their agricultural soils and irrigation water, the erosion of agricultural soils, and the degradation of water resources. LDCF activities have strengthening institutional capacities and integrated adaptation into policies and plans at several levels. Institutional and technical capacities in systematic adaptation planning have

been developed at the ministerial, district and village levels in Lao PDR. In Cambodia, LDCF activities have played a crucial role in supporting climate change priorities in national and sub-national strategies and policies. However, some country level stakeholders, especially in Haiti, have expressed concerns about the lengthy approval process for projects that can negatively impact project relevance, decreasing the LDCF’s effectiveness in reaching the three strategic objectives.

66. A quality at entry review was carried out for all in-country NAPA implementation projects (N=116) that were CEO endorsed/approved or under implementation. This assessment included child projects, but excluded the parents. The review assessed the design of projects and shed light on the probability of projects delivering tangible adaptation benefits.

67. The evaluation showed that nearly all projects (96.6 percent of projects scored in the large to extremely large extent range) clearly describe the intended adaptation benefits and convey the country’s adaptation aspirations (Figure 12). In a very high percentage of projects (92.2 percent), the description of adaptation benefits is realistically taking into consideration the country’s context (including the country’s institutional and governance capabilities) and 90.4 percent of the projects takes into account potential major risks and includes sufficient risk mitigation measures. Projects were not as well designed when considering the measurability of results, though still 85.2 percent of projects scored in the large to extremely large extent range in terms of explaining the adaptation benefits in measurable terms. The remaining 14.7 percent of NAPA implementation projects could improve their linkages with the 'adaptation monitoring and assessment tool' (AMAT) and their M&E frameworks.

**Figure 12: NAPA Implementation Projects’ Quality at Entry Review**



68. Overall the quality at entry review showed that over 98.3 percent of reviewed NAPA implementation projects had a high to very high probability of delivering tangible adaptation benefits (Table 12, N=116). 52.6 percent of the projects addressed adaptation issues in project design, and the adaptation benefits are realistic and measurable. For these projects with a very high probability of delivering tangible adaptation benefits, the project baseline is discussed, project components take into account existing and potential risks, and include risk mitigation measures. 45.7 percent of the NAPA implementation projects are rated to have a high probability of delivering tangible adaptation benefits; most of the adaptation issues to be addressed are clearly explained, most adaptation benefits are realistic though not always measurable. The project baseline needs to be improved, as does the risks appreciation and mitigation measures.

**Table 12: Probability of NAPA Implementation Projects Delivering Tangible Adaptation Benefits**

<b>Probability Rating<sup>1</sup></b>		
<b>Very high:</b> The adaptation issues to be addressed are clearly explained, and adaptation benefits are realistic and measurable. The project baseline is discussed and all project components take into account existing environmental, governmental, sectorial and other potential risks, and include risk mitigation measures.	61	52.6%
<b>High:</b> Most of the adaptation issues to be addressed are clearly explained, most adaptation benefits are realistic though not always measurable. The project baseline needs improving, as does the risks appreciation and formulation of risk mitigation measures.	53	45.7%
<b>Low:</b> Most of the adaptation issues to be addressed are clearly explained though the project does not present the most realistic options for the issues identified. Measurability leaves much to be desired, as does the baseline. Some project risks have been identified, but risk mitigation measures are mostly absent.	1	0.9%
<b>Very Low:</b> Adaptation issues as well as the project's adaptation benefits are poorly described. A baseline is absent and a project risk analysis is lacking.	0	0.0%
Unable to Assess	1	0.9%
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>116 100.0%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Quality at entry review took place for all in-country projects that were CEO endorsed/approved or under implementation. This included child projects, but excluded the regional and global parents.

### **Efficiency of the Fund**

69. The project portfolio analysis identified project delays by comparing expected with actual dates of project timelines. The analysis found that 45 projects have experienced delays in the approval process and during implementation, accounting for 20.7 percent of the portfolio, excluding cancelled projects (Table 13, N=217). Seventy-five percent of the delays was experienced during GEF-4 (Table 14, N=217). When the LDCF started, many countries found it difficult to access the fund due to a lack of transparency of, and knowledge regarding the procedures and requirements. Over time, and with the help of the GEF Agencies who improved country capacity to formulate projects, countries learned how to work with the Fund. Measures

were also taken to expedite the project cycle to approve projects on a rolling basis. This could be the reason for a lower percentage (12.1 percent) of delayed projects during GEF-5.

**Table 13: Identification of Delays in NAPA Implementation Projects**

Yes	45	20.7%
No	172	79.3%
Total: <sup>1</sup>	217	100.0%

<sup>1</sup> Excludes cancelled projects

**Table 14: Identification of Delays in NAPA Implementation Projects**

	Yes	No	Yes%
GEF-3	0	2	0.0%
GEF-4	28	9	75.7%
GEF-5	16	116	12.1%
GEF-6	1	45	2.2%
Total: <sup>1</sup>	45	172	217

<sup>1</sup> Excludes cancelled projects

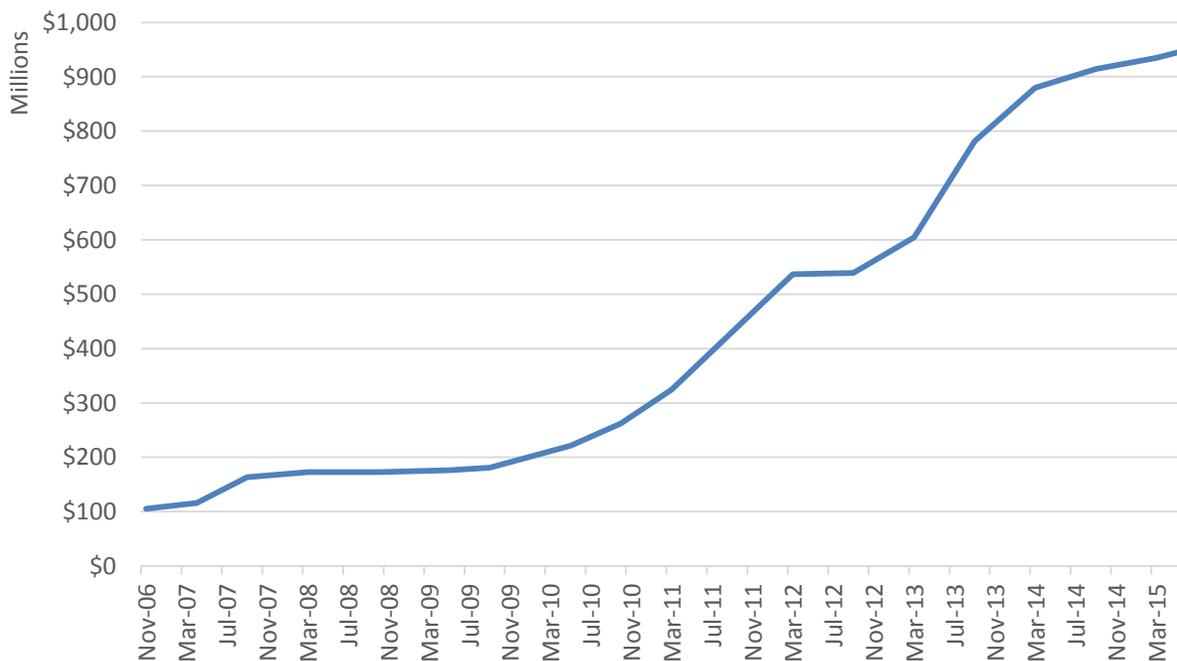
70. Projects can be delayed for many reasons and it is difficult to determine whether underlying causes for delays are internal or external in nature. There often is a mix of reasons, a series of events resulting in delays and not one single reason. At first glance there seems to be a trend for the percentage of projects to be delayed to go down over time, but one has to take into account that in GEF-5 and GEF-6 several projects are in an early stage and delays may still materialize over time.

71. The evaluation assessed factors that have affected the efficiency of the LDCF. Stakeholders interviewed and field visits point to mostly negative factors. A positive factor is that the LDCF is administered by the GEF and since it started the fund has benefited from well-established structures and procedures. Some negative factors cited are unstable governments, climate extremes and natural disasters, co-funding requirements, and the prolonged project approval processes. In Haiti, current political instability creates uncertainty for government officials to endorse new projects while some projects that have been in the pipeline too long need to be redesigned to be relevant in the current context.

72. The most frequently noted factor is the unpredictability of funding. The LDCF is replenished through voluntary contributions and pledges have been made in an ad hoc manner. Over time the trend has been an increase in contributions (Figure 13). The GEF Secretariat reported to Council in its November 2012 progress report ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.13/Inf.02](#)) that while cumulative pledges had increased over the past ten years, pledges vary significantly each year.

In addition the demand of the LDCs to address needs identified in NAPA’s exceeded the cumulative pledges and falls short of the estimate of \$2 billion needed to achieve their key adaptation priorities. In May 2014 the GEF Secretariat reported to Council ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/04](#)) that there were no resources available in the LDCF for new approvals and \$66.32 million were required for current proposals. The pipeline of technically cleared projects and programs continued to grow until [pledges were made by eleven donors at COP21 in Paris in November 2015](#). The \$248 million in pledges will help but are not sufficient to fund the more than \$250 million pipeline of technically cleared implementation projects and recently submitted proposals.

**Figure 13: LDCF Cumulative Pledges Outstanding and Contributions Finalized**



**Note:** Based on the LDCF/SCCF Status Reports from November 2006 ([GEF/LDCF/SCCF.1/Inf.2/Rev.1](#)) up to the LDCF Financial Report of September 2015 ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.19/Inf.02](#))

73. The LDCF follows streamlined and simplified procedures to facilitate expedited access to the Fund by the LDCs; projects are approved on a rolling basis and projects smaller than \$2 million can be approved by the CEO in one step. To ensure sound financial management, the LDCF follows the GEF’s fiduciary standards, result-based frameworks, and monitoring and evaluation practices. The LDCF also follows GEF operational policies except where the LDCF/SCCF Council decides otherwise in response to COP guidance. Interviews with representatives of GEF Agencies show that the agencies appreciate GEF reports to the COP prepared by the GEF Secretariat, briefings provided on COP meetings, and guidance documents such as the “[Accessing Resources under the LDCF](#)” booklet. GEF’s Adaptation Task Force also involves all GEF Agencies when issues such as programming of available funds and the LDCF

project pipeline are discussed by the GEF Secretariat. The procedures for accessing LDCF resources have been simplified over time and all documents regarding the governance of the LDCF are publicly available on the GEF website.

74. A factor related to the unpredictability of funding affecting the Fund's efficiency is the transparency of the governance of the LDCF by the GEF. The unpredictability of funding in the past two to three years has been a major challenge for LDCs who are dependent on LDCF support for the implementation of their key climate change adaptation priorities. Interviews with various stakeholders show that their perception of the Fund's transparency has changed since the funding crisis; a picture that was most pronounced when in-country representatives of GEF Agencies and government focal points were interviewed. Projects that were technically cleared more than a year ago have been waiting for funding and it is not always clear to the country focal point and in-country GEF Agency representatives as to the status of project funding. Country focal points and in-country GEF Agency representatives interviewed would similarly appreciate more clarity regarding the outstanding LDCF balance for their country / the country in which they work. Although the LDCF operates on a 'first-come first-served' basis there are transparency concerns regarding decisions on which projects would be financed and in what order. This perception of a lack of transparency in the governance of the Fund's resources comes down to gaps in communication between the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies and country focal points. The evaluation team did not find evidence of non-transparent decisions being made by the GEF in relation to the management of LDCF funds.

75. LDCF's resource unpredictability has been slowing down project preparation, approvals, and implementation in support of LDCs' climate change adaptation needs. The GEF Secretariat encourages GEF Agencies to submit project identification forms (PIFs) but it is difficult for agencies to plan resources if funding is unpredictable. For some GEF Agencies, especially the multilateral development banks (MDBs), it can be a challenge to mobilize teams if the availability of funding is questionable. Also, some countries and agencies have stopped pursuing multi-trust fund projects because of the LDCF's resource unpredictability.

## **VII. EMERGING RESULTS AND THEIR SUSTAINABILITY**

76. This section looks at the emerging results of LDCF support, and factors that affect the sustainability of these emerging results. The following questions are addressed;

- To what extent has LDCF support had a catalytic effect?
- 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 (likely to be) achieved and gender mainstreaming principles adhered to by the LDCF?
- To what extent are the emerging results of LDCF support sustainable?

## Catalytic Effects of the LDCF

77. The LDCF program evaluation looked at two different types of catalytic effects. First it looked at the extent to which LDCF support to NAPA implementation projects has been catalytic in one or more of the following ways:

- a) *Production of a public good*: The project developed or introduced new technologies and/or approaches. No significant actions were taken to build on this achievement, so the catalytic effect is left to 'market forces'.
- b) *Demonstration*: After the production of a public good, demonstration sites, successful information dissemination and/or training was implemented to further catalyze the new technologies/approaches.
- c) *Replication*: Activities, demonstrations, and/or techniques are repeated within or outside the project.
- d) *Scaling-up*: Approaches developed through the project are taken up on a regional/national scale, becoming widely accepted.

This catalytic effect analysis focused on the 13 completed NAPA implementation projects summarized in Table 15.

78. Analysis of these projects with respect to the catalytic effects described above revealed that most projects developed public goods and effectively demonstrated new technologies or approaches (Figure 14, N=13). Close to half the projects also replicated activities, demonstrations and/or techniques. But only two of the projects, in Samoa and Cambodia (GEF IDs 3358 and 3404) performed well on scaling-up, with one project in Gambia (GEF ID 3728) being moderately successful. Observations during field visits to Haiti and Lao PDR suggested that extensive replication and upscaling beyond projects' target districts or provinces generally may not occur during project implementation. For the majority of projects that received low ratings for scaling up, additional financing will be required to ensure scaling up. In most cases, the technical and institutional capacity building and information sharing activities had good buy-in from national and local-level officials. Each of these projects highlights further financing as the primary requirement for scaling up.

**Table 15: Overview of Completed LDCF Implementation Projects (MSP/FSP)**

GEF ID	AER	Agency	Project title	Country	LDCF funding (M\$) <sup>1</sup>	Outcome rating <sup>2</sup>	Sustainability rating <sup>3</sup>	M&E design at entry rating <sup>2</sup>	M&E plan implementation rating <sup>2</sup>
2040	-	UNDP	Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to Implement the UNFCCC8/CP8 Decision	Global	0.69			<i>No TE and TER rating available</i>	
2191	-	UNDP	Technical Assistance to Francophone LDCs to Implement the UNFCCC8/CP8 Decision	Global	0.34			<i>No TE and TER rating available</i>	
3219	2013	UNDP	Reducing Climate Change-induced Risks and Vulnerabilities from Glacial Lake Outbursts in the Punakha-Wangdi and Chamkhar Valleys	Bhutan	3.99	S	L	HS	HS
3319	2014	UNDP	Implementing NAPA Priority Interventions to Build Resilience and Adaptive Capacity of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change	Niger	3.80	S	ML	MU	S
3358	2014	UNDP	Integrating Climate Change Risks into the Agriculture and Health Sectors in Samoa (ICCRAHS) Project	Samoa	2.25	MS	ML	S	MS
3404	2014	UNDP	Promoting Climate Resilient Water Management and Agriculture Practice in Rural Cambodia	Cambodia	2.14	S	ML	U	MS
3430	2015	UNDP	Implementing NAPA Priority Interventions to Build Resilience in the Agriculture and Water Sectors to the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change	Sudan	3.74	MU	MU	MU	U
3581	2014	UNDP	Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in the Water Sector in Cabo Verde	Cabo Verde	3.41	MS	ML	S	S

Table 15 continued

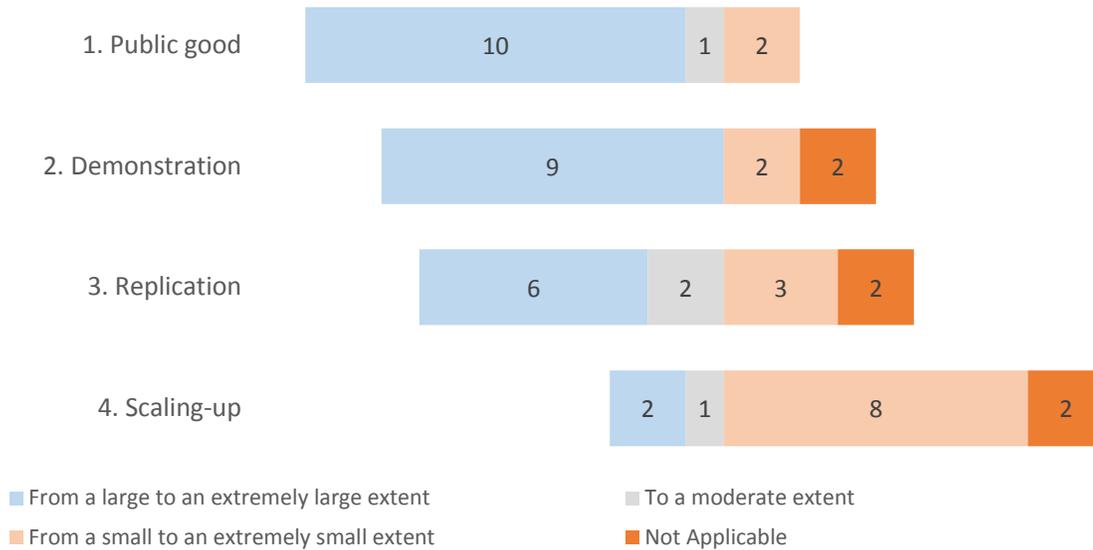
GEF ID	AER	Agency	Project title	Country	LDCF funding (M\$) <sup>1</sup>	Outcome rating <sup>2</sup>	Sustainability rating <sup>3</sup>	M&E design at entry rating <sup>2</sup>	M&E plan implementation rating <sup>2</sup>
3684	2014	UNDP	Strengthening Adaptation Capacities and Reducing the Vulnerability to Climate Change in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso	3.30	S	MU	MS	MS
3689	2015	UNDP	Adaptation to the effects of climate variability and change in agro-ecological regions I and II in Zambia (CCAP)	Zambia	3.77	S	MU	S	S
3718	2015	UNDP	Building the Capacity of the Agriculture Sector in DR Congo to Plan for and Respond to the Additional Threats Posed by Climate Change on Food Production and Security	Congo DR	3.41	S	ML	MU	UA
3728	2015	UNEP	Strengthening of The Gambia's Climate Change Early Warning Systems	Gambia	1.16	S	ML	MU	MU
3838	2015	UNDP / UNEP	Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change by Establishing Early Warning and Disaster Preparedness Systems and Support for Integrated Watershed Management in Flood Prone Areas	Rwanda	3.99	S	L	S	S

<sup>1</sup> Total LDCF-related project funding, including PPG, Agency Fees and LDCF funding.

<sup>2</sup> GEF/GEF Agency six-point rating scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

<sup>3</sup> GEF/GEF Agency four-point rating scale: Likely (L), Moderately Likely (ML), Moderately Unlikely (MU), and Unlikely (U). Alternatively, the rating might be Unable to Assess (UA).

**Figure 14: Catalytic Effects of NAPA Implementation Projects**

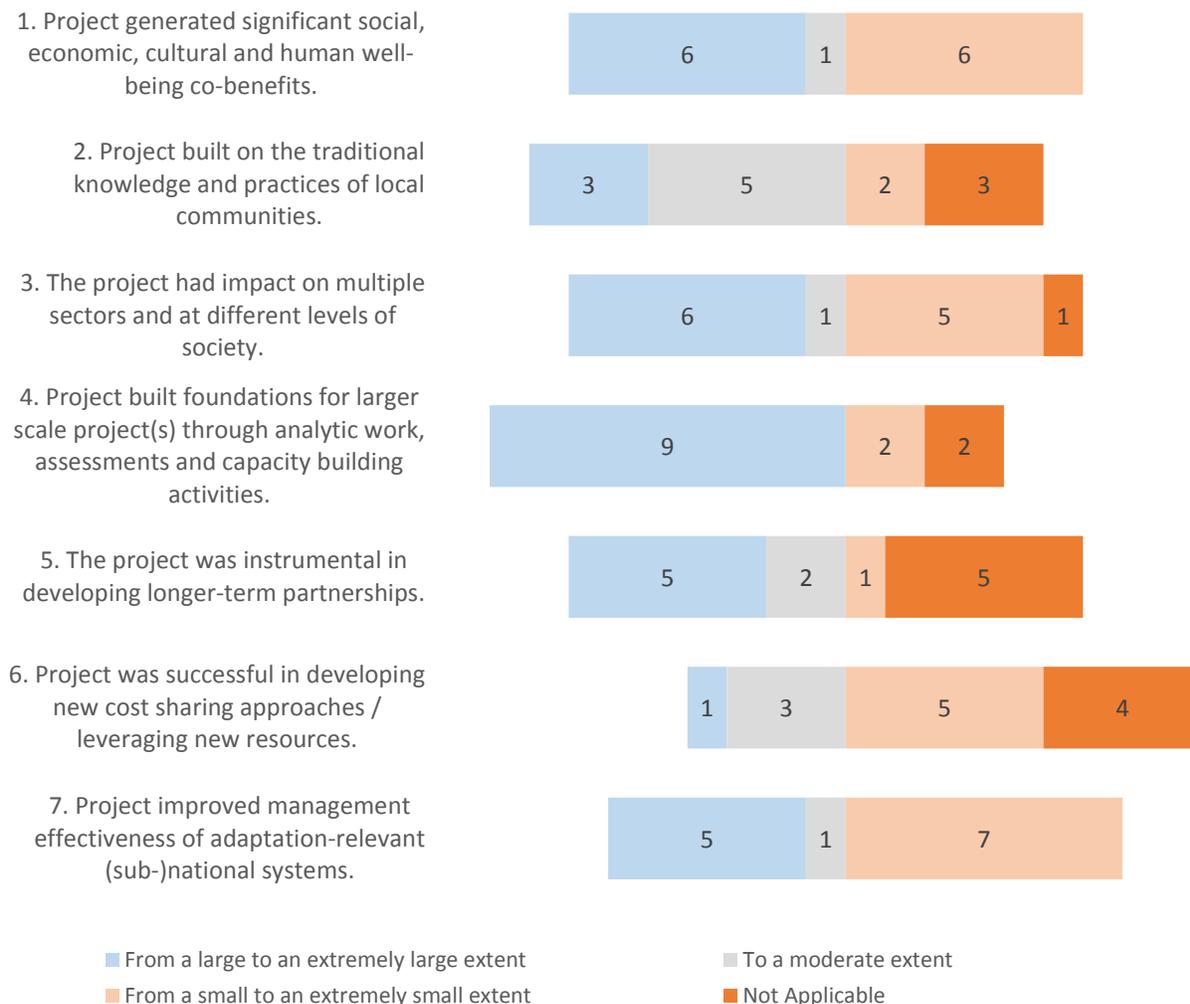


79. A second analysis of catalytic effects carried out on completed projects (N=13) looked at the following seven indicators of momentum and synergies generated by LDCF support in relation to development programs and institutions, as identified by project stakeholders:

1. Projects generated significant social, economic, cultural and human well-being co-benefits.
2. Projects built on the traditional knowledge and practices of local communities.
3. Projects had impacts on multiple sectors and at different levels of society.
4. Projects built foundations for larger scale project(s) through analytic work, assessments and capacity building.
5. Projects were instrumental in developing longer-term partnerships.
6. Projects were successful in developing new cost sharing approaches / leveraging new resources.
7. Projects improved management effectiveness of adaptation-relevant (sub-)national systems.

80. The greatest catalytic effects achieved were in the generation of significant social, economic, cultural and human well-being co-benefits (indicator 1); having impacts on multiple sectors and at different levels of society (indicator 3), and the development of foundations for larger scale project(s) through analytic work, assessments and capacity building (indicator 4). Projects performed reasonably well on the development of longer-term partnerships (indicator 5) and improvements of management effectiveness of adaptation-relevant (sub-) national systems (indicator 7). The evaluation found the projects to be less successful in developing new cost sharing approaches and/or leveraging new financial resources (indicator 6). (Figure 15)

**Figure 15: Catalytic Effects of NAPA Implementation Projects, as Identified by Stakeholders**



81. An LDCF project in Niger (GEF ID 3319) for example, generated co-benefits through the high labor intensity of the public works projects, which resulted in poverty reduction, enhanced food security and greater access to water. Co-benefits identified in a Rwanda project (GEF ID 3838) related to the ‘no regrets’ approach to addressing climate change through the provision of climate information that facilitates community leaders and district disaster management committees in their decision making, helping to avoid mal-adaptive decisions. A conservation agriculture approach introduced in Zambia (GEF ID 3689) raised farmers’ incomes, which contributed to an increase in payments for children’s education, increased social status for women and reduced discrimination. Projects that adopted a multi-sector approach also built foundations for larger scale projects. For example, the Samoan project (GEF ID 3358) strengthened cross-sectorial collaboration and built the foundation for climate early warning system application in subsequent NAPA sectorial implementation projects. Lessons learned from the project considered in Bhutan (GEF ID 3219) have already been applied to that

country's Disaster Management Act, passed in 2013, which will guide further actions in disaster risk management.

82. LDCF support was generally catalytic for the thirteen projects reviewed; projects developed or introduced new technologies and/or approaches, which were successfully demonstrated and disseminated, resulting in activities, demonstrations, and/or techniques being repeated within or outside the project. The majority of projects which received low ratings for scaling up, the final element of being catalytic, had a financial sustainability rating in the likely range, though at the same time all discuss a lack of assured financing into future phases of project implementation as an issue. Projects were less successful in developing new cost sharing approaches and/or leveraging new financial resources.

### **LDCF Support in Relation to Other GEF Focal Areas**

83. The GEF programming strategy on adaptation aims to expand synergies between climate change adaptation and other GEF focal areas, in order to realize both the adaptation and global environmental benefits delivered by interventions financed under the LDCF, the SCCF and the GEF Trust Fund.<sup>34</sup> One of the GEF adaptation strategic pillars as part of the programming strategy on adaptation is 'Expanding synergies with other GEF focal areas'.

84. The first question asked by the evaluation was whether interventions receiving LDCF support contribute to focal areas other than climate change. Almost all (94%) NAPA country reports (EAs) called for contributions to at least one other focal area, mostly to the biodiversity and land degradation focal areas (Table 6). Meanwhile, 58 percent of NAPA implementation projects contributes to controlling land degradation, while 46 percent contributes to biodiversity protection (Table 7). Close to one third of these projects contribute only to the program's core climate change focal area. Of these, 17 focus specifically on capacity development, either linked to a specific UNFCCC decision or a specific sector like health, water or agriculture. Twelve of them focus on the development and implementation of early warning systems and the collection of hydro-meteorological data.

85. A second evaluation question was whether interventions receiving LDCF support were aligned with GEF's strategic pillars of the GEF strategy on adaptation. All NAPA implementation projects align to some extent with the first pillar of integrating CCA in relevant policies, plans, programs and decision-making processes, and 89 percent of the projects does so from a large to an extremely large extent (Figure 9). Ninety-five percent of the projects aligns to some extent with the second GEF adaptation strategic pillar of expanding synergies with other GEF focal areas. Furthermore, 64 percent of the NAPA implementation projects does so from a large to an extremely large extent.

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<sup>34</sup> GEF, [GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund](#), May 05, 2014. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.16/03/Rev.01.

86. LDCF supported interventions contribute to focal areas other than the climate change focal area. It is not within the Fund's mandate to explicitly target focal areas beyond climate change. However, it is clear that with agriculture, water resource management and fragile ecosystems identified as primary priority areas, there are likely to be beneficial synergies with the biodiversity and land degradation focal areas.

87. A third evaluation question related to LDCF contributions to global environmental benefits (GEBs). It should be noted that within the portfolio of 217 projects considered, only 11 were registered as 'multi-focal area', which are by their nature expected to contribute to the GEBs. The evaluation assessed the extent to which implementation projects appeared likely to contribute to the following six global environmental benefits:<sup>35</sup>

1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society.
2. Sustainable land management in production systems, i.e. agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes.
3. Promotion of collective management of transboundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services.
4. Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path.
5. Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern.
6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream MEAs into national and sub-national policy, planning, financial and legal frameworks.

88. Projects were rated in the 'from a large to an extremely large extent' range for alignment with GEBs if they included numerical targets towards the GEBs being assessed. Projects were rated 'moderately aligned' if they did not include numerical targets, but expressed an intent to add these in future project documentation. Projects could score in the 'from a small to an extremely small extent' range if they showed clear intent to contribute, but did not provide information on targets.

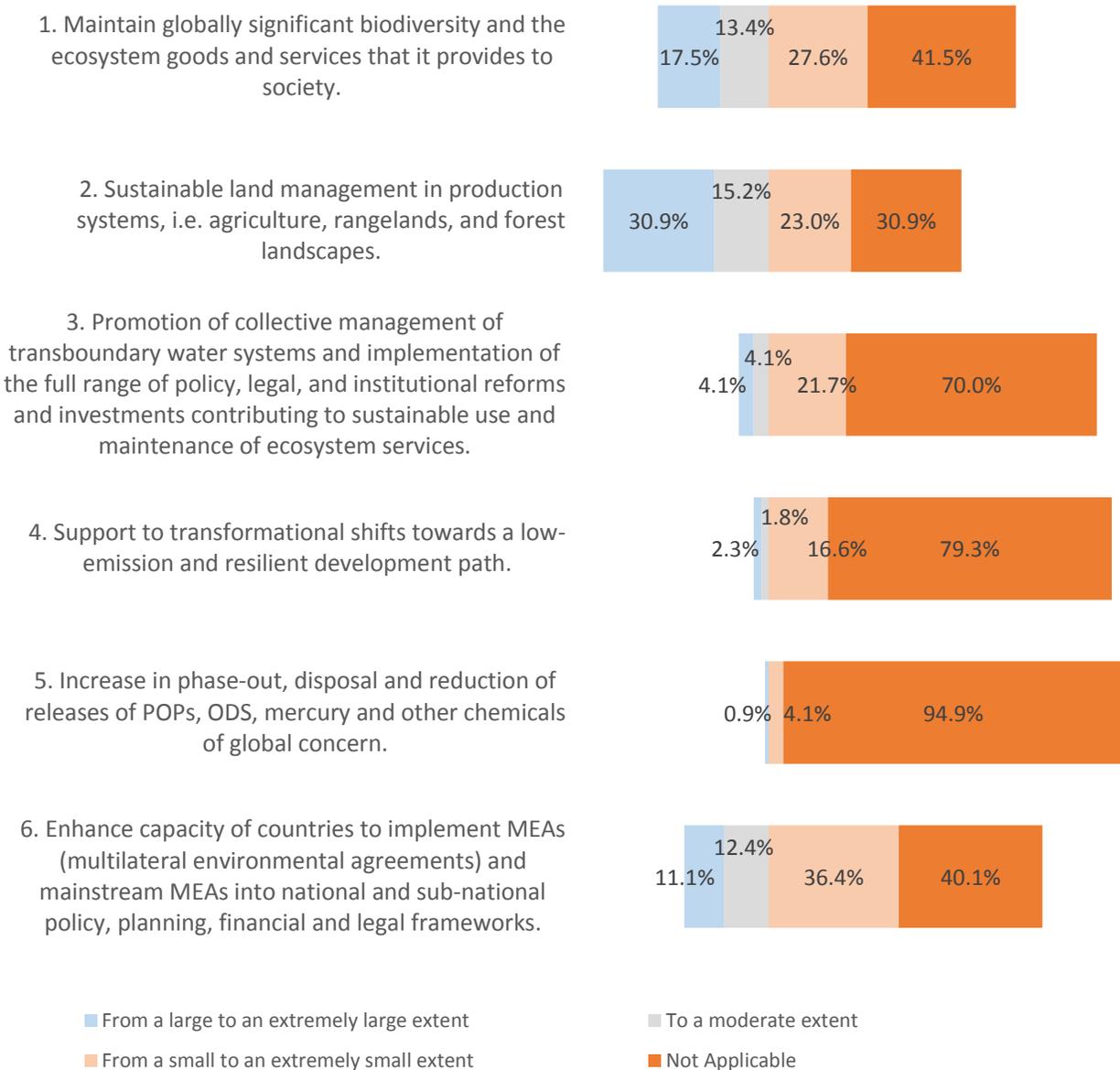
89. About one third (30.9 percent) of NAPA implementation projects intentionally contributes to the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems, while close to half (46.1 percent) intentionally contributes to sustainable land management. Almost a quarter of the projects (23.5 percent) intentionally contributes to multilateral environmental agreements and their

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<sup>35</sup> GEF, [Report on the Sixth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund](#), May 22, 2014. Assembly document GEF/A.5/07/Rev.01, Corporate Results Framework, Table 2, p.16.

mainstreaming into national and sub-national policy, planning, financial and legal frameworks. NAPA implementation projects provide the least support in the area of chemicals – POPs, ODS and mercury. A relatively low level of support to collective management of transboundary water systems is due to those projects focusing on water resource management not having a transboundary component. The low score on (4) ‘transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path’ is the result of most CCA projects not being focused on lowering emissions or other mitigation measures (Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Potential Contribution of NAPA Implementation Projects to Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs)**



## Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Objectives

90. 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.”<sup>36</sup> Subsequently, consistent with the GEF’s operational policies and procedures on gender mainstreaming, LDCF implementation projects began to apply GEF’s five core gender indicators (Annex 6) from October 2014 onward. The Results-Based Management (RBM) Framework Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool (AMAT) has recently been updated<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

91. A gender assessment took place as part of the portfolio analysis. It focused first on whether or not a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan was included in the NAPA project documentation. There were differences in interpretation regarding what it means for a project to be ‘gender mainstreamed’. The FY 2014 AMR ([GEF/LDCF.SCCF.18/04, p.25](#)) talks, for example, about 47 percent of the projects analyzed providing “strong evidence of gender mainstreaming against one or more of the indicators”, introduced in the updated results-based management framework for adaptation to climate change. To avoid confusion, we have followed the gender mainstreaming definition of GEF’s Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) ([GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01, 2014](#)). This states that “Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities”, and “it [Gender mainstreaming] is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated” (p.7). It was decided however to ‘relax’ the gender mainstreaming definition somewhat in the gender assessment and to aim for gender perspectives and gender equality being central to ‘most, if not all, activities’ rather than ‘all activities’.

92. According to these definitions, 29 percent of the NAPA implementation projects included a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan, and 47.5 percent gave strong indications that the development of such a strategy or plan was in progress (Table 16, N=217). 23.5 percent

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<sup>36</sup> DANIDA / IEO, [Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Adaptation to Climate Change](#). October 13 2009, page 46.

<sup>37</sup> GEF, [Updated Results-Based Management Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change under the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund](#), October 2014. Council document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.17/05/Rev.01.

<sup>38</sup> GEF, [Updated Results-Based Management Framework for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tracking Tool](#), November 2010. Council Document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.9/Inf.4.

of the implementation projects assessed did not include a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan. It is important to note that these figures include projects designed throughout the GEF replenishment phases, which includes those that predated GEF's gender policy ([Policy: SD/PL/02, 2012](#)) and Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) ([GEF/C.47/09.Rev.01, 2014](#)). When considering only GEF-6, over 90 percent of the projects either includes or gives strong indication that the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan is taking place.

**Table 16: Inclusion of a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy or Plan by GEF Replenishment Phase**

	GEF-3		GEF-4		GEF-5		GEF-6		Total <sup>1</sup>	
Yes			3	8.1%	44	33.3%	16	34.8%	63	29.0%
No, but its/their development is implied			16	43.2%	61	46.2%	26	56.5%	103	47.5%
No	2	100.0%	18	48.6%	27	20.5%	4	8.7%	51	23.5%
Total by phase:	2	100.0%	37	100.0%	132	100.0%	46	100.0%	217	100.0%

<sup>1</sup> Percentages per rating are towards the total for each phase.

93. A second part of the gender assessment looked at the inclusion of a gender responsive results framework, including gender disaggregated indicators (Table 17, N=217). The totals for the entire portfolio show that over 31.3 percent of the projects includes a gender responsive results framework, while for over 45 percent, the development of a gender responsive results framework is implied. When looking at the GEF-6 replenishment phase, only 10.9 percent of projects assessed include a gender responsive results framework. This low score comes down to the results frameworks not having been fully developed for projects that are in early stages of development.

**Table 17: Inclusion of a Gender Responsive Results Framework, Including Gender Disaggregated Indicators, by GEF Replenishment Phase**

	GEF-3		GEF-4		GEF-5		GEF-6		Total <sup>1</sup>	
Yes			7	18.9%	56	42.4%	5	10.9%	68	31.3%
No, but its/their development is implied			17	45.9%	51	38.6%	31	67.4%	99	45.6%
No	2	100.0%	13	35.1%	25	18.9%	10	21.7%	50	23.0%
Total by phase:	2	100.0%	37	100.0%	132	100.0%	46	100.0%	217	100.0%

<sup>1</sup> Percentages per rating are towards the total for each phase.

94.

95. A final part of the gender analysis further focused on the ultimate goal of mainstreaming. The evaluators developed a new gender rating, which takes gender mainstreaming as the goal for projects, but has added an even higher goal of being gender transformative to identify those projects that go beyond gender mainstreaming and could be an example to others when it comes to gender. The reviewer provided a gender rating for NAPA implementation projects as follows:

- *Gender-blind*: Project does not demonstrate awareness of the set of roles, rights, responsibilities, and power relations associated with being male or female.
- *Gender-aware*: Project recognizes the economic / social / political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations and power relations socially assigned to men and women, but might work around existing gender differences and inequalities or does not sufficiently show how it addresses gender differences and promotes gender equalities.
- *Gender-sensitive*: Project adopts gender sensitive methodologies (a gender analysis is undertaken, gender disaggregated data are collected, gender sensitive indicators are integrated in monitoring and evaluation) to address gender differences and promote gender equality.
- *Gender-mainstreamed*: Project ensures that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to most, if not all, activities. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels.
- *Gender-transformative*: Project goes beyond gender-mainstreaming and facilitates a 'critical examination' of gender norms, roles, and relationships; strengthens or creates systems that support gender equity; and/or questions and changes gender norms and dynamics.
- *Not gender-relevant*: Gender plays no role in the planned intervention.

The gender rating is further explained in Annex 4.

96. The gender assessment shows that close to 14 percent of all NAPA implementation projects is gender mainstreamed, while almost 50 percent is gender sensitive and over 32 percent of implementation projects is gender aware (Table 18, N=217). An important development is that under GEF-6 none of the projects are rated gender blind or 'not gender relevant'.

97. The majority of implementation projects rated gender aware have (or had) the intent to incorporate gender considerations in project activities, but lacked gender disaggregated indicators or other gender specific types of analyses needed to label it gender sensitive or gender mainstreamed. Projects that are rated gender sensitive often cover the first part of the 'gender mainstreamed' definition in that they ensure that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to most, if not all, activities. However, the assessment of

the implications for women and men of planned actions is often lacking. For example, in a Zambian project (GEF ID 3689), the participation and empowerment of women farmers was evident. However, there was insufficient time and resources to further analyze who these women were, and whether the intervention made a difference in their lives. It did not consider key questions such as: Were they single heads of households? Were they cultivating their own land or land allotted to them by their husbands, or by others? Were they able to keep the full proceeds of their own labor?

**Table 18: Overall Assessment of NAPA Implementation Projects' Inclusion of the Gender Component, by GEF Replenishment Phase<sup>1</sup>**

	GEF-3		GEF-4		GEF-5		GEF-6		Total	
Gender blind			6	16.2%	8	6.1%			14	6.5%
Gender aware			13	35.1%	43	32.6%	15	32.6%	71	32.7%
Gender sensitive			17	45.9%	59	44.7%	23	50.0%	99	45.6%
Gender mainstreamed			1	2.7%	21	15.9%	8	17.4%	30	13.8%
Gender transformative					1	0.8%			1	0.5%
Not gender relevant	2	100.0%							2	0.9%
Total by phase:	2	100.0%	37	100.0%	132	100.0%	46	100.0%	217	100.0%

<sup>1</sup> Percentages per rating are towards the total of the phase.

98. Common features shared by implementation projects that were rated 'gender mainstreamed' were women's involvement in activities for which they are the primary beneficiaries or decision-makers, the inclusion of gender disaggregated indicators and targets, and the availability of a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan – preferably designed by or with the women it addresses. Other features are equal gender representation in project beneficiaries and staff, and women in project leadership roles. A CEO endorsed project in Uganda (GEF ID 5603 - UNIDO) is the only project rated gender transformative, because it performed an extensive gender impact analysis as part of the PPG phase, identified alarming inequalities, and aims to mainstream gender equality in Uganda's national development policies to further enhance the national gender equality agenda. An ongoing project in Benin (GEF ID 5232 - AfDB) was rated gender mainstreamed, but came close to a gender transformative rating. The project prioritizes rural activities valued by women (market gardening, rice farming, processing, marketing, etc.) and from which they can generate income. The project specifically focuses on women's access to newly developed public goods and it actively encourages and supports women to assume leadership roles.

### **The Sustainability of Emerging Results**

99. The assessment of the sustainability of project outcomes focused on completed projects (MSP/FSP) for which terminal evaluations (TEs) and terminal evaluation reviews (TERs) were

available (Table 15, N=11). The quality at entry review - discussed in Chapter VI - assessed projects that were CEO endorsed / approved or under implementation (N=116), and it showed that over 98 percent of NAPA implementation projects had a high to very high probability of delivering tangible adaptation benefits. Sustainability is defined, in line with the Annual Performance Reviews (APRs), as the likelihood of continuation of those project benefits after completion of project implementation. To assess sustainability, the terminal evaluation reviewer assessed key risks that could undermine continuation of benefits at the time of the evaluation. The following four types of risk factors are taken into account to rate the likelihood of sustainability of project outcomes beyond the project's timeframe: financial, sociopolitical, institutional frameworks and governance, and environmental.

100. In terms of sustainability of project outcomes, eight of the eleven completed projects for which TERs were available received ratings in the likely range. Two completed projects in Bhutan and Rwanda were rated likely sustainable (GEF IDs 3219 and 3838), while six national projects in Niger, Samoa, Cambodia, Cabo Verde, Congo DR and Gambia (GEF IDs 3319, 3358, 3404, 3581, 3718 and 3728) got a moderately likely rating for the sustainability of project outcomes.

101. For six of these eight completed projects (GEF IDs 3219, 3358, 3581, 3718, 3728 and 3838) that received sustainability ratings in the likely range, the main area of potential concern is financial sustainability of projects' activities beyond the scope of project-related funding. Despite receiving moderately likely or likely financial sustainability ratings, the projects all discuss a lack of assured financing into future phases of project implementation as an issue. TEs recommend that projects identify and implement self-funding mechanisms in order to move beyond the need for project-specific funding, which is not assured into the future.

102. Apart from financial sustainability, two other issues raised repeatedly in TEs relate to integrating climate change adaptation with national policies and programs (institutional sustainability), and, related, the need for country ownership to ensure sustainability (sociopolitical sustainability). The TE of the Samoa project (GEF ID 3358), for example, states that integrating CCA with national policies, programs and relevant sector plans could ensure country ownership of sustainability, and increases the chances that the project's financing becomes a national, sectorial or local-level priority. However, it should be clearly stated that the mainstreaming analysis focused on the self-identification of mainstreaming as described in the NAPA country reports and in project documentation of NAPA implementation projects. The analysis did not include the reviewing of the national development plans and policies of the 51 LDCs.

103. Three of the eleven completed projects, in Sudan, Burkina Faso and Zambia (GEF IDs 3430, 3684 and 3689), received a moderately unlikely rating for the sustainability of project outcomes. TEs indicate that the lower sustainability rating was not due to one specific criterion, but projects had multiple weaknesses contributing to a low sustainability rating. For example, issues related to project funding (financial sustainability), country ownership (socio-political sustainability), and institutional sustainability were identified for the Burkina Faso project (GEF

ID 3684). The TE concludes that “given the very challenging context, the project was as successful as could be expected” (p. 11).

104. A cohort of thirteen completed projects (MSP/FSP), eleven of them with terminal evaluations (TEs) and terminal evaluation reviews (TERs), is too small to draw Fund-wide conclusions. Field visit data from Cambodia, Haiti, Lao PDR and Senegal also illustrates that for most NAPA implementation projects it is still too early to assess the sustainability of LDCF support. In Senegal, the limited results thus far appear highly sustainable; potentially due to the highly participatory methodology promoting progressive ownership of activities by community groups and use of highly experienced internal experts. The data from the Cambodia field visit points toward a role for private sector involvement and value chain perspectives to move beyond project-related funding and increase the potential for financial sustainability. Results from the data of the Lao PDR field visit are cautiously optimistic about the sustainability of project outcomes, but state it will largely depend on successfully transferring project ownership to local stakeholders.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

105. In its evaluation of the LDCF, the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF reached the following 8 conclusions:

**Conclusion 1: LDCF supported activities, for the most part, have been highly relevant to COP guidance, and countries’ development priorities.** There is a generally high degree of coherence between the scope of LDCF funded activities and both the guidance and priorities of the UNFCCC and the GEF, and the development priorities of countries receiving LDCF support.

**Conclusion 2: LDCF supported interventions show clear potential in reaching the GEF’s three adaptation strategic objectives.** Eighty-eight percent of NAPA country reports (EAs), and 90 percent of implementation projects (MSP/FSP) were from a large to an extremely large extent aligned with the GEF adaptation strategic objectives. The quality at entry review showed that 98 percent of NAPA implementation projects had a high to very high probability of delivering tangible adaptation benefits. Also the majority of stakeholders interviewed indicated it was very likely that the NAPA implementation projects they were familiar with, or involved in, would reach the GEF’s strategic adaptation objectives.

**Conclusion 3: Contributions of LDCF supported interventions to focal areas other than climate change are potentially significant.** It is not within the Fund’s mandate to explicitly target focal areas beyond climate change, but given the primary priority areas for LDCF support – agriculture, water resource management and fragile ecosystems – there is clear potential for beneficial synergies with the biodiversity and land degradation focal areas in particular. The Fund’s support also has the potential to contribute to some extent to GEF’s global

environmental benefits, most notably on maintaining globally significant biodiversity and sustainable land management in production systems.

**Conclusion 4: The efficiency of the LDCF has been negatively impacted by the unpredictability of available resources.** Despite employing measures to expedite the project cycle the LDCF's efficiency has experienced negative effects from the unpredictable nature of available resources. There is no formal resource mobilization process and the Fund has to rely on voluntary contributions. Unpredictable funding creates uncertainty for GEF Agencies and least developed countries reliant on LDCF support for the implementation of their primary climate change adaptation priorities. It also negatively influences stakeholders' perception of the Fund's transparency and overall impacts LDCF's efficiency.

**Conclusion 5: LDCF support to NAPA implementation projects has resulted in catalytic effects in completed projects, though extensive replication and upscaling generally demands further financing beyond the projects' timeframe.** Completed NAPA implementation projects developed or introduced new technologies and/or approaches, which were successfully demonstrated and disseminated, and resulted in activities, demonstrations, and/or techniques being repeated within and outside of these projects. Additional catalytic effects, as identified by project stakeholders, were (1) in the generation of significant social, economic, cultural and human well-being co-benefits as a result of NAPA project implementation, (2) the projects having impacts on multiple sectors and at different levels of society, and (3) the projects resulting in the development of foundations for larger scale projects through analytic work, assessments and capacity building. Only 15 percent of completed projects performed well on upscaling. For the majority of projects which received low performance ratings for scaling up, additional financing will be required to ensure scaling up. The technical and institutional capacity building and information sharing activities had good buy-in from national and local-level officials, but projects highlight further financing beyond the project's timeframe as the primary requirement for scaling up.

**Conclusion 6: There is a clear intent to mainstream adaptation into countries' environmental and sustainable development policies, plans and associated processes.** The portfolio analysis found that almost three quarters of NAPA country reports clearly detailed the ways in which NAPA priorities would be linked with existing national policies, plans and strategies.

**Conclusion 7: The gender performance of the LDCF portfolio has improved considerably in response to enhanced requirements from the GEF, though there seems to be confusion as to what it means to be 'gender mainstreamed'.** Almost 50 percent of projects under GEF-4 lacked a gender mainstreaming strategy or plan, which went down to 8.7 percent under GEF-6. Over 90 percent of NAPA implementation projects financed under GEF-6 address gender concerns to some degree. However, this evaluation rated only 17.4 percent of these projects as gender mainstreamed; more projects need to move from the 'gender aware' and 'gender sensitive' categories to the 'gender mainstreamed' rating. The Gender Equality Action Plan clearly explains what it means for a project to be gender mainstreamed. Some other council

documents, more specifically the AMR, show a different interpretation regarding gender mainstreaming.

**Conclusion 8: There are significant discrepancies in project data from the GEF Secretariat's Project Management Information System (PMIS).** A quality assessment of PMIS information was not a specific objective of this evaluation, but project data harvesting from PMIS revealed 58 broken links to project documentation for 46 projects. Moreover, the cross-checking of the available project data with GEF agencies revealed further discrepancies in the data coming from the Project Management Information System.

### **Recommendations**

106. In its evaluation of the LDCF, the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF reached the following 3 recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: The GEF Secretariat should explore and develop mechanisms that ensure the predictable, adequate and sustainable financing of the Fund.**

**Recommendation 2: The GEF Secretariat should make efforts to improve consistency regarding their understanding and application of the GEF gender mainstreaming policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) to the LDCF.**

**Recommendation 3: The GEF Secretariat should ensure that the data in the Project Management Information System is up to date and accurate.**