



GEF/LDCF.SCCF.38/E/02
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38th LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting
June 5, 2025
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 08

**FY26 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OFFICE OF THE GEF UNDER THE LDCF AND SCCF**

(Prepared by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF)

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/LDCF.SCCF.38/E/02, “FY26 Program and Budget for the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF under LDCF and SCCF,” approves the annual budget of \$298,207 to carry out the work program for fiscal year 2026. The budget is in line with the term of the evaluation work, which spans multiple years. The approved budget is being distributed as follows:

1. \$171,324 from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and
2. \$126,883 from the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. During fiscal year (FY) 2025, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) completed activities of the annual work program approved by the Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council at the 36th Council meeting in June 2024. The IEO completed the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2025 and included adaptation to climate change based on the LDCF/SCCF portfolio in highlights of evaluation findings for the Eighth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS8).
2. Consistent with the evaluation budgeting approach for the GEF Trust Fund, the IEO's work program and budget under the LDCF and SCCF adhere to a multiannual model. This model allows for the inclusion of multiyear evaluations and facilitates knowledge-sharing activities following evaluation completion. Maintaining a four-year work program aligns with the objective of fostering a longer-term vision for evaluation within the funds.
3. The IEO conducts evaluations to assess the performance and results of the LDCF and SCCF. These evaluations serve accountability purposes, promote learning, and aim to enhance the performance of the funds. The LDCF/SCCF indicative work program for FY2024–27 (annex I) aligns with the goals outlined in the *GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the LDCF and the SCCF for the GEF-8 Period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2026, and Operational Improvements* (GEF 2022). This strategy aims to assist developing countries in advancing toward the adaptation goals set in the Paris Agreement. The work program focuses on four thematic areas: 1) agriculture, food security, and health; 2) water; 3) nature-based solutions; and 4) climate information and early warning systems (GEF 2022). The IEO's work program for the LDCF/SCCF incorporates AERs to monitor performance, program and thematic evaluations, and the inclusion of adaptation to climate change in OPS8. These evaluations and activities are intended to provide insights that will inform the next GEF adaptation programming strategy.
4. In June 2024, the LDCF/SCCF Council approved a budget for the IEO of \$347,788 for FY25. As of May 1, 2025, most of the budget has been allocated. This document presents a progress report on the activities completed by the IEO in FY25, and a work program and a budget for activities proposed for FY26.

II. PROGRESS REPORT AND FOUR-YEAR WORK PROGRAM

5. In FY25, the IEO completed the AER 2025, initiated work on the LDCF/SCCF program evaluation, prepared highlights of LDCF/SCCF evaluation findings for the first meeting on the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, and included adaptation to climate change based on the LDCF/SCCF portfolio in the report-*Highlights of Evaluation Findings-2022-2025*. The proposed IEO work program for FY26 includes the preparation of the AER 2026, the completion of the LDCF/SCCF program evaluation, and the inclusion of adaptation to climate change in the final report of OPS8.

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

6. During FY24–27, the LDCF/SCCF AERs are following the GEF Annual Performance Report’s (APR) biennial schedule and report on the performance of the LDCF and SCCF based on assessment of completed projects using information from terminal evaluations in FY25 and FY27. In addition to these assessments, the LDCF and SCCF are also partially covered through thematic evaluations conducted by the IEO. Accordingly, the AERs in FY24 and FY26 synthesize evaluative evidence, findings, and conclusions from GEF Trust Fund evaluations conducted during GEF-8, which also encompass projects funded by LDCF/SCCF. All AERs include a summary of the GEF Management Action Record (MAR), tracking the progress in implementation of the GEF management’s action plan that has been endorsed by the LDCF/SCCF Council.

7. In FY25, the IEO prepared the LDCF/SCCF AER 2025 to report on the performance of the funds. The AER presents an assessment of project outcomes and sustainability, quality of project monitoring and evaluation, gender considerations, scaling up, and adaptive management of the cohort of 33 LDCF/SCCF projects. These include 20 projects financed by the LDCF, eight by the SCCF, and five multitrust fund projects. The AER 2025 cohort has a shared value of \$200.9 million in LDCF/SCCF/GEF funding and \$1.6 billion in materialized cofinancing.¹ Additionally, the AER includes a summary of the Management Action Record (MAR). The AER 2025 is being submitted to the June 2025 LDCF/SCCF Council as a working document.

8. The IEO will prepare the AER 2026 in FY26, reporting on the funds through a synthesis of evaluative evidence, findings, and conclusions from GEF Trust Fund evaluations conducted since AER 2024, which include a coverage of LDCF/SCCF projects. These evaluations address areas such as nature-based solutions interventions, the socioeconomic co-benefits of GEF-funded interventions, components of the GEF results-based management system, and programs in Pacific Small Island Developing States. The AER 2026 will also include the MAR to track the implementation of LDCF/SCCF Council–approved action plans. The IEO will submit the AER 2026 to the LDCF/SCCF Council at its June 2026 meeting.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

9. The IEO has conducted a series of program evaluations of LDCF and SCCF, most recently in 2020 and 2021, respectively (GEF IEO 2022a and 2022b). The main objectives of these evaluations were to assess progress since the most recent program evaluations (GEF IEO 2016 and 2018) and to determine the extent to which the funds were achieving the objectives set out in the GEF-7 adaptation strategy. Their findings and conclusions informed the LDCF/SCCF Programming Strategy (GEF 2022). In addition, program evaluations have also been important for validating good performance and results to encourage donor support.

10. In FY25, the IEO initiated the LDCF/SCCF program evaluation to assess the progress since the 2020 and 2021 program evaluations. The evaluation is focused on the extent to which the

¹ Grant funding includes LDCF/SCCF/GEF amounts approved at CEO endorsement, plus project preparation grants. Agency fees are excluded.

funds have achieved LDCF/SCCF objectives, their response to conference of the parties (COP) guidance, and enhancement of policy coherence. Additionally, the evaluation is assessing the Challenge Program for Adaptation Innovation under the LDCF/SCCF. The GEF launched the Challenge Program in 2019 in support of the increased emphasis on private sector engagement in its programming directions. The Challenge Program uses a preselection modality for LDCF/SCCF funding, soliciting project concepts through calls for proposals. To date, it has announced three calls for proposals. The first two were each valued at \$10 million, and after a review process, 19 proposals were selected for financing as medium-size projects. The IEO will complete the LDCF/SCCF program evaluation in FY26.

ADAPTATION IN COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS OF THE GEF

11. The IEO has synthesized conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change based on the LDCF/SCCF portfolio in the past three OPSs including the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7; GEF IEO 2022c). In FY25, adaptation to climate change has contributed to the development of OPS8 through various channels. It brings in evaluative evidence from the AERs prepared during FY23–25, the thematic evaluation of GEF support to climate information and early warning systems (GEF IEO 2025a), and GEF Trust Fund evaluations conducted by the IEO during GEF-8 that also covered LDCF/SCCF activities. Adaptation to climate change has been included in the Highlights of Evaluative Findings on the LDCF/SCCF (GEF IEO 2025b) presented to the first meeting on the GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, and in the Highlights of Evaluation Findings 2022–2025 (GEF IEO 2025c) presented to the first GEF-9 replenishment meeting, both held in May 2025.

12. The efforts to incorporate adaptation to climate change based on the LDCF/SCCF portfolio in the OPS8 report will continue in FY26. Evaluative evidence from completed and ongoing LDCF/SCCF and GEF Trust Fund evaluations will inform both the draft and final reports of OPS8, which will be presented at the second and third GEF-9 replenishment meetings scheduled for October 2025 and January 2026, respectively.

III. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

13. The purpose of the IEO's knowledge management activities is to enhance the use of evaluations across the GEF partnership and promote the application of lessons learned to improve overall performance and impact. In FY25, evaluative evidence and findings from the IEO work program under LDCF/SCCF were disseminated through several knowledge products and activities. The evaluation of GEF support to climate information and early warning systems (GEF IEO 2025a) and the AER 2024 (GEF IEO 2025d) were published and are available on the IEO website. The IEO reported on these evaluations in the report of the GEF to the 29th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The IEO contributed to the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) activity group on early warning systems under the UNFCCC. The TEC activity group drafted a joint policy brief with the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), *Realizing Early Warnings for All* (UNFCCC TEC and GEO 2024), which was published in September 2024. Findings from the IEO's evaluation of GEF

support to climate information and early warning systems informed the brief contributing to the integration of LDCF/SCCF projects' lessons into global policy dialogues on technological innovation and strategic climate resilience planning. Findings and lessons from the LDCF/SCCF work program were also shared through the OPS8 summary of findings and presentations to the replenishment meetings and the LDCF/SCCF strategy meeting in May 2025.

14. During FY26, evaluative evidence and findings from the IEO work program under the LDCF/SCCF will be disseminated through several knowledge products and activities. Findings and conclusions on adaptation will be included in the final OPS8 report to be submitted to the replenishment meeting. The AER 2025 will be published and shared on the IEO website. The IEO will report on evaluative evidence in reports of the GEF to sessions of the COP to the UNFCCC. Findings will also be shared through blog posts on the new EvalForEarth Community of Practice² and at various relevant conferences.

IV. MULTIANNUAL EVALUATION BUDGET

15. The multiannual budget of the IEO under the LDCF/SCCF for the period FY24–27 was approved for a total of \$1,269,257 in June 2023 (GEF IEO 2023). At its 36th meeting in June 2024, the LDCF/SCCF Council approved a total budget for the IEO of \$347,788 for FY25. This amount falls within the approved envelope for FY24–27. For FY25, it is estimated that approximately 90 percent of the approved budget will be disbursed by the end of the fiscal year. Due to the multiannual nature of the budget, these undisbursed funds from the FY25 budget will be rolled over into the FY26 budget.

16. Table 1 presents the FY25–26 budget for the IEO under the LDCF/SCCF. The amounts shown for the activities cover the staff cost of an IEO senior evaluation officer to manage and contribute to conducting the evaluation activities, and the cost of an evaluation analyst to support the evaluations. The multiannual budgets include the costs of consultants, travel, knowledge management and dissemination, and miscellaneous expenses. Because the evaluations will be led by an IEO staff using in-house human resources, staff costs will be charged directly to the individual evaluation budgets via the World Bank time recording system.

17. The IEO requests the LDCF\SCCF Council's approval for the proposed annual budget of \$298,207 for FY26 to cover the cost of the activities in the work program presented above. The breakdown of the proposed annual budget is \$171,324 from the LDCF and \$126,883 from the SCCF.³

² EvalforEarth is a joint initiative of the evaluation offices of the GEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research that functions as a community of practice focused on advancing evaluation in food security, environment, agriculture and rural development.

³ The World Bank will allocate 11 percent of the approved budget for FY26 to cover the hosting fees for the Evaluation Function of the LDCF/SCCF. This fee is estimated at \$32,803 (\$18,846 for LDCF and \$13,957 for SCCF), based on the projected actual disbursements expected to occur during FY26. Consequently, the total funding received by the trustee will include this 11 percent fee.

Table 1: Independent Evaluation Office budget for FY25 and budget request for FY26 (thousand \$)

<i>Expense category/LDCF</i>	<i>FY25 approved budget</i>	<i>FY25 estimated expenditures</i>	<i>FY26 budget request</i>
<i>Fixed cost</i>			
IEO salaries and benefits cost	115,765	104,188	118,658
<i>Total (A)</i>	115,765	104,188	118,658
<i>Variable cost</i>			
Consultants	51,175	45,058	20,025
Travel	8,900	8,010	8,900
Knowledge management/dissemination	2,670	2,403	2,670
Miscellaneous	2,225	2,003	2,225
<i>Total (B)</i>	64,970	58,473	33,820
<i>WBG hosting fee (C)</i>	22,338	20,104	18,846
<i>Total annual budget (A+B+C)</i>	203,073	182,766	171,324

<i>Expense category/SCCF</i>	<i>FY25 budget request</i>	<i>FY25 estimated expenditures</i>	<i>FY26 budget request</i>
<i>Fixed cost</i>			
IEO salaries and benefits cost	77,176	69,459	79,106
<i>Total (A)</i>	77,176	69,459	79,106
<i>Variable cost</i>			
Consultants	37,825	34,043	20,025
Travel	8,900	8,010	8,900
Knowledge management/dissemination	2,670	2,403	2,670
Miscellaneous	2,225	2,003	2,225
<i>Total (B)</i>	51,620	46,458	33,820
<i>WBG hosting fee (C)</i>	15,919	14,327	13,957
<i>Total annual budget (A+B+C)</i>	144,715	130,244	126,883

LDCF/SCCF total			
<i>Total annual budget</i>	347,788	313,009	298,207

Note: The World Bank will allocate 11 percent of the approved budget for FY26 to cover the hosting fees for the Evaluation Function of the LDCF/SCCF. This fee is estimated at \$32,803 (\$18,846 for LDCF and \$13,957 for SCCF), based on the projected actual disbursements expected to occur during FY26. Consequently, the total funding received by the trustee will include this 11 percent fee.

V. REFERENCES

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VI. ANNEX I: INDICATIVE IEO WORK PROGRAM UNDER THE LDCF/SCCF FOR FY24–27

FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report 2024	LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report 2025	LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report 2026	LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report 2027
Evaluation of GEF Support to Climate Information and Early Warning Systems	LDCF/SCCF: Program Evaluation 2025	LDCF/SCCF: Program Evaluation 2025	
	Include adaptation to climate change in OPS8	Include adaptation to climate change in OPS8	