

Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS 6): Participation of Civil Society Organizations in GEF Activities

Draft Approach Paper

Since its inception, GEF has given attention to participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in GEF activities. The GEF Instrument (2015) calls for consultations with the local communities and, where appropriate, facilitating their participation in GEF activities through the project cycle.¹ CSOs are expected to support achievement of the GEF objectives through actions on the ground and ability to leverage partnerships and resources. GEF established the CSO network in 1995 to facilitate CSO participation in GEF activities ranging from general policy discussions to project design, implementation and monitoring. The network participates in the GEF Council meetings as an observer. In 1996 the GEF Council approved a policy on *Public Involvement in GEF Projects* (GEF/C.7/6). The policy sought greater public participation through information dissemination, consultations, and involvement in project execution. The policy was aimed at enhancing country ownership, addressing the socio-economic concerns of affected people, building partnerships among GEF agencies and stakeholders, and using available capacities in design, implementation and evaluation of project activities.

During GEF-5 several measures were under taken to strengthen CSO participation in GEF activities. Through the pilot on broadening of the GEF Partnership, three NGOs (IUCN, WWF-US, CI) were accredited as GEF Project Agencies so that they become eligible to implement GEF activities through direct access to GEF funds.

Up to December 31st 2015 GEF has approved 4,137 projects that account for US \$ 14.6 billion in GEF grant. About 1,100 projects that account for US \$ 4.8 billion in GEF grant have been completed. More than 330 approved projects that account for about US \$ 0.97 billion dollars in GEF grant have a CSO in the lead executing agency role. When the resources provided through SGP are taken into account the activities executed by the CSOs account for about US\$ 1.5 billion in GEF funding.

The review of 'Participation of Civil Society Organizations in GEF Activities' will assess the extent of their participation in GEF activities. It is being prepared as an input to the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation (OPS-6) of the GEF. This paper presents the proposed approach for the review.

Key Questions

The review will seeks answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent has participation of the CSOs in GEF activities been encouraged?
2. To what extent have CSOs participated in the GEF activities?

¹ Paragraph 5, Restructuring and Purpose of GEF, in *Instrument for Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility*, March 2015. GEF. Earlier versions of the Instrument also call for participation of the local communities in GEF activities.

3. To what extent has participation of CSOs affected the outcomes of GEF activities?

Question 1 is aimed at assessment of the extent to which GEF policies, guidelines, and practices encourage participation of CSOs in GEF activities. It would also assess the extent to which other arrangements such as STAR and programmatic approach, that do not directly address CSOs, affect their participation.

Question 2 is aimed at taking stock of the extent to which CSOs participate in preparation, implementation and evaluation of GEF activities. It also assesses the manner in which CSOs participated during different stages of the project cycle.

Question 3 is aimed at assessing the extent to which CSO participation affects the results of the GEF projects. It will determine the extent projects that are executed by the CSOs achieve satisfactory outcomes compared to those that are not. Quality of implementation, execution, and M&E will be other parameters where comparisons will be made.

Methodological Approach

The review will draw on several sources for gathering information. Literature review will be an important source of information. The literature review will include recent evaluations undertaken by the GEF IEO such as the 'Evaluation of the GEF Civil Society Network of GEF' and the 'Joint GEF UNDP Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme,' which have covered several aspects related to CSO participation in GEF activities. The review would also include Council Documents that have addressed participation of CSOs in GEF activities and other relevant documents.

Another source of information will be a quality at entry survey of project documents submitted at the point of CEO Approval or Endorsement. Based on a representative sample of projects from different GEF replenishment periods, the survey will gather information on the extent to which CBOs have been involved in project preparation.

The terminal evaluation review will provide information on the extent to which CBOs and local communities, including indigenous peoples, were involved in design and implementation of the GEF projects. It will also assess the extent to which results of projects where CBOs were involved are different from other projects. The projects will also be compared based on other performance indicators such as efficiency in project preparation, implementation delays, quality of execution, co-financing mobilization, sustainability, support for follow up activities, etc, using data from PMIS, PIRs and terminal evaluations.

Review Report

The review report will present findings on trends in involvement of CBOs in GEF activities. Where feasible the trends in these ratings will be presented by GEF replenishment periods and/or year of project approval.

The review report will have following sections:

- Introduction
- Key Questions
- Methodology

- Trends in involvement of CBOs
- Results of CBO involvement
- Summary

Activity calendar

The review will be conducted by a team led by a Senior Evaluation Officer. Other members of the team will include two short-term consultants. The activities for the review will start in October 2016 and end in June 2017 (Table 1).

Table 1: Calendar of Activities

Activity	Duration	Milestone
Preparation of approach paper	Oct-Nov 2016	15 th of Oct, 2016
Desk Review of GEF IEO Evaluations	Nov to December 2016	December 31 st 2016
Survey of project documents and TEs	December 2016 to April 2017	April 30 th 2017
Analysis	May to June 2017	June 7 th 2017
Draft review report	June 2017	June 20 th 2017
Final report of the review	June 2017	June 30 th 2017