Effects of Conflict and Fragility on GEF Projects, and Innovations to Manage Those Risks
WHY THIS EVALUATION?

PORTFOLIO

4,136 GEF projects

Evaluation methods:
- document analysis
- statistical analysis
- remote sensing
- interviews
- case studies across seven conflict and fragile situations

- Several IEO evaluations have provided evaluative evidence on how FCS affect the outcomes and sustainability of GEF support
- No independent assessment of GEF interventions in such situations

GEF Case Study Situations and Conflict (1989-2020)
The vast majority of GEF projects occur in countries affected by conflict and fragility.

88% of GEF country-level projects occurred in fragile environments.

As of July 2020, GEF had invested $4 billion in countries affected by major armed conflict.

Conflict Hotspots and GEF Project Locations
Fragility of countries and territories receiving GEF funding

**Share of GEF projects in countries affected by major armed conflict**

- **by $ value**
  - Conflict: 29% ($4 billion)
  - Mixed: 15%
  - Non-conflict: 45%
  - Not specified: 11%

- **by number of projects**
  - Conflict: 33% ($4 billion)
  - Mixed: 11%
  - Non-conflict: 49%
  - Not specified: 7%
Fragility has a statistically significant impact on all performance (TER) indicators.

Conflict and fragility had statistically significant impacts on a project being cancelled or dropped, as well as increased duration of delays.
KEY PATHWAYS BY WHICH CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY AFFECT GEF PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Insecurity</th>
<th>Social Conflict and Mistrust</th>
<th>Economic Drivers</th>
<th>Political Fragility and Weak Governance</th>
<th>Coping Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impedes access to project site</td>
<td>Land tenure issues</td>
<td>Illicit extraction and trade of natural resources</td>
<td>Institutional capacity and legitimacy</td>
<td>Conflict between internally displaced persons/refugees and local communities</td>
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<td>Physical safety of project staff and partners</td>
<td>Sensitivities hiring project staff</td>
<td>Competition over resources can drive conflicts and put staff and parties at risk</td>
<td>Financial capacity</td>
<td>Decreased carrying capacity</td>
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<td>Difficulties hiring staff</td>
<td>Projects designed to increase cooperation among groups</td>
<td>Currency depreciation</td>
<td>Corruption and rule of law</td>
<td>Vulnerability enhanced by climatic stressors</td>
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<td>Positive impact</td>
<td>Projects focused on livelihoods and sustainable natural resource management</td>
<td>Projects designed to align with governmental priorities, including implementation of peace agreement</td>
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Can affect the **relevance**, **effectiveness**, **efficiency**, and **sustainability** of the project
The GEF has no standard safeguards, policies, guidance, or procedures to manage conflict- and fragility-related risks to projects.

- Half of the GEF Agencies have developed policies, strategies, and toolkits.
- In the absence of official guidance, implementing organizations and project staff have innovated to meet the needs of their operating environments.
GEF PROJECT INNOVATIONS TO MANAGE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY

RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Acknowledgement  Avoidance  Mitigation  Peacebuilding  Learning
GEF PROJECT INNOVATIONS TO MANAGE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVOIDANCE</th>
<th>MITIGATION</th>
<th>PEACEBUILDING</th>
<th>LEARNING</th>
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<td><img src="arrow.png" alt="" /></td>
<td><img src="umbrella.png" alt="" /></td>
<td><img src="peacebuilding.png" alt="" /></td>
<td><img src="learning.png" alt="" /></td>
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<td>- Project site selection</td>
<td>- Training</td>
<td>- Political will</td>
<td>- Applying learning from previous experiences in project design</td>
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<td>- Monitoring and early warning</td>
<td>- Livelihoods</td>
<td>- Learning during project implementation</td>
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<td>- Participatory approach</td>
<td>- Environmental restoration</td>
<td>- Learning during M&amp;E</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Local partners</td>
<td>- Co-benefits</td>
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<td>- Dispute resolution mechanisms</td>
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<td>- Adaptive management</td>
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RISK MANAGEMENT
LESSONS

- Conflict and fragility **matter**.

- These contexts present **risks** but also **opportunities**

- Projects in fragile and conflict-affected settings should be approached differently than non-conflict-affected projects

  → **Conflict sensitivity!**

  - Project staff should assess risks early and plan for potential complications

  - Institutions need to ensure provide guidance, policies, safeguards, and trained staff to support conflict-sensitive programming
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GEF

1. The GEF Secretariat should use the project review process to provide feedback to Agencies to identify conflict- and fragility-related risks to a proposed project and develop measures to mitigate those risks.

2. To improve conflict-sensitive programming while also providing flexibility to Agencies and projects, the GEF Secretariat could develop guidance for conflict-sensitive programming.

3. To improve conflict-sensitive design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF projects, the GEF Secretariat together with the Agencies should leverage existing platforms for learning, exchange, and technical assistance.

4. The current GEF Environmental and Social Safeguards could be expanded to provide more details so that GEF projects address key conflict-sensitive considerations.

5. The GEF Secretariat could consider revising its policies and procedures so that GEF-supported projects can better adapt to rapid and substantial changes common in fragile and conflict-affected situations.
THANK YOU!

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