

Audit Trail

Stakeholder Comments on Approach Paper for the Third Joint GEF-UNDP SGP Evaluation March 2020

Commenter	Comment	Response and Action Taken
UNDP, SGP CPMT	Suggest to revise text and relevant footnote, in line with GEF/C.54/05/Rev.0, "Gef Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF7". While the SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) at UNDP manages the SGP Global Programme, the Upgraded Country Programme Portfolio of the SGP Country Programmes is managed by a UNDP-GEF Global Coordinator, who provides oversight by supporting and monitoring implementation and promoting the sharing of lessons learned and best practices among UCPs and between UCPs and the Global Programme (para 4)	Revised based on comment (footnote 3).
UNDP, SGP CPMT	For UCPs, the Project Document is considered as the country program strategy (para 4)	Added in footnote 4.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	15 as of June 2019. As of December 2019, there is one additional country, Malaysia, in the process of upgrading as the OP7 PIF was approved by the Dec 2019 GEF Council (para 7)	Overall number was left at 15 as Malaysia in the process, text specifies this.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	In reference to the UCP being financed by STAR, maybe the paper could inform earlier in the text that the SGP global program is funded by Core funding agreed by the GEF replenishment for each replenishment cycle, and additional STAR is also accessed based on agreed rule under the cycle (para 7)	Modified.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	This refers to the year of CEO endorsement but not necessary the starting year (table 2).	Mentioned in the notes, will be discussed in the report, as relevant.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	To note, GEF-7 SGP operation is yet to start with the pending CEO endorsement for GEF-7 resources for SGP (para 18).	Reworded to "will have."
UNDP, SGP CPMT	For project portfolio analysis, could it align with the FY (end of June 2019) as we have comprehensive data and analysis done for the Annual	Noted, coverage will be specified in the report, preliminarily extended to December 2019 (also note comment from GEF SEC).

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	Monitoring Report? As for other activities, it could be up to Sept 2019 (para 21).	
UNDP, SGP CPMT	Balance between the SGP Global programme and the Upgraded Country Programmes countries could be further considered - only one country from the global program may not be representative/sufficient. Country that will be newly upgraded would be Malaysia (Para 23).	Revised based on five country visits.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	What is the rationale for selecting the same UPCs countries that were visited for the 2015 joint evaluation?	Removed for now, desk review ongoing to identify case studies.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	Would be useful to discuss on the criteria for selection.	Noted, and see comment above on ongoing desk review.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	Within the purpose and objectives of this evaluation to assess and further enhance the effectiveness of the SGP, and in light of the recent discussions, it may also be valuable to capture the linkage between the effectiveness and efficiency considerations, including the issues on grant/non-grant costs, based on earlier evaluation studies (para 21)	Noted, this falls under the second key evaluation question under efficiency
UNDP, SGP CPMT	We also welcome the focus on assessing the innovation and inclusive approaches of the SGP. In addition to gender equity and women's empowerment, the evaluation may also include other key target groups of the SGP (such as indigenous peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities) by building on the recent IEO evaluations on indigenous peoples, scaling up, and other related ones that included SGP (para 21)	This is noted, however the evaluation needs to focus due to time and budget constraints.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	On the issue of governance of the programme, we welcome the evaluation question that will assess the extent to which SGP is guided by a vision which ensures coherent and effective implementation of a program which remains relevant to national priorities, and GEF and UNDP priorities. This could include looking at the corporate nature of the programme, such as the SGP Steering Committee and other organizational structures that may allow greater synergy and integration of SGP work with GEF and UNDP, for example looking at SGP's role as a testing and demonstration ground for larger initiatives (para 21)	Noted.
UNDP, SGP CPMT	In terms of the methodologies of the evaluation, we would like to seek further clarity on the criteria of the selection of countries for visit, and the	Noted, desk review to determine countries and methods is ongoing.

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	survey to be conducted so that we could assist in providing the necessary data and logistical support as needed (para 23)	
UNDP, SGP CPMT	Would be useful to discuss on the criteria for selection (para29).	Noted.
GEF SEC	The key evaluation questions would benefit from including a cost-effectiveness analysis of the SGP. Detailed suggestions on this and other points using the evaluation headlines of the approach paper are as follows:	See responses below.
GEF SEC	<p>For the relevance question, we suggest adding a question about whether the SGP contributes to the overall results of the GEF as a whole or if it attends to a separate logic driven primarily from the demand arising from local communities and CSOs for support.</p> <p>The evaluation could also ask to what extent the SGP complements the GEF ‘regular’ programming through MSPs, FSPs, PFDs in countries/regions, if this is the case. Examples from different countries and programs would be helpful in this sense. (para 22, Relevance)</p>	<p>It will be addressed by the first relevance question and the first effectiveness question.</p> <p>This is noted, and it will be considered when developing country case studies and in answering the first key relevance and effectiveness questions.</p>
GEF SEC	<p>The evaluation asks, “To what extent is the GEF SGP contributing to the delivery of global environmental and socio-economic benefits”? The evaluation can also consider issues related to the socio-economic impacts of the Programme, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) local environmental benefits and (ii) direct/indirect socio-economic benefits to beneficiaries, communities and CSOs. (para 22, Effectiveness) 	Local environmental benefits added to the question while socio-economic benefits will cover beneficiaries, communities and CSOs.
GEF SEC	In addition to “grants” as the main deliverable of the program, the approach can analyze all the services provided by the SGP. We are particularly interested in learning how grantees and recipient countries see the value emerging from the SGP global and regional components vis a vis the small grants themselves (para 22, Effectiveness)	Noted and will be part of the country visits.
GEF SEC	How do the management costs associated with the SGP over time compare with other programs of similar characteristics? (Para 22, Effectiveness)	A comparative analysis was attempted in the past, but comparable data is difficult to identify. This evaluation will consider appropriate methods to assess cost-effectiveness.

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GEF SEC	We suggest the Grants Maker Plus initiative be made a part of the assessment. (para 22, Effectiveness)	Noted, however the evaluation needs to focus due to time and budget constraints.
GEF SEC	The “gender” question (To what extent is gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment integral to the SGP?) could be more focused on emerging gender-related results, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to what extent are gender-related results being generated by the SGP? How effective is the SGP gender mainstreaming approach in delivering the SGP objectives? (para 22, Effectiveness)	Revised.
GEF SEC	To what extent is the SGP supporting an effective inclusion of local beneficiaries including indigenous peoples, vulnerable or marginalized groups and individuals? (para 22, Effectiveness)	Noted. The portfolio review will calculate the percentage of grants targeting indigenous peoples and country visits will provide evidence on inclusion of local beneficiaries. Question revised.
GEF SEC	Is the current governance structure still adequate to deliver the SGP mandate? What are your recommendations, if any, for improvements? (para 22, Efficiency)	This falls under the efficiency evaluation questions.
GEF SEC	What is the role of co-financing in the SGP program? (para 22, Efficiency)	Assessment of co-financing will be part of the portfolio review.
GEF SEC	The approach should take into account that sustainability of small-scale local projects and with communities is very different than the question of sustainability of large GEF projects at the national level with governments and agencies. (para 22, Sustainability)	Noted.
GEF SEC	All three dimensions of sustainability should be considered: environmental, economic and social. (para 22, Sustainability)	Noted.
GEF SEC	It is not clear why an analysis of sustainability of outcomes is being limited to UCPs. This topic is relevant across the SGP portfolio, and probably more relevant to the non UCPs since the UCPs by definition would may now have a greater capacity to implement and sustain outcomes. (para 22, Sustainability)	Noted, however the evaluation needs to focus due to time and budget constraints. Some evidence on sustainability will be collected during country visits and the portfolio review will assess sustainability ratings.
GEF SEC	It may be beneficial to revisit some of those very projects that were evaluated for sustainability in the two earlier evaluations, and actually see if	Noted and agree, however the time and resources available to this exercise mean that it will have to focus on key aspects and the

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	the outcome were indeed sustained (a similar approach as was done for the recent SIDS evaluation). (para 22, Sustainability)	possibility of revisiting projects will depend on the country visit selection.
GEF SEC	We suggest that the focus of the evaluation not be on “innovation” at the expense of other types of investments. (para 22, Sustainability)	Noted, but innovation is integral to the GEF-7 implementation arrangements of SGP.
GEF SEC	The Evaluation should reveal what mechanisms result in practices being replicated and upscaled in a systematic way. (para 22, Sustainability)	Noted.
GEF SEC	The “portfolio review” section mentions use of “a limited number of case studies, surveys and targeted interviews based on survey results.” Can we know more as to which countries will be the case studies, and why? (para 23)	See answer above to GEF SGP CPMT comment on para 23.
GEF SEC	The document review should include the recent GEF’s monitoring report (December 2019). The paper still mentions this report as “forthcoming”. Given the detailed analysis undertaken in the 2019 Monitoring Report, it would be useful to extend the evaluation period to December 2019 so as to include this analysis where relevant (para 23)	This was not available at the time of drafting the Approach Paper, all relevant documents will be used during the evaluation phase, coverage periods will be specified, preliminary set to December 2019 (see also GEF SGP CPMT comment on coverage period).
GEF SEC	It would be useful to understand better what the survey design will be, the target audience for the interviews, and how these will be conducted (para 23)	This is being developed based on evaluation methodology used by GEF and UNDP IEOs.
GEF SEC	It would be useful to get acquainted with the “interview protocols” and “review protocols” that will be used. How will the interviews be structured? By stakeholder types or otherwise? (para 23)	This is being developed based on evaluation methodology used by GEF and UNDP IEOs.
GEF SEC	We suggest that the selected countries are evenly split between UCPs and countries under the global programme (para 23)	Noted, currently five visits are foreseen, three UPCs and two under the global programme.
GEF SEC	What is the framework that the assessment will employ to define innovation in the SGP? (para 21)	This will be based on SGP definition and will be developed and presented in the report (see para 19).
GEF SEC	Under “triangulation”, there is reference to testing of preliminary findings with different stakeholders. Does the Evaluation Office envisage that the GEF Secretariat will be a part of this testing? (para 23)	Yes.

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GEF SEC	If the evaluation is going to analyze cost-effectiveness, it may need to include a review of other grant mechanisms for comparison purposes.	This is covered by the second key efficiency question.
GEF SEC	It would be useful to have a greater inclusion of the perspective of grantees. The evaluation identifies the grantees as the secondary target audience and not a direct stakeholder of the evaluation. The grantees would offer an interesting perspective on the program.	Noted and agree, however the time and resources available to this exercise mean that it will have to focus on key strategic aspects and grantees can only be reached on a limited sample basis.
GEF SEC	It would be useful if the review assessed how the Secretariat has implemented the recommendations of previous evaluations. The summary of the conclusions of the previous evaluations of the SGP can be extended to include what measures the Secretariat has adopted in line with prior IEO recommendations, and the effectiveness of these measures.	This is part of standard evaluation practice and will be covered in the evaluation report.
GEF SEC	Finally, when do you expect the draft assessment to be ready? It would be useful to have a timeline of when the draft paper will be available for the Secretariat's review, and at what stages in the process explicit consultation with the Secretariat will be sought. We would also welcome a face-to-face conversation to discuss these points above.	See section VII a.