

59th GEF Council Meeting
December 7–11, 2020
Virtual Meeting

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO:

- (1) GEF/E/C.59/01: Evaluation of GEF Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations**
- (2) GEF/E/C.59/02: Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector**
- (3) GEF/E/C.59/03: Evaluation of the Role of Medium Size Projects (MSP) in the GEF Partnership**
- (4) GEF/E/C.59/04: Evaluation of Knowledge Management in the GEF (2020)**

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INTRODUCTION

1. This paper presents the GEF Secretariat's management responses to the following reports of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO):
 - (a) GEF/E/C.59/01: Evaluation of GEF Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations
 - (b) GEF/E/C.59/02: Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector
 - (c) GEF/E/C.59/03: Evaluation of the Role of Medium Size Projects (MSP) in the GEF Partnership
 - (d) GEF/E/C.59/04: Evaluation of Knowledge Management in the GEF (2020)

EVALUATION OF GEF SUPPORT IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED SITUATIONS

2. The Secretariat welcomes the IEO's report on the Evaluation of GEF Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations, and particularly appreciates its in-depth and data-oriented analyses. The Secretariat is in broad agreement with the report's conclusions and recommendations.
3. The Secretariat takes note of the findings that the majority of GEF projects are in fragile and conflict-affected situations, and the potential impacts of these circumstances on project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
4. The Secretariat is pleased by the findings that a growing number of GEF projects have acknowledged the risks posed by conflict and fragility, and innovated strategies to manage those risks. The Secretariat is also encouraged by the observation that many of these projects are learning from both their own experiences and from the experiences of other programming on these dimensions.
5. The Secretariat appreciates the extensive range of innovative guidances for fragile and conflict-affected circumstances that has been developed and is being practiced by many of the Implementing Agencies. The Secretariat will build upon these to develop jointly with Agencies GEF guidance on conflict-sensitive programming. This will provide a framework that all Agencies can adopt during project design and across the project life cycle.
6. The Secretariat takes note of the recommendation to leverage existing knowledge platforms to improve conflict-sensitivity. The Secretariat considers this recommendation as usefully related to the present Knowledge Management evaluation, and will therefore address this through its coming advancements in Knowledge Management as per the recommendations of that report.

7. Finally, the Secretariat is confident that developments along all of these dimensions will facilitate and strengthen the incorporation of adaptive management into GEF programming, so as to enable further project adaptability and resilience in challenging implementation circumstances.

EVALUATION OF GEF INTERVENTIONS IN THE ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING SECTOR

8. The Secretariat welcomes the IEO's report on the Evaluation of GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale GOLD Mining Sector, and is in broad agreement with its conclusions and recommendations.

9. The Secretariat appreciates the report's robust review of both earlier GEF funded projects and newly funded programs, including the Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of the ASGM Sector (GOLD).

10. The Secretariat is pleased by the IOE findings that the GEF ASGM interventions meet their objectives and are successful at reducing mercury from the ASGM Sector. The Secretariat is encouraged by the conclusion that the GOLD program has learnt from, and built upon past GEF funded pilots in the sector.

11. The Secretariat takes note of the recommendation to continue to encourage high mercury use countries to become more involved in the Convention. The Secretariat agrees that high mercury use countries are globally significant, and recognizes that GEF support extends to all eligible countries as described in the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention.

12. The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation to increase focus on policy interventions to put in place the necessary framework to formalize miners, and is already progressing in this direction through the GOLD+ program, which was approved in June 2020 and is piloting the use of landscape and jurisdictional approaches to support formalization in the ASGM sector.

13. The Secretariat will continue to seek opportunities for multi-focal area ASGM interventions where and as appropriate.

EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF MEDIUM SIZE PROJECTS (MSP) IN THE GEF PARTNERSHIP

14. The Secretariat welcomes the IEO's report on the Evaluation of Medium Size Projects (MSP) in the GEF Partnership and its ensuing conclusions and recommendations.

15. The Secretariat is pleased by the IEO's findings that MSPs are effective in their specific and intended role in both the GEF suite of programming modalities and in the broader landscape of environmental financing.

16. The Secretariat appreciates the findings that the MSP Modality is useful for piloting new approaches for scaling up and knowledge sharing. The Secretariat is particularly encouraged by the IEO's positive conclusions on the relevance, efficiency, performance and sustainability of

the MSP Modality, and the observations this modality has led to impact and transformational change.

17. The Secretariat is therefore in agreement with the recommendation that the MSP modality should continue to be used for innovation and transformation in particular, and that relevant lessons can be provided from continued assessment of such projects.

EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN THE GEF (2020)

18. The Secretariat welcomes the IEO's report on the Evaluation of Knowledge Management in the GEF, and appreciates its useful analyses and conclusions.

19. The Secretariat is pleased to see the IEO finding that the GEF Partnership has continued to make progress on knowledge management during GEF-7. The Secretariat further appreciates the observations that the relevance of knowledge and learning activities within the Partnership has been increased by the KM focus within the new programming approaches of IAPs/IPs, GOLD and CFI programs, as well as through initiatives such as IW:Learn and the GEF Gender Partnership. The Secretariat is confident that further positive progress will continue to be made on KM as these programs and initiatives advance and evolve.

20. With respect to the recommendations of the Evaluation, the Secretariat is in agreement that a partnership-wide KM Strategy and Action Plan should be developed, and that technical KM capabilities can be further strengthened for greater knowledge capture, exchange and dissemination.