

32nd LDCF/SCCF Council Meeting
June 23, 2022
Washington, D.C.

Agenda Item 09

**FY23 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.32/E/01, “FY23 Work Program and Budget for the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF under LDCF and SCCF,” approves the annual budget of \$46,000 to carry out the work program for fiscal year 2023. The budget is in line with the term of the evaluation work that spans over multiple years. The approved budget is being distributed as follows:

1. \$23,000 from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and
2. \$23,000 from the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. During fiscal year (FY) 2022 the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) completed the activities of the annual work program approved by the Least Developed Countries Fund/Special Climate Change Fund (LDCF/SCCF) Council at the 30th Council meeting in June 2021. The IEO prepared the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2022 and completed the 2021 Program Evaluation of the SCCF.
2. The IEO introduced multiannual budgets for its LDCF/SCCF work program in June 2015. This was in line with the practice of the IEO evaluation budget for the GEF Trust Fund and accommodates multiyear evaluations such as overall performance studies (OPSs) and knowledge sharing activities after the completion of evaluations. Continuing to deliver a four-year work program is in support of the development of a longer-term evaluation vision toward the Funds.
3. The IEO provides evaluations on the performance and results of the LDCF and SCCF for accountability purposes, and the FY2020–23 LDCF/SCCF indicative work program is organized around the three objectives of the *GEF Programming Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change for the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund and Operational Improvements July 2018 to June 2022*: (1) reduce vulnerability and increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation; (2) mainstream climate change adaptation and resilience for systemic impact, and (3) foster enabling conditions for effective and integrated climate change adaptation (GEF 2018). The IEO has also contributed evaluative evidence and lessons that informed the GEF programming strategy on adaptation for the LDCF/SCCF for GEF-8 being presented at this Council session (GEF 2022).
4. In June 2021, the LDCF/SCCF Council approved a budget for the IEO of \$84,000 for FY22. The IEO estimates that the budget will be nearly fully used by the end of the fiscal year. This document presents a progress report on the activities completed by the IEO in FY22, and a work program and a budget for activities proposed for FY23.

II. PROGRESS REPORT AND FOUR-YEAR WORK PROGRAM

1. Annual Evaluation Report

5. The IEO has prepared the LDCF/SCCF Annual Evaluation Report (AER) 2022. Previous AERs have presented performance ratings, trends in gender, and innovative aspects of the cohort of LDCF/SCCF projects included in the GEF Annual Performance Report (APR). Additionally, the AERs included a summary of the GEF Management Action Record tracking of the level of adoption of LDCF/SCCF Council decisions. To align with the changes in reporting on the annual performance of the GEF Trust Fund and the GEF Management Action Record which are moving to a biennial reporting schedule and thus are not being presented to GEF Council in June 2022, this year's AER instead presents a special analysis on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on project design, implementation and results covering LDCF and SCCF projects under design or implementation between March 2020 and December 2021.

6. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, a review of the impacts of the pandemic on projects, as well as the measures adopted to address the impacts, can provide useful lessons moving forward. AER 2022 presents a review of 53 LDCF and SCCF projects, of which 19 are at the project identification form (PIF) stage, 15 are at the midterm review (MTR) stage, and 19 projects at the terminal evaluation (TE) stage. This sample comprises all projects for which PIFs, MTRs, or TEs were submitted between March 2020 and December 2021 respectively.¹ Project documentation was reviewed for discussions on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on project design and performance. Interviews were conducted with stakeholders of three projects, one from each stage. AER 2022 is being submitted to Council as an information document (see GEF/LDCF.SCCF.32/E/Inf.01).

7. In FY23 the IEO will prepare the AER 2023 that will assess the terminal evaluations that have been submitted to the IEO since AER 2021 in line with the APR 2023. The AER will report on outcome, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) design, and implementation ratings for these projects. The management action records reporting on progress in implementing agreed follow-up actions to LDCF/SCCF evaluation recommendations will also be presented in AER 2023.

8. Additionally, the AER 2023 will report on a special study on early warning systems (EWS) activities financed by the LDCF/SCCF. The GEF-8 adaptation strategy includes early warning and climate information systems as one of four priority themes for LDCF and SCCF. Given this proposed focus, a detailed review of past LDCF and SCCF projects addressing EWS has the potential to influence future direction of a major area of work. This study would fill a knowledge gap in the performance and trends of an intervention area which has been elevated in the GEF-8 adaptation strategy to a priority theme. The study will assess a portfolio of 88 LDCF/SCCF projects approved in GEF-5 to GEF-7 and conduct a review of existing literature for lessons on EWS. The work for this special study has started with the preparation of a concept note and will be completed in FY23 with funds carried over from FY22.

2. Fund Program Evaluations

9. As part of the four-year work program of the IEO approved by the LDCF/SCCF Council at its 26th meeting in June 2019 (GEF IEO 2019a), the IEO conducted the 2021 Program Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Countries Fund (GEF IEO 2021). The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the progress the SCCF has made since the most recent SCCF program evaluation (GEF IEO 2018) and the extent to which the SCCF is achieving the objectives set out in the GEF adaptation strategy. Another important objective of this evaluation, given changes and major trends over the past few years in the global climate finance architecture and the shifting priorities of donors, was to provide recommendations on the way forward for the SCCF

¹ With the following exceptions: Five PIFs submitted between March 4 and March 23, 2020 which did not discuss the COVID pandemic (presumably because it had not yet impacted the project implementation areas when the PIFs were written), and any MTRs and TEs submitted during the period but not covering a period of implementation impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (for instance, TE was submitted to the Portal in April 2020, but project closure was December 2019).

within the context of these changes and shifting priorities. The IEO completed the evaluation in FY22, and it was presented to the December 2021 LDCF/SCCF Council. Earlier in FY21, the IEO completed the 2020 Program Evaluation of the LDCF (GEF IEO 2020a).

3. Adaptation in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF

10. The IEO has synthesized conclusions and evaluative evidence on adaptation to climate change in the Seventh Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS7) through various channels. OPS7 brings in evaluative evidence from the AERs prepared during FY19–21, from the 2020 and 2021 program evaluations of the LDCF and the SCCF, and from GEF Trust Fund evaluations conducted by the IEO during GEF-7. Some GEF Trust Fund evaluations have integrated LDCF/SCCF activities including the role of medium-size projects in the GEF partnership, the strategic country cluster evaluations (SCCEs), and GEF support to innovation in particular. The LDC SCCE and African Biomes SCCE included LDCF/SCCF projects, and findings and conclusions have informed OPS7. Adaptation to climate change was also included in special studies for OPS7 on, for example, performance, strategies, and approaches, and gender equality. Furthermore, the IEO conducted a study on the mainstreaming of climate change resilience in the GEF portfolio that informed OPS7. The final report of OPS7 was submitted to the third meeting of the 8th replenishment of the GEF in February 2022 (GEF IEO 2022).

11. In FY22, the findings and recommendations from the LDCF and SCCF program evaluation and the AER 2021 were also shared through presentations at the first and second 2022-2026 LDCF/SCCF strategy meetings. Evaluative evidence informed 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).

4. Policy and Guidance

12. The *2010 Monitoring and Evaluation Policy* has been revised and a separate GEF Evaluation Policy was adopted by the GEF Council in June 2019. In FY20, the IEO started work on updating the *Guidance Document: Monitoring and Evaluation in the LDCF/SCCF* (GEF 2014) to reflect the change to a separate evaluation policy. This guidance document discusses the fundamentals of M&E practices within the context of the Funds' M&E policies and requirements and provides guidance to apply the M&E policy to LDCF/SCCF activities in accordance with GEF policies and practices. A professional peer review of the IEO, conducted in FY20, was submitted to the June 2020 Council meeting as an information document (GEF IEO 2020b). The peer review made recommendations for further revision of the updated evaluation policy which, after the completion of OPS7, were incorporated in FY22 (GEF IEO 2019b). In FY23 the IEO will finalize the updating of LDCF/SCCF guidance document with funds carried over from FY20.

5. Knowledge Management

13. Evaluative evidence and findings from the IEO work program under LDCF/SCCF are disseminated through several knowledge products and activities. The graphically edited full

evaluation reports of the LDCF and SCCF program evaluations have been published on the IEO website along with IEO Learnings. The IEO is reporting on the SCCF program evaluation in the report of the GEF to the twenty-seventh session of the conference of parties to the UNFCCC scheduled in November 2022. Findings and lesson from evaluations of the LDCF/SCCF were also shared at the third Asian Pacific Evaluation Association Conference 2022 in February and the 2022 Islamic Development Bank Group Evaluation Symposium in March. In FY23 dissemination of evaluative evidence will take place at conferences and through blog posts on Earth-Eval, an online community of practice hosted by the IEO.

III. MULTIANNUAL EVALUATION BUDGET

14. The IEO introduced the first multiannual budget for the IEO's FY16–19 work program for LDCF/SCCF in June 2015. This was in line with the practice of the IEO evaluation budget for the GEF Trust Fund and accommodates multiyear evaluations such as OPSs and knowledge sharing activities after the completion of evaluations. The multiannual budget for FY20–23 was approved for a total of \$340,000 in June 2019 (GEF IEO 2019a). The IEO work program has been tailored so that the approved budgets will allow for an effective and efficient delivery of the proposed evaluation work.

15. The LDCF/SCCF Council approved a budget for the IEO of \$84,000 for FY22 at its 30th meeting in June 2020. The projected amount to be disbursed by the end of FY22 is approximately 95 percent of the approved budget. Based on the multiannual nature of the budget, any undisbursed funds from the FY22 budget will be rolled over into the FY23 budget (table 1). The amounts shown for the activities cover the cost of a senior evaluation officer from the IEO to manage and contribute to the activities, and the cost of other IEO staff to carry out the activities.

16. The IEO requests the LDCF\SCCF Council's approval for the proposed annual budget of \$46,000 for FY23 to cover the cost of the activities in the work program presented above. This amount is within the approved envelope for FY20–23.

17. The office would like to highlight that IEO staff costs have been increasing for evaluations of the LDCF/SCCF due to the maturity of the programs and the growth of the portfolio, especially for the LDCF. For the next four-year budget (FY24–27) the IEO would like to put forth an updated estimate of staff costs to enable a more accurate cost recovery.

Table 1: FY22–23 budget of the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF (thousands \$)

Evaluation Activity	FY22 Approved Budget	FY22 Estimated Expenses	FY23 Requested Budget
LDCF			
Annual Evaluation Report	22	10	23
LDCF Evaluation	0	0	0
Adaptation in OPS7	15	15	0
Policy and Guidance	0	0	0
Sub-Total (A)	37	25	23
SCCF			
Annual Evaluation Report	22	10	23
SCCF Evaluation	10	30 ^a	0
Adaptation in OPS7	15	15	0
Policy and Guidance	0	0	3
Sub-Total (B)	47	55	23
Total (A+B)	84	80	46

Note: ^a As the SCCF program evaluation was postponed \$20,000 was carried over from FY21.

IV. REFERENCES

All URLs were checked before publication or as of the access date noted.

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