

Report of the Eastern Africa Regional CSO meeting

May 16, 2013

Kigali, Rwanda



Cross section of the participants of the CSO meeting at hotel Des Mille Collines, Kigali Rwanda

Background

For over 3 years now, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been convening the Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW) in its constituencies as associated meetings of the GEF constituency meetings.

These workshops aim at keeping the GEF national focal points, the Rio conventional national focal points: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and relevant stakeholders,

including civil society, equipped and informed about GEF strategies, policies and procedures and further encourage coordination.

The workshop also provides an opportunity for different country focal points to meet with other GEF partners so as to interact, share experiences, lessons and review policies and procedures from development and implementation of GEF projects and ensure integration within national policy frameworks.

Introduction

The third ECW in the row took place in the city of Kigali. This preceded the ECWs held in Nairobi and Arusha in 2011 and 2012 respectively. Parallel to the ECW, was the regional civil society organization (CSO) meeting that was attended by 14 representatives from the 13 countries (Comoros; Djibouti; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Kenya; Madagascar; Mauritius; Rwanda; Seychelles; Somalia; Sudan; Tanzania; Uganda) except **South Sudan** a new member of GEF.

The CSO meeting collated views on the ECW and provided a platform where CSOs shared practices, experiences on their engagements with GEF.

Proceedings



CSO representatives listening to a point being made by representative from Sudan

The meeting was called to order by the Representative of the Regional Focal Point (RFP) at 9.08 am in Hotel Des Mille Collines located in the heart of the city of Kigali, Rwanda. The participants introduced each other so as to easily identify themselves. Procedural matters were raised with regard to the draft agenda. Participants unanimously adopted the annotated agenda. Welcome remarks and opening remarks were made by the CSO representative from

Rwanda and Uganda respectively.

The morning session was chaired by the CSO representative from Somalia, the Representative of the RFP presented a summary of the 2 day ECW. Participants were reminded of the evolution of the GEF, its organs and its role as a financial mechanism to some multilateral environment agreements/conventions. The replenishment process including a summary of the April meeting that was held in Paris, France. A snap short of the GEF country support programme with a practical

exercise on National Portfolio Formulation Exercises (NPFs) was shared. The Representative of the RFP elaborated on the GEF 6 replenishment by sharing the process timetable and reminded participants of the 2 slots availed to CSOs for the September meeting. Participants were taken through the key findings from the Overall Performance Study 5 (OPS5). Of the 10 observations presented, the CSO meeting noted with concern that the general environmental trends continue to spiral downwards. Interestingly, CSOs were amused to hear that the evaluation of the Small Grants Program (SGP) dated back in 2009. Concern was raised on whether the small projects when aggregated could impact on the GEF goal of achieving global environmental benefits. Unanimously, CSOs requested GEF Evaluation Office to consider evaluating the work under the SGP.

The Representative of the RFP then concluded the feedback from the ECW by highlighting the new GEF signature programs, process of tracking results and tracking tools. He reminded the participants of the practical exercise of which said that will be useful for application at country level.



Some of the CSO representatives meet Ms. Pilar Barrera-Operations Officer civil society/capacity development from GEFSEC during the ECW bilaterals.

He also reflected on the CSO presentation on policies and procedures for civil society participation in the GEF programme and Projects. He informed the meeting that countries were systematically arranged into 2 groups. One country group attempted the issue of CSO engagement in respect countries while the other on Feedback on implementation of Public involvement Policy. Among the reflections was the ill-informed dysfunctional understanding of CSOs. A

case in point was when one OFP did not digest the assertion that CSOs played a monitoring role in GEF projects at national level. Interestingly, 4 countries shared the findings from their practical exercise. Kenya and Sudan shared their findings on CSO engagement and both emphasized the capacity building needs for CSOs, suspicion and mistrust since seem to push donor interests.

Comoros and Tanzania shared their findings on feedback on implementation of Public involvement policy and both informed the ECW that CSOs are involved in the development and implementation of GEF programs and projects further cited the SGP. Both countries informed the workshop that current public involvement policy was adequate to ensure the participation of CSOs though some CSO representatives wondered whether some of the country delegates had read the policy.

The Representative of the RFP, reminded the meeting of his question on if there was a breach of the public involvement policy or GEF standard, a project would be terminated to which no formal answer

was provided. This agitated the meeting in a sense that many were concerned of GEF and its Implementing agencies only considering the reports of OFPs thus translating into limited oversight roles of GEF NGO Network members at national level.

A plenary was opened to comment and ask on what the Rep. of the RFP had presented. One participant put the meeting to order by reminding the participants of the second session that would directly address some of the issues that were raised on the floor.

CSO participants also expressed concern on the convening of their meeting parallel to the site visit. It was unanimously agreed that CSO meeting be held prior to the ECW so as to generate issues to be presented at the ECW. Also inquired whether GEF could increase the number of representative per country to 2/3.

After a health break, the meeting chaired by the representative from Madagascar resumed with the representative of the RFP giving a highlight of the GEF NGO Network, its structures and coordination mechanism. This answered one query from the participant on who the meeting report will be sent to and what next? Participants echoed the issue of establishing a GEF NGO Network/Forum at national level since some country OFPs had expressed concern about the diversity, poor coordination and amorphous behavior of NGOs at national level.

The session chair inquired about how to acquire data and information in other country CSOs. This was after he shared the achievement of CSOs in Madagascar that included implementing a medium size project (MSP) and winning the UNDP equator prize.

One CSO representative questioned how the stratified CSO structure would strengthen engagement with the GEF from national level (steering committees); regional level (ECWs) and international level (GEF Council & Assembly). Concern was also raised on a fee (US\$ 25,000) charged by GEF Secretariat (GEFSEC) on accrediting NGOs as project implementing partners.

The Meeting expressed concern over the shallow interpretation of the network (GEF NGO Network) and requested that the name be change to “**GEF CSO Network**” since many civil society organizations other than NGOs were implementing GEF projects and are already members of the network.

Some participants inquired about the process of becoming a GEF NGO Network accredited NGO to which the representative of the RFP answered and projected a brief on how to become a member and further advised participants to visit the network site.

Being a hot and lengthy session, the chair had to cut it short to pave way for the 2 presentations from the representatives from Kenya and Ethiopia. These were 1). Exploring public involvement in the GEF projects, by Mogues Worku, LEM, Ethiopia and An Overview of GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming, by Kennedy Ochieng, ELCI, Kenya.

Mogues 's presentation informed the meeting about the 3 related and overlapping processes in public involvement that is information dissemination; consultation and stakeholder participation. He shared the progress on projects carried out by CSOs tending towards a promising better trend from SGP to Full size projects (FSP). He singled out the limited collaboration amongst CSOs in public involvement and an enabling policy environment for environmental related CSOs. He suggested among others to CSOs

to build trust, share information through networking, mobilize resources and recognize public involvement (PI) in GEF projects as an indicator.

Kennedy 's presentation highlighted the background to the GEF Policy standards and objectives. He also shared the 7 safeguard standards under the environmental and social safeguards policy and their importance to CSOs. He gave a snapshot of the GEF policy on Gender mainstreaming.

One participant expressed concern about the process based efforts of GEF with minimum tangible benefits. A case in point was the highlights under the Gender mainstreaming policy that talked about undertaking social assessment of gender analysis and preparing a gender mainstreaming strategy. One participant argued CSOs to put GEF to focus on action oriented output since it has undergone reforms to make it a better mechanism that touches base with the beneficiaries.

On the other note, one participant suggested to use the terminology "affirmative action" instead of mainstreaming gender.

A way forward plenary was convened and the chair reminded participants to focus their submissions taking note of the ECW deliberations.

Summary of the recommendations/suggestions from CSO meeting

Broad representation during GEF 6 replenishment meetings

- Explore the option of the 9 Major groups in the GEF NGO Network;
- Explore to change the name from GEF NGO Network to "GEF CSO Network";
- For the time being, the GEF-6 Replenishment be under the whole consistencies considering 1 from the GEF NGO Network (CFP) and 1 from 9 Major groups as stipulated under Agenda 21;

Enhancing Engagement (Regional, national)

- Where need be, establish a GEF Network/Forum at national with a "contact point";
- Build mechanisms for CSOs engagement at national level monitoring and evaluation;
- All the OFPs be given support to convene the Annual GEF national dialogues & national steering committees whereas ensuring balance in representation and where possible channel it through the GEF NGO Network Country Contact Point;
- Have a direct finance mechanism for CSOs to ensure better preparations in GEF processes;

Process of the GEF

- Improve finance access to the GEF (improve the disbursement and accessibility of money) and increase the size of grant under the SGP;
- GEFSEC clarifies on the mechanism for ensuring that safeguards are followed and adhered to;
- Focal area/signature programme under Capacity building should also target improving CSOs systems and general organizational development;
- Need to review the Public involvement Policy (PIP) of 1996 with assigning more roles to CSOs such as in monitoring and evaluation of national projects;
- Include CSOs in the independent evaluations teams of GEF projects;

- Risk analysis and evaluation **MUST** be an integral part of GEF project cycle;
- Ensure the principles and pillars of good governance, transparency and public involvement are applied and adhered to such as the national portfolio formulation exercise (NPFE) and national capacity self-assessments (NCSAs);
- Build in mechanisms for CSOs engagement at national level monitoring and evaluation;
- Expedite the financial support to OFPs so as to early convene the Annual GEF national dialogues & national steering committees whereas ensuring balance in representation;
- Include CSOs in the country support programme knowledge platform so as to support the information and knowledge sharing needs within the GEF NGO Network.



Cross section of ECW participants fronted by Rwanda Minister for Environment, Suzan and Pilar (GEFSEC) and Mr. Francis Ogwai, CBD Focal point-Uganda

Thursday, May 16, 2013

9.00-10.00 **Opening session**

The opening session will be facilitated by Abdirizak Yusuf Kahiye, Program Manager, SIFO, Somalia. The purpose of the session will be to recall the objectives of the CSO meeting, and its expected outcomes and feedback on the ECW.

- Welcome address, Johnson Nkuusi, *President*, Rwanda Environmental NGOs Forum
- Opening remarks, Emily Kitabire, *Programme Officer*, Environmental Women in Action for Development (EWAD)
- Summary of the ECW, Robert Bakiika, *Representative of the Regional Focal Point (RFP)-Eastern Africa GEF NGO Network*

10.00-10.30 Tea/Coffee Break

10.30-13.00 **Session 2: CSOs and the GEF**

This session will explore the CSO engagement and the GEF by providing a reflection on the implementation of Public Involvement Policy. The session will be facilitated by Fenosoa Solofomandimby Andriamahanina from Tanya Meva Environment Foundation, Madagascar.

The objective of the session will be to introduce the latest developments with regard GEF 6 and enhancing whereas preparing CSOs engagement. A presentation shall be made by Mr. Robert Bakiika on behalf of the RFP on Policies and Procedures for civil society participation in GEF programmes and Projects and GEF-6 climate change mitigation strategy. Panelists will be invited to critic, comment and discuss the presentation whereas sharing their perspectives on CSO engagement in their respective countries and experiences on implementation of Public Involvement policy.

1. Exploring public involvement in the GEF projects, by Mogue Worku, LEM, Ethiopia

2. An Overview of GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming, by Kennedy Ochieng, ELCI, Kenya

Plenary with way forward

13.00-16.00 Lunch and bilaterals

Annex 2: List of participants

Registration for the CSD meeting on May 16th, 2013.

Name	Organization	Contact	Signature
1. Robert Bakirika	EMHI	+256 482-643315	
2. NKUUSI JOHNSON	RWANDA ENVIRONMENTAL NGO Forum	+250 788449738	
3. Mogues Woreku	Lem Ethiopia	+251 0911 408305	
4. Yonas Gebru	Forum for Ethiopia	+251 091 303940	
5. Rosa Kiflemeriam	NUFEM	(yogebvu@gmail.com)	
6. Japhel Stephan	Land of Lakes	+251 954-063370	
7. Josiah N. Mshuda	DONET	+255 754 458475 donetdolome@yahoo.com	
8. Muawia H. Shaddad	SECS	shaddadmsh@yahoo.com	
9. ABDIRIZAK KATHIYE YUSUF	SIFO	abdirizak2006@gmail.com	
10. KENNEDY D. DRWA	ELCI	kennedyd@elci.org	
11. RONALD BUSUMBE	EMRITSTARS	ronald.busumbe@earthstars.org	
12. ANDRIAMANENINA Emmanon	Tany Meva Foundation	+261 38 0246320 andriamanenina@tanymeva.org.mg	
13. Richard N. Mbatia	MMCC	dmimcc@gmail.com	
14. Emily Kitaborie Kiremire	EWAF	+256 772421449 emilykiter@gmail.com	