gef IEO Independent Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Evaluation of the
GEF Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Network

Ms. Anna Viggh
Senior Evaluation Officer
20 July 2015

Introduction

- GEF IEO has begun consultations to inform the Evaluation of the GEF CSO Network.

- Today's presentation includes a brief overview of:

  - CSO Network History
  - Purpose of the CSO Network
  - Membership and Structure
  - Evaluation Objectives
  - Proposed Methods/Tools
  - Identified Limitations
  - Knowledge Management & Communication Plans
  - Management of the Evaluation
  - Time Frame

- Approach Paper was circulated with the GEF Partnership and is currently being finalized. Final will be posted on IEO website.

The GEF CSO Network
History

- From its inception, the Pilot Phase, CSOs are acknowledged as **critical stakeholders in the GEF**.

- **Formalized and systematic consultations** became a part of the restructured GEF, including mention in the Instrument of the **importance of CSO participation** (Para 5) and ability to **act as executors** (Para 28).

- GEF restructuring resulted in a process of accreditation by the GEFSEC and semi-annual consultations amongst the Network and with Council, which are in **still in place today.**

- Any accredited NGO was thus **automatically a member of a "GEF NGO Network"**. Council replaced the accreditation with a membership system (2009) to be operated by the Network itself in a similar manner with member CSOs eligible to attend Consultations and Council/Assembly meetings

The GEF CSO Network
Purpose

- Members of the Network are focused on influencing Council proceedings and facilitating participation of NGOs in the Council, NGO Consultations and Program implementation.

- The Network has developed a Vision, Mission and Objectives (v.2014):
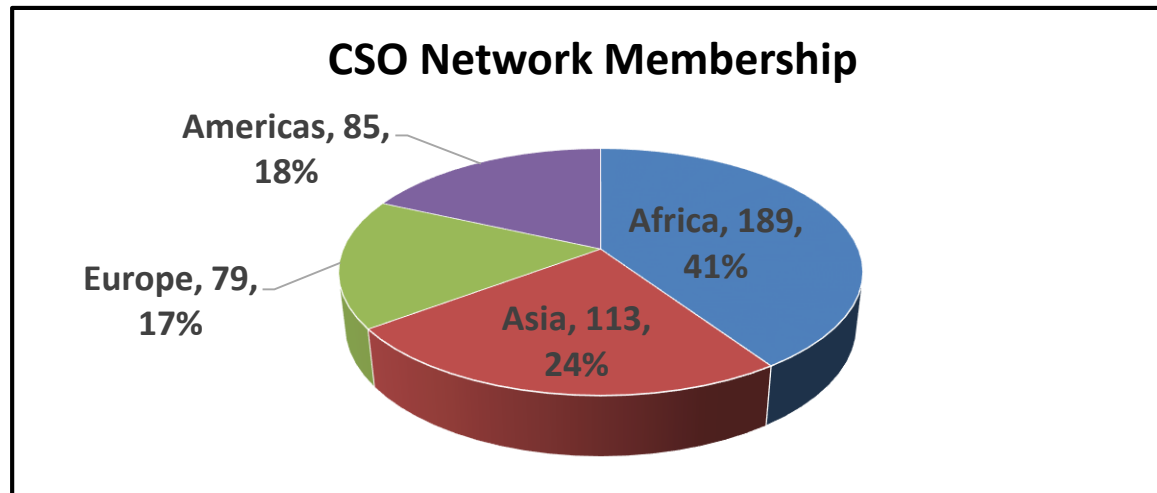
   Vision: *"A dynamic civil society influencing policies and actions at all levels to safeguard the global environment and promote sustainable development."*

   Mission: *"To strengthen civil society partnership with GEF by enhancing participation, contributing to policy and stimulating action."*

   - **Objective 1**: *To enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment*

   - **Objective 2:** *To strengthen GEF Program implementation through enhanced partnership with civil society*

   - **Objective 3**: *To strengthen the GEF NGO Network Capacity*

The GEF CSO Network
Membership

- The Network membership is currently comprised of 466 member CSOs. Of these:

  - 189 are in the Africa Region representing 37 countries;
  - 113 in Asia and the Pacific representing 32 countries;
  - 79 in Europe representing 27 countries; and,
  - 85 in the Americas representing 24 countries

CSO Network Membership

- Americas, 85, 18%
- Europe, 79, 17%
- Asia, 113, 24%
- Africa, 189, 41%

The GEF CSO Network
Structure and Governance

- The structure of the Network has come about as a result of self-regulating initiatives,

GEF CSO Network Evaluation (2005)

- Independent Review of the GEF NGO Network was presented to GEF Council in October 2005.

- Conclusions:
  - Model of NGO engagement at that time (both regional and country-level) was ineffective
  - Network lacked a long term vision
  - GEFSEC and Council had no long-term strategy for engaging the Network
  - Insufficient Resources and a need for capacity building were major obstacles
  - Secretariat, Council, Agencies and NGO community have a vested interest to re-energize the Network

- Recommendations:
- Increase the network's accountability and effectiveness by strengthening the network's management, increasing accountability in the application of the network's Guidelines, re-focusing the accreditation process, and strengthening outreach to NGOs;

- Establishing an active partnership between the NGO Network and the GEF Secretariat and Council; and

- Providing support, financial and otherwise, to build the network's capacity.

Evaluation Objectives

- Building on the 2005 review, this evaluation will answer the following key questions:

  1. To what extent is the CSO Network meeting its intended goals and strategic objectives and adding value to the GEF Partnership and its membership?

  2. How are Network features contributing to the effective and efficient functioning of the Network?

  3. What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO network?

Literature Review

- The increase in number and influence of CSO networks worldwide post the 1990s have allowed for their activities to be the subject of greater scrutiny.

- There is a growing body of literature on **network formation, development, capacity building and evaluation**. Evaluators have begun to develop frameworks for understanding networks using a mix of methods and tools:

- Pre-Evaluation Phase entailed beginnings of review of the literature on networks and their evaluation.

Key Questions (1)

Key Evaluation Questions	Focus	Example Evaluation Questions	Information Sources	Possible Approaches
• To what extent has the CSO Network meeting its intended goals and strategic objective and adding value to the GEF partnership and its members? (i) Disseminating information on the GEF to the CSO community at the national, regional & international levels; (ii) Strengthening GEF Policy & Program implementation through enhanced partnership with civil society • What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO Network?	Credibility	• Are the original objectives still relevant? Have they been successfully achieved? • Are lessons from similar networks (Adaptation Fund, GCF, CIF, etc.) used to inform the workings of the GEF CSO Network? • To what extent has the Network aligned with GEF goals on gender mainstreaming and indigenous peoples' inclusion? • Has the CSO Network contributed to shaping the GEF agenda (getting new issues on the GEF agenda, policies incorporated by the Council)?	- Council and GEF SEC Documents - Network Guidelines, - Network Rules and Procedures - Non-GEF CSO Networks	- Document review - Interviews and Focus Groups/Focused meetings with key stakeholders - Surveys - (Online) Self-Assessment - Comparative analysis with other networks
• How are Network features contributing to the effective and efficient functioning of the Network? • What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO Network?	Connectivity	• What GEF-relevant information is flowing through the Network to its membership and other stakeholders? • How effective and efficient are the connections the network makes? • Are all members contributing, individually or through joint efforts, to network goals? (male/female disaggregated)	- Network Documents - Data / Results from Surveys, Interviews, and other primary sources (e.g. workshops)	- (Online) Self-Assessment - Interviews and Focus Groups/Focused meetings with key stakeholders - Cost / Level of Effort Overview Assessment - Social Network Analysis
	Structure	• Has the structure adjusted to meet changing network needs and priorities? • What infrastructure is in place for Network coordination and communications? • Are these coordination and communication structures efficient and effective?	- Council and GEF SEC Documents - Network Documents - Data / Results from Surveys, Interviews, Focused meetings with key stakeholders and other primary sources	- Document review - Social Network Analysis - Surveys - Meta-Evaluations - Comparison to other Networks - Visual Timeline (infographic Representation)

Key Questions (2)

Key Evaluation Questions	Focus	Example Evaluation Questions	Information Sources	Possible Approaches
• How are Network features contributing to the effective and efficient functioning of the Network? • What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO Network?	Membership	• Who participates in the Network and why? Are women', indigenous peoples' and youth organizations represented? Has the Network assembled member organizations with the capacities needed to meet Network goals (experience, skills, and connections)? (male/female disaggregated) • Are the procedures for Network membership transparent, effective, and efficient? Has this changed over time? • What is the geographic distribution of membership in relation to GEF operations? • What have been the trends in membership?	- Membership Databases - Council and GEF SEC Documents - Network Documents	- (Online) Self-Assessment - Social Network Analysis - Visual Timeline (infographic Representation) - Document review
	Governance	• Are the Network's governance rules applied in a transparent manner? • Is there a transparent conflict resolution process? • Do Network members actively participate in Network elections? • Do decision-making processes encourage members to contribute and collaborate? • How dependent is the Network on a small number of individuals? (male/female disaggregated) • Do governance structures take into consideration gender mainstreaming?	- Council and GEF SEC Documents - Network Guidelines, Rules and Procedures - Data / Results from Surveys, Interviews, and other primary sources	- Document review - Interviews and Focus Groups/Focused meetings with key stakeholders - Surveys - (Online) Self-Assessment - Meta-Evaluations - Comparative analysis with other networks
	Resources	• What is the level of financial and technical resources provided to the Network? • Has the Network secured needed material resources? • Is the Network adapting its business plan over time? • How has the GEF partnership [GEF SEC, Agencies, OFPs, IEO, etc…] supported the work of the CSO network?	- Network Documents - Data / Results from Surveys, Interviews, and other primary sources	- Document review - Interviews and Focus Groups with key stakeholders

Key Questions (3)

Key Evaluation Questions	Focus	Example Evaluation Questions	Information Sources	Possible Approaches
• How are Network features contributing to the effective and efficient functioning of the Network? • What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO Network?	Capacity	• Does the Network have the needed capacities to advance members' skills & Network goals? • How are members adding value to one another's work, i.e. achieving more together than they could alone? • Are there clear signals of development of CSO/member capacity? (male/female disaggregated)	- Data / Results from Surveys, Interviews, and other primary sources	- Interviews and Focus Groups/Focused meetings with key stakeholders - Surveys - (Online) Self-Assessment
• To what extent is the CSO Network meeting its intended goals and strategic objectives and adding value to the GEF partnership and its membership? of: (ii) Strengthening GEF Policy & Program implementation through enhanced partnership with civil society; (iii) strengthening the GEF CSO Network capacity; (iv) strengthening the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment? • What are the implications for the next phase of the development and evolution of the CSO Network?	Progress towards Results	• Are there clear signals of influence on GEF policy and program implementation? Can a case be made as to Network contribution?	- Council and GEF SEC Documents - Network Documents	- Document review - Interviews and Focus Groups with key stakeholders - Surveys - (Online) Self-Assessment

Possible Approaches

- Final decisions on methods and tools will be made on the basis of issues identified.

- Evaluation activities will involve:

    - *Further document review*

    - *Comparative analysis with other networks*

    - *Meta-evaluation*

    - *Select individual interviews with key stakeholders*

    - *Focus group meetings with key stakeholders*

    - *Survey (CSO Network members/non-members/GEFSEC/Agencies)*

    - *Self-Assessment (Coordination Committee)*

Additional Stakeholder Involvement

- **Reference Group:**
  - Includes representatives from the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies, the CSO Network, and SGP. The Reference Group will:
    - Share comment on the Approach Paper and drafts of the Report; identify & establish contact with individuals for interviews/focus groups and identify & facilitate access to information.
    - 10 individuals

- **Expert Peer Review Group:**
  - Consists of relevant evaluation specialists from GEF Agency Evaluation Office and the broader evaluation community.
  - 3 individuals.

Limitations

- Networks are inherently complex and dynamic systems which makes them difficult to evaluate.

- Main limitations of this evaluation will be:
    - Access to entirety of CSO Network (over 460 members, different regions/access/languages)
    - Access to older and archived documents of the CSO Network
    - Relatively *short* timeframe

Knowledge Management & Communications

- The CSO Network Evaluation will add to the growing body of literature on network evaluations and thus will be of broad interest to the evaluation community.

- The IEO will disseminate information gathered at various points in the course of the evaluation with stakeholders.

- Information sharing could take place through various platforms such as:
  - Online stakeholder groups
  - Webinars
  - Published knowledge products

Management of the Evaluation

- The evaluation will be task managed by Ms. Baljit Wadhwa, Senior Evaluation Officer, leading a team comprising of GEF IEO staff and consultants.

- Consultants are contracted to undertake specific elements which include peer review and analysis of data on the CSO membership, connectivity and network health though self assessments and/or social network analysis, etc.
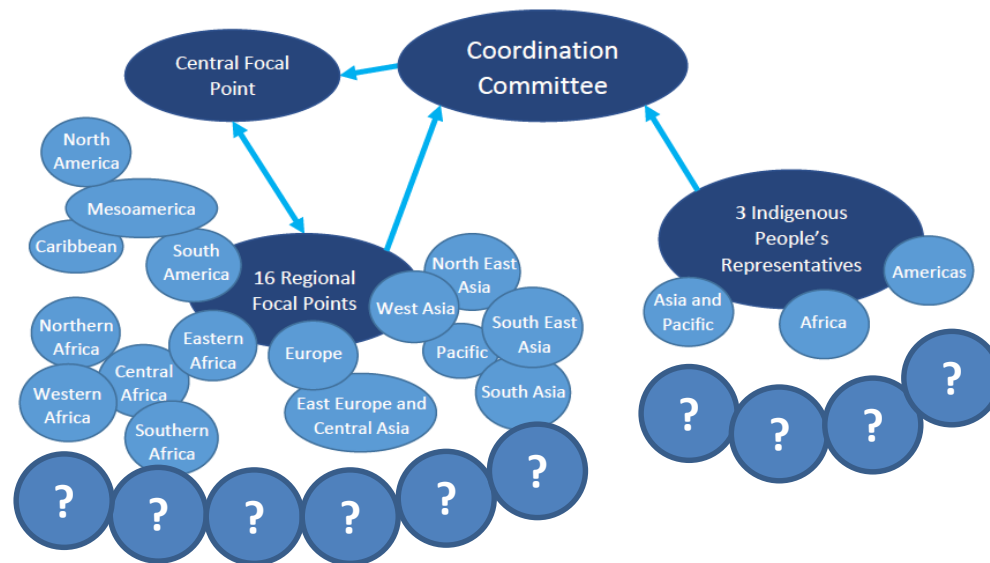
Time Frame

Phase	Evaluation Phase	Time Frame
1	Pre-evaluation desk review, upstream consultations & Approach Paper	End of June 2015
2	Further desk review; **survey instrument pilots**; identification of data gaps; further methods selection	July – August 2015
3	Application of appropriate methods/tools for additional data gathering and analysis • 2nd Peer Review & Reference Group Consultation	September 2016 – January 2016 September 2015
4	Synthesis, triangulation, verification, gap analysis and preparation of Evaluation Report	January- May 2016
	• Beginning of Report writing& consultation with Peer Reviewers	February 2016
	• Draft Evaluation shared with Reference Group/Stakeholders	Mid-March 2016
	• Comments due	Early April 2016
	• Final Evaluation shared with GEF Council	May 2016
	• Evaluation Conclusions & Recommendation presented at GEF Council meeting	June 2016

Questions and Feedback

We are looking for feedback on:

- Survey Questions

- How can we best reach the sub-regional and country constituencies?

Thank you

gefevaluation@thegef.org
www.gefieo.org