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GEF-6 INTEGRATED APPROACH PILOT (IAP) PROGRAMS

SYNTHESIS OF EXPERIENCES AND EMERGING LESSONS FROM ADDRESSING KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| List of Acronyms | 2 |
| Introduction and Background | 3 |
| Cross-Cutting Theme 1: Gender Mainstreaming | 4 |
| Cross-Cutting Theme 2: Resilience | 12 |
| Cross-Cutting Theme 3: Stakeholder Engagement | 18 |
| Cross-Cutting Theme 4: Private Sector Engagement | 25 |
| Cross-Cutting Theme 5: Knowledge Management | 32 |
| References | 38 |

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| BRT | Bus Rapid Transit |
| CBO | Community-Based Organizations |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DATAR | Diversity Assessment Tool for Agrobiodiversity and Resilience |
| DRF | Disaster Risk Financing |
| FIES | Food Insecurity Experience Scale |
| GEB | Global Environmental Benefits |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GGP | Good Growth Partnership |
| GPSC | Global Platform for Sustainable Cities |
| IAP | Integrated Approach Pilot |
| IEO | Independent Evaluation Office |
| IFPRI | International Food Policy Research Institute |
| ISEAL | International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling |
| KM | Knowledge Management |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MPAT | Multidimensional Poverty Assessment Tool |
| MTR | Mid-Term Review |
| NGI | Non-Grant Instrument |
| PCU | Program Coordination Unit |
| PFD | Program Framework Documents |
| PIR | Project Implementation Report |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnership |
| RAPTA | Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Assessment Framework |
| RFS | Resilient Food Systems |
| RSPO | Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil |
| RT | Resource Team |
| SCCF | Special Climate Change Fund |
| SC-IAP | Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Pilot Program |
| SE | Stakeholder Engagemnet |
| SHARP | Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists |
| STAP | Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel |
| USF | Urban Sustainability Framework |
| WAFFI | West Africa Forest-Farm Interface |

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The three Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) programs launched during GEF-6 were the first to introduce the new dimension of programming that emphasized “integration” as a key organizing principle for GEF financing. The IAP programs were structured around major emerging drivers of global environmental challenges. Two were global programs focused on urbanization (Sustainable Cities) and commodity-driven deforestation (Commodities); the third was on sustainability and resilience for food security in the drylands of Sub-Saharan Africa. GEF financing for the IAP programs was not “siloes” by focal area, but rather invested in a coherent manner to promote synergy in generating multiple global environmental benefits, while ensuring that progress in any dimension of the global environment does not negatively affect other related objectives.

In addition to several key underlying principles to advance the integrated approach, the design and implementation of each IAP program also considered five priority cross-cutting issues:

Gender Mainstreaming

Through analyses to identify and account for differences in needs, roles, and responsibilities, and opportunities for equal engagement of women and men;

Resilience

In the context of systemic drivers being tackled and defined here as “the capacity of a social–ecological system to absorb shocks and trends (e. g. drought) and reorganize so as to retain the same functions, structure, and feedbacks (i.e. the same identity);”

Stakeholder Engagement

Taking into consideration existing GEF policies and guidelines including an emphasis on the role of civil society organizations (CSOs);

Private Sector Engagement

Considering the role of businesses (large as well as small- and medium-sized enterprises), financial institutions, and technology providers as major actors for advancing system shifts and transformational change; and

Knowledge Management

Focusing on tools, practices, and approaches to generate, capture, share, and disseminate knowledge during implementation, leading to enhanced impact.

As part of a joint effort by the GEF Secretariat and Lead Implementing Agencies, a review and assessment of experiences with these cross-cutting issue across all three programs was conducted. The assessment was based on information provided in program-level documents (e.g. Annual Report and Highlights) as well as reports from individual country projects (e.g. Project Implementation Reports).

This report synthesizes trends and emerging lessons from the assessment of each cross-cutting issue, including case studies and examples from across the portfolio. It also highlights potential opportunities and challenges for further consideration of each issue as the GEF continues to invest in the integrated approach to programming for global environmental benefits.

CROSS-CUTTING THEME 1: GENDER MAINSTREAMING

1. INTRODUCTION

Through their different roles and responsibilities and varied priorities and needs, women and men alike shape the drivers and pressures on environmental resources and systems. Women and men use natural resources in different ways. They also influence markets; policies; and global, regional, national, and local incentives and behaviors that impact the health of the global environment in different ways. As such, women are vital to tackling environmental challenges. Despite recent promising policy and legal reforms, persistent gender-discriminatory social and cultural norms, unequal access to land, water, and productive assets, and unequal participation in decision-making continue. However, to constrain women and men from participating equally in, contributing to, and benefitting from environmental projects and programs. The GEF's efforts to address gender equality have been guided by several GEF policies and strategies, including (i) [the Policy on Public Involvement in GEF Projects](#); (ii) [the Policy on Gender Mainstreaming](#); (iii) [the GEF 2020 Strategy](#); and (iv) [the Gender Equality Action Plan \(GEAP\)](#).

Gender mainstreaming actions across all three Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) programs have been guided by the GEF 2020 Strategy and 2011 GEF Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, emphasizing the need to support transformational change and achieve impacts on a broader scale and highlighting the importance of gender equality in environmental management policies and programs. Since the launch of the IAP programs in GEF-6, the GEF's renewed focus on gender equality and women's empowerment has been translated into a [new Policy on Gender Equality approved by the GEF council in 2017](#), as well [Guidelines](#) and an

[Implementation Strategy](#). While the IAP programs were not directly guided by these new directives on gender equality, many principles and key elements of the new Policy have been incorporated in their design and implementation, including:

- Efforts to mainstream gender and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women are pursued in accordance with the decisions on gender under the MEAs that the GEF serves, and in recognition of related international and national commitments to gender equality and human rights.
- GEF-financed activities address and do not exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities.
- Stakeholder engagement and analysis are conducted in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, so that the rights of women and men and the different knowledge, needs, roles, and interests of women and men are recognized and addressed.
- GEF-financed activities are conducted, designed, and implemented in an inclusive manner so that women's participation and voice are, regardless of their background, age, race, ethnicity, or religion, reflected in decision-making, and that consultations with women's organizations, including Indigenous women and local women's groups, are supported at all scales.
- A gender-responsive approach is applied throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF-financed activities.
- Opportunities to address gender gaps and support the empowerment of women are seized in order to help achieve global environmental benefits.

2. OVERVIEW OF KEY GENDER DIMENSIONS AND ACTIONS

Overall, all three programs have included gender mainstreaming as a priority for advancing the integrated approach. For example, all three IAP programs recognized the benefits of identifying entry points for gender and social inclusion at the onset of program planning and design, and efforts have been made at the program as well as the child project level to take concrete and targeted actions to leverage the role of women in delivering important global environmental benefits in collaboration with national governments and other partners, including the private sector and civil society. The programs are, however, in different stages of demonstrating progress during implementation, with useful experiences and lessons emerging that will help inform future programs.

Resilient Food Systems (RFS)

Women make essential contributions to the rural economy across the African continent as farmers, laborers, and entrepreneurs. Their roles are diverse and changing rapidly, but women continue to have less access than men to agricultural assets, inputs, and services, and to rural employment opportunities. Yet closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agriculture sector and society in Sub-Saharan Africa and globally. Gender-sensitive and multiple-benefit practices for food value chains and food production systems were incorporated in the Resilient Food Systems program theory of change, including broad objectives to ensure gender balance of beneficiaries, providing capacity development and ensuring gender balanced participation. Gender mainstreaming also became an important aspect of the country project design.

The RFS Regional hub has played an important role in promoting the approach developed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), to guide efforts for empowering women

to have secured access and rights on lands, water, forests, financial services, and technology, as well as increased incomes, improved capacities in literacy, market/economic activities, and better daily time management. The RFS program has also developed program-level indicators to monitor issues related to: (i) economic empowerment of rural women and men; (ii) equitable and reduced workload balance; and (iii) women's decision making. Several good practice elements are emerging in the different child projects, covering issues related to economic empowerment, wellbeing, and decision-making, including:

- Ensuring that women constitute 50 percent of beneficiaries and supporting environmentally friendly microprojects targeting women;
- Applying gender-sensitive decision support tools and participatory processes to identify and support women leaders at project sites;
- Ensuring inclusive and gender sensitive national multi-stakeholder platforms advocating for sustainable agriculture and sustainable land management practices for improved food security;
- Providing capacity development for women to build their leadership and negotiation skills and to enhance gender balance in key institutions; and
- Reducing women's workload by, for example, promoting efficient stoves that also provide health benefits for women and children.

Good Growth Partnership (GGP)

Women play an important but often invisible role in agriculture, resulting in an uneven burden of care and unpaid labor in the agricultural sector. Social sustainability, including gender equity, is essential to achieving sustainable commodity supply chains. In Indonesian palm oil production, for example, women may not be paid directly for fruit collection in cases where their contribution is used to help meet their spouses' production quotas. Further, women engaged in commodities production often

face more limited access to and control of inputs and resources than men. Such conditions affect the value of women's contribution in agriculture and their ability to influence the sector, including on sustainability issues.

The GGP, which is advancing an integrated supply chain approach to take deforestation out of supply chains for beef, soy, and palm oil, has mainly focused its early gender mainstreaming efforts on analyses. The objective with these analyses has primarily evolved around: (i) identifying and accounting for gender differences in needs, roles and responsibilities in the respective supply chains; (ii) identifying opportunities for equal engagement of women and men; (iii) implementing specific activities to mainstream gender and support women's empowerment. At the project level, gender issues are considered to varying degrees, but all child projects included gender analysis and/or gender-related activities in their design working closely with the governments of Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia, and Paraguay.

The analyses served as important starting points to address gender and led to the development of a program-level gender strategy and action plan to guide actions taken across the components of the IAP program, and to ensure that gender mainstreaming is adequately addressed throughout implementation. They also highlighted the need for targeted efforts to address knowledge gaps on gender and create opportunities for learning and engage organizations with gender expertise. GGP child projects now have gender-specific outputs and at the program level frameworks have been set up to monitor the number of program beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender, based on the supply chain approach.

Sustainable Cities (SC-IAP)

Women and men face different impacts in the urban context including water management, transport, water and sanitation, energy efficiency/renewable energy, resilience to climate change

impacts, and urban agriculture. Urban areas are expanding, and as major producers, consumers, and greenhouse gas emitters, cities play an important role in contributing to climate change mitigation. While many cities are developing and implementing strategies and systems for tackling climate change and its impacts, few pay attention to gender issues and integrating gender-responsive approaches.

The importance of including gender dimensions in cities' planning and policy is not only to address social inequities, but also to fully unlock the potential of women and men to successfully address climate change. Cities can only be sustainable and safe if they meet the needs of women as well as men, and if women have an equal voice in urban planning and development. For these reasons, attention to gender issues has emerged to be an important consideration in most of the country projects of the SC program, including Viet Nam, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, and South Africa.

In South Africa, for example, the project in the City of Johannesburg is promoting the adoption of gender-sensitive and resource efficiency guidelines for improved sustainability of social housing and seeking to support urban farmers to implement more environmentally sustainable food security solutions. It has also developed gender-disaggregated indicators to, for example, track the "number of men and women emerging farmers and city officials trained in and using sustainable and/or organic farming methods." These commitments together with other supporting actions are captured in a gender action plan to be monitored by a sociologist with gender expertise. The Viet Nam child project followed the "urban sector gender checklist" of the Asian Development Bank that emphasizes the need to address gender during the project design phase. It builds on existing GEF/Asian Development Bank investments to promote climate resilience in Vietnamese cities, while supporting the participation of disadvantaged groups, including women, in the prioritization,

planning, and implementation of urban infrastructure and services.

The SC-IAP country projects are demonstrating in their early implementation reports that gender is being considered in a number of ways, utilizing a range of frameworks, assessments, and indicators.

3. COMMON ELEMENTS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Review of CEO endorsements, PIR, MTRs and the lessons learned reports, submitted by the lead agencies, suggest that all three IAP programs are considering gender as a crosscutting issue and that each IAP is taking concrete steps toward addressing gender equality in its respective targeted sectors/systems. Common practices across the IAPs include:

Carrying out gender analysis to inform program and project design/development and activities

The Program Framework Documents (PFD) for all IAPs suggest that gender was considered early in the program design and the emerging IAP hubs have to varying degrees guided analytical approaches and capacity development efforts. Most child projects for the RFS, the SC-IAP, and GGP considered gender in project design stage. The scope of the child project gender analysis varied, in line with the specific GEF Agency policies and procedures, as well as the specific program and child project context. The gender analyses carried out by the different child projects included collection and examination of quantitative and qualitative gender-disaggregated data and gender information. In some cases, the analyses were standalone activities and in other cases they were included as a key component of the broader stakeholder analyses or social and situation assessments. Some projects also utilized existing data and information, such as sectoral assessments, country gender assessments, gender analyses of prior or similar projects, and national statistics available from databases to support the analysis.

While each GEF agency used its own analytical frameworks, tools, and procedures for carrying out their gender analysis, they helped support the identification of specific gender differences, including women and men's different roles, needs, priorities, capacities, and vulnerabilities relevant to activity. While, most child projects for RFS and GGP developed gender mainstreaming action plans, some of the Cities IAP child projects (e.g. Viet Nam) developed gender action plans while others did not adopt a targeted approach to gender as such and did not develop dedicated gender action plans.

Launching efforts to collect gender-disaggregated data and tracking gender sensitive indicators and gender results

All IAPs invested in initial efforts to collect gender-disaggregated data and have to varying degrees succeeded in establishing frameworks to monitor and track gender-disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators and results at program or project level.

The RFS program initiated efforts to develop a program-level gender monitoring framework, including development of monitoring guidelines and a program result framework. Many RFS child projects developed gender responsive results frameworks and are currently tracking gender indicators linked to the program results framework.

The SC program invested in efforts to collect gender-disaggregated data but ended up not developing a gender-specific index to track gender results in implementation. While the child projects have mainstreamed gender in a variety of ways, some have not incorporated any gender-disaggregated indicators.

The GGP program made early efforts to collect gender-disaggregated data. The production project planned to monitor the number of project beneficiaries but dropped this due to lack of data and the Adaptive Management and Learning (A&L) project choose not to develop gender-disaggregated indicators at the onset, as it is a global project without

any direct beneficiaries. Instead, gender action plans were developed and integrated in projects annual workplans under the production and demand child projects, which ensures that progress on gender mainstreaming efforts is captured as part of the regular monitoring processes.

Facilitating dialogues and learning on gender

Raising awareness and encouraging learning, knowledge-building, and skills development are essential tools to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. All three IAP programs have in different ways supported capacity development and knowledge generation efforts.

The RFS program incorporates elements of capacity development in their annual workshops, organized at the regional Hub level, with project proponents and have developed training guidelines such as gender and resilience (forthcoming) and gender transformative approaches and resilient landscapes.

The different components of the GGP program have organised trainings and workshops at

the global level on gender including through specific child projects or more widely through the Community of Practice (Green Commodities Community) and the Good Growth Conference (roundtable on Women Speak Their Truth) and the program utilizes the quarterly Secretariat country-focused calls for knowledge exchange on gender. The GGP has also developed a "Gender Knowledge Product" (Gender mainstreaming in global agricultural supply chains can accelerate good growth: what works and for whom?) to, for example, increase the understanding of practitioners to address gender inequality in the commodity supply chains. Gender is also a cross-cutting issue integrated in the global learning activities – for example the knowledge platform Evidensia.

The SC-IAP Program has mainstreaming gender in a variety of ways and many SC child projects have incorporated gender issues in trainings and technical capacity building activities.

EMERGING AND COMMON LESSONS LEARNED (GENDER MAINSTREAMING)

Efforts to advance coherent gender mainstreaming interventions have been facilitated by the coordination child projects or the "supported knowledge platforms." The three IAP platforms adopted different approaches to advance coherent gender mainstreaming interventions. Both GGP and RFS facilitated consultations, knowledge exchanges, and training opportunities on gender among program partners. The GGP carried out a knowledge study to provide information on how to generate and disseminate knowledge on gender in supply chains; RFS develop monitoring guidelines; and SC activities were designed to be gender inclusive.

Conducting gender analysis at the child project level is key to developing relevant actions plans to address gender gaps and promote women's

empowerment. While some similarities can be found across IAP child projects, gender inequalities and actions to address them are context and culturally specific.

Operationalization of gender actions plans is dependent on capacity, resource allocations, projects timeframes and/or commitment by project stakeholders. The coordination child projects or "supported knowledge platforms" are deploying different strategies to address these issues. RFS plans to continue offering gender training to countries; the GGP has used gender experts in the different components to provide training and guidance to projects; and in other cases, such as the SC South Africa project, gender experts are being hired to support implementation.

4. EMERGING TRENDS AND LESSONS

Overall, the review suggests some emerging and common lessons learned across the IAP programs, including:

With detailed information available for child projects, including CEO endorsements, PIRs, MTRs, and the lessons learned reports submitted by the lead agencies, there are several emerging results on gender equality and women's empowerment. This includes progress on improving women's access and control over natural resources, increasing women's participation in natural resource decision-making, and supporting women's economic opportunities. The review also suggests a positive trend in terms of projects actively reaching out to women's organizations and gender focal points of relevant national ministries, nongovernment organizations, and civil society. These are further elaborated below, with examples from across the different program portfolios.

Women's improved access, use, and control of resources

Women continue to be held back by structural constraints and gender norms related to access to and control of land, water, and other productive assets and biological resources. Even when the law guarantees women equal rights as men, many women have less control over natural resources.

Efforts to promote improved access, use, and control of resources for women's have especially been incorporated in the RFS projects. Child projects in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda, for example, are implementing strategies aimed at formalization land rights and secure rights to access water and forest resources (FSP gender monitoring framework includes dedicated indicators to track this over time). Further, in Kenya, RFS is working with women to help them have greater access to water for irrigation through provision of water pans—enabling them to grow vegetables close to home for household consumption and income. The promotion of wood

lots for agroforestry, also means that women don't have to travel far for firewood.

Promoting an equal voice in planning and decision-making

Gender norms, women's greater time constraints and other structural constraints continue to prevent women from having the same opportunities as men to decision-making related to the management and sustainable use of natural resources. Most IAPs are to varying degrees addressing gender gaps related to participation and leadership in decision-making processes, i.e. helping to make institutions and policies more representative and supporting women to better engage in decisions that shape environmental planning and policymaking, as well as sustainable solutions and practices.

In Brazil, the Commodities project has partnered with the Women Agribusiness Leadership, an initiative to encourage female participation and recognition within the agriculture sector in Brazil. The GGP production project in Liberia, Indonesia, and Paraguay adopted specific measure to increase women's participation in platform meetings and multi-stakeholder collaboration efforts. The GGP in Liberia is ensuring the participation of women through the use of town chiefs who have made recommendations that any training taking place do so at convenient times when the women have finished with their chores.

Many SC-IAP child projects are also working to ensure that women have an equal voice in urban planning and development. SC child projects in Viet Nam, Cote d'Ivoire, India, and Paraguay, for example, are ensuring women's participation in decision making bodies at different levels and promoting gender balanced participation in policy dialogs/events and training events. Meanwhile, in Eswatini, the RFS project is working with community leaders through the community development committees involved in natural resource planning, and actively encouraging the representation of women.

The same trend is also being observed in the Burundi RFS project, where the Farmer Field Schools committees—the decision-making bodies—have women represented at a rate of 50 percent. Lastly, in Niger, the RFS project is encouraging the promotion of women within management and consultation committees of management of natural resources. This gives the women an opportunity to increase their decision-making power and their place at the village level.

Targeting women as specific beneficiaries in project design

Women, in many places, do not have the same access to income-generation opportunities, credit, and technology as men. Women often face more obstacles than men in accessing financing, training, and information. Recognizing the benefits of supporting women's socio-economic benefits to support sustainable development and global environment benefits, many IAP programs are designed to target sustainable livelihoods and income-generation opportunities for women.

There are many examples in the RFS IAP of efforts to support income-generating activities for women, e.g., through the Farmer Field Schools where women are involved at the management level such as in Uganda where clan leaders and elders are encouraging the mobilization of women to join and belong to Farmer Field Schools. Specific RFS country project examples include:

- In **Ethiopia**, where woreda leaders are working with self-help groups who have over 74 percent women membership and are targeting women for poultry production to enhance their economic empowerment.
- In **Burkina Faso**, the project is supporting women led enterprises, and in Ghana a project is supporting women groups to enhance traditional activities such as picking and processing shea butter and beekeeping.
- In **Niger**, the project is supporting Cash for Asset (CFA) activities that are providing employment and incomes that specifically targets women-headed households and the handicapped. The project further encourages the promotion of women within management and consultation committees for restored / protected natural resources, allowing them to increase their decision-making power and their place at the village level.
- In **Kenya**, the project is targeting women by providing 50 percent more subsidy on all materials supplied by the Water Fund (irrespective of the source of funding) to all households that are headed by women, making it easy for them to access funding they might otherwise not receive.

Specific efforts are also being promoted by the GGP program, e.g., through a gender-focused paper developed as part of the "Soy Toolkit"—a capacity-building tool to help companies source soy more sustainably—supporting investors, buyers, and traders to integrate gender equality commitments into their reduced-deforestation commitments and policies. Other specific GGP project examples include:

- The project in **Liberia** that is addressing women's barriers to access loans. The project is using the existing structures of the Village savings and Loan Association (VSLA) to greater opportunities for women to access loans.
- The project in **Brazil** partnered with The Brazilian Rural Society (SRB) to promote two meetings of the Women Agribusiness Leadership, an initiative to encourage female participation and recognition within the agriculture sector in Brazil. The idea was to strengthen cohesion among women, bringing in those still excluded from the main discussions of the sector and the demands such as technical training, access to employment opportunities, equal pay, and access to technology.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

While there remains great variation in the approaches and frameworks as well as in the experiences across the IAP programs in terms of mainstreaming gender, the reports suggest some valuable takeaways for future programming:

Gender and socio-economic analysis

Compilation of existing data and information, such as sectoral assessments, country gender assessments, gender analyses of prior or similar projects, and national statistics available from databases to support/guide gender analysis help ensure timely and effective uptake in child project design and interventions.

Addressing Gender Gaps

Efforts to support women's access to natural resources and enhance women's participation and role in natural resources decision-making processes (i.e. promoting women's equal engagement in community, rural, and urban planning processes) are key to helping to address gender gaps and supporting more inclusive environmental benefits. There is still, however, limited focus on addressing systemic issues that perpetuate inequality and on efforts to strengthen social change processes that facilitate women's empowerment/decision-making as well as equitable distribution of benefits.

Providing guidance and tools

Compilation/production of knowledge products and guidance tools on gender early in the design help ensure timely and effective uptake in child project design and interventions. Such compilation/production, however should be done early enough to allow enough time for implementation.

Developing framework to monitor progress and capture lessons learnt

Development of a program-level monitoring framework that incorporates gender-disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators helps improve reporting and communication on gender results over time. The Program and child project gender analysis are key to generate better gender-informed child projects and help them to identify entry points and actions to address gender and promote the development of gender-disaggregated indicators and targets.

Facilitating dialogues and learning on gender

Early allocation of program- and project-level resources to support capacity development efforts on gender mainstreaming for project teams and stakeholders and partner organizations is important to factor in early in the Program design, including setting up platforms for sharing lessons learned.

Building partnerships

Early identification and consultations with women's organizations, including Indigenous women and local women's groups (at all scales) help support gender-response design and implementation of gender interventions. For future programs, it would be important that partnerships with these organizations as well as government entities responsible for gender are engaged early in the program/project design at the global as well as the national and local levels.

Capturing and communicating lessons learned

Finally, it would be important for programs to better document the lessons learned addressing gender equality and capture data and stories on how efforts to address gender gaps or empowering women are contributing to greater program results and environmental benefits.

CROSS-CUTTING THEME 2: RESILIENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Given the Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) programs' focus on system-scale issues and drivers of degradation, their conceptualization was accompanied by recognition of the need to integrate systemic resilience considerations. Though various definitions exist,¹ the general approach the GEF has taken toward resilience is aligned with the concept put forth by the Stockholm Resilience Centre: *"Resilience is the capacity of a system, be it an individual, a forest, a city or an economy, to deal with change and continue to develop. It is about how humans and nature can use shocks and disturbances like a financial crisis or climate change to spur renewal and innovative thinking."*

Three noteworthy points emerge from this definition. First, in expecting system capacity to "continue to develop," it diverges from traditional definitions, which focus more on the ability of a system to retain its state despite disturbances ('persistence' characteristics). Secondly, the concept of resilience applies to all pertinent shocks and stresses that a system may face. Thirdly, these very shocks and stresses have the potential to spur innovative thinking and solutions.

At the time of the start of the IAP programs, systemic resilience was a new approach for GEF programming—and indeed, for the development practitioner world, which was focusing on addressing specific threats such as climate change, disaster risk, etc. Thus, a certain degree of awareness and capacity around the concept needed to be built among some partners. The GEF

Secretariat prepared and shared a Note on *GEF Perspectives on Resilience in Relation to the IAP Programs*, which the lead agencies used as basis for discussions on system scale resilience as part of the Inception Workshop for each of the programs.

Given the highly context-specific nature of these issues, it was envisioned that the lead agency, together with other agencies and technical partners, would work with countries to identify relevant shocks and stresses for each child project, as well as appropriate tools and methodologies to address these and track progress.

The Lead Agency reports submitted in May 2020 illustrate that each of the three IAP programs has made effort to integrate resilience considerations. This is evident at the scale of the program, as well as within individual child projects. When reading through the sections below, readers will see that the commonly held 'seven principles of resilience'² have generally been addressed across these programs. These are:

1. Maintain diversity and redundancy
2. Manage connectivity
3. Manage slow variables and feedbacks
4. Foster complex adaptive systems thinking
5. Encourage learning
6. Broaden participation
7. Promote polycentric governance

1 STAP-RATA definition of resilience: "The ability of a system to maintain high-level objectives (e.g. sustainability, rural livelihoods, ecosystem services) in the face of unknown changes or disturbance."

2 Biggs, R. et al. 2015.

2. APPROACHES AND EXPERIENCE WITH RESILIENCE

Resilient Food Systems

Resilience in the context of food security for smallholder farming communities of Sub-Saharan Africa is complex terrain, encompassing the relationships between land, climate, disasters, poverty, governance, livelihoods, markets, knowledge, gender, conflict, policies, and more. Specific issues identified as particularly pertinent for several countries participating in this IAP program, according to the Lead Agency paper (May 2020), included climate change and disaster risk (shocks), with a strong focus on improving community resilience.

Across the program, there is strong emphasis on governance, gender equality, and stakeholder engagement

Important dimensions of gender equality include economic empowerment of women and youth, decision-making power and representation of women, and equitable workload balance. A dedicated gender monitoring framework was developed and incorporated into the overall results-based framework. The program also places emphasis on capitalizing on multi-stakeholder platforms to coordinate efforts, exchange knowledge and best practice, and aim for a level 'knowledge-playing-field' that can engage all stakeholders—government, civil society, private sector, research, and others.

The Program enhances access to production markets (value-chain approach), job opportunities and incomes

The program emphasizes diversification of production systems by using multiple species, breeds, or varieties, as well as integration of crop, livestock, forest, and aquatic biodiversity. It also supports efforts to reduce post-harvest losses, lower crop pest and disease incidence, and train farmers on best practices.

A 'Resilience Tools Bazar' was held at the 2nd FS-IAP workshop, in Nairobi in 2018

At which various methodological approaches, tools and frameworks for monitoring and assessing resilience impact were introduced and explained. These included FAO's 'Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists (SHARP),' IFAD's 'Multidimensional Poverty Assessment Tool (MPAT),' STAP/CSIRO's 'Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Assessment Framework (RAPTA),' CI's 'Vital Signs' tool, Bioversity International's 'Diversity Assessment Tool for Agrobiodiversity and Resilience (DATAR),' in addition to the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), Resilience Atlas, 'Trends.Earth,' and others listed in the FS-IAP lead agency report.

A wide range of resilience tools are being applied across countries in the RFS program

Table 1 shows the various tools the participating countries opted to use for identifying and/or assessing and monitoring resilience consideration in their national projects, with most countries using more than one tool, and Kenya and Senegal up to three tools, to capture various dimensions of resilience.

The SHARP tool helped establish basic indicators of resilience in Uganda, and RAPTA helped analyze elements of the social-ecological system in the Ethiopia child project

SHARP helped the project team understand the issues facing households in Uganda's highly vulnerable Karamoja region, especially relating to production systems and practices, environment, and social and economic status. The baseline data collection focused on land, water, and cropping information; gender and livelihoods; agroecological and social resilience status; and levels of risk and vulnerability in the project area. RAPTA, on the other hand, provided a comprehensive framework for embedding resilience in the design of Ethiopia's child project. This included understanding the social-ecological system, convening multi-stakeholder

TABLE 1: RESILIENCE TOOLS IN THE RFS PROGRAM

| Country | SHARP | FIES | MPAT | WEAI | RAPTA |
|--------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| Burundi | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Burkina Faso | | | ✓ | | |
| Eswatini | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Ethiopia | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Ghana | | ✓ | | | |
| Kenya | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Malawi | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Niger | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Nigeria | | ✓ | | | |
| Senegal | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Tanzania | | | ✓ | | |
| Uganda | ✓ | ✓ | | | |

dialogue, moving towards learning and adaptive management of the project, and interventions through continuous learning and adjustment. The RAPTA approach also guided the assessment of adaptation pathways within the six zones and regions where the project activities were implemented.

Sustainable Cities

With two-thirds of the global population projected to live in cities by 2050, the implications for resource competition within cities, and the challenge for sound urban planning that can deliver sustainable energy, food, clean water, infrastructure, and reliable municipal services are profound. Added to this struggle are threats from global change, population growth, pandemics, political change, and environmental pressures. Cities need to be planned in a sufficiently robust manner to be able to provide reliable, sustainable services in the face of shocks and stresses. Thus, resilience is recognized as a core principle of this IAP, which seeks to promote integrated and adaptive urban planning with a strong focus on connectivity and coordination across sectors. The SC-IAP is integrating resilience

considerations at two levels: the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC), and individual child projects focusing on selected cities.

The concept of resilience has been emphasized in each of the GPSC’s three knowledge pillars

Cities are integrating climate resilience in their urban development plans, exploring means of fiscal resilience, and applying social resilience principles in affordable housing activities. The Urban Sustainability Framework (USF), developed by the GPSC to guide and track city sustainability initiatives, includes an ‘enabling dimension’ on resilience, with associated indicators. In addition, the GPSC held a working group meeting in 2019 on Greening Urban Development with a focus on Biodiversity, Natural Capital Accounting, and Nature-Based Solutions for Cities. The working group explored urban resilience as a key cross cutting objective.

Individual child projects are exploring resilience considerations relevant to their context

In addition to addressing threats such as climate and disaster risk in some projects, all cities are enhancing resilience by considering important

principles such as broad participation (with particular focus on private sector engagement), gender mainstreaming, systemic approaches, and open knowledge dissemination.

Resilient and low-carbon ‘multiple wins’ infrastructure is being supported (South Africa)

Each component of South Africa child project focused on ‘eco-district’ housing, seeks to integrate resilience considerations in the delivery of comfortable, safe, healthy, and affordable living environments. It will test alternative approaches to financing resilient infrastructure services, such as on-site electricity generation and water conservation. It will also support resilient human settlements in the form of social housing that will encourage sustainable energy and water consumption, management of stormwater and green space, household waste separation, and promotion of the use of recycled materials. In line with Johannesburg’s Social Food Resilience Program, the urban food security component will pilot urban farming to improve food quality, affordability, financial and environmental sustainability, and gender equality.

Flood prevention is a priority for several cities

Including in peri-urban Dakar, Senegal. The project is supporting improved stormwater drainage, tools relating to urban resilience and climate change, and providing training to key stakeholders in flood risk management, urban climate change resilience, and territorial planning.

Resilience is being mainstreamed in integrated urban planning

For example in secondary cities in Viet Nam. Jointly supported by both GEF Trust Fund and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), the Viet Nam child project is applying the concept of resilience across the project components. It will also pilot insurance

mechanisms to develop Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) solutions for two city governments, and investment in low-impact, low-carbon development in Ha Giang City.

Several projects will be enhancing resilience of urban populations through health benefits

That will ensue from reduced emissions of projects supporting Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), diversified and cleaner energy sources, and reduced flooding and disease. The integrated planning approaches are also likely to improve the reliability of urban services.

Private sector engagement is expected to result in more resilient, inclusive, and competitive cities

It is an essential aspect of the SC-IAP. Together with the public sector, the private sector plays a critical role in financing, innovation, and up-scaling. In Malaysia, for example, where resilience-friendly but not yet tested ‘smart grid’ technology is being explored in the child project, private sector engagement is actively being sought. In so doing, the policy framework and financial mechanisms will be in line with the needs of investment manufacturers.

Applying a ‘systems approach’ and dealing with complexity are important elements of this program

To encourage rational and coordinated development planning across urban sectors, the GPSC developed a knowledge product, *Greater Than Parts: A Metropolitan Opportunity*. This attempts to break down urban complexity and explain in depth the rationale for integrative urban planning.

Measures being supported by this program to improve creditworthiness will build resilience by enhancing the capacity of some cities to borrow more easily if they are hit by a shock or hazard.

Good Growth Partnership

Supply chains have multiple moving parts and can be vulnerable to disruptions arising from constraints to production, finance, delivery, market shocks, national and international regulations, and other factors. External threats such as tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, pandemics, and systemic vulnerabilities, such as oil dependence, have the potential to cause major disruptions to supply chains. This was clearly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, where supply chains for several products were under stress in April-May 2020.

The GGP program embedded resilience in its theory of change, and several dimensions of resilience feature strongly.

These include improved production, robustness of the supply chain, gender equality mainstreaming, broad and inclusive stakeholder engagement, adaptation to climate change, and consideration of pertinent shocks and stresses. The program also supports more stable livelihoods for farmers and adds value to their products through enhanced knowledge.

The Program takes an adaptive management approach to build resilience of the supply chain

As part of the integrated supply chain approach, the program addresses barriers to sustainable production, demand, and investment. Various shocks arose during program implementation, related to climatic hazards, diseases, market demand changes, and political change; however, both the child projects and program overall have responded to the shocks, and built resilience at the country level.

Building resilience of the supply chain to disaster risks, market shocks, and political change is crucial

These are being taken on board in Paraguay's project focused on beef value chains, for example. In 2019, severe fires in Paraguay led to the decision to include fire prevention and mitigation practices

in farmers' trainings. Efforts are also underway with the Paraguayan Central Bank to increase the resilience of the finance sector to volatility from climate and other environmental risks, such as land use change. The project is planning a workshop on systems approaches to help stakeholders arrive at a common understanding of the drivers, threats, and opportunities related to deforestation and beef production in the country.

The Production child project is enhancing resilience of commodity supply chains

By maintaining forest habitat while building climate resilience, supporting good policy, encouraging sound production practices, and farmer training, and putting degraded lands to productive use.

There are also multiple entry points for resilience in the Demand project

Diversifying away from single-source suppliers to multiple suppliers; and building the capacity of traders, companies, retailers, and investors to make and adhere to commitments to reduced-deforestation commodities, are relevant examples.

The Transactions project aims to improve the resilience and competitiveness of financial institutions

Enabling them to support improved risk management practices and innovative products that will accelerate the production and supply of forest-friendly commodities. Through the creation of new business models that increase the value of greener production, green producers can also benefit from higher or more reliable incomes.

Highly robust stakeholder engagement will continue to be key

In line with a key resilience principle of broadening participation and given the large mix of partners and actors in this space, the GGP has undertaken extensive external stakeholder consultations and outreach to industry and private and public organizations. Also, given the complexities of each commodity supply chain, commodity platforms

and relevant roundtables have been woven into the implementation of the child projects.

The global knowledge platform has the potential to be a good source of information and exchange

Across the countries on resilience approaches and methodologies.

3. EMERGING LESSONS

Overall, the synthesis report prepared by Lead Agencies indicates that efforts are underway to integrate resilience considerations. Although the experiences vary between the programs, emerging lessons suggest that the resilience agenda is a critical aspect of the integrated approach to advancing systems transformation. The following are key observations and lessons drawn from the synthesis:

The IAP programs are building general resilience based on standard principles

Principles include broad participation, exchange of knowledge, dealing with complexity, gender equality, and good governance. The fact that each also takes a systems approach means that inter-relationships across system elements—e.g., within food value chains or urban contexts—are being better understood.

Specific resilience issues are also being addressed across the programs

Specific measures include adaptation to climate change, better management of forest fires and coping with changing political conditions. In Senegal, for example, climate change is expected to exacerbate existing flood risk issues in Dakar. Thus, investments and policy considerations relating to flood risk management are being addressed in the country's Sustainable Cities IAP child project.

The IAP programs are helping partners gain experience in applying resilience monitoring tools and methodologies

Agencies and countries have been dealing with shocks and stresses in a development context for a long time, yet at the time the IAPs were being designed, 'systems thinking' was a relatively cutting-edge programming approach for practitioners. Thus, though the IAPs identified systemic resilience as a key cross-cutting issue from the outset, these have been addressed in an ad hoc manner, and it has been a challenge for IAP partners to identify appropriate methodologies and frameworks for long-term resilience monitoring across each of the programs. This was compounded by the fact that, given the context-specific nature of resilience considerations, the GEF Secretariat did not recommend specific methodologies for agencies to apply; the Lead Agency was asked to work with project teams to identify the most appropriate analytical tools. The IAP programs are building valuable experience in resilience monitoring, and these approaches can be refined in future initiatives.

Investing in resilience is turning out to be a good idea, although approaches are variable across the programs

It was understood that the IAP child project grants included resources for the exploration, analysis, and capacity building needed for project teams to use appropriate tools and methodologies to address resilience issues. However, the degree to which the various child projects allocated the necessary funding for this purpose varied. Experience from the IAP programs is showing the potential of the GEF Trust Fund to support resilience as a key cross-cutting priority that can be linked with generation of global environmental benefits. This opportunity can be harnessed to address systemic resilience considerations in future integrated approach programs dealing with complex systems.

CROSS-CUTTING THEME 3: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder Engagement, understood as a process of identification of stakeholders, planning, disclosure of information, consultation, and participation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning, is a critical element of any GEF program or project. Stakeholder engagement enhances transparency and accountability, strengthens projects' outcomes, improves country ownership and buy-in, and harnesses knowledge and expertise of stakeholders. Effective stakeholder engagement contributes to the environmental and social sustainability of projects.

Stakeholder engagement is a cross-cutting issue for all the IAP programs. All three programs were designed before the [GEF Updated Policy on Stakeholder Engagement](#) was approved by the GEF Council in November 2017, and before there were any formal guidelines regarding appropriate and meaningful stakeholder engagement. Nevertheless, design of each was founded in several of the core principles for the effective engagement of stakeholders contained in that Policy, such as:

- Stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of the program;
- Stakeholder engagement supports inclusive participation;
- Stakeholder engagement is supported by appropriate documentation and access to information;
- To be effective and meaningful, Stakeholder Engagement requires sustained commitment and action, including the appropriate allocation of resources.

The purpose of this section is to synthesize experiences and emerging lessons from application of these principles during implementation of the programs. The following are the questions addressed during the review of emerging lessons regarding stakeholder engagement in the IAPs:

- What are the key elements of stakeholder engagement (SE) in the design and implementation of the IAPs and what approaches to SE were taken?
- What roles did stakeholders play in the IAPs? In particular, what roles did civil society organizations play?
- What are some of the emerging lessons from SE regarding its contribution to more transparency, ownership, and impact of the IAPs?

2. IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR THE INTEGRATED APPROACH

Stakeholder engagement was at the center of the design of the IAP programs. The working assumption has been that engagement with a wide set of stakeholders from the design stage would result in a larger impact beyond the immediate scope of the program, allowing for replication, scaling up, and outreach to other existing platforms that engaged stakeholders in the focus areas. Knowledge and learning would also be fostered by complementary mechanisms for engaging stakeholders and would increase their capacity to influence change and promote sharing of experiences and good practices amongst actors.

The collaborative processes that started with the design of all the IAP programs have brought together an array of capacities, knowledge, and

views that have played a key role in enhancing country ownership and program and project sustainability. Early and continuous stakeholder engagement at different levels support long-term impacts, while contributing to reinforcing other cross-cutting elements of the IAP programs such as gender equality, private sector participation, resilience, and knowledge sharing. At the same time, the Integrated Approach has supported inclusive and participatory management of the Programs, by including institutional frameworks for stakeholder engagement that would harness the efforts of a wide range of partners to address specific global issues.

Who are the stakeholders?

The IAP programs engaged a wide range of stakeholders, from GEF agencies, to national and local governments, private sector, bilateral, and civil society organizations, among other. All these stakeholders have participated in different capacities. [Table 2](#) provides a description of specific stakeholders that are engaged with each IAP program.

3. KEY ELEMENTS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The IAP programs created diverse tools and the means to engage with stakeholders at the design and implementation phases. This includes *multi-stakeholder platforms* at national, regional, and global levels for *advancing systemic shifts and transformational change* as well as steering committees, working groups, knowledge platforms, and advisory and technical committees. The engagement processes are innovative, covering multi-country, multi-stakeholder participation and the establishment of steering committees at the global, regional, and national level, in addition to the inclusion of working groups aimed at establishing platforms and involving other sectors.

These innovative institutional frameworks and mechanisms were envisaged from the onset in

order to engage with stakeholders and guarantee broad consultations, knowledge and learning, capacity development, technical expertise, policy influence, advocacy, and ultimately, participation in decision-making. In addition, some mechanisms were used to reach out to other stakeholders beyond the programs to bring valuable experiences and networks to provide inputs and share information relevant to the program. These multi-stakeholder mechanisms guaranteed bringing in voices and perspectives from different sectors. Furthermore, they have created opportunities for stakeholder participation in implementation, which will play a critical role in improving project performance and impact in accordance with key provisions in the GEF Stakeholder Engagement Policy and Guidelines ([see Table 3](#)).

These institutional frameworks for stakeholder engagement involved a wide range of government agencies, private sector, academia, civil society organizations, smallholders, communities, financial institutions, GEF Agencies and others, to effectively tackle major emerging drivers of global environmental challenges. The multi-stakeholder platforms are not only bringing in different national sectors of society, but also different levels of decision-making within a country contributing to coordination and integration.

The IAP programs relied on new as well as established mechanisms and initiatives for stakeholder engagement at different levels. These mechanisms comprised two main types of engagement: internal coordination (governance platforms), to engage stakeholders related to the program, and provide the space for consultative decision-making; and external mechanisms, through multi-stakeholder platforms to engage outside players and other relevant and complementary initiatives.

The objective of the internal coordination was to ensure participation and inclusion of all stakeholders associated with the program towards achieving coherence and consistency, transparency

TABLE 2: TYPOLOGY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE IAP PROGRAMS

| | Resilient Food Systems | Good Growth Partnership | Sustainable Cities |
|--|--|--|--|
| Governments | 12 countries (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda) each represented at national level | Four target countries (Brazil, Paraguay, Indonesia and Liberia) each represented at national level; additional countries represented through designated national agencies. | 11 countries represented at national and sub-national level (Paraguay, Brazil, Malaysia, Vietnam, Mexico, Peru, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa, China and India). |
| Sub-national Governments/ Municipalities | Representation of sub-national entities (district, provincial), including as executing partners in some countries | Representation of sub-national entities (district, State, provincial), including as executing partners in all four countries | Engagement by 28 cities as executing partners through city authorities, municipal development agencies or planning departments |
| GEF Agencies | IFAD (Lead Agency), World Bank, UNEP, FAO, UNDP, CI (Vital Signs Program), and UNIDO | UNDP (Lead Agency), with CI, UNEP, WWF, and World Bank Group via International Finance Corporation (IFC) | World Bank (Lead Agency), with ADB, AfDB, DBSA, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and IDB |
| Development Partners | Africa Union, AUDA/NEPAD, and RECs | Bilateral agencies such as GIZ and Switzerland's State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) | Bilateral Agencies such as JICA and EBRD and various national, bilateral development and financial institutions supporting cities |
| Technical Partners | The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) hosts the "regional hub project"; others include Bioversity, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), and other CGIAR Centers such as IFPRI. | ISEAL Alliance, Proforest, Trase (partnership between Stockholm Environment Institute and Global Canopy), and GlobeScan are among the major executing partners supporting work on supply chain sustainability | European Space Agency (ESA), UN Habitat, city administration of Aarhus, California, Paris and Sao Paulo (global level), Countries have used diverse entities in line with their national priorities for urban development, as well as local universities |
| Civil Society Organizations | Farmer organizations and grassroots communities are fully engaged across all country projects; global CSOs such as the Nature Conservancy are contributing knowledge and technical expertise through the multi-stakeholder platform | In addition to CI and WWF as GEF agencies, groups such as Pro-forest and Rainforest Alliance are executing partners at the global level; others at national level in each country, such as the Brazilian Foundation for Sustainable Development (FBDS) in Brazil. As part of commodity platforms, other civil society organizations are engaged as relevant. | The "Resource Team" of ICLEI, C40, and WRI are playing a major role in the GPSC, while major CSOS such as Guyra Paraguay are supporting work at city-level |
| Private Sector | Models of engagement with the private and banking sectors are emerging in countries to increase investments flows in major value chains, local value chains, and natural resource management such as with the Water Fund in Kenya involving companies like Coca-Cola and Caterpillar | Key stakeholder across the three supply chains, including producers, suppliers, aggregators, commercial banks, private investors and assets managers | Private sector engaged as partners and contractors in some of the components, financial institutions, transport and others |

in decision-making, and accountability within the program. The purpose of the external multi-stakeholder platforms was to increase the scale and ambit of the program by reaching out to other influential initiatives and leverage higher impact. Thus, two different types of stakeholders were included as part of the engagement: partners, close to the program, who were direct collaborators with particular roles and responsibilities, and an active engagement in decision-making; and other stakeholders, who would be consulted, sometimes considered as beneficiaries, would provide technical expertise or share relevant experiences, whose capacities would be strengthened and who could contribute to enhancing the scale and scope of the IAP programs.

For instance, in the GGP program, there was a distinction regarding stakeholder engagement and collaboration between the program steering committee for coordination, and the multi-stakeholder platforms for advancing systemic shifts and transformational change. The Sustainable Cities program was designed and structured to operate in two tiers: at city-level in 28 cities distributed across 11 country child projects, and at the global level through a dedicated global child project, renamed the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC).

In the RFS program, internal coordination is achieved through a Regional Hub that engages seven international organizations to implement cross-cutting priorities for sustainability and resilience of smallholder agriculture. In addition, there is a Program Coordination Unit (PCU) hosted at the World Agroforestry Centre that coordinates activities of the “hub” partners and technical support to country teams. In terms of external engagement, the Program is liaising with existing platforms in sub-Saharan Africa, engaging other partners to provide technical support and promoting dialogue, models, metrics, and practices that bridge the agricultural and environmental agendas at various scales.

Roles played by civil society

Here we refer to civil society stakeholders as NGOs, communities, farmer associations, cooperatives, Indigenous Peoples, and other non-state actors that participated in the IAPs in different capacities from design to implementation. The engagement of the private sector, another non-state actor that has been crucial for the IAPs, is covered in another synthesis document.

Civil society and local communities play an important role in addressing global environmental and sustainable development issues. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) can be effective agents of change for the necessary transformation that is needed in the areas addressed by the IAPs.

Across the IAPs, CSOs participated in the initial consultation workshops to discuss and agree on the strategic directions of the Programs and on ways and means to advance policy and institutional engagement at national and sub-national levels.

In all cases, they were consulted on different issues of the programs, both at the design and implementation phases. The three IAPs engaged CSOs in dialogues with other stakeholders through national and subnational platforms to ensure all perspectives were heard and the proposed solutions were captured.

Consultation and engagement with civil society allowed for a better alignment between project implementation and stakeholders and beneficiaries’ needs and ensuring greater support from stakeholders, thereby enhancing country ownership. In some cases, CSOs also played the role of advocates for actions of the IAP programs in the different sectors, pushing for changes to unsustainable practices. In addition to consultations, CSOs participated in each IAP program’s knowledge platform and capacity development activities. They shared experiences with other stakeholders and brought in other networks for broader engagement.

TABLE 3: APPROACH AND EXPERIENCE WITH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE IAP PROGRAMS

| GEF Priority | IAP Programs | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | RFS | GGP | SC-IAP |
| (a) Enhancing country ownership and accountability; | Each of the 12 countries have a dedicated team for implementation of in-country activities and for engagement in transboundary and regional activities through the “hub” project | The Production child project builds on UNDP’s Green Commodities Program methodology on multi-stakeholder collaboration for systemic change. This enables the establishment of government-led national and sub-national commodity platforms to ensure structured dialogue on sustainable production within the target countries, thus facilitating action planning, policy reform and improved enforcement capabilities. | Dedicated implementation teams in 28 cities across 11 countries, including national level platforms established to strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement |
| (b) Addressing the social and economic needs of affected people; | Farmers, SMEs, communities | Producers, buyers, and investors. Stakeholder Platforms enable public-private discussions, as well as greater coordination among different governmental institutions and ministries, and ensure that the views of smallholders, local communities and disadvantaged groups are heard. | City dwellers and beyond: access to services like public transport and clean water supply, green buildings and other interventions designed to mitigate GHG and air pollution emissions, resource efficiency, waste management, ecosystem protection, biodiversity, and climate resilience. |
| (c) Building partnerships among Agencies and stakeholders; | Platforms established to provide space for governance and decision-making that is internal to the program delivery as well external for participation and collaboration | The program has established or joined existing platforms and relevant roundtables to engage stakeholders and partners in a dialogue and collaboration and contribute to the delivery of targeted outcomes. Engagement with stakeholders is principally through national and sub-national commodity focused multi-stakeholder platforms, gathering actors from government, civil society and business engaged in the transformation of commodity sectors, and facilitating collaboration between these actors to achieve systemic and lasting changes. | The Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) promotes global knowledge coordination, programmatic support and experience-sharing between program recipients and other cities or sustainability-focused organizations. |
| (d) Harnessing the skills, experiences and knowledge of a wide range of stakeholders, particularly civil society organizations (CSO), community and local groups, and the private sector | The “hub” project plays a major role in networking stakeholders to share practices, tools, and knowledge for achieving sustainable resilient food systems | Engagement with stakeholders is principally through national and sub-national commodity focused multi-stakeholder platforms, building on a Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Systemic Change approach, gathering actors from government, civil society and business engaged in the transformation of commodity sectors, and facilitating collaboration between these actors to achieve systemic and lasting changes. | As part of the GPSC, the Resource Team partners (WRI, C40, and ICLEI) leverage their large city networks and broad technical expert base to increase access to knowledge through publications, events, and on-line events, such as the Peer to Peer exchanges, City Academies and Webinars. |

Based on the information reviewed, it seems that while civil society organizations were consulted amply, they have played a lesser role in the decision-making processes, with some exceptions where they participated in the steering committees. For example, in the RFS program, child projects have project steering committees, with three countries (Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia) engaging civil society representatives (universities, private sector, and NGOs). In the Sustainable Cities program, civil society organizations included national city network, regional initiatives, and associations. Some city-based organizations (C40, ICLEI, and WRI) have also been key partners in this program.

The GGP program has engaged civil society in the adaptation and learning platforms, which have served as mechanisms for engagement with other stakeholders, through facilitated learning and knowledge exchange opportunities. The 'Demand' child project under this program includes about half a dozen CSOs as executing partners, working with many other stakeholders through either existing platforms or new mechanisms. Also, thanks to having two NGOs acting as Implementing Agencies (CI and WWF), the engagement and mobilization of civil society and private sector was enhanced in this program.

In both the GGP and RFS programs, CSOs, including local communities, farmers cooperatives, women's associations, etc., were engaged in the on-the-ground implementation of the sustainable practices envisaged by the programs, applying the technologies and know-how.

4. EMERGING LESSONS

The stakeholder engagement process across the three IAP programs provide some emerging lessons for consideration in future projects and programs. They include the following:

Stakeholder engagement is key for an effective integrated approach

The engagement of different stakeholders in the IAP Programs has allowed for the establishment of inclusive governance systems designed to tackle the complexities and linkages of the issues and the possibility of influencing systemic change.

Enhancing country ownership

The stakeholder engagement platforms have allowed for more transparency, contributing to strengthening country ownership. The design of these platforms contributes to the replication of actions and leveraging of capacities of stakeholders and ensure sustainability in the long-term.

Transaction costs of an inclusive approach

Engaging many partners and diverse stakeholders may have increased the complexity of the programs and render the coordination process more challenging. The transaction costs associated with coordinating stakeholder engagement during the design phase may therefore be high, but hopefully outweighed by subsequent benefits.

Need for greater coordination

Given the need for integration, and the multiplicity of stakeholders, there is also a need for good coordination and coherence of actions across different levels by the partners to achieve related outcomes. This has been achieved through the coordination mechanisms and the engagement of key agencies leading the processes.

Higher impact

Engagement at all levels has allowed for the whole of the program to be greater than the sum of its parts, with stakeholders being part of a larger process rather than just their immediate sphere of action. As concluded by the IEO in the 2018 Formative Review of the IAP programs, the buy-in

of “the intersectoral approach at the country level, introduced by the IAP programs constitutes one of the main strategies for achieving impact at scale.”

Enhancement of capacities of stakeholders

The multi-stakeholder participatory frameworks promoted ownership at multiple scales and allowed for the sharing of information and best practices among the project stakeholders and decision-makers at different levels. They harnessed different capacities and strategic partnerships with national and international stakeholders across focal areas.

Reinforcing other cross-cutting issues

Broad Stakeholder Engagement contributes to strengthening other cross-cutting elements of the IAP programs such as gender equality, private sector participation, resilience, and knowledge sharing.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

Future GEF programs could learn from the approach and process of engaging stakeholders pioneered by the IAP programs. In line with GEF expectations for stakeholder engagement, the following lessons are invaluable for further consideration:

- **Meaningful consultations³ with stakeholders and their engagement in the design phase, allows for active support from different sectors** and for the early identification of possible challenges to implementation.
- **Consulting early and engaging stakeholders from the design phase** helps guarantee buy-in and participation.
- **Consider similar multi-stakeholder platforms,** guided by the principles and requirements of the Updated Policy on Stakeholder Engagement and its Guidelines for Implementation.
- **Civil society may contribute expertise and knowledge** that can enhance the impact of the program.

- Future GEF programs may benefit from engaging relevant civil society organizations (beyond the GEF agencies) in **a more active role in the coordination platforms.** Their expertise and know-how as well as their deep knowledge of the local realities can provide important perspectives in decision-making.
- **A monitoring framework with concrete indicators to track stakeholder engagement** should be devised in advance of implementation. These indicators may help identify the level of engagement and the impacts on results.
- **Using the requirement of the 2017 Policy in terms of the formulation of a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan** will help identify a comprehensive list of stakeholders and their interests and roles in the project, including the program or project beneficiaries. This plan would also allow identification of possible partnerships, and collaboration among stakeholders.
- **Include indicators to monitor the engagement of stakeholders** in the Programs and possible impacts of that engagement in terms of capacity development, access to resources, and decision-making.
- Finally, it would be important for the IAPs and future programs including GEF-7 Impact Programs to **document the impact of the stakeholder engagement on beneficiaries.**

3 As defined in the Guidelines for the Implementation of the [Policy on Stakeholder Engagement](#).

CROSS-CUTTING THEME 4: PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The private sector, as an actor in the transformation of markets, is a critical stakeholder group across all three IAP programs:

Across all three programs, the integrated approach created opportunities for a range of options to crowd-in private sector, from co-financing and parallel financing to creation of institutional platforms for catalyzing change. The IAP program design activities involved a wide range of private sector entities at national, regional and global levels.

Responses to the two key questions that were addressed through the review:

1. What are the emerging trends with respect to engaging private sector in the program? – characterize private sector from local to global, and means of engagement for each; and
2. How is the engagement being managed to create opportunity for systems shift and transformational change?

Three main observations emerged from the overall experience to-date:

IAP programs have supported a higher level of private sector engagement

by operating at global, regional, and local scales, thus providing multiple entry points for the private sector with solutions and contributions relevant at each level. This approach supports more systemic transformation across sectors and reaches into markets and demand centers.

The diversity of private sector contributions is impressive, with many industry sectors represented

The finance sector in particular is strongly engaged across the IAP programs and is itself a 'cross-cutting' theme in the programs. However, some gaps remain in the engagement of key landscape actors and technology providers.

Multi-stakeholder platforms feature strongly across all IAP programs

There is need for knowledge management and resources to strengthen the best practices and approaches for harnessing and engaging with the platforms.

2. EXPERIENCE AND APPROACHES WITH PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Across the three IAP programs, observable trends have been developing in the processes and modalities of engagement with the private sector entities. While each program has its own focus and program design, there are commonalities between them both in terms of the approach and features of private sector engagement and also across activities that may well be explored to further build private sector engagement into the programs. Three important trends are particularly key to highlight as the GEF moves forward with strengthening private sector engagement through integrated programming: (i) processes for a broad and inclusive representation of private sector; (ii) modalities for private sector engagement, and (iii) recognizing the critical role of the financial sector.

Broad and Inclusive Representation of the Private Sector

Each of the programs successfully demonstrates a broad range of engagements with the private sector represented across the spectrum of typologies from large multinational corporations to micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises. The inclusive range of companies engaged across the programs is extensive, with the active participation from the private sector at all scales. This has been achieved through the collective engagement of business in two main ways:

By working across scales, from local, subnational, national, regional to global. These include:

In the SC-IAP program, city level private-public partnerships (PPP) are being created based upon an enabling environment and supportive policies. In India, private enterprises are directly co-financing the project (USD 10million) to establish business models and a PPP mode of operations for four-five investment projects. Based on the 2020 PIR, the project has now adopted pilot investment projects under PPPs in each city, with funds set to flow in the second half of 2020:

- Bhopal: Development of 200 tons per day bio-methanation plant.
- Jaipur: Construction of 90 liters per day sewerage treatment plant (STP) and rejuvenation of existing 125 liters per day STP to latest treatment standards.
- Mysore: Remodeling of existing waste to compost facility and development of two composting facilities of different capacities within the city.
- Vijayawada: Upgrading of seven existing STPs and utilization of biogas/electricity generation from four STPs.
- Guntur: Construction of modern slaughterhouse with focus on effluent treatment and energy efficiency.

Taking advantage of regional hubs in which diverse private sector entities are effectively engaged on the shared priorities within their respective geography, and where specific strategies can be deployed that target the specific entities. For example, the GGP is harnessing commodity roundtables to engage businesses in sustainable supply chain activities for soy in South America and palm oil in Africa. Engaging with such multi-stakeholder platforms increases the prospect of achieving systemic change, such as innovations for sustainable production operations, ensuring buyers have the skills, knowledge, and tools to source sustainably, and financial institutions have access to information for investing into sustainability throughout supply chains.

Multi-level engagement opportunities throughout the program are supported by central coordination at the global level and strategic investments locally. These multiple entry points can better function to facilitate the engagement of both a multitude of different sized companies and also the various tiers of management, subsidiaries, and business units that exist within the multinational companies.

The formation of Global Project strategic management units with oversight of the child projects further fostered networked collaboration, such as multi-stakeholder platforms and other organizations with a global mandate and therefore able to scale beyond the project portfolio, develop harmonized or consistent approaches, and address challenges at a greater level of complexity than would otherwise be achieved through a basic portfolio of disparate projects.

Engaging the main value chain actors for key commodities and products also drives initiatives up and down the value chain and connects customers and suppliers.

The RFS program specifically focused on SMEs and smallholder farmers as major stakeholders for driving sustainability and resilience in African agriculture. This is acknowledged by the observation that “the

TABLE 4: TYPOLOGY OF PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES REPRESENTED ACROSS THE IAP PROGRAMS

| Sectors (Using the Global Industry Classification Standard) | IAP Programs | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | RFS | GGP | SC |
| Energy | | | |
| Materials | Valued contributor in projects | Valued contributor in projects | Valued contributor in projects |
| Industrials | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Critical contribution to program outcomes |
| Consumer discretionary | | | |
| Consumer staples | Critical contribution to program outcomes | Critical contribution to program outcomes | |
| Health care | | | |
| Financial | Critical contribution to program outcomes | Critical contribution to program outcomes | Critical contribution to program outcomes |
| Information technology | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components |
| Communication services | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components | Major contribution to child project outcomes or key program components |
| Utilities | | | Critical contribution to program outcomes |
| Real estate | | | Critical contribution to program outcomes |

local land users and farmers are themselves part of the private sector, and in sub-Saharan Africa represent the largest investors of labor, knowledge, and expertise in land management."

There are more challenges in engaging the multinational companies in the local contexts of each IAP program and programs have not been able to as successfully include them to the same extent as smallholders or national companies. However, having integrated programs active at multiple scales (e.g. GGP) allow for private sector from various relevant sectors and scales to be engaged, and to connect the dots between these actors, which is not always possible in country-focused or siloed projects.

The coverage of industry sectors represented by the private sector is also a great achievement in meeting the objective of a *wide range of private sector entities*. Industry sectors represented across the IAP programs according to GICS classifications are shown in [Table 4](#).

Modalities of Engagement

The modalities of engagement with the private sector are also wide-ranging with finance, technical assistance, and knowledge and information sharing being the most commonly evident ways in which the private sector is engaging with the IAP programs.

Other contributions from the private sector, such as their advisory services, training, and extension are also mentioned and have clearly been valuable contributors to the programs although measuring and quantifying this contribution remains more challenging. As described by the RFS program, the finance engagement modality is the only one where clear metrics exists.

Financial Sector Private Sector Engagement

The strongest cases of success with the private sector engagement were working across the financial sector with a raft of new initiatives including financial products, new business models,

knowledge and training, and new funds, including:

In the Sustainable Cities program:

- Two to three business models for investment projects co-financed by government, banks, and private investors.
- Pilot investment projects and technologies tied to manufacturing supply chains to enable scale up.
- Knowledge products and training: Municipal Finance and Creditworthiness Academy, a Municipal Finance, Bonds and Public-private Partnerships (PPP) event, a Municipal PPPs City Academy, and Municipal PPP Framework knowledge product.

In the GGP program:

- A Statement of Intent was signed with &Green Fund, opening the door for collaboration on financing more sustainable business models, possibly in Liberia.
- Investors and assets managers from Southeast Asia are being trained on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles.
- Deforestation risk management is being developed for banks in Indonesia, Brazil, and Paraguay as well as at the global level.

In the RFS program:

- Cost-sharing financing mechanism through which several banks and micro-finance institutions signed partnership agreements.
- Scaling the innovative multi-stakeholder Water Fund.

3. EMERGING TRENDS AND LESSONS

The IAP programs are demonstrating that private sector engagement can be successfully advanced through a wide range of platforms deployed at local, subnational, national, regional, and global scales. Existing platforms or new initiatives are being harnessed to influence actions and policy options that could potentially drive systemic change at scale.

Engagement through platforms is also helpful in allowing IAP programs to develop outputs addressing the most common needs identified across stakeholders, including the private sector, and to co-create solutions, increasing the likelihood of buy-in and adoption, be they vision statements, strategies, plans, tools, knowledge resources, or reports. This form of multi-stakeholder engagement also allows participants to work more effectively on enabling conditions, which often requires involvement and action from distinct actors.

Stakeholder platforms need to have appropriate governance and a robust business model incorporating sustainability strategies to support multi-stakeholder collaboration and knowledge exchange between competitors and between buyers and sellers. New technology platforms for enhanced traceability, the use of third-party service providers, and a well-developed understanding of governance and training on issues related to the pre-competitive environment could be incorporated as the IAP programs evolve.

Combining the multi-stakeholder collaborative approach with bilateral engagement is, however, important, so that the specific needs and visions of individual private actors can be better understood.

4. POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCING SYSTEMS SHIFT AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

Working in Collaboration: PPPs, Regional Hubs, and Platforms for Successful Engagement

Fostering and managing working relationships between the public sector and the private sector is a major challenge that was targeted by the IAP programs. A commonly cited barrier was the in-country level of experience or institutional capacity within countries and the level of experience within companies at the local level in dealing with agencies and the procedures that are entailed in a GEF partnership.

As noted in OPS6, getting started is often the challenge: *“GEF country clients and private sector stakeholders lack awareness of the opportunities for engagement with one another; and the GEF’s position, processes, and role are insufficiently clear to the private sector.”*¹ Neither party can demonstrate a strong track record in collaboration and in some cases, such as with local governments, close ties with the private sector raise questions of favorable consideration, probity, and governance.

Despite these challenges, all IAPs have developed innovative PPP and 4P models that prove successful in bridging these gaps. Across the IAP portfolio there is strong evidence for the value in multi-stakeholder platforms as the optimal mechanism by which the public and private sectors can be mobilized to foster collaboration, enable collective action, and develop coherent policy through constructive processes.

The engagement of the private sector through a wide range of platforms deployed at local, subnational, national, regional, and global scales was outstanding. In many cases, existing platforms such as commodity roundtables were available, and in other cases new initiatives were developed with the IAP partners to address specific challenges.

In the RFS program, engagement with multi-stakeholder frameworks and platforms at the regional level made it possible to bring together different stakeholders working in common landscapes, as well as partners from existing platforms across Sub-Saharan Africa. This approach builds a logical coherence for changes to systems at the regional level.

At the country level, the IAP program design encouraged the use of multi-stakeholder institutional frameworks and platforms for sustainability and resilience which facilitated multi-stakeholder and multi-level engagement with National Government Agencies, Multilateral Agencies—including GEF agencies, bilateral agencies, and CSOs—from grassroots to international and the various scales of private sector.

In cases where existing platforms are already functioning well, it was proven to be more expeditious to build on, or augment, the platforms instead of creating new “competing” platforms that can have the effect of diluting private sector engagement.

Broader Private Sector Collaboration

The private sector is often described in a linear fashion—from producer to consumer. While this is a useful approach to address the primary challenges in supply chains and to attain transformational shifts needed in the national to sub-national levels, there is a contingent of supportive and diverse private sector actors that cut across all supply chains and all geographies. Many of these companies have made commitments under the Rio Conventions and are ideally suited for GEF partnerships. These include:

- Input providers for seeds, crop protection, and plant nutrition who themselves have a large network of farmers and aligned projects;
- Technology companies including weather and climate services, renewable energy and large data managers that are better able to collate and disseminate information and use the tools of the Fourth Industrial Revolution such automation with GIS and precision agriculture;
- The full range of finance sector service providers including insurance and re-insurance companies, in addition to the investment community;
- Other landscape level actors (Coca-Cola and Caterpillar are good examples in the RFS program) that have no direct linkage to the value chain but are partners in landscape management and water stewardship. It was a feature of the IAP programs, notably the RFS program, that such uncommon collaborations were yielding excellent results and that innovative thinking on private sector engagements should be encouraged across landscapes. Partners in the resources and extractive industries should be screened for environmental and social performance with leading companies often proving to be excellent long-term partners.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

To understand the role of the private sector and to better account for questions of additionality as a result of private sector engagement, a brief summary of the role that the private sector played would be useful. It would be valuable to capture some of the lessons and success factors in working with multi-stakeholder platforms to inform future engagements and the roles that agencies and the GEF could play.

The inclusion of an annex, listing all the private sector companies engaged, including those that declined participation would also prove insightful and indicate the total amount of activity and resourcing that is required for successful private sector engagement. A comprehensive list of companies and multi-stakeholder platforms will be an asset for future programming and can be categorized by industry sector according to the GICS industry codes. This will help coordination and prioritization of private sector engagement activities and show where successes have occurred, and which sectors remain underrepresented.

Future programming could consider more closely the different roles that the private sector is playing, beyond financial contributions, to widen the understanding of the breadth of contributions that could be made. Such engagement modalities include:

- Knowledge and information sharing;
- Technical assistance;
- Finance;
- Capacity development;
- Policy development;
- Industry leadership (SBTs across focal areas, commitments for sourcing and investing).

The formation of “early action” plans for engagement and a GEF “guide for business” to support the concept development and planning phases of projects would be helpful to build-in

more meaningful engagement of the private sector at the start of planning activities and to identify early on in the process any gaps or barriers that could appear later in programs. If one of the strengths of the IAP programs is to bring together a coalition of development actors with different expertise, networks, and comparative advantages, ensuring coordination around private sector engagement is also important so networks and contacts of a specific agency can be better leveraged.

In support of the trend to work more collaboratively with platforms, the GEF Secretariat and agencies could work to obviate the challenges created by the “existence of competition between organizations” through guidance on the creation of a pre-competitive safe operating space for business that takes into account antitrust considerations. This may take the form of a workshop, training series, or documented guidance for participants, to better facilitate private sector engagement by giving private sector actors the confidence that commercially and legally sensitive issues will be considered in the development of GEF partnerships.

Many private sector actors could play a role across multiple priorities for integrated programming, particularly in finance, 4IR technologies, automation, and water resources management and therefore coordinated private sector approaches should be explored across the programs.

Other private sector landscape-level actors, without having a direct value chain linkage to commodities but a strong commitment to sustainable development, could also be encouraged to participate:

- Mining and resources companies;
- Power generation and transmission, utilities and infrastructure;
- Logistics companies – ports, rail, cold storage, pipelines, shipping and bulk handling;
- Cement, pulp and paper, and heavy industry.

In communicating the success of the IAP programs and the role of the private sector, opportunities for the private sector to promote their work with the GEF should be considered through media resources available and through participation in major events.

Enhancing organizational leadership connectivity, between the agency CEOs and their senior leadership team and the relevant company CEOs and leadership teams should be considered to reinforce strategic industry responses and better resource activities at the global and multiple country levels for the IAP programs.

The use of the resources available through the GEF Secretariat should also be considered, including the presence at major global fora where agencies and companies can showcase the success of the IAPs and provide a platform for the participants, including private sector partners at all tiers and scales.

There has been a range of superb knowledge resources developed through the IAPs and ensuring these are adopted is a priority. How are we measuring their use and what further measures could we all take to improve uptake, such as the use of social media?

A further knowledge resource to consider is a guide to success factors in working with platforms, documenting what works, what doesn't, how to manage members, target setting, what role can the

agency play in the platforms to support the delivery of global environmental benefits.

As the IAP programs have achieved considerable success with the financial and banking sectors, concerted support for green bond metrics, defining the standards for bonds, and other approaches to investments that can encourage the adoption of practices and standards that have been developed through the programs could also be encouraged.

The support provided through GEF Blended Finance (NGI) should also be considered. Programs under the NGI, such as the LDN Fund, the Livelihoods Fund and Agri3 could be deployed through integrated approach programs. In this regard, the proposed plan for microfinancing and a Risk Facility Instrument for the African Union are other ideas that have been advanced and hold great promise.

The development of metrics beyond the GEF indicators for the private sector would need to be adopted on a case-by-case basis and may better show the breadth of social and economic benefits that could bolster the case for private action and underscore the value of GEF investments across key SDGs which are important to the private sector. This could include metrics relevant to the modalities of engagement, indicators and metrics specific to the programs, and consideration of private sector additionality.

CROSS-CUTTING THEME 5: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge Management (KM) entails deliberate and strategic learning and sharing, as well as systematic management of knowledge assets, and it is a key feature of all GEF investments, including the IAP programs. The goal for KM in the GEF is to ensure that GEF programs/projects benefit from existing knowledge and lessons learned at design, and that they generate, capture, and disseminate knowledge during implementation, leading to enhanced impact, and that they facilitate learning, behavior change, replication and scale up at local, national, regional, and global levels, by strategically sharing, upon completion, program/project outputs, results and lessons learned across the GEF partnership and beyond to inform policy and investment decisions.

As part of this review, three key questions were asked across the three IAPs:

- What tools and techniques were identified for KM and learning during “design” of the program?
- How are the tools and techniques being used to *generate, capture and disseminate knowledge* during implementation? – *highlight examples from across the portfolio.*
- What kind of *barriers*, if any, are been faced in advancing knowledge and learning components for the program?

In this synthesis report, IAP responses to these three key questions are summarized with key findings and recommendations presented for further discussion.

2. EMERGING TRENDS AND LESSONS

A range of tools and techniques were identified for KM and learning during “design” of the IAP programs

These were either inherent in the overall program framework or embedded within specific child projects. Highlights include the following:

The “**Engage and Track**” approach of the RFS program is reflected in all projects as a means to establish or strengthen knowledge platforms for *South-South Exchanges*, and to build an evidence base for resilient and sustainable agriculture and resource management practices through systematic monitoring and assessment. The design structure also envisaged the Hub project to deliver applied knowledge services to the country projects and facilitate peer learning, as well as to connect them to other sources of experience and expertise. This was planned through three key avenues:

- **Establishment of the Science Policy Interface** to enhance linkages between science, policy and practice;
- **Ensure feedback of lessons to policy makers at national and regional level** on what works and what does not;
- **Dissemination of program results, communication and advocacy.**

The Hub project for RFS program was tasked with ensuring results and impacts are well documented and shared among all the stakeholders, and with refining and applying an *External Communication Strategy* to reach a broader audience. This function included gathering and synthesizing information,

best practices, and evidence to support project goals and to facilitate south-south exchanges.

The Adaptive Management and Learning (A&L) Project under the GGP program was designated to coordinate joint knowledge management and learning at the global level, across child projects, and with external initiatives. Joint knowledge management activities were organized around two knowledge platforms:

- **A global Community of Practice** established to facilitate learning on effective interventions to address deforestation in supply chains and to provide a learning framework to explore cross-cutting themes such as gender and resilience.
- **A Global Impacts Platform** to disseminate robust and policy-relevant evidence on the effectiveness of different market-based sustainability approaches for deforestation-free commodities.

In accordance with its unique integrated supply chain approach, the design stage of individual GGP child projects also identified tools and techniques for KM and learning to help influence the shift toward sustainability. Examples include: *Knowledge products* on topics such as approaches to constructively engaging governments and working with the private sector and good practices for providing effective support to smallholders; *sub-community, or working group* of knowledge professionals to meet on an annual basis to develop cutting edge joint analyses of key issues and findings under the project themes; *Market Intelligence Research* to provide state-of-the-art information on market demand, its impact on deforestation, trade patterns, corporate tracking, key consumption trends, and financial flows for beef, soy, and oil palm. *Small grants fund for learning and exchange* to provide opportunities for companies and governments in “demand markets” to learn about sustainable production; and Development of *studies, guidance notes, and technical briefs* on relevant topics that could

accelerate the production of low deforestation commodities (e.g. production country analyses of fiscal instruments, trade frameworks, and legal frameworks that shape the flow of capital in a landscape into areas that are not aligned with sustainable agricultural practices, and recommendations for enhancing alignment).

The Global Platform for Sustainable Cities program (or GPSC) under the SC program was designed to serve as a “Knowledge Management” platform, to support enhanced connectivity and partnership for sustainable cities at local, national, and global levels. The KM framework weaves together three central pillars to urban sustainability – planning, financing, and measuring – together with cross-cutting activities. Tools and techniques envisioned under the GPSC during the design phase included the following:

- **Global Meetings** to obtain contextual insights from the different cities and institutions involved in terms of technical knowledge, capacity development, and program implementation lessons learned.
- **Expert or Working Groups** to bring together domain experts to inform the development of different forward-looking knowledge products.
- **GPSC Website** to serve as day-to-day tool for promoting knowledge exchange and dissemination, including project information on City Dashboard, knowledge products and resources, blogs, and news; and events which showcases future, current, and archived materials.

The Sustainable Cities IAP program also included as part of its design, a Resource Team (RT) of key technical partners and city networks, to enable wider access to other knowledge platforms, promote peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and facilitate access to a diverse range of good practices and other cities with relevant experience. The RT was linked to the GPSC to support its web platform with knowledge

and learning materials that link the SC-IAP cities with others. The RT partners also capture knowledge from their activities and lessons learned, addressing topics identified by the IAP cities, amongst the stakeholders to encourage sharing beyond the core group.

Diverse tools and techniques are being used to generate, capture and disseminate knowledge during implementation:

Websites as hub for KM

Each of the IAP programs have launched a website that serves as the primary tool to disseminate knowledge across all projects. In addition, in response to the need to make knowledge on key thematic issues easier to disseminate across multiple stakeholders, some programs have added new dimensions to the websites:

- **The RFS program** has developed a tailored knowledge center with dual language functionality to serve as an open access resource to address country project's needs in key thematic areas, providing resources such as monitoring and evaluation and communications toolkits, and allowing country projects to upload as well as request resources.
- **GGP** has launched the Global Impacts Platform, now branded as Evidensia, to be a global repository of credible evidence on the impacts and effectiveness of standards and other sustainability tools. This innovative knowledge management platform delivers high quality evidence, information, and insights on sustainability impacts with the final goal of positively influencing corporate and government decisions regarding sustainable commodity production and sourcing and supporting sustainability practitioners and implementers as well as researchers and academics. The A&L project has also established a database to capture lessons learned from each child project and keep track of the lessons learned around different thematic such as project

design, management, gender, communications, and Community of Practice, among others.

- A significant component of the knowledge portion of the **GPSC website** is the Transit-oriented Development (TOD) space. Dedicated space for TOD provides not only key principles to design effective, inclusive and safe TOD projects with country case studies but also a step-by-step guidance to implement TOD from assessment to financing and implementation.

Global Convening

All three programs organize program-level events or conferences that bring together all stakeholder participating in the program, and in some cases with inclusion of stakeholders and initiatives that are also operating the program space. These meetings are proving invaluable for knowledge sharing and learning by stakeholders, but also as mechanism for synthesizing emerging lessons and achievements. Since launch of the programs, the SC program through its GPSC has organized three global meetings: Singapore (2016), New Delhi (2017), and Sao Paulo (2019). The GGP has organized conferences two conferences: New York (2017) and Lima (2019). The RFS program has organized two Annual Meetings: Ethiopia (2017) and Ghana (2018).

Communities of Practice

The programs are demonstrating that conceiving, planning, and implementing a Community of Practice and development of knowledge products synergistically creates a virtuous circle that allows the creation of hands-on guidance knowledge products. The GGP (re)launched a *Green Commodities Community (GGC)* in February 2018, which has since engaged 210 practitioners from 40 organizations and 12 countries. The GCC carries out cycles of virtual workshops leading to the Good Growth Conference in English and Spanish, facilitating knowledge sharing.

Outreach Events

GGP has been represented at different global events such as the TFA annual meetings, RSPO regional and global meetings, GRSB regional and global meetings, learning workshops such as the one on Stakeholder Engagement and dialogue processes in the pursuit of GEB organized by the STAP and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in 2019, to name a few.

Knowledge Products

Each of the programs has invested in series of knowledge products on best practices, lessons, and achievements. While the products are unique to each program, they illustrate the importance of the programs as spaces for generating global public goods. Examples include the following:

- **The GGP program** has produced and disseminated a program-level gender knowledge product: "Gender Mainstreaming in Global Agricultural Supply Chains Can Accelerate Good Growth." In addition, a wide range of knowledge products have been produced through each of the supply chain child projects, such as: a Landscape Analysis Tool to assess the impact of different interventions aiming to reduce deforestation inside a landscape, learn on which ones are the most effective and adapt quickly; Commodity Market Intelligence Update newsletters as well as additional deep-dive market analyses and topical reports providing decision-relevant information to stakeholders.
- **The SC-IAP program** has a suite of knowledge products developed through the GPSC and partners to support cities. These include Transit-oriented Development Implementation Resources and Tools, the Municipal Public-private Partnership Framework, and the Urban Sustainability Framework which is available in four languages.
- **The RFS program** generates knowledge products around the programmatic theory of change, grouping outputs under either

'engage', 'act', 'track' or 'cross-cutting' to include aspects such as gender mainstreaming and nutrition. Significant efforts are made at a regional level contribute not only to extract the salient knowledge and evidence from country project activities, but also to add significant value in "packaging" stories and integrated them into the series.

Learning and Knowledge Exchange

This includes learning visits, roundtables, workshops, and webinars to disseminate knowledge generated from project activities and build capacity of stakeholders that are critical for influence system change. This operates at multiple scales, such as between actors across different sites or project teams between countries, Examples from the IAP programs include:

- For **GGP**, a business roundtable dialogue led by ISEAL to explore challenges, opportunities, and strategies to move toward deforestation-free supply chains in India; a strategic business-media-youth dialogue led by ISEAL on whether going more sustainable can be a competitive advantage for businesses operating in India; and a strategic dialogue led by ISEAL with the Indian finance sector to explore challenges, opportunities, and strategies to achieve deforestation-free supply chains in India;
- **The SC-IAP** program primarily uses direct peer-to-peer learning, where project teams from one country visit another country to learn and discuss collaboration on priority issues for urban sustainability. City Academies are also organized by the RT on different topics (e.g. transit-oriented development, geospatial data, and municipal public-private partnerships) have provided unique spaces for training on prevalent themes important to urban sustainability.
- **The RFS program** has organized South-South exchanges (inter-state collaboration within countries as well as exchange visits among countries) to expand the level of impact and

deliver global environmental benefits across geographic landscapes and at scale. For example, in 2018 ICRAF facilitated the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned between stakeholders from different research and development projects working in common areas in Northern Ghana, including the RFS Project (SLWM); the West Africa Forest-Farm Interface (WAFFI), an IFAD-funded initiative; and the EU-financed Regreening Africa.

Barriers faced in advancing knowledge and learning components for each program

A wide range of barriers were identified across the three programs, but overall fall into the following categories:

Lack of a common template and unified framework for all child projects

Because of the high level of autonomy of the projects and the diversity of institutional standards, it is difficult to establish and implement a common framework for KM. Country / thematic child projects are not always proactive in sharing knowledge with the coordination project for greater dissemination. There is no single reporting template or timeline, for instance, adopted by all projects. In some cases, the KM function is not clearly defined within project management structures, resulting in low engagement from project teams, usually due to competing priorities and commitments.

Misaligned timelines or the long internal review processes required by some partners

Knowledge materials generated by child projects are not always available to contribute in a timely manner to the preparation and implementation of activities under other child projects that would have benefitted from the knowledge. Timelines of activities and review processes necessary to finalize knowledge products should be better integrated in the design phase.

Insufficient budget and time planned for KM activities at project design

This has resulted in limited participation of all partners in learning activities and knowledge sharing, especially at the regional / global level where such engagement is critical for synthesizing progress and achievements at program level. In some cases, this has also affected the expertise available for KM.

3. LOOKING AHEAD

Embedding a culture of learning within a wider integrated project.

As the country projects all started at different times and with different funding mechanisms, some projects are still not incentivized or have enough clarity on the wider purpose and structure of an integrated program. This needs to be regularly highlighted by the PCU and/or through donor interactions, with sustained encouragement of a culture of peer learning as well as continued efforts by the Hub to connect key focal points within projects. Annual meetings, strategic events, virtual webinars and more informal channels (e.g. social media, WhatsApp) allow for continued relationship building.

Designing and implementing the GEF's KM Approach

Starting with GEF-7, all GEF-financed programs are required to develop and implement a KM Approach, ensuring that knowledge and learning objectives are appropriately addressed at the design stage. The implementation of each program's KM approach is financed by GEF funds, making adequate budget allocation for KM feasible and removing a barrier to mainstreaming KM into program implementation. Lessons emerging from IAPs will provide guidance for IPs in designing and implementing their KM approaches.



Sensitization at design

Additional efforts would be welcome during project design (of future initiatives) to sensitize national stakeholders for an improved collective understanding of the relationship between M&E, KM, communications, and advocacy, including the different capacities and expertise needed for appropriately performing each of these functions. This would hopefully improve budget allocation, staffing plans, and overall strategies at project level.

Clear KM indicators and targets

As it became clear throughout the interactions between the PCU and country teams in the process of finalizing the program results framework and M&E plan, many projects did not from the onset have clear indicators or ambitious targets related

to KM activities. Had these been in place from the beginning, projects would likely have achieved more – and their workplans could already be adapting based on KM findings.

Sustained capacity development efforts

Continuous support to capacity strengthening at country level is essential, such as training on thematic issues; the application of analytical tools for regional-scale monitoring; and knowledge platforms for learning, synthesis, and dissemination. This includes practical toolkits on how to structure KM approaches both within and across integrated programs, as well as linking earlier on projects with similar intervention plans and outcome goals. KM approaches for GEF programs would benefit from including specific indicators and targets for KM activities.

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