

# **Approach Paper: Good Practices in Developing Indicators for Climate Change Adaptation**

## **Climate-Eval community of practice**

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### **I. Summary**

This paper presents the approach for undertaking the study to identify and document good practices in developing and applying indicators in monitoring and evaluation of climate change adaptation interventions. The study will consider indicators that assist in tracking the performance and achievements of climate change adaptation programs and projects, consistent with international conventions, and national and regional plans and frameworks. In addition, it will address the recommendations in the previous study *Tracking Progress for Effective Action: A Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Adaptation to Climate Change* conducted by Haris Sanahuja. The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. document experiences and lessons on the development, selection and use of indicators, and the monitoring and evaluation frameworks and contexts on which they are embedded;
2. review and synthesize existing literature on typologies of indicators according to the level of intervention and type/sector of climate adaptation intervention;
3. identify other evaluation parameters and/or assessment questions in determining the success of climate change adaptation interventions
4. determine appropriate indicators that can deliver information critical for decision-makers and policymakers at the national and international level

Inputs and comments from members of Climate-Eval, members of Adaptation Task Force, and other key informants will be solicited and the results of the discussion of the approach paper will be integrated into the final version of this approach paper. To the extent possible, the study itself will be undertaken with active participation of interested members of Climate-Eval through a separate discussion group that will be set up for this purpose. With the assistance of the Climate-Eval moderator, the consultant will present the pre-final draft of the report as a validation exercise, through a Climate-Eval webinar to gather further comments and suggestions.

### **II. Background**

The UNFCCC lays out adaptation as the strategic action to address the impacts of climate change. As part of the agreement, developed countries ('Annex I' countries) need to mobilize financing to develop and implement these adaptation measures. The portfolio of these projects and programs has increased since the creation of funds which support climate adaptation. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) administers two global funds, namely the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and it supports the Adaptation Fund. Development cooperation agencies have also created priority work programs or funds dedicated to adaptation activities. In addition, the World Bank administers the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience, which funds technical assistance and investments to support countries' efforts to integrate climate risk and resilience into core development planning and implementation.

At the national level, countries are required to formulate their respective adaptation plan for action, which identifies adaptation strategies that apply to national contexts, which are translated to concrete projects.

To espouse accountability and learning from these activities, and to determine the success of these measures, monitoring and evaluation is necessary. A corresponding results-based management framework is usually associated with finance or portfolio funding institutions. These funding institutions typically formulate and follow their respective monitoring and evaluation policies and frameworks, to which projects, programs and/or funds are subjected. Their respective evaluation units have begun evaluating adaptation interventions from the perspective of the goals, objectives and results based management frameworks of their organizations.

However, evaluators encounter many conceptual and operational challenges, namely: long timescales associated climate change, and difficulties in distinguishing climate variability from anthropogenic climate change; moving baseline presented by climate change; mix of hazards and opportunities; multi-sectoral nature of adaptation, involvement of many agencies, and different indicator requirements for their own M&E frameworks; absence of agreed definitions of success; confusion among process, output and outcome indicators; non-compliance with SMART criteria; vague and wordy formulation; and use of proxy indicators. These difficulties apply at different levels of intervention, i.e., finance/portfolio, national, project levels.

Climate-Eval was formed to meet these challenges, with a broader goal of setting standards and norms in climate change and development evaluation. It has undertaken a study on *Tracking Progress for Effective Action: A Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Adaptation to Climate Change* conducted by Haris Sanahuja. The study examines monitoring and evaluation frameworks employed by various institutions, and the issues in applying them. In particular, section 6.4 looks at literature on indicators, and a list of sample of indicators used by development organizations.

The proposed study on Best Practices on Adaptation Indicators replaces the initial plan to undertake a study on 'second generation adaptation indicators'. Yet given the rise of adaptation measures, and the resulting evaluations and literature, the identification and analysis of appropriate indicators are deemed timely and more appropriate.

### **III. Rationale**

In the recent years, development organizations and evaluation units have been addressing these difficulties in monitoring and evaluation. The GEF Evaluation Team validated the challenges mentioned above upon the evaluation of the SCCF and LDCF<sup>1</sup>. The Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), together with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), UK Department for International Development (UK DFID), and the Adaptation Partnership organized an international workshop on 'Tracking Successful Adaptation - Smart Monitoring for Good Results' (7 and 8 May 2012) to discussed topics on M&E of climate change adaptation. A survey conducted prior to the workshop revealed that key next steps at the climate finance/portfolio level, there is a need for common set of adaptation indicators that measure portfolio-level adaptation impact and indicators relevant for decision-making project level include identifying indicators that measure results and identifying best practice methodologies for impact evaluation<sup>2</sup>.

Goals and objectives vary from one intervention to another, and so do the formulated indicators which measure the success (or failure) of an intervention. Thus the formulation or selection of indicators is critical for evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Evaluation of Special Climate Change Fund \(SCCF\)](#), pp. 55 – 58

<sup>2</sup> See [Results Report: Tracking Successful Adaptation – Smart Monitoring for Good Results](#)

The variety of M&E policies, guidelines and frameworks likewise reflect on the multiplicity of indicators for the projects or programs. This creates difficulty in identifying which indicators facilitate evaluation of development actions against the OECD DAC criteria i.e., relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

As adaptation projects and programs reach their completion phase, the number of evaluations on climate adaptation will continue to increase. But given the abovementioned conceptual and operational challenges, a more reliable set of indicators is necessary. Furthermore, new criteria or measurement approaches may also need to be developed.

This study will synthesize current trends and identify agenda pertinent to climate change and development measures, particularly indicators and other evaluation parameters. As development cooperation agencies conduct evaluations, initiate discussions, and publish reports, a comprehensive overview and analysis of these initiatives are necessary.

#### **IV. Key Questions of the Study**

This study is consistent with the objectives of Climate-Eval to establish norms and standards in the evaluating climate change and development. Identifying good practices in indicators will address pertinent issues that have arisen from previous evaluations climate change adaptation interventions. The document will attempt to answer the following issues:

1. What experiences and lessons on climate change and development indicators already exist?
2. How should organizations and evaluators organize and disseminate this body of knowledge?
3. What evaluation parameters and assessment questions could guide evaluators in determining the success of adaptation measures?

#### **V. Methodology**

Prior to the start of the study, the Climate-Eval moderator will solicit comments from Climate-Eval members and other interested individuals. The results of the discussion will be integrated into the final version of the approach paper.

Literature review. A review of related literature will establish the state-of-the-art on evaluation of climate adaptation measures, with a focus on indicators. The review will include existing M&E frameworks that have been used for vulnerability and livelihoods, which “can provide a considerable amount of data that is compatible with climate change adaptation” (Hedger et al.). Key sources may include M&E frameworks and policies, evaluation reports, and research studies from development cooperation agencies (e.g., OECD/Monitoring and Evaluation for Adaptation: Lessons from Development Cooperation Agencies, UKCIP/AdaptME Toolkit, etc). The Climate-Eval library is a ready repository of evaluation reports, including those on climate change adaptation projects and programs.

Audience. The target users of the document are evaluators, technical staff who conduct project and program review, and project managers and policy makers working on climate change adaptation.

Adaptation evaluation frameworks and indicators. A review and synthesis of adaptation evaluation frameworks and indicators developed and employed by development agencies will be undertaken. The OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability will be used as a starting basis. Additional criteria will be identified, such as equity and flexibility (see Hedger et. al.). The SCCF/LDCF Secretariat devised the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool (AMAT) which

“measures progress toward achieving the outputs and outcomes established at the portfolio level under the LDCF Framework”. How this tool could be adopted by other agencies, or if similar tools are already exist and are in use, could be part of the study.

Assessment questions and proxy indicators. Given the limitations of indicators, other means of verification should be explored. In lieu of or to complement indicators, assessment questions may need to be formulated, which could closely approximate the function of indicators in determining the success, merit and worth of a projects or programs. However, their practical application and integration to M&E frameworks should be considered.

#### **VI. Roles and Responsibilities**

A senior consultant will lead the study on Best Practices for Climate Adaptation Indicators, and will be contracted by the GEF Evaluation Office on behalf of the Climate-Eval community of practice. The Climate-Eval moderator will facilitate the communication and discussion between the consultant and the community members, via focus group discussions, postings on the Climate-Eval forum, and email. The community members will also be consulted during the key steps of the study, such as in the design of the approach paper, review of the methodology, identification of key documents and stakeholders, among others.

Self-selected members of the Climate-Eval community of practice and experts will be consulted in key steps of the study, such as in the identification of scope, the document’s target users, validation of results, and addressing the main issues that will be encountered in conducting the study, among others. The consultant will present the preliminary results of the guidelines and toolbox to the community of practice, and other forums to solicit additional comments.

#### **VII. Schedule**

The study is planned to be conducted between December 2012 and March 2013. The consultant is required to propose a detailed schedule of activities outlining the key steps of the study.

#### **VIII. Budget**

Preparation of the budget for the guidelines preparation is underway. Other tasks required will be carried out by Climate-Eval moderation team, and will not have any additional budget implications.

#### **IX. References**

Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office (2011). Evaluation Report: Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). <http://www.thegef.org/gef/SCCF%20Evaluation>. Accessed on September 5, 2012

Hedger et. al.. (2008). Evaluation of Adaptation to Climate change from a Development Perspective. In R.D. van den Berg and O. Feinstein (Eds.) *Evaluating Climate Change and Development* (pp. 241-263). New Brunswick, Transaction Publisher.

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Adaptation – smart Monitoring for Good Results. [http://www.bonn-perspectives.de/documents/events/2012/tracking\\_adaptation/bope\\_tracking\\_adaptation\\_results.pdf](http://www.bonn-perspectives.de/documents/events/2012/tracking_adaptation/bope_tracking_adaptation_results.pdf). Accessed on September 30, 2012