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**2011 Second Quarter Operational Report for PIMS: 3508-Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change (GEF SPA-Global FSP)**

**Introduction**

Community based adaptation (CBA) is an important component in the GEF’s support to countries with managing inevitable climate change. Communities are often at the forefront of experiencing climate change impacts but the least able to overcome pressures. GEF managed resources such as those from the Strategic Priority on Adaptation, were accessed and is being utilized by the ten pilot countries with the support of UNOPS on administrative functions. Additional resources from bilateral sources (Japan, Switzerland, Australia, and in-country government support) to implement community driven and owned initiatives to develop local capacities to plan for and manage long-term climate change pressures were also secured.

The project is ensuring the resources are flowing to communities for demonstration initiatives, testing and validating techniques and approaches on climate resilience activities and coping mechanisms as well as codifying and disseminating knowledge. Lessons and needs are also being fed into and guiding national and sub-national level policy, strategies and plans for supporting and facilitating behavioral adjustments that are necessary in the context of possible future climate change.

**Approaches and delivery**

The delivery mechanism of the Community-Based Adaptation projects is through the SGP infrastructure in 9 out of the 10 pilot countries. The CBA activities are building the capacity of participating stakeholders at the local level. The pilot countries represent different ecosystems and geographical scope. Thus, the built capacity that would be developed in this effort leads to replications of CBA projects typologies in many more countries of various ecosystem types.

The use of Vulnerability Reduction Assessment (VRA) tool for CBA projects and linking the outcome to the GEF criteria of global environmental benefits, as well as participatory identifying “climate sensitive” natural resource dependent sectors are unique and prerequisites to developing the overall adaptation measures and options. Therefore, capacity building in these aspects is integral component of the CBA project’s support to participating countries.

A unique blend between volunteerism specialists, communities and inter-phasing with UNDP/GEF technical advisors and managers, presents an opportunity for CBO and NGO participants to learn to assess livelihood options that a community may have access to including: (i) *natural assets* such as the coastal fishing grounds; (ii) *physical assets* such as markets for produce and roads to markets; (iii) *human assets* such as knowledge of local conditions; (iv) *social assets* including strong local user associations and family ties; and (v) *financial assets* limited to natural resource sales. With further assessment of the impact of climate change on these assets, the CBA strategy at country levels and its response measures are developed and implemented.

**Summary of key projects portfolio in the pilot countries**

In **Namibia,** the projects aim to support communities to adjust agricultural practices to reduce climate change risks. Specific activities include: soil conservation, water harvesting and handmade wells*,* and awareness raising interventions. Projects in **Niger** promote sustainable farming techniques that enhance yields while helping regenerate the soil, demonstrating quick maturing varieties of local staple crops and further testing their vulnerability to drought. The establishment of drip irrigation systems and technology transfer help increase agricultural productivity. In addition, the initiatives target training of farmers through “farmer to farmer innovations’ in resilient techniques that help improve soil fertility, dune fixation and natural regeneration. To support the communities’ stem against poverty, animal drawn ploughs and fertilizers are provided together with an establishment of community-managed banks for provision of agricultural inputs. CBA activities in **Morocco** focus on adaptation in natural resource-dependent communities, focusing on water management, sustainable and productive agriculture, soil erosion and land degradation, forestry and coastal zones.

In **Samoa**, CBA projects support communities to increase drainage through constructions of culverts, wetlands rehabilitation and replanting in order to address sea level rise due to climate change. The restorations of coastal defenses through vegetation rehabilitation to create surges and reduce siltation of coral reefs are among the central activities. Key activities in **Vietnam** target awareness creation among the local authorities, demonstrating sustainable use of water resources and management of crop rotations aimed at protecting diversity, and increasing productivity of resistant crop varieties and sustainable land management. Furthermore, CBA activities promote the conservation of local rice varieties that are resilient to increased droughts and salt-water intrusion and supports sustainable fisheries management by testing climate change adaptation models in aquaculture and fisheries.

**In Kazakhstan**, the CBA projects focus mainly on sustainable land management, irrigation technologies and range resources management. The Swiss Government provides co-financing for six out of nine projects addressing land degradation and water scarcity. In efforts to upscale CBA knowledge sharing amongst Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan, national and regional roundtables provide a platform to bring together farmers and government representatives for exchange of experiences and suggestions for steps ahead. The key challenges with CBA activities in Kazakhstan are related to little capacity of local communities to manage and utilize grants, the need for training in M&E and effective tasks realization on time. The focus of CBA activities in **Jamaica** is on cost effective soil conservation techniques, organic and greenhouse farming to protect biodiversity through reducing the need to expand agricultural plots into forests and protecting communities from landslides and crop destruction by increased floods and droughts.

The **Bolivia** CBA portfolio targets the management of forest watersheds by enhanced tree planting, restoration of soil and water resources and improvement of livelihoods. Additionally, initiatives include promotion of agro-forestry techniques, contouring and terracing techniques for water and resource management on-farms. Specific focus is on Cherimoya cultivation and its resilience to climate change. Targeted training on CCA is conducted for municipal residents as well as the key groups such as youths. In **Guatemala,** CBA projects focus on community-based natural disaster risk reduction activities in rural communities in globally important ecosystems and watersheds, focusing on the management of natural resource management to increase resilience to climate change impacts. Five concepts are in their final stage of planning for **Bangladesh** and will commence in Q3. Key activities will include the support of piloting of sustainable agriculture practices, improvement of biodiversity and ecosystem management for fishing, and restoration of livelihood opportunities of women in vulnerable communities.

**Volunteerism and CBA Activities**

The UN Volunteers partners with UNDP and GEF/SGP to enhance community mobilization recognize volunteers’ contribution and ensure inclusive participation around the CBA project, as well as to facilitate capacity building of partner NGOs and CBOs. UNV’s support is fully integrated into UNDP-GEF CBA project: UNV volunteers support the SGP National Coordinators to implement CBA at the country level, not only on the voluntary aspects, but for the whole CBA implementation. Some UNV volunteers are acting as the CBA assistant to the SGP National Coordinator, while some UNV volunteers are also acting as the main CBA project manager. During the last quarter, seven UNV volunteers have supported the mobilization of more than 35 local community volunteers in addition to the local community members for developing and implementing CBA projects in seven UNV-supported CBA countries (Bolivia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Namibia, Niger, Morocco and Samoa).

Morocco trained new Peace Corps Volunteers and projects partner with UNV (UNDP EEG) to benchmark gender practices in community projects. In Niger, volunteers have been identified to support women to enhance their practices in market gardening.

**New project development (concept notes and proposals)**

UNDP, UNV and SGP developed 7 new project concept notes (in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Morocco) and 7 proposals (in Guatemala and Morocco) in line with CBA requirements for quality portfolio development, on a participative way with communities to ensure that projects answer to their specific local needs and include their local knowledge.

The ten project proposals for Bangladesh were reviewed and approved by the CBA Approval Committee in April 2011. Based on the readily available CBA funds to Bangladesh, the first five proposals were forwarded to the UNDP Grants Committee for review and approval. As per the grants committee requirements, CBA has developed its M&E plan along with a communication plan and all the five projects were approved. The MOA with the NGOs are in progress and the real implementation is believed to commence in July 2011.

Four additional projects can be proposed for Bolivia. These will primarily focus on strategies concerning ecosystems, food security and sustainable water management. Formal proposals in CBA format are being prepared to get approval for disbursements and new potential partners to be involved in these new projects are being identified.

**Monitoring and evaluation of projects under implementation**

PMU and UNV’s effectively monitored 50 projects through numerous field visits and missions to project sites, through implementing pilot participative monitoring tools, and maintaining continuous communication with grantees. Specifically, UNV volunteers are taking time to go in the field to build a cultural understanding/respect with the communities, listen carefully to community members instead of “informing and deciding for people”, explaining with patience, accessible and culturally adapted words, the rationale of the partnership and providing technical information. This is necessary for communities to mobilize themselves and sustain projects when there is trust and confidence, and when they understand and see benefits emerging from the process.

Many projects are already successful in strengthening communities’ capacities to adapt to climate change. In Bolivia, enhanced practices of crop cultivation, more climate resilient crop varieties, the establishment of systems to protect water sources and soil conservation through afforestation contribute significantly to the reduction of vulnerability to food insecurity.

On the other hand, the Bunkers Hill project in Jamaica is faced with serious challenges - the MoA has now expired and is under review for amendment, however some stakeholders have expressed concern about the project. The main challenge that the group now faces is the fact that the activities of the project will be seriously impacted by the 2011 hurricane season. As such, very little activity is taking place on the ground. Due to the technical expertise that is required for successful implementation, the project has caught the attention of Government, Private Sector and Civil Society organizations, some of which are giving their support.

**Training and capacity building of grantees and partners**

The project supported CBO/NGO partners in facilitating their capacity building such as in the following areas:

* Women’s knowledge of drip irrigation techniques and the provision of kits in Niger.
* Management of biodiversity and forest nurseries as a measure of climate change adaptation in Guatemala
* Knowledge on climate change impacts, adaptation, VRA and project M&E in Vietnam.
* Regional experience sharing and acquainting with adaptation methods in different regions in Kazakhstan through three National Round Tables (in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikistan) with a wide audience including NGOs, CBOs, experts, farmers and government representatives among others.

**Community mobilization and inclusive participation, whilst valuating volunteerism**

During this reporting period, UNVs strengthened the mobilization of more than 35 community volunteers, in addition to the local community members, on an inclusive way (young/old, men/women, people with disability, farmers/pastoralists/housewives, etc.) to contribute their capacities, knowledge, know-how, manual labor, materials and tools to the successful and sustainable development and implementation of CBA projects.

In Morocco, field missions were organized in the two sites of the new Zakoura project to sensitize people to the importance of collective action, and advocate for the immense contribution that volunteers bring to development. Two Specific Women’s VRA workshops were held, which sensitized four proponents to women and youth inclusion during finalization of their proposals, and incorporated the gender approach in the M&E plan (gender indicators, gender focal point etc.). In order to reinforce gender inclusion in CBA, exchanges with UN Women were launched to develop a joint reflection on Gender & Adaptation.

During field visits in Jamaica, meetings were held with grantees discussing climate change issues, activities on the national level and the importance of replication by other community members. Responses have been very impressive as community members use the opportunity to share their experiences to influence and support each other. Some members expressed their appreciation for the intervention of the CBA project, as it has caused increased unification of the, broader knowledge about the impacts of climate change and understanding that their livelihoods can still be maintained by changing certain practices. Community members were very appreciative of the training provided by organizations that partnered with CBA as it helped to mobilize the communities.

**Knowledge management, sharing lessons learnt, project promotion and networking**

These are bulleted as follows:

* A stock of publicity materials has been prepared in Bolivia and the experience of the CBA authorities was presented at different levels.
* Projects in Guatemala have used spaces such as workshops, forums, meetings to publicize the initiative CBA.
* The CBA project in Jamaica benefits from regular updates on energy strategies, farming practices etc. through information sharing from other participating countries via emails and websites. Most of this information is imparted to our grantees.
* In Kazakhstan, brochures were published in Russian within CBA completed projects early 2011. Some more will be published later during 2011. All the publications contain information about CBA programme, detailed description of the project approaches and analysis of the lessons learned and results achieved.
* Monthly reports were provided to PMU by CBA projects in Morocco through the CBA knowledge sharing tool to keep track of new observations, tools, contacts, tips, lessons, as well as to document identified successful initiatives for case studies.
* Participation in National Workshop on Vulnerability and CC Adaptation (organized by Ministry of Environment and GIZ) in Morocco: presentation of the VRA tool (by the NC), and dissemination of a specifically designed VRA factsheet (UNV) + networking. Ensured promotion of CBA, dissemination of approach and tools, towards national and international (Tunisia) stakeholders.
* In Namibia, a theme and development stages for the CBA National Stakeholders workshop were formulated and posters, banners and t-shirts were designed.
* A DVD that has been produced in Niger will be shared with members of the communities hosting CBA projects, the partners of the Dakoro CBA.
* In Samoa, a consultant to conduct a socioeconomic survey for the 11 CBA projects was hired and a presentation was held in Apia, Samoa, at the “Lessons for Future Action Conference; Asia-Pacific and Carribean islands”

**Implementation status**

The project was officially launched in February 2008 and since then, country programme strategies have been developed, vulnerability reduction assessments conducted, community solidarity and cohesion pursued, photo stories, project information sheets and participatory videos and various knowledge management products developed. The community outreach and projects development activities are at different stages in each country, as detailed in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Initial grantee outreach** | **Projects concepts under development** | **Projects in planning** | **Projects in implementation** |
| Bangladesh | Completed | None | 5 concepts | Commencing in Q3 |
| Bolivia | Completed | None | None | 6 projects |
| Guatemala | Completed | None | 2 concepts | 2 projects |
| Jamaica | Completed | None | None | 5 projects |
| Kazakhstan | Completed | None | None | 9 projects |
| Morocco | Completed | None | None | 8 projects |
| Niger | Completed | None | None | 6 projects |
| Samoa | Completed | None | None | 9 projects |
| Vietnam | Completed | None | None | 5 projects |

*Table 1: show implementation status in respective pilot countries*

**Projects Impacts Assessment in 2011**

The methodology for measuring project impacts and contributions to global environmental benefits has been through the vulnerability reduction assessment (VRA) process and the Impact Assessment System (IAS) designed by UNDP and SGP respectively.

The measurements reported in this period consists of 2 groups: 1.) projects that have performed the first, mid-term, and final Vulnerability Assessments, and 2.) those projects that have performed the base line and mid-term Vulnerability Assessments only. Specifically,

1. Vulnerability assessments on the mid-term and final evaluations were completed by eight (8) projects in Kazakhstan, Jamaica, and Niger. The averaged VRA values at the portfolio level reflects an improvement of perceptions towards the contributions of the projects in reducing vulnerability levels to climate change, as seen in Table 1. On a scale of 1-5 and with ‘min’ being the score from the mid-term evaluation and max being the score from the final evaluation, the VRA scores at portfolio level averages a score for Jamaica (min=2.15, max=2.25), Kazakhstan (min=3.49, max=3.97), and Niger (min=4.1, max=4.5). When grouped together, these 8 projects have a min=3.25 and a max= 3.60, giving an increase of .35.

This increase in VRA scores is an indication of the progress in tackling the communities’ vulnerability to climate change impacts which can be attributed to knowledge and skills gained by the communities in the respective countries. These figures also show that various communities’ responses to variability of climate change and subsequent adaptation measures are context and area specific. The project’s VRA qualitative data also showed similar positive trends. Further, this is an indication that communities are very happy with the way projects have been conducted in their localities. In addition to the perceived environmental benefits brought on by adaptive land/water resource management practices, the local communities have experienced economic benefits (food security and increase in employment) from increased crop production. They also have voiced out that social cohesion has been strengthened within the communities, by tackling challenges together and empowering each other by sharing new skills learned. Communities’ confidence in their capabilities to cope with climate change can be generally indicated that this is continually increased throughout the project life cycle as attested by the increases vulnerability and impact assessment scores over the years. With this tangible results coming out of the CBA projects, motivators, confident, sustainability and replication can be secured.

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|  |  | **Countries** |  |
| **Average VRA** | **Jamaica** | **Kazakhstan** | **Niger** |
| Min | 2.15 | 3.49 | 4.1 |
| Max | 2.25 | 3.97 | 4.5 |
| Variance | .10 | .48 | .4 |

*Table 1:**Minimum and maximum average VRA scores at the country level: from Mid-Term and Final VRA indicators*

1. Vulnerability assessments at the baseline stage and mid-term evaluations of projects were completed for 17 projects in Kazakhstan, Jamaica, Namibia, Niger, Samoa and Vietnam. Like in table 1, the averaged VRA values at the portfolio level reflects an improvement of perceptions. As shown in Table 2, the VRA portfolio average scores were as follows: Jamaica (min=2.41, max=3.04), Kazakhstan (min=4.22 max=4.18), Namibia (min=2.75, max 2.93), Niger (min=2.0, max=2.96), Samoa (min=2.34, max=2.36) and Vietnam (min=3.27, max=3.52). When grouped together, these 17 projects have a mean min=2.82 and a max= 3.16, resulting in an increase of .35.

Once again, this is a clear indication of the progress in reduction of vulnerability of communities and enhanced resiliency to climate change through, the project activities realized, capacity-building and awareness-raising. Through the training sessions and workshops, the communities are understanding better climate change impacts and making efforts on how to tackle the problems in an adaptive and sustainable manner, however, these are context-specific and project/sector-specific. Additionally, the communities now understand better that their traditional resource management practices are sometimes contribute to maladaptive and are changing strategies as a they see results from the new adaptive methods demonstrated through the projects. Furthermore, support from local and state officials, which was non-existent before the CBA project, have motivated the communities even more.

During these assessments, challenges were also raised that included the passiveness or lack of interest by some community members, as well as the difficulty in assessing the new species (seeds) introduced by the project, that one project is experimented on. For example, in Vietnam, in search for drought-resistant varieties of rice, beans and peanuts to adapt to salt-water intrusion, selected mung bean plants were used, but have proven to be very hard to evaluate.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Countries** |  |  |  |
| **Average VRA** | **Jamaica** | **Kazakhstan** | **Namibia** | **Niger** | **Samoa** | **Vietnam** |
| Min | 2.41 | 4.22 | 2.75 | 2.0 | 2.34 | 3.27 |
| Max | 3.04 | 4.18 | 2.93 | 2.96 | 2.36 | 3.52 |
| Variance | .63 | -.04 | .18 | .96 | .11 | .26 |

*Table 2:**Minimum and maximum average VRA scores at the country level: from baseline and Mid-Term VRA indicators.*

**Resource Utilization Matrix**

The table below shows expenditure levels from the inception of the project (2008) until the 2nd Quarter of 2011 with a total of 1.2 million expended including cost shared agreements in Namibia, Niger and Kazakhstan**.**

**Outcome/Activity Amounts ($)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome 1: Enhanced adaptive Capacity |  | 2,146,606.69 |
| Outcome 2: National Policies & Programmes | | **371,751.72** |
| Outcome 3: Cooperation Among Countries | | **91,655.81** |
| Outcome 4: Monitoring & Evaluation |  | **689,004.76** |
| Outcome 5: Project Management |  | **82,090.37** |
| Cost-Shared Agreement: Niger- JTF |  | **174,357.91** |
| Cost Shared Agreement: Namibia- JTF |  | **184,314.34** |
| Cost Shared Agreement: UNV -old |  | **594,136.31** |
| Swiss Contribution |  | **112,648.84** |
| Totals |  | **4,446,566.75** |

*Table 3: Shows funds utilization from project inception to the 2nd quarter of 2011*

**Potential for replications and policy strengthening**

The activities that have been supported aim at realizing effective stewardships of global environmental benefits as well as preparing communities to better manage risks associated with climate change. Early and important lessons have been generated from the pilot initiatives. These lessons suggest that; (i) the ability of communities to manage weather risks can be extended, with appropriate adjustments and infusion of relevant information, to inform the management of a range of likely future risks on landscape levels; and (ii) institutional and policy arrangements that reflect indigenous knowledge coupled with scientific based information and know-how is a necessary input to inform national and sub-national enabling environments to support adaptation.

Civil society, the CBA main executers of the projects, is an important spur to articulating and contributing towards codification and distribution of knowledge. The GEF’s involvement in supporting community-based adaptation through the Special Climate Change Fund therefore is a critical step towards supporting civil society led and owned climate change risk management practices

**Planned activities during the third quarter 2011**

* The implementation of five (5) projects will begin in Bangladesh in the third quarter of 2011.
* Bolivia will systemize lessons learnt and share experiences in August and September.
* Two (2) mid-term VRA will be organized in September/October in Morocco.
* Production of bags as community mobilization items in Morocco expected in August.
* Two (2) workshops on Climate Change were coordinated with community groups in Guatemala and will be held in July.
* Community groups in Guatemala will mobilize two (2) CBOs and develop two (2) workshops on Community Organization between July and September.
* Reports of the National Round Tables in Kazakhstan will be submitted to the PMU in July.
* Electronic versions of bulletin as well as publications for Kazakhstan will be ready and placed on SGP website by August.