

PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND – AND HOW CIVIL SOCIETY CAN ENGAGE

BRIEFING PAPER

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Executive Summary

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has involved external experts or stakeholders measuring performance of a project or an activity against preset indicators, using standardized procedures and tools. However, with growing emphasis on participatory approaches towards development, there has been recognition that M&E should also be inclusive and consultative. Participation, defined as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them, could strengthen M&E^[1]. **Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)** is defined as a process through which stakeholders at various levels engage in monitoring and/or evaluating a particular project, programme, activity or policy, share control over their content, the process and the results, as well as engage in taking or identifying corrective actions.

The **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** requires that financed programmes, projects and activities are regularly monitored for impact, efficiency and effectiveness in line with rules and procedures established by the Board^[2]. The Fund encourages the use of **participatory monitoring** involving targeted stakeholders and calls on Accredited Entities (AEs) to include at the project/programme level participatory monitoring approaches. This translates into the expectation that they involve communities and local stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), at all stages of the project/programme cycle^[3].

Key points

- Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) is a key approach to fully and effectively involve stakeholders in project implementation and measuring its results.
- The Green Climate Fund in principle encourages participatory monitoring through its Governing Instrument and has taken first steps towards a participatory approach.
- Analysis of selected projects indicates a lack of clearer guidance on how participatory M&E should be applied.
- The GCF should take further steps to increase the attention to PM&E, including through requesting explicit information on PM&E in its standard proposal forms, and ensure all relevant agencies (AEs, NDAs) pursue truly participatory approaches.

The participatory monitoring approach also encourages the National Designated Authorities (NDAs) or Focal Points to organize country portfolio reviews involving project beneficiaries and communities affected by the GCF financed activities locally. The GCF is very explicit in calling for CSO involvement in participatory monitoring and has created some enabling environments for that. The GCF Private Sector Facility (PSF) provides entry level for private sector organizations (PSOs) to be involved in participatory monitoring of activities funded through the facility. The GCF, through the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS), is one of the rare climate finance delivery channels that encourages participatory monitoring. CSOs and PSOs can become strong partners in advocating for transparency, accountability and good governance of climate finance, particularly in developing countries that are the main beneficiaries of GCF funding. They can do this by contributing to policy discussions regarding low carbon and climate-resilient development pathways at national and regional level, while also being involved in the design and formulation of relevant projects and programmes, as well as their implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1 Sam Erevbenagie Usadolo M. C., 2016.
2 GCF, 2018c.
3 Ibid. P 15.

In summary, CSOs and PSOs have high potential to regularly monitor GCF financed activities for better impact, efficiency and effectiveness. This can be achieved particularly through the identification and engagement of **primary stakeholders as active participants** in the project and programme cycle; building stakeholder **capacity** to actively participate in defining the **objectives** of the PM&E process, improve the population's **awareness of climate information; promote accountability** through citizen-led

monitoring, as a strategy to ensure quality, accountability and transparency. This is essential to lead to **learning, knowledge sharing and sustaining change**. The GCF can still take a number of steps in order to **increase the visibility of and attention to participatory M&E** (e. g. by including provisions in its concept note and full proposal forms; integrating participatory M&E in capacity strengthening efforts; by having the Independent Evaluation Unit undertake analysis of GCF programmes).

Introduction

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) established under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is evolving as the biggest multilateral fund dedicated to climate action, funding both mitigation and adaptation activities. While awaiting new pledges of financial contributions as part of the 2019 first replenishment process, actual implementation of concrete projects and programmes is gaining speed, which makes it even more important to ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that need to be highly participatory. This briefing paper puts specific attention to participatory M&E in the context of adaptation and related civil society involvement under the GCF.

Participatory monitoring in climate change activities is relevant to CSOs because of a variety of reasons. This includes most importantly how climate change affects vulnerable communities, the complexity of climate-focused projects, how these are being funded, and which impacts they create. Climate change mitigation is regarded as relatively easy to monitor due to the existence of many tools developed for this purpose^[4], while tools for monitoring adaptation are still in their early stage, but rapidly evolving. As such, adaptation to climate change is one of the biggest challenges of accountability and governance of implementing actors across developing countries^[5] hence requiring a strong process of negotiation and a large range of alternatives and efficient possibilities for communities to adapt to the new climate scenario^[6]. It is further complicated by the fact that most GCF funded projects in Africa are elaborated and implemented through AEs which are multilateral institutions such as development banks or private sector companies, while Executing Entities (EEs) are either government ministries, departments or agencies and local non-governmental organizations which are more close to the beneficiaries and vulnerable communities. During the execution of these projects and programmes, AEs tend to apply their internal policies that may not be consistent with those from the governments or the GCF. It is therefore incumbent upon CSOs and PSOs to advocate through PM&E approaches that national and sub-national policies are consistent with GCF funding.

Climate change adaptation involves learning at all stages on how people, their livelihoods and environments are affected. It also includes policy measures to increase resilience and adaptive capacity, and how to continuously improve related strategies. **Participatory monitoring** in climate change adaptation contributes



directly or indirectly to the expertise, knowledge and learning of CSOs involved, increases motivation of stakeholders and their contribution to corrective action, widens the knowledge base, and strengthens ownership for successful outcomes, thus increasing sustainability. A range of tools which can support PM&E exist and have been documented, including for example Community Score Cards, Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) etc^[7]. There are five particularly significant functions that can be performed by CSOs (as well as PSOs) to promote inclusion of climate change risks in policy decision making^[8]. If applied, they can make it easier for financed activities to meet the GCF participatory monitoring approaches guided by the ESMS. These functions include:

- i) Improving the population's **awareness of climate information** and related services because climate impacts are context-specific which creates the need to clearly ensure availability of climate information to justify adaptation projects and programmes locally;
- ii) Facilitating spaces for **the voice of the most vulnerable groups and communities to be heard, and, where appropriate, represent them** by acknowledging their high vulnerability in public policy discussions and decisions, through advocacy for inclusion of their solutions and increased financial support to their own roles;
- iii) **Promoting accountability** through citizen-led monitoring, as a strategy to ensure **quality, accountability and transparency** for diverse actors' participation and incorporating the interests and knowledge of vulnerable communities, populations and people, their active and meaningful participation in prioritizing, designing and implementing adaptation activities;
- iv) Promoting a participatory and **inclusive disaster risk reduction approach** from design and implementation of related projects and programmes to monitoring and reporting as well;
- v) Actively participating in **promoting inter-institutional coordination** at local and national level by linking and networking with other related sectors and actors.^[9]

4 <https://www.climatelinks.org/tools>

5 Schaar and Caffrey, 2014.

6 Adriana Ramos: Adaptation, Governance and Civil Society in WRI Report.

7 See for example CARE 2012 and 2015.

8 Canales, 2010/2011.

9 Ibid.

Elements of participatory processes

The main elements of a PM&E process are participation, negotiation, flexibility, learning and change. These are encapsulated in the principles of sharing information, ownership, commitment, sustainability and self-evaluation^[10]. Successful PM&E's processes are characterized by the following staged approaches^[11], captured by figure 1.

It provides an eight staged PM&E process conceptual framework which could be adopted by CSOs and PSOs as part of ensuring that AEs and EEs meet the GCF's ESMS requirement. It summarizes the PM&E process which involves:

1 identifying and engaging key (primary) stakeholders; **2** building capacity of people identified above to develop their skills, knowledge and experience; **3** involving stakeholders to actively participate in

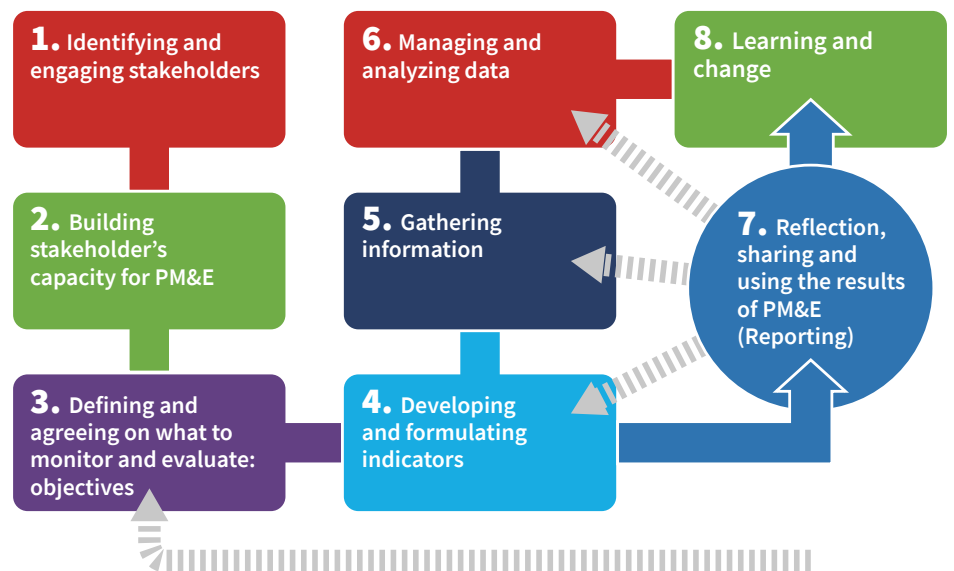


Figure 1. The PM&E approach by Njuki, J. et al., 2006.

defining the objectives of the PM&E, what will be monitored, how and by whom; **4** identifying the relevant indicators; **5** gathering data on implementation processes; **6** analysing data of successes and constraints and formulating conclusions and lessons learned; **7** sharing reflection and using the related results and findings, and **8** learning and sustaining change.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation in the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

Since the GCF encourages the involvement of CSOs and PSOs in its financed activities and Board proceedings, including in the design, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of funded projects and programmes, there are currently 276 civil society organizations (CSOs)^[12] registered with the Fund which are granted the right to participate in its Board meetings. Additionally, there are 81 PSOs registered as observers to the Fund. Among those CSOs and PSOs, two representatives, one each from a developed and developing country, are allowed to participate in the meetings of the Board as Active Observers on behalf of their constituencies.

The Governing Instrument of the GCF states that projects and programmes as well as other activities financed by the Fund should be monitored regularly for impact, efficiency, and effectiveness in line with rules and procedures established by the Board. The use of participatory monitoring approaches involving stakeholders will be encouraged, and are to be guided by the ESMS^[13]. As a broad operational framework that allows the GCF to work closely with AEs in incorporating environmental and social considerations to achieve improvements in environmental and social outcomes while addressing any adverse impacts from GCF financed activities, the ESMS is a key part of the Fund. Furthermore, it directs the GCF Secretariat to carry out a continuous process of

monitoring and reporting functions related to the environmental and social performance of the AEs and the supported activities based on the type and level of risks identified, including environmental and social risks. AEs are therefore expected to comply with the applicable Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) requirements, and to provide the GCF on an annual basis with a self-assessment of their compliance with those safeguards, pursuant to the ESS standards and the GCF's Monitoring and Accountability Framework. Halfway through the five-year accreditation^[14], the Secretariat will undertake a mid-term review of compliance performance of the AEs. Annually, a report is submitted to the Board with the consolidated results of the annual self-assessments, mid-term reviews, and any ad hoc reviews that were conducted. At the AEs level, the policy sets out the requirements for entities working with the GCF to establish and maintain robust, systematic, accountable, inclusive, gender-responsive, participatory and transparent systems to manage risks and impacts from its financed activities.

¹⁰ <https://www.slideshare.net/lenfontanilla/participatory-monitoring-and-evaluation-40805319>

¹¹ <https://sswm.info/sites/default/files/ppts/SENN%202013%20Participatory%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation-130918.ppt>

¹² to ¹⁴ see next page

The Fund requires the AEs to maintain effective due diligence, including participatory monitoring approaches, to address unanticipated developments in the activities or to reflect improved techniques and technologies for addressing environmental and social risks and impacts and meeting the environmental and social safeguards requirements pursuant to the ESS standards of the GCF. To this end, the GCF shall require the AEs to undertake all necessary measures to ensure participatory monitoring through the involvement of communities, local stakeholders, indigenous peoples and civil society organizations in all the stages of the life cycle of activities (including projects and programmes). This participatory monitoring approach will also encourage the NDAs or Focal Points to organize country portfolio reviews involving people affected by the activities and other local stakeholders. These various frameworks, avenues

and processes provide CSOs and PSOs with key opportunities to engage with the GCF-funded activities at the sub-national, national and regional levels. As such, they can engage in participatory monitoring and evaluation of these activities across their communities and countries in an effective, meaningful and constructive manner.

However, while GCF provisions provide various entry points for participatory M&E, the GCF as an institution is **not visibly promoting PM&E**, despite the clear encouragement contained in the Governing Instrument. For example, the forms for concept notes and full proposal development do not make any mention of participatory monitoring and do not explicitly request institutions to provide information on the participatory elements within their M&E approach. The assessments on safeguards and gender are of course an important starting point, but not sufficient.

Examples of participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches in GCF projects

This section highlights a number of projects and programmes^[15] funded by the GCF where participatory monitoring and evaluation are built into the project’s design. As they are in a very early stage of implementation, no conclusions can yet be drawn about the actual realization of the proposed plans, but should be observed in the

future. The point to note is that each of these projects has developed and applied a participatory monitoring framework guided by the AEs. As such, they all present different approaches, while their most common theme is that the GCF funding was mobilized through an international access.

Table 1: Monitoring approaches in selected GCF approved projects

Source: own compilation based on GCF projects documents

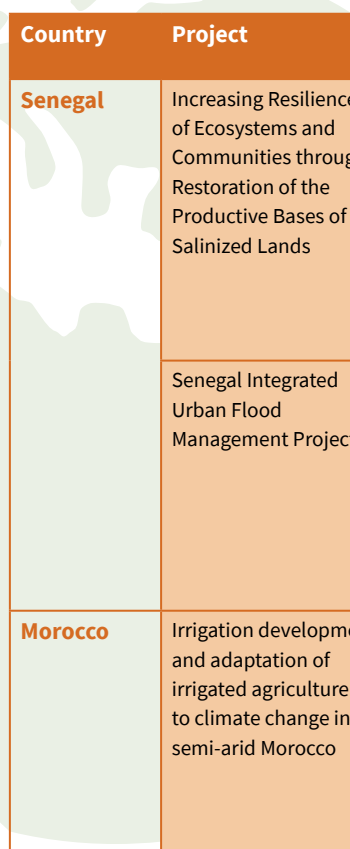
Country	Project	Monitoring approach and participatory elements
Kenya	Universal Green Energy Access Programme	The funding proposal acknowledges continuous consultations in each of its country of operations with all relevant stakeholders, national and local government, among which civil society organizations as well as academic. Project 2 of the proposal mentions that there will be effective participatory community engagement prior to building of the mini grids. While the project outlines stakeholder engagement, it does not clearly outline PM&E with reference to the funding proposal submitted to the GCF.
Malawi	Scaling Up of Modernized Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Malawi	A M&E plan (described in section H.2 of the proposal) includes provision for generation of lessons learned and best practices to support adaptive project management and inform learning across national/sub-national/community levels within Malawi. Project-level monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken in compliance with the UNDP guidelines and the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The Gender Action Plan (GAP) has to some extent used the elements and conceptual framework for PM&E process. The plan incorporates gender and social inclusion, an example being the need for women, men, youth and people living with disability to have a voice in designing and implementing climate information and early warning systems need for different stakeholders involved in the project. There is no mention of participatory monitoring approaches in the main proposal, but PM&E elements are captured such as learning, change and participation.

12 See previous page: GCF’s CSO directory: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/how-we-work/tools/observer-directory/civil-society>

13 See previous page: GCF’s Governing Instrument, paragraph 57.

14 See previous page: AEs have to re-apply for accreditation with the GCF every five years, and re-accreditation is subject to an assessment by the Fund.

15 These have been chosen as those countries are focus countries under the project “GCF CSO readiness – focus Africa”, implemented by Germanwatch, CARE and PACJA with various partners in those countries.



Country	Project	Monitoring approach and participatory elements
Senegal	Increasing Resilience of Ecosystems and Communities through Restoration of the Productive Bases of Salinized Lands	The project has aspects of PM&E process e.g. creation of partnerships with stakeholders (...) and the technical supervision of local populations. Community based participatory planning (CBPP) and evaluation workshops (EW) are planned once a year. The project proposes development of intermediation to link local communities with other stakeholders who are active in areas not directly addressed by the proposal. As part of the participatory implementation of the project and public-private partnership to be developed, the shares of responsibility in the maintenance of each stakeholder are defined both for the private sector and local collectives, the State and local communities. CSOs and PSOs involvement is emphasized in section E.5.3.
	Senegal Integrated Urban Flood Management Project	The project includes a participatory, detailed diagnostic of the Senegalese institutional framework for integrated urban flood management. Participatory planning and watershed-based approaches are key elements in the design and implementation of different soil and water conservation measures and related assets. The project nominates a Project Management Assistance (PMA–operational level) to be the Lead Coordinating Institution, in its management and appropriate coordination with the Executing Entities and other stakeholders. Although PM&E are not mentioned, the elements and approaches are scattered in the project proposal.
Morocco	Irrigation development and adaptation of irrigated agriculture to climate change in semi-arid Morocco	The project elaborates a monitoring and reporting through results-based framework and states that environment and social development activities will be elaborated through a participatory planning process. On gender, it states that inclusion of women in the project activities relies on a participatory & community driven process allowing the agents to make decisions in terms of their own values and goals; particularly when it comes to water management. The project's sustainability partly relies on private sector involvement to increase efficiency in the management of water and associated infrastructures and, thereby, need for establishing a Public Private Partnership (PPP) to guarantee the management of the irrigation scheme after project closure.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The GCF is guided by eighteen principles in implementing the ESMS with the view to achieve objectives of the Environment and Social Policy, all of which support participatory approaches. Three of these directly support PM&E conceptual framework process and include:

- Broad stakeholder engagement and participation throughout the life cycle of GCF financed activities, including the development of measures to mitigate, manage and monitor environmental and social risks and impacts. Here, the process to build support needs to be inclusive, gender-responsive and culturally sensitive as well;
- Gender inclusiveness by ensuring that the methods and tools to promote gender equality and reduce gender disparities in climate actions are established and implemented;
- Knowledge-sharing of lessons and experiences in applying ESS and in implementing the ESMS among Accredited Entities and GCF stakeholders, in order to integrate these lessons with capacity development, communications, and outreach activities of the Fund and AEs;
- Promoting indigenous peoples' access to GCF financed activities by incorporating considerations related to indigenous peoples into the Fund's decision-making processes and activities. This allows the GCF to examine, control, eliminate and reduce the adverse impacts of its activities on indigenous peoples, and to explore ways to get them actively participation in its activities.

The ESMS clearly advocates for stakeholder engagement that delivers meaningful and active participation of all actors, including NDAs, CSOs and PSOs. Such participation requires that activities are implemented in a manner that takes into account the views of these various stakeholders, including vulnerable groups and individuals such as women, children, people with disabilities, and people marginalized due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, local communities, and indigenous peoples, that may benefit the Fund's activities or being or potentially affected by them.

Through the application of the **PM&E process and approaches**, CSOs and PSOs would have a say in the reporting requirements for GCF-financed activities which includes annual performance reports and interim evaluation and final evaluation reports. These reports are key since they specify the activities' consistency with the ESS standards and provide information from the GCF independent accountability units^[16] and any other applicable environmental and social provisions in the legal agreement. CSOs and PSOs should advocate for GCF's recognition of the **PM&E conceptual framework** in monitoring its financed activities so as to be assured of first-hand information from all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, communities, etc.

16 The GCF has three independent units working closely with its Board, Secretariat, AEs, EEs and other stakeholders: Independent Integrity Unit (IIU), Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) and Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM)

However, the **GCF can still improve on increasing the visibility of and attention to participatory M&E** in its work, thereby giving due attention to the Governing Instrument's encouragement. The Secretariat should include provisions in relevant forms (in particular for the concept notes and full proposals) that requests information on the PM&E approach proposed. Regular report templates should do so as well. Readiness and preparatory support provided for the AE's or NDA's capacity strengthening, for National Adaptation Plans (NAP) development, and any events such as national and regional dialogues organized should include PM&E guidance and examples as a standard. The GCF's Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) should prepare an analysis on how GCF programmes are in accordance with good practice standards of PM&E, and generate recommendations.

Through the PM&E conceptual framework process, CSOs and PSOs can become a key part of monitoring and evaluation GCF funded projects and programmes, ensure better environmental and community benefits, as well advocating for transparency and accountability of implementing actors and good results in the way GCF funding is used. Moreover, they can help to ensure that climate information reach a bigger population by acting as a bridge to attaining crucial sustainable development goals. Additionally, through the PM&E process, CSOs and PSOs can play an important role of enhancing the relevance of climate finance in developing countries by contributing to increased public debate on issues surrounding the formulation and implementation of government budgets as well as in supporting greater transparency of public revenues. This can support these countries to realize sustainability with GCF financing.

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