Session Summary

Parallel Session 18: Water, Climate, and Communities: Generating Impact Evidence for Climate Solutions in Vulnerable Contexts at the Regional Level
5 September 2024, 9:00 am – 10:30 am

SESSION TAKE AWAY
Participants will gain insights into the evidence from impact evaluations of climate interventions in vulnerable countries, with case studies from Bangladesh, Myanmar, Egypt, and Nigeria, highlighting the role of impact assessment in supporting sustainability-focused policies and interventions based on impact studies from the Green Climate Fund and CGIAR in vulnerable contexts.
SUBTHEME
Evaluating Regional Public Goods for Sustainable Cooperation
Andreas Reumann, Head of the Independent Evaluation Unit, GCF
1. It is important to conduct impact evaluations collaboratively from the start of projects, with continuous engagement and feedback loops to improve implementation. This allows for good baselines, midlines, and endlines to measure impact effectively. 2. There is a need to focus on fostering behavioral changes and awareness of climate risks within communities, rather than just on adoption of new practices. This is crucial for effective and sustained climate adaptation and resilience.
Jeehyun Yoon, Evaluation Specialist, GCF
1. There is a significant gap and disparity in the available evidence on the effectiveness of climate change adaptation, particularly in sectors like water, environment, and institutional systems. This uneven distribution of evidence across different sectors and geographic regions underscores the need for more targeted research and data collection to address these gaps. 2. We need to address the evidence gaps and utilize the available evidence to inform decision making. This approach can help organizations enhance the effectiveness and impact of their climate change adaptation initiatives, especially in low- and middle-income countries.
Cristiano Rossignoli, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and Impact Assessment Research Leader, WorldFish
1. In implementing and evaluating development interventions it is important to understand the local context. We cannot make assumptions based on what worked for other countries. We need to engage deeply with our target community and avoid preconceived notions. 2. There is a need to look beyond predefined variables and evaluation metrics when assessing the impact of an intervention. We should take an open-minded and holistic approach when it comes to impact assessment.
Prashanth Kotturi, Principal Evaluation Officer, GCF
1. Water plays a vital role in climate adaptation efforts. Although much has been accomplished in this area, there is limited evidence to show for it. Measuring the intangible aspects of water-related interventions, such as empowerment and the enabling environment, is challenging. These two dimensions are particularly crucial for the success of climate adaptation, especially in water-related projects

2. We need a more iterative cycle of evaluation, planning, and implementation. The best way forward is to foster more national and context-driven collaborations that can only be achieved by working closely with national actors.

Q&A SUMMARY

1. What should be the outcome of climate adaptation projects?
Summary: Climate adaptation projects have multiple outcomes, including developing adaptive skills and knowledge, reducing the impacts of extreme climate events, and enhancing economic, social, and behavioral capacities. Creating and sustaining supportive institutional systems is also important. These areas collectively represent the quality and effectiveness of climate adaptation, though measuring them can be challenging.

2. How does IEU evaluate climate resilience?
Summary: The IEU is context driven. We focus on the theory of change, but we are flexible regarding how projects define their theories of change, allowing them to report on high-level impact indicators rather than adhering to a strict set of metrics. This flexibility can be both beneficial and challenging, as it makes it difficult to aggregate data and assess climate resilience across the portfolio.

3. Are we adopting the right means to measure impact or is it a case where projects are not meeting the expected results?
Summary: Measuring intervention results is challenging due to inadequate tools, technical issues, and biases. Interventions can have unintended consequences requiring careful management, and more reflective practice is needed to understand project shortcomings. However, the current development cycle often leaves little time for this reflection and learning.

4. How are you looking at policy coherence, how will it help?
Summary: Country ownership is vital for policy alignment, as shown by NDCs and national adaptation plans covering sectors like water and gender. These plans build comprehensive frameworks to enhance resilience. The GCF evaluates using criteria like controllership, enabling environment, and partnership. NDCs often reflect policy coherence, guiding sectoral policies, and evaluations.

5. How to design an evaluation to better assess climate outcomes, that will allow access climate finance in the future?
Summary: Building evaluation capacity is crucial for assessing climate outcomes and securing finance. Leveraging national evaluation systems enhances coordination. Focus should be on measuring results at the country level. Climate evaluations must address sectoral complexities using comprehensive data and technologies. A legitimate system requires accountability, understanding what works, and involving local stakeholders for buy-in.

6. How to measure behavioral changes and what to look out for at the end of a particular project?
Summary: The best suggestion is to do interview research, use existing indices as a foundation, adapt them through discussions with local stakeholders, and test them in the field to ensure they are relevant and effective. This approach allows for flexibility and context-specific adjustments, ensuring the indices are not rigid but tailored to the needs of the community.

7. How does the evidence-to-policy cycle work in the case of the GCF?
Summary: The GCF aims to use evidence for policy and investment decisions but has struggled with impact communication. The Independent Evaluation Unit is creating evidence gap maps and engaging with national networks to address this. The GCF is also building a stronger

community around climate value and evidence-to-policy linkages and is shifting to more intentional “climate investment plans” with countries. 8. What is the approach of GCF in working with supreme audit institutions to enhance the environmental spending on climate accountability? Summary: The GCF emphasizes the importance of collaborating with national institutions, like supreme audit institutions, to enhance climate accountability. They aim to shift from addressing long lists of needs to developing focused “climate investment plans.” This approach fosters deeper dialogues with countries, helping to identify effective strategies and better utilize national institutions for reporting on climate impacts and financing.
SESSION COORDINATOR
Alzeus Alzate