



Monitoring Report

Monitoring reference MR-146999.02
Report date 11/04/2014
Project title Guiana Shield Facility (GSF)

I. Intervention data

Status	FINAL
Report final date	11/04/2014
Report finalised by user	KELEMENIS ALECOS
Monitoring Report Type	Ongoing
Aid Modality	Project approach
Project	Multi Country / Regional Project - Component Report
Project Management	Project managed by HQ (Brussels)
Financed via a thematic budget line	Yes
CRIS Number	C-242905
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision	Guiana Shield Facility (GSF)
Domain	Development - Environment
DAC - CRS Sector	31200 - FORESTRY
Additional DAC - CRS code	41010 - Environmental policy and administrative management
Geographical zone	Colombia
Keyword (for innovative interventions)	Environment Mainstreaming
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed	12/08/2010
Person responsible at HQ	
Person responsible at Delegation	TATO SERRANO SONIA
Monitor	NOT APPLICABLE NOT APPLICABLE
Project Authority	COLL MORELL JOSEP MARIA
Type of implementing partner	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Start date - planned	UN family organizations (incl. WB)
End date - planned	13/08/2010
Start date - actual	31/12/2014
End date - likely	13/08/2010
Monitoring visit date	31/12/2014
	from 17/03/2014 to 21/03/2014

II. Financial data

Primary commitment (EC funding)	1,500,000
Budget allocated for TA	Not Available
Secondary commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution)	1,500,000
Other funding (government and/or other donors)	3,198,477
Total budget of operation	4,698,477
Total EC funds disbursed	1,406,250
Financial data on	11/04/2014

III. Grading

Relevance and quality of design	A
Efficiency of Implementation to date	A
Effectiveness to date	A
Impact prospects	A
Potential sustainability	B

IV. Summary of conclusions

Relevance and quality of design

The project aims at contributing to the preservation and promotion of the sustainable use of natural resources by improving governance of the indigenous communities in Colombia, through the strengthening of the Guyana Shield Facility (GSF). The 9% share the Guyana Shield (GS) in the surface area of Colombia is one of the most pristine areas of its overall natural forest that holds 53% of the surface area of the country. The project targets the Matavén Forest (SM) in the Province of Vilchada, one of the most remote and preserved areas of the Colombian GS, by partnering with the indigenous association ACATISEMA and its member communities. Due to its natural resource affluence, this area is seriously threatened by illegal activity of extractive industries, deforestation, extortionist guerrillas and difficult accessibility. The project is highly relevant, as it provides to the local population sustainable alternative mechanisms to combat these threats through (i) capacity building for governance, (ii) incentives to foster local livelihoods through conservation strategies, and (iii) empowering women in decision-making bodies and entrepreneurial agencies. One of the strongest points of the design is that the project the two project components apply research in knowledge-based interventions, compiled in the frame of the previous GS initiative: 1) strengthening the governance structures of ACATISEMA and 2) supporting the design of livelihood improvement activities on conservation and sustainable development with the communities. In addition, the project design facilitates the horizontal mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, such as gender balance, environmental conservation, entrepreneurship and governance, as central aspects to be strengthened. The intervention logic presented in a results-oriented logframe that is updated quarterly, is well built and coherent, and a robust management structure is set, that allows for systematic monitoring. The risks / assumptions and their mitigation plan, which proves weak in view of the pervasiveness of aforementioned threats, is the main design weakness.

Efficiency of Implementation to date

Activities concern mainly: diagnosis, training, capacity development and networking events on improving governance at ACATISEMA and socioeconomic and cultural research on local livelihoods, monitoring information systems and gender (component C1); and capacity development to foster biodiversity conservation industries and community well being, including design and formulation of 4 pilot projects (C2). All planned activities have been implemented by the two implementing partners (UNDP and the Institute Alexander von Humboldt -IavH-) with high involvement of target beneficiaries; 190 indigenous leaders have participated in activities related to C1 and 220 people from communities to C2. Two factors threatened project implementation. First, the due diligence carried out in the frame of the diagnosis of the ACATISEMA governance structure discourages the foreseen transfer of funds to the association, resulting in a delay of the initiation of operations. Second, security and extreme climate conditions discouraged the set up of activities in early 2013. Nevertheless, implementing partners took agile remedial action and efficiently re-scheduled the activities. Fourteen good quality outputs have been delivered. IAvH's technical studies were capitalised upon to customise activities according to the real needs of the target groups in their communities. This was a catalyst for involving participants and ensuring local ownership of the project. Despite targeting a very isolated area, the project has managed to coordinate with the few other operations on-going in the area (Tropenbos and Regional Autonomous Corporations) in sharing knowledge and resources for field activities on capacity development. Implementation and progress monitoring have been well supported by a strong management structure consisting of the National Stakeholder Steering Committee, the Technical Committee and the Regional Advisory Board.

Effectiveness to date

The project proved very effective. The complementary work on improving governance and local livelihoods has initiated a profound transformation that is changing the traditional indigenous cooperation dynamics of development at local level. The project management decided to delegate the link of the project with ACATISEMA to a respected indigenous leader. This horizontal cooperation measure contributed decisively to

building trust and local ownership. The promotion of three women amongst ACATISEMA representatives is producing tangible effects in empowering women towards increased participation in decision-making bodies. This is a positive indicator not only of gender equity, but also of democratic quality. The active participation of women in the financial and business administration workshops is proving very effective for the promotion of home-grown conservation initiatives linked to socio-economic development; e.g. women re-discovered the sebecán, a traditional tool used for producing yucca flour, thus creating new business opportunities. The fieldwork of IAvH, building upon information monitoring and recording biodiversity in the region, is empowering local communities to self-recognize the extent, abundance and potential of the natural resources. This process is leveraging a renewed local interest for developing entrepreneurial activities, e.g. new species are collected, transported and marketed at the township of Inírida. All in all, the project is bringing a new approach for developing sustainable alternatives to combat the traditional exploitative cooperation with extractive industries and the paternalistic assistance delivered by the government.

Impact prospects

The contribution of the project to the Overall Objective, defined in terms of strengthened indigenous governance for promoting participatory decision-making towards sustainable development, hinges on the extent to which the fieldwork activities result in changes in entrepreneurial behaviour. There are already several indications that the project is likely to succeed: 1) after realising the potential to develop ventures from their local resources, women decided to manufacture and market their own clothes instead of accepting provision of clothing by nuns; 2) the biodiversity monitoring system retrieved new agricultural species (26 varieties of yucca) and discovered natural fishing and hunting feedlots that are enriching peoples' nutrition and offering alternative livelihoods; 3) a workshop facilitated the identification of medicinal plants that are likely to improve health conditions. Furthermore, these conservation activities have direct impact on the improvement of water and waste management infrastructures. Thereby, the promotion and implementation of entrepreneurial-based income activities is proving critical in assigning to local communities a decisive role in safeguarding conservation, which is pivotal against the high risk of these communities to fall upon extractive industries and guerrillas big pressure. As a potential indirect impact, capacity development activities with ACATISEMA revealed a conflict of interest between payment for ecosystem services (PES) and the project activities. Whereas people at the communities do not understand PES yet, indigenous leaders are attracted by economic incentives for them; this could affect project impact, as the project does not render direct profits for ACATISEMA leaders.

Potential sustainability

Initially, the project strategy did not envisage continuation after its completion, but the positive outcomes achieved lead the partners to plan for a downstream phase. Therefore, sustainability will depend largely on two major issues. On one hand, it will hinge upon the capacity of GSF to raise and allocate funding for the Colombia component. On the other hand, the project has become a reference for IAvH. The initiative has allowed applying pioneering methodologies that are raising the interest of other institutions (i.e. the National Service of Learning of the Ministry of Labour). As a pilot project in 'intercultural management of biodiversity and the territory', IAvH is planning to scale up the scope and outreach of the project for benefitting a wider range of beneficiaries. This, in turn, is likely to reinforce institutional support and expand the cooperation beyond the Ministry, with better prospects for investments. It is important to bear in mind that the target region is highly vulnerable to external threats on a regular basis; the project contributes to addressing them through conservation strategies, but this process is yet far from being consolidated, and a sudden cease of activities would create high risks of diluting the positive effects delivered to date.

Key observations and recommendations

UNDP / IAvH: 1) Consider increasing, through a communication strategy, the visibility of the project work at national and regional level, to upgrade the political support to the initiative. It would be convenient to coordinate the GS project with action in wider geographical priority areas (e.g. Orinoco region), thereby advocating the importance of GS; 2) Discuss the transfer of the project coordinating unit to the field, to further enhance coordination and effectiveness; 3) Include complementarities and coordination with PES schemes in the formulation of a next phase (REDD+); 4) Consider widening partnerships with associations of extractive industries.