**Executive Summary**

**Introduction**

This mid-term evaluation was requested by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation plan put forth in the project document for the Saint Lucia’s Capacity Building & Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management (SLM). The evaluation is also a requirement of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) the agency that provided the donor contribution to the project. Matching funds were provided by the Government of Saint Lucia who therefore has a vested interest in the progress, effectiveness and efficiency of the project execution. Based on UNDP’s record, the mission to St. Lucia is being carried out some two years after the official start of the project. The evaluator has been informed that the project must be operationally closed by June of 2012. This means that the project has gone past its mid-term leaving only 15 months to operational closure. In that context, this review sought evidence that the project actions have been directly focused on contributing to the specific project objectives and outcomes and whether or not the project can deliver on its targets set out in the logical framework.

**Scope of the Review**

The mid-term evaluation in Saint Lucia consisted essentially of a review of the project documents, interviews with some stakeholders and a group discussion with the project team. Information collected from the interviews, the literature search and the group discussion was analyzed for consistency, accuracy and relevance. The resulting data was then used to inform the report. The report examines the project design and relevance, efficiency of implementation, effectiveness to date, partners’ perception of change brought about by the project and potential sustainability of any such change. It further assesses the achievements of the project with respect to the stated objectives and the attainability of its outcomes. The evaluation also assesses the extent to which the assumptions and risks outlined in the logical framework are valid and identifies external factors beyond the control of the project that affected it negatively or positively. Special emphasis is placed on the degree to which the project has succeeded in carrying out the activities outlined in the logical framework.

**Long Term SLM Goal**

The stated long term goal of the Sustainable Land Management Project at the country level ‘is to ensure sustainable management of the land resources of Saint Lucia in order to enhance ecosystem health, integrity, stability, functions and services, while contributing directly to the environmental, economic and social well-being of the people of Saint Lucia.’ It should be noted that poor management of land issues in St. Lucia has resulted in many floods, landslides and pollution of water courses. Arresting these trends is the ultimate goal of land management in St. Lucia to which this project is expected to contribute.

**Specific Project Outcomes**

This project intervention was designed to “strengthen capacity at the individual and institutional level and to mainstream SLM concepts into national development strategies and policies.” It was expected that capacities for SLM would be strengthened through 5 major outcomes. These are

1. Mainstreaming sustainable land management into national development policies, plans and regulatory frameworks,
2. Developing individual and institutional capacities for SLM,
3. Increasing awareness on SLM issues and enhancing capacities for knowledge management,
4. Elaboration of investment planning and resource mobilization for SLM and
5. The completion of a National Action Plan.

Saint Lucia faces severe land degradation challenges ranging from deforestation to hillside farming. Hurricane Tomas (29-30 October 2010) exploited many of these challenges resulting in several serious landslides. At the time of this evaluation mission (9th March 2011) the town of Soufriere south of the island was still cut off from the remainder of the island by landslides and silts deposits from flood waters. The design of the GEF funded SLM project executed by the Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment of Saint Lucia and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) took cognizance of the issues that became a reality during hurricane Tomas. While defining the institutional context in the project document the designers pointed to the fragmentation of the state institutions resulted in “failure to foster integrated development planning process” which they saw as an impediment to programme implementation. This also resulted in areas being neglected because they seemingly are not the domain of any Ministry.

The project design is still applicable but adaptive project management on “a fast track” coupled with strategic financial support will have to be applied if the project outcomes are to be met in time for project closure.

**Progress towards Results**

This project is moving very slowly and there is little evidence of real progress towards achieving the stated outcomes. The project team seems to have a low morale and lacks momentum putting at risk the success and sustainability of the few activities undertaken to date. Two critical aspects of the project have yet to be initiated. These are the “mainstreaming of SLM into national development plans and policies and the strengthening of individual capacities of key stakeholders in the key sections of the relevant Ministries as well as key stakeholders in construction land development, and tourism”. These, it should be noted, are the main elements of the project.

Some hardware in the form of a ‘large format plotters’ for use in the Physical Planning department were supplied by the SLM Project. The project also assisted in the acquisition of licenses for two important pieces of software for the Nation’s Land Registry to make digital images and legally digitize documents.

At the time of the evaluation mission there was no evidence that the NGO community was involved in the implementation of this project. There was no visible link between the livelihood of the Saint Lucian people and this SLM intervention. Further there is no evidence of the project capitalizing on the ‘fallout’ from hurricane Tomas to underscore the need for a national purposeful response to the realities on the ground regarding land degradation.

Each activity of the project has been assessed to determine to what extent the work has progressed towards the related outcome(s), objectives and goal. Of particular focus during the evaluation was the extent to which the project has succeeded or failed to implement planned activities using the available resources. The findings show that activities completed to date are focused on purely preparatory actions addressing issues like Cabinet approval of the ‘National Land Policy May 2007’, the ‘Final Report of the National Action Plan and Strategic Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Drought in Saint Lucia, December 2008,’ and the ‘Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey, August 2010.’

It would be fair to say that this SLM Project has made some strides in garnering political and legal support for further work on the project. However, as important as this may be, it cannot replace or substitute for the outcomes listed in the project document and so far nothing has been done regarding Outcomes 3 and 4 and the work on Outcome 1 and 2 are very minimal.

The project document does not speak to the issues of socio-economic or gender, elements that are critical to sustainable land management in St. Lucia. The latest poverty survey (2005) indicated that 25% of the population was classified as working poor most of whom are rural dwellers within the agricultural sector.

**Project Management and Monitoring**

The implementation of the project has been reviewed with respect to project management, the delivery of inputs, assumptions made, the achievement of outputs, project timing, and budget and expenditures. The members of the PMU are struggling with lack of office space, access to communication technology, technical support from strategic players, and commitment on the part of some PSC members. These elements have to some extent contributed to the poor performance of this project.

The PMU consists of two female and one male. The females are the Project Manager with responsible for all technical aspects of the project and the general day to day running of the project while the other female handles the administrative issues. The lone male is the Deputy Permanent Secretary who is responsible to general oversight of the project in addition to his full range of duties. The PMU is unclear as to how much project implementation is in concurrence with project design and expectations.

Based on the minutes of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), representation at PSC meetings comes mainly from the Ministries of Physical Development & the Environment, and Agriculture. Even with a quorum of four, some PSC meetings had to be postponed and when they are held there is a lack of consistency in participation at these meetings. The PSC is supposed to meet every quarter but there was evidence of only four PSC meetings and one consultation during the two years life of the project.

In addition to the work of the PSC and the official supervision of the Deputy P.S. Physical Development & Environment, monitoring activities are carried out by the Permanent Secretary and the UNDP programme manager. Both of these have expressed a measure of dissatisfaction frustration at the very slow rate of project implementation.

In addition to providing financial and technical guidance to this project, UNDP has participated in one of the committee’s meetings. Other UNDP monitoring activities include participation in the inception workshop, annual review and announced visits to the project office. UNDP maintains its financial vigilance through the quarterly financial reports, review of TORs and payments to service providers.

**Budget Management**

Based on discussions with both the PMU and UNDP, and examination of the Combined Delivery Report (CDR), the project expenditure is well within the allocated budget. Infact, there is very little disbursement for a project that has had a project manager for more than two years; the project manager was hired sometime before the official start of the project. There is constant dialogue between the PMU and UNDP’s Programme and Finance Departments to verify contract sums, permitted activities and ensure general budget agreements but there is very little to show for all this.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

This project was initially given recognition by the Government of Saint Lucia as evident by the endorsement of 24th January, 2005 by the P.S. Ministry of Physical Development, Environment & Housing. The project continues to have top leadership support illustrated by Cabinet approval of the various strategic documents. However, partnership with non-governmental organizations and local communities is lacking. Links with non-traditional but influential stakeholders such as developers, tourism and construction industry also need to be made to assure the effectiveness and sustainability of this project intervention.

At the national level, there is a potential risk that public understanding and application of SLM principles will not occur within the project period. Some immediate decisive action has to be taken regarding the implementation of a dynamic and comprehensive public awareness strategy to raise understanding and effect practical application of core SLM principles in Saint Lucian’s everyday lives and activities.

Stronger partnerships should be developed with farmers, contractors, and all relevant Government Ministries and Departments, NGOs and other non-traditional stakeholders which can assure the effectiveness and the sustainability of this project intervention. It is the view of the PMU that greater efforts need to be made to ensure more timely comment and approval of terms of reference, and items placed before the Cabinet. The PMU also complains that the Government tender procedures are onerous but the real problem seems to be a lack of management skills by the PMU.

There is an urgent need to ramp up the project implementation probably through enlisting the assistance of strategic technical personnel that can be responsible for key activity of the project. Further, an exit strategy need to be put in place to ensure completion of the proposed activities since it seem unlikely that all activities would be undertaken by project closure date. There is need for a project champion in government to lobby for the project and ensure that all activities are undertaken and that project gains are sustained.

On the basis of the findings delineated in the foregoing narrative the project elements can be rated as follows:

Project Formulation – Satisfactory (S)

Project Implementation – Highly Unsatisfactory (HS)

Results – Unsatisfactory (U)

Sustainability of outputs -

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**ACRONYMS**

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization

GEF Global Environmental Facility

GIS Geographic Information System

LIS Land Information System

GPS Geographic Positioning System

IT Information Technology

KAP Knowledge Attitude and Practice

LUD Land Use Department

MOA Ministry of Agriculture

MTE Mid-term Evaluation

NAP National Action Programme

NGO Non-Government Organization

PIR Project Implementation Report

PMU Project Management Unit

SLMPC Sustainable Land Management Project Coordinator

PPU Physical Planning Unit

PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

PSC Project Steering Committee

QOR Quarterly Operation Report

SIDS Small Island Developing States

SLM Sustainable Land Management

TOR Terms of Reference

UNCCD United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

1. **Introduction**

The passage of the Hurricane Tomas on October 31st 2010 caused severe flooding, damage to property and loss of lives in Saint Lucia. The situation underscored the urgent need for St. Lucia to embrace the principles of Sustainable Land Management.

The stated objective of the “Capacity Building and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management in Saint Lucia” (SLM) Project is to ‘strengthen capacity for sustainable land management at the individual and institutional level and to mainstream SLM concepts into national development strategies and policies.’ The three year duration project was scheduled to commence in 2007 but the inception workshop never happened until September 2008. Even then, actual work on the project never started until January 2009.

At the inception workshop in 2008, the UNDP representative clearly outlined the various responsibilities of the GEF, UNDP, the Government of Saint Lucia’s Environment Department and the Project Steering Committee. The inception workshop established the project boundaries including the project completion date of September 2011. The interviews and group discussions for this MTE took place on Wednesday and Thursday March 9 and 10, 2011. With these dates as a backdrop, it is very clear that this project is completely off schedule.

**1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation**

This “mid-term evaluation” has four main objectives:

1. To evaluate results and impacts of the project
2. Provide a basis for decision making on possible amendments and improvements
3. To provide feedback on lessons learned
4. To provide accountability for resource use

Specifically the MTE would:

1. Identify potential project design problems
2. Assess progress towards the achievement of the project’s objectives
3. Identify and document lessons learnt
4. Identify risks to project completion
5. Make recommendations for successful completion of the project.

Collectively these evaluation elements are intended to promote accountability and transparency while guiding project convergence with other national priorities.

**1.1.1** **Key Issues Addressed**

The evaluator sought to determine the appropriateness of the activities relating to outcomes as stated in the logical framework and how are these activities contributing towards the goal of the project. Outcome 1 seeks to mainstream SLM into national development plans, policies and regulatory frameworks. The evaluator sought to find how the chosen activities and the design of the activities are assisting stakeholders in bringing about this integration.

The second Outcome (2) focuses on capacity building both at the individual and institutional levels. The MTE examined the effectiveness of the methodologies used and asked whether there has been any change in the land management capacity at the local level as a result of this project.

The third Outcome (3) sought to increase awareness and enhance knowledge management skills. The MTE sought to determine how well the project outcomes and lessons learnt are being communicated to the relevant stake holders and how they are contributing to improving “SLM awareness and the enhancement of knowledge management capacity.”

Outcome 4 is expected to develop an investment plan and increase resource mobilization for land management. The MTE questioned whether the investment planning and resource mobilization for SLM have been elaborated and the current status of the National Action Plan.

**1.1.3 Project Resources**

The total budget of the project is US$1,450,000 of which US$500,000 was provided as incremental cost by the GEF. The co-financing was expected from the European Union, the World Bank and the Government of St. Lucia. After project approval by the GEF, UNDP came on board with US$30,000 cash co-financing.

It is not very clear if the co-financing from agencies other than UNDP and the Government has been applied to the project. This is largely because the activities that were to be supported by the co-financing have not been implemented.

**1.1.4 Global Targeted Portfolio Project on SLM in SIDS**

The Targeted Portfolio Approach to Sustainable Land Management furthers the objectives of the Operational Program 15 and Strategic Priority 1. Specifically, the portfolio approach outcomes are directly in line with the requirements for “Institutional and human resource capacity strengthened to improve sustainable land management planning and implementation and the strengthening of policy, regulatory, and economic incentive framework to facilitate wider adaptation of sustainable land management practices across sectors,” expected outcomes of OP 15.

The assumptions that the portfolio project will maintain close links with SLM related activities being supported by other IAs to minimize overlap and ensure maximum collaboration was recognized by this project but much was not achieved in this regard due to the expedited time frame set by the government and the much slower pace of other projects and programmes. The expedited time frame for this project was agreed upon because the project start date was delayed by two years.

The major risk as far as the global Portfolio Project was concerned was the possibility that the NAP would be out of synch with other specific projects. However, the NAP is being used as a resource for identification of needs and to ensure that activities planned are relevant to national requirements.

**1.2 Evaluation Methodology**

**1.2.1 Data Collection**: Data for the MTE was collected from literature review, observation and interviews. This combination of data collection methodologies allowed for cross checks and verification. The project staff and the UNDP Programme manager provided information on the operations of the project while the interviews allowed the evaluator to assess the effectiveness and impact of the project.

The interviews conducted took the form of discussions with the structured questions providing the talking point. This allowed persons to speak lucidly about the project giving the evaluator a better sense of its achievements and or weaknesses. The interviews therefore provided factual information as well as personal perceptions of the project.

A DVD “Riding the Aftermath: Hurricane Tomas in Saint Lucia” also gave graphic illustration of the consequences of land degradation in Saint Lucia.

**1.2.2 Data Analysis**: At the end of each day the evaluator sorted the responses in categories as they relate to the TORs and the Outcomes. Data under each heading was then ranked in order of importance to the evaluation need. After sorting, the data that did not find its way into the chosen groups were revisited to determine the usefulness of the information.

**1.2.3 De- briefing Meeting:** Having completed the island mission and the interviews, the evaluator analyzed the information and identified the main findings. A de-briefing session with the two members of the SLM Project Management Team (SLM PMT) was held at the end of the mission to Saint Lucia. Some of the preliminary findings were shared with the SLM PMT in Saint Lucia, and with the UNDP Programme Manager at a separate meeting.

**1.2.4 Constraint:** Although the evaluation was conducted under generally good conditions and with excellent support from the project team, the evaluator had some constraints; 1) Baseline data for the indicators were not available; 2) There was not sufficient time to prepare and carry out a detailed de-briefing session; 3) Some information provided by interviewees could not be verified hence omitted from the evaluation even though it could have made a difference to the ‘rating’ of the evaluation.

**2.0 Project Development Context**

Saint Lucia is plagued by low technology agriculture – slash and burn, down slope tilling and excessive land clearing. Efforts of the 1970s and 80s to mitigate these negative impacts have resulted in some short term remediation but the interventions were sporadic and the gains were not sustained. This project was therefore designed to build capacity to address the issues as well as maintain the gains made. A key component of the capacity building and mainstreaming efforts is the strengthening of the legislative architecture to underpin the land use changes associated with the evolving land use plans. A major challenge that has emerged is the lack of congruence between project implementation and the project design. There are legislative changes occurring under the project but there is no associated practical activity or the involvement of civil society.

Although the formal information on the extent of land degradation in St. Lucia remains incomplete, the steering committee members are convinced that Land degradation in the island state of Saint Lucia is increasing in severity and extent. According to the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey (KAPS, Alison King-Joseph, August 2010), Saint Lucians think land degradation in the island is “principally fueled in descending order through deforestation, poor drainage, high rainfall, poor cultivation practices and development planning, over cultivation, poor infrastructure – roads, poverty, steep slopes, intensive farming and mining/quarrying management.” Persons associated with the SLM Project also mentioned poor construction on steep slopes and the number of septic tanks per unit area in certain districts as problematic.

If this project can steer ‘agricultural, forest and other terrestrial land users to maintain ecosystem productivity and ecological functions while contributing to environmental, economic and social well-being’ of the nation then it would have done well.

This project was developed at a time when The National Land Policy (NLP) (2007) was being adopted and approved by the Cabinet of Saint Lucia. The project structure was therefore influenced by the public discussion that surrounded the national Land Policy making it easily acceptable to government as well as reflective of government’s priorities. The stakeholders that lead the development of the NLP formed the core of the SLM steering committee; they include Ministries of Planning Development Environment and Housing and Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry. Although the project document boasts an impressive list of NGO and private sector organizations, there is no real clear evidence of their involvement in this project.

UNDP as the implementing agency was integral to the project development providing both financial and technical support to the process. The project bears resonance with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean which has a strong emphasis on land management and livelihoods.

This project is linked to Saint Lucia’s commitment to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD).

Apart from the PIR and the 2009 annual report the only other record of monitoring of this project are three site visit reports from the UNDP Programme Manager. None of these reports speak of success or real progress of the project. The UNDP Programme Manager reported that on two out of the three recorded visits to the project in St. Lucia he met with the Permanent Secretary and expressed his concern about the lack of progress of the project.

**3.0 Findings of the Evaluation**

**3.1 Project Formulation**

The passage of tropical storm Debbie in 1994 brought land use and land degradation issues to a focus. The Watershed and Environmental Management Project study sited soil erosion as “the most important single environmental problem facing St. Lucia, both in terms of current economic loss and future threats to other activities”[[1]](#footnote-1). This study along with the government’s ratification of the UNCCD formed the backdrop for the development of this project.

The project was designed to be a participatory effort at mainstreaming land management. It assumed the willingness of government agencies to participate to the extent that sixteen (16) government agencies Including the Physical Planning Department, the Forestry Department, the Water Authority and the ministry of Finance were listed as stakeholders. In this regard the project can be said to be truly national owned and country driven. The great risk however, was the potential fallout from lack of buy-in by these agencies.

There was an absence of private sector and only limited NGO involvement in the project formulation to the extent that these agencies are practically absent from the implementation process. External to government the main inputs came from UNDP which sort to bring experiences from other projects executed in St. Lucia such as the NBSAP and the Climate Change Enabling Activity into the mix. Additionally, UNDP’s comparative advantage vis-a-vis its global experience in development and the fact that it has a basic standard agreement with Saint Lucia did assist the formation of this project.

This evaluation found that while project conceptualization and design were Satisfactory (S) the rating for stakeholder participation was only Moderately Satisfactory (MS).

**3.2 Project Implementation**

The implementation of this project is proceeding with a high level of emphasis on the upstream activities but no supporting downstream activity. Even so, the upstream activity is related only to Cabinet approval of documents but no visible shift in national policy. There is no evidence of real buy-in by the policy makers and no technical base for grounding the project.

Prior to the start of this project the following were identified as the baseline for the Outcomes 1 to 4:

* SLM not mainstreamed at the systemic level resulting in ineffective management of land resources
* Low level of capacity within agencies with land management mandates to effectively manage land resources
* NAP currently being drafted
* Guidelines for incorporating SLM into macro-economic policies do not exist; limited capacity to effect mainstreaming process
* Most policy instruments do not incorporate SLM
* Personnel inadequately trained in SLM
* SLM practices readily adopted by some farmers and resource users
* General low level of awareness on impacts of human-induced factors that contribute to land degradation and measures to mitigate land degradation
* Low level of investment within agencies for support to SLM
* Elements of a national digital Land Resources Information System (LRIS) for Saint Lucia already exist. Recent aerial photography for the entire island was undertaken with assistance from the French government. Spatial information (GIS) with limited datasets exist in some government departments, public and private sector companies but not oriented to SLM decision making
* Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems on the state of land degradation do not exist
* Limited hydrometric data
* Very limited capacity in application of spatial information systems to sustainable land management planning
* No guidelines exist for management of spatial information systems
* Medium-term Development Strategy (2005 – 2008) completed but Sector Investment plans in SLM inadequate
* No incentive regimes to encourage investment in SLM exist
* No funds committed for SLM initiatives

There were no baseline objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) for Outcome 5.

To date, there is no evidence that this project has made any significant positive impact for change on these baselines. SLM has not been brought to the forefront at important decision making levels of the governmental and technical system. With a speedy implementation of the public awareness strategy it remains to be seen to what extent the wider publics will adopt the SLM ideas into their everyday lives.

At this point there are few visible outputs of this project and the current signs are not encouraging. Technical officers have identified a National Land Use Plan (NLUP) as an urgent need. To arrive at this NLUP a number of important base activities are necessary such as Road Network identification and naming, comprehensive land mapping, the modernization of the Geo-determining Network (1955 – 1984), the revision of the Saint Lucia Land Surveys Act, evaluation of the Land Titling Project (1984-1987), and revision of the Manual for Developers (1988). There is no clear indication of when these activities will be undertaken.

Geographic Information System (GIS) is an important tool is the development of a land information system. The evaluator was reliably informed that the Surveys & Mapping Department is **not** GIS ready but that the Physical Planning Department of the Government and the Saint Lucia Electricity Company (LUCELEC) have GIS capability. The telephone company (LIME) has the most advanced GIS capability in Saint Lucia. . The point personnel for the National GIS reside in the department of Physical Planning. It is therefore importance that this entity is given assistance to become GIS ready in the shortest possible time.

* 1. **Project Performance/Results**
  2. **Activity matrix:**

The following summary matrix, verified by the UNDP Programme Manager shows the actual work done for each outcome. The comments on each project outcome following the matrix are the objective opinion of the evaluator.

**Summary of SLM Project Progress – May 2009 – Nov 2010**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **OUTCOME 1: SLM mainstreamed into national development policies, plans & regulatory frameworks** | | | | | | | | |
| **Activity #** | | **Indicator** | | **Date Undertaken** | | **Degree of Success** | | **Comment** |
| **1.** | | SLM considerations are included in Medium-term Development Strategy by Project Year 3 | |  | |  | | No visible activity to date.  It is highly unlikely that this outcome will be achieved. |
| **2.** | | Draft National Land Policy and updated NEP restructured around the principles of SLM  NAP incorporated in Strategic Plan coming out of Land Policy | |  | |  | | Minimal effort on this activity. The indicator is not visible. |
|  | |  | |  | |  | | . |
| **OUTCOME 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM developed** | | | | | | | | |
| **Activity #** | | **Activity Title** | | **Date Undertaken** | | **Degree of Success 1-5 (1 Lowest; 5 highest)** | | **Comments** |
| **1.** | | % of technical staff from MPDE, MAFF, NGOs and CBOs trained in provision of technical support and policy guidance on SLM to stakeholders by end of Project Year 2 | |  | |  | | No training undertaken |
| **2** | | % increase in the number of farmers and other resource users within construction, commercial and tourism sectors that have modified livelihood approaches to incorporate SLM principles | |  | |  | | There is still enough time to make a success of this activity. At this time the indicator is not visible. |
| **3** | | Heightened awareness of land degradation issues and SLM approaches by target stakeholders and the general public | |  | |  | | This indicator is not visible. |
| **4** | | % increase in budget allocation in MPDE and the MAFF to render required support to SLM approaches | |  | |  | | The SLM project is not positioned to capitalize on any gains made by the MAFF. |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
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|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **Activity #** | | **Activity Title** | | **Date Undertaken** | | **Degree of Success 1-5 (1 Lowest; 5 highest)** | | **Comments** |
| **Outcome 3: Capacities for knowledge management in support of SLM developed** | | | | | | | | |
| **1.** | | Number of requests for access to computerized LRIS established within the MPDE | |  | |  | | No monitoring programme in place |
| **2.** | | LRIS in SLM planning updated regularly through M&E system for state of environment assessment in Saint Lucia | |  | |  | | No update of LRIS. |
| **3.** | | Technical staff in MPDE and MAFF are developing spatial information products for decision-making based on agency and stakeholder requirements for SLM planning | |  | |  | | The work of the MPDE is proceeding without the inputs from the SLM project |
| **4.** | | % technical staff in the MPDE and the MAFF trained in guidelines for operation, maintenance and information-sharing of the LRIS | |  | |  | | No training of officers was done. The indicator is not visible. |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **Activity #** | | **Activity Title** | | **Date Undertaken** | | **Degree of Success 1-5 (1 Lowest; 5 highest)** | | **Comments** |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **Outcome 4: Investment planning and resource mobilization for implementation of SLM interventions elaborated** | | | | | | | | |
| **1.** | | The investment plans in key economic sectors of agriculture, tourism, construction, commercial incorporate priority actions for SLM as defined in NAP | |  | |  | | No work on the investment plan undertaken to date. |
| **2.** | | Incentives for SLM incorporated into main sector incentive regimes including the review and amendment of the Agricultural Incentives Regime Strategy developed to facilitate donor resource mobilisation | |  | |  | | The means of verification were (sector investment plan) are not available |
| **Outcome 5: Adaptive management and learning (including Start-up Activities)** | | | | | | | | |
| **Activity #** | **Activity Title** | | **Date Undertaken** | | **Degree of Success 1-5 (1 Lowest; 5 highest)** | | **Comments** | |
| **1.** | Establishment of a functional Project Management Unit | |  | |  | | The project management team is lead by a trained Government technical officer. | |
| **2.** | Cabinet approval of PSC | |  | |  | |  | |
| **3.** | Stakeholder Consultation | | October 8 2009 | | 4 | | A successful meeting but the outputs and recommendations remain unused. | |
|  | Hosting of Inception Workshop | | July 8th 2009 | | 4 | | Report submitted to UNDP | |

**3.5.2** The project performance was examined with respect to achieving the objectively verifiable indicators, contribution to outcomes, effectiveness and impact.

*OUTCOME 1: SLM integrated into national development policies, plans and regulatory frameworks:* At this stage of project implementation there is still no guideline for the incorporation of SLM into macro-economic policies. Only the National Land Policy has been approved by Cabinet and placed in the Gazette and on the government’s website. The Final Report on the NAP/SAP to Combat Desertification and Drought in Saint Lucia has been approved by Cabinet. These elements are not enough to say that the outcome was achieved or even show signs of being achieved. This is the centre piece of the project but it remains incomplete with minimal effort. It does not seem very unlikely that this outcome will be achieved.

OUTCOME 2: *Individual and institutional capacities for SLM developed*

There is no evidence to confirm that anything other than the survey of knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) intended to assess behavior regarding land degradation and SLM in Saint Lucia has been undertaken. The main assumption facing this outcome at inception was that the stakeholders will gravitate to the project and participate. The KAP survey showed that the public is largely unaware of the project hence participation is poor. There is no source of verification that activities relating to outcome two have ever been attempted.

OUTCOME 3: *Capacities for knowledge management in support of SLM developed*

The only evidence that the capacity for knowledge management in support of SLM was being attempted is the supply of hardware and software to key sectors of the Government. The equipment was provided but no accompanying training was undertaken. There are no consultants report, no record of Government funding being directed to the project and this was a major risk at the time of project development.

OUTCOME 4: *Investment planning and resource mobilisation for implementation of SLM interventions elaborated*

No verifiable indicator of success of this outcome is visible. Despite St. Lucia hosting one of the earlier UNDP sponsored workshop on Investment Planning and an ongoing UNDP run project on International Financial Flows, the project team has made no attempt to initiate a process of resource mobilization or to connect to any of the ongoing initiatives.

OUTCOME 5: *Adaptive management and learning*

The project has two full time staff, the Project coordinator and an Administrative Officer. The project coordinator is responsible for the day to day operations and reports directly to the Deputy P.S. Ministry of Physical Planning and Environment. There is a project steering committee with the following responsibilities:

* Conduct annual review and evaluation of project execution
* Provide guidance to PMU
* Create a mechanisms to strengthen participation of stakeholders
* Provide to the development of a long-term strategies to ensure project sustainability
* Monitoring and evaluation of results and lessons learnt.

Clear lines of responsibility regarding the execution of this project were outlined at the Inception Workshop. While the GEF provides the incremental cost of the project, strategic and policy guidance, review and approval of work plans and budgets are the responsibility of UNDP.

The responsibilities of the Environment Department of the Government of Saint Lucia were outlined as follows:

* Execution of approved Annual Work plans
* Participation in Steering and other Management Committee meetings to ensure smooth project implementation
* Institute appropriate arrangements for logistical and technical support for project training and workshop activities
* Knowledge sharing and awareness raising
* Provide adequate logistical support; office space, furniture and appliances.

Despite the clarification of roles and the support anticipate from several quarters (government departments, UNDP, NGO community), the management of this project has faltered. The PMU has shown no creativity, and the concept of Adaptive Management seem far removed from the project. The project has made no use of the network created at its inception. The synergy workshop that was hailed proactive has yielded no fruit. Based on the findings recorded in the foregoing narrative this evaluation rates the results as unsatisfactory (U).

* + 1. **Sustainability of Change**

Sustainability of outputs generated by this project will depend on the stakeholders taking ownership of the project and its outputs.. At present none of the stakeholders listed in the project document seem clear of their role or responsibility.

The investment plan in Outcome 4 was intended to provide additional financing to ensure that key activities continued beyond the GEF funding amounts and date. However this activity has not been attempted and there is no allotment in the national budget to support SLM initiatives therefore there is currently no financial future for this project. There is much socio-economic risk in the future of this project. Currently, land degradation is fueled by livelihood challenges (deforestation, hill side farming and construction in water course). With the stakeholders out of the loop things can only get worse.

Probably the only spark of light in the project execution so far is the conscious effort to include policy makers and government institutions. If these efforts are taken to their real conclusion, then the resulting institutional structure may be cause for some hope. At present, sustainability of the project gains is uncertain and therefore rated as unsatisfactory (U).

**3.5.4 Gender Issues**

Despite the significance of land, land tenure, land management, land degradation and the central role of women to the economic development of the Caribbean as a whole and Saint Lucia in particular, the project document did not speak specifically to the issue of gender. Several references were made to the importance of agriculture and the changing economic landscape but the gender dimension was not reflected.

The evaluator found that no conscious efforts are being made to include the gender dimension into the implementation of the project but these may be hidden by the social realities.

**3.5.5 Adaptive Management**

**3.5.5.1 Risk Management**

There is a very real risk that the few gains made by this project can be lost when the project life expires. There is ownership of the SLM process by the Permanent Secretary and his deputy in the Ministry of Physical planning and the Environment but there is need for committed support and a creative, assertive Project Coordinator to craft a mainstreaming plan and infuse it into the national development process. Anything short of this will be a disaster.

The main elements of risk as stated in the logical frame work of the project document are

1. Political support for the project
2. Stakeholder buy-in and willingness to participate
3. Interagency willingness to collaborate
4. The willingness of agencies and institutions to share data in support of the LIS

All of these risks are still very real and there is no mitigation plan in place. The current project team seems oblivious of these risks, the project time frame and the consequence of inaction.

UNDP Programme Manager reports indicated two substantial meetings with the Permanent Secretary both addressing delivery rate and financial flows. However, no action was taken at the project management level. Both the implementing agency (IA) and the executing agency (EA) continued their monitoring as indicated by the records but took no steps to address project delays and the poor quality of the outputs.

**3.5.7 Financial Resources**:

Examination of the Annual Work Plans generated by Atlas (UNDP accounting system) revealed that the project had three substantial budget revisions. Each revision allowed for the addition of US$10,000 from UNDP core resources (TRAC funds) as co-financing to the project. The work plan also revealed that the allocation of funds for each activity was in accordance with the approved project document. This project utilizes UNDP’s financial advance modality. In this regard, all funds for project expenses are forwarded to the Government of St. Lucia in accordance with the request submitted using the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT). The HACT is design to solicit quarterly expenditure report but this project has not adhered to the reporting requirement. UNDP’s combined delivery report CDR indicates that there are outstanding advances against this project for which reports are due.

While UNDP followed the standard HACT procedure and financial management, there is still the concern of how the financial advance modality was used in 2009 and 2010 following the dismal performance in 2008 and the challenges in financial reporting. Even when the disbursement and the accompanying expenditure in 2009 was less than 50% a significant advance was made in 2010.

**3.5.8 Partnerships**

As noted in the project document, the main project partners are Ministries of Government including the Ministries of Agriculture, Physical Planning and Environment. From the perspective that these partners have interest in SLM, such a partnership strategy is very sound. Indeed, the wish to collaborate is very real as noted from discussions with various partners during this evaluation mission but there is a high element of frustration with the pace of the process. The NGO and private sector communities are invisible both in the project document and the project execution.

Some partnership exists among SLMs in Grenada, Dominica and St. Lucia but there is no real benefit or visible output at St. Lucia’s end from this association.

1. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

**3.1 Conclusions**

This evaluation was conducted under generally good conditions. The project team was prepared and cooperative. However, they are dissatisfied with their working environment. The stakeholders interviewed had high expectations for the project though most were unaware of the contents of the project document as it pertains to budget, activity sequence and the true scope of the project.

Judging from the reactions and comments of stake holders, and the various project reports reviewed it is my professional opinion that this project may not come to a successful conclusion. Some outcomes have not advanced and some like the mainstreaming effort will need additional attention in order to anchor them into the development process.

This evaluation along with outputs from the KAP survey will prove useful as the project moves into its final year. The information in these documents should provide insights and identify areas where additional inputs are needed and how these inputs can best be tailored to support the dangling outcomes. Some rethinking will be necessary in light of the fact that the impacts from the few foundational components are the only ones visible.

The project has employed two basic strategies; 1) the search for and use of national, regional or international experts who can deliver the requisite skills and best practices and 2) forging of links with other programmes, projects, initiatives or institutions nationally and regionally.

In this regard, the location of the project within the Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment was meant to be an asset but one can find no visible gain or value added from this location. It might have been more advantageous if the project was housed in the same building as the Sustainable Development Officer where other GEF projects are located and where there are many more project type activities. Close physical association with other such activities and persons having long-term project experience may have proved better for all concerned and give the project some energy and synergy.

Long –term ownership of the project is a challenge. Although the Government of Saint Lucia is contributing the Project Coordinator’s time, office space, stationery etc, to date there has **not** been a significant “buy-in “to this project by the relevant Heads of Sections in the government. It appears as though persons are unclear of their role. There is also a lack of commitment on the part of some Steering Committee members, and the public seems unaware of the existence of the project.

The Project Coordinator is definitely struggling. She has identified lack of office space and technical support, multi-tasking by officers connected to the project, PSC problems, unavailability of Saint Lucian expertise and lack of sufficient funds to hire outside personnel, and tender regulations of the Government as contributing to the slow pace of implementation of this project. However, the evaluator found the greater challenge to be the Project Manager’s lack of creativity and knowledge of the functioning of Government machinery. She has issued contracts at the national level oblivious of the national tendering process. Persons close to the project have identified poor time management, the lack of knowledge of the Government’s financial regulations and the lack of assertiveness of the Project Coordinator as problematic.

The project evaluation found that the project base was sound, the needs real and so were the risks. The failure to engage with the plethora of government stakeholders has significant weaken the project and called the assumption to question. One risk not considered was that of a weak or inexperienced project manager which seem to be the worst of all possible risk.

* 1. **Recommendations**

In order to ensure the mainstreaming of SLM, the project activities needs to be relocated and made parts of more successful and proactive initiative. It is quite clear that if things continue as they are < 50% of the project will remain incomplete at project closure. The Government of Saint Lucia is developing a National Land Use Plan and a Land Resource Information System. Repackaging the Land Use Plan and the Land Resource Information System to embrace the Mainstreaming, Capacity Development and Knowledge Management component of this project offers an excellent option for salvaging this project if the new arrangement has a skilled project manager. Since these are national initiative independent of external funding, mainstreaming and sustainability issues will be obviated.

The following recommendations already made by members on the PSC at various times should be taken on board:

* Assigning responsibility for oversight of specific activities to agencies more appropriately
* Re-working project timeframe and activity timelines considering the 2012 dead line
* Incorporation of activities into ongoing agency normal work-plans where appropriate with an eye on continuity after project closure
* Re-engage with agencies that have critical roles to play in the successful completion of activities
* Prioritize project activities and place emphasis and resources on the more critical ones
* Bring GIS and LRIS capability and the agencies that are important to this and get them actively ‘on-board’
* Finalization of the Legal Review of the Land Tenure System in Saint Lucia.

The evaluator believes that a sustained interagency coordinating mechanism is urgently needed to provide strong and influential leadership to save the project.

Capacity development for standardization and management of data via an intranet system needs to be undertaken as a final step to a knowledge management outcome.

There is an urgent need for some creative, dynamic entity to take ownership of the process beyond the estimated end of project date. The capacity building push should increase and be expanded to include an element on monitoring and evaluation so that the project can be self regulating and the project gains maintained after the ends.

The capacity to network and manage standardized data via an intranet needs to be developed and must include Land & Surveys, Land Use, Registry of Lands & Deeds, Valuation and Physical Planning.

UNDP needs to become more involved in this project beyond the financial management and site visits. With its wealth of development experience, its links to government and its on the ground staff, UNDP should do more to move the project forward.

The government of St. Lucia should request help from UNDP through its “support to NEX’ modality. In this regard the UNDP worker on the ground should be made a co-manager to the project.

APPENDIX

1. The Watershed and Environmental Management Project (WEMP) a post disaster initiative …. Recommendations to the Government of St. Lucia for more sustainable management of land resources in St. Lucia. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)