Tajikistan Country Report

Mid Term Review of the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) Scale-Up

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CC	Climate Change	
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation	
СР	Communities Programme	
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	
CBO	Community-based Organisations	
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan	
DDP	District Development Plan	
DFID	Department for International Development	
EC	European Commission	
ECIS	Europe and CIS	
EIG	Environment Initiative Group	
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation	
ITA	International Technical Adviser	
Jamoat	Village cluster/council for a group of villages	
JRC	Jamoat Resource Centre	
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	
MLF	Micro Loan Fund	
MTR	Midterm Review	
NDS	National Development Strategy	
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation	
Oblast	Province	
PE	Poverty and Environment	
PEF	Poverty and Environment Facility (Nairobi)	
PEI	Poverty and Environment Initiative	
PRODOC	Programme Document	
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy	
Rayon	District	
RGP	Rural Growth Programme	
ToR	Terms of Reference	
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme	
WG	Working Group	

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Summary

- PEI Tajikistan focuses on subnational planning to demonstrate results, which can potentially be lifted to national level. This is an appropriate model in the Tajik context
- PEI Tajikistan adds value by ensuring that PE concerns are taken into account in local development planning, and by building capacity to address PE issues at the sub-national level, and is thereby also contributing the the intended global outcome of the PEI Scale-up Programme
- The programme is directly implemented by UNDP and integrated in UNDAF and UNDP's country programme, and is benefiting from structures and support functions of the UNDP Communities Programme
- PEI Tajikistan has over a short time span and with modest resources influenced the district development plans in Sughd province and laid the foundation for national scaling up of PE mainstreaming in district development plans
- Within the limited time frame of Phase 1, it will be difficult to ensure full sustainability, although some of the results achieved and scheduled activities enhance the likelihood of achieving some sustained changes in district and provincial planning processes. Limited central government involvement and options for handing over the process to other programmes could limit the scope of sustained changes

Main recommendations

- With the current uncertainty about post 2012 funding, PEI Tajikistan should focus on interventions and upcoming entry points that are likely to contribute to sustainability, and adjust work plans accordingly, if needed. Various ownership models of PEI should be explored
- Engage only in pilot projects if the experiences can/will be used strategically, and to map whether other agencies have relevant experiences
- If funding is secured for phase 2, include national scaling up of the experiences from Sughd province, and include a component on involving national government more actively to ensure broader national buy-in and promotion of supportive sector policies

Main lessons learned

- An inception period allows the Programme Implementation Team to refine the approach and develop a more detailed work plan
- Support from the UNDP Country Office and integration in larger programmes can help improving PEI country delivery and reduce the risk of delays
- Using national human capacity as much as possible can reduce costs and enhance the national resource base
- Subnational development plans can be an entry point to demonstrate the value of mainstreaming PE concerns into planning processes

Introduction

The overall purpose of this review is to "serve as a monitoring tool focusing on how the programme is operating and if any major changes are required (Terms of Reference p. 5)". The specific objectives are to: i) assess the current value added of the PEI and whether changes in the wider policy environment, i.e. opportunities and challenges in view of the climate change agenda, green economy, and consideration of other-related initiatives or actors that have emerged since 2002 have implications for how PEI operates to 2012 (relevance); ii) assess the progress to date of the Initiative and its implementation against the results and resources framework of the Scale-up joint programme and identify its strengths and weaknesses. In this sense, emphasis should be put on the analysis of results obtained compared to the "targeted results" that were expected taking into account the actual inputs,

outputs and outcomes (effectiveness and efficiency); iii) provide findings, conclusions and recommendations to improve implementation and delivery. These should focus on:

a. The global joint PEI design and arrangements (including the PEF, PEI governance and operational and technical support from UNDP and UNEP)b. PEI regional teamsc. PEI country programme design and implementation

This report is a country case study review of one of the 6 case studies chosen. The country level reviews are not intended to be fully comprehensive reviews of the country programmes (as such an exercise would need 2 to 3 weeks rather than just 1 week of inputs). Instead, the focus is on the key findings, recommendations and lessons learned that potentially are relevant for the wider study.

Questions asked

The main questions the MTR team put to the stakeholders refer to:

Relevance: i) eliciting opinions from stakeholders about the PEI's relevance to national policies, in particular concerning the links between the overall PEI PRODOC result framework and the Tajikistan PRODOC; and ii) the strategy's relevance and realism for meeting the implementation challenge on time.

Effectiveness: i) adequacy of advice and inputs by the PEF, the PEI Asia Regional Team and the Tajikistan country team on PE mainstreaming, including internal and external communication management; and ii) institutional connectedness, and whether PEI is effective at linking ministries of finance with line ministries and e.g. ministries of environment, and agriculture, and at enhancing collaboration between ministries with environment and poverty related mandates.

Efficiency: i) assessment of completion of key activities and achieving programme outputs: assessment of progress towards achieving targets and expected outcomes vis-à-vis each result area (also asked at global levels); ii) review PEI execution modalities, i.e. the management and institutional set-up (membership and profiles, cost-effectiveness, lead agency, national ownership including the role of the national management).

Preparing for impact and sustainability: i) assessment of changes in the degree to which pro poor environmental sustainability is included and operationalised in national, sector and sub-national development plans and budgets; ii) the likelihood of the outputs and outcomes that PEI is producing bringing about durable change and ensuring that environment and poverty concerns are embedded in institutional development planning processes used by different sectors of the government.

The reviewed intervention

PEI Tajikistan aims to develop awareness and promote action to tackle key environmental problems and their socio-economic impacts in order to support delivery of the Government's National Development Strategy (2007-2015) and Poverty Reduction Strategy 3 (2010-12).

Phase 1 of PEI Tajikistan runs from June 2010 to December 2012, with an anticipated second phase to follow in 2013. PEI Tajikistan aims at achieving the following outcome: *Enhanced capacity of government and other national and subnational stakeholders to integrate environmental concerns into sustainable pro-poor development planning and budgeting*. To achieve this objective, PEI Tajikistan will produce the following outputs:

- 1. Information and Knowledge Base for PE Mainstreaming Developed (USD 302,680)
- 2. PE Linkages Integrated in District Development Plans (Sughd Province) (USD 261,570)
- 3. Capacity for implementing PE sensitive sub-national plans increased (USD 255,750)

The focus of the activities under output 2 and 3 are at the provincial and district level, while output 1 focuses on the national level. The main activities include, i) improving national monitoring systems by ensuring inclusion of PE indicators, ii) strengthening the development and implementation of provincial and district development plans, and ensuring the inclusion of PE issues, and iii) ensuring access to financial services supporting sustainable investments by rural poor. A detailed overview of PEI Tajikistan's activities is provided in Annex 1.

Organisation and management

The Tajikistan PEI is embedded in the overall UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) for Tajikistan, which is designed to support the achievement of the goals of Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (NDS) and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), and PEI is fully integrated in UNDP's Tajikistan Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). PEI Tajikistan, like most UNDP programmes and projects in Tajikistan, is being directly implemented by UNDP. Within the UNDP Country Programme, PEI reports to the Energy and Environment cluster but is administered by the Communities Programme (CP)¹, which reports to the Poverty and MDGs cluster, and PEI Tajikistan uses the same Steering Committee as CP. The Steering Committee is chaired by PEI's primary Government partner, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, which is responsible for coordination of line ministries, budgeting and planning, and implementation of the National Development Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The PEI ECIS Regional Team (PEI ECIS) provides both technical and managerial support to PEI Tajikistan and stays up-to-date on the implementation status. The design of the PEI intervention in Tajikistan was undertaken by the PEI ECIS and UNDP Tajikistan in collaboration. Furthermore, PEI ECIS is also the interphase between PEI country programmes in ECIS and PEF. PEI ECIS is a joint UNDP-UNEP team comprising staff from both agencies.

Programme Implementation Team

The Programme Implementation Team comprises a Project Manager and an Administrative Assistant. In the first six months, an International Technical Adviser (ITA) provided support for awareness raising, capacity development and shaping the project during the inception phase. After that the PEI ECIS and UNDP Tajikistan agreed that there would be no further need for a long term ITA on the Team, but international experts are brought in for specific tasks and advise, which cannot be obtained within the country. National consultants are widely used by PEI Tajikistan, e.g. in relation to capacity building and advisory at provincial and district level. The Programme Implementation Team is housed by the Communities Programme located in UNDP's country office. The Programme Implementation Team handles day-to-day management and implementation of PEI Tajikistan with support from the Communities Programme in relation to access to vehicles, support from two area offices in Sughd Province, procurement, financial management, and M&E. At provincial and district level, implementation is closely coordinated and carried out in collaboration with the Rural Growth Programme, which is implemented by DFID, UNDP, and GIZ.

Budgeting and financial management

The total budget for PEI Tajikistan phase 1 is USD 900,000 over a three-year period, fully funded by UNDP-UNEP PEI. UNDP Tajikistan provides in-kind support (e.g. through the Communities Programme), including office space, access to vehicles, M&E and administrative support, and staff time. Furthermore, through the funding provided for the Communities Programme, DFID and GIZ are also contributing to PEI Tajikistan. USD 50,000 in additional funds will be provided by DFID for the planned contribution of PEI Tajikistan to the revision of the monitoring system and indicators of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (USD 75,000 will be provided for this by the PEI Tajikistan budget). Since PEI is under the direct implementation modality, all funds are managed by the Communities Programme and PEF under the UNDP Atlas system. Planning, disbursements, procurement, and financial accounting are handled by UNDP. By 31 August 2011, total expenditure was USD 177,201 (USD 29,566 in 2010 and USD 147,635 in 2011).

¹ CP is also a key delivery mechanism for other UNDP clusters

Monitoring and reporting

The Communities Programme's monitoring system provides regular data collection from both national and subnational levels and reporting against PEI Tajikistan's indicators, and the M&E and reporting team has also provided substantial support in indicator development, ensuring they are aligned with both PEI global indicators and the indicators of the Communities Programme and UNDP's country programme in general. However, the monitoring of the relevance of training/capacity building provided appears to be limited to asking participants about their opinion immediately after the training, and the team seems not to contact the participants after some time to assess the actual utilisation of the skills acquired.

Stakeholders

The main PEI stakeholders in Tajikistan are:

Stakeholder	PEI relevance
UNDP Tajikistan (incl.	PEI Tajikistan implementing agency, supporting the District Development Plan
Communities Programme)	and PRS processes, UN country lead. Signatory of PEI Tajikistan PRODOC
Rural Growth Programme	Joint UNDP/GIZ implemented and co-funded programme (with DFID major
(RGP)	funding), building provincial and district capacity on preparing and
	implementing Province and District Development Plans, collaborates with PEI
	Tajikistan in Sughd Province. RGP has also supported the development of a
	national methodology for local development planning. Upcoming RGP activities
	of relevance to PEI Tajikistan include microfinance and extension services
Ministry of Economic	Main PEI government partner at national level and signatory of PEI Tajikistan
Development and Trade	PRODOC. Planning, budgeting, coordination of line ministries. Lead ministry
	on National Development Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy. Lead
	ministry on support and approval of provincial and district development plans.
	Disburse funds for provinces and districts. Chairing steering committee
Sughd Province	Responsible for preparing provincial development plans, reviewing district
	development plans, supporting districts and disbursing funds for districts
Districts, Sughd Province	Prepare and implement district development plans
Jamoats, Sughd Province	Submit proposals for development projects at village level for inclusion in
	district development plans
Committee on	Line agency for environment, responsible for environmental protection and
Environment Protection	management. Member of steering committee, but currently not actively involved
	in PEI at the national level. The Committee's office in Sughd province is
	involved in mainstreaming environment into development plans
Institute for Civil Servant	Capacity building and training for government staff at all levels. Responsible for
Training	training of government staff on the national methodology for provincial and
	district development plans. Collaboration with PEI on inclusion of PE training in
	curriculum will start in autumn 2011
MLF Sughd Microfin	One of two microloan funds supported by RGP. Planned partner of PEI for
	development and provision of "green" microlending products under RGP. PEI is
	sharing the costs of PE training for the microloan funds with RGP
CBOs and CSOs	Local civil society prepared proposals for district development plans and
	implement approved projects
National Statistics Agency	Responsible for indicator development and gathering monitoring data (from
	surveys, sector agencies, provinces and districts), e.g. for the National
	Development Strategy, Poverty Reduction Strategy. PEI is working with the
	National Statistics Agency to get PE indicators included and mainstreamed
	across sectors
Ministry of Agriculture	Responsible for agricultural development. May in the future provide agricultural
	extension services. Currently no direct collaboration with PEI
Other line ministries and	Other line agency with a poverty and/or environment related mandate, e.g.
committees	Ministry of Water and Ministry of Energy

Findings

Progress on results

The PEI Tajikistan PRODOC was signed on 2 June 2010. UNDP Tajikistan's programmes, including PEI Tajikistan, always include an inception phase and during the inception phase the programme implementation plan was updated and refined. The PEI Tajikistan Inception Report was finalised in February 2011.

Annex 1 provides an overview of activities implemented vis-à-vis the activities and targets outlined in the PRODOC and annual work plans. During the inception phase, some adjustments were made to the results framework of the programme, i.e. adjustments of activities, work plans and targets; the main changes include:

- Removing weather insurance pilot activity from the programme, as this proved unfeasible, due to low farmer interest
- Including support for inclusion of PE in the curriculum of the Institute of Civil Servant Training for courses on district development plan development
- Increasing the support to districts on elaboration district development plans from 2 to 14 districts to be in line with the targets and work plan of the Rural Growth Programme. To accommodate for this change, it was decided not to work at jamoat (village cluster) level.

Some delays have been experienced in the implementation of PEI Tajikistan, mainly due to difficulties in finding qualified staff and consultants in Tajikistan. The Project Manager Position was readvertised 2 times, and the position was filled in September, three months after the programme was launched. To be in line with the Rural Growth Programme interventions in the Sughd region, at the first stage of implementation PEI Tajikistan focused entirely on mainstreaming PE into the ongoing district development plan elaboration. This delayed the development of the inception report, which in turn delayed some activities, including communication strategy development and the economic study on the impact of land degradation. The input to the Poverty Reduction Strategy monitoring system is waiting for the review process to begin. Till now, implementation has therefore focused mainly on output 2, but preparation for activities under the other outputs have taken place, and implementation strategy development, the study on the economic impact of land degradation, curriculum development for civil servant training, and development and piloting of "green" micro lending products.

Relevance

Tajikistan is a low-income country. 70% of the population live in rural areas and depend on natural resources for farming and livestock rearing, the primary livelihood strategy. However, Tajikistan is mountainous and has a predominantly semiarid climate, and only 7% of the land is suitable for agricultural production. Land degradation (i.e. erosion and deforestation), water management and access, and climate change are thus the major environmental concerns in Tajikistan. Other concerns include loss of biodiversity, waste management and unsafe deposits of chemical and nuclear waste from the soviet era. Nonetheless, sustainable utilization of natural resources through improved and pro-poor management (e.g. community-based natural resource management, soil-water conservation, eco-tourism, renewable energy) also presents opportunities to improve the livelihoods of rural poor.

Government's development priorities are guided by the National Development Strategy (NDS) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and poverty reduction is a high priority. The goal of NDS is to: *strengthen social and political stability and to achieve the economic prosperity and social well-being of the people of Tajikistan in an environment shaped by the supremacy of the principles of a market economy, freedom, human dignity and equal opportunities for each person to realise his or her potential.* Furthermore, PEI Tajikistan aims to support the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy 3 (PRS3), which has the main goal *to promote dynamic economic growth, to improve the quality of living standard of the population, particularly socially vulnerable segments of the population and strengthen the human potential.* However, while environment is included in the strategies, it is not currently a strong priority for the Government; this is reflected by the absence of a Ministry of Environment, which over time has been downgraded to the status of a Commission. PEI Tajikistan adds value by demonstrating the socio-economic role of environment and natural resources, by ensuring that PE concerns are taken into account in local development planning, and by building capacity to address PE issues at the sub-national level.

The intended global outcome of the PEI Scale-up Programme is: *Improved capacity of programme country governments and other stakeholders to integrate the environmental concerns of poor and vulnerable groups into policy, planning and implementation processes for poverty reduction, pro- poor growth and achievement of the MDGs.* PEI Tajikistan contributes to this outcome as it promotes the inclusion of PE concerns in development planning approaches.

All UN agencies in Tajikistan operate through the UNDAF framework. The UNDAF and UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) specifically aim at supporting the above-mentioned strategies. PEI Tajikistan contributes to the following UNDAF and CPAP outcomes: 2.1) Good governance and economic and social growth are jointly enhanced to reduce poverty, unlock human potential, protect rights and improve core public functions, and 2.3) There is a more sustainable management of the environment and energy and natural resources. Furthermore, PEI Tajikistan contributes to the following UNDP Programme clusters: i) Poverty reduction and MDGs achievement, ii) Environment and sustainable development, and iii) Good governance. Within the Communities Programme, PEI contributes to the following outcomes: i) Poverty reduction and economic development programmes are enhanced, with particular focus on the rural poor, women and marginalized people, ii) Improved environmental protection, sustainable natural resources management, and increased access to alternative renewable energy, and iii) National and local levels of government have the capacity to implement democratic governance practices, and effectively and strategically plan, finance and implement development initiatives in an inclusive and participatory manner.

Tajikistan is a young country, which over the last 20 years has undergone a systemic shift from a planned and subsidised Soviet economy to a market-based economy, and during the early nineties, Tajikistan experienced five years of violent conflict. Due to reportedly low Government capacity and frequent changes in ministry mandates and leadership, most UNDP interventions, including PEI, are implemented directly by UNDP.

During the planning and inception phases of PEI Tajikistan, it was found that due the situation above described, there were few entry points at national level for PEI, e.g. to influence policy, e.g. the Poverty Reduction Strategy 3 was already finalised. Thus, the main focus of PEI Tajikistan has been to influence the development, budgeting, and implementation of provincial and district development plans, using the larger Rural Growth Programme as an entry point. The results framework and its objectives, outputs, activities and targets are consistent with this approach (pls. refer to annex 1). The Communities Programme's M&E team has developed a consistent M&E and reporting framework for PEI Tajikistan with relevant indicators, which are aligned with both the Communities Programme and global PEI, although the PEI Tajikistan outcome appears broad, generic and difficult to measure: *Level of capacity of country stakeholders to systematically integrate environmental concerns into sustainable pro-poor national and subnational development planning and budgeting*. The technical assistance (e.g. training for decentral Government, advisory and studies) is relevant for the approach and reportedly produces the intended outputs.

Under the Trust Fund mechanism established in each district by the Rural Growth Programme (total budget USD 700,000), limited financial support (USD 50,000 as cofinancing) will be provided by PEI Tajikistan for 4-6 pilot PE activities (environmentally sustainable projects) identified in district development plans. This is generally seen by staff from UNDP Tajikistan, PEI Tajikistan and PEI ECIS as a necessary means to demonstrate the relevance and feasibility of addressing PE concerns to Government at all levels. Reportedly, there are few existing experiences and ongoing initiatives in Tajikistan with pro-poor sustainable agricultural and natural resource management, which can be used to advocate for PE mainstreaming.

At the national level, the main entry points identified by PEI Tajikistan are a) the planned revision of the monitoring framework and indicators for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, b) using the experience from working with district development plans to influence the national methodology and indicators for these, and c) using the experience to influence the curriculum of the Institute for Civil Servant Training.

Conclusion on relevance

Given the clear PE issues Tajikistan is facing, the support provided by PEI Tajikistan to strengthen the government's capacity to address PE issues is highly relevant, and PEI Tajikistan adds value by ensuring that PE concerns are taken into account in local development planning, and by building capacity to address PE issues at the sub-national level. The integration within UNDAF and UNDP Tajikistan and their support for the NDS and PRS3, provides relevant entry points to supporting Government priorities. In the current context with Government capacity constraints and frequent changes in central Government structure and leadership, UNDP direct implementation and the focus at the subnational level is justified, and with the limited Government prioritisation of environment and awareness of its socio-economic importance, the focus on subnational level to demonstrate results, which can be used to raise awareness is appropriate and relevant.

Efficiency

PEI Tajikistan has experienced some delays in implementation, mainly due to a) difficulties in finding qualified staff and consultants, and b) external factors, such as waiting for the Rural Growth Programme to start or waiting for the Poverty Reduction Strategy monitoring review. However, while these delays will make the workload for PEI Tajikistan high in the remaining implementation period, it does not seem to be a major threat to delivery of Phase 1 outputs within the programme timeframe.

While the UN system for recruitment and procurement is seen by programme staff as being complicated for new staff to get acquainted with and time consuming to use, in Tajikistan it appears not to have caused major delays, although the system with the need for consistent follow-up to avoid delays. The inclusion of PEI in the Communities Programme has enabled the Project Manager to get support for procurement processes. PEI Tajikistan has not procured goods and services for an amount requiring approval from New York.

The inclusion of an inception period in the beginning of the programme and expanding the duration of phase 1 to a 2.5 year period has enabled the PEI Tajikistan team to refine the results framework and plan implementation after the recruitment of the Project Manager and consultants.

The financial resources available for PEI Tajikistan are much smaller than for many PEI country programmes in other regions. Access to UNDP and Communities Programme support and resources (e.g. office space, vehicles, M&E support, admin support), and collaboration with the Rural Growth Programme have enabled PEI Tajikistan to reach 14 districts in Sughd province. The limited and targeted use of international technical assistance and wide use of national capacity has also proven cost-efficient.

Conclusion on efficiency

PEI Tajikistan implementation efficiency is significantly benefiting from the use of UNDP resources and support. The inclusion of the inception phase after the recruitment of the Programme Implementation Team has also been an important factor in ensuring efficient implementation. This has to a significant extent helped offsetting the potentially negative influence of delays.

Effectiveness

The timing of PEI Tajikistan to be implemented in parallel and collaboration with the Rural Growth Programme has enabled PEI with its limited resources to effectively reach 14 districts and create awareness about PE issues and capacity to address these in district development plans within a limited time frame, although as one would expect, some districts have achieved better results than others. Also, the results at district level have enabled PEI Tajikistan to influence the national methodology for elaboration of district development plans and to facilitate the inclusion of new PE indicators for districts across sectors. The support and capacity building for the preparation of the Sughd provincial development plan and the input to the national methodology also appear to be effective in ensuring that development plans with PE content will be appreciated during the assessment of, and budget allocation for, district development plans. However, a tendency of district development plans being project oriented in their design appears to remain; the evaluator's impression is that in Tajikistan there is generally a tendency of thinking in projects at both decentralised and national levels of Government. It is in this light, that the PEI Tajikistan team feels the necessity to provide some funding for pilot activities to demonstrate the relevance of PE mainstreaming.

The hosting of the Programme Implementation Team at UNDP reduces the opportunity for the Government to participate in and learn from the days-to-day implementation, but the programme has a strong emphasis on using and building national capacity, through the use of national consultants and provision of capacity building, training and mentoring for Government staff, in particular at district level. Reportedly, PEI Tajikistan has been good at changing perceptions and generating interest in environmental sustainability and its importance for rural livelihoods.

However, PEI Tajikistan has deliberately not engaged significantly at the national level yet, and has not engaged in influencing government policies. The main reason is that PEI Tajikistan in 2010-2011 has focused on using the window of opportunity to influence district development planning process while it was ongoing. Till now, engagement with the national level has primarily been in relation to the district development plan process, where the Department of Planning under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade were involved in process facilitation in the districts and took part in PEI training. The inclusion of PE in the national methodology for district development plans, and the scheduled PE mainstreaming into the curricula of the Institute of the Civil Servants Training provides a foundation for PEI Tajikistan to have an influence at local development planning across Tajikistan and influence national planning.

However, PEI ECIS, PEI Tajikistan and UNDP Tajikistan has found it difficult to identify entry points to influence national policy and budgeting during the design and inception phases. For example, the current Poverty Reduction Strategy 3 (PRS3) was already developed and thus not an entry point for PEI. The main entry point found is the planned revision of the monitoring system for PRS3, which is scheduled for early 2012. However, other entry points may emerge, such as the development of the PRS4 (likely to take place in 2012), and reportedly there are a number of policy reform processes going on in Tajikistan. The planned economic study on the impact of land degradation, which will take place in end October-November, will provide evidence to be used in influencing the national agenda.

Conclusion on effectiveness

PEI Tajikistan has over a short time span been able to effectively influence the development process for district development plans, and through the revisions of the national methodology and indicator collection the foundation is laid for national upscaling of PE mainstreaming in district development plans. PEI has not yet engaged in advocacy and influencing policy processes in Tajikistan.

Impact

PEI Tajikistan Phase 1 has only been under implementation for approximately one year, including the inception phase, so it is too early to verify impact. Nonetheless, some results have already been achieved, which could contribute to tangible outcomes:

• 14 district development plans have been prepared and submitted to provincial and national level for assessment and funding allocation. The Rural Growth Programme and PEI have jointly supported their development and they include PE considerations. With a trust fund for district development plan implementation established by the Rural Growth Programme, many of these plans are likely to attract funding. There is thus scope for measurable on-the-ground pro-poor environmental outcomes facilitated by PEI

- With the capacity building and sensitization provided during the preparation of the district development plans, future oblast and district practices and priorities in Sughd may include pro-poor environmental management
- The experiences at decentralised level of the Rural Growth Programme and of PEI have been communicated to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the national methodology for preparation of district development plans has been amended as a result. PEI's contribution to the methodology resulted in the inclusion of PE considerations across all sectors, and in having district environment departments included in the district development plan working groups. The foundation is thus laid for ensuring PE inclusion in district development plans across Tajikistan
- The experiences from PEI collaboration with districts in Sughd province has led to the inclusion of PE relevant district development indicators across sectors by the National Statistics Agency
- The planned inclusion of PE approaches in the curriculum of the Institute for Civil Servant Training may facilitate national coverage of the PEI experience
- PEI is likely to influence the indicator set for the Poverty Reduction Strategy 3 to include PE indicators across sectors
- Beyond PEI Tajikistan, training was provided to six districts in Khatlon Region in South Tajikistan under the Tajik-Afghan Poverty Reduction Initiative

The potential impact of PEI Tajikistan Phase 1 on national policies is more uncertain, but depending on timing, there may be scope to influence the design of the next Poverty Reduction Strategy 4 (2012-15).

The first outcome indicator in the results framework for the global PEI Scale-up Programme is the *number of countries in which pro-poor environmental concerns are incorporated into: 1) the national development/poverty reduction and growth strategy; 2) budget processes/Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF); 3) key sectoral policies and plans; and 4) the poverty monitoring system.* PEI Tajikistan has achieved the following against this indicator: 1) PEI Tajikistan has not yet been involved in influencing national level strategies; 2) PEI Tajikistan has not engaged in budgeting processes; 3) PE concerns and PEI Tajikistan approaches have been included in the national methodology for local development planning and have been included in 14 District Development Plans; and 4) PE indicators have been included in the data collected across sectors in all districts in Tajikistan.

Conclusion on impact

PEI Tajikistan is likely to result in changed practices in provincial and district development plans and generate higher prioritising of pro-poor sustainable environmental management in Sughd, with the potential for contributing to similar changes in other provinces. The likelihood of influencing national policies in Phase 1 is more uncertain, but this also not an intended outcome in the PRODOC.

Sustainability

PEI country programmes aim at changing perceptions, capacities and "the way of doing business" in governments. Sustainability would for PEI Tajikistan thus entail "sustained changes in national and subnational Government practices and approaches, which integrate environmental concerns into sustainable pro-poor development planning and budgeting". Such changes take time and it may be difficult to ensure full ownership of the PE mainstreaming agenda in a time frame of a couple of years. Also, capacity building can also be a process that take time, in order to ensure that new skills and knowledge is fully absorbed, sustained and utilized over time. The PEI model comprises two phases, to follow this through and ensure sustained changes. However, the global funding situation for PEI is uncertain beyond 2012, so whether PEI Tajikistan will be able to move into Phase is also uncertain. Thus, the sustainability of PEI Tajikistan's intervention may to a large extent depend on the future funding situation of PEI. Nonetheless, some aspects of PEI Tajikistan would enhance the likelihood of achieving sustained change:

- In Sughd province, PEI has been successful in increasing awareness of PE linkages, and the capacity to include these in development plans, of provincial and district government staff, jamoat staff, and communities. Depending on the successful implementation of the new development plans this result may be sustained
- PE concerns have already been mainstreamed into the national methodology for district development planning
- PEI Tajikistsan will work on the inclusion of PE tools in the national civil servant training curriculum, which could enable Government staff in other provinces and in the future to mainstream PE into planning and budgeting processes
- PEI has to a large extent utilised national capacity in its implementation

However, other issues pose challenges for programme sustainability, if funding is not secured for a second phase:

- PEI has been undertaken as direct implementation by UNDP, so no provision have been made for Government to assume responsibility for second phase of PEI
- National Government has only been involved to a limited extent, so the ownership and capacity to promote, continue and upscale PE work by Government has not been fully built
- PEI is integrated in the UNDP Communities Programme and the close collaboration with the Rural Growth Programme has been a key factor for its success. However, the next phase of the Rural Growth programme will focus on private sector and business development, so there will be limited scope for it to address pro-poor sustainable environmental management and continue the PEI process and follow-up on capacity building and actual implementation (microlending and extension services may still)

Conclusion on sustainability

The uncertain PEI funding situation in the future means PEI Tajikistan may not be able to move to Phase 2 after 2012. Within the limited time frame of Phase 1, it can be difficult to ensure full sustainability, but some of the results achieved through awareness raising, capacity building and methodology revision in relation to district planning and the planned curriculum development for civil servants enhance the likelihood of achieving sustained changes. However, the limited central government involvement and limited options for handing over the process to other programmes may limit the scope of sustained changes, should the programme end when Phase 1 comes to conclusion.

Conclusion

In the Tajik context with low capacity, frequent institutional changes, and limited priority given to environment, the approach chosen by PEI Tajikistan with direct implementation and a focus on subnational planning to demonstrate results is rational, pragmatic, and relevant. PEI Tajikistan adds value by ensuring that PE concerns are taken into account in local development planning, and by building capacity to address PE issues at the sub-national level, and is thereby also contributing the the intended global outcome of the PEI Scale-up Programme. The programme is integrated in UNDAF and UNDP's country programme, and strategically uses the Communities Programme and Rural Growth Programme to enhance its delivery capacity and outreach. The inclusion of an inception phase has helped to orient the programme approach and has also contributed to implementation efficiency and helped to offset the negative influence of delays. As a result of the above, PEI Tajikistan has over a short time span and with comparatively modest resources been able to influence the development process and practices for district development plans in Sughd province and laid the foundation for national scaling up of PE mainstreaming in district development plans. The likelihood of influencing national policies in Phase 1 is more uncertain, but this is not an intended outcome in the PRODOC. However, the uncertain PEI funding situation in the future means PEI Tajikistan may not be able to move to Phase 2 after 2012 and within the limited time frame of Phase 1, it may be difficult to ensure full sustainability, although some the results achieved and scheduled activities enhance the likelihood of achieving some sustained changes. However, the currently limited central government involvement and limited options for handing over the process to other programmes may limit the scope of sustained changes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings presented in the report, the MTR recommends the following for PEI Tajikistan:

- If the current uncertainty about post 2012 funding remains after the November donor meeting, or if funding for Phase 2 is not secured, PEI Tajikistan should focus on interventions that are likely to contribute to sustainability. Such activities should be prioritised, even if they are not included in the PRODOC. Various ownership models of PEI should be explored, e.g. with Government, UN programmes or other programmes/actors. The inclusion of PE mainstreaming in the civil servants training curriculum is an example of sustainability oriented activities
- To be flexible and opportunistic and make use upcoming entry points at national/policy level even if they fall outside the work plan, e.g. if the Poverty Reduction Strategy 4 design starts in 2011-12 to enhance leverage, partnerships with other agencies/programmes could be used
- To monitor actual uptake and utilization by stakeholders of skills and knowledge provided through capacity building and awareness raising
- To make sure only to engage in pilot projects if the experiences can/will be used strategically, e.g. for advocacy. Map whether other agencies have relevant experiences, e.g. with pro-poor sustainable NRM or agriculture
- If funding is secured for phase 2, include national upscaling of the experiences from Sughd province. Also include a component on involving national government and relevant line ministries more actively to ensure broader national buy-in and promotion of supportive sector policies

Lessons learned

The experience from Tajikistan has provided some lessons, which could be relevant for other PEI country programmes and for the PEI methodology:

- An inception period (e.g. six months) is valuable for phase 1, as it allows the recruited Programme Implementation Team to orient itself and further refine the approach and targets and develop a more detailed work plan. If time is a constraint, it should be considered to reduce the design phase (e.g. to six months) to create space for an inception phase and to get the Programme Implementation Team on board quickly
- While the use of UNDP management and procurement systems can be complicated and time consuming, training of Programme Staff and support provided by the UNDP Country Office can greatly reduce the risk of delays. However, programme staff should also be prepared to proactively follow up at all stages of the procurement/recruitment cycle
- Support from the UNDP Country Office and integration in larger programmes (e.g. regarding procurement, M&E, vehicle access) can help improving PEI country delivery both in terms of efficiency and effectiveness
- A focus on using national capacity (e.g. staff or consultants) as much as possible can reduce costs and enhance the national human resource base, for the benefit of future interventions and national ability to take over leadership of PE integration
- When Government awareness of, and interest in, environmental sustainability is low, subnational development plans can be an entry point to demonstrate the value of mainstreaming PE concerns into planning processes
- A flexible and pragmatic approach is advantageous, as it can enable the programme to continuously adapt to changes and opportunistically make use of new entry points that may arise during programme implementation

Annexes

Annex 1 Progress on implementation of activities

The table below compares the indicated activities for each result as indicated in the PEI Tajikistan PRODOC with implemented and ongoing activities from Jan 2010 to June 2011.²

with implemented and ongoing activities from Jan 2010 to June 2011. ²				
PRODOC indicative activities	2010 work plan targets	2011 work plan targets	Implemented Jan 2010 – June 2011	Ongoing/under preparation June 2011
OUTCOME PHASE 1: E	nhanced capacity of gov	ernment and other stake	eholders to integrate envi	ronmental concerns
		onal development plann		
Output 1: Information and	d Knowledge Base for PE N	/ainstreaming Developed		
Note: Whenever refered to,	PE issues include climate ch	ange and disaster related pro	oblems impacting on natural	resource managment
sustainability	I	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	I	
1.1 Provide evidence base	Area of study	1 study establishing		Study subject identified,
for linking economic development, poverty and	establishing country specific relationship	country specific relationship between		ToR developed, international consultant
environment	between economic	economic growth and		identified, work plan
	growth and environment	environment conducted,		agreed upon. Study
Target: Evidence on	is identified	published and		scheduled for Oct 2011
contribution of		disseminated		
environment to human				
well-being and pro-poor economic growth				
collected and used for PE				
mainstreaming				
Identify economic	No targets	No targets		
instruments for				
sustainable financing options and identify the				
approach to integrating				
PE links into National				
Budgeting process				
Note: Not in PRODOC				
but introduced in inception phase				
1.2 Improve and Link	Draft PE indicators for	PE indicators utilized in	PE Indicators developed	Installation of database
Existing PE Indicators	the district level are	fourteen pilot districts	during DDP elaboration	in pilot district and in
	developed	*	included into district	14 districts. Hardware
Target: PE indicators			database by State	installed, software to be
utilized at least in two pilot DDPs and PRS3			Statistics Committee	installed by the end of this year
review and evaluation				uns year
1.3 Mainstream PE and	Environment indicators	Core set of PE indicators	The initial analysis of PE	Monitoring framework
Utilize PE Indicators in	in PRS3 are reviewed	are included in the next	indicators is provided in	of current PRS will be
Monitoring and	and analyzed for PE	PRS monitoring system	the PEI inception report	initiated in partnership
Evaluation Framework in PRS3 and during the	linkages			with the MEDT-UNDP project on PRS
formulation of the next				monitoring starting Sept
PRS				2010
Target: PE indicators				
utilized at least in two pilot DDPs and PRS3				
review and evaluation				
1.4 Design and	Key ministries and	Key country	- 1 PE mainstreaming	- Video product is
Implement Awareness	NGOs are informed on	stakeholders, including	workshop for line	under
Raising and Capacity	the concept of PEI	media and donors aware	ministries	development – to
Development Program to Mainstream PE Linkages		of PEI concept, objectives, activities and	- Missions and	be ready in September
into National and Sub-		results	bilateral meetings	1
National Planning			were organized with other stakeholders	 TV company hired for producing TV
Processes			other statemonders	program and TV
Truck All d				discussion on PEI,
Target: All donors,				I

² Table prepared by PEI Tajikistan Project Manager

PRODOC indicative activities	2010 work plan targets	2011 work plan targets	Implemented Jan 2010 – June 2011	Ongoing/under preparation June 2011
agencies, key government agencies, CSO and media aware of PEI concept	tegrated in District Develop	ment Programmes		 first program to be aired in Nov Expert identified for Communication strategy development Contract signed with Institute for Civil Servant Training on including PE mainstreaming into planning process and economic development modules
 2.1 Develop Capacity for PE mainstreaming at sub- national level Targets: National guidance for mainstreaming PE into district development planning, monitoring and budgeting adopted officially by government At least XY% of all stakeholders involved in DDP elaboration and consultation are women 	 14 heads of districts are committed to PE mainstreaming being part of the District Development Planning 14 Heads of District working groups have understanding of PEI 30% of all stakeholders involved in DDPs elaboration and consultation are women 	 Authorities, planners and experts from Sughd region (14 districts) have a knowledge and experience in mainstreaming PE links in sub- national planning 30% of all stakeholders involved in DDPs elaboration and consultation are women 	 Local PEI consultants supported EIGs and WGs in 14 districts on problem identification, data analysis, problem solutions identification, project prioritization, and proposal writing SWOT analysis, problem analysis and goals setting of Regional Development Strategy 11% of stakeholders involved in PE part of DDP elaboration in 14 districts were women Note: WG and EIGs include local authorities, civil society, and private 	WG and EIGs work on Regional development strategy and on analysis of DDP documents and DDP process quality
 2.2 Integrate PE Linkages into selected District Development Plans (DDPs) Targets: At least 2 DDPs include support to environmental sustainability, climate resilience as a development priority At least 2 DDPs reflect environmental sustainability and climate risk in the design and costing of implementation measures At least 10% of DDP budget allocated for projects on pro-poor 	PE guidance for mainstreaming PE into 14 district development planning, monitoring and budgeting developed	 PE guidance for mainstreaming PE into 14 district development planning, monitoring and budgeting and oblast development strategy adopted by the government At least 50% of proposed PE issues /suggestions integrated into final DDPs and regional strategy 	 sector representatives 10 DDPs in Sughd include PE situation analysis, problems and solutions in economic, social, and infrastructure sectors On average, 70% of recommendations from EIGs were included in draft sectoral priorities and measures 	Methodology on PE mainstreaming will be updated before adoption by the Ministry of Economic Development

PRODOC indicative activities	2010 work plan targets	2011 work plan targets	Implemented Jan 2010 – June 2011	Ongoing/under preparation June 2011
environmental sustainability and CCA				
Output 3: Sub-National an	nd Local PEI Plan Impleme	entation Initiatives and Cap	oacity Building Supported	
 3.1 Integrate PE to the Local Extension Services Targets: Local actors in 2 districts trained in provision of PE sensitive extension 1 small-scale demo of PE sensitive extension impl. 	No targets	50 local actors trained in provision of PE sensitive extension and financial services		 International consultant hired for developing capacity building package for microlending organizations UNV volunteer will support identificaton of best approaches for mainstreaming PE into extension and microlending services Extension services local company to be hired for PE mainstreaming
 3.2 Integrate PE in Local Microfinance Services Targets: Local actors in 2 districts trained in PE sensitive financial services 3 local service providers and microfinance agencies adopted PE and CC criteria 3 PE projects supported by local service providers 3 PE and climate change sensitive projects microfinanced in each district 	No targets	Clients of MF organization of at least one district submit business plans with a section on environment		Pilot MLF has been identified. Draft PE criteria for micro lending and piloting in MLF is elaborated and to be piloted in Oct 2011
Identify the best approaches to promote environmentally sustainable, climate resilient and income generating development (Activity added in the inception report)	No targets	Two projects supporting environmental sustainability and climate risk management funded and implemented	 8 Project Proposals with environment sustainability and economic growth component developed by EIGs Around 55 projects from other sectors screened for the environmental sustainability 	Project proposals with environmental sustainability have been submitted for reviewed by Oblast Review Committee for funding

Annex 2 The PEI methodology in theory – and in practice in Tajikistan

PEI Tajikistan has not strictly followed the sequencing outlined in the PEI methodology. Considering the national context and entry points, e.g. the timing of planning and policy processes, the example shows that some flexibility may be needed when applying the PEI methodology in practice. Some types of interventions specified for Phase 1 have not taken place (yet), and while PEI Tajikistan is in Phase 1, some Phase 2 activities have already taken place.

Methodology, Phase 1:

- Collecting country-specific evidence: Integrated ecosystem assessment & economic analysis - In Tajikistan: Ongoing/planned economic study on the impact of land degradation
- Influencing policy processes: National (PRSP/MDG), sector and subnational levels – In Tajikistan: PE inclusion in 14 district development plans, inclusion of PEI approach in national local development planning methodology
- Developing and costing policy measures: National, sector and subnational levels - In Tajikistan: Not done
- Strengthening institutions and capacities: Learning by doing

 In Tajikistan: Capacity building in districts on problem identification, data analysis, problem solutions identification, project prioritization, and proposal writing

Methodology, Phase 2:

- Including PE issues in the monitoring system: Indicators and data collection

 In Tajikistan: PE Indicators included in national district database, indicators proposed for Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Budgeting and financing: Financial support for policy measures - In Tajikistan: Not done yet above district project level
- Supporting policy measures: National, sector and sub-national levels - In Tajikistan: Not done yet
- Strengthening institutions and capacities: Mainstreaming as standard practice – In Tajikistan: Not done yet. Steps taken to get PE mainstreaming included in training curriculum for civil servants

Annex 3 Methodology for data collection and analysis

The methodology used by the MTR in Tajikistan comprises the following elements:

- Interview key stakeholders, individually or in small thematic groups: Ask key questions that are not leading, listen with respect and engage in a mutual learning process in reviewing project progress. This attitude is important for reviewing the PEI because PEI is a programme with great emphasis on lobbying, advocacy, and mentoring
- Visit to province and districts where PEI works
- Desk review of key documents
- Key questions to key stakeholders that emerge from reading key documentation
- Coordination with the Tajikistan PEI programme team, the PEF team, and PEI ECIS regional team
- Testing findings and recommendations with staff from PEI ECIS, PEI Tajikistan, UNDP Tajikistan

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U	Shermatova Shoira	Gonchi town representative, "Mahina" group	
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		Gazantarak village	
	Jabborova Gulbahor	Mobilizer, "Mujun" jamoat	
	Zokirova Mastura	"Sabza" group, Mujun jamoat	
	Pulodova Gulchehra	Chairperson, "Padida" group	
	Hamrokulova Mashhura	Member " Manchit" group	
	Komilova Manija	"Bahor" group	
	Mahkamova Nilufar	"Mahina" group	
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1 Sep	Yusuf Kurbohkhojaev	Senior Local Governance Officer		
	Mubin Rustamov	Poverty reduction program analyst		
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