Annex G: Intervention review template and explanatory notes

Title of project or programme reviewed
Part A: Basic data
A1. Project number & name.
A2. Interviews. May be consolidated elsewhere (e.g. Country Report annex).
A3. Dates & financial data. If possible to component level, including budget allocations by partner.
A4. Location(s). Including regional and sub-national coverage as appropriate.
A5. Partners. By name and role if details are available (government, co-financier, contractor, etc.) and including civil society and private sector actors.
Part B: Purpose and relevance
B1. Purpose. Statement(s) from cited key design document(s).
B2. Relevance to partners. Citing the project's responsiveness to needs, policies and strategies of partner countries (including Denmark).
B3. Relevance to MDGs/SDGs. The goals to which the project was or is likely to contribute. (*Note 1*).
B4. Relevance to NDC. Reference to mitigation ambitions in dated NDC(s) and updates (www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/Pages/All.aspx).
B5. Relevance to mitigation. Mitigation verification criteria met: (*Note 2 - delete all not applicable*). • **Practical actions**: Mitigation ecology (ME). Mitigation technology (MT). Capacity building (CB). • **Enabling frameworks**: Mitigation mainstreaming (MM). Incentives & regulations (IR). Training & education (TE). Research & monitoring (RM).
Part C: Narrative overview
A stand-alone summary of the intervention, comprising a sentence or two each on its context, purpose, relevance, design, performance, problems and achievements, as appropriate, for use as an *aide mémoire* and in reporting.
Part D: Design quality
D1. Theory of change. A re-statement and explanation in clear language of the reviewer's understanding of what the designers hoped to achieve and why, the approach they took, why they expected it to work, and the methods that they intended to use. Context and commentary may be used to clarify if necessary. The *Guidelines for Strategic Sector Cooperation* describe the theory of change as a: "narrative about what to do when, how, and with whom and what to look out for on that journey ... a simple structured way of establishing and explaining the logic of the project" (DAIC, 2020: 21).
D2. Assumptions underlying the theory of change. A list of explicit and implicit assumptions of cause and effect that underly the theory of change.
D3. Plausibility of assumptions and links. Using evidence, reason and the logic of cause and effect, assess each assumption and the links between them for plausibility. (*May be scored - Note 3a*).
D4. General quality of the project design. Assess the whole project design for clarity, presentation, logic, etc. (*May be scored - Note 3a*).
Part E: Evidence for mitigation performance
E1. Direct effectiveness. Signs that the project had or plausibly could have had a direct, near-term effect in reducing net GHG emissions. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).
E2. Indirect effectiveness. Signs that the project had or plausibly could have had an indirect, near-term effect in reducing net GHG emissions. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).

E3. Net GHG emission reductions. Quantitative estimate if available of emission reductions expected or reported as a result of project activity. (*Note 4*).

E4. Impact effects. Signs that the project had or plausibly could have had a long-term effect in reducing net GHG emissions. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).

E5. Sustainability effects. Signs that the project had or plausibly could have had a role in changing policies, laws, systems, practices, fiscal arrangements, business environments, skills, ideas, technologies, etc. that might contribute to reducing net GHG emissions over time. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).

E6. Efficiency issues. Key issues of management, reporting, monitoring, evaluation, governance, etc. that may have affected project performance. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).

E7. Capacity building issues. Evidence relating to the effectiveness and quality of processes and partnerships that may have an impact on enhancing capacity. (*Note 5*).

E8. Baseline and monitoring arrangements. Describe arrangements for baselining and monitoring emissions director or using proxies.

E9. Overall conclusion on mitigation performance. Conclusions based on all evidence. (*May be scored - Note 3b*).

Part F: Other aspects of design and performance

F1. Unintended consequences. Identify and explain any positive or negative impacts that might be induced by the project (e.g. economic externalities, perverse incentives, migration effects, ecological damage).

F2. Other performance issues. Mention highlights as noted during the review, under Coherence, Replicability, Partnerships, Connectedness, Cross-cutting themes, and Other. (*Note 5*).

F3. Follow-on questions. List lines of enquiry for further exploration.

F4. Missing documents. List those known or believed to exist (e.g. based on references in reviewed documents).

Part G: Notes on other relevant topics

G1. Topic 1.

G2. Topic 2.

Part H: Bibliography

Part I: Acronyms and abbreviations

Guidance notes (to be deleted from the report)

Millennium Development Goals (www.who.int/topics/millennium_development_goals/about/en/):

- MDG 1: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- MDG 2: to achieve universal primary education.
- MDG 3: to promote gender equality and empower women.
- MDG 4: to reduce child mortality.
- MDG 5: to improve maternal health.
- MDG 6: to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
- MDG 7: to ensure environmental sustainability.
- MDG 8: to develop a global partnership for development.

Sustainable Development Goals (www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/):

- SDG 1: No Poverty.
- SDG 2: Zero Hunger.
- SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being.
- SDG 4: Quality Education.
- SDG 5: Gender Equality.

- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.
- SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy.
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure.
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities.
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.
- SDG 13: Climate Action (the explanatory notes stress both mitigation and adaptation).
- SDG 14: Life Below Water (focus is on marine and coastal ecosystems).
- SDG 15: Life on Land (focus is on forests, land and biodiversity, including fresh-water ecosystems).
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.
- SDG 17: Partnerships.

Note 2. Mitigation Validation Criteria.

Practical actions:

- **Mitigation ecology (ME)**. Protecting or enhancing GHG sinks and reservoirs through forest protection, avoided deforestation, sustainable forest management, reforestation, restoration of disturbed ecosystems (including soils through organic farming), rehabilitation of areas affected by drought and desertification, and sustainable management and conservation of oceans and other marine and coastal ecosystems, wetlands, wilderness areas and other ecosystems.
- **Mitigation technology (MT)**. Reducing or stabilising GHG emissions in the waste and sewage management, transport, energy, agricultural, construction, industrial and other sectors through application of new and renewable forms of energy, measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing generators, machines and equipment, or demand-side management.
- **Capacity building (CB)**. Developing, transferring and promoting emission-reducing technologies and know-how, including building capacity to control, reduce, prevent or reverse emissions of GHGs in the waste and sewage management, transport, energy, agricultural, construction, industrial and other sectors.

Enabling frameworks:

- **Mitigation mainstreaming (MM)**. Integrating mitigation concerns and priorities within development processes, through preparation of national inventories of GHGs (emissions by sources and removals by sinks), mitigation - related policy and economic analysis and instruments, low-carbon development strategies and plans, mitigation- related legislation, mitigation technology needs surveys and assessments, and the building of mitigation-related institutional capacity.
- **Incentives & regulations (IR)**. Strengthening of regulatory frameworks related to mitigation, including those to discourage GHG emissions and to remove barriers to or encourage, through fiscal, economic, legal and other incentives, investment in reducing GHG emissions.
- **Training & education (TE)**. Promoting mitigation-related education, training and public awareness.
- **Research & monitoring (RM)**. Promoting research and monitoring efforts focused on mitigation and the understanding of oceanographic and atmospheric systems and processes.

Purpose of the criteria, and the need for baselines and monitoring.

- These criteria are based on the Rio Climate Markers and were designed to be used to 'validate' claims of mitigation relevance in a climate change portfolio, by confirming that the project has a valid mitigation purpose. They therefore also offer a way to disaggregate the actions and budgets of the portfolio, in order to shed light on its priorities.
- By meeting one or other of these criteria, a project creates certain expectations regarding its design and performance. Some are tautologous, since ME and MT projects must deal with quite different processes and things, but both require in principle a baseline assessment of conditions - and particularly GHG emissions and trends - before the project (i.e. in its design), and some way to describe the effect of changes induced by the project (i.e. in its performance).
- Where a project is classified as CB, however, it would be expected to be designed using a detailed assessment of capacity in the target institution(s), in order to describe the weaknesses that the project will correct, and that monitoring and reporting would then be expected to include reference to progress toward defined targets for improving that capacity. This is particularly important in projects that are not expected to result in reduced GHG emissions during their lives, but that are expected to build the capacity to reduce GHG emissions going forward, since without them it will not be possible to claim mitigation (CB) performance. More generally, this needs to define aims and progress also applies to all of the 'enabling frameworks'.
- In the 2010s, however, many projects had mixed aims and were designed prior to recognition of the climate emergency (and/or by people unfamiliar with mitigation principles and practices), but may have been retrospectively classified as mitigation projects. In these temporary circumstances it is fair to make sympathetic use of proxies and inference to try to describe the baseline and estimate

performance, but this is on the understanding that arrangements for promoting and documenting GHG reductions must be greatly improved in future.

- Use should be made of the 'Mitigation baseline and monitoring arrangements' cell in Part E for comments on those used in the project and how these could have been improved.

Note 3. Scoring design and performance. Scores express judgements based on evidence and are meaningful and defensible only to the extent that they are supported by evidence. Each score is thus short-hand for a descriptive summary of the evidence upon which it is based. Being in whole numbers they can be added and averaged, and consistently high or low scores for a criterion across a portfolio can draw attention to strengths and weaknesses for further examination. They can also be compared between donors, countries and periods (such as 'before and after the Paris Agreement'). They are presented with the following definitions:

a) Design quality scores:

- Perfect design, with no flaws at all = 7.
- Excellent design, but less than perfect = 6.
- Basically good design, but with some flaws = 5.
- Moderate design quality, with good and bad points = 4.
- Basically weak design, but with some good points = 3
- Extremely weak design, but with some possible merits = 2.
- Extremely weak design, with no merits at all = 1.

b) Performance scores:

- Perfect performance, with no weaknesses at all = 7.
- Very strong performance, with few weaknesses = 6.
- Good performance, compromised by some weaknesses = 5.
- Moderate performance, with strengths and weaknesses = 4.
- Weak performance, with some strong points = 3.
- Very weak performance, but with some minor positives = 2.
- Extremely weak performance, with no positives at all = 1.

Note 4 - Net GHG emission reductions. Net emission reductions take into account all sequestration (i.e. absorption, accretion by soil and vegetation, carbon capture and storage), and emission reductions (e.g. by protecting ecosystems, or by reducing energy consumption from fossil fuels through energy efficiency, or substituting with renewable energy sources), less any increased emissions from construction of facilities (such as dams and towers), operation of equipment (vehicles, etc.) and effects on GDP growth, expressed as tCO_2e to correct for differential radiative forcing ('greenhouse effect potency') by different GHGs in the mix of emissions. The technical complexity involved means that proxy indicators will often have to be used for now.

Note 5 - Capacity building.

Capacity building must be specifically designed-for if it is to be effective, since to build institutional (or individual) capacity requires: (a) an agreed assessment of defined weaknesses, based on knowledge, trust and shared aims among the actors; (b) an agreed plan to correct weaknesses in defined areas, for defined purposes, against defined goals, using defined and plausible methods, over a defined period with defined goals and indicators for their achievement; and (c) efforts to implement the plan with adequate resources competently deployed.

For institutions, capacity building concerns the development both of managerial systems and of competencies among staff members, along with the hardware and software that they use in their work internally and externally in combination with the user and stakeholder communication flows. It is therefore a *process* and cannot be separated from the quality of the *partnership* between the institutions involved. To make formal judgements on the performance of processes requires agreed baselines, milestones and criteria and indicators of change, and to do so on partnerships requires both quantitative and qualitative information, plus an ability to discriminate between tasks completed by empowered staff and those by external actors.

Thus, assessing capacity-building performance typically requires changes to be demonstrated using multiple direct, indirect or proxy markers of process and partnership. These may include training courses attended, equipment procured and used, forums established and operating, planning exercises completed, levels of partner satisfaction expressed at interview, or even draft policies or regulations prepared. These multiple kinds of evidence can support a judgement on the likely effectiveness of capacity-building efforts.

Note 6 - Other performance issues.

Coherence is considered high if there is evidence that an intervention has ways to promote synergy with, and to manage interference from, the plans and actions of other actors, including other donors and the impact of one donor's actions on another. Factors include: compatibility (i.e. how well the goals of all participants are taken into account and where necessary reconciled); coordination (i.e. the existence and likely use of forums to sustain dialogue among stakeholders); and complementarity (i.e. how well participants' policies,

plans, actions and choices support one another, and the degree of harmony among partners in achieving desired outcomes). There is often insufficient evidence to examine different aspects of coherence separately, and coordination arrangements such as forums for stakeholder dialogue are then used as a proxy.

Replicability is considered high if there is good reason to expect that the intervention will yield lessons that can be used to improve actions in the future or elsewhere, based on the expectation that previous choices, policies or planning approaches will be effective against new but similar challenges. Knowing that this has actually occurred would be strong evidence for high replicability.

Partnerships are considered best where if there is evidence that the intervention promoted ownership, accountability and enthusiasm in partner organisations. The existence of a partnership can be confirmed using records of activities (visits, joint workshops, reports, etc.) which show the exchange of goods, services and knowledge, and the quality of the partnership and its 'aid effectiveness' depends partly on the frequency and content of these exchanges, but mainly on the extent to which participants are enthusiastic about them, which can be assessed using interviews. An additional factor is that partnerships must adjust themselves to remain relevant to changing priorities on both sides and require both sides to see enough mutual advantage to be willing to invest in overcoming challenges.

Connectedness is considered high if there is evidence that the intervention was designed and implemented to anticipate and mitigate external factors and influences to which it may be vulnerable but over which it has little or no control, such as climate change, macroeconomic pressures, or civil discord.

Cross-cutting themes (CCTs) include human rights (i.e. as set out in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), good governance (i.e. stable, lawful, and effective governance maintained by accountability to an informed electorate), gender equity and social inclusion (GESI, i.e. ensuring due attention to groups who are disadvantaged because of landlessness, caste, poverty, ethnicity, gender, age, faith or other reasons), and environmental sustainability (maintaining the full integrity of ecosystems and hence their ability to nurture and protect human interests). These CCTs are common to different sectors and always face the challenge of ensuring that they become part of standard institutional procedures (i.e. through 'mainstreaming'). The issue for evaluation is therefore to assess to what extent each of the CCTs has been mainstreamed within the intervention, and to identify possible barriers to respecting the CCTs that prevailed in the culture where the intervention occurred.

Note 7 - Bibliography.

DAIC (2020) *Guidelines for Strategic Sector Cooperation*, October 2020 (updated November 2020). https://amg.um.dk/en/programmes-and-projects/strategic-sector-cooperation/. Danish Authorities in International Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (Copenhagen).