



Executive summary

Report of the End-term Review

Green Growth Support Facility

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Vietnam

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1 Presentation of the evaluation

The Green Growth Support Facility (GGSF) project was prepared in 2012 in order to support the implementation of the Vietnamese Green Growth Strategy (VGGS), which was approved the same year. The project was implemented from 2014-2019 with a budget of 5.500.000 euros (5.000.000 provided by Belgium) with Enabel support in the framework of Belgian bilateral development cooperation.

“A facility to support the implementation of the VGGS enables green initiatives” was its specific objective, to be achieved through five results:

- R1. A support facility is created and developed
- R2. Green growth capacity & MPI leadership increased
- R3. Piloting activities in three provinces are supported
- R4. The Facility supports, through a call for proposals, green growth interventions throughout the country
- R5. Good practices disseminated and replicated

The current evaluation is the End-Term Review conducted in Vietnam in March 2019 (a few weeks before the final completion of the project) by a team of two consultants (Jean-Paul Ledant and Nguyen Thi Hien working for ADE, Belgium).

2 Results and conclusions

2.1 Performance criteria

Relevance

Supporting a strategy aimed at greening the economy of Vietnam both at central and local levels, was highly relevant. However, the objective was ambiguous or two-fold reflecting both the idea of operating like a facility and the aim of setting up a Vietnamese facility.

Both orientations were followed in parallel. On one side the GGSF project was used as a facility supporting VGGS at policy level (MPI) and implementation level (Provinces). On the other side it took steps towards the establishment of a Vietnamese Facility (which could be a Fund as suggested in the Facility Operation Manual, FOM, prepared by the project). While the first orientation clearly met actual needs the relevance of some options incorporated in the second one is more questionable (for example establishing a Fund is not endorsed by the Ministry of Finance). For this reason and because both aspects have been competing each other the score attributed to relevance is **“B”**.

Efficiency

The project faced operational constraints during its implementation course but finally could very efficiently support the implementation of Pilot Projects, such an efficiency being in line with the expected role of a Facility. The disbursement rate is high. The overall efficiency is good in terms of ratio between intended outputs and inputs. The score attributed to efficiency is **“A”**.

Effectiveness

At results level effectiveness is very good when assessed against output indicators (reflecting efficient result-oriented management based on indicators) and less good when assessed against the description of the expected results.

At outcome level effectiveness is excellent for the first aspect of the project’s two-fold objective: operating like a facility (support to MPI and to Pilot Projects). It is weak for the second aspect (establishing a Vietnamese facility attracting external funds). Because the relevance of the first aspect is the strongest it deserved more weight and the proposed score is **“B”**.

Impact

The project has a positive impact consistent with its overall objective (VGGS implementation), due to the advisory role of the facility, capacity building and Pilot Projects. This means that the contribution of the GGSF to its overall objective is mainly due to effects by-passing the specific objective of establishing a Vietnamese Facility or mobilizing finance. There were nevertheless many activities implementing the VGGS but most of them are not attributable to the facility and mainly result from other projects and Vietnamese efforts. The score attributed to impact is **“B”**.

Sustainability

The Facility is not yet established as a sustainable institution, despite several benefits resulting from the projects that are expected to be sustainable. The score attributed to sustainability is **“C”**.

Transversal themes

The environment and gender are properly integrated, both in the Facility Operation Manual (FOM) and in practice. Because the environment is at the heart of the Green Growth concept, it could not be neglected but, for the same reason, the environmental requirements could have been stronger (for example by integrating adaptation issues and more guidance on how to define a green project).

Horizontal issues

Results oriented steering was effective but guided by indicators that were not optimally reflecting the planned contribution to the expected impact. Monitoring has been carried out seriously by the PMO, but this was based on an imperfect set of indicators, the monitoring system did not cover the Vietnamese contribution and it was not aligned with a Performance Assessment Framework of the VGGS (which is still missing).

2.2 Specific questions

Communication and GCF accreditation

The communication component of the GGSF project is the weakest at this stage and will presumably remain the weakest despite the workshops to be organized during the remaining lifetime of the project. Communication efforts have not led to expected pledges of resources for the facility. Contacts with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) have started, MPI being the National Designated Authority (NDA). However, accreditation of the facility as a National Implementation Entity (NIE) cannot be reached in a near future and also “the facility” may not be the best candidate.

The Facility Operation Manual

The Facility Operation Manual (FOM) is a very comprehensive document without being fully complemented. It contains options for a fund that risks being subject to objection and is not yet ready for operational use or for the post-project period.

Pilot Projects innovativeness and contribution to green development

Pilot Projects (PP's) are innovative, some have a potential for dissemination or replication for a greener development and all can provide important learnings for a greener development, but they still deserve ex post assessments.

Provinces capacities, Green Growth Action Plans and development models

Provinces capacities have been strengthened, the GGSF supported the preparation and the implementation of their Green Growth Action Plans and this will modestly contribute to green the Province SEDP's.

3 Recommendations

The future continuation of the Pilot Projects (PP) process, with an extension to ex-post assessment and learnings, is suggested as a key desirable contribution to the VGGS. The ETR team received signals that MPI approves this vision but recommends MPI to confirm it and to inform its partners about the steps it can take in this direction with its own resources. Prompt information of the PMO about MPI's position and expectations for the post-project period is required in order to guide the GGSF-project activities during the few remaining weeks with regard to the adaptation of the Website and the FOM and to the organization of the proposed workshops (capitalization and final workshops).

The capitalization workshop will prepare the post-project period by providing recommendations on how to improve the PPs process and how to learn lessons from the PPs, if this is the option confirmed by MPI. For this purpose it will involve the PMU, the PMO, the Technical Committee (TC) and the PPs' stakeholders. It will also prepare the final workshop by defining key messages to be delivered.

The final workshop targets a broad audience including important ministries involved in green growth and climate change (MPI, MoF, MoNRE, MoIT) and donors. It should be used for informing donors and other stakeholders of the positive outcomes of the PPs (not just as showcases, also as a learning process), for informing them on MPI's intentions and expectations and for exchanging views on prospects for supporting VGGS and channeling Climate Finance.

4 Lessons learned

Different lessons can be learnt for improving similar actions in the future. They concern the use of the logical framework approach, the design of projects in situations of high uncertainty, monitoring and evaluation, ownership on either sides (partner and donor), pilot projects, knowledge management, funding green growth or responses to climate change, and environmental integration.

The GGSF provides an example of the value of several principles of the Logical Framework Approach, such as objective-oriented planning and the uniqueness and clarity of the specific objective (especially in case it is ambitious), to be combined with sufficient flexibility in case of uncertainty.

Monitoring and evaluation should be based on a consistent set of indicators, covering equally all parts of the intervention (not only the Enabel contribution), based on logical causal chains and linked with the indicators framework of the supported strategy, without losing sight of the qualitative information that indicators cannot capture.

The experience of the GGSF project is also confirms the value of ownership (in terms of commitment and adherence to the goals), on both partner and donor sides, and the value of shared objectives. In case other donors are expected to join there should be room for their ownership as well.

Pilot projects are valuable tools to interconnect actions at policy level and field realities but they need to be followed by careful assessment and learnings, The ETR also shows that Green Growth implementation is a complex issue where actors are exposed to confusing concepts and the challenge of adapting to new policies, institutions and sources of funding

in addition to the effects of environmental and climate change. In such a situation standard training and communication approaches can be insufficient and should be complemented with broader views on knowledge management.

The interventions supporting green growth (or responses to climate change) also interplay with this changing context and are exposed to particular risks, notably the risk of losing sight of the need to qualitatively change the development course.

Finally the GGSF project reminds that green interventions are not exempted from the obligation of environmental integration and rather may deserve more attention in order to be exemplary on this aspect.