

Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of the Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase II on Enhancing Regional Collaboration for Environmentally Sustainable and Socially Equitable Development Policies and Practices in Asia

1. Background

1.1. About the Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase II

With the support from the Government of Sweden (Sida), the Stockholm Environment Institute's Asia Centre (SEI Asia) has been implementing the Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase II (SCF2) Programme on Enhancing Regional Collaboration for Environmentally Sustainable and Socially Equitable Development Policies and Practices in Asia between 2018-2022. SEI Asia administers the fund to support regional and inter-regional events focusing on environmental protection, sustainable development, and poverty reduction in Asia while mainstreaming gender and social equality as well as rights-based approaches.

The SCF2 programme aims to build capacity, develop regional collaborations, and enable learning for enhanced regional dialogues on key environmental issues. The programme contributes to effective regional policies, which help towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through strategic policy events with particular attention on the marginalized groups such as, but not limited to, women, children, ethnic minorities, the poor, and other environmentally vulnerable groups based on their specific contexts.

Cognizant of the fact that a human rights-based approaches and gender equality are vital in achieving sustainability, SCF2 promotes the issue of regional collaboration and dialogues for transboundary environmental policy development and fosters dialogues with other regions particularly East Asia and Europe. The planned activities strive to increase the chances of achieving SDG targets by emphasizing on a collaborative partnership approach.

The SCF2 programme consists of four components:

Component 1: Inter-regional cooperation platforms. These platforms are central to the dialogue between Southeast Asia and other regions. Specifically, SCF2 links to the existing China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum, a prime inter-regional policy development forum, to address issues related to shared resources and impacts of trade expansion. Similarly, SCF2 connects with the Asia-Europe Environment Forum, part of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), enabling a dialogue between the two regions on matters other than commerce, but equally important for the region's prosperity and development.

Component 2: Regional collaboration. SCF2 programme aims to improve regional cooperation on critical transboundary environmental issues linked to broader development agendas, such as poverty reduction, social and gender equality, and human rights in Asia. SEI Asia will achieve these objectives with systematic and substantial support for conveners in initiating, organizing, and hosting key regional events on selected issues. The programme support consists of coaching, financing, and technical expertise to lead regional collaboration efforts towards the achievement of SDGs and policy development.

Component 3: Capacity building and support. The programme supports regional partners in implementing a human rights-based approach and gender mainstreaming in their collaborative activities. It will be achieved by developing massive open online courses (MOOCs) and coaching for selected partners. This ensures that poverty reduction, human rights-based approaches, and gender perspectives are integrated into regional environmental and climate change policy dialogues, with the intent of achieving SDGs.

Component 4: Programme management. This component ensures that SEI Asia will effectively and efficiently manage the proposed programme, engage with the right boundary partners, provide the appropriate level of expertise where it is needed, and continue to develop an SDG agenda, which is specific to the region and the requirements of regional collaboration while maintaining an international focus.

1.2. Rationale and Objective of Final Evaluation

In its final year of programme implementation, SEI Asia will develop a final report to outline the achievements of the programme's objectives. Having an external evaluation will increase the validity of the outcomes that the SCF2 programme claims to have achieved by the end of the programme cycle. In addition, a final evaluation will inform SEI Asia and Sida on how to improve SCF implementation in the following phases and identify any opportunities to strengthen regional and inter-regional environmental cooperation.

2. The Final Evaluation

2.1. Intended Use and Users

SEI Asia will use the final evaluation for measuring the achievements of SCF2 objectives over the whole implementation period (2018-2022). The results and recommendations generated from this final evaluation will be used by SEI Asia as the programme implementer and fund manager; the Government of Sweden (Sida) as the funder; and to some extent, SCF grantees as the project executor. SEI Asia and Sida will provide comments, feedback, and direction related to the final evaluation, including to provide documents for review and any other necessary information. It is expected that the evaluator will interact with present and past grantees of the programme, along

with other stakeholders engaged in the SCF2 to gather primary information on the programme implementation. In addition, the report will be shared with the grantees to obtain additional feedback after the evaluator completes the main analysis, especially to help craft the recommendations and explore ideas for the next phase.

2.2. Scope of Evaluation

The final evaluation will cover the full SCF2 implementation period from 2018 to 2022. SCF2 will have supported 29 projects by the end of its project implementation period in 2022 under Components 1-2 on inter-regional and regional collaborations, respectively. Of these, 19 projects have been implemented by the early 2022, and the final reports and deliverables will be available by the time the final evaluation commences. The remaining eight projects will be implemented in 2022 under component 2 on regional collaboration. There will also be two multi-year projects under the inter-regional environmental partnerships (Component 1). They will have events in 2022 that the evaluator needs to take into consideration when performing the assessment.

It is noteworthy that not all the 2022 projects will be fully completed by the time the data gathering and analyses for this final evaluation conclude. Thus, the evaluator needs to factor this situation into the final achievements of SCF2 programme. In addition to components 1-2, the evaluator will assess components 3-4 on MOOCs and programme management respectively.

2.3. Evaluation Criteria and Guiding Questions

This final evaluation looks into five assessment criteria, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, outcomes, and sustainability. The findings arising from these criteria must inform the recommendations for the intended users of this evaluation. The evaluator shall refer to the following guiding questions and SEI Asia expects the evaluator to come up with more specific questions during both the tender and inception phases.

Evaluation Criteria	Guiding Questions
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the overall SCF approach, structure and impact in line with the Sida regional strategy outcome objectives? 2. Are the SCF2-funded projects relevant to the goal of the SCF programme as stated in the theory of change? 3. What is the extent of the links between SCF Phase I and Phase II, especially in terms of roll out, cost efficiency, and outputs? 4. What are the gaps (if any) in terms of topics and policy outcomes that SCF2-funded projects may have? 5. Does the SCF2 programme design and support respond adequately to the needs of the grantees and the stakeholders engaged in the projects?

Effectiveness	<p>6. To what extent has the SCF2 programme been able to move towards achieving its intended goals/objectives?</p> <p>7. To what extent has SCF 2 approach enhanced delivery of policy impacts from the regional dialogue undertaken?</p> <p>8. To what extent has the SCF2 programme been able to integrate gender and human rights-based approaches into its supported projects? What can be improved from the gender and human rights mainstreaming during the planning, implementation, and follow up stages?</p> <p>9. To what extent has the program contributed to poverty reduction? Were the perspectives of the poor and marginalised communities represented in the projects supported by SCF2?</p> <p>10. To what extent has the SCF2 programme been able to build new partnerships and maintain existing ones?</p> <p>11. Has the SCF2 programme's monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework been sufficient to capture the outcome achievement of each supported project? What more could it do?</p> <p>12. What have been the risks of implementing SCF2 programme and how have these risks been managed?</p> <p>13. Are there any specific recommendations that SEI Asia, SCF2 team, Sida, and other stakeholders involved should do to implement the programme more effectively in the next phases?</p>
Efficiency	<p>14. Have the grant and programme management processes of SCF2 been efficient in terms of value for money?</p> <p>15. Are there any improvements of grant and programme management processes between Phase I and Phase II, including the cost efficiency?</p> <p>16. Are there any required adjustments that the SCF2 programme needs to do in the next phases? Please also assess the business process of SCF2 programme and identify any potential improvements.</p>
Outcomes	<p>17. Has the SCF2 programme achieved its intended and unintended outcomes as reflected in its results measurement framework?</p> <p>18. At which level do you think SCF2 programme has achieved, i.e., "expect to see", "like to see", or "love to see"?</p> <p>19. If any, how and why certain results were or were not achieved, were these results relevant and sustainable?</p>

	<p>20. What could SEI Asia, Sida, and/or other partners do to improve the outcome achievement?</p> <p>21. Has the programme had any positive or negative effects on the environment? Could environment considerations have been improved in the planning, implementing or follow up stages?</p>
Sustainability	<p>22. What is the level of ownership among stakeholders to the regional cooperation established or strengthened through SCF2 support?</p> <p>23. Is there any emerging partnership that SEI Asia and Sida should tap on to strengthen our presence in the region?</p> <p>24. To what extent will the net benefits of the programme continue, or are likely to continue?</p>

2.4. Evaluation Approaches and Methods

SEI Asia expects the evaluator to come up with the methods and approaches for final evaluation of SCF2 programme. SEI Asia expects the evaluator to employ a combination of data gathering and analytical methods, such as in-depth or semi-structured interviews, participant observations, thematic coding, etc. The proposed methods and approaches should come with appropriate justifications, which will require a confirmation or approval from SEI Asia, prior to conducting the evaluation. SEI Asia will provide all the documents needed and the evaluator may request for additional documents from SEI Asia, if necessary. Due to the prevailing travel restrictions and Covid-19 precautionary measures, the evaluator must be flexible to perform data gathering online and in person, whichever is feasible.

2.5. The Management of Final Evaluation

SEI Asia will manage the final evaluation process, complying with Sida's standards and requirements. The evaluator is expected to independently conduct the evaluation based on the data and information that SCF2 will make available to them. SCF2 team will provide further information and assistance needed to conduct the evaluation, such as to follow up with the past grantees to respond to the evaluator's queries. A regular meeting between the evaluator and SCF2 team will be held from time to time to stocktake and monitor the progress of the evaluation and resolve any related issues. Once the evaluator submits their findings in the form of final report draft, SEI Asia and Sida will perform a thorough review for quality control and assurance purposes as well as clarifying the report contents.

2.6. Quality Control and Assurance

The evaluator shall, in their inception report, indicate how they integrate quality control and quality assurance in accordance with the OECD's Development Assistance Committee Guidelines and Reference Series on Quality Standards for Development Evaluation.¹ They shall also refer to Sida's Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management² when designing the evaluation framework.

3. The Evaluator

This role is open to individual experts and/or consulting teams who are experienced in international and/or regional development programme evaluation. To this end, SEI Asia expects the evaluator to have the following competencies.

3.1. Minimum Requirements

- a. International or regional consultant with academic and professional competencies in fields related to impact evaluation, environment and climate change, gender and rights-based approaches, and regional policy engagement and collaboration.
- b. At least 10 years of relevant experience in the combined topics stated in point (a), especially in the Asia region.
- c. Substantive experience in regional programme monitoring evaluation and learning.
- d. Excellent English writing and communication and analytical skills.
- e. Demonstrate ability to assess complex situations, succinctly distilling critical issues, and drawing forward-looking conclusions and recommendations.
- f. The evaluator/team must have their own computer, recording devices, and other relevant equipment.
- g. Willingness to travel within the Asia region, especially Southeast Asia, contingent upon prevailing travel restrictions.

3.2. Desirable Qualifications

- a. Substantive experience in reviewing and evaluating similar projects, preferably those involving Swedish International Development Agency or other major donors.
- b. Highly knowledgeable of participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning processes in the fields of environment and climate change, gender and rights-based approaches, and regional policy engagement and collaboration in Asia.

¹ See the guidelines here <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf>.

² See the glossary here <https://cdn.sida.se/publications/files/sida37877en-glossary-of-key-terms-in-evaluation-and-results-based-management.pdf>.

- c. Familiarity with the issues, challenges, and priorities in developing countries within the region, in the area of environmental sustainability, which addresses gender inclusiveness and poverty reduction in Asia.

4. Activities, Workplan, and Outputs

4.1. Indicative Final Evaluation Activities

SEI Asia expects the entire final evaluation process will take approximately 40 days to complete from the inception to final report submissions. Please refer to the following table for an indication of the activities, outputs, and their associated timeline.

No	Activities	Outputs	Working Days	Tentative Timeline
1	Inception meeting		1	Early April 2022
2	Review of programme documents, partners' reports and outputs, and SCF online platforms	Inception report	4	April 2022
3	First SCF2 evaluation for projects implemented in 2018-2021 (e.g., partner interviews and analysis)	Regular progress update as agreed	12	April-July 2022
4	Evaluators to attend SCF2 2022 events to observe, likely three events in total covering inter-regional, regional, and private sector		3	April-August 2022
5	First report draft of final evaluation for SEI Asia's review	First draft covering 2018-2021 projects	5	End of July 2022
6	Second SCF evaluation process for 2022 projects (e.g., partner interviews, additional documents/outputs review, and analysis)	Regular progress updates	6	July-September 2022
7	Second report draft preparation and submission to SEI Asia and Sida	Second draft adding 2022 projects and incorporating the first draft feedback	5	Early October 2022
8	Discussion on findings and recommendations with Sida		1	Mid October 2022
9	Final report finalization and submission to SEI Asia and Sida	Final draft, incorporating all feedback from SEI Asia and Sida	3	End of Nov 2022
Total Estimated Working Days			40	

4.2. Deliverables

SEI Asia requires the evaluator to deliver three main outputs, namely (1) inception report; (2) final evaluation report; and (3) presentation of findings. Please note that all deliverables must be made in professional English.

Inception report should be written in 10-15 pages (excluding annexes) which lays out the processes and methodologies to perform the final evaluation. Based on this report, SEI Asia will approve and request for any necessary adjustments to ensure that the evaluation design captures all the required information. It should also ensure the integration of gender and rights-based approaches in the evaluation design. As such, the inception report should comprise of the following sections.

- a. Background and Context
- b. Evaluation Objectives and Rationale
- c. Guiding Questions
- d. Data Collection and Analytical Methods
- e. Potential Limitations
- f. Indicative Timeline and Expected Working Days/Hours
- g. List of Stakeholders to Interview

Please note that this is an indicative outline, and the evaluator has the flexibility to adjust the contents as they deem fit, as long as it covers all the required components by SEI Asia.

Final report covers all the evaluation findings and recommendations, addressing all the prompts posed in the ToR. It should be written in professional English and be approximately 40 pages in length, excluding references and annexes. Professional proofreading and editing may be needed to ensure the quality standard. The final report shall follow the following structure and SEI Asia has provided the report template with detailed instructions for reference.

- a. Executive summary
- b. Background and Context
- c. Evaluation Objectives and Rationale
- d. Guiding Questions
- e. Evaluation Methods and Limitations
- f. Results and Findings
- g. Recommendations and Ways Forward
- h. Conclusion
- i. References and Annexes

Please note that SEI Asia expects the evaluator to send the draft report in three stages: (i) first draft by the end of July covering 2018-2021 projects; (ii) second draft by early October covering

the full programme phase (2018-2022); and (iii) final draft by the end of November. The second and third drafts should incorporate all the feedback received from SEI Asia and Sida.

Presentation of findings will be done sometime in October 2022 after the submission of the second draft. The teams from both SEI Asia and Sida will attend the presentation to give direct feedback and clarifications. This is also to validate the findings and analysis from the evaluator prior to finalising and submitting the final evaluation report.

5. Finance and Human Resources

- The maximum available budget for this final evaluation is **SEK 300,000** for up to 40 days of work (estimated) from April to November 2022.
- All correspondence for this bid should be addressed to Dimas Fauzi (dimas.fauzi@sei.org), Research Associate and SCF2 MEL Specialist, SEI Asia.
- The evaluator will need to make their own arrangements to carry out the final evaluation, including interview appointments, travels arrangements (if situation allows), virtual platform provisions, etc.