

Evaluation Abstract

Title, author and date of the evaluation report:

Report on the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Environmental Awareness Fund in Mozambique, prepared by Dr. C.J. Brown and Sandra Roque, May/June 2001

Name of project, programme or organizational unit

Environmental Awareness Fund (EAF)

Objectives of the project, programme or mandate of the organizational unit:

To support local initiatives aimed at promoting the sustainable management of natural resources through stimulation of local participation in environmental projects, awareness raising, applied training, and research. Specific objectives included:

1. Facilitating the development of empowerment programs, advocacy and the establishment of decision support systems that can contribute to the implementation of alternative natural resource management strategies, resource-based conflict management and policy development;
2. Providing training and supporting pilot projects that promote the testing and dissemination of best practices in biodiversity conservation and community income generation;
3. Facilitating the effective information dissemination and exchange of experiences on innovative methods and approaches aimed at improving environmental management and local participation.

IUCN area of specialisation: Education and Communications

Geographical area: Mozambique

Project or programme duration, length of existence of organisational unit:

November 1999 – December 2002

Overall budget of the project, programme or organizational unit: USD 1,200,000

Donor(s): Government of the Netherlands

Objectives of the evaluation:

To assess EAF's performance and its interface with civil society by comparing the original project objectives with the results achieved; providing recommendations for future development; synthesizing lessons learned; and proposing performance monitoring indicators.

Type of evaluation: Mid-term project evaluation

Period covered by the evaluation: November 1999 – May 2001

Commissioned by: Government of the Netherlands and IUCN

Audience:

Evaluation team: External

Methodology used:

Following a review of key project documents, twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted with partners and stakeholders. Regular debriefing sessions were held with the Netherlands Embassy and IUCN – Mozambique, as well as a stakeholder workshop to review the evaluation's findings and recommendations. The reviewers also participated in one of the Fund's ongoing activities.

Questions of the evaluation:

The evaluation sought to assess the following aspects of project planning and implementation: organizational capacity, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance, sustainability, and quality of project formulation, implementation, and monitoring.

Findings:

- The Fund is highly relevant to the social and environmental needs of Mozambique, making an important contribution to raising environmental awareness, building the capacity of civil society, and filling an important “niche” in the small to medium-sized “funding market.”
- The Fund reaches a wide sector of society and promotes cooperation and collaboration among organizations.
- EAF’s broad focus and objectives make it highly flexible and responsive, with activities currently being concentrated on biodiversity conservation and natural resources management.
- To date, the Fund has been largely reactive to partners’ ideas and proposals. While this approach has been appropriate for the early stages of project implementation, it has directed investment to the priorities of those organisations capable of submitting good technical proposals. Areas that have remained neglected include policy, advocacy, conflict management, and poverty alleviation.
- IUCN provides good management and administrative services, thus enjoying a wide level of support from both government and NGOs. Its implementation approach has been highly adaptive, adequately responding to emerging situations and continuously improving management and administration.
- In terms of sustainability, EAF is still highly vulnerable, being supported by only one donor agency.

Recommendations:

- Continue the Fund’s operations for the remainder of the project’s duration, as well as grant a three-year project extension, while continuously exploring ways to secure the fund in the medium term;
- Keep the Fund’s *reactive* component, particularly for micro and small grant applications, while introducing a *proactive* component for medium-sized grants on environmental priority issues and cross-cutting themes, such as empowerment, policy development, gender equality, etc;
- Differentiate among four types of grants with regard to their overall purpose and priorities: 1) *reactive micro-grants* for research activities of up to one year, with purely *training* objectives; 2) *reactive micro-grants* of up to one year for *newly emerging organizations*; 3) *proactive*, small/medium-sized grants of up to three years, aimed at *improving the existing knowledge base* on priority environmental areas; and 4) *proactive*, small/medium-sized grants of up to three years, *addressing priority environmental issues*.
- Establish a Steering/Advisory Board for overseeing macro-policy issues, reviewing progress, setting environmental and cross-cutting priorities, and facilitating fund-raising activities;
- Increase support to IUCN in meeting growing demands of administering the fund and providing guidance to emerging, inexperienced organizations.
- In extending the Fund throughout the country, establish regional partnerships rather than set up regional forums.
- Ensure the Fund’s sustainability by broadening its donor base, integrating the private sector, considering income-generating activities, and involving the Government of Mozambique.

Lessons Learned:

None

Language of the evaluation: English

Available from: IUCN Global Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative, Gland, Switzerland; IUCN – Mozambique