BACKGROUND

Programme purpose and objectives

The purpose of the GSF programme in Togo is to support improvement of sanitation and hygiene for 1,650,000 people living in the Regions of Savanes, Kara and Plateaux - nearly 40% of Togo’s rural population. It represents a major contribution to the national campaign TOGO SANDAL that aims to eliminate open defecation by 2025, and to the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal target 6.2 to achieve adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030.

Programme management

A multi-sectoral coordinating mechanism chaired by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoH) designed the programme and continues to provide oversight and guidance.

UNICEF Togo was selected to manage the programme initially and to then hand over the role to the MoH after the first three years. Togo is the only country where a GSF-funded programme is managed by UNICEF and it is the first case where the transfer of programme management from an external agency to the government is an explicit objective. Since the fall of 2014, seven implementing partners (IPs) have carried out field activities following the approach of Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS).

Current programme status

At the end of 2016, the programme had achieved about a third of its target for the number of people living in an ODF environment. As for the planned handover, the MoH was not yet ready to take over programme management. In light of the substantial progress that had been achieved, however, and the ongoing commitment of the MoH, the GSF extended its agreement with UNICEF Togo to the end of 2018.

The programme is now entering its third phase of implementation with...
an increase in the number of IPs to 16 to achieve major scaling up of activities in the field. Preparation of the management handover to MoH continues.

**Purpose of the evaluation**

The overall purpose of this evaluation was to identify achievements and challenges of the programme to date, as well as to further inform the next phase. As a joint evaluation, it drew on the input of all stakeholders from the initial design to the review and validation of its conclusions and recommendations. It covered the period from September 2013 through March 2017, while taking into account ongoing developments in the programme and the institutions involved, particularly the MoH and the GSF itself.

**Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation was based on analysis and triangulation of information from a review of programme documents and data, interviews with key informants in Togo and Geneva, as well site visits to a non-probabilistic sample of 20 villages in the three regions of the programme. Altogether, 82 interviews and focus group discussions were held.

**RESULTS**

**Main conclusions**

Strategies adopted for the third phase of implementation, including more than doubling the number of IPs, should allow the programme to achieve its targets for 2018.

The programme approach and strategies are also highly relevant to achieving Togo’s national objectives for eliminating open defecation. The achievement of SDG target 6.2, however, will require the development of effective strategies to address the challenges of semi-urban and urban areas, as well as further efforts to address issues of equity and non-discrimination.

Although the programme achieved only about a third of its target for people living in an ODF environment at the end of 2016, the results that have been achieved on the ground have been unprecedented in Togo. Also, the programme has achieved impressive results during a short span of time with respect to other programme objectives, including capacity building at the sub-national level; advocacy to strengthen national policies, strategies and guidelines; and sharing of best practices within the programme and in the broader sector.

Sustainability of results achieved to date remains to be proven over time, but the programme’s overall approach and strategies are very relevant. Sustainability monitoring, including the definition of appropriate indicators and systems for tracking them over time, remains to be developed.

The transfer of programme management from UNICEF Togo to the MoH by the end of 2018 appears feasible, although the preparation will require strong management and close monitoring to ensure that the necessary activities are completed in a timely manner.

**Summary of recommendations**

Strengthen the management of processes required to achieve the transfer of programme management to MoH by treating it as a project in itself under the leadership and management of the MoH.

Preparation for the capacity assessment that will be needed before establishing a grant agreement between UNOPS and the MoH should begin now with guidance from GSF.
GSF should proceed with recruiting a country programme monitor to carry out preliminary and final capacity assessments and, after the transfer, financial and programmatic monitoring for the duration of the grant agreement.

Establish a standard protocol for monitoring ODF status after certification and introduce an indicator in the monitoring system to allow tracking of sustainability in line with the new GSF results framework.

Investigate the factors that led to villages failing to achieve ODF status in the first two phases of the programme, paying special attention to the categories of semi-urban villages and small, dispersed villages, for which rates of achieving ODF have been relatively low.

Develop a five-year plan for programmes in sanitation and hygiene for the period from 2017 through 2022, in line with the National Health Development Plan and incorporating the GSF programme, for which funding is secured through 2020.

Continue developing approaches to issues of equality and non-discrimination with particular attention to practical implications and opportunities for cross-sectoral coordination.

Develop the role of the Programme Coordinating Mechanism beyond the scope of the current GSF programme to encompass all programmes in the sanitation and hygiene sector.

LESSONS LEARNED

The importance of careful planning and close monitoring of all processes necessary to programme implementation and the achievement of programme objectives cannot be overemphasized.

The involvement of actors from multiple sectors in the orientation and implementation of the programme is a real strength of the Togo programme, especially in light of the broad interest in community led approaches which can only reinforce the effectiveness of the CLTS approach.

Exchanges between GSF programmes in different countries can be very beneficial and help ensure that taking ownership does not require reinventing the wheel.

The joint evaluation approach is much appreciated by programme stakeholders, but geographic and linguistic challenges demand extra time and effort to ensure the effective participation of all.

To see the full report please go to: