



Introductory Workshop for the BES Solution Fund Recipient Countries

Post-Event Report

26 October 2021

Introduction

The Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services Network (BES-Net) envisioned a series of knowledge exchange and capacity-building workshops to support the target countries benefitting from the BES Solution Fund in the First Phase (2020–2023).

Aware of the challenges and opportunities in developing and implementing workplans to implement the Fund, BES-Net aims to foster a peer-to-peer learning process, networking, and exchange towards establishing the BES Solution Fund Community of Practice (COP).

The first introductory workshop was held virtually and brought together 30+ representatives from Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nigeria, and Trinidad and Tobago (see Annex 1. List of participants), providing the space to build a network and share experiences regarding workplan development and initial implementation of the BES Solution Fund.

The present report outlines the key insights and messages that emerged during the workshop, paying particular attention to the constructive discussion during the breakout sessions. Please refer to the agenda (Annex 2) or watch the recording available [here](#) to have a more detailed vision of the introductory workshop.



Group Photo

Highlights of the meeting

Sharing best practices among the BES Solution Fund recipient countries equips the country teams with an evidence base that supports buy-in from policymakers across sectors at the national level. One of the most significant benefits of connecting with fellow country teams implementing the BES Solution Fund is to bring back to national governments concrete examples and success stories on advancing the BES initiatives worldwide. It supports building solid ground for the BES Solution Fund-related projects and builds trust across all the stakeholders.

Identifying the champions of change among key stakeholders and working closely with them is instrumental to advancing the work of the BES Solution Fund. Change doesn't just happen; it is often co-created. Selecting the right focal point within the right administrative body is critical for the implementation of the Fund. Securing support and engagement of the national policymakers (e.g., the Ministry representatives) sets the right tone and pace for the implementation. However, it is frequently very challenging due to varied and competing agendas of several Ministries, bureaucratic procedures, and a high level of turnover among policymakers and influencers.

A significant obstacle highlighted by most countries is the **low awareness of policymakers and the private sector of biodiversity loss, global BES agenda and related evidence base** (including the IPBES thematic assessments). Therefore, sustaining and supporting opportunities for the science-policy interface, building policymakers' capacity, and practitioners' awareness of ecosystem services management are critical aspects of the

Knowledge exchange between the BES Solution Fund recipient countries provides learning opportunities and shall be further explored. The workshop allowed the country teams to identify the mutual areas of interest to be exchanged, gaps to be addressed, and opportunities to be pursued in future workshops. The identified areas of opportunity for cross-country collaboration and exchange included pollinator-friendly techniques and the development of a pollinator app and good practices for community engagement.

Covid-19 disrupted on the ground implementation plans, especially with community-based organizations, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and youth. The delays caused by the pandemic impacted relationships with beekeepers, farmers, and local communities, given that travel and in-person meetings have been challenging. In addition, the counterparts were not (yet) familiar with the digital tools or were located in remote areas with a low level of internet connectivity. As a result, stakeholder engagement faced multiple obstacles and has to be re-energized in most countries.

Yet, the Covid-19 pandemic and the global shift towards digital presented many other opportunities. The pandemic came with stress and obstacles. Still, it offered many possibilities in applying digital communication and other innovative online and hybrid approaches. In record time, most of us got used to working and communicating remotely. This shift allowed several country teams to reach out to more stakeholders, including actively engaging the

BES Solution Fund implementation. Increased awareness and understanding of BES-related opportunities would enhance commitment to the BES Solution Fund of the practice community that is currently less engaged.

Overcoming a lack of commitment from the policy and practice sector requires new and creative ways of communication and advocacy, including a narrative featuring local champions and global success stories. This aspect can also be supported by the BES-Net global team.

Mapping and leveraging existing regional, national or local coalitions and working groups create an advantage for the country teams. For example, some of the national teams benefitted from existing institutional arrangements and strong buy-in of key stakeholders at different levels, including the local level, e.g., farmers groups, women's associations, schools. They mentioned having mapped and leveraged national policy, strategies and plans, and tapping into synergies to build commitment and bridge the gap between national and regional action plans.

Subsequent BES Solution Fund events shall consider more time for small mixed group discussions to allow a meaningful exchange.

The second breakout discussion featuring mixed groups was considered one of the most fruitful and the most appreciated sessions. It was particularly beneficial thanks to the information collected before the event that provided an overall understanding of the background. More time should be allocated for the exchange among countries in the following workshops

youth-led organizations and schools, natural users of digital technology.

Looking out of the box for partners. Synergies with local communities and businesses were mentioned as key ingredients of a successful workplan.

Also, tapping into the network of the UNDP sister projects like the GEF Small Grants programme may offer some new opportunities for knowledge exchange.

Working with **indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) is a strong driver of engagement on the ground.** BES-Net supports the co-production of knowledge with equally valuable contributions from the scientific community and the traditional knowledge holders. UNESCO is a BES-Net consortium partner supporting the engagement of ILK holders and capturing local knowledge among rural communities.

In the pre-event survey, the Introductory Workshop participants expressed interest in the **continuous capacity building activity.** Key areas of interest include multi-stakeholder engagement, project monitoring, results-based management, communication and knowledge products. In addition, to enhance the peer-to-peer learning process, the respondents identified areas of their expertise, including national biodiversity platforms, food security, land degradation and restoration, biodiversity and climate adaptation. The planning of the next workshops will take into consideration these findings.

Annex 1: List of participants

Kazakhstan

Anatolii Mishchenko
a_mishchenko@bk.ru

Arkadiy Radionov
amrodionov-p@mail.ru
Expert on Traditional Knowledge

Dinara Kamalova
dinara.kamalova@undp.org
Administrative and Finance Specialist,
UNDP Kazakhstan

Elena Kurganova
zion.helena@mail.ru
Executive Secretary of Kazakhstan
Association of Nuts and Berries Producers

Firuz Ibrohimov
firuz.ibrohimov@undp.org
Chief Technical Adviser, UNDP Kazakhstan

Kairat Ustemirov
ustemirov64@mail.ru

Kumar Kylychev
kumar.kylychev@undp.org

Kuralay Karibayeva
kkaribayeva@mail.ru
Director, Institute of Ecology and Sustainable
Development

Roman Kussainov
roman.kussainov@undp.org
Agricultural Economist, UNDP Kazakhstan

Yerlan Zhumabayev
yerlan.zhumabayev@undp.org
Project Manager, UNDP Kazakhstan

Kenya

Mercy Gichora
mewagi05@yahoo.com
Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI)

Peris Kariuki
pmweru@yahoo.com
National Museums of Kenya

Sheila Koech
skoech@icipe.org
International Centre of Insect Physiology
and Ecology (ICIPE)

Wanja Kinuthia
wanja.wacau@gmail.com
National Museums of Kenya

Washington Ayiemba
washington.ayiemba@undp.org
UNDP Kenya

Nigeria

Damaris Uja
damaris.uja@wepnigeria.net
Women Environmental Programme

Muyiwa Odele
muyiwa.odele@undp.org
UNDP Nigeria

Iloh Chibuzor Andrew
Chibaziloh@gmail.com
Biodiversity Education and Resource
Centre

Jemilat Ibrahim
sadiqoyene@yahoo.com
National Institute for Pharmaceutical
Research and Development Council

Solomon Adefolu
solomon.adeolu@ncfnigeria.org
Nigerian Conservation Foundation

Trinidad and Tobago

Shane Ballah
shane.ballah@undp.org
UNDP Trinidad and Tobago

Marlon Cowie-Clarke
marloncc@hotmail.com
Beekeepers Association of Trinidad and
Tobago

Lena Dempewolf
Lena.Dempewolf@planning.gov.tt
MEA Unit, Environmental Policy and
Planning Division (EPPD), Ministry of
Planning and Development

Trisandhi Gosine
trisandhi.gosine@undp.org
UNDP Trinidad and Tobago

Darren Henry
newlandscape2014@gmail.com
Department of Natural Resources and
Forestry, Tobago House of Assembly (THA)

Floyd Homer
fmhome@gmail.com
Farmer

Sharda Mahabir
sharda.mahabir@undp.org
GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)

Ryan Mohammed
rfabraham7@gmail.com
Forestry Division,
Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Raynaldo Philips
raynaldo.phillips@gmail.com
Forestry Division,
Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

BES-Net Team

Sofia Delger
s.delger@unesco.org
BES-Net Consultant, UNESCO

Joseph Karanja
j.karanja@unesco.org
BES-Net ILK Project Officer, UNESCO

Marlyn Omondi
marlyn.omondi@undp.org
BES-Net Technical Officer, UNDP GC-RED

Alexandra Postrigan
alexandra.postrigan@undp.org

Yuko Kurauchi
yuko.kurauchi@undp.org
Policy Specialist/ BES-Net Coordinator,
UNDP Global Policy Centre on Resilient
Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED)

Mary Likavo
mary.likavo@undp.org
BES-Net Project and Administrative
Assistant, UNDP GC-RED

BES-Net Stakeholder Engagement and
Partnerships Consultant, UNDP GC-RED

Prashanthi Subramaniam
prashanthi.subramaniam@undp.org
BES-Net Knowledge Management,
Communications and Monitoring Officer,
UNDP GC-RED

Sneha Verma
vermasneha949@gmail.com
BES-Net Intern, UNDP

Annex 2: Agenda

Tuesday 26 October 2021			
Time (EAT)	Session Title	Facilitator	Mode of Session
15:00-15:01	Welcome and kick off	Marlyn Omondi (BES-Net)	Kick-off the meeting
15:01 – 15:07	Interactive session and group photo	Alexandra Postrigan (BES-Net)	Interactive presentation
15:07-15:12	Welcome remarks	Yuko Kurauchi (BES-Net)	Plenary
15:13 – 15:20	Overview of BES-Net, BES Solution Fund and objectives of the workshop	Marlyn	Presentation
15:20 – 15:40	Presentations on country experiences in work planning and preliminary implementation of BES Solution Fund	Kazakhstan Kenya	Presentation
15:40 – 15:45	Q&A	Marlyn	Plenary
15:45 – 16:05	Presentations on country experiences in work planning and preliminary implementation of BES Solution Fund	Nigeria Trinidad and Tobago	Presentation
16:05 – 16:10	Q&A	Marlyn	Plenary
16:10 – 16:40	Country group work session	Marlyn/ Yuko/ Alexandra/ Prashanthi (BES-Net)	Breakout groups
16:40 – 16:50	Report back from group discussions	Alexandra	Plenary
16:50 – 16:55	Health Break		
16:55 – 17:25	Multi-country group work session	Marlyn/Yuko/Alexandra/ Prashanthi	Breakout groups
17:25 – 17:35	Report back from group discussions		Plenary
17:35 – 17:45	Priority thematic areas for capacity building to support implementation	Marlyn/Yuko	Plenary
17:45 – 17:55	Q&A	Marlyn	Plenary
17:55 – 18:00	Next steps	Marlyn	Plenary
18:00 – 18:05	Closing remarks	Yuko	Plenary
End of Workshop			