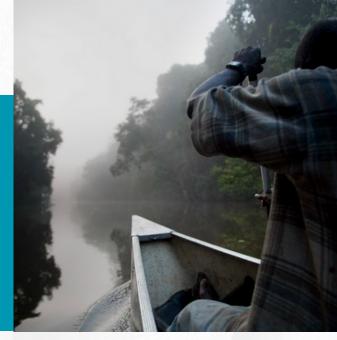# CASE STUDY ON MONITORING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN LIBERIA

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In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, practitioners were suddenly faced with the challenge of how to conduct activities and gather monitoring information as travel and access to local sites was limited. To gather lessons learned and good practices, the Environmental Peacebuilding Association held a workshop for practitioners to share their experiences and insights.

With pandemic restrictions limiting in-person data collection, practitioners turned to alternative sources of data and remote tools. The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for instance, combined geospatial and socioeconomic data from existing datasets collected by other organizations such as the World Bank. By looking at both kinds of data, the GEF could draw conclusions on interventions' co-benefits. For example, in Uganda they were able to demonstrate a positive correlation between household assets and proximity to GEF interventions; households closer to intervention areas had $310 more in assets than those farther away. In another case, the GEF used geospatial data to analyze deforestation over time around Sapo National Park in Liberia. Despite being unable to visit the site in person, the IEO was able to determine that while areas around the park had experienced significant deforestation, the park and areas close to it had experienced less deforestation.

Geospatial data can also be used in conjunction with information collected by local consultants to create hybrid datasets. During the pandemic, the World Bank conducted virtual visits to Uzbekistan intervention sites as part of its Resilient Landscape Restoration Program. This hybrid approach combined data collected remotely from geospatial analysis of the sites, drone imagery, and aerial satellite imagery with photos and videos of sites taken by local consultants. For example, the consultant filmed the drive leading to the intervention site to provide a feel and context for stakeholders who were unable to visit during the COVID-19 pandemic. The consultant also collected interview data. This approach highlights the importance of both having a broad network of local consultants who can be mobilized to support remote work as well as ensuring those consultants have the capacity to collect monitoring data.

These innovative approaches to monitoring during a global pandemic are good examples as to why it is important to have the skills, resources, systems, and knowledge already in place to effectively respond to shocks like pandemics or conflicts. It is far more difficult to create innovative systems in the middle of a crisis than it is to prepare them preemptively. The GEF, for instance, had already examined links between health and environmental interventions and invested in technology and human resources prior to the pandemic. This allowed the IEO to quickly leverage those resources.

AT A GLANCE

MONITORING

- Monitoring during the Covid-19