**UNDP Management Response**

**Project: Sustainable Management of Namibia’s Forested Lands (NAFOLA)**

GEF Agency: UNDP, Namibia

Executing Partner: Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), Directorate of Forestry (DoF)

GEF Land Degradation Focal Area

GEF Project ID: 4832

UNDP PIMS: 4626

UNDP ATLAS Project ID: 00082143

**Name of the Evaluation: Mid-Term Evaluation Report**

Date: November 24, 2017

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Cleared by: Position: Unit/Bureau:

Input into and update in ERC: Position: Unit/Bureau:

**Overall comments:**

The overall performance of the project is rated between moderately unsatisfactory and to moderately satisfactory and with a recommendation to improve the project implementation measured on an outcome basis. The project has made good progress in respect of assisting 13 community forests (CFs) for official gazettement and two additional ones with implementation plans, albeit a slow gazettement process. The project should ensure that the gazetting process is expedited in order to apply the remaining resources to capacity building of the CFs management. Sustainable forest management (SFM) technologies have been tested and those with promising results and potential synergistic opportunities should be furthered in the remaining project period. Decisions for expenditures on some cost items led to over-expenditure in Output 2.3.: Improved marketing of sustainably harvested forest and livestock products piloted accumulating the overall project expenditure to 60%. The Project Management Unit (PMU) must invest more time in knowledge management and communication activities for effective utilization of project findings, results and impacts. It is recommended that certain adjustments have to be made in order to streamline prioritized and re-strategized activities for efficient utilization of the remaining budget. The risk log should be reviewed in order to consider risks identified during mid-term review and with a complementary Project Quality Assurance (PQA) by the UNDP CO.

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| **COMPONENT 1: Knowledge based land use planning and policy change hastens gazettement of eleven community forests (CFs) and mainstreaming of forest resources in productive policies.** | | | | |
| **Evaluation Recommendation A.1:** **Expedite gazettement process** | | | | |
| **Management Response: The gazetting of CFs is an elaborated process. MAWF with support from NAFOLA will put in place measures to expedite gazetting, *inter alia*, submitting eight of the eleven dossiers to the Attorney General’s Office for legal clearance, after which the MAWF will sign and submit the dossiers for listing on government gazette.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Write a letter to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) towards the accelerated support for the gazetting of the CFs | 30 September 2017 | PMU, MoJ and DoF | Completed | Letter on file at UNDP. |
| 2. Appoint a technical staff member in MAWF to liaise between the MoJ and MAWF. | 31 March 2018 | PMU, DoF and MET | MAWF appointed a technical person to liaise between MAWF and Attorney General. Regular follow up is being undertaken. | Notes for meetings held with MoJ. |
| 3. Submit the remaining (2) dossiers for gazetting. These are for Onkumbula and Epukiro CFs. | 31 January 2018 | PMU, DoF and MoJ | Meeting for endorsement of Onkumbula CF dossier by Traditional Authority to take place by end of November 2017, after which the dossier will be submitted to the Attorney General.  Management plan for Epukiro CF to be finalized by 31 December 2017 and documents to be endorsed by Traditional leaders and Regional Government by January 2018.  Submit Ongandjera CF for gazettement, should the boundary dispute be resolved during project implementation. | Signed dossiers by traditional leaders and governors for the two CFs and  Final Integrated Forest Management Plan (IFMP) for Epukiro CF.  The Onkumbula dossier is pending authorization of traditional leaders before it can be submitted to the Attorney General (AG) for clearance.  In Epukiro, the final steps are being finalized before submission of dossier to the AG’s Office through the endorsement of the IFMP by community members and authorization of the complete dossier by the Traditional Authority.  Dossier for Ongandjera CF has been finalized. However, the dossier has not been approved by the Traditional Authorities because of a border dispute between Uukwambi and Ongandjera traditional authorities. The proposed CF is within the boundaries of these two CFs. |
| **Evaluation Recommendation A.2.: Apply interim provisions to NAFOLA targeted CFs. As suggested by DOF technical staff, recognize the interim Management Committees and allow them to receive further project support while their applications have been submitted for official gazettement.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: In order to comply with the Forest Act, NAFOLA will support implementation of IFMPs in gazetted CFs.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** | **Key Action(s)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Support implementation of IFMPs for the four gazetted CFs (Okongo, Uukolonkadhi, Oshaampula and Otjiu-West). Build capacity (through targeted training) of the other eight CFs to execute their constitutional mandates after they are gazetted. | 31 December 2018 | PMU and DoF | In progress -  Annual Work plans for the four gazetted CFs to be developed by 31 December 2017. | It is expected that these eight (8) CFs will be gazetted in 2018. |
| **Evaluation Recommendation A.3.: Continue to explore sensible long-term policy matters including harmonization of CBNRM related laws and procedures (e.g. conservancy and CF gazettement and management, including GRN support)** | | | | |
| **Management Response: NAFOLA and DoF will explore and publish long-term policy matters related to CBNRM.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Produce a detailed analysis on the gazetting of the CFs as a useful knowledge product. Set-up consultation mechanisms between MAWF and MET for the joint-management of the CFs and conservancies to ensure participatory and consultative endorsement of the developed dossiers by stakeholder ministries. | 31 December 2017 | PMU and DoF | In progress |  |
| 2. Draft post review lessons-learnt report for the harmonization of policies, procedures and management planning of conservancies and CFs through joint management committees. | 31 March 2018 | PMU and DoF | To be initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation A.4.: NAFOLA focuses dedicated amount of remaining funds to support implementation of management plans in all targeted CFs (suggested amount: +/- USD 25,000 per CF)** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Ensure equitable allotment of funding to the target CFs in accordance with the needs and the gaps and the respective progress of implementation** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Undertake needs and gaps analysis and sustainable financing mechanisms of the respective CFs. NAFOLA support would be predominantly on sustainable capacity development efforts to increase the capacities of the CFs so that they are able to function on their own – rather than making communities dependent on projects/government funding in perpetuity. The needs and gap assessment will also contain a section on the results of the NAFOLA investigations on sustainable financing mechanisms for CFs operations | 30 June 2018 | PMU and DoF | An internal assessment on best practices and gaps in NAFOLA supported demonstration activities.  A detailed assessment on sustainable financing mechanisms will be carried out in 2018. Draft ToR for the sustainable financing mechanisms have been developed and presented to the PSC. |  |
| 2. Allocate financial resources in accordance with the needs assessment results | 31 December 2017 | PMU and DoF | In progress |  |
| 3. Systematically monitor the implementation of the activities prioritized for each CF in line with the M&E framework and project results framework | Ongoing | PMU and DoF | Monitoring against results framework has been initiated. Monitoring system to be initiated. | To be reported in quarterly reports and PIR |
| **Evaluation Recommendation A.5.: NAFOLA produce replicable training materials based on previous projects (e.g. KfW) and NAFOLA trainings and make available to future CF trainings (e.g. incl. on internet** <http://www.mawf.gov.na/community-forestry> **and** <http://www.cfnen.org.na/> **- not currently operational)** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Package the training materials in knowledge management products** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1 a). Utilize available training materials including those developed during PPG phase to avoid duplication of efforts and increase resource efficiency, NAFOLA will also package and broadly share materials produced to enhance replication of practices outside the 13 CFs hot spots.  b) Update CF Toolbox with new material and also upload the material on the DoF website developed by CFN.  c) Coordinate and facilitate training interventions as per updated Training Action Plan with e.g. forest management bodies | 31 December 2017 | PMU and DoF | To be initiated | Available at this link <http://www.mawf.gov.na/community-forestry> |
| 2. Publish knowledge management products as community forestry toolbox and on appropriate platforms (e.g. incl. on internet <http://www.mawf.gov.na/community-forestry> and <http://www.cfnen.org.na/>) | Ongoing | PMU and DoF | To be initiated |  |
| **COMPONENT 2: Implementation of SFM technologies in selected CF hotspots.** | | | | |
| **Evaluation Recommendation B.1.: Take stock of the various demonstration projects implemented so far; undertake analysis of cost benefit, sustainability, success factors; use such analysis for follow-up planning of remaining resources and investments into innovative and financially interesting income generating opportunities for CFs. Based on the analyses identify few (potentially 2 to 4 value chains for implementation).** | | | | |
| **Management Response: As recommended, NAFOLA will take stock of the various demonstration projects implemented and use such analysis for follow-up planning of remaining resources and investments into innovative and financially interesting income generating opportunities for CFs.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Cost-benefit, feasibility and lessons-learnt assessments of investments and analysis of income generating value chains (to be read with actions under A4.) | 31 March 2018 | PSC, PMU, DAPEES and DoF | In progress | Draft TOR developed |
| **Evaluation Recommendation B.2.: Pick projects that are in line with local level ideas and interests. There are a number of proposals that CF MCs prepared – get these pipelined e.g. with the EIF and SGP small grant facilities or NDC for independent financing. NAFOLA could provide technical support to ensure proposals are in line with CF constitutions and ideals.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Support management bodies of CFs to develop pipeline projects (responding to IFMP) to be considered by small grants facilities e.g. EIF and SGP** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Provide technical support - develop proposal for CFs to selected projects (identified by the respective CFs) to ensure funding through Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) and UNDP Small-Grants Project (SGP) or Namibia Development Corporation (NDC) for independent financing through CFs management committees | 31 March 2018 | PMU | In progress | Identification of themes from the CF management plans and work plans |
| 2. Collaborate with GIZ on debushing project and build on sustainable previous experiences with DEED/KfW/NNF | 31 March 2018 | PMU | In progress | Collaboration meetings to be set-up with other implementing agencies |
| **Evaluation Recommendation B.3.: Rethink CA investments in Omaheke; do not support medium scale fodder production, but focus on home garden food security measures and rangeland management instead, and as applicable. Use tractors for CFs – making firebreaks, transporting timber and non-timber forestry products, etc.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: The overall objective of NAFOLA Project is to reduce pressure on forest resources. Conservation Agriculture (CA) was considered as one mechanism to increase crop yields in a sustainable manner, which minimizes clearing of forest areas. Since the formulation of the project, the government of Namibia has received numerous supports on CA. At MTR, NAFOLA is prioritizing its interventions and the PSC has taken a resolution to focus project resources on sustainable forestry interventions. As a result NAFOLA will not be engaged in active CA activities. The project will collaborate with DAPEES on monitoring uptake of CA and its impact on the forest.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Resolution to be communicated to PSC and subsequently to MAWF (as the Implementing Entity) | 31 December 2017 | PMU, DoF and UNDP | In progress | PSC meeting date planned for 7 December 2017 |
| **Evaluation Recommendation B.4.: No further payments by NAFOLA for the Auction Kraal. Government must find a solution to making the kraal operational.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Government agreed on funding the gaps. No further payments by NAFOLA for the construction of Auction Kraals and additional amenities. Government committed funds to provide the solution to complete the marketing facility** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. MAWF to provide commitment letter to UNDP for the funding and finalization of auction kraal which is part of the Marketing Facility | 27 September 2017 | PMU and DoF | Completed | Letter on file at UNDP |
| 2. NAFOLA to collaborate with DAPEES, DVS and farmers associations to ensure that marketing plans are in place and implemented. | 31 March 2018 | PMU and DoF | To be initiated |  |
| 3. Finalize construction of the kraal | 31 March 2018 | DoF | In progress |  |
| **COMPONENT 3: Project Implementation & Adaptive Management.** | | | | |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.1.: Replace current PSC as the members have not taken on their oversight responsibilities; include CF representatives in PSC as they are indicated in the project document as Responsible Parties; provide a clear orientation to the PSC of their roles, mandates and responsibilities.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Strengthen the capacity of the PSC and establish a technical advisory committee.** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1 a. Provide a clear orientation to the PSC of their roles, mandates and responsibilities to increase oversight and guidance  b. Share the terms of reference (ToR) train the current PSC to ToR  c. Facilitate the setting-up of the technical advisory committee for interim decision-making and setting-up an annual calendar. | 31 December 2017 | PMU UNDP, PSC | To be initiated |  |
| 2. Improve participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as NACSO at the PSC. | 31 December 2017 | PMU and PSC | To be initiated | Ensure representation of NACSO at PSC |
| 3. UNDP representation at PSC is up to the Head of Energy and Environment as the lowest suitable designate of the Resident Representative and/or Deputy Resident Representative. | 31 December 2017 | PMU and PSC | To be initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.2.: Increase UNDP oversight function especially over financial resources and reporting.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Increase UNDP oversight function especially on PQA and Reporting** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Undertake Project Quality Assurance (PQA), Micro-assessment, SPOT Checks.  UNDP to fulfill its fiduciary role to monitor/track project spending congruent to ProDoc and revised project budget. | 31 December 2017 | PMU and UNDP | In progress |  |
| 2. Analytical M&E oversight function by UNDP in respect of quarterly reporting. | 31 December 2017 | PMU and UNDP | In progress |  |
| 3. Disbursement from quarterly to direct payments based on an approved procurement plan. | 30 November 2017 | PMU and UNDP | In progress |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.3.: Undertake focused re-planning for “phase 2”- remaining 2 to 3 project intervention years, in line with remaining budget; focus work on target CFs; focus interventions to actually generate meaningful impacts in the CFs, including direct support to the CF committees.** | | | | |
| **Management Response: MAWF, PMU and UNDP will undertake a focused re-planning for the remaining project phase. (Also refer to management responses and activities under A4 and B1)** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
| 1. Obtain approval from the PSC on the adjusted annual plans | 31 December 2017 | PMU, UNDP and PSC | In progress | PSC meeting date planned for 07 December 2017 |
| 2. Implement activities in strict adherence to approved annual work plan and procurement plan. | 31 March 2018 | PSC, PMU, DAPEES and DoF | In progress | TOR to be developed |
| 3. Capital investments in prioritized low cost facilities. | 31 March 2018 | PMU and DoF, MET (CBNRM) | In progress | Proposal for low cost capital investment to be presented to PSC, as part of 2018 AWP |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.4.: Adjust or rearrange the PMU with re-planning and budget; and arrange for a no-cost extension** | | | | |
| **Management Response: Reduce staff complement; and no-cost extension not permissible by a UNDP HQ directive** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Realign staff complement and undertake activities through PLOs and CF management committees with strict adherence to timelines and outputs or cost-benefit analysis. | From 31 December 2017 | PMU, UNDP, DoF and PSC | In progress. Number of liaison officers has been reduced. | TOR of Project staff and monthly progress reports to accompany payment requests for project staff. |
| 2. Develop deliverable based-contracts with templates and team building exercises for re-organization | 31 December 2017 | PMU, UNDP, DoF and PSC | To be initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.5.: Plan for a non-cost extension, despite the fact that limited resources are remaining – the sort of support needed now requires longer-term engagement rather than capital investments** | | | | |
| **Management Response: The project will be implemented within the planned timeframe** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Implement activities in strict adherence to work plans to avoid delays. | Ongoing | PMU and PSC | Ongoing | Work plans and procurement plans will be circulated to PSC by email for endorsement. A project Advisory Committee will be established to guide project implementation. |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.6: Invest strongly into knowledge management and communication** | | | | |
| **Management Response: As recommended, the project will invest into knowledge management and communication** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking\*** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Realign project staff to make provision for a Knowledge Management Officer | 31 October 2017 | PMU and MAWF | One of the former PLOs has been recruited as a Knowledge Management Officer. |  |
| 2. a) Capture lessons learnt as knowledge management products.  b) Identify strategic partnership with academia and agree on production of knowledge management products for current and future programming | 31 December 2017 | 1. PMU, MAWF 2. UNDP and DoF-PMU | In progress | 1. Allocation of various lessons-learnt among PMU members with DoF staff 2. As part of the NILALEG ProDoc development process |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation C.6.-C.7.: Develop functional and practical monitoring framework and actually invest into data collection (M&E)** | | | | |
| **Management Response: PMU and DoF to develop the outcome-based M&E/RBM framework together with the TOC** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking\*** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1. Develop the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the M&E framework including TOC with suggested outcomes and corresponding indicators | 22 September 2017 | PMU and DoF | In Progress, the adverts are to be placed by UNDP procurement online | Attached TOR |
| 2. a. Procure consultant and develop an RBM and M&E framework in line with the new TOC recommendations and SDGs reporting guidelines  b. Develop and update the project knowledge management plan/strategy including communication activities and stakeholder engagement  c. Train the trainers on the new M&E and RBM framework to train the remaining staff complement after reorganization and CF management committees. | 31 March 2018 | PMU, DoF and UNDP | 1. To be initiated as per 1.1 2. TOR to be developed by PMU 3. As per actions on 1.1 |  |
| 3. Outcome and results based monitoring, data (disaggregated by Gender) collection on new indicators (including SDGs) and reporting in accordance with the tracking tool (TT) | 31 March 2018 | PMU and DoF | To be initiated |  |
| 4. Restructure PMU to include a monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management officer | 31 December 2017 | PSC, PMU and DoF | PMU and DoF reviewed the structure, resulting in only seven & PLO being in place | The specific seven TORs with deliverables are hereby attached. |
| 5. Implement the changes to the developed M&E framework | 31 March 2018 | PMU and DoF | To be initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation or Issue C.8.: Add two risks to the risk log (namely; 1) decision making, reporting and accountability of project management and 2) slow gazetting process of CFs)** | | | | |
| **Management Response:** **Amend Risk Log** | | | | |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  |  | **Status** | **Comments** |
| 1.  a. Add a specific organisational or operational risk to the UNDP’s risk register on decision-making, reporting, and accountability of project management. | 30 November 2017 | PMU and UNDP | To be initiated |  |
| 2. The Risk log should be updated to include the impact of slow gazetting of CFs to attainment of project targets | 30 November 2017 | PMU and UNDP | To be initiated |  |

\* The implementation status is tracked in the ERC.