

Closure Stage Quality Assurance Report

Form Status: Approved

Overall Rating: Satisfactory

Decision:

Portfolio/Project Number: 00092855

Portfolio/Project Title: Supporting climate resilient livelihoods in agriculture

Portfolio/Project Date: 2016-05-01 / 2022-03-31

Strategic

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

1. Did the project pro-actively identified changes to the external environment and incorporated them into the project strategy?

3: The project team identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives, assumptions were tested to determine if the project's strategy was valid. There is some evidence that the project board considered the implications, and documented the changes needed to the project in response. (all must be true)

2: *The project team identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives. There is some evidence that the project board discussed this, but relevant changes did not fully integrate in the project. (both must be true)*

1: The project team considered relevant changes in the external environment since implementation began, but there is no evidence that the project team considered these changes to the project as a result.

Evidence:

The project actively followed national developments (changes in legislation on land and water, institutional amendments of relevant ministries and departments, strategies and policies adopted) and incorporated responses to the degree these are found relevant as part of project outcome 2 "Adaptation mainstreamed in agricultural and water sector development strategy and policy"

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No documents available.

2. Was the project aligned with the thematic focus of the Strategic Plan?

3: The project responded to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan (SP) and adopted at least one Signature Solution .The project's RRF included all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)

2: The project responded to at least one of the developments settings¹ as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF included at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)

1: While the project may have responded to a partner's identified need, this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence:

The project was aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, in particular, the Project operated within the Development Settings B. Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development and C. Build Resilience to shocks and crises and adopted the following 2 signature solutions in achieving its objectives:

Signature solution 4: Promote nature-based solutions for a sustainable planet;

Signature solution 6: Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

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No documents available.

Relevant

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

3. Were the project's targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, to ensure the project remained relevant for them?

3: Systematic and structured feedback was collected over the project duration from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. Representatives from the targeted groups were active members of the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) and there is credible evidence that their feedback informs project decision making. (all must be true)

2: Targeted groups were engaged in implementation and monitoring, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized. Beneficiary feedback, which may be anecdotal, was collected regularly to ensure the project addressed local priorities. This information was used to inform project decision making. (all must be true to select this option)

1: Some beneficiary feedback may have been collected, but this information did not inform project decision making. This option should also be selected if no beneficiary feedback was collected

Not Applicable

Evidence:

Target group representatives of the agricultural communities of 8 farmers associations across 2 pilot regions were actively engaged into the different project activities, including trainings and awareness raising activities, agricultural consultations, the demonstration and implementation of practical adaptation measures as well as the allocation of grants.

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No documents available.

4. Did the project generate knowledge, and lessons learned (i.e., what has worked and what has not) and has this knowledge informed management decisions to ensure the continued relevance of the project towards its stated objectives, the quality of its outputs and the management of risk?

3: Knowledge and lessons learned from internal or external sources (gained, for example, from Peer Assists, After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, analysis and monitoring were discussed in project board meetings and reflected in the minutes. There is clear evidence that changes were made to the project to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)

2: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by relatively limited evidence, drawn mainly from within the project, were considered by the project team. There is some evidence that changes were made to the project as a result to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)

1: There is limited or no evidence that knowledge and lessons learned were collected by the project team. There is little or no evidence that this informed project decision making.

Evidence:

Throughout its implementation period, the project generated a multitude of knowledge products, including a review of lessons learned, which were described in the annual progress reports. Knowledge products and lessons learned were also presented to, and discussed in, project board meetings, and shared with beneficiary communities and stakeholders as well as government partners.

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#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	Guidelinesontheuseofgenderdisaggregateddata_RU_12073_304 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Guidelinesontheuseofgenderdisaggregateddata_RU_12073_304.docx)	farhat.orunov@undp.org	4/15/2022 2:07:00 PM

5. Was the project sufficiently at scale, or is there potential to scale up in the future, to meaningfully contribute to development change?

3: There was credible evidence that the project reached sufficient number of beneficiaries (either directly through significant coverage of target groups, or indirectly, through policy change) to meaningfully contribute to development change.

2: While the project was not considered at scale, there are explicit plans in place to scale up the project in the future (e.g. by extending its coverage or using project results to advocate for policy change).

1: The project was not at scale, and there are no plans to scale up the project in the future.

Evidence:

Throughout its implementation period, the project has worked with rural communities of eight farmers associations, focusing on project activities supporting the adaptive capacity and reduce the vulnerability of beneficiaries in agricultural communities in two pilot regions in Turkmenistan. Climate resilient livelihood approaches demonstrated and supported by the project have shown to attract attention from wider farmer communities within the pilot regions and beyond, offering good potential for scaling up in the future after EOP

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No documents available.

Principled

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

6. Were the project's measures (through outputs, activities, indicators) to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant and produced the intended effect? If not, evidence-based adjustments and changes were made.

- 3: The project team gathered data and evidence through project monitoring on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. Analysis of data and evidence were used to inform adjustments and changes, as appropriate. (both must be true)
- 2: *The project team had some data and evidence on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. There is evidence that at least some adjustments were made, as appropriate. (both must be true)*
- 1: The project team had limited or no evidence on the relevance of measures to address gender inequalities and empowering women. No evidence of adjustments and/or changes made. This option should also be selected if the project has no measures to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant to the project results and activities.

Evidence:

The project has delivered a series of activities that focused on women empowerment, including targeted trainings on gender mainstreaming in agriculture, and the proactive involvement of women in the development of Local Adaptation Plans, as well as targeted awareness raising activities. For any project activity, including practical trainings and demonstration of adaptation approaches, the project promoted an equal engagement of women and women-led farms, including to the grant facility aimed at promoting climate-resilient efficient irrigation technologies and improved crop production systems

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7. Were social and environmental impacts and risks successfully managed and monitored?

3: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for Substantial and High risk projects and some level of social and environmental assessment for Moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed for identified risks through consultative process and implemented, resourced, and monitored. Risks effectively managed or mitigated. If there is a substantive change to the project or change in context that affects risk levels, the SESP was updated to reflect these changes. (all must be true)

2: *Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for Substantial and High risk projects and some level of social and environmental assessment for Moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed, implemented and monitored for identified risks. OR project was categorized as Low risk through the SESP.*

1: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. For projects categorized as High, Substantial, or Moderate Risk, there was no evidence that social and environmental assessments completed and/or management plans or measures development, implemented or monitored. There are substantive changes to the project or changes in the context but SESP was not updated. (any may be true)

Evidence:

The project was categorized as Low risk through the SESP, as it did not generate potential adverse trans boundary or global environmental concerns and did not result in secondary or consequential development activities that could lead to adverse social and environmental effects

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#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	05_5459_SCCF_Turkmenistan_SESP_12073_307 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/05_5459_SCCF_Turkmenistan_SESP_12073_307.docx)	farhat.orunov@undp.org	4/15/2022 2:08:00 PM

8. Were grievance mechanisms available to project-affected people and were grievances (if any) addressed to ensure any perceived harm was effectively mitigated?

3: Project-affected people actively informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism (SRM/SECU) and how to access it. If the project was categorized as High, Substantial, or Moderate Risk through the SESP, a project-level grievance mechanism was in place and project affected people informed. If grievances were received, they were effectively addressed in accordance with SRM Guidance. (all must be true)

2: *Project-affected people informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism and how to access it. If the project was categorized as Substantial or High Risk through the SESP, a project -level grievance mechanism was in place and project affected people informed. If grievances were received, they were responded to but faced challenges in arriving at a resolution.*

1: Project-affected people was not informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism. If grievances were received, they were not responded to. (any may be true)

Evidence:

The Project was not categorized as High Risk through the SESP. However, the project has established Agro-Information Centers in the two pilot regions with local staff employed that provided for a grievance mechanism available for project-affected people (if any) that allowed to effectively address any grievance received

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No documents available.

Management & Monitoring

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

9. Was the project's M&E Plan adequately implemented?

3: The project had a comprehensive and costed M&E plan. Baselines, targets and milestones were fully populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was reported regularly using credible data sources and collected according to the frequency stated in the Plan, including sex disaggregated data as relevant. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, fully meet decentralized evaluation standards, including gender UNEG standards. Lessons learned, included during evaluations and/or After-Action Reviews, were used to take corrective actions when necessary. (all must be true)

2: *The project costed M&E Plan, and most baselines and targets were populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was collected on a regular basis, although there was may be some slippage in following the frequency stated in the Plan and data sources was not always reliable. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, met most decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were captured but were used to take corrective actions. (all must be true)*

1: The project had M&E Plan, but costs were not clearly planned and budgeted for, or were unrealistic. Progress data was not regularly collected against the indicators in the project's RRF. Evaluations did not meet decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were rarely captured and used. Select this option also if the project did not have an M&E plan.

Evidence:

The Monitoring and Evaluation work plan and budget was agreed, scheduled and costed appropriately in the Project Document. According to M&E plan appropriate data collection and reporting, including on sex disaggregated data as relevant, was carried out on quarterly basis, including of progress against indicators in the project's SRF, using the best available credible data sources

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No documents available.

10. Was the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) function as intended?

3: The project's governance mechanism operated well, and was a model for other projects. It met in the agreed frequency stated in the project document and the minutes of the meetings were all on file. There was regular (at least annual) progress reporting to the project board or equivalent on results, risks and opportunities. It is clear that the project board explicitly reviewed and used evidence, including progress data, knowledge, lessons and evaluations, as the basis for informing management decisions (e.g., change in strategy, approach, work plan.) (all must be true to select this option)

2: *The project's governance mechanism met in the agreed frequency and minutes of the meeting are on file. A project progress report was submitted to the project board or equivalent at least once per year, covering results, risks and opportunities. (both must be true to select this option)*

1: The project's governance mechanism did not meet in the frequency stated in the project document over the past year and/or the project board or equivalent was not functioning as a decision-making body for the project as intended.

Evidence:

Throughout its implementation period, the Project Board has met twice per year and minutes of the meetings are documented appropriately along with decisions taken at the meetings. To date, 10 Project Board meetings have been conducted to discuss, review and assess project progress, including risks and challenges. Annual progress reports were prepared and submitted to the project board and other relevant authorities. The final Project Board meeting has been conducted 30 March 2022

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11. Were risks to the project adequately monitored and managed?

- 3: The project monitored risks every quarter and consulted with the key stakeholders, security advisors, to identify continuing and emerging risks to assess if the main assumptions remained valid. There is clear evidence that relevant management plans and mitigating measures were fully implemented to address each key project risk and were updated to reflect the latest risk assessment. (all must be true)
- 2: *The project monitored risks every year, as evidenced by an updated risk log. Some updates were made to management plans and mitigation measures.*
- 1: The risk log was not updated as required. There may be some evidence that the project monitored risks that may affected the project's achievement of results, but there is no explicit evidence that management actions were taken to mitigate risks.

Evidence:

Throughout its implementation period, the Project annually has monitored and updated the risks; as relevant adaptive management and mitigation measures were adopted. At the closure stage all risks associated with project implementation were identified as having been completed

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No documents available.

Efficient

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

12. Adequate resources were mobilized to achieve intended results. If not, management decisions were taken to adjust expected results in the project's results framework.

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

Overall, the total project budget was sufficient to implement all planned activities and achieve the intended results as evidenced by achieving the targets of indicators in the SRF. The project has proactively allocated budgeted resources in support of planned small grant activities by members of rural communities applying a cost-sharing mechanism.

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No documents available.

13. Were project inputs procured and delivered on time to efficiently contribute to results?

3: The project had a procurement plan and kept it updated. The project quarterly reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)

2: *The project had updated procurement plan. The project annually reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)*

1: The project did not have an updated procurement plan. The project team may or may not have reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs regularly, however management actions were not taken to address them.

Evidence:

Annually, updated procurement plans have been elaborated after Annual Work Plans were approved by the Project Board and appropriate national authorities. Throughout the project's implementation period, at regular intervals the implementation of the procurement plans was reviewed, with indication of the status of each activity, and updated as relevant. Identified bottlenecks and delays were addressed through adaptive management actions.

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#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	AnnexIV_ProcurementPlan2021-2022SCRL_11Mar21_12073_313 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/AnnexIV_ProcurementPlan2021-2022SCRL_11Mar21_12073_313.xls)	farhat.orunov@undp.org	4/15/2022 2:09:00 PM

14. Was there regular monitoring and recording of cost efficiencies, taking into account the expected quality of results?

- 3: There is evidence that the project regularly reviewed costs against relevant comparators (e.g., other projects or country offices) or industry benchmarks to ensure the project maximized results delivered with given resources. The project actively coordinated with other relevant ongoing projects and initiatives (UNDP or other) to ensure complementarity and sought efficiencies wherever possible (e.g. joint activities.) (both must be true)
- 2: The project monitored its own costs and gave anecdotal examples of cost efficiencies (e.g., spending less to get the same result,) but there was no systematic analysis of costs and no link to the expected quality of results delivered. The project coordinated activities with other projects to achieve cost efficiency gains.
- 1: There is little or no evidence that the project monitored its own costs and considered ways to save money beyond following standard procurement rules.

Evidence:

To assess cost efficiency of all adaptation measures implemented by project in the pilot regions against national and international benchmarks (as relevant), a national expert was recruited by the project. The project also engaged with parallel projects and initiatives for the coordinated implementation of joint activities and the creation of financial benefits from cost-sharing.

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No documents available.

Effective

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

15. Was the project on track and delivered its expected outputs?

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

The project was on track to deliver most of its expected outputs, as evidenced by the approximations of the values of most SRF indicators towards their EOP target values

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#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	2021-GEF-PIR-PIMS5459-GEFID6960_12073_315 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/2021-GEF-PIR-PIMS5459-GEFID6960_12073_315.docx)	farhat.orunov@undp.org	4/15/2022 2:10:00 PM
2	SCRLProjectEvaluationReport_12073_315 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/SCRLProjectEvaluationReport_12073_315.docx)	farhat.orunov@undp.org	4/15/2022 2:11:00 PM

16. Were there regular reviews of the work plan to ensure that the project was on track to achieve the desired results, and to inform course corrections if needed?

3: Quarterly progress data informed regular reviews of the project work plan to ensure that the activities implemented were most likely to achieve the desired results. There is evidence that data and lessons learned (including from evaluations /or After-Action Reviews) were used to inform course corrections, as needed. Any necessary budget revisions were made. (both must be true)

2: *There was at least one review of the work plan per year with a view to assessing if project activities were on track to achieving the desired development results (i.e., outputs.) There may or may not be evidence that data or lessons learned were used to inform the review(s). Any necessary budget revisions have been made.*

1: While the project team may have reviewed the work plan at least once over the past year to ensure outputs were delivered on time, no link was made to the delivery of desired development results. Select this option also if no review of the work plan by management took place.

Evidence:

During the course of project implementation, the project team regularly reviewed the work plan and assessed progress towards achieving the desired results. Decisions on relevant necessary changes were decided upon by the Project Board during bi-annual meetings. As relevant, budget revisions were made as part of the approval process of the Annual Work Plan

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No documents available.

17. Were the targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, prioritizing the marginalized and excluded, to ensure results were achieved as expected?

3: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, identified by using credible data sources on their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. There is clear evidence that the targeted groups were reached as intended. The project engaged regularly with targeted groups over the past year to assess whether they benefited as expected and adjustments were made if necessary, to refine targeting. (all must be true)

2: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, based on some evidence of their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. Some evidence is provided to confirm that project beneficiaries are members of the targeted groups. There was some engagement with beneficiaries in the past year to assess whether they were benefiting as expected. (all must be true)

1: The project did not report on specific targeted groups. There is no evidence to confirm that project beneficiaries are populations have capacity needs or are deprived and/or excluded from development opportunities relevant to the project area of work. There is some engagement with beneficiaries to assess whether they benefited as expected, but it was limited or did not occurred in the past year.

Not Applicable

Evidence:

Since the start of the project, the participatory approach adopted by the project has facilitated the involvement and participation of households of farmer and livestock associations, including the vulnerable and marginalized members of the community (including women) in the planning and implementation of the project activities. Assessments of vulnerability and capacity have been instrumental in identifying targeted project activities, including training and awareness raising initiatives, field demonstrations, agro-consultation on current and innovative farming practices, and grants designated for the practical implementation of climate change adaptation practices. Monitoring by project staff in the pilot regions provided evidence that target groups were being reached as intended.

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Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

18. Were stakeholders and national partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation and monitoring of the project?

3: Only national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to fully implement and monitor the project. All relevant stakeholders and partners were fully and actively engaged in the process, playing a lead role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)

2: *National systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to implement and monitor the project (such as country office support or project systems) were also used, if necessary. All relevant stakeholders and partners were actively engaged in the process, playing an active role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)*

1: There was relatively limited or no engagement with national stakeholders and partners in the decision-making, implementation and/or monitoring of the project.

Not Applicable

Evidence:

From the design stage, the project goals, activities and targets were planned, decided upon, implemented and monitored with the full engagement of all relevant key stakeholders, including national partners (Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, State Committee on Water Resources, Parliament, Ministry of Finance and Economy, and others), as well as regional stakeholders (farmers associations, provincial and district authorities). In addition, in line with stakeholder engagement planning, the Project invited other relevant and interested institutions being engaged into targeted project activities, as appropriate

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19. Were there regular monitoring of changes in capacities and performance of institutions and systems relevant to the project, as needed, and were the implementation arrangements⁸ adjusted according to changes in partner capacities?

3: Changes in capacities and performance of national institutions and systems were assessed/monitored using clear indicators, rigorous methods of data collection and credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Implementation arrangements were formally reviewed and adjusted, if needed, in agreement with partners according to changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)

2: *Aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were monitored by the project using indicators and reasonably credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Some adjustment was made to implementation arrangements if needed to reflect changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)*

1: Some aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems may have been monitored by the project, however changes to implementation arrangements have not been considered. Also select this option if changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems have not been monitored by the project.

Not Applicable

Evidence:

Throughout its implementation period, the project maintained regular monitoring of the institutional structure and systems in place in Turkmenistan, their capacities and performance. Following political reforms, due to which the main implementing project partner has been changed twice, the project applied adaptive management to minimize delays and upheaval in project management, supported by the fact that during the lifespan of the project the National Project Coordinator (NPC) fortunately was not changed, and maintained the ability to support the planning and implementation of project activities at national and local levels

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20. Were the transition and phase-out arrangements were reviewed and adjusted according to progress (including financial commitment and capacity).

3: The project's governance mechanism regularly reviewed the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan. The plan was implemented as planned by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made during implementation. (both must be true)

2: *There was a review of the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan.*

1: The project may have had a sustainability plan but there was no review of this strategy after it was developed. Also select this option if the project did not have a sustainability strategy.

Evidence:

The Project designated sustainability plans of action at the provincial and local level, which specifically in the last year of project implementation have been revised and agreed on a regular basis. Aspects of transition and hand-over were elaborated, specifically for ensuring the continued operability of the Agricultural Information Centers established by the project, in support of broad capacity building effort designed to create a critical mass of efficient climate-smart agricultural practitioners. Trainings were a key component of this program, and in particular with an emphasis on learning by doing.

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QA Summary/Final Project Board Comments

Due to COVID-19 pandemic related delays in implementation of planned activities, the project has been extended for 6 months until 31 March 2022, which has enabled the project to complete activities and achieve targets set for all key indicators. The project continued to support the implementation of the gender-sensitive Local Adaptation Plans adopted for 6 pilot farmers associations and 2 livestock farms through allocation of small grants to local agriculture communities. In all project activities implemented, due attention was paid to the integration of gender related issues. Specifically, the project encouraged grant proposals submitted by female-headed communities or aiming at strengthening women empowerment. The project has been successful in synergizing with other projects (including UNDP) and agencies (USAID and FAO) in relation to cooperation on developing agricultural extension services, legal aspects, gender issues and revision of the NDC. Overall, 11 Project Management Board meetings took place throughout the project duration. As in years past, all national and local partners actively participated in the Project Management Board meetings, discussing project implementation progress, key issues and potential solutions. During the PB meeting on 30 March 2022, the main project achievements and findings of the Terminal evaluation process were presented, and TE recommendations were discussed. Recently the project has completed the process of the Terminal Evaluation. The TE report assessed the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved, assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, performance and results/outcomes of the project. Lessons learned were described in detail that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.