

# FINAL REPORT

## REVIEW OF UNDP DPRK SERCARB PROJECT NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 2016

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**UNDP DPRK**

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(short: **UNDP**)

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## Executive summary

In the following chapters a brief summary of the present report is given, to give an introduction to the report in which the results are explained in much more detail.

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Strengthening Ecosystem Resilience and Community Adaptive Capacity in Climate Affected River Basins in DPRK (SERCARB)</b>		
ATLAS Award ID:	00074802	ProDoc Signature Date (date project began):	June 28 <sup>th</sup> 2013
ATLAS Project ID	00087040	Date project manager hired:	Q1 2015
Country:	DPR Korea	Inception Workshop date:	30-31 March 2015
Region:	Asia	Midterm Review completion date:	December 21 <sup>st</sup> 2016
Focal Area:	Climate Change and Environment	Planned planed closing date:	December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2016
Implementing Partners:	UNDP Direct Implementation (MOLEP and SHMA are key national level counterparts)	If revised, proposed closing date:	December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018

<b>Project Financing</b>	<b>at CEO endorsement (US\$)</b>	<b>at Review (US\$)</b>
[1] UNDP contribution:	2,200,000	2,300,000
[2] Other partners:	–	–
<b>PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 2]</b>	<b>2,200,000</b>	<b>2,300,000<sup>1</sup></b>

**Table 1 Project Information Table**

## A. Project Description

The overall objective of the project is to maintain and enhance the beneficial services provided by natural ecosystems in order to secure livelihoods, food, water and health, reduce vulnerability to climate change, store carbon and avoid emissions from land use change and forestry. To achieve this objective the project has chosen an integrated watershed management approach, which is designed to treat the watershed in the project sites as a system and taking into account the influences and interdependencies between the different subsystems within the watershed. The main outputs as defined in the ProDoc are:

- Strengthen the community capacities for participatory hazard mapping and disaster reduction;
- Improve the Weather monitoring and EWS in the watersheds to reduce the impact of natural disasters caused by heavy rains;
- Improve the forest management to reduce flood risk, landslides and erosion;
- Ensure and promote the sustainable utilization and rehabilitation of sloping lands in agricultural landscapes;
- Improve the multi-stakeholder coordination and project management.

The SERCARB project is directly executed and implemented by UNDP, giving UNDP a much bigger role in the management, operation, monitoring and accountability of the project. Due to the nature of the project interventions there are two national counterparts: MoLEP and SHMA, focusing on different aspects of the project. MoLEP focus is on the output 1, 3 and 4, while SHMA's focus mostly lies on weather monitoring and the EWS under output 2.

It shall be noted here that the project suffered some serious delays, which had their root causes outside of project range influence. Amongst others quarantine measures implemented because of the Ebola crisis in

<sup>1</sup> Budget increased by \$US 100,000 to respond to the Rason flood damages in September 2016.



March 2015, complicated and lengthy clearance of specifications of equipment due to UN Sanctions as well as the recurring close of the banking channel for international organizations in DPRK since March 2016, which restricted the purchases to be done by UNDP.

## B. Project Progress Summary

The project has five stated objectives, as stated above. The level of completion of each of these objectives has been derived from the Desk Study, the In-Country mission as well as further consultations with the PM team and the PM. These results are in line with the reported Quarterly Reports prepared by the project during project lifetime.

**Output 1 – Strengthen the community capacities for participatory hazard mapping and disaster reduction** – This output is considered as to be completed fully in the present project regions, given the fact that in all 5 project sites the Hazard Mapping exercise has been finished by the date of the review.

**Output 2 – Improve the Weather monitoring and EWS in the watersheds to reduce the impact of natural disasters caused by heavy rains** – This output lacks well behind the implementation plan as the procurement process has not been finalized by the date of the review, meaning that no equipment necessary for the weather monitoring and EWS has been purchased so far, except initial in-country or overseas training provided to the local level technicians.

**Output 3 – Improve the forest management to reduce flood risk, landslides and erosion** – Present assessment shows that most of the activities planned until end of 2016 have been finalized. Awareness was raised through trainings and international study tours. Likewise the nursery capabilities have been improved, by which the national and local capacity was improved to sustainably supply seedlings and seed for reforestation campaigns focused on sustainable income generation as well as reforestation in areas without agricultural activities.

**Output 4 – Ensure and promote the sustainable utilization and rehabilitation of sloping lands in agricultural landscapes** – Around 90% of the activities planned under this output have been finalized. Namely the construction of the Awareness Center in Joyang-dong, the income generating activities were initiated and well received in the Pilot Sites and embankments in the project counties have been finished. Likewise training materials have been disseminated, increasing the awareness on sustainable watershed management and sustainable utilization of land. Problems are found in the output targets defined in the ProDoc and later reviewed in one of the PSC meetings.

**Output 5 - Improve the multi-stakeholder coordination and project management** – The output target is likely to be reached by the end of project, benchmarked against the defined target.

Within the evaluation framework the outputs are ranked according to the following table.

Measure	Achievement Rating <sup>2</sup>	Description
Project Strategy	Highly Satisfactory	The project aims to maintain and enhance the beneficial services provided by natural ecosystems in order to secure livelihoods, food, water and health, reduce vulnerability to climate change, store carbon and avoid emissions from land use change and forestry.  The selected project strategy shows a high degree of adaption to the national context of DPR Korea and is well in line with the GoDPRK and Line Ministries goals and strategies. Likewise the experience by other agencies active in DPR Korea have been taken into account during the formulation phase of the project.
Progress Towards Results	Output 1: Highly Satisfactory	Benchmarked against the targets set for the end of the project this component has been completed. With the Hazard mapping exercise finalized in all 5 project Ri's and additional trainings performed, by this building capacities for disaster risk reduction and mitigation structures.

<sup>2</sup> Full description of Review ratings can be found in Annex 10, based on the recommendations given in [1].



Measure	Achievement Rating <sup>2</sup>	Description
	Output 2: <b>Satisfactory</b>	Taken the set goals during the formulation of the project as criteria this output has not been achieved to its full extent. Mainly because of procurement constrains particular for DPR Korea and difficult to handle.  As it was not possible to implement working EWS at the Pilot Sites before the present review, it is hard to rate the achievement of this output. Nevertheless the specifications of the equipment needed for setting up the EWSs were cleared and ready for procurement, whilst the documents shown and the design of the EWS indicate that it is feasible to achieve the set targets by the end of extension period in 2018.
	Output 3: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>	Due to project delay and procurement constrains not all the activities planned could be implemented in time. Thus the activities under this output have not been finalized as expected by end of 2016. Nevertheless the outlook is positive as the implementation is only delayed, but not jeopardized by this delay. Dissemination of information and knowledge and specific training programs on forest management activities have been undertaken and provide a good starting point for the Extension Period of the project. Likewise the FMB has been strengthened by the Awareness Center.
	Output 4: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>	The number of beneficiaries as indicator of success for this output is well within the expected number, making this output a success.  The second target defined in the Project Document, and revised during the 6 <sup>th</sup> PSC meeting could not be assessed as expected and might need a revision as it has not been used in previous evaluations nor in the Project Document itself.
	Output 5: <b>Satisfactory</b>	Benchmarked against the original timeframe of 3.5 years the stage of implementation is overall good, with most of the project activities implemented or on the way of implementation. The set goal of 95% implementation of project activities was not reached due to external factors, namely the close of the bank channel was a limiting factor.  Even though an external factor the particular present situation in DPR Korea with the different sanctions in place could threaten some of the targets to be reached.
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	<b>Highly Satisfactory</b>	Taking into consideration the limitations and obstacles external of the project, namely the tightened sanction regime as well as the closing of the bank channel the project has been implemented in a very good way. Stakeholder engagement as well as the very close M&E scheme helped the project to keep on track.
Sustainability	<b>Likely</b>	Given the condition that the project targets and objectives are in line with the national counterpart objectives and aims the sustainability is considered to be likely. Threats to this classification could be selected technical solutions that would not be available after the project has finished and lack of (economical) resources. The first can be addressed by the PM, the last is out of PM range of action, but can be addressed towards the project partners.

Table 2 Ratings &amp; Achievement Summary Table

### C. Concise summary of conclusions

The project is assessed as an overall successful project with well-selected tools and approaches, which respond to needs formulated in the country. It is therefore and to assure the sustainability of the implemented project activities advisable to extend the project by the requested 2 years with an additional budget of up to \$US 5Mio.

### D. Lessons-learnt and Recommendations

The lessons-learnt and recommendations derived by the IC from the present consultancy are summarized below. Detailed recommendations can be found in chapter 4.

N°	Lessons learnt	Recommendations
1	<p>The effective two years project life is a too short period to demonstrate the full success of the present project. One-year no cost extension will be very important for the project success and to finalize the activities under the present ProDoc.</p> <p>Early recruitment of project team is crucial for the success of any project. One of the reasons for initial delay was the late formation of the project team;</p>	<p>Even without any further extension with additional budget the project shall be given additional time so the initiated project activities can be finished and make the project a success story;</p>
2	<p>The SERCARB project is an excellent example of best practice in several aspects, including, capacity building, sustainability, target population participation and mainstreaming;</p> <p>The time invested into project design, was valuable for ensuring effective project formulation, planning of meaningful activities around the proposed targets and for facilitating implementation;</p> <p>Through the successful implementation of key project features further initiatives can be initiated. That was successfully shown by the project for the embankment activities as well as the newly build Awareness Center built in Alil-Ri.</p> <p>Good organization of international and national level project management is key for the success of any project. This is achieved through regular communication, monitoring of results, and clear follow-up actions whenever potential problems are identified;</p>	<p>Replicate the developed techniques and approaches in additional project sites during an extension period of the present project. The focus for the extension of the project shall be laid upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The existing project counties, further strengthening, improving and deriving lessons-learnt from the project activities undertaken so far</i></li> <li><i>Project regions outside the Pilot County and along other rivers, in which the activities from the Pilot Ri's are replicated;</i></li> </ul>
3	<p>Wherever possible and meaningful participatory approaches and techniques are key elements for sustainability and success of projects that work directly with target population;</p>	<p>Participatory approaches, such as the Participatory Hazard Mapping are key for sustainability and shall be maintained for the Project Extension;</p>
4	<p>Continuous review of key outputs and targets enables fast and high quality assessment of the project. Some of these targets have not been followed always in a consistent way by the project team</p>	<p>To improve the operational handling of the project the targets as well as the indicators for Output 3 and Output 4 shall be revised and adapted for the planned extension of the project. In general realistic targets shall be defined during the inception phase of the project for each county during the extension phase of the project.</p>
5	<p>The project clearly demonstrated that the problems described in the ProDoc can be best and sustainably addressed with an integrated approach that takes into account all aspects and levels of a watershed rather than focusing on isolated solutions;</p> <p>The problems identified in the ProDoc being a problem for the whole country it has been good practice to design the project around some two Pilot Site in which an adapted methodology and approach has been developed that was thereafter implemented in additional sites and watersheds;</p>	<p>Ensure the coordination of activities put in place by different stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Interventions driven by UNDP and PC shall take place in an integrated and coordinated way to avoid any negative side effects of e.g. river embankments</i></li> <li><i>All used techniques and approaches shall be assessed with regards to their sustainability;</i></li> <li><i>All techniques and approaches shall be easy to use in the given context;</i></li> </ul>



N°	Lessons learnt	Recommendations
6	Further project development and sustainability depends very much on the continuous revision of MoLEP and SHMA capabilities and the ability of project partners to adapt to new (external) conditions and requirements.	<p>Consolidate and strengthen MoLEP and SHMA capacities further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The nursery capabilities shall be consolidate and strengthened for the extension of the project to not rely on purchase of seedlings and seeds from outside DPRK;</i></li> <li>• <i>Forest fire fighting capabilities shall be strengthened as well;</i></li> <li>• <i>Maintenance and repair capabilities of SHMA for the EWS and AWS shall be strengthened to ensure sustainability of this component;</i></li> </ul>
7	Especially in the context of DPRK fast clearance of the specifications is necessary to avoid unnecessary delays in the project implementation. This topic has been addressed by the BRH through a system of clearance pre-check;	<p>The clearance procedure implemented by the CO shall be maintained over the project lifespan to ease the clearance of goods and services that need to be purchased under the project;</p> <p>Those parts of the EWS (and other project activities), that does not need the purchase of equipment, shall be implemented as soon as possible to avoid any further delays under this output</p>

Table 3 Lessons learnt and recommendations

