

MID-TERM REVIEW

UNDP CAMBODIA

**“Reducing the Vulnerability of Cambodian Rural
Livelihoods through Enhanced sub-national Climate
Change Planning and Execution of Priority Actions”
(SRL Project)**

March 2019

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project title:	Reducing the Vulnerability of Cambodian Rural Livelihoods through Enhanced sub-national Climate Change Planning and Execution of Priority Actions			
GEF Project ID:	5419		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>at completion (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	00093204 PIMS: 5174	GEF financing:	4,567,500	
Country:	Cambodia	IA/EA own:	1,350,000	
Region:		Government:	14,510,000	
Focal Area:	Climate Change	Other:		
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	Reduce vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change, including variability, at local, national, regional and global level.	Total co-financing:	15,860,000	
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Environment/NCSD	Total Project Cost:	20,427,500	
Other Partners involved:	NCDD-S and UNDP	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		1 July 2015
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 31 Dec 2019	Actual:

Executive Summary

This report presents the main findings of the Mid-term Review (MTR) of the GEF-funded project titled “Reducing the Vulnerability of Cambodian Rural Livelihoods through Enhanced sub-national Climate Change Planning and Execution of Priority Actions” (SRL). Commissioned by UNDP Cambodia and carried out during October - November 2018 by a team of two independent experts, this review was conducted at mid-point of project implementation with the goal of determining progress towards the achievement of outcomes and identifying potential corrections of project’s course if needed. The report’s main findings consist of three parts: assessment of key aspects of project design and formulation; assessment of implementation issues; and, assessment of the results achieved by the project along the standard dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

As far as the design of the project is concerned, the MTR concludes that the project document is well-structured and quite comprehensive in terms of the expected actions that it proposes. It provides a thorough and consistent analysis of the country context and the needs to be addressed and identifies a clear set of objectives and activities for the project to pursue. Furthermore, the project’s results framework is coherent and provides a good results-chain logic: outputs, outcomes and objectives. Also, indicators, baselines and targets are generally adequate and well-identified.

Furthermore, the project document identifies some of UNDP’s comparative advantages in the area of sustainable development which represent potential for high-impact work. It also provides a thorough analysis of previous and ongoing efforts related to climate change adaptation, especially in the water and agriculture sectors. The project design has benefited from a large amount of information available from these previous initiatives and draws on their experience and lessons learned. It outlines a “Stakeholder Involvement Plan” which lists the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders having a role as partners and beneficiaries of the project and provides a clear and effective set up of the project in terms of management arrangements. Responsibilities, functions and duties are clearly identified and effectively structured.

Overall, risks have been well-analyzed in the project document. One important risk that is not identified at the project design stage, and which with hindsight appears to have been a significant one, is the weak capacity of sub-national administrations (at the district and commune level). While insufficient capacities of extension workers and engineers are taken into account by the project document, the administrative capacities of local governments are not included in the analysis.

While the logic of the project is solid, there are three design aspects which could have been formulated and integrated more adequately into the project document: i) a larger allocation of funding for infrastructure projects would have guaranteed more scale and impact; ii) the sustainability of some of the project interventions, given the small size and weak capacity of

local governments, could have received more attention; and, iii) a more thorough analysis could have been conducted of the existing community groups in the targeted locations, their experiences and challenges, and opportunities for strengthening their sustainability. Apart from these challenges, the MTR concludes that overall the project design and strategy has been adequate and, most importantly, appropriate and relevant for the context in which the project operated. Further, for all its strengths in outlining the replication approach, the project document could have benefitted from a dedicated and more detailed section that describes in clearer terms what project aspects will be replicated elsewhere and how the replication process is going to unfold over time. For projects of this nature that are primarily meant to demonstrate institutional and technological solutions, the importance of a replication and upscaling strategy should not be underestimated.

As far as the implementation is concerned, the project was implemented through the National Implementation Modality, with overall ownership and accountability by the government. The Secretary General of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) was appointed as the Project Director for SRL, chairing the Project Board which is responsible for the supervision and direction of all project activities. Further, a Project Management Unit (PMU), led by a Project Manager, was established under the NCSD, supported and monitored by UNDP. The PMU has consisted of a strong technical team of professionals, bringing together a broad range of skills and knowledge in the agriculture, water, pasture and capacity building areas. The project's component related to the sub-national level has been managed by the Secretariat of the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD-S), an inter-ministerial coordinating body for decentralization reform. Four NCDD-S technical support officers and four provincial coordinators and finance officers for the two target provinces have been recruited since the second quarter of 2017 and play a crucial role for the livelihoods, planning and investment activities at the national and sub-national level.

The use of adaptive management by the project team was instrumental in dealing with unexpected contingencies, especially the significant delay in kick-starting the project. Through the process of adaptive management, the project strategy was reviewed, the performance indicators at output level and the risks associated with the implementation of the project were updated, a stakeholder engagement plan and the project's M&E plan were drafted, and the 2017 detailed work plan and budget and the multiyear work plan were developed. Other adaptive actions included the reduction of activities carried out by the "Service Provider" responsible for the livelihood component (working with the targeted communities on the formation of the community/livelihood groups, providing trainings, etc.), the reduction of the number of surveys for establishing the project's impact and contributions (just having a base-line and end-line), modification of the model for the flow of funds for the implementation of activities at the sub-national level, adjustments to project management arrangements in light of changes in the country's governance structures, etc. Overall, the project has shown an ability to adapt swiftly to evolving needs and emerging opportunities, which has served it well.

Overall, the project has benefited from a strong partnership between partners involved in the project. The project's partnership arrangements have included many stakeholders from national and sub-national governments, community and livelihood groups, organizations on the ground, research institutes, NGOs and donor organizations.

The design and implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system has been adequate. Overall, the project has made good use of the available tools for monitoring, although the project could have tracked more effectively a number of crucial parameters such as co-financing for infrastructure projects, the uptake of outputs (studies, training, etc.) and the degree to which the outputs were serving their intended purpose, the degree to which the capacity of participants in the various training programmes improved, the experience of infrastructure initiatives, the lessons they have generated and the extent to which they get scaled up, etc.

As the leading entity, NCSD has demonstrated strong ownership and leadership in this project. Throughout the implementation process, the essential functions of the national implementing partner have continued without interruption. Good relationships and coordination have been established among the three main parties – NCSD, NCDD-S and UNDP. Also, relations with the sub-national authorities in the targeted locations have been close and productive. Furthermore, UNDP has provided an appropriate level of support to the project team, enabling them to manage the project within the guidelines for NIM projects.

As far as the results are concerned, the project has made good progress in a range of areas, especially considering the fact that the start up was delayed significantly, and so was the hiring of the two main contractors (Service Provider and Research Firm for the Survey). The project team has been committed to achieving what was planned to be achieved and has been able to adapt to evolving circumstances and respond effectively to emerging challenges. There are two crucial areas where there is a need for faster progress – the design, approval and construction of infrastructure projects and the formation of the community groups (women, water users, livelihoods, etc.). To some extent these activities are interdependent, because some of the groups will be formed as infrastructure construction gets underway (i.e. water users). The overall consensus among stakeholders is to strive for completion by the middle 2020 and at some point after the end of the current dry season (which is crucial for water infrastructure projects) to re-examine the need for a potential extension. This is a sensible approach that is endorsed by the MTR. In the coming months, project stakeholders should prioritize these two areas to ensure that activities are accelerated. The intervening rainy season will make it difficult to complete the water infrastructure projects on time. There are two windows of opportunity for doing this. One is the current dry season that ends early next year and the other is the following dry season. The project team should plan around these two openings to complete the infrastructure projects, and use the rest of the time to focus on the livelihoods activities.

With regards to efficiency, the budget execution rate stands at 54%, which leaves 46% of the budget to be spent in the remaining one year and a half (assuming no project extension will take

place). Given that for 2018 the project was able to spend US\$ 1.7 m, it is feasible for it to spend the rest of the budget by June 2020. The project's administrative costs have thus far constituted about 37% of all expenditures, which is a high rate. There is one important factor that should be taken into consideration here – the project has had minimal expenditure on local and international consultants. For these two categories combined, project expenditure has been about 3%. Most of the work that is typically done by consultants in the case of the SLR project has been done by project staff, especially the experts hired by NCDD-S at the national and sub-national level. The absence of international consultants in this project has been a cost-saving factor, allowing the team to reallocate funds elsewhere. In terms of synergies with other UNDP projects, despite significant connections between the SRL project and some UNDP ongoing projects (CCCA in particular), the potential for stronger cooperation is not fully capitalized. Certainly, there is sharing of information at the level of meetings organized by the CO, but cooperation between the two projects is not strategic and does not take advantages of commonalities they share, especially at the sub-national level. UNDP should further strengthen project linkages as much as possible.

With regards to sustainability, the use of a clear set of performance-based conditions/criteria in the PBCR model to motivate performance and generate co-financing is a strong mechanism for strengthening financial sustainability and scaling up the grant programme in other locations. However, there are two outstanding challenges here. First, some local governments are too small and remote and unable to generate sufficient co-financing. When their real priorities do not coincide with adaptation matters (drought or flood issues), there is usually no money available for co-financing, so they cannot benefit from the financing scheme. Second, it remains to be seen how the financing (PBCR) model could be institutionalized further by integrating it in the financing model through which the Ministry of Finance and Economy allocates and distributes funding to local governments on a regular basis. In the coming months, the project team could look more closely into these issues and examine how it can secure stable contributions from the national, provincial and district levels for communes' infrastructure plans. Further, getting the livelihood groups to operate on self-sustaining fashion will be a tall order, as they will require sustained support, financially, technically and also politically. Also, questions remain around the maintenance and scaling up of the water infrastructure initiatives pursued by the project. The same argument applies to some of the methodologies promoted by the project. It will take sustained support and several years of engagement before sub-national counterparts can fully internalize the methodologies that were developed with the help of the project into their systems and create the capacities for systematically implementing them.

As far as mainstreaming is concerned, the project has had a significant focus on the gender dimension. It has placed women at the center of activities by clearly recognizing that they experience specific challenges in their daily lives which are exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The project has also followed a human rights approach by targeting the most vulnerable groups and regions and addressing the rights of women, people with disabilities, etc. One cross-

cutting area where the project could have engaged more actively is the adaptation and implementation of SDGs in Cambodia. The SDG process presents a unique opportunity for integrating climate change adaptation concerns into policy frameworks.

The MTR provides the following scores for the SRL project.

Monitoring and Evaluation	
Overall quality of M&E	MS
<i>M&E design at project start up</i>	MS
<i>M&E Plan Implementation</i>	MS
IA & EA Execution	
Overall Quality of Project Implementation/Execution	S
<i>Implementing Agency Execution</i>	S
<i>Executing Agency Execution</i>	S
Outcomes	
Overall Quality of Project Outcomes	MS
<i>Relevance</i>	HR
<i>Effectiveness</i>	MS
<i>Efficiency</i>	MS
Sustainability	
Overall likelihood of Sustainability:	ML
<i>Financial resources</i>	ML
<i>Socio-economic</i>	L
<i>Institutional framework and governance</i>	ML
<i>Environmental</i>	L
Overall Project Results	MS

The report also highlights four main lessons drawn from the SRL project:

Lesson 1: Kick-starting a Project Requires Strong Coordination

One lesson that can be learned from this project is related to its late start. Late starts are common when the project involves multiple parties playing key roles in the project. In this case, it took time for project implementing partners to agree on specific roles and responsibilities, although they were outlined in some degree of detail in the project document. The key lesson here is that to get the project started on time, a lot of preparatory work and coordination is necessary while the project document is receiving approvals from the funder (GEF).

Lesson 2: Effective Use of Adaptive Management

Given the project's late start and evolving circumstances, the use of adaptive management by the project team and board was crucial for dealing with a number of unexpected contingencies and taking advantage of emerging opportunities. Examples of the project team's ability to respond swiftly to evolving needs and emerging opportunities were the modification of the funding scheme, the change in the scope of work for the Service Provider, the decision to conduct only two surveys (baseline and end-line), etc.

Lesson 3: Building Resilient Local Communities Takes Time and Requires Sustained Engagement

The development of institutional and human capacities at the sub-national level, especially at the commune level in small and remote locations, is a challenging task that requires a long engagement and repeated interactions. As has been outlined in this report, a number of interventions by development partners and the government have taken place in this area. The SRL project builds on foundations laid out by these previous interventions. But the building of capacities of local governments and communities does not end here. Building resilient local communities takes time and requires sustained engagement.

Lesson 4: Climate Change Adaptation and Local Governance are an Inseparable Tandem

The SRL project is classified as a "climate change adaptation" project, but it is equally a project about local governance because its operations are focused on strengthening the capacities of local governments to plan and implement climate change adaptation measures. The project's contributions in the area of local governance are inseparable from its contributions in the area of climate change adaptation. Working with sub-national governments on the assessment of vulnerabilities, formulation of development plans, preparation of investment programmes and feasibility studies, monitoring and management of infrastructure projects, and so on, is extremely important for strengthening governance at the local level. It is precisely this focus on the governance aspects of climate change adaptation that makes these initiatives more sustainable and efficient.

Furthermore, the MTR identifies the following six recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Reassess at the Onset of the Rainy Season Progress with Infrastructure Projects and Chart the Way Forward

As has been shown in this report, one of the most critical aspects of the project is the design and construction of the water infrastructure projects. Activities on this front are behind the schedule and need to be accelerated. As discussed in the report, there are two limited windows of opportunity during the dry seasons to make quick progress with construction works.

At the end of the current dry season, the project team and board should take stock of the situation and assess the likelihood of completing the remainder of the infrastructure projects by mid-2020. This will require a detailed analysis of the progress of each infrastructure project supported by the project. If the prospect of completing all infrastructure projects by mid-2020 will look unlikely, then the Project Board should come up with a clear plan of action that sees all the infrastructure through and also outlines the necessary timelines for completion, including need for project extension.

The project team should also develop a clear action plan targeted to the formation of community groups. This is another area that is lagging behind and that would benefit from a clearer acceleration strategy. Transferring funds to these groups and supporting their economic activities will require a lot of engagement that takes time and resources. The project team should develop a matrix that shows in great detail the stage at which every group's formation is, including a preliminary assessment of their sustainability. The project team needs to develop a clear plan for how this engagement will take place for each group in the remainder of this project.

Also, the end-line survey is a complex survey that will require time to organize adequately. The project team should start with preparations without wasting time.

Recommendation 2: Safeguard the Sustainability of Infrastructure Projects

The project team should examine more closely the issue of sustainability of the water infrastructure projects. The analysis suggested under **Recommendation 1** for each infrastructure project should also cover the dimension of sustainability and include a preliminary assessment of potential exit strategies. Ideally, for each infrastructure project there should be a sustainability plan that specifies what will happen to that piece of infrastructure upon the completion of the project. Who will own it? Who will pay for the maintenance? Who will pay for repairs when needed? How is it going to be managed? Are the water users groups created in some locations going to be able to maintain these assets? Will local governments be able to step up to the challenge of organizing maintenance on a regular basis? All these questions, and others, should be addressed in a systematic way and for each project individually because the circumstances and context around each project are different.

Project stakeholders should also discuss the issue of insufficient funding for some of the infrastructure projects that are completed only partially because of limited resources from the project and local government's own contributions (i.e. renovation of only half of an irrigation canal). Also, the possibility of further institutionalizing the role of the national government (MEF) in providing additional funding through the PBCR model should be examined. Where feasible, the Project Board could identify possible ways for creating more depth in these projects by allocating a sufficient amount of financing.

Recommendation 3: Build on Existing Community Groups rather than Reinventing the Wheel

This report has also noted that some of the community groups that are created by the project are quite weak and their sustainability is questionable at this point. Given that Cambodia has a long history with the creation of such groups, the important question is - What have we learned from the previous experiences with these groups? In the locations that were visited for the MTR, it was noted that there were a number of community groups that had been established by previous projects. Would it have been more appropriate to focus on strengthening existing community groups, rather than creating new ones? Would it not be more effective to channel funds to villagers' cooperatives, where they exist and require strengthening, rather than create new community groups? There is still time for project stakeholders to focus on these questions and examine the experience of existing groups in each location and see how current efforts could build on those existing groups. So, two specific recommendations are associated with this analysis. First, the project could conduct a systematic assessment/study to understand what is the experience of these other groups in each location and to identify challenges and opportunities related to the groups that are being formed with the aim of strengthening their sustainability. Second, the project team could develop for each community group that is created under the project an exit strategy that identifies the challenges that the group will face after the end of the project's life and ways to mitigate those challenges.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen Synergies and Linkages between Projects

NCSD/DCC should strengthen collaboration and linkages between the SRL project and other technical assistance projects under its leadership, particularly the CCCA project. Where feasible, it should establish more integrated frameworks for project planning and implementation.

At the same time, UNDP should strengthen synergies between its projects operating in the area of climate change adaptation and sub-national governance – and, in particular, between SRL and CCCA. Further, UNDP should recognize that there are no actual divisions between climate change adaptation projects at the local level and local governance. These are two sides of the same coin. UNDP should explore the establishment of mechanisms for managing more closely together aspects of projects that share similar objectives, especially when the sub-national level is concerned. Such mechanisms may involve not only integrated implementation of activities related to information sharing and data systems, but also joint implementation tools related to training, awareness raising, planning, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Recommendation 5: Using the M&E System to Track Important Parameters

The project team should examine how the M&E system is used to track important aspects of the project with a view to improving the availability of information for management purposes. Measuring some of these dimensions was a challenge in this MTR. The following are a few dimensions worth considering.

- *Uptake of project outputs (studies, training, etc.) and the degree to which they serve their intended purpose* – The project should monitor more systematically the extent to which project activities related to research and training get absorbed by beneficiaries.
- *Capacity of stakeholders/beneficiaries* – The project should track the degree to which the capacity of participants taking part in the various training programmes organized by the project has improved.
- *Experience of infrastructure initiatives, lessons they generate and the extent to which they get scaled up* – It is too early to talk about replication of infrastructure projects, but one characteristic of them is that they serve to produce lessons which when shared may lead to replication in other locations. They can be vehicles for transmitting experience and play a crucial role for upscaling and replication. However, it is not clear how their lessons are collected, analyzed, synthesized and shared by the project. This requires more systemic thinking and actions. The project should develop a tracking mechanism for pilot initiatives, including documenting results, lessons, experiences and good practices.
- *Co-financing* – The project should track co-financing for infrastructure projects more effectively by strengthening the monitoring database (PID) that has already been developed.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen Engagement with SDGs at the Sub-national Level

The SRL project has significant potential linkages to the SDG process in the country, especially at the sub-national level, but there has been little explicit recognition of this in the project document or implementation strategy, and no significant action on the ground. Given the commitment of the Cambodian government to the SDG agenda and its importance for UNDP, the project team, NCSD and UNDP could consider linking more effectively some of the project activities to the SDG-related activities going on in the country. At a minimum, project stakeholders should explore how to use the SRL platform to promote more actively the SDGs at the subnational level. This will require a clearly articulated strategy, approved by the Project Board, and should be done in close coordination with other national and UN structures that promote the SDGs in the country.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCCA	Cambodia Climate Change Alliance
CCBAP	Cambodia Community Based Adaptation Programme
CCCSP	Climate Change Strategic Plan
DCC	Department of Climate Change
CO	UNDP Country Office
CPAP	UNDP Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	UNDP Country Programme Document
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GCCSP	Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GSSD	General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoWRAM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NCCC	National Climate Change Committee
NCDD-S	National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NP-SNDD	National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development
NP-SNDD	National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development
PBCR	Performance Based Climate Resilience
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound
SNA	Sub-National Authorities
SRL	Project “Reducing the Vulnerability of Cambodian Rural Livelihoods through Enhanced sub-national Climate Change Planning and Execution of Priority Actions”
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDAF	United Nation Development Assistant Framework
VRA	Vulnerability Reduction Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the main findings of the Mid-term Review (MTR) of the “Reducing the Vulnerability of Cambodian Rural Livelihoods through Enhanced sub-national Climate Change Planning and Execution of Priority Actions” (SRL) project. The review was commissioned by UNDP Cambodia and was carried out during October - November 2018 by a team of two independent experts. This chapter provides an overview of the MTR’s objectives and methodology employed for the collection of information and analysis of the data.

1.1. Purpose of the MTR

This MTR of the SRL project was conducted at mid-point of project implementation with the goal of determining progress towards the achievement of outcomes and identifying potential corrections of project’s course if needed. The MTR is focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and timeliness of project implementation, highlights issues requiring decisions and actions, and presents initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the remainder of the project’s term.

More specifically, the MTR was conceived and conducted with the following specific objectives in mind:

- To assess overall project performance against project objectives and outcomes as set out in the Project Document, the Logical Framework, and other related documents;
- To assess the extent to which results have been achieved, partnerships established, capacities built, and cross cutting issues such as gender equality addressed;
- To establish whether the project implementation strategy has been optimal and recommend areas for further improvement and learning;
- To identify gaps and weaknesses in the project design and provide recommendations as to how it may be improved for the remaining implementation period;
- To assess project strategies and tactics for achieving objectives within established timeframes;
- To critically analyze the project’s implementation and management arrangements;
- To provide an appraisal of the project’s relevance and efficiency of implementation;
- To review and assess the strength and sustainability of partnerships with government bodies, civil society, private sector and international organizations;
- To assess the gender aspects of implementation and results;
- To draw lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of project activities in the remainder of the project’s lifetime; and,
- To provide the project team and partners with feedback on issues that are recurrent and need attention, and on improvements regarding identified challenges;

The results of this MTR are intended to:

- Support the decision making of the project team and stakeholders on: i) implementation modalities of the present stage, and ii) strategic planning of activities in the remainder of the project's lifetime; and,
- Provide government counterparts, UNDP Country Office (CO) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) with lessons from this particular project on overall project implementation and delivery, including potential corrective/adaptive measures that need to be applied to project interventions to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability prospects.

1.2. MTR's Scope and Methodology

The MTR's scope encompasses all activities from the project's start date, indicated in the Project Document as July 1st, 2015, to the point of review (November 2018). The Terms of Reference (ToR) where the scope and main steps of the MTR process were laid out are attached in Annex I of this report.

Key issues at the center of the MTR are:

- Project design and its effectiveness in achieving stated objectives;
- Assessment of key financial aspects, including planned and realized budgets, financing, etc.;
- The project's effectiveness in building the capacity of local institutions and strengthening policy framework to promote sustainable livelihoods and development;
- Strengths and weaknesses of project implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes including the project's exit strategy; and,
- Recommendations, lessons learned, best practices that may be used further in the project or in future interventions.

The MTR applied OECD DAC criteria¹ and definitions and followed norms and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group. It was guided by the requirements set forth in UNDP's evaluation toolkit, and in particular the "*Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results*"² and "*Guidance for Conducting Mid-Term Reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*".³

The methodology was based on mixed methods and involved the use of commonly applied evaluation tools such as documentary review, interviews, information triangulation, analysis and

¹ Criteria for evaluating development assistance: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of development efforts.

² <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>

³ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf

synthesis. A participatory approach was taken for the collection of data, formulation of recommendations and identification of lessons learned. MTR activities were organized according to the following stages: i) planning; ii) data collection; and, iii) data analysis and reporting. Figure 2 below shows the three stages and the main activities under each of them.

Figure 1: Stages of MTR

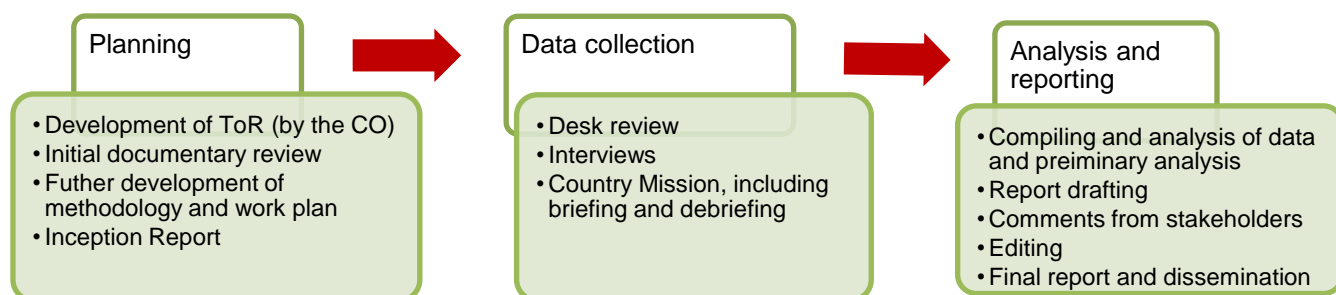


Table 1 further details the main activities that were undertaken under each stage.

Table 1: MTR Steps

I. Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the ToR (by the CO and Implementing Partner) • Teleconference discussion and finalization of work plan • Collection and revision of project-related documents • Formulation and submission of inception report
II. Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further collection of project related documents (home based) • Mission preparation: agenda and logistics • Country Mission • Interviews with key stakeholders • Mission debriefings & Mission report summary
III. Data analysis and reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected • Follow-up interviews • Develop draft MTR report • Circulate draft report with project team and stakeholders • Integrate comments and submit final report

MTR Planning

The planning and preparation phase included the development of the ToR by the UNDP CO and Implementing Partner (IP) and the design of the MTR framework which was presented in an inception report. The MTR team further developed interview guides for interviews with stakeholders.

Data Collection

The data collection process involved a comprehensive desk review of project documents and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and partners.

- **Desk Review** - The MTR team started by analyzing relevant documents, project documents and progress reports, as well as country development policies and strategies. Documents from similar and complementary initiatives, as well as reports on the specific context of the project will form part of the analysis.
- **Semi-structured Interviews** – The MTR in-country mission took place between October 29 and November 5, 2018. During the mission, meetings were held in Phnom Penh with key project stakeholders such as the Project Team, Department of Climate Change (DCC) of the General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (GSSD), Ministry of Environment (MoE), National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S), Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM), UNDP CO, UNOPS and the Swedish Embassy. Interviews with local government representatives and project beneficiaries were organized in the two project locations (Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces). Particular attention during the interviewing process was paid to the gender dimension of the project with the aim of ensuring a balance in the views expressed by male and female beneficiaries of the project. The MTR benefitted from a second mission of the international evaluator in the country (for a broader evaluation of the country programme) and meetings with the Department of Climate Change (DCC) of the General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (GSSD), National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S) and UNDP. These meetings were useful to assess progress made between November 2018 and March 2019.
- **Open-ended questions** were used to enable interviewees to express their views freely and raise the issues they considered most important. A questionnaire was designed to guide the semi-structured interviews and ensure that questions would be investigated consistently across all interviews (the questionnaire can be found in Annex III). A full list of people that were interviewed was developed in cooperation with the CO and project team.

Data Analysis

Information obtained through the documentary review and interview process was triangulated against available documented sources, and then synthesized using analytical judgement. The method of triangulation is depicted in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Method of Triangulation

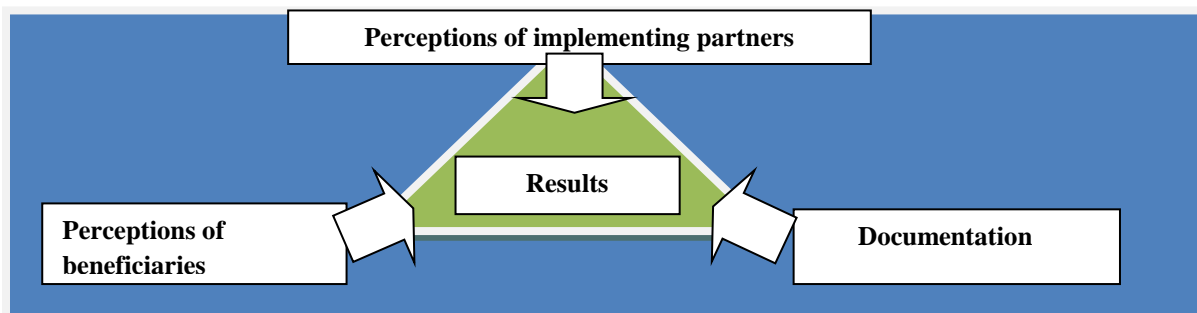
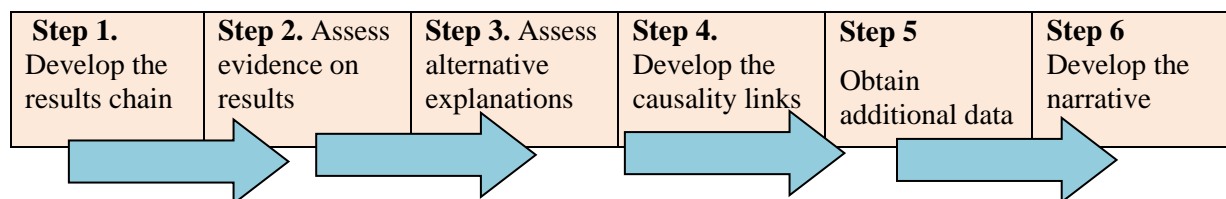


Figure 3 shows the steps taken for the analysis which was conducted on the basis of the standard criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability (see Annex II for a more detailed list of questions used for the analysis of information).

- **Relevance**, covering the assessment of the extent to which outcomes are suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time;
- **Effectiveness**, covering the assessment of the achievement of the immediate objectives (outputs) and the contribution to attaining the outcomes and the overall objective of the project; and an examination of the any significant unexpected effects of the project (either of beneficial or detrimental);
- **Efficiency**, covering the assessment of the quality of project implementation and adaptive management; adequacy of planning and financial management; the quality of monitoring and evaluation; the contribution of implementing and executing agencies in ensuring efficient implementation;
- **Sustainability**, covering likely ability of the intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion.

Figure 3: Steps in Analysis Process



The analysis starts with the construction of the results chain, which is subsequently used to assess the collected evidence. Alternative explanations are considered, on the basis of existing data, and causality links are identified. After the collection of additional information, the final evaluation narrative is developed. The analysis covers aspects of project formulation, including the extent of stakeholder participation during project formulation; replication approach; design

for sustainability; linkages between the project and other interventions within the sector or in the targeted locations; adequacy of management arrangements, etc.

Table 2 shows the six-scale rating system used to rate the various dimensions of this review.

Table 2: Rating Scale

Rating for the assessment of Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency	
HS	Highly Satisfactory: The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
S	Satisfactory: The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
MS	Moderately Satisfactory: The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
MU	Moderately Unsatisfactory: The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
U	Unsatisfactory: major problems
HU	Highly Unsatisfactory: The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Ratings for sustainability assessment	
LS	Likely sustainable: negligible risks to sustainability
MLS	Moderately Likely sustainable: moderate risks
MUS	Moderately Unlikely sustainable: significant risks
Additional	
N/A	Not Applicable
U/A	Unable to Assess

The following Indicator Assessment Key is used:

- Green = Achieved
- Yellow = On target to be achieved
- Red = Not on target to be achieved

1.3. MTR Limitations

All possible efforts were made to minimize any limitations of this review. Overall, the MTR team received all the necessary support from the UNDP CO and implementing partners and access to project-related data and information. The field mission in the two target provinces was well-organized and attended, thanks to the support of UNDP CO, the project team, NCSD, NCDD-S and the respective sub-national authorities.

1.4. Structure of the Report

The current chapter provides an overview of the MTR's objectives and methodology. The second chapter provides a description of Cambodia's development context and a description of the

project. The third chapter presents the main findings of the report and consists of three parts: the first part assesses key aspects of project design and formulation; the second part focuses on implementation issues; and, the third part presents an assessment of the results achieved by the project along the standard dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The fourth chapter summarizes the main conclusions and identifies key “lessons learned” drawn from the experience of this project and the last (fifth) chapter provides a set of recommendations for the consideration of project stakeholders. Additional information supporting the arguments made throughout the document is provided in the annexes attached to this report.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1. Project Summary

The SRL project is designed to promote interventions that reduce the vulnerability of rural Cambodians, especially land-poor, landless and female-headed households. Cambodian households are heavily dependent on agriculture, with about 70% of them deriving part of their income from agricultural activities. The majority of agricultural production is dependent on monsoon rains and natural floods/recession of the Tonle Sap River and Lake. Both the natural cycle of the monsoonal system and the hydrological function of the interconnected Mekong-Tonle Sap River drainage system are prone to climate change disruptions, which are expected to result in significant negative impact on the livelihood and welfare for rural Cambodians.

The SRL project is designed to address these vulnerabilities by promoting investments in small-scale water management infrastructure, technical assistance for resilient agricultural practices, and capacity building support, especially targeting poor women, for improved food production in home gardens. These interventions are delivered by sub-national governments (communes, districts and provinces), which strengthens their ability to plan, design and deliver services.

The project's overall goal is to strengthen the capability of sub-national governments to plan, budget and execute climate change related investments in rural areas. This goal is achieved through the following three components:

1. ***Climate Sensitive Planning, Budgeting and Execution at Sub-National Level Strengthened*** – This component builds on the existing system of development planning at District and Commune levels. The project supports the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation in the plans and investment programmes of ten Districts and their constituent Communes. It also provides technical capacity for climate sensitive agriculture extension and for planning and implementation of climate resilient infrastructure investments.
2. ***Resilience of Livelihoods of the most Vulnerable Improved against Erratic Rainfall, Floods and Droughts*** – This component facilitates investments in small scale water management infrastructure which contributes to resilient agricultural production, in particular by overcoming unpredictable rainfall during the wet season. Beneficiaries are members of vulnerable communities identified through the sub-national planning process and a detailed, participatory needs assessment carried out to identify suitable improvements to resilient agricultural livelihoods. Groups of poor and vulnerable women are assisted to develop livelihood activities requiring only limited amounts of land and receive complementary support for social capital building activities, including leadership training and formation of savings groups.

3. ***Enabling Environment is Enhanced at Sub-National Level to Attract and Manage Greater Volume of Climate Change Adaptation Finance for Building Resilience of Rural Livelihoods*** - This component strengthens the system of performance assessment for climate change adaptation by sub-national governments, linked to the Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant awards that co-finance infrastructure investments under Outcome 2. The capacity of the sub-national administrations to monitor, evaluate and plan improvements in capacity and performance for climate change adaptation is strengthened.

Box 1 below presents a recap of the main aspects of the SRL project, which is funded by GEF and supported by UNDP.

Box 1: Project Summary

GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP
Grant Size	US\$ 4,567,500
Implementing Partner:	Ministry of Environment (MOE)/GSSD
Responsible Parties:	NCDD-S and UNDP
National Project Director:	General Secretary of NCSD
National Project Manager:	Director of DCC/GSSD
Programme Period:	4 years (2015-2019 in Pro Doc) – (2016 –2020 after late start)
Budget LDCF (GEF):	\$ 4,567,500
Co-financing:	Government parallel \$14,510,000 UNDP \$1,350,000 Total Co-financing \$15,860,000
Target areas:	89 communes, 10 districts in Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces.
Sector/Sub-sector:	Climate smart agriculture, rural livelihood development/resilient irrigation, rural water supply services.
Beneficiaries:	6,000 households (poor, women-headed and vulnerable households)

The Project is implemented in 89 Communes and 10 Districts of Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces (project locations are shown in the map in Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Project Locations (Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces)



2.2. Problems Addressed by the Project

For Cambodia, global climate change is predicted to result in average temperatures increasing by between 0.7 to 2.7°C by the 2060s, and 1.4 to 4.3 degrees by the 2090s. Average annual rainfall is predicted to increase as a result of climate change. Sea level rise is likely to be significant for low-lying coastal plains and may also impact indirectly on the Mekong River system and its floodplains. Despite the large uncertainties in the magnitude of the predicted changes, it is clear that there will be major impacts, particularly for households and communities that depend on rain-fed agriculture. This includes not only land-owning farmers, but also the land-poor and landless who depend on casual employment on their neighbours' farms and, increasingly, on commercial plantations. Women, and women-headed households, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which are likely to include an increased burden in collecting water for domestic and agriculture use, as well as increased transmission of infectious diseases.

Despite an impressive performance in GDP growth and poverty reduction in recent years, Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia. According to data from Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey, the overall poverty headcount in 2011 was 20.5% and the proportion of households below the food poverty line was 3.8%. Poverty is disproportionately rural: the rural poverty rate was estimated as 24% and food poverty 4.4%. Agriculture contributes about 30% of GDP, and about 70% of the population derives an important part of its living from this sector. Despite the fact that the majority of Cambodians depend on agriculture, and predominantly rice, for an important part of their livelihoods, only about 24% of the rice area is irrigated and the fully-irrigated dry season crop accounts for only 14% of area and 20% of production. By comparison, 50-75 % of the land in the lowlands of south-central Thailand and southern Vietnam has been successfully brought under irrigation after decades of investment and development.

Farmers are dependent on good weather for sustaining their livelihoods. While currently available projections of rainfall patterns point to a dryer dry seasons and wetter wet seasons, it is the uncertainty of rainfall that farmers themselves have indicated as most threatening. In a climate change vulnerability assessment covering 18 provinces, farmers indicated that it is the dry spell during the monsoon seasons that has the largest impact on their livelihoods. Other serious climate change impacts will result from damage to productive infrastructure (irrigation systems, roads, etc.) from increased rainstorms and flooding, and potential reduction in rice yields associated with increased temperatures.

Key underlying causes of vulnerability of the agricultural sector are multiple. The coverage of irrigation, which would act as a buffer against fluctuations of water availability, is considerably low compared with its neighbouring countries. The 2013 Agriculture Census found that 32% of agriculture holdings use at least some irrigation. Moreover, the quality of existing irrigation schemes poses an additional challenge. Most of irrigation systems in the country were built in a very short period of 1975-78 during the Democratic Kampuchea regime. The irrigation networks

were in general badly designed and the locations of dams and canals were largely politically driven, rather than based on engineering feasibility or farmers' needs. The underlying design weaknesses continue to affect recent rehabilitation efforts. Although the Government continues to invest heavily in irrigation rehabilitation and construction, most of this work focuses almost exclusively on head-works and primary canals, with much more limited investment in distribution systems. The great majority of canals are of unlined earth construction, which is much cheaper than construction of lined canals or concrete channels but results in large land requirements, poor performance (slow flow rates and high seepage loss), susceptibility to damage from heavy rain and flood flows, and rapid deterioration due to siltation and erosion. Where local administrations or communities invest in canals, there is typically an imperative to maximize the length of canal constructed at the expense of necessary water control structures. Low level of irrigation infrastructure and its quality, compounded by infertile native soil in Cambodia, limits agricultural production to a single cropping season (either wet-season or flood recession, depending on the local topography) and partly explains the significantly lower yields per crop-hectare compared with neighboring countries.

In theory, access to dry season irrigation would enable farmers to switch from wet season rice to more profitable dry season rice cultivation while growing two short and/or cash crops during the wet season. Alternatively, access to wet season irrigation can reduce risk, encourage investment in inputs and enable multi-cropping during the rainy season. However, investment in irrigation alone will not result in a sustainable improvement in agricultural livelihoods: other constraints include lack of knowledge of resilient and profitable crop technologies and market opportunities, shortages of labour and credit, and lack of means to offset risk, for example by crop diversification or through insurance. Access to extension services is weak and highly dependent on funding from projects or NGOs, while the quality of extension suffers from weak linkages to research and development, a traditional focus on productivity of a limited number of staple crops rather than diversification to take advantage of market opportunities, poor responsiveness to farmer demand and local agro-ecological conditions and markets and a time-consuming, didactic and teacher-centered style of learning. The availability of off-farm employment opportunities has resulted in traditional labour-intensive agriculture techniques becoming unattractive or uneconomic. Credit costs are high for all farmers and the poorest and most vulnerable are subject to poorer access, higher interest rates and the risk of losing their land (as collateral) in the event of crop failure. Therefore, a focus on one production input, for example irrigation, is not sufficient: improved and resilient agricultural livelihoods require a comprehensive strategy of support matched to local circumstances and ensuring that constraints of water, land, labour, technology and credit can all be overcome.

Many of the rice species adopted in Cambodia have a fixed flowering period (some in the matter of a week) during which sufficient moisture level in soil is critical for good harvest. The large majority (about 90%) of rainfall occurs during May to October, which is precisely why rice is cultivated during this time. However, there is commonly a dry period during the wet season,

typically in July/August but with large variance from year to year. This drought period can cause significant reduction in crop yields if it occurs at an unfavourable time. Alternatively, farmers may wait to plant their rice crop until the drought period has passed. Climate change, which is characterized by large variability in rainfall, is likely to bring about larger uncertainty around the occurrence of dry spells during the monsoon seasons. In addition, shortages of general production inputs continue to contribute to the underlying vulnerability of farmers. Extension services are generally understaffed and available primarily at the provincial level and their outreach limited, and farm mechanization, fertilizer use and access to affordable farm credits are all at suboptimal level.

The high vulnerability of rural Cambodians to climate change has social as well as technical causes. Weak local institutions and a limited tradition of community solidarity (beyond the immediate kinship network) are caused or exacerbated by historical factors. Decades of armed conflicts have severely weakened traditional customs regulating land use, and access to natural resources, including land and water, is determined by wealth, position and power, with the most disadvantaged often excluded from productive resources. At the same time, modern institutions handling disputes remain weak. The key barriers that the SRL project document has identified in relation to climate change vulnerabilities in rural areas in Cambodia are:

- Financial barrier – Limited financial latitude for sub-national administrations and communities to for resilient livelihoods
- Capacity and institutional barriers – Insufficient integration of climate risks into sub-national development planning
- Institutional barrier – Misaligned incentives for promoting climate-sensitive at sub-national level
- Human resources barrier – Technical capacity constraints for climate-resilient agriculture and water infrastructure design
- Coordination barrier – Fragmentation of development and adaptation services at the sub-national level
- Knowledge Management Barrier: Lack of effective, cross-comparable measurement of results and sharing of knowledge

Ultimately, the key issues that this project addresses are: limited capacity for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting, limited irrigation infrastructure and climate smart agriculture technologies; limited capacity of local communities to manage and protect water resources from climate impacts; women and children travel long distances to fetch water; limited technical capacity and skill of commune councils to integrate climate smart agriculture into commune investment plans.

2.3. Project Objective and Outcomes

The SRL project is designed to reduce the vulnerability of rural Cambodians, especially land-poor, landless and women-headed households, through investments in small-scale water management infrastructure, technical assistance to resilient agricultural practices, and capacity building support, especially targeting poor women, for improved food production in home gardens. These initiatives are delivered by sub-national governments (communes, districts and provinces) with a view to strengthening their overall capacity to plan, design and deliver public services for resilience building. The objective of the project is to improve sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution.

The Project Objective is “*Sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods are improved through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution.*” The objective reflects the strategic perception that the capacity of sub-national governments to support and provide services for climate change adaptation is an important pre-condition for sustainable improvements in resilience at the levels of communities, community assets (e.g. irrigation systems) and individual households.

The following are the three main outcomes and related outputs that the project is designed to achieve:

- **Outcome 1:** Climate Sensitive Planning, Budgeting and Execution at Sub-National Level Strengthened, builds on the existing system of development planning at District and Commune levels. In particular, mainstreaming of climate change adaptation in the plans and investment programmes of ten Districts and their constituent Communes will be supported. Technical capacity for climate sensitive agriculture extension and for planning and implementation of climate resilient infrastructure investments will also be developed.
 - Output 1.1 Capacity of sub-national councils (communes and districts) and Planning and Commune Support Units in two provinces enhanced for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting
 - Output 1.2 Technical capacity of agricultural extension officers and grass-roots NGOs enhanced for climate-resilient livelihood techniques and sustainable assistance to communities
 - Output 1.3 Technical capacity to execute climate resilient water infrastructure design and construction enhanced for about 50 Government technical officials and private contractors
 - Output 1.4 Knowledge management platform for sub-national Climate Change Adaptation Planning and resilient livelihoods support established
- **Outcome 2:** Resilience of Livelihoods of the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfall, floods and droughts, will facilitate investments in small scale water management

infrastructure which will contribute to resilient agricultural production, in particular by overcoming unpredictable rainfall during the wet season. Beneficiaries will be members of vulnerable communities identified through the sub-national planning process and a detailed, participatory Farmer Needs Assessment will be carried out to identify suitable improvements to resilient agricultural livelihoods. Groups of poor and vulnerable women will be assisted to develop livelihood activities requiring only limited amounts of land and will receive complementary support for social capital building activities including leadership training and formation of savings groups.

- Output 2.1 Climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure designed and put in place in at least 10 districts following the resilient design standards specifically targeting rain-fed farmers
 - Output 2.2 Climate-resilient livelihood measures demonstrated in at least 10 districts targeting landless women and farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture
- **Outcome 3:** Enabling environment is enhanced at sub-national level to attract and manage greater volume of climate change adaptation finance for building resilience of rural livelihoods, will result in an improved system of performance assessment for climate change adaptation by sub-national governments, linked to the Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant awards that will co-finance infrastructure investments under Outcome 2. The capacity of the sub-national administrations to monitor, evaluate and plan improvements in capacity and performance for climate change adaptation will be strengthened.
 - Output 3.1 Performance-based adaptation financing mechanism is strengthened and applied in 10 districts covering 89 communes and integrated into the enhanced climate-smart development planning
 - Output 3.2 Capacity of Districts for self-monitoring of climate change adaptation and resilient livelihood support enhanced

2.4. Project Implementation Arrangements

The project is nationally implemented,⁴ with Cambodia's National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) as the Implementing Partner⁵ and a number of key technical ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Water Resources

⁴ National Implementation is an arrangement whereby the government, in principle, assumes full ownership and responsibility for the formulation and effective management, or execution, of all aspects of UNDP-assisted projects and programmes. It implies that all management aspects of the project are the responsibility of the national authority. However, the national authority remains accountable to UNDP for production of the outputs, achievement of objectives, use of resources provided by UNDP, and financial reporting. UNDP Cambodia in turn remains accountable for the use of resources to the UNDP Executive Board and the project donors.

⁵ The institutional set up will be explained in more detail further in this report, but it is important to mention that the Ministry of Environment (MoE) is part of the implementation process because its Department of Climate Change (DCC) serves as the Secretariat of the NCSD.

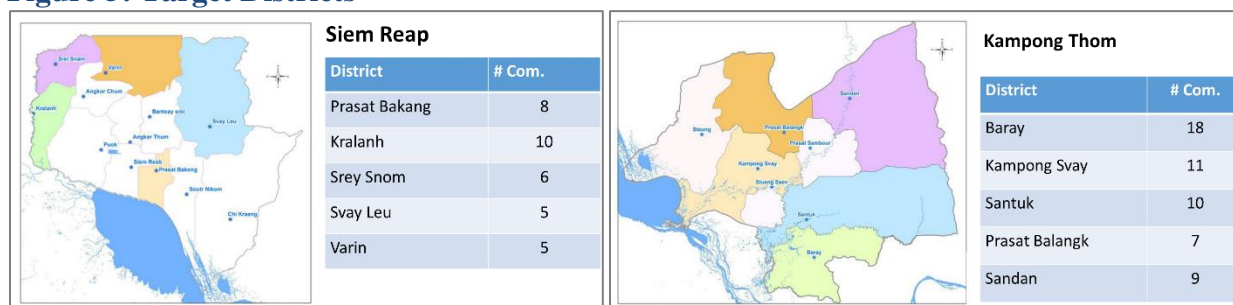
and Meteorology, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, etc., coordinated through a Technical Advisory Group. To ensure cross-sectoral integration, responsiveness to local needs and sustainability, sub-national activities of the project are integrated with the National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD) 2010-2019, under the coordination of NCDD-S. UNDP has two principal roles and responsibilities in the project: i) project quality assurance through a Project Advisor who provides independent oversight and monitoring functions; and, ii) financial and administrative support, including procurement, contracting, and payments, as needed.

The highest decision making body of the project is the Project Board, whose role and function is similar to that of the majority of UNDP-GEF projects. It provides strategic oversight and takes overall responsibility for project delivery. The board is responsible for reviewing and approving annual project reviews, work plans and budgets, technical documents and financial reports. It has met three times since the beginning of the project. Day to day management and implementation of the project is being carried out by the National Project Manager and the Project Management Unit (PMU). The PMU is responsible for the financial and administrative reporting, preparation of annual work plans, and drafting TOR for procurement, etc.

2.5. Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

The beneficiaries of the project are poor households in 89 communes located in 10 districts in the provinces of Siem Reap and Kampong Thom (see Figure 5 for the maps of targeted districts). These two provinces were identified as the project’s target provinces on the basis of an analysis of indicators of climate vulnerability and characteristics that matched the project focus on resilience of rain-fed agriculture livelihoods.

Figure 5: Target Districts



The main project stakeholders involved in the implementation of activities are the following (a more detailed list is shown in Annex VII of this report):

- ***National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD)***⁶ – NCSD is the project’s Implementing Partner. It is a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary coordinating body with the mandate to prepare, coordinate and monitor the implementation of policies, strategies, legal instruments, plans and programmes related to climate change.⁷ NCSD is a relatively new institution – at the time of the project formulation, the institution that was foreseen to play the role of the Implementing Partner was the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC). However, NCCC was disbanded in 2015 and its functions were taken over by NCSD.
- ***Ministry of Environment (MoE)*** – MoE is responsible for leading and coordinating government policies and programmes related to environmental protection and climate change. The Climate Change Office was established in MoE in 2003, and in 2009 was upgraded to the Department of Climate Change (DCC).⁸ DCC was designated to serve as the secretariat for the NCCC, but after the creation of the NCSD it has been acting as its General Secretariat (GSSD).
- ***National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development – Secretariat (NCDD-S)*** – NCDD is an inter-ministerial coordinating body, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for the decentralization reform. NCDD’s primary mandate is to strengthen institutions at the sub-national level – provinces, districts, and communes. NCDD’s Secretariat is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD) and its associated three-year implementation plans called IP3.⁹ NCDD-S is also responsible for mainstreaming climate change into sub-national development process and ensuring alignment with the Cambodia’s Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCSP). NCDD is the project’s responsible party for sub-national operations: provision of funding and technical assistance to sub-national administrations, integrated within the provisions of the NP-SNDD.
- ***Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)***¹⁰ – MAFF supports the development of technical guidelines for climate-smart agriculture and master training of

⁶ NCSD is supported by a General Secretariat (GSSD), with its office at the Ministry of Environment.

⁷ NCSD comprises high-level representatives (Secretaries and Under-Secretaries of State) of relevant ministries and agencies, with the Prime Minister as its Honorary Chair and the Minister of Environment as its Chair.

⁸ DCC has five units: the Administration Office; the GHG Inventory and Mitigation Office, the Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Office; the Policy Coordination Office and the Education and Outreach Office.

⁹ The ten-year NP-SNDD is focused on developing accountable and democratic sub-national governments, with clearly assigned functions, budgets and personnel dedicated to improving service delivery for the citizens’ benefit.

¹⁰ MAFF consists of five technical units: General Directorate of Agriculture (GDA), General Directorate of Animal Health and Production (GDAHP), Fisheries Administration (FiA), Forestry Administration (FA), and General Directorate of Rubber (GDR). Operating under GDA, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) is charged with contributing to the improvement of food security, rural income and agricultural production in Cambodia. DAE adopts and uses the participatory training and extension approach and methodology for delivering and transferring agricultural knowledge, information and technology including farming system development, farmer organization development and extension and household food security.

extension agents. It also provides technical support to Outcome 2 activities through the Technical Facilitation Committees at Province and District level.

- ***Ministry of Planning (MoP)*** – MoP cooperates with NCDD-S in the preparation of the guidelines for mainstreaming climate change adaptation in sub-national planning. MoP assists NCDD-S in analyzing data from the commune database and the household survey in order to prepare the District Vulnerability Analysis scorecards and maps.
- ***Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM)*** – MoWRAM cooperates with NCDD-S in developing and validating guidelines for climate resilient infrastructure (particularly for irrigation) and preparation of training materials. MoWRAM assists NCDD-S in monitoring the quality of irrigation infrastructure constructed under the project's Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant financing (more on this further in this report).
- ***Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)*** – MoWA provides advice on mainstreaming of gender in climate sensitive planning. It monitors implementation of the project's gender strategy through its Provincial Departments and District Offices. MoWA also advises on appropriate livelihood activities for poor and vulnerable women and makes available relevant training materials.
- ***Sub-national governments¹¹*** – Provincial, district and commune governments play a crucial role in the implementation of project's planning and livelihood activities. Key technical agencies at provincial level are the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology, Provincial Department of Women's Affairs and Provincial Department of Planning. These provincial departments and their respective District Offices cooperate through a working group which is convened under the mandate of the Technical Cooperation Committee (TCC). The key role of the TCC at both levels includes the formulation of the development plans and investment programmes.

¹¹ At the level of the Province and the District, technical coordination between sectoral agencies and the sub-national administrations is achieved through the Technical Facilitation Committee (TFC) established under the Organic Law.

3. FINDINGS

While the amount of information generated by this review was large, the findings presented in this chapter cover only the project's most essential aspects and are to some extent focused on those issues that require improvement and the attention of project stakeholders. The MTR's findings are organized in the following sections: i) Project Design; ii) Project Implementation; and, iii) Project Results.

3.1. Project Design

This section examines the project's logic and design features by focusing on the adequacy of elements like the results framework, management arrangements, identification of risks and assumptions, use of lessons derived from other projects, linkages with relevant UNDP or donor projects, UNDP's comparative advantage in the area, planned stakeholder engagement, replication approach and exit strategies, etc. The main questions that drive the analysis presented in this section are shown in Box 2 below.

Box 2: Key Issues Related to Project Design

The key questions driving the analysis in this section are:

- Whether the project has a sound logic with outcomes flowing from activities and the latter driven by project objectives.
- Whether assumptions and risks were adequately identified at the outset of the project.
- Whether lessons learned from the earlier NCSA project and other UNDP interventions were incorporated into the project design.
- Whether the project's linkages to other relevant projects in the UNDP portfolio or by other donors were properly identified and capitalized on.
- Whether UNDP's comparative advantages were adequately exploited.
- Whether stakeholder consultation was an essential part of the project incorporated from the project design phase.
- Whether the replication approach was sound, and an exit strategy was clearly identified.
- Whether management arrangements were properly identified, with roles and responsibilities adequately determined prior to project approval.

It is important to emphasize here that the following discussion does not pertain to how the project was implemented, but only to how it was designed.

3.1.1. Analysis of the Project Document and Planning Matrix

Work on the development of the SRL project started in 2013 and all the necessary approvals were received by 2016. Actual implementation started in early 2017. During this period, the project design underwent multiple changes to accommodate diverse views from concerned stakeholders.

Overall, the project document is well-structured and quite comprehensive in terms of the expected actions that it proposes. It provides a thorough and consistent analysis of the country context and the needs to be addressed, and identifies a clear set of objectives and activities for the project to pursue.

- The *analysis of the context and the problem* is quite thorough. Linkages between climate change and impacts on agriculture are drawn adequately. Further, links between agriculture and rural livelihoods, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups, are clearly identified. The project document contains a dedicated section that analyzes in great detail the root causes of climate change vulnerabilities, be they social or technical. The analysis includes the coverage of irrigation, quality of existing irrigation schemes, rice varieties adopted in the country, etc. The analysis also examines how local institutions and community solidarity (beyond the immediate kinship network) are weakened or exacerbated by a previous history of armed conflict that has severely weakened traditional customs regulating land use. Access to natural resources, including land and water, is largely determined by wealth, position and power, with the most disadvantaged often excluded from productive resources. At the same time, modern institutions handling disputes remain weak.
- The project document further identifies *long term solutions and barriers* to achieving the project's objective. To meet the challenge of climate change, resilience of agricultural livelihoods must be strengthened through actions at multiple levels: introduction of more resilient agriculture technology at the farm enterprise level; improvement of household incomes so that households can build up assets that provide a safety cushion in case of climate related shocks; improved access to services including credit and insurance; and, increased social capital through strengthening of community organizations. On the other hand, to reciprocate these actions, the existing sub-national system also needs to transform the way it supports them. For example, investments in infrastructure and services to improve climate resilience of rural livelihoods are in the realm of public services. The quality and quantity of such public services, and the way in which such services are designed and delivered, are not currently sufficient to prepare rural households to take up the challenge of climate change. The project document identifies the following barriers:
 - Financial barrier – Limited financial latitude for sub-national administrations and communities to for resilient livelihoods

- Capacity and institutional barriers – Insufficient integration of climate risks into sub-national development planning
 - Institutional barrier – Misaligned incentives for promoting climate-sensitive at sub-national level
 - Human resources barrier – Technical capacity constraints for climate-resilient agriculture and water infrastructure design
 - Coordination barrier – Fragmentation of development and adaptation services at the sub-national level
 - Knowledge Management Barrier: Lack of effective, cross-comparable measurement of results and sharing of knowledge
- The ***logic of the proposed intervention*** is clear and quite well-targeted to the removal of barriers identified above. It is based on a comparative assessment of a range of interventions in climate resilient agriculture conducted by SNV (Netherlands-based international NGO). The highest ranked interventions were found to be drip irrigation; the climate change resilient cropping system developed by ACIAR¹²; followed by the introduction of improved rice seed varieties, irrigation infrastructure supported by CAVAC and Save the Earth's building micro insurance scheme. These interventions were found to be complementary rather than exclusive. The SNV report especially emphasized the importance of providing technical training as a complementary investment to irrigation infrastructure. In order to enhance livelihood resilience to climate change in the long-run, the project design is focused on the improvement of management and use of locally available water resources for agriculture, which includes irrigation for dry season cropping, efficient use of rainfall and surface water in the wet season through better storage and distribution systems, introduction of resilient seed varieties and changing cropping patterns to allow two wet season crops (either two rice crops or rice plus another field crop), etc. The project design is focused on small-scale, locally-adaptive water management infrastructure including distribution canals, control structures and small storage reservoirs. This approach assists farmers to increase and diversify their farm income while reducing the risk of crop failure. The project document is also focused on strengthened extension support, diffusion of a diverse range of seeds and off-farm livelihood opportunities.
 - The ***project's goal*** is adequately defined and responds to a clearly identified problem. The outcomes (three in total) and outputs (eight in total) are clearly formulated and are well-connected with each other (see Box 3 below for a brief summary of project outcomes and outputs). For each outcome area, the project document provides a quite detailed and very

¹² The ACIAR-developed climate resilient cropping system is based on making better use of existing local and on-farm water resources including seasonal rainfall patterns. The system replaces the traditional single, long-maturing rice crop with two short-maturing crops which may be improved rice varieties, or rice plus an alternative cash crop.

useful baseline which lays out in clear terms the situation in the country in relation to that specific outcome.

Box 3: Outcomes and Outputs Identified in the Project's Logical Framework

The following are the three main outcomes and related outputs that the project is designed to achieve:

- **Outcome 1:** Climate Sensitive Planning, Budgeting and Execution at Sub-National Level Strengthened, builds on the existing system of development planning at District and Commune levels. In particular, mainstreaming of climate change adaptation in the plans and investment programmes of ten Districts and their constituent Communes will be supported. Technical capacity for climate sensitive agriculture extension and for planning and implementation of climate resilient infrastructure investments will also be developed.
 - Output 1.1 Capacity of sub-national councils (communes and districts) and Planning and Commune Support Units in two provinces enhanced for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting
 - Output 1.2 Technical capacity of agricultural extension officers and grass-roots NGOs enhanced for climate-resilient livelihood techniques and sustainable assistance to communities
 - Output 1.3 Technical capacity to execute climate resilient water infrastructure design and construction enhanced for about 50 Government technical officials and private contractors
 - Output 1.4 Knowledge management platform for sub-national Climate Change Adaptation Planning and resilient livelihoods support established
- **Outcome 2:** Resilience of Livelihoods of the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfall, floods and droughts, will facilitate investments in small scale water management infrastructure which will contribute to resilient agricultural production, in particular by overcoming unpredictable rainfall during the wet season. Beneficiaries will be members of vulnerable communities identified through the sub-national planning process and a detailed, participatory Farmer Needs Assessment will be carried out to identify suitable improvements to resilient agricultural livelihoods. Groups of poor and vulnerable women will be assisted to develop livelihood activities requiring only limited amounts of land and will receive complementary support for social capital building activities including leadership training and formation of savings groups.
 - Output 2.1 Climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure designed and put in place in at least 10 districts following the resilient design standards specifically targeting rain-fed farmers
 - Output 2.2 Climate-resilient livelihood measures demonstrated in at least 10 districts targeting landless women and farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture
- **Outcome 3:** Enabling environment is enhanced at sub-national level to attract and manage greater volume of climate change adaptation finance for building resilience of rural livelihoods, will result in an improved system of performance assessment for climate change adaptation by sub-national governments, linked to the Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant awards that will co-finance infrastructure investments under Outcome 2. The capacity

of the sub-national administrations to monitor, evaluate and plan improvements in capacity and performance for climate change adaptation will be strengthened.

- Output 3.1 Performance-based adaptation financing mechanism is strengthened and applied in 10 districts covering 89 communes and integrated into the enhanced climate-smart development planning
- Output 3.2 Capacity of Districts for self-monitoring of climate change adaptation and resilient livelihood support enhanced

At the level of objectives, two indicators have been defined:

1. **Impact:** Percent increase in income from agriculture and linked activities of target smallholder households. This increase in income will arise from the combined effect of the project interventions in climate resilient agriculture, farmer organizations and infrastructure. Income will be measured using the major impact survey. Impact will be measured separately for poor and vulnerable women, for vulnerable commercial smallholders and for beneficiaries of infrastructure investments (who are not also participants in training).
2. **Sustainability:** Number of Districts and Communes integrating CCA in their development plans and investment programmes following MoP & NCDDDS guidelines. This is taken as a proxy indicator of the enhanced capacity of the sub-national administrations to continue to support interventions to reduce vulnerability in the future.

It is important to note that two additional elements of *coverage* and *replicability* are included in the project document to be monitored throughout the implementation phase of the project.

1. **Coverage** is to be assessed through the number of smallholder households with reduced vulnerability. It is assumed that all households participating directly in project activities or benefitting from improved infrastructure will experience reduced vulnerability as a result, i.e. this is a measure of the number of direct beneficiaries and does not attempt to measure the scale of reduction in vulnerability.
2. **Replicability** is to be assessed through the number of lessons learned codified and published in knowledge products. It is assumed that lessons learned through project implementation and robustly evaluated through the knowledge platform activities will be capable of replication in other areas of Cambodia.

There are two indicators selected to measure the achievement of Outcome 1: Climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution at the sub-national level strengthened

- Number of District and Commune Investment Programmes that include specific budgets for adaptation actions
- Number of engineers and technicians (public sector, private sector and civil society) trained in delivery of climate resilient water infrastructure;

For Outcome 2 (Resilience of livelihoods for the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfalls, floods and droughts), the first indicator measures the number of climate resilient infrastructure schemes supported by PBCRG. The second indicator measures adoption rates for resilient livelihood measures.

- Number of resilient infrastructure measures introduced to prevent economic loss and co-financed by Commune/Sangkat Fund
- Indicator: % of targeted households (gender disaggregated) that have adopted resilient livelihoods under existing and projected climate change

For Outcome 3 (Incentive mechanism is in place at sub-national level to manage greater volume of climate change adaptation financing aligned with local development plans), the indicator measures the success of the project in introducing an improved system of performance measurement and performance-based grant financing.

- Fiscal incentive structure that incorporates adaptation as climate change risk management (i.e Performance Measurement for PBCRG) successfully introduced.

Overall, the project's results framework (shown in Annex V) is coherent and provides a good results-chain logic: outputs, outcomes and objectives. Also, indicators, baselines and targets are generally adequate and well-identified.

While the logic of the project is solid, there are three design aspects which could have been formulated and integrated more adequately into the project document.

1. Insufficient Financing for Infrastructure Projects

The MTR mission in the target districts and communes found that the financing available from the project for the water infrastructure projects was limited. Also, the amount of co-financing by local authorities was limited, especially in small and remote communities. What compounded things further was that in some locations the real needs and priorities of the commune identified in the commune development plan (i.e. rural roads) were different from the project's targeted intervention (i.e. irrigation system). Consequently, funds were sometimes insufficient and could only cover a section of an infrastructure project selected by the project (i.e. half of an irrigation canal), resulting in infrastructure that was only partly rehabilitated. This is something that could have been addressed more adequately at the project's design stage by foreseeing larger amounts of funding for fewer infrastructure projects. A larger allocation of funding would have guaranteed more scale and impact.

2. Weak Capacities at the Sub-national Level

The capacities of the district and commune governments appeared to be quite weak in the locations visited for the MTR. The administration at this level is quite small – sometimes consisting of just a couple of staff, in addition to the appointed council. Furthermore, newly

appointed council members are inexperienced, especially on management and technical issues like development planning and the management of investment projects. One question that emerged from the field visits in the two provinces is whether these administrations will be able to sustain project activities in the long run without further support from the project or other actors. Formulating development and investment plans and managing investments in physical infrastructure is a demanding task that requires manpower and significant technical capacity. The sustainability of some of the project interventions, given the small size of local governments, is not guaranteed. The type of training and coaching provided by the SRL project will need to be sustained beyond the project's end.

3. Building on Existing Community Groups

During the field visit to some of the villages, it was noted that the SRL project was supporting the creation of a significant number of community groups (savings' groups, farmers' groups, women's groups, etc.) in places where already some groups had been established by previous projects. These existing groups appeared to be generally weak. The question that emerged in this context was whether the focus on the creation of new groups was adequate, given that alternatively the project could have supported the strengthening of existing groups. Creating new groups where existing ones are already in place and struggling is not the best investment of resources. So, from this perspective, at the design stage of the SRL project, a more thorough analysis could have been conducted of the existing community groups in the targeted locations, their experiences and challenges, and opportunities for strengthening their sustainability. This would have served two purposes – first, the formulation of the SRL project would have benefited from a more detailed understanding and analysis of the experience of these groups, including their challenges, shortcomings, but also good practices, and, second, the SRL project could have had a more significant focus on strengthening existing structures, rather on creating new groups.

These design shortcomings did have an impact subsequently during the implementation stage as will be discussed further in this report. Apart from these challenges, it can be concluded that overall the project design and strategy has been adequate and, most importantly, appropriate and relevant for the context in which the project operated.

3.1.2. Assumptions and Risks

The project document identifies a set of major risks facing the project and associated assumptions. The Project Document identified the following risks and associated assumptions:

Project Objective Risks

1. Large scale climate resilience building investments, such as SPCR, channeled through sectoral budget allocation, undermine the incentives for climate resilient planning perceived by SNAs

- a. Potential Consequence: Climate resilience planning is not effective because of insufficient engagement (i.e. plans would be prepared as per guidelines but quality would be weak)
- 2. Power dynamics and political-economic structure at the sub-national level undermine the adaptive impacts of the LDCF investments
 - a. Potential Consequence: resources could be allocated to purposes that do not strengthen climate resilience of local livelihoods

Outcome 1 Risks

- 3. The cycle of sub-national development planning process limits the window through which climate risks are mainstreamed.
 - a. Potential Consequence: CCA is not mainstreamed into sub-national development plans with support from the LDCF project as intended, because the timing of preparation of these plans is not compatible with the project timeline.
- 4. Insufficient extension agents with required basic skills/learning potential
 - a. Potential Consequence: Trainees in the climate resilient extension training lack adequate basic skills in agriculture and/or adult learning techniques. This could then reduce the availability of effective extension agents for Output 2.2
- 5. Insufficient engineers/technicians with suitable skills and learning potential
 - a. Potential Consequence: Trainees do not have sufficient basic technical skills to absorb the climate resilient infrastructure training, with the result that there are insufficient technical staff to support Output 2.1

Outcome 2 Risks

- 6. Quality and cost-effectiveness of sub-projects undermined by collusive practices
 - a. Potential Consequence: Winning bid prices are artificially high or bid prices are appropriate but sub-standard work is accepted for payment. Experience with the CSF projects indicates the second consequence is a greater concern.
- 7. MAFF and MoWRAM unable to agree on integrated agriculture (AC) and irrigation (FWUC) responsibilities for FO
 - a. Potential Consequence: FWUC are limited in their scope of activities and thus in the level of ownership and engagement of the farmers, while cooperatives with closely overlapping membership but different leadership are formed for agriculture purposes
- 8. New techniques fail to demonstrate benefits within short timescale (e.g. because of exceptional weather)
 - a. Potential Consequence: Farmers disillusioned and unwilling to invest time and resources in developing climate resilient agriculture.
- 9. Material support too complex to administer or creates perverse incentives

- a. Potential Consequence (too complex): project staff seek ways to simplify which undermine the conditionality and other design features.
- b. Potential Consequence (Perverse Incentives): farmers participate in trainings in order to obtain material support (e.g. cash, inputs) for its own sake even if they have no real interest in investing time and resources in the climate resilient production technique.

Outcome 3 Risks

- 10. Weaker or more disadvantaged districts unable to meet performance targets and therefore cannot access full amounts of PBCRG
 - a. Potential Consequence: Weak districts do not receive funds and therefore become disillusioned and cease to strive for improvement; most disadvantaged communities are deprived of access to funds.

At the inception phase, the Project Team identified communal elections of June 2017 as an additional risk that required the project team's attention, because commune councilors (many of them active members of political parties) were likely to prioritize political campaigns over project implementation. Also, changes in council membership, bringing in new and inexperienced councilors, were expected as a result of the election.

Overall, the risks described above have been correctly identified in the Project Document. One important risk that is not identified at the project design stage, and which with hindsight appears to have been a significant one, is the weak capacity of sub-national administrations (at the district and commune level). While insufficient capacities of extension workers and engineers are taken into account by the project document, the administrative capacities of local governments are not included in the analysis. As mentioned in the previous section, based on observations from the MTR field visits in the targeted districts, the capacity of local governments seems to have been a significant challenge with direct implications for the sustainability of the interventions. This will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of this report.

3.1.3. Lessons from Other Relevant Projects Incorporated into the Project Design

The design of the SRL project has benefited from lessons learned from previous and ongoing projects supporting local climate change adaptation initiatives. Among the most important of these are the “NAPA Follow Up” (NAPA-FU) project¹³ in Kratie and Preah Vihear provinces and the Cambodia Community Based Adaptation Programme (CCBAP) project which supported climate change adaptation interventions through local NGOs. Both projects have demonstrated success in specific technical approaches to local climate change adaptation, and both have

¹³ Title of the project: “Promoting Climate Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices in Rural Cambodia” (2009-2013).

piloted versions of the Vulnerability Reduction Assessment (VRA) process, initially developed under NAPA-FU.¹⁴ The VRA process, along with District Climate Resilience Strategies and Performance Based Climate Resilience (PBCR) grants, was also piloted by NCDD-S' pilot Local Governments and Climate Change (LGCC) project in eight Districts/Municipalities.

The project has also benefited from the experience of NCDD-S in piloting PBCR grants for climate change adaptation investments by sub-national authorities (SNA) through the ASPIRE programme of IFAD. Another project that was identified in the SRL project document to have strong potential complementary to the SRL project is UNCDF's LoCAL programme, funded by Swedish SIDA and implemented through NCDD-S.

The project document also identifies ADB's SPCR programme for capacity building (which included PBCR grants of \$1.2 million for 4 Districts in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey) and a Capacity Building and Disaster Risk Reduction facility, also supported by ADB (\$2.9 million for 5 provinces including Kampong Thom and Siem Reap). Coordination of these efforts through NCDD-S was identified as an opportunity for sharing lessons learned and innovative approaches.

Lessons learned from past and ongoing initiatives were incorporated into the project design in the following ways:

- The need for an integrated approach to planning support, including introduction and/or upgrading of planning tools to assist SNA to link identified climate change vulnerabilities to actionable plans and budgets;
- The importance of building adequate technical capacity at the sub-national level so that local CCA investments can be implemented to a high standard;
- The importance of learning, including careful measurement of results, and sharing of knowledge amongst stakeholders;
- The need to ensure that sectoral inputs are coordinated and responsive to local needs, for example by making agriculture support and irrigation investments work together;
- The need to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable are not excluded due to their lack of economic resources; and,
- The value of performance incentives, but the need to ensure that these are based on robust, objective and relevant performance measures and do not unfairly penalize the most disadvantaged SNA.

Overall, the SRL project document provides a thorough analysis of previous and ongoing efforts related to climate change adaptation, especially in the water and agriculture sectors. The project design has benefited from a large amount of information available from these previous initiatives and draws on their experience and lessons learned.

¹⁴ The first LDCF-financed project (locally known as the NAPA follow-up project), implemented by MoWRAM and MAFF with UNDP assistance and introduced Vulnerability Reduction Assessments (VRA) into the five-year Commune Development Plan and annual Investment Programme formulation process in 16 pilot communes.

3.1.4. UNDP's Comparative Advantage

The SRL Project Document identifies some of UNDP's comparative advantages in the area of sustainable development which represent potential for high-impact work. UNDP's comparative advantage arises primarily from its strong, multi-disciplinary country presence, a track record of engagement with key stakeholders at policy and project levels over a long period, and institutional experience in implementing previous and ongoing projects on climate change adaptation and strengthening sub-national governance, which presents an important baseline for this project. UNDP is recognized as a partner of choice by the government based on its timely and significant contributions to the country's development agenda.

UNDP's vast experience enables it to build on previous achievements and apply the lessons learnt to new challenges. Combined with the good image, effective financial system control, procurement systems, close links and trusted partnership with government and non-governmental partners, this experience allows UNDP to ensure continuity in the circumstances of the frequent institutional changes. Box 4 summarizes some key advantages of UNDP in the implementation of environmental projects.

Box 4: Key Elements of UNDP's Comparative Advantage

- UNDP boasts excellent partnerships with the government, civil society, private sector, research institutes, etc. National stakeholders value UNDP for its neutrality and impartiality. The trust and respect commanded by UNDP and the access it has to government officials, as well as civil society, place UNDP in a good position to play a strong advocacy role on the one hand, and, on the other, to undertake pioneering initiatives.
- UNDP has extensive experience supporting capacity development initiatives of national governments and other stakeholders through advocacy, policy advisory, and technical assistance services. Implementation of this project benefited from the experience and technical support UNDP provided as a specialist in capacity development.
- Its global experience and lessons learned in the same sectors in many countries around the world and in the region in particular, provide UNDP with a distinct advantage. When needed, UNDP is able to mobilize support from a range of UNDP and UN structures. Its access to a vast global network of experts allows it to tap into comparative experiences and technical support from other regions. UNDP's regional office, in particular, provides technical support to numerous projects across a number of areas. Regional technical advisors assist with project formulation and input into the development of the logical frameworks, recruitment of international experts, identification of key stakeholders, etc.
- UNDP has extensive experience and capabilities related to regional cooperation. A significant part of UNDP's work is regional (multi-country) in nature. It has great capabilities for promoting south-south and triangular cooperation and can mobilize technical expertise to develop a suitable regional knowledge platform.
- UNDP's strong record of working with GEF on climate change adaptation and environmental

projects allows it to capitalize on valuable GEF expertise in these sectors. UNDP has one of the largest portfolios of GEF-funded projects in the world. The experience and capacity that this implies is a significant comparative advantage in developing and implementing such types of projects.

- Another one of UNDP's strengths is its broad-based development approach focused on strengthening national capacities for sustainable development through the integration and mainstreaming of various development aspects. SDGs are used by UNDP as an integrating platform for all development efforts in various countries and as an instrumental for engaging with a wide spectrum of stakeholders, which has proven to be a critical factor of success in many instances.
- UNDP's extensive experience in Cambodia is one of its strongest assets and a huge comparative advantage when it comes to delivering development programmes at the sub-national level. Long established partnerships with sub-national partners are crucial for ensuring smooth implementation, sustainability and replication of various initiatives. Also, UNDP has a lot of experience helping communities develop local initiatives and bankable proposals.

UNDP has engaged with Cambodia's MoE since its establishment in 1993 and was the first development partner to provide core support to policy and implementation on climate change in Cambodia since 1999. Key aspects of this support have included support to preparation of the Initial and Second National Communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) and the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), support to Cambodia Climate Change Alliance (CCCA) including management of the CCCA Trust Fund, support to preparation of the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP), etc. UNDP was the first GEF designated agency to be invited by the government to support the implementation of the LDCF financed "NAPA-FU" project and the institutional review of the Ministry of Environment under the new government mandate. UNDP's engagement in the area of climate change adaptation builds on strong foundations of cooperation and partnership with MoE and other key stakeholders.

In the area of local governance support, UNDP also has a long history of engagement with and support to decentralization initiatives in Cambodia, reaching back to the launch of the Seila Programme in 1996 with support from the CAREERE2¹⁵ project. UNDP has supported the development of key policies and legislation and provided assistance through a number of project facilities. Further, UNDP has provided technical assistance for enhancing the use of data (e.g. the MDG Scorecards) in the sub-national planning system and has provided support to NCDD-S for climate change adaptation in local planning, including technical assistance for mainstreaming climate change in the formal planning guidelines as well as support to climate vulnerabilities (the

¹⁵ Title: Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project.

“Scale-Up” project). Through NAPA-FU, UNDP has supported improved technical guidelines for climate resilient irrigation. UNDP has also supported the capacity development of the District and Commune Councils through the Local Council Association (formerly the National League of Communes and Sangkats). Having received initial support from an EU-UNDP supported programme “Democratic and Decentralized Local Governance”, this organization increasingly takes responsibility for capacity development for elected councilors.

Finally, UNDP’s role as the coordinating agency for the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Cambodia and its strong knowledge management capacities lend it an advantage in ensuring the effective learning of lessons and sharing of knowledge in local climate change adaptation initiatives and mainstreaming of climate change in local development planning.

3.1.5. Planned Stakeholder Participation

A broad-based stakeholder participation process was inherent in the design of the SRL project, given that it was intended to facilitate partnerships with a broad-spectrum of stakeholders in different areas related to sustainable development. The project document contains a section that outlines the “Stakeholder Involvement Plan” which lists the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders having a role as partners and beneficiaries of the project. The project document lists the following stakeholders for engagement.

- Ministries and other public agencies with a mandate to support sub-national development and climate change adaptation. This includes all the government agencies involved in project implementation either as Responsible Parties or through their participation in the Climate Change Technical Team.
- Development Partners supporting climate change adaptation, sub-national democratic development and rural livelihoods. This is a quite large and diverse group including multilateral and bilateral agencies (e.g. IFAD, FAO, SIDA, EU, World Bank, ADB, etc.);
- Project staff of projects with similar areas of activity (e.g. ASPIRE, USAID-HARVEST, projects supported under CCBAP, etc.);
- NGOs active in climate change adaptation and rural livelihoods support (e.g. SNV, CEDAC, iDE and numerous others);
- Farmer Organizations;
- Private sector entities, including micro-finance institutions and potentially, companies selling agriculture inputs to or buying produce from smallholder farmers.

The project document also elaborates upon the ways in which the project would engage various project stakeholders in activities. The main modalities of stakeholder engagement identified in the project document are:

- Project planning and review workshops: external stakeholders will be invited to these events at national and provincial level;
- Participation by the project staff in workshops and discussion forums including the Climate Change Technical Meetings, etc.;
- The Knowledge Management Platform will provide a forum for stakeholders to share knowledge, analyze results, discuss issues and prototype new solutions;
- Presentation of lessons learned and knowledge products in seminars, followed by publication in multi-media formats including web content and hard copy;
- Presentation, review and validation of draft specific technical materials (e.g. extension materials, technical guidelines, etc.) for review in workshops and seminars to which external stakeholders will be invited;
- Sub-national development plans and investment programmes are developed through a participatory process including various types of consultation event. A particularly notable example is the District Integration Workshop which consolidates the investment programmes at Commune and District level with the planned activities of NGOs and other types of development actor.

The project document also provides a stakeholder engagement plan (reproduced in Table 3 below) which consists of a number of well-thought-out events that create significant opportunities for engagement with major stakeholders.

Table 3: Stakeholder engagement plan by component

Component	Title	Timing	Objective	Location	Target Participants
1.1	Provincial CCA Planning Workshop	Annually, before SNA planning process starts	Familiarize project agencies and other stakeholders with climate sensitive planning principles and process, and get feedback on progress	Provinces	Provincial technical agencies, NGOs, Farmer Organizations and private sector.
1.2	Validation Workshop for Climate Resilient Agriculture Materials	Year 1	Review and feedback on proposed Farmer Needs Assessment and climate resilient agriculture extension packages	Phnom Penh	MAFF technical agencies, agriculture sector programmes, farmer organizations.
1.3	Validation workshop for Climate Resilient Infrastructure materials	Year 1	Review and feedback on standards and training materials for climate resilient small-scale infrastructure development	Phnom Penh	MoWRAM and other technical agencies, NGOs
1.4	Knowledge Seminars	1 or 2 per year	Share knowledge, analyze results, present knowledge products, discuss issues and prototype solutions	Phnom Penh	Ministries, technical agencies, FO, NGOs and private sector

2.1	Annual PBCRG Allocation Workshop	Annually	Inclusive meeting to discuss and confirm priority uses of the District PBCRG	Districts	District and Commune Councils, technical offices, NGOs etc.
3.1	Workshop to validate the Performance Measurement system	Year 1	Presentation and review of performance measurement system for SNA climate change adaptation	Phnom Penh	Ministries, DPs involved in D&D, NGOs, others.
3.2	Performance Review Workshops	Annually	Result of self-evaluation and external assessment of CCA performance by SNA (includes result of Citizens Scorecard)	Provincial	Provincial, District, Commune, NGO stakeholders
ALL	Inception Workshop	Year 1	Presentation of project objectives and approach, initial work plan, stakeholder feedback	Phnom Penh	Project participating agencies/selected stakeholders
ALL	Annual Planning and Review Workshop	Years 2 - 4	Presentation of progress reports, work planning and stakeholder feedback. Includes announcement of PBCR Grant allocations for following year	Phnom Penh or target province	Project participating agencies and selected external stakeholders

3.1.6. Replication Approach

The project document adequately recognizes that the most appropriate and cost-effective interventions to develop climate resilient livelihoods (including identification of locations and beneficiaries, as well as suitable technologies) need to be identified case-by-case in response to local conditions and local needs. It also recognizes that this must be done through participation of local communities that are most knowledgeable about the risks of a changing climate. Also because of uncertainty about the precise nature of climate changes that will occur, as well as the potential for increased variability and frequency of extreme events, measures to strengthen resilience at the community and household level may be as important as technical responses calibrated directly to the predicted trends.

This project's contribution to the replicability of adaptation solutions/pilots pursued through its activities is the institutionalization of the processes and methodologies developed through the project. For example, the vulnerability assessments, planning tools, methodologies for the development of the investment plans, and a range of other instruments are being institutionalized through the involvement of NCDD-S, which is expected to carry over these tools in other districts and provinces not covered by the project. Through the lessons and best practices generated on the successful implementation of adaptation solutions to local problems, this type of piloting is expected to catalyze interventions on a larger scale elsewhere. The project

document notes that replicability will be monitored and assessed throughout the implementation of the project through the number of lessons learned codified and published in knowledge products. It is assumed that lessons learned through the project and robustly evaluated through the knowledge platform activities would be capable of replication in other locations.

For all its strengths in outlining the replication approach, the project document would have benefitted from a dedicated and more detailed section that describes in clearer terms what project aspects will be replicated elsewhere and how the replication process is going to unfold over time. For projects of this nature that are primarily meant to demonstrate institutional and technological solutions, the importance of a replication and upscaling strategy should not be underestimated.¹⁶ Given the number of projects UNDP operates in this area and the ubiquity of piloting in UNDP projects, it might be useful for UNDP and its government partners to conduct at some point a more thorough assessment of the way in which UNDP projects are replicated and up-scaled, identify good practices and develop a more coherent strategy that could be applied across projects. Some UNDP COs have done this and it has proven for them a useful exercise.

3.1.7. Management arrangements

The SRL project was designed to be nationally executed in accordance with UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM).¹⁷ Implementation was foreseen for a period of four years, beginning in the second quarter of 2015 and ending in the first quarter of 2019. Figure 6 (below) shows the SRL's management arrangements outlined in the project document.

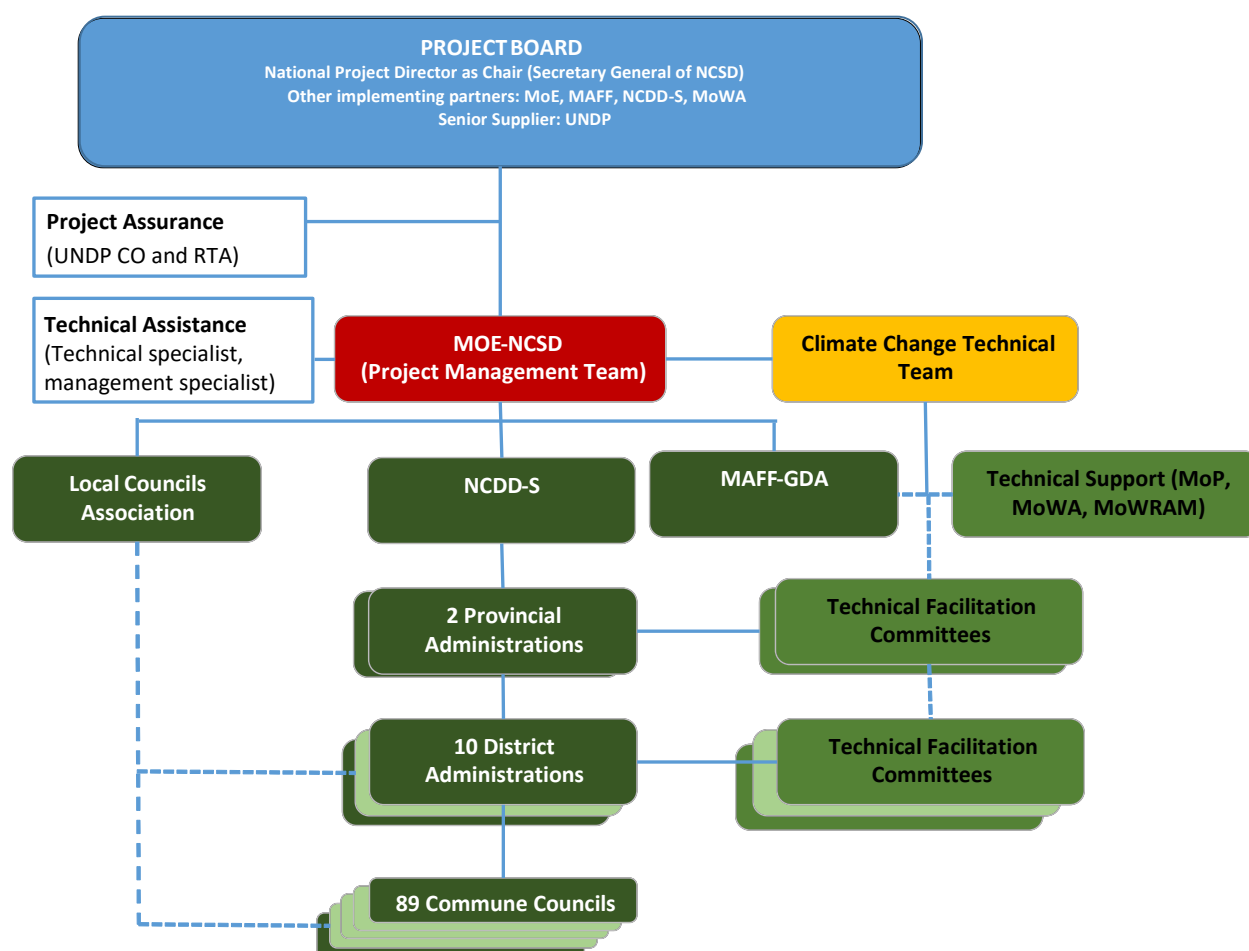
A Project Board (PB) was to be established to provide high-level guidance and oversight to the project. The PB is given responsibility for high-level management decisions and policy guidance, including recommendations and approval of project plans, budget and revisions. The PB would make its decisions in accordance with standards that ensure efficiency, cost-effectiveness, transparency, effective institutional coordination, and harmony with overall development policies and priorities of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), UNDP and development partners. The PB was to be chaired by a senior official of the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) and made up of senior representatives from key national implementing agencies, UNDP and other partner agencies. As has been mentioned, NCCC was taken over by the NCSD, whose General Secretary became the Project Director and the chair of the Project Board.

¹⁶ This idea is further developed in the "sustainability" section of this report.

¹⁷ National Implementation is an arrangement whereby the government, in principle, assumes full ownership and responsibility for the formulation and effective management, or execution, of all aspects of UNDP-assisted projects and programmes. It implies that all management aspects of the project are the responsibility of the national authority. However, the national authority remains accountable to UNDP for production of the outputs, achievement of objectives, use of resources provided by UNDP, and financial reporting. UNDP Cambodia in turn remains accountable for the use of resources to the UNDP Executive Board and the project donors.

The project document foresaw the recruitment of technical advisers and additional short-term consultants for specific tasks. TOR for these advisers are provided in the project document. The Project Management Team was to be assisted by a full-time Management Specialist responsible for assisting the Project Manager on the overall management of the project. Although the Management Specialist would be located in the PMU in the MoE, they were expected to also work closely with NCDD-S to support its implementation responsibilities.

Figure 6: Management Arrangements¹⁸



The project document foresaw that NCDD-S to be supported by three full-time national adviser positions: Climate Resilient Planning Adviser, Social and Gender Adviser and Infrastructure Adviser. The Climate Resilient Planning Adviser would support all aspects of NCDD-S implementation responsibilities with a particular focus on Outcome 1, and would also support development of capacity for climate sensitive planning nationally through the NP-SNDD. The

¹⁸ The organigram shown in the figure is the revised version of the project management structure, which happened at the inception stage to reflect changes in the country's governance structure.

Social and Gender Adviser would support and monitor implementation of the Project Gender Strategy and would advise on implementation of Output 2.1 (livelihood support for poor and vulnerable women), as well as advising on all aspects of community mobilization, group formation and support to farmer organizations (Output 2.3). The Infrastructure Adviser would support implementation of Output 1.3 (technical standards for climate resilient infrastructure) and would support the Provincial Infrastructure Advisers to ensure the technical quality of infrastructure works.

The project document also foresaw that provincial administrations would be supported by a Provincial Project Adviser and a Provincial Infrastructure Adviser. The Provincial Infrastructure Adviser would support the Provincial Technical Review Committee to ensure the technical quality of infrastructure works, as well as performing the wider role of technical support to project implementation.

The project document also states that UNDP is expected to assign a Technical Specialist, recruited internationally, who will be responsible to ensure the technical synergy with other ongoing, related projects. At the implementation stage, the Project Board decided not to proceed with the recruitment of an international adviser.

Overall, the project document provides a clear and effective set up of the project in terms of management arrangements. Responsibilities, functions and duties are clearly identified and effectively structured. Although during the implementation stage there were modifications to the arrangements outlined in the project document, the model provided there served as a good basis for setting up the project upon its initiation.

3.2. Project Implementation

During these years of its lifetime, the project has gone through a number of important stages. The following is the chronology of key events that marked the project's conceptualization and implementation phases that have spanned the period 2013-2018.

- The Project Identification Form was submitted to GEF on 23 April 2013.
- The Preparation Grant was approved by GEF on 26 September 2013.
- The concept was approved by GEF on 24 October 2013.
- The project was approved for implementation on 25 March 2015.
- The LPAC Meeting was held on 21 November 2014.
- The project was initiated in July 2015.
- The project document was officially signed on 15 January 2016 by UNDP and the Implementing Partner, General Secretariat of NCSD.
- Mobilization for project implementation started in January/February 2017.
- The first Project Board meeting was held in January 2017
- The inception workshop was organized in March 2017.
- Mobilization of resources (i.e. recruitment of staff, experts, service providers, etc.) took place between March and May 2017.
- Full implementation of the project started *de facto* in the second quarter of 2017.
- The project inception report was finalized on October 2017.
- End date of the project in the Project Document was foreseen on 31 December 2019. Given, the late start of activities, expected end date is June 2020.

As had already been noted, the project is implemented through the National Implementation Modality (NIM), with overall ownership and accountability by the government. In the Project Document, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) was foreseen to assign implementation responsibilities to its Department of Climate Change, which also acted at that time as the Secretariat to the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC). However, in May 2015, the government reorganized its environmental governance system and as result of that process NCCC's functions were taken over by the newly-established National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), which comprises representatives of relevant government institutions, with the Prime Minister as its Honorary Chair and the Minister of Environment as its Chair (a brief description of the NCSD is provided in the box below). NCSD has a General Secretariat (GSSD), with its office at the Ministry of Environment and led by a General Secretary. As result of government restructuring, NCSD (GSSD) became the project Implementing Partner. The Secretary General of NCSD was appointed as the Project Director for SRL. He chairs the Project Board, which responsible for the supervision and direction of all project activities. The Project Board is responsible for all major decisions, including approval of work plans, reports, large procurement and financial transactions and recruitment of senior staff and advisers.

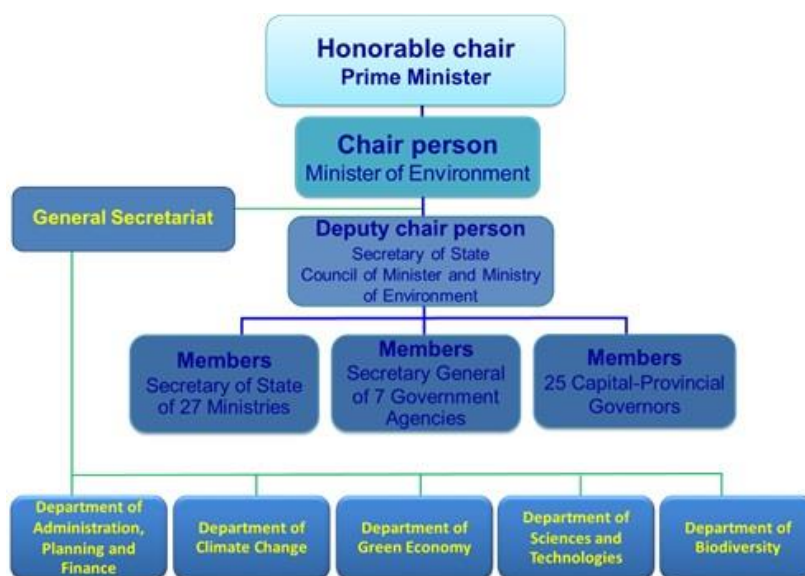
Box 5: Cambodia's National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD)¹⁹

In 2006, the Royal Government of Cambodia established the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC), a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary body with the mandate to prepare, coordinate and monitor the implementation of policies, strategies, legal instruments, plans and programmes related to climate change. With an amendment in 2014, the NCCC has functioned since its establishment as the inter-ministerial mechanism for coordination of climate change response in the country.

In May 2015, NCCC's functions were taken over by the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD). The Council comprises high-level representatives (Secretaries and Under-Secretaries of State) of concerned government ministries and agencies, with the Prime Minister as its Honorary Chair and the Minister of Environment as its Chair. Council membership has increased compared to the NCCC, covering a greater number of ministries and agencies, including provincial governors.

NCSD has made efforts to improve the coordination of climate change activities in Cambodia and to promote a stronger, comprehensive and effective climate change response, including the preparation of the Cambodian Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023, the Sectoral Climate Change Action Plans and the Climate Change Financing Framework.

The structure of the NCSD is show in the figure below.



NCSD has a General Secretariat (GSSD) with its office at the Ministry of Environment. GSSD have functions and duties as follow:

- Coordinate and perform day-to-day work in line with NCSD instructions and decisions;
- Develop NCSD programmes and work plans;
- Lead and coordinate implementation of NCSD programmes and work plans approved;
- Facilitate preparation of legal instruments, policy, strategic plans, action plans,

¹⁹ Description of NCSD is taken from <http://www.camclimate.org.kh/en/policies/ncsd-structure.html>.

programmes and projects related to sustainable development;

- Coordinate and support the implementation of legal instruments, policy, strategic plans, action plans, programmes and projects related to sustainable development and conduct review, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and reporting regularly;
- Mobilize and manage resources for implementation of legal instruments, policy, strategic plans, action plans, programmes and projects related to sustainable development;
- Propose establishment of mechanisms required for sectoral issues related to NCSD's roles and duties and provide support to regular operations of the mechanisms;
- Coordinate and support the strengthening of cooperation related to sustainable development with development partners, civil society, private sector, academia, and relevant stakeholders at national, regional and global levels;
- Lead and coordinate research and study, education, training and exchange of technologies related to sustainable development;
- Manage data and disseminate information related to sustainable development and NCSD's activities to the public;
- Review and study the possibility to participate in international agreements related to sustainable development for NCSD;
- Develop draft position papers and strategy for participation in international negotiations relevant to sustainable development;
- Facilitate preparation of national report in accordance with international agreements relevant to sustainable development to which Cambodia is a party;
- Participate in national, regional and international events on sustainable development;
- Manage NCSD's finance and budget;
- Organize meetings, take minutes and produce report of the NCSD; and,
- Develop monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, nine-monthly, and annual report for the NCSD;
- Perform any other duties as assigned by the NCSD and chairperson of the NCSD's Executive Committee.

Further, a Project Management Unit (PMU) was established in the premises of MoE, under the direction of the Project Director. PMU is an independent entity, but answerable to NCSD. It is also both supported and monitored by the GEF implementing agency (UNDP). The PMU is led by a Project Manager, who was hired by MoE/GSSD and reports to the Project Director. The PMU consists of a strong technical team of professionals, bringing together a broad range of skills and knowledge in the agriculture, water, pasture and capacity building areas.

The project's component related to the sub-national level is managed by the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD), an inter-ministerial coordinating body for decentralization reform (see Box 6 below for a brief description of NCDD). Established in 2008, NCDD is chaired by Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and supported by a Secretariat (NCDD-S). NCDD's primary mandate is to strengthen institutions at the sub-national level – provinces, districts/municipalities, and communes/sangkats. It is overall responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-

SNDD)²⁰ and its associated three-year implementation plans called IP3. NCDD-S has been working to mainstream climate changes into sub-national development process and ensure alignment with the Cambodia's Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP). Due to its focus on the sub-national level, NCDD-S has large access to local governments, which allows the project to implement regional activities. Funds for the PBCR grants allocated at the sub-national level are transferred from UNDP directly to NCDD-S on the basis of a mechanism established through a Letter of Agreement signed between the two parties in February 2017.

Box 6: National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development

Cambodia embarked on a process of Decentralization and Deconcentration (D&D) reform, beginning with the election of councils to govern Communes and Sangkats (the lowest level of local administration) in 2002.

The National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD) was initiated in 2010 and will be implemented over 10 years under the leadership of the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD).

NP-SNDD is financed through three-year implementation plan known as IP3 (currently in the third phase of IP3). The NP-SNDD-IP3-III aims explicitly improvements in the quality and efficiency of service delivery and local development in the Capital, Municipalities, Districts and Communes through the general mandate, transferred functions, and other service delivery innovation.

Four NCDD-S technical support officers and four provincial coordinators and finance officers for the two target provinces have been recruited since the second quarter of 2017. They play a crucial role for the livelihoods, planning and investment activities at the national and sub-national level.

The project also has a component of support by UNDP, which has hired a Project Adviser to provide overall coordination and advisory support to the project on behalf of UNDP. The Project Adviser reports to the UNDP's Assistant Country Director.

3.2.1. Adaptive Management

The use of adaptive management by the project team was instrumental for dealing with unexpected contingencies and taking advantage of emerging opportunities. While a number of

²⁰ The ten-year NP-SNDD is focused on developing accountable and democratic sub-national governments, with clearly assigned functions, budgets and personnel dedicated to improving service delivery for the benefit of citizens.

adaptive strategies and actions employed by the project team were observed during the review, this section focuses on those adaptations that played a bigger role in the delivery of activities.

One of the biggest challenges faced by this project has been the delay that it experienced in the start-up of the activities. As has already been mentioned, the project's start date was scheduled for July 2015, but fully-fledged implementation did not start until mid-2017. The main reason for this delay was that it took time for the implementing partners to figure out and agree on roles and responsibilities for the project, although roles and responsibilities are outlined in adequate terms in the Project Document.

To deal with the delay challenge, the project hired a Start-Up Project Advisor who worked in partnership with the key project stakeholders on the set up of the project and produced an Inception Report that described the initial start-up activities and refinements to the design of the project and assisted the project team to understand and take ownership of the project's goals and objectives.²¹ Through this process, the project strategy was reviewed, the performance indicators at output level and the risks associated with the implementation of the project were updated, a stakeholder engagement plan and the project's M&E plan were drafted and the 2017 detailed work plan and budget and the multiyear work plan were developed. It is important to note here that despite the initial delays, the organization of the inception phase was a real success as it really changed the dynamics of the project and set it on a different path which was dynamic and fast.

Another delay that compounded the project's progress happened in the recruitment of a "Service Provider" that would carry out the activities of the project's livelihood component (primarily, working with the targeted communities on the formation of the community/livelihood groups, providing trainings, etc.). The delay occurred during the procurement process when one of the bidding companies (CADTIS) provided the lowest financial proposal, but the quote was above the amount budgeted by the project. To respond to this situation, the project (under the proposal of NCDD-S) took the adaptive action of revising the Terms of Reference (ToR) and reducing the scope of activities to bring the cost of services in line with a negotiated price with the service provider, by cutting some training activities and downsizing some of the required staff in the proposal. This resulted in a reduction of the contract duration from 30 months to 22 months, which also brought the activities in line with the end date of the project.

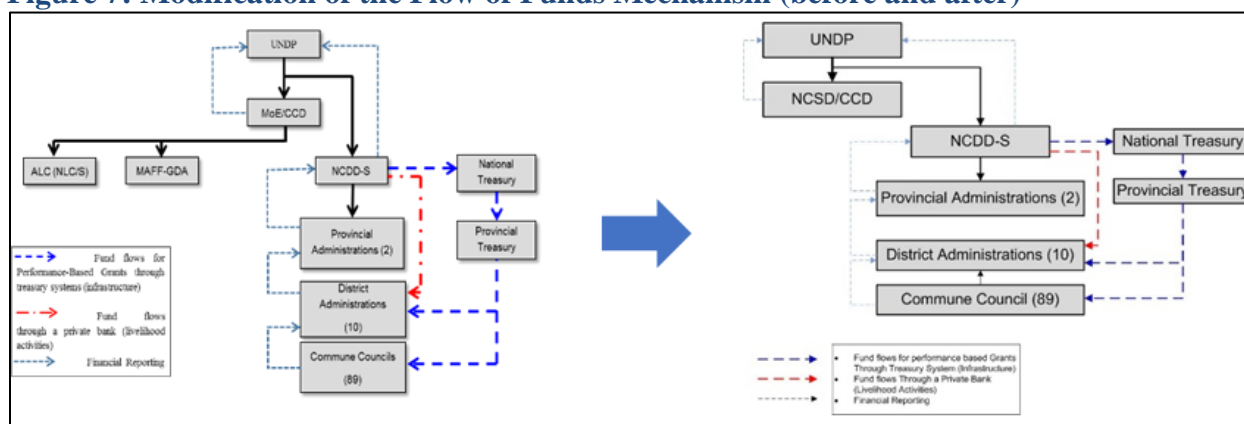
Another adaptive action undertaken by the project is with regards to the impact baseline assessment which was carried out by a local contractor. The Project Document foresaw the conduct of three assessments (at the starting point, mid-term and end point). However, given the delays encountered in initiating project implementation, the Project Board decided to conduct

²¹ Throughout the Inception Phase, which started in June 2016, a series of consultative meetings were conducted with participations from NCSD/DCC, UNDP CO and NCDDS to discuss and agree upon the priority start-up activities, project board establishment, the recruitment of key project personnel and consultants, and the interim arrangement for the flow fund to NCDDS.

only two assessments – one at the beginning and the other at the end of the project. This reduction in the number of assessments was a judicious decision that responded to a clear challenge created by the delays in implementation without jeopardizing the quality of the project. Stakeholders interviewed for this MTR considered two surveys sufficient for establishing the project’s impact and contributions. Further, to accelerate the conduct of the first (baseline) assessment, the project team, NCDD-S and NCSD/DCC have provided direct support to the research firm (GIS Ltd.) in the selection of the sample villages and potential beneficiaries.

Another adaptive measure taken by the project was to adjust the flow of funds for the implementation of activities at the sub-national level. To this effect, a Letter of Agreement was signed between UNDP and NCDD-S that allowed the flow of funds directly from UNDP to NCDD-S, without going through NCSD/DCC (as shown in Figure 7 below). The modification also disallowed the flow of funds from UNDP to GDA and ALC as they would not directly implement project activities, but only be engaged for technical support, promotion of learning and sharing of training materials.

Figure 7: Modification of the Flow of Funds Mechanism (before and after)



Adaptive adjustments were also applied to project management arrangements in light of changes in the country’s governance structures. Based on the Project Document, the Project Board was to be chaired by a senior official of the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC). However, as a result of institutional restructuring, NCCC functions were taken over by the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD). Consequently, the Chair of the Project Board became the Secretary General of the NCSD, with members from senior representatives from NCDD-S, MAFF, MoWRAM, MoWA and UNDP.

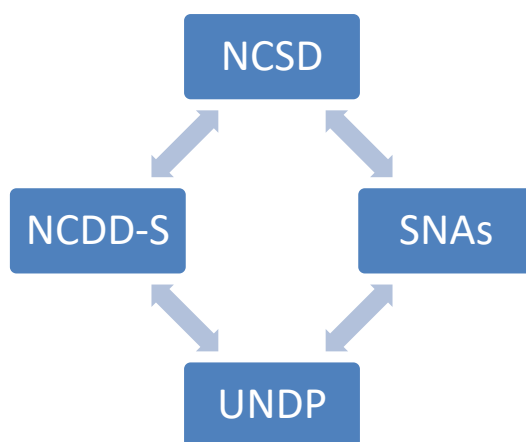
Overall, the project has shown an ability to adapt swiftly to evolving needs and emerging opportunities, which has served it well. It should also be noted at this point that the project’s planning process has been flexible and efficient, allowing the project team to revise its activities in line with changing circumstances. While operating on the basis of a multi-year work plan included in the Project Document, the project team has also developed rolling two-year work

plans to adapt to the evolving situation. By revising these two-year work plans to reflect the changing situation, the project team has been able to address effectively a number of bottlenecks.

3.2.2. Partnership Arrangements

Overall, the project has benefited from a strong partnership between partners involved in the project. The project's partnership arrangements have included a large number of stakeholders from national and sub-national governments, community and livelihood groups, organizations on the ground, research institutes, NGOs and donor organizations. The core of the partnership arrangement consists of the four major players, shown in Figure 7 below, which have had an essential role in project activities. The MTR found that this partnership has been characterized by a clear division of responsibilities, effective cooperation and good working relations.

Figure 8: Key project partners



The division of labour between the key project partners is briefly described in Table 4 below. A number of other partners, not shown in the table, have been directly involved in project activities through one of the major partners. These include MoP, MoWA, MoWRAM, MEF, etc.

Table 4: Division of Responsibilities among Project Partners

Partner	Responsibilities
NCSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Implementing Partner, NCSD has been responsible for the overall implementation of the project (project management component), including matters such as chairing of the Project Board, financial and activity reporting, project accountability, etc. NCSD has also been the responsible party for some of the activities under Outcome 1, which is shared with NCDD-s (see below) and sub-national administrations.
NCDD-S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under Outcome 1, NCDD-S has been directly responsible for support to climate sensitive planning (with technical inputs from MoP); for gender mainstreaming in the project (with

	<p>technical inputs from MoWA); for technical standards and capacity development for climate resilient infrastructure (with technical inputs from MoWRAM).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCDD-S has also been responsible for delivery of all outputs under Outcomes 2 and 3 through sub-national administrations.
SNAs and Association of Local Councils (ALC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAs have been directly involved in the project activities on the ground, including the formulation of development and investment plans, the various training programmes carried out at the local level, the livelihood activities, etc. • ALC has been responsible for training district and commune councilors in CC awareness and climate sensitive planning
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP has provided technical support where needed, and has been in charge of monitoring the execution of project activities. UNDP has also been responsible for the transfer of project funds to national authorities, according to the agreed project work plan.

Overall, project activities have been highly participatory. The main instruments for the engagement of partners have been the following:

- Project Board meetings have been organized regularly and have been well-attended. Based on the project documentary review, it is clear that key project issues have been discussed in board meeting and important decisions have been made to address major challenges.
- Strong partnerships have been forged at the sub-national level, with the active participation of provincial, district and commune authorities in project activities. The good engagement of these players emerged clearly during the field mission in the two target provinces. Also, given the community development nature of this project, the local communities have been actively engaged in project activities. The participation of women in the livelihood groups that were visited during the field mission was evident.
- A significant number of awareness raising and training events have been conducted by the project in Phnom Penh, the two provinces and the targeted communities. These activities have involved a large number of participants.
- At the start of the project, the project team developed and conducted a baseline survey which engaged a significant number of households in the targeted communities to understand their living conditions and bring their issues and challenges to the attention of the project team and decision makers. As has been already mentioned, this survey will be repeated at the end of the project.

3.2.3. Feedback from M&E Activities Used for Adaptive Management

As noted in the previous sections, adaptive management was crucial for the project team's response to changing circumstances. This adaptive reaction resulted a good monitoring system that has been put in place by the project team to identify problems and bring them to the attention of the Project Board. To a large extent, the ability of the project stakeholders to react was enabled by feedback received through the M&E system which consisted of a number of mechanisms (i.e. planning, monitoring, risk management, etc.).

A primary tool of M&E were the quarterly project reviews conducted regularly each quarter. The MTR team reviewed all quarterly reports produced in the course of project implementation and found them to have been used adequately by the project team to inform the Project Board. They provided the project team and board with the opportunity to take stock of the situation on a regular basis and engage relevant actors into discussion.

Also, Project Board meetings, although not too frequent, have played an important role in project management. The MTR team reviewed board meeting minutes which although not too detailed gave the impression that they enabled stakeholders to provide feedback on project activities and results and propose corrective actions and strategies.

Some issues could have been tracked more effectively using the M&E system – i.e. a database of training products (studies, training programmes, etc.),²² uptake of outputs and the degree to which the outputs were serving their intended purpose, the amount of co-financing provided by partners, etc. Some of these limitations are discussed in more detail in the section on the implementation of the M&E system further in this report.

3.2.4. Project Finance

As can be seen from Table 5, the project has a budget of US\$ 4.8 m, of which US\$ 4.6 m is provided by GEF and about US\$ 0.2 m by UNDP. Although the project was approved by GEF in 2015, financial allocations began in 2016, with a small amount of about US\$ 38,000 allocated (as can be seen in the table below). Actual implementation of the project started in 2017, with about US\$ 885,000 allocated. The table also shows the increasing intensity of project activities in these three years of implementation. The allocation for 2018 were twice as high as the allocation for 2017. About 54% of the project's financial resources have been allocated in the first three years of its implementation. In the remaining one year and a half of the project (assuming June 2020 as the end date of the project) a bit less than one half of the budget has to be spent. Table 5 shows that the third outcome area has the lowest proportion of budget allocated thus far (with 46%).

²² Having databases of all such project outputs makes it simple for the project team to produce these things whenever anybody (including the MTR team) asks for them.

Table 5: Approved Allocations (US\$)

Project Outcomes	2016	2017	2018	Total	Approved 2016-2020	% of Total Approved Budget
Outcome 1	9,640	229,707	418,761	658,108	1,197,881	55%
Outcome 2	14,291	520,922	1,113,367	1,648,581	3,064,137	54%
Outcome 3	671	10,855	55,510	67,036	144,804	46%
Project Management	13,265	123,721	92,770	229,756	398,708	58%
Total:	37,867	885,205	1,680,408	2,603,481	4,805,529	54%
GEF	37,867	816,677	1,610,908	2,465,452	4,567,500	54%
UNDP	0	68,529	69,500	138,029	238,029	58%

Table 6 (below) shows the project's expenditure by category of expenditure and rate of budget execution for each category. As can be seen from the table, the largest categories of expenditure are the PBCR grant and service components, which make up about half of total expenditure thus far. 2018 has been the year in which expenditures have increased considerably for three main reasons – the service contract companies were contracted, the amount of grants paid doubled in comparison to 2017 and the administrative expenses also increased. Spending by category as a proportion of budgeted amounts hovers around 50% this point in the project's life, with the exception of the “international consultants” category which is about 34%.

Table 6: Expenditure by Category

Expenditure Categories	2016	2017	2018	Total Exp. 2016-2018	Budget (2016-	% of Budget Spent
1. - Contractual Services-Companies	0	30,242	279,168	309,410	616,559	50%
2. - Local Consultants	12,240	17,522	23,228	52,990	80,090	66%
3. - International Consultants	0	0	17,500	17,500	51,000	34%
4. - Grants	0	300,000	669,000	969,000	1,647,881	59%
5. - Events, conferences, travel	2,722	100,201	188,995	291,918	581,110	50%
6. - Admin expenses	22,905	437,240	502,517	962,662	1,828,889	53%
TOTAL	37,867	885,205	1,680,408	2,603,481	4,805,529	54%

Table 7 (below) shows the structure of project expenditures thus far. The largest categories of spending are grants and administrative expenses, which constitute about 37% of total expenditure each, followed by contractual services with 12% and events and conferences with 11%. Local and international consultants have played a minor role in this project, making up 2% and 1% of total expenditure each.

Table 7: Structure of Project Expenditure

Expenditure Categories	Total Exp.	% of Total
1. - Contractual Services-Companies	309,410	12%
2. - Local Consultants	52,990	2%
3. - International Consultants	17,500	1%
4. - Grants	969,000	37%
5. - Events, conferences, travel	291,918	11%
6. - Admin expenses	962,662	37%
TOTAL	2,603,481	100%

Co-Financing

The Project Document indicates that co-financing amounting to US\$ 15.9 m was expected from the government and UNDP. Despite attempts made by the MTR team to quantify some of the information available, it was not possible to estimate the total amount of co-financing that has materialized in the course of the project thus far.

The total volume of on-budget co-financing from the districts and communes is approx. \$450,000, while the project invests a total of \$900,000.

According to project documentation, most local governments have provided co-financing for the infrastructure projects. Only two districts were unable to co-finance their small-scale water infrastructure projects selected and endorsed by NCDD-S because their 2018 fund has already allocated for other priorities. Overall, co-financing data was not readily available because the project team had not estimated the amounts contributed by local governments. This is something that the project team should work on addressing during the remainder of the project.

Flow of Project Funds

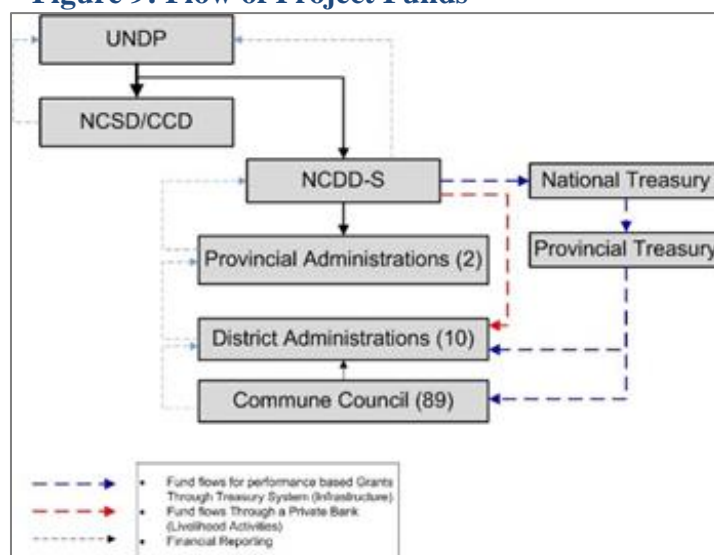
The project funding model is shown in Table 9 below. Project funds are transferred from UNDP CO to MoE according to the NIM agreement and from UNDP CO to NCDD-S through direct cash transfer (NIM advance) at the request of the Implementing Partners. MoE and NCDD-S have opened bank accounts with a commercial bank. Funds are transferred from UNDP directly to each agency separately in accordance with the activities outlined in the Project Annual Work Plan and Budget which is signed by the Project Director after approval by the Project Board.

As was described in section 3.2.1. on Adaptive Management, the flow of funds was modified during the project inception phase to improve the efficiency of the process. In the new model, funds allocated for sub-national level activities flow directly from UNDP to NCDD-S, without going through the NCSD/DCC.²³ The modification also disallowed the flow of funds from

²³ To this effect, a Letter of Agreement was signed in February 2017 between UNDP and NCDD-S that allowed the flow of funds directly from UNDP to NCDD-S, without going through NCSD/DCC.

UNDP to GDA and ALC as they would not directly implement project activities, but only be engaged for technical support, promotion of learning and sharing of training materials.

Figure 9: Flow of Project Funds



At the sub-national level, the funds flow from NCDD-S to provincial, district and commune levels.²⁴ At the provincial level, funds are transferred on a quarterly basis and cover relatively small activities such as office operation, technical support services, capacity building activities for commune and village levels and monitoring/ and follow up activities. Funds are transferred by NCDD-S into the districts' bank accounts, in accordance with the approved Annual Work Plans and Budgets, to finance livelihoods activities taking place at the local level. Investment funds for the PBCR grants are transferred to district and commune accounts through the national and provincial treasuries. Execution of these funds is subject to the Commune/Sangkat Fund Project Implementation Manual procedures. Conditional Cash Transfers are executed on the basis of procedures developed and tested for the Cash Transfer Operational Research programme in cooperation with NCDD-S. The recipients' list is validated by the Commune Council and passed on to NCDD-S. NCDD-S then executes the payments directly to the recipients. MoE is the sole focal point with UNDP for the purpose of financial reporting. All expenditures from the fund directly transferred to NCDD-S are included in MoE's financial reporting.

Project stakeholders met for this MTR, including representatives of the Treasury Department in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, confirmed that SRL's financing mechanism has been effective, and in certain ways superior to that of other donor-funded projects. There is one outstanding concern though that the transfer of the PBCR grant from the project to the sub-national level requires a grant notification from the Ministry of Economy and Finance which

²⁴ The respective sub-national administrations have opened bank accounts in a commercial bank to receive project funds from NCDD-S.

takes additional time. This is something that should be examined in more detail by the project stakeholders with the aim of finding an appropriate solution.

3.2.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Design at entry

The design of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system provided in the Project Document was overall adequate. It comprises standard tools used in most UNDP projects in accordance with established UNDP and GEF procedures. The primary tools identified in the Project Document are Inception Workshop, Inception Report, Measurement of Means of Verification for Project Progress and Performance (measured on an annual basis), APR and PIR, progress reports, Mid-term Review, Terminal Evaluation, Audit, and visits to field sites. The Project Document also provides a detailed Indicative M&E Work Plan and Budget. As part of the M&E framework, the Project Document also foresaw the conduct of a **household baseline survey** at project inception and two follow-up surveys at mid-term and end-of-project. The sampling frame was suggested to be smallholder farm households in the project target area, with the expectation that some, but not all, of the households sampled at baseline would become project beneficiaries. The follow-up surveys were intended to be conducted on a panel basis, i.e. the same households will be surveyed as in the baseline. This approach would permit comparison of outcomes for the direct beneficiaries and for a comparison group of non-beneficiary households and, with suitable adjustments for exogenous differences between the groups, would allow statistically robust conclusions about the impact of the project activities. It was expected that the basic content of all three surveys would be very similar and therefore, sharing a survey instrument would facilitate cross-comparisons as well as resulting in cost savings. Some adjustments to the basic survey were foreseen to ensure that the specific indicators in the project results framework could be adequately measured. The impact survey was intended to be contracted to an academic or research institution with suitable skills. The Project Document also foresaw the measurement of the performance of sub-national administration in planning and implementing climate change adaptation actions using a performance measurement system with standardized indicators and individually-set targets for each district. The primary purpose of this system was to support PBCR grants. However, the performance measurement system was expected to yield information that could also be used to measure the project's impact, and in particular the achievement of improved SNA capacity.

Where the M&E design could have been stronger is on the monitoring and measurement of certain project parameters, which with hindsight proved to be challenging to monitor. The uptake of capacity for participants in the training programme, co-financing, etc.

The rating of the Monitoring and Evaluation design at entry point is “Moderately Satisfactory”.

Implementation

For the assessment of the M&E framework, the MTR team had access to a number of project documentation related to monitoring and reporting. The reports provide a reasonable picture of project progress, as well as the issues requiring the attention of the PMU and Project Board.

At the inception phase, the project reviewed the M&E arrangement outlined in the project document and developed an M&E plan. To ensure that project objectives are realized and expected results achieved, implementation progress appropriately tracked, feedback from stakeholders taken into account and incorporated, as well as learning and knowledge sharing documented, the following tools and monitoring methodology were deployed:

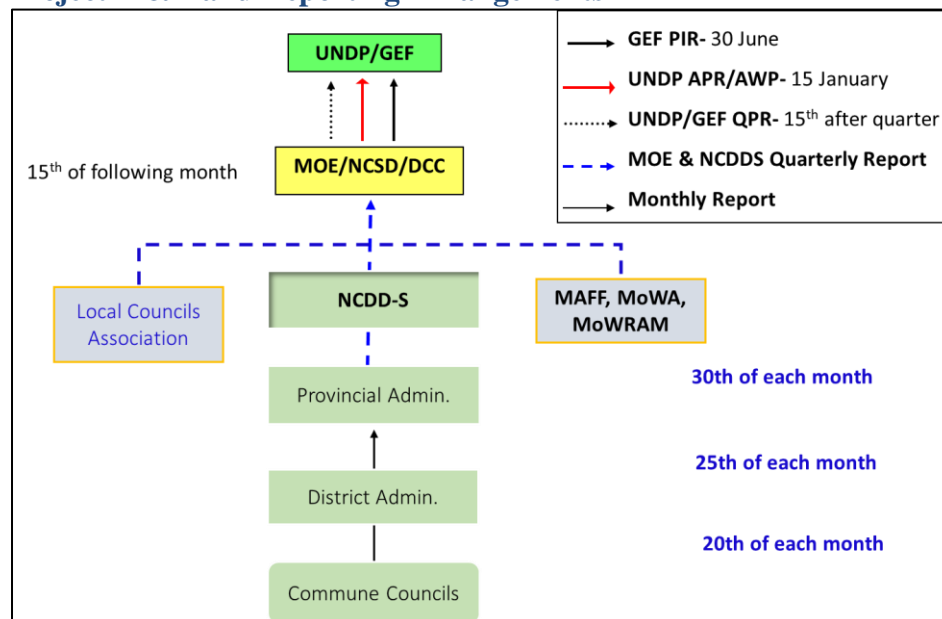
- Field trips
- Quarterly Progress Report (QPR), and Project Implementation Review (PIR)
- Financial reports, financial spot check and audits (Annual)

Based on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan approved by the Project Board at the inception phase, the project team conducts the following regular meetings to provide proper guidance and oversight to the project management:

- Annual Project Board Meeting
- Quarterly Climate Change Technical Team (TWG) meetings
- Monthly Project Coordination (PCM) meeting

The system that the project put in place for the monitoring of activities and reporting is shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 10: Project M&E and Reporting Arrangements



Overall, the monitoring and reporting system that has been used by the project is quite effective and has been implemented well by the project partners. As can be seen from the figure below, the rules and deadlines for reporting are clearly established, following a bottom up approach. The project team has followed the common M&E template and used standard tools such as risk logs which have been updated accordingly. Quarterly Project Reports have provided the project team with an effective platform for engagement with other stakeholders on the discussion of the project's progress. Challenges encountered by the project were discussed in Project Board meetings and analyzed in progress reports.

The UNDP Project Adviser has been closely involved in project activities and working closely with the PMU. He has been providing substantive support by discussing the progress and problems, assisting with advice and monitoring project activities.

The following crucial M&E tools have been instruments in the project:

1. Board meetings have been regular and meaningful. Three meetings have taken place so far. Board members have been fully engaged in discussing implementation issues and the project's status, reviewing previous board meeting recommendations and planning implementation of outstanding issues in the work plan.
2. An impact baseline survey was carried out by a local contractor between April and May 2018 in both target provinces (Kampong Thom and Siem Reap). 28 target villages out of 160 target villages known as "treatment villages" and 10 non-target villages known as "control 2" were selected for the baseline assessment. Sub-national authorities, with support from NCDD-S, facilitated village meetings in the 28 selected villages to identify potential beneficiaries (25-30 householders per village) based on which the respondents for the assessment were randomly chosen. A total of 1,563 household respondents comprising of 726 treatment, 422 control-1, and 415 control-2 households were surveyed. Further, 25 focus group discussions (FGDs) with more than 500 participants and 50 key informant interviews were undertaken. The survey is crucial for establishing a clear baseline and forging a good understanding of the situation on the ground. The project has also developed the methodology for small-scale Follow Up survey.
3. Furthermore, GIS-based vulnerability maps were developed with meaningful involvement of the sub-national authorities and introduced to 10 target districts for climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) planning—i.e. district CCA strategies, as well as for monitoring of CCA interventions. The map was developed upon existing climate risk data and adaptive capacity—based on the commune database of the target districts. It highlights the vulnerable areas prone to the combined aspects: drought, flood, and adaptive capacity.
4. As part of the PBCR grant assessment, a technical audit team was assigned to monitor the quality of implementation of selected sub-projects annually. This ensures the quality and

cost-effectiveness of the funded projects. The commune procurement process is simple and conducted publicly, which creates the opportunity to intervene (i.e. by NCDD-S, project advisers or, if necessary, the implementing agency) before the contract is signed when problems are evident. The quality assurance system established by the project includes spot-checks of projects by contracted Technical Support Consultants during and after the construction. The capacity of Technical Support Consultants and relevant sub-national administration representatives was strengthened to effectively monitor and manage the small scale rural infrastructure projects. With support from the project team, NCDD-S organized a training workshop on the Monitoring and Management of Small Scale Rural Infrastructure projects. A total of 30 representatives (six of the women) participated in the training.

The project could have tracked more effectively a number of crucial parameters. The following are the most important.

- One element that the project team could have tracked better is the uptake of outputs (studies, training, etc.) and the degree to which the outputs were serving their intended purpose. For example, the project could have monitored more closely the extent to which research and analytical documents produced by the project were incorporated into the authorities' policies and programmes. While some evidence was generated during the interviews for this MTR (see the sustainability section for a brief discussion of this), it would have been useful if the project had kept track of this in a more systematic way.
- Another thing that the project team could have tracked is the degree to which the capacity of participants in the various training programmes improved. This was an important activity of the project which could not be assessed by the MTR team because of the lack of data.
- Experience of infrastructure initiatives, the lessons they generate and the extent to which they get scaled up. It is too early to talk about replication of infrastructure projects, but one characteristic of them is that they serve to produce lessons which when shared may lead to replication. They can be vehicles for transmitting experience and play a crucial role for upscaling and replication. However, it is not clear how their lessons are collected, analyzed, synthesized and shared. The project should develop a tracking mechanism for pilot initiatives, including documenting results, lessons, experiences and good practices.
- The project should monitor co-financing more effectively by developing a tracking system at the infrastructure project level.

Overall, the project has made good use of the available tools for monitoring. The use of annual work plans and budgets, as a tool for monitoring and planning, was effective throughout the period in question. The M&E system has overall adequate for tracking progress and assessing the achievement of project objectives.

Some improvements are still necessary, especially with regards to tracking parameters such as co-financing and others listed above. The rating of the Monitoring and Evaluation at implementation is “Moderately Satisfactory”.

3.2.6. Execution and Implementation

Performance of the Executing Agency (MoE/GSSD)

As has been noted already multiple times, given the NIM nature of this project, the implementing partners of this project is NCSD's General Secretariat (GSSD), which also acts MoE's Department of Climate Change (DCC). The Secretary General is the National Project Director and the Director of DCC/GSSD is the National Project Manager. They have been supported by a project team consisting of a Project Coordinator, a Finance Assistant, an Administration Assistant, and a National Communication Officer. The project team deserves credit for the accelerated pace of implementation in the second half of 2017 and throughout 2018.

Equally important in the project has been the role of NCDD-S which, as has been mentioned, has been responsible for the livelihoods and infrastructure components at the sub-national level. The NCDD-S has consisted of the following key positions:

- Climate Resilient Planning Adviser
- Social and Gender Adviser
- National Infrastructure Adviser
- Senior Financial Officer
- Provincial Project Management Adviser
- Provincial Finance Officer

As the project is implemented under the NIM modality, for most of the activities it has had to follow the rules and procedures of the government. Most procurement has been handled by government counterparts, using their own procurement rules and regulations. Both NCSD and NCDD-S have their own manuals (procedures) for administrative and financial matters (including procurement) which are distinct. NCSD was previously supported by another UNDP project in developing the manual of rules (these rules were developed to manage the Climate Change Alliance grants). When procurement cannot be handled by the government entities, UNDP has provided support, using its own rules and regulations. During the planning stage when procurement matters are discussed in the Project Board, procurement which requires UNDP support is placed in the same budget, but under the responsibility of UNDP.

As the leading entity, NCSD has demonstrated strong ownership and leadership in this project. Throughout the implementation process, the essential functions of the national implementing partner have continued without interruption. Good relationships and coordination have been established among the three main parties – NCSD, NCDD-S and UNDP. Also, relations with the sub-national authorities in the targeted locations have been close and productive.

For all these positive factors related to the role of the NCDS and NSDD-S, the main shortcoming of this project, which has been highlighted throughout this report, has been the late kick-off of the project – by more than a year – and some delays in the mobilization of the service provider

and the firm conducting the baseline survey. These delays, especially the initial one in launching the project on time, could have been avoided through stronger coordination and division of responsibilities among the executing agencies. Because of these delays, the MTR mission in October-November 2018 found a situation in which the timely completion of the infrastructure projects and certain other activities was uncertain. In these conditions, some stakeholders raised the possibility that the project might require an extension (as will be discussed further, the need for an extension will become clearer later in 2019 before the onset of the rainy season). However, a second mission by the international evaluator in the country in March 2019²⁵ (not directly related to the SRL project) found that significant progress had been made by the project in addressing the challenges related to the infrastructure projects and establishment of community groups. Given the progress made by the national partners (NCSD and NCDD-S) in accelerating the pace of activities and in countering the delays caused by the late start of the project, the rating for the Executing Agency in this project is “Satisfactory”.

Performance of Implementing Agency (UNDP)

UNDP has provided the necessary support throughout the entire cycle of the project, including in its identification, preparation of concept, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion and evaluation. UNDP has also played a key role in the monitoring and evaluation of the project, working closely with project partners to ensure that the outputs of the project were on track through field visits, consultations and reviews with stakeholders. Beyond that, UNDP has also provided technical advice and advisory support to the project.

This support has been primarily channeled by UNDP’s team dedicated to this project which has consisted of a National Project Advisor and a Project Assistant. Also, at the CO level, the respective Programme Analyst (in charge of environmental projects) and the Oversight Analyst have also played a crucial role in providing managerial, technical, oversight and advisory functions and supports to the project, too.

The UNDP Country Office, and in particular the National Project Advisor, are very engaged and highly committed to the project. The Evaluator observed constructive working relations between the UNDP, the Project Management Unit and the key national counterparts.

Overall, the performance of UNDP (the Implementing Agency) has been commendable. UNDP has provided an appropriate level of support to the project team, enabling them to manage the project within the guidelines for NIM projects. During the field work and interviews with project stakeholders, no concerns were noted with regards to UNDP’s performance and its role in the

²⁵ The MTR benefitted from a second mission of the international evaluator in the country (for a broader evaluation of the country programme) and meetings with the Department of Climate Change (DCC) of the General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (GSSD), National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S) and UNDP. These meetings were useful to assess progress made between November 2018 and March 2019.

project. In particular, no delays were noted in the transfer of funds and no shortcoming were detected in the conduct of monitoring activities. For these reasons, the rating of Implementing Agency's performance in the project is "Satisfactory".

3.3. Project Results

This section of the report is organized along the standard dimensions of UNDP evaluations: i) relevance - the extent to which the project has been relevant to the country's priorities and needs; ii) effectiveness - whether the project has been effective towards the achievement of desired and planned results; iii) efficiency - whether the process of achieving results has been efficient; iv) sustainability - the extent to which the benefits of the project are likely to be sustained; and, v) mainstreaming – the extent to which considerations related to gender, human rights and SDGs have been incorporated into project activities.

3.3.1. Progress Towards Results

The project contributed to a range of outcomes which are difficult to pin down in their entirety because of the “high-level policy” nature of the project, with potential for far-reaching effects across multiple sectors and levels of government. Moreover, it is difficult to talk about ultimate results because the project is still underway, and even when completed full effects of many activities will take time to play out. Nevertheless, it is possible to provide an overview of the project's more immediate contributions, which are summarized in Table 8.

A positive thing about this project is that it has established a clear baseline with the household survey that was conducted in the targeted areas. The baseline survey will allow for a very good understanding of the results and ultimate impact that the project has had. There are few projects out there that incorporate into their design this kind of measurement that is necessary to be able to speak with confidence about impact. A mid-term survey was foreseen in the Project Document, but it did not take place because of the delays with launching the project. Had that survey taken place at mid-term, this MTR would have been a lot richer in terms of data about project effects results. The project will only run an endline survey that will allow it to compare key parameters and establish with rigour the degree of change and impact. The project team is well advised to schedule the terminal evaluation of this project after the data from the endline survey has become available, so that more information and lessons can be captured in the final project report.

Table 8 presents the project's achievement at the point of the MTR at the level of project objectives and outcomes. The project started with a significant delay and picked up pace starting from the middle of 2017. Since then, the pace of implementation has accelerated and a lot has been achieved. However, as can be seen from Table 8, at the outcome level a lot remains to be done and achieving the set targets by June 2020 is going to be a real challenge. The issue of a potential extension came up in some of the meetings related to this MTR, but the overall consensus among stakeholders is to strive for completion by the middle 2020 and at some point after the end of the current dry season (which is crucial for water infrastructure projects) to re-examine the extension issue with a better sense of what remains to be done. This is a sensible approach that is endorsed by this MTR.

Table 8: Progress Towards Outcomes

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Achievement at MTR Point
<p>Project Objective: Sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods are improved through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution</p>	<p>Impact: % increase in income from agriculture and linked activities of target smallholder households</p> <p>Sustainability: Number of Districts and Communes integrating CCA in their development plans and investment programmes following NCDDDS guidelines</p>	<p>To be collected in the first year of the project</p> <p>10 Target Districts and their Communes do not have formal climate change adaptation strategies</p>	<p>At least 6,000 households increase income from agriculture by 20% compared with baseline</p> <p>10 Target Districts and 89 Communes have formulated climate change adaptation strategies integrated in plans and IP</p>	<p>840 households, or 14% of target households, have been supported with resilient agriculture and related activities. For measuring an increase in income from agriculture, a baseline survey has been administered and the final results will be captured in an end-of project survey in 2020.</p> <p>10 target districts already have in place a climate change adaptation strategy. These have been integrated into investment programmes of the districts.</p> <p>40 out of 89 communes (45%) have fully integrated climate change adaptation into Commune Development Plan (CDP) and Commune Investment Programme (CIP), leveraging the results from the vulnerability reduction assessment (VRA) exercises in each commune being supported by the project teams. The work is in progress for the remaining 49 communes.</p> <p>A total of 348 (35% women) PBC members and commune councillors in 40 communes have received training on CCA and VRA skills.</p> <p>Having reviewed the 89 CIPs, it is noted that a total of 1,601 priority projects (507 infrastructures and 1,094 service projects), representing 32% have reflected and responded to climate change adaptation.</p>
<p>Outcome 1 Climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution at the sub-national level strengthened</p>	<p># District and Commune Investment Programmes that include specific budgets for adaptation actions (AMAT Indicator 13)</p> <p>Number of engineers and technicians (public sector, private sector and civil society) trained in delivery of climate resilient water</p>	<p>SNA in target Districts do not explicitly list adaptation actions in their investment programmes</p> <p>None</p>	<p>10 DIP and at least 50 CIP include specific budgets for adaptation activities</p> <p>At least 50 engineers and technicians trained using hands-on, demonstration scheme approach. At least 20% female</p>	<p>2 DIPs and 39 CIPs have included specific budget for adaptation actions. These were allocated in the form of co-financing along with the project investments, with the ratio of 1 to 2, towards climate resilient water infrastructure. The total volume of on-budget co-financing from the districts and communes is approx. \$450,000, while the project invests a total of \$900,000.</p> <p>50 engineers and technical support officers (2 women) received in-class technical training on Climate Resilient Infrastructure Design and Construction. In addition, during this reporting period, 30 technical support consultants and provincial technical officers (6 women) attended hands-on trainings when</p>

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Achievement at MTR Point
	infrastructure			<p>undertaking the project feasibility study and design and technical monitoring and management of small scale infrastructure projects. With this additional trainings and coaching, the Technical Service Consultants (TSC) and technical team can properly monitor and manage the implementation of resilient small-scale water infrastructures in the project areas.</p> <p>For the next 2 years, the project will provide on-the-job training to the same individuals at each stage of the scheme development.</p>
<u>Outcome 2</u> Resilience of livelihoods for the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfalls, floods and droughts	# Resilient infrastructure measures introduced to prevent economic loss and co-financed by Commune/Sangkat Fund % of targeted households that have adopted resilient livelihoods under existing and projected climate change (AMAT Indicator 3)	None None	At least 100 climate resilient infrastructure schemes have been successfully implemented At least 60% of households participating in livelihoods trainings adopted at least one resilient livelihood technique (half of the uptake is by women)	Feasibility studies completed for 41 schemes and are ready for bidding. 11 contracts have been awarded and 5 schemes are under construction. 28 Farmer Groups in 28 villages, with a total of 825 group members – of which 646 are women, representing 78% of the total – have been formed to implement resilient livelihoods. Needs assessment and training will be provided in quarter 3, 2018 and onward.
<u>Outcome 3</u> Incentive mechanism is in place at sub-national level to manage greater volume of climate change adaptation financing aligned with local development plans	Fiscal incentive structure that incorporates adaptation as climate change risk management (i.e Performance Measurement for PBCRG) successfully introduced (AMAT Indicator 14)	Performance measurement system piloted by NCDD-S needs improvements and has not been implemented in target Districts	Improved system developed, introduced successfully in target districts and adopted for widespread use by NCDD-S	In June 2018, NCDD-S organized a consultation workshop to review and collect feedback aiming at improving the PBCRG manual with support from 3 main projects (this project, ASPIRE, LGCC). The revised manual has been approved by NCDD. In early 2018, the draft manual was introduced to the 10 target districts. More importantly, NCDD-S together with external consultants conducted the PBCR baseline assessment and set out the performance targets in the foregoing districts. The assessment report clearly indicates the baseline data and annual target for each target district.

During the Inception Phase, the project team updated the RRF at the output level (as shown in Table 9 further in this section and Annex V at the end of this report). A detailed assessment of progress towards the achievement of output targets can be found in Table 9 below. The following is a brief summary of progress for each output area, focusing on the main challenges lying ahead for the project.

- Output 1.1: Progress with this output is overall good, but there are challenges with a couple of components, as follows.
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Local councils and key stakeholders at sub-national level are aware of gender and climate change.
 - Provincial CCA Planning Workshop: Introduction to VRA and CCA mainstreaming into CDP/CIPs.
 - Initial CCA Planning Meeting in each district and Supporting for VRA's conduction in village level.
 - District CCA Action Plans.
 - ***The project has not met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - VRA conducted in selected villages. (Status of this was 45% completed by the time of the MTR).
 - Priority actions from VRA, including livelihood support and infrastructure investments, responding to climate change risk integrated into CDP/CIPs. (Status of this was 45% completed by the time of the MTR).
 - Commune Support Office trained on DVA and GIS-based vulnerability maps and vulnerability scorecards. (Status of this was 75% completed by the time of the MTR).
- Output 1.2:
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Extension packages for climate resilient agriculture.
 - ToT training for agricultural extension officers and LNGOs.
- Output 1.3:
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Training manual on climate resilient infrastructure.
 - Technical officers trained on climate resilient infrastructure.
- Output 1.4:
 - ***The project has not met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Impact assessment administered (baseline and final assessment) – This is still ongoing because an endline survey is foreseen.
 - Knowledge products (case studies, policy briefs, reports). – This is another ongoing activity.
- Output 2.1:
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***

- Firm/NGO recruited to provide extension services.
 - ***The project has not met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Support climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure. (Status of this was 49% completed by the time of the MTR).
- Output 2.2:
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Carry out FNA with potential beneficiaries in target villages.
 - ***The project has not met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Women's Livelihood Groups formed. (Status of this was 63% completed by the time of the MTR).
 - Climate-resilient livelihood activity and training. (Status of this was 16% completed by the time of the MTR).
 - Group saving supported. (Status of this was 35% completed by the time of the MTR).
 - FWUC/Water user groups formed. (Status of this was 15% completed by the time of the MTR).
- Output 3.1:
 - ***The project has met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Minimum Access Conditions and Performance Measurement System.
 - ***The project has not met the target for the following output indicators:***
 - Baseline Performance Assessment and Performance Target Setting. This is an ongoing activity.
 - Annual reflection workshop on the outcome of performance assessment. This is another ongoing activity.

The bottom line here is that while overall the project has made good progress in a range of areas, especially considering the fact that the start up was delayed significantly, and so was the hiring of the two main contractors (Service Provider and Research Firm for the Survey), there are two crucial areas where there is a need for faster progress – the design, approval and construction of infrastructure projects and the formation of the community groups (women, water users, livelihoods, etc.). To some extent these activities are interdependent, because some of the groups will be formed as infrastructure construction gets underway (i.e. water users).

In the coming months, project stakeholders should prioritize these two areas to ensure that activities are accelerated. The intervening rainy season will make it difficult to complete the water infrastructure projects on time. There are two windows of opportunity for doing this. One is the current dry season that ends early next year and the other is the following dry season. The project team should plan around these two openings to complete the infrastructure projects, and use the rest of the time to focus on the livelihoods activities.

Table 9: Status of Output Indicators & Completion of Activities at MTR Point

Outputs & Activities	Output Indicators	Status of Output Indicators
Output 1.1: Capacity of sub-national councils (communes and districts) and Planning and Commune Support Units in two provinces enhanced for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting		
<p>1.1.1. Climate Change Awareness Training of Sub-National Councillors. This training will be delivered through the Association of Local Councils with support from the UNDP-ACES project.</p> <p>1.1.2. Training on gender mainstreaming in sub-national climate change adaptation.</p> <p>1.1.3. Preparation of the DVA including GIS-based vulnerability maps and vulnerability scorecards and associated hands-on trainings targeting the Planning and Commune Support Unit at the district level.</p> <p>1.1.4. Organizing Provincial CCA Planning Workshop in each Province, at the beginning of the project and annually thereafter for setting the framework for CCA planning at District and Commune level and extending knowledge and lessons learned to representatives of Districts and technical agencies that are not directly involved in project implementation.</p> <p>1.1.5. Initial CCA Planning Meeting in each District. The project will start work in four Districts (i.e. two per Province) in the first year and a further six Districts in the second year. At the initial meeting, the DVA will be presented and participants will identify in outline the key localities for the focus of project efforts.</p> <p>1.1.6. Administration of Vulnerability Reduction Analysis (VRA) in selected villages in vulnerable areas of each District (up to 6 villages per Commune in at least 50 of the 89 Communes in the 10 Districts).</p> <p>1.1.7. Technical assistance targeting Commune Planning and Budgeting Committee to review the results of the VRA, identify priority actions, including livelihood support and infrastructure investments, responding to the key climate change vulnerabilities, and integrate climate change adaptation actions into the Commune Investment Programme.</p>	<p>Local councils and key stakeholders at sub-national level are aware of gender and climate change. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 200 (40% women)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 251 provincial, district and commune councillors (89 women – 35%) are better aware of gender and climate change through provincial awareness raising workshops in the two target provinces on 26 and 28 March 2018.
	<p>Provincial and District CCA Planning Workshop: Introduction to VRA and G&CC mainstreaming into CDP/CIPs. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 360 (40% women)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAs (province, district and commune) further enhanced their knowledge and skills in terms of CCA planning through refresher trainings. A total of 389 SNA participants, 129 of whom are women (representing 33%), participated in the refresher trainings from May to June 2018.
	<p>Commune Support Office trained on DVA and GIS-based vulnerability maps and vulnerability scorecards. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 62</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46 provincial and district officials including commune planning and support units (8 women) participated in the two-day training on DVA and GIS-based vulnerability maps on 14-15 March.
	<p>VRA conducted in target communes. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 40</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 150 A0 and 120 A3-District Vulnerability Maps have been developed and distributed to the 10 target districts for supporting CCA planning and monitoring of CCA intervention.
	<p>Priorities from VRA, including livelihood support and infrastructure priorities, responding to CC integrated into CDP/CIPs. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 40</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VRA conducted in 40 target communes, 20 out of which completed in the reporting period. A total of 1,992 representatives from local authorities and communities (950 women representing 47.7%) actively participated in the exercises.

1.1.8. Technical assistance targeting the District Technical Facilitation Committee to formulate District Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCA and DRR priorities from VRAs, including livelihood support and infrastructure priorities, responding to CC integrated/updated in 40 CDP/CIPs. There were 1,137 Commune Councillors, PBC members and other local community representatives (230 women) actively took part in the exercises.
	District strategies for CCA updated. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District strategies for CCA in 5 districts in Siem Reap were updated through district meetings. There were 147 district officials and key stakeholders (43 women) participated and provided inputs. District strategies for CCA in Kampong Thom will be updated in quarter 4, 2018.
Output 1.2: Technical capacity of agricultural extension officers and grass-roots NGOs enhanced for climate-resilient livelihood techniques and sustainable assistance to communities		
1.2.1. Training Needs Assessment and identification of climate resilient agriculture technologies; 1.2.2. Development of methodology for Farmer Needs Assessment. This will be designed to help smallholder farmers to identify the livelihood improvements that are most relevant to their situation and to make optimum decisions from the options open to them, particularly taking into account seasonal water availability (including the possibility of improved irrigation infrastructure). 1.2.3. Development of extension packages for climate resilient agriculture. These may involve production of new extension materials or updates to existing materials. There will be opportunities for mutual support and cost-sharing with the ongoing IFAD projects. All extension packages will be designed for a farmer-centred learning approach that does not rely excessively on classroom teaching or make unnecessary demands on farmers' time. Farm business planning, calculation of expenditures and income, post-harvest and marketing will be incorporated in each package. 1.2.4. Validation Workshop. The Farmer Needs Assessment	TNA for agricultural extension officers and LNGOs. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With support from the project team, the CADTIS - service provider has developed the guidelines for farmer group mobilization (FWUC, WUG, LIG, SLG, and Saving) and Farmers' Needs Assessment methodology (FNA). The FNA (including TNA) has been introduced to CADTIS field staff and the assessment has been completed for 25 groups in 25 target villages. 590 group members participated in the assessment.
	Extension packages for climate resilient agriculture <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension packages for climate resilient agriculture and water management have been finalized, printed and used in farmer trainings in the target communes.
	Master training for agricultural extension officers and LNGOs. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 30</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 115 representatives (34 women) from key involved ministries including MoWA, MoWRAM and MoAFF/GDA as well as those

<p>methodology and extension packages will be reviewed by a stakeholder workshop and any necessary modifications identified before finalization of the training materials.</p> <p>1.2.5. Master Training. The trainings in use of the new packages will be conducted by MAFF-GDA and will take place at MAFF training facilities with facilities for demonstration of techniques. The trainees will be selected from the target Provinces. It is expected that the trainees will consist of a mixed group including officials of PDA/DAO, NGO extension agents and private sector agents (i.e. extension agents individually contracted to support project activities and (if feasible) extension agents employed by private sector entities such as input supply companies).</p> <p>1.2.6. Qualitative review of applied trainings/extension to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the innovations in farmer extension services related to climate change resilience and identify problems and opportunities for improvement. The findings of the review will be used for making changes during project implementation and also to learn lessons for future policies and programmes. The review will provide an evaluation of the technical quality of the on and off farm applied trainings (targeting, pedagogical approach, materials, relevance of topics covered, likely impact on adoption, etc) and suggest areas for improvement. The review will consist of interviews and/or focus group discussions with trainers in the project, as well as at sub-national level, MAFF staff and individual beneficiaries, as well as observation of a random number (small).</p> <p>1.2.7. Recommendations for Innovative Technologies Requiring Field Testing. This activity will be carried out in collaboration with the Innovations for Climate Resilient Agriculture component of IFAD's ASPIRE programme by identifying and recommending suitable climate resilient agriculture technologies for testing under field conditions. Testing will then be carried out by farmers in the ASPIRE provinces. Results measurement is included in the ASPIRE activities and the results will be shared by the two projects.</p>	<p>Farmer to farmer exchange visits <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 250</i></p>	<p>from relevant provincial departments, the SNAs, importantly the Service Providers participated in/learnt from the validation/mater training workshops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be implemented in Q4, 2018.
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Output 1.3: Technical capacity to execute climate resilient water infrastructure design and construction enhanced for about 50 Government technical officials and private contractors		
1.3.1. Identify and agree with MoWRAM suitable standards for construction of small-scale climate resilient infrastructure; 1.3.2. Design of training course in climate resilient small-scale irrigation and agreement of contents between NCDD-S and MoWRAM; 1.3.3. Revise the existing training manual developed by the first LDCF-financed project to specifically align with the new standards; 1.3.4. Stakeholder workshop to validate the standards and training materials; 1.3.5. Selection of suitable example schemes from amongst those supported under Outcome 3; 1.3.6. Initial classroom training followed by phased on-the-job training based on phases of development of the example schemes and obtaining feedback (including individual skills and knowledge assessment) at each stage of the training.	Stakeholder workshop to validate the standards and training materials. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 70</i> On-the-job training based on phases of development of the example schemes. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 50</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Climate Resilient infrastructure (including irrigation system) training manual has been revised and published for training and distribution.• 30 (6 women) TSCs and relevant SNA representatives trained on the monitoring and management of resilient small-scale rural infrastructures. Their knowledge improved and feel confident to monitor and manage the infrastructures supported by the SRL project.• Further, hand-on training on technical design, monitoring and management of climate resilient small-scale rural infrastructures will be provided to TSCs and provincial team in Q4, 2018.
Output 1.4: Knowledge management platform for sub-national Climate Change Adaptation Planning and resilient livelihoods support established		
1.4.1 Establishment of a statistically valid impact measurement system based on a controlled household survey; 1.4.2 Qualitative monitoring of project impacts which should include assessment of the differential impacts on women and on men; 1.4.3 Assessment of lessons learned and preparation of knowledge products (progress summaries, case studies, policy briefs, reports) in multi-media formats suitable for web-based publication; 1.4.4 Knowledge sharing events (seminars, workshops and study visits); and 1.4.5 Institutionalization of the Knowledge Management Platform, through (a) finalizing the TOR and membership; (b) email/website-based dialogue and knowledge sharing among members as well as organization of dialogue events such as	Impact assessment administered (baseline and final assessment). <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i> Knowledge products (case studies, policy briefs, reports). <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project has now finalized its baseline survey report. The Final Report is made following the expert and project team extra comments which have been solved promptly and thoroughly by the research team, especially through a series of Skype Meetings with the Regional Expert. In addition, the project has developed also a methodology for Small Scale Follow Up survey.• The project bulletin volume 3 has been finalized for printing and distribution.• 250 project bulletin volume 2 were developed and distributed in the provincial awareness raising workshops.

seminars and (c) standardization of reporting of key indicators of sub-national climate change adaptation interventions and results achieved.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,000 booklets, 4,000 posters and 40 I-Stand posters on gender and climate change published and distributed as part of awareness raising among local communities and authorities.
	Joint knowledge sharing events <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be implemented in November 2018.
Output 2.1: Climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure designed and put in place in 10 districts following the resilient design standards specifically targeting rain-fed farmers		
<p>2.1.1 Allocation of the PBCRG, following the steps described above, to priority schemes identified in the District Climate Change Adaptation Plan and confirmed as priorities for CSF financing by the Communes.</p> <p>2.1.2 Recruitment of a local NGO that will be responsible to support FWUC organization and scheme design. The NGO will be recruited by the District Council following the procedures of the District Project Implementation Manual prepared by NCDD-S. The NGO will recruit a Technical Support Consultant with appropriate technical skills and who will participate in training on climate resilient infrastructure.</p> <p>2.1.3 Initial steps in FWUC formation, and participatory scheme design. This should ensure that the farmers' local knowledge is integrated into the scheme design (i.e. layout of canals, structures etc. and intended functioning of the scheme) and also that farmers understand what benefits they can expect from the scheme. Farmer responsibilities to contribute to operation and maintenance costs should be clearly agreed at this stage.</p> <p>2.1.4 Technical design of the scheme, led by the Technical Support Consultant, who will cooperate with the TSO and with the PDoWRAM.</p> <p>2.1.5 Technical review of the scheme design by a technical working group under the Technical Facilitation Committee. This will ensure that the scheme and technical design are reviewed both by PDoWRAM and by PDA and will also facilitate the mandatory requirement of technical clearance by PDoWRAM (for irrigation schemes);</p> <p>2.1.6 Procurement and implementation of the scheme under</p>	<p>Support climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure.</p> <p><i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 50</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidding process for 6 small-scale water infrastructures (2017 PBCR grant) completed. They are under construction and expected to be completed by the end of this year. 43 small-scale water infrastructure projects for 2018 PBCR grant have been selected and endorsed. US\$600,000 has been allocated and transferred to district and commune accounts at the Provincial Treasuries. The Technical Support Consultants (TSCs) have been recruited and are now undertaking the feasibility studies and designs. The studies, designs and bidding will be completed December 2018.
	<p>Firm/LNGO recruited to provide extension services</p> <p><i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 50</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CADTIS Consulting Firm – Special Service Provider (SSP) recruited and 18 SSP Team members have been mobilized and on board in May 2018. They include: 1 team leader, 2 Agriculture/Livelihood Specialists, 2 Provincial Coordinators, 10 District Facilitators and 1 Account/Admin Assistant (1 women). Their understanding on the SRL project and NCDDS structure/system enhanced through orientation meetings at national and provincial levels organized by NCDDS.

<p>CSF PIM arrangements, with the TSC responsible for technical supervision. The Provincial Technical Committee conducts quality assurance checks prior to approval of the final payment to the contractor.</p> <p>2.1.7 FWUC formation follows the standard steps under the leadership of PDoWRAM, but also involving staff of other key line offices, in particular, DAO and District Office of Women's Affairs;</p> <p>2.1.8 The local NGO carries out capacity development of the FWUC including leadership training, climate change awareness training and support in developing its climate change adaptation plan. This support is integrated with development of agriculture activities under Output 2.2.</p>		
Output 2.2: Climate-resilient livelihood measures demonstrated in 10 districts targeting landless women and farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture		
<p>2.2.1 Farmer Needs Assessment identifying climate vulnerabilities, assessing resources including water resources available to the target group, identifying livelihood opportunities and selecting the training topic;</p> <p>2.2.2 Group formation and skills development. Formation of the Women's Livelihood Groups will be based on the process used by NCDD-S for formation of Livelihood Improvement Groups (following the TSSD project) but there will be less emphasis on selection based on poverty ranking and more on voluntary self-selection based on interest to engage in and commit to the livelihood activities. A total of 160 groups will be formed (i.e. about 16 per District in each of 10 Districts). Each group will consist of approximately 25 women.</p> <p>2.2.3 Selection of climate-resilient livelihood activity and training. The group will select from a menu of livelihood activities based on suitability to local circumstances, access to product markets and interest of the group members. Each group will participate in one training module in the first year and a second, shorter module in the second year.</p> <p>2.2.4 Group Savings Scheme. Each group will form a savings scheme in cooperation with an MFI that is active in the area. Initially this will involve a joint deposit account managed by the group members followed subsequently by</p>	<p>Carry out FNA with potential beneficiaries in target villages. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 200</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Farmers' Needs Assessment methodology (including TNA) has been finalized.
	<p>Women's Livelihood Groups formed. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 40</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the reporting period, 37 farmer groups have been formed in 37 target villages with a total of 907 group members—642 of whom are females, representing 70%.
	<p>Climate-resilient livelihood activity and training. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1000</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of September 2018, 348 (233 women) out of 1,596 group members trained on resilient agriculture techniques (chicken raising, vegetable gardening and rice farming).
	<p>Group saving supported. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Saving Groups formed in 13 target villages. Internal rules and group by-laws are being developed and recognized by the commune councils.
	<p>Smallholder Learning Group (SLG) through FFS. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 250</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be implemented in quarter 4, 2018.

<p>disbursing loans according to rules and conditions agreed within the group. The project will explore whether, and how, membership in the savings scheme can be leveraged to gain improved access to microfinance credit for the group members. The group may engage in other types of cooperative action, for example in purchase of inputs for the livelihood activity or in marketing of the products.</p> <p>2.2.5 Conditional Cash Transfers. The purpose of conditional cash transfers is to offset the cost and risk to poor households (i.e. those with ID-Poor cards) of investing in the start-up costs of a climate resilient livelihood activity. Group members will be expected to demonstrate that they have invested significant resources (own labour, agriculture inputs) in the livelihood activity that was the subject of the training. Verification of this will trigger the cash transfer to the group member, which will at least cover the interest cost of the loan. The size of the conditional cash transfer is provisionally set at \$25 per ID-Poor card holding member in each of two agriculture seasons. Operation of the scheme will draw upon the design and implementation lessons learned from the Cash Transfer Operational Research (CT-OR) programme implemented under CARD in cooperation with NCDD-S .</p> <p>2.2.6 Farmer Needs Assessment. Following the methodology developed under Output 1.2, the target village will undertake a participatory Farmer Needs Assessment which will include assessment of seasonal water availability, present cropping patterns, market opportunities and will assist the farmers to identify (from a menu of options) the most appropriate Climate Resilient Agriculture technology for their situation.</p> <p>2.2.7 Smallholder Learning Group (SLG) formation and training plan. A total of 160 groups will be formed (i.e. average 16 groups in each of 10 Districts). The size of the group should be around 25 farmers. The group members will have a short orientation and will then discuss among themselves on the training topic (from a suitable menu) and on organization of the training (timing of training sessions, location of demonstration plots, use of the subsidy for training inputs etc).</p> <p>2.2.8 Climate Resilient Agriculture training will be</p>		
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<p>delivered through a modified Farmer Field School approach with about 10 training sessions spaced at roughly two-week intervals over the growing season. The intensity of training may be adjusted according to the needs of the crop cycle. The primary training method will be hands-on demonstration in a plot or plots owned by the group members. Classroom style training will be used but will occupy a minority of the training time. A second, less intensive training module will be provided in Year 2.</p> <p>2.2.9 SLGs will receive follow-up visits from the extension agent to review their progress and advise them how to adapt the techniques to the needs of their own plot. There will also be group follow-up activities including a Farmer Field Day and discussion of opportunities for group action, for example in purchasing production inputs or marketing of produce.</p> <p>2.2.10 Formation and registration of agriculture cooperatives under MAFF guidelines (NB: This may involve a single group of farmers with a single leadership taking the functions of both an FWUC and an Agriculture Cooperative, as noted above);</p> <p>2.2.11 Development of a climate resilient business plan for the FO;</p> <p>2.2.12 Support to farmer field days, cross-visits and other activities to assist farmers to share knowledge and skills.</p>		
<p>Output 3.1: Performance-based adaptation financing mechanism is strengthened and applied in 10 districts covering 89 communes and integrated into the enhanced climate-smart development planning</p>		
<p>3.1.1 Improved design of Minimum Access Conditions and Performance Measurement System. The Performance Measurement System will be based on a Climate Change Adaptation Performance Scorecard described above.</p> <p>3.1.2 Baseline Performance Assessment and Performance Target Setting. The NCDD-S team will work with the District to set realistic targets for each quadrant in the Performance Scorecard and overall. This system will allow achievement of locally determined priorities to be taken into account and will also avoid penalizing Districts with low initial capacity (often the poorest and most vulnerable Districts).</p> <p>3.1.3. Performance Measurement will be carried out annually. The performance measurement system will rely on self-</p>	<p>Minimum Access Conditions and Performance Measurement System. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i></p> <p>Baseline Performance Assessment and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PBCR grant manual has been updated through a consultation workshop organized by NCDD-S to collect stakeholders' feedback for PBCR grant manual improvement under support from ASPIRE, LGCC, and SRL projects. The revised manual has been approved by NCDD-S. Trainings on the revised manual for SNAs and project teams (ASPIRE, LGCC and SRL) are scheduled in early October 2018. The annual assessment of PBCR grant projects is planned in October 2018. Baseline Performance Assessment and

reporting by the Districts with a verification check carried out by the performance assessment team organized by NCDD-S.	Performance Target Setting. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i>	Performance Target Setting has been completed in the second quarter for the 10 target districts.
Output 3.2: Capacity of Districts for self-monitoring of climate change adaptation and resilient livelihood support enhanced		
3.2.1 Internal review of the results of performance assessment and development of an action plan to ensure that targets area achieved;	Self-monitoring to ensure that the district is on track. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i>	To be jointly implemented in Q4, 2018 with output 3.1.2 above.
3.2.2 Self-monitoring to ensure that the District is on track to achieve its targets;		
3.2.3 Participatory evaluations of infrastructure and livelihood activities;	Annual reflection workshops/events on the outcome of performance assessment. <i>Baseline (01/07/2015) = 0</i> <i>Target (31/12/2018) = 1</i>	To be implemented in Q4, 2018.
3.2.4 Annual reflection workshops;		
3.2.5 Support and backstopping from the Provincial Project Adviser.		

Colour Legend:

Completed	
Ongoing	

3.3.2. Relevance

This section provides an assessment of the relevance of the project. While there may be many criteria for assessing relevance, here it will be assessed along the following dimensions: i) relevance to the country's needs and priorities; ii) relevance to UN Country Priorities and UNDP's Country Mandate and Strategy; and, iii) relevance to GEF objectives.

Relevance to the country's needs and priorities - The feedback received from national stakeholders, including government officials, community members and research institutions participating in project activities, donors, and the UNDP CO staff was unambiguously positive. It is clear that the project is fulfilling an important role in the country. The project is also relevant to the national processes on adaptation to climate change. The SRL project is well aligned with the following national strategic documents:

- *Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency*, first adopted in 2005 and updated in 2013, which focuses on four key areas: agriculture, infrastructure, the private sector and capacity building and human resources development, while good governance is placed at the core of the strategy. The Rectangular Strategy recognizes the need for action to address the impacts of climate change on agriculture and on irrigation infrastructure, which are key concerns of the project.
- *National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018 (NSDP)*, which elaborates the principles of the Rectangular Strategy. NSDP core targets that are directly addressed by the project include reduction in the poverty rate and increases in paddy yield and irrigated area. The project is also aligned with the decentralization objectives of the Rectangular Strategy and the NSDP.
- *Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP)*, which outlines the government's vision for promoting climate-resilient development and green growth in the period 2014-23. During its first phase the CCCSP focuses on adaptation activities aimed at strengthening community resilience. All climate-related issues, including a climate change financing framework, will be gradually integrated into development strategy and planning at all levels – national and sub-national – as a matter of priority. The SRL project responds directly to the first Goal of the CCCSP: “Reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts of people, in particular the most vulnerable, and critical systems (natural and societal)”.
- *Sectoral Climate Change Action Plans*, developed by MAFF,²⁶ MoWRAM,²⁷ and MoWA.²⁸

²⁶ MAFF has prepared a Ministerial Climate Change Action Plan which is subordinate to the CCCSP. The project responds to the first stated objective of MAFF-CCAP which is “To ensure food security and farmers' livelihood improvement through an increase of crop production, agro-industrial at 10% per year. To enhance development, the use of appropriate technology, renewable energy, the effective use of water, adaptation and mitigation.”

²⁷ MoWRAM has developed a Climate Change Strategic Plan with 10 objectives, concerning improved protection, management and use of water resources.

²⁸ MoWA has prepared a Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan with the vision that “Women and men in Cambodia are equally empowered and resilient to climate change impacts, including natural disaster risks and impacts; they join in climate change adaptation and mitigation equally; and participate in policy-making processes to transform economies into greener ones.”

- *Policy for Promotion of Paddy Production and (Milled) Rice Exports* (2010), which is an integrated, cross-sectoral strategy to return Cambodia to its former position as a major rice exporting nation, thus diversifying exports, earning foreign exchange and capturing a larger share of value-added milling, processing, packaging and branding activities. Priority measures proposed by the “Rice Policy” include improvement of extension services, promotion of improved, climate-resilient rice seed varieties, irrigation development and support to Farmer Organizations.
- *National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable*, which includes as its Objective 3 “The working-age poor and vulnerable benefit from work opportunities to secure income, food and livelihoods, while contributing to the creation of sustainable physical and social infrastructure assets.”
- By integrating planning of project activities with the sub-national planning process and using sub-national administrations as the coordinating and implementing agencies at local level, the project supports the process of decentralization in Cambodia and the objectives of the NP-SNDD. The key role of NCDD-S in implementing the project, in cooperation with the NCSD, ensures alignment with the implementing approach of the NP-SNDD IP3 and with its development partner institutions.

Relevance to UN Country Priorities and UNDP’s Country Mandate and Strategy – The project is in line with the key planning documents of the UN and UNDP in the country - UNDAF, UNDP’s Country Programme Document (CPD) and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The project supports UNDAF’s outcome area for economic growth and sustainable development:

- Outcome 1.1: Sustainably developed agriculture sector promoting equitable physical and economic access to an increased number of safe and nutritious food and agriculture products.
- Outcome 1.2: National and local authorities and private sector institutions are better able to ensure sustainable use of natural resources (fisheries, forestry, mangrove, land, and protected areas), cleaner technologies and responsive to climate change.

The project also supports a number of key goals identified in UNDP’s CPD Outcome 2: By 2015, national and local authorities, communities and private sector are better able to sustainably manage ecosystems good and services and respond to climate change.

Relevance to GEF Objectives – The SRL project is fully in line with GEF’s LDCF focal area objective 1 to “reduce vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change, including variability, at local, national, regional and global level”. The overarching project objective of strengthening the resilience of rural livelihoods is consistent with the GEF Focal Area Objectives and Outcomes on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA): 1-Reduced vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change, including variability, at local, national, regional and global level.

Based on the examination of project activities and the opinions of stakeholders interviewed in the course of the MTR mission, the project is rated as “Highly Relevant”.

3.3.3. Effectiveness

This section provides a brief overview of the project's effectiveness, including main achievements and challenges.

As has been shown in the previous sections of this report, the SRL project has gone through two distinct periods. The first period was one of a very long delay in kick-starting the project. Between one and half to two years were wasted because of this delay. However, once the project got off the ground with the Inception Workshop in March 2017, implementation has proceeded fast and a lot has been accomplished, as evidenced in the results' section of this report. The project's focus has largely remained aimed around the two objectives of helping local authorities implement water infrastructure projects and supporting the formation of livelihood groups. Further, it was clear from the field visit in the targeted locations that this project has focused on the poorest of the poor. Most of the livelihood groups that were visited for this MTR consisted of women in very poor communities. The degree of their participation in the discussion of community problems during the meetings that were witnessed by the MTR team was impressive.

During the implementation stage a number of challenges have been encountered and delays have been experienced in certain areas, as with the hiring of the Service Provider or the Research Firm for the conduct of the baseline survey. But these are contingencies that are common in projects of this nature that involve many transactions among multiple agents. The project has also had to deal with deeper rooted challenges. For example, the capacities at the district and commune level are quite weak and cannot be addressed overnight. Capacity development is a long-term process that requires sustained engagement over a long period. The commune level in particular is prone weak capacities, especially with newly appointed commune councilors. This is also because the communes are very small and their administrations include only a couple of staff. Some of the activities implemented at this level are technically quite demanding, especially the formulation of development and investment plans. Capacity building at this level requires significant resources and coaching/training. Furthermore, some sub-national administrations have limited fiscal capacity and cannot meet the co-financing requirements. This is particularly the case for the most disadvantaged locations which are very small and/or remote. In other cases, basic development needs and priorities (rural roads) conflict with adaptation needs (irrigation system).

Overall, the achievements of this project are significant and they are outlined in more detail in the section on results and tables 8 and 9 above. The project team has been committed to achieving what was planned to be achieved and the degree of effectiveness following the work plan has been commendable, especially given the initial disadvantages with the late start. As described in earlier sections, the project has been able to adapt to evolving circumstances and respond effectively to emerging challenges. The effective use of adaptive management by the project team and board has been critical for dealing with unexpected circumstances. Looking forward, there are two crucial areas where there is a need for greater focus in the coming months

– the design, approval and construction of infrastructure projects and the formation of the community groups (women, water users, livelihoods, etc.).

Overall, the rating of the project’s effectiveness is “Moderately Satisfactory”.

3.3.4. Efficiency

This section provides an assessment of the project’s efficiency. To assess efficiency, the report focuses on a number of parameters which are closely associated with efficient project management. These parameters are categorized into the following categories: i) budget execution rates; ii) cost structure; iii) timeliness of project activities; iv) synergies and linkages with other projects; and, v) flow of funds.

Budget Execution Rates

Budget execution rates can be an adequate indicator of the project’s efficiency because inefficient projects usually have delays in expenditure which results in higher amounts of spending occurring at accelerated rates closer to project end dates. This typically leads to hurried decisions and hastened implementation which is rarely efficient. Table 11 shows the project’s execution rates based on planned expenditure as per Project Document. Clearly, the project had a slow start with no to little activity in 2015 and 2016. However, in 2017 the pace of activities picked up and in 2018 project expenditure reached US\$ 1.7 m. Overall, up until the point of MTR about 54% of the total project budget had been spent. This leaves 46% of the budget to be spent in the remaining one year and a half (assuming no project extension will take place). Given that for 2018 the project was able to spend US\$ 1.7 m, it is feasible for it to spend the rest of the budget by June 2020.

Table 10: Budget Execution Rates by Category of Expenditure (in %)

Expenditure Categories	2016	2017	2018	Total Exp. 2016-2018	Budget (2016-2018)	% of Budget Spent
1. - Contractual Services-Companies	0	30,242	279,168	309,410	616,559	50%
2. - Local Consultants	12,240	17,522	23,228	52,990	80,090	66%
3. - International Consultants	0	0	17,500	17,500	51,000	34%
4. - Grants	0	300,000	669,000	969,000	1,647,881	59%
5. - Events, conferences, travel	2,722	100,201	188,995	291,918	581,110	50%
6. - Admin expenses	22,905	437,240	502,517	962,662	1,828,889	53%
TOTAL	37,867	885,205	1,680,408	2,603,481	4,805,529	54%

Cost Structure

Another indicator of project efficiencies is the composition of expenditures. In particular, administrative costs are an important factor to examine because unusually high administrative costs are a sign of inefficient management. Table 12 (below) shows the composition of project

expenditure for all years of project implementation. As can be seen from the table, administrative costs have thus far constituted about 37% of all project expenditures, which is a high rate. There is one important factor that should be taken into consideration here – the project has had minimal expenditure on local and international consultants. For these two categories combined, project expenditure has been about 3%. Most of the work that is typically done by consultants in the case of the SLR project has been done by project staff, especially the experts hired by NSDD-S at the national and sub-national level. The absence of international consultants in this project has been a cost-saving factor, allowing the team to reallocate funds elsewhere.

Table 11: Project's Expenditure Structure

Expenditure Categories	Total Exp.	% of Total
1. - Contractual Services-Companies	309,410	12%
2. - Local Consultants	52,990	2%
3. - International Consultants	17,500	1%
4. - Grants	969,000	37%
5. - Events, conferences, travel	291,918	11%
6. - Admin expenses	962,662	37%
TOTAL	2,603,481	100%

Timeliness of Activities

Another indicator of project efficiencies is the extent to which implementation falls behind established timelines. The main challenge with this project when it comes to delays has been its delayed start. Between the time of GEF approval in the summer of 2015 and the beginning of the actual implementation of the project by mid-2017 about one and a half years were lost. Another delay resulted in the recruitment of the Consulting Firm that carried out the baseline survey. The report for the baseline survey was finalized in the 3rd quarter of 2018. Delays were also experienced with the hiring of the Service Provider for carrying out grassroots activities, such as the identification and selection of project beneficiaries for resilient livelihood activities, farmer needs assessment, and capacity development activities (trainings), etc. The hiring of the Service Provider (CADTIS) which was finalized only in April 2008. Delays in the mobilization of these firms have slowed project delivery. Delays have also been experience with the design and construction of the water infrastructure projects. This is further complicated by the onset of the rainy season which allows only for a small window of opportunity for the construction works. Also, the formation of the livelihood groups is behind schedule and needs to be further accelerated.

Despite these challenges, it should be noted that in general the pace of implementation has been good starting from the point when the project was actually launched in mid-2017 (as can also be seen from expenditure rates in Table 11). The project board and team have been able to deal effectively and proactively with a number of challenges, as evidenced in the “adaptive management” section of this report.

Synergies and Linkages with Other Projects

Another angle from which to assess the project's efficiency is by examining the extent to which its activities have been coordinated and synergetic with the activities of other UNDP projects. From an efficiency perspective, it is important to understand how various project activities have reinforced each other and the degree to which similar UNDP interventions have functioned as one.

As far as cooperation and coordination between UNDP projects in the area of climate change, environmental protection and community development is concerned, interviewees for this review pointed to regular joint meetings, coordination of activities, joint communications with government representatives, etc. One strong positive aspect of the SRL project is that it builds on previous interventions, including UNDP projects such as “NAPA Follow Up” (NAPA-FU) project²⁹ in Kratie and Preah Vihear provinces and the Cambodia Community Based Adaptation Programme (CCBAP) project which supported climate change adaptation interventions through local NGOs. Both projects have demonstrated success in specific technical approaches to local climate change adaptation, and both have piloted versions of the Vulnerability Reduction Assessment (VRA) process.

The CO has already taken certain steps to ensure greater cross-project collaboration. Following a review that took place in 2015, UNDP Cambodia has eliminated the cluster approach to managing its projects. So, in the current CPD cycle which runs from 2016 to 2018, UNDP projects, which are mostly NIM, are organized around four programme areas:

- Resilient Livelihoods
- Development Financing
- Voice and Participation (which includes issues of human rights and governance)
- Value Chains (which includes economic development activities)

The SRL project is placed under the Resilient Livelihoods pillar, although it is also aligned with the objectives of the Value Chains pillar. UNDP Cambodia has extensive experience with projects in the Resilient Livelihoods thematic area. The following are some key projects that have been or are being implemented in this area:

- Cambodia Climate Change Alliance – Phase 2 (CCCA-II)
- Cambodia Community Based Adaptation Programme (CCBAP)
- Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project
- Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project II
- Generating, Accessing and Using Information and Knowledge
- Environmental Governance Reform

²⁹ Title of the project: “Promoting Climate Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices in Rural Cambodia” (2009-2013).

- Cambodian Rural Livelihoods
- Collaborative Management for Watershed and Ecosystem Service Protection and Rehabilitation (CoWES)
- Early Warning Systems

One ongoing project that is particularly relevant and complementary to SRL is the CCCA project, a long-standing UNDP project that is currently in its second phase. CCCA is also implemented by NCSD, which means it shares the same Project Manager and Project Director with the SRL project. CCCA works more at the policy level, focusing on capacity building and advisory support for MOE, but also has sub-national pilots focused on budgeting for local infrastructure initiatives. CCCA has taken a different approach to implementation – they work through the NCSD at both the central and local level. Thus, unlike SRL, at the sub-national level they work through the provincial departments of NCSD, not NCDD-S. They also work with different NGOs and CBOs on the ground providing them grants, but these are different stakeholders from those of the SRL project. Another project with potential for significant linkages with SRL is the Early Warning Systems project. On water related issues, MoWRAM is expected to facilitate information sharing and cooperation between the two projects. Furthermore, UNDOPS has been running for many years now the Small Grants Programme (SGP), which at the sub-national level is quite relevant to SRL because of the grant-making component.³⁰

The evidence collected during this MTR suggests that despite significant connections between the SRL project and some UNDP ongoing projects (CCCA in particular), the potential for strong synergies is not fully capitalized. Certainly, there is sharing of information at the level of meetings organized by the CO and some events have been organized jointly between the CCCA and SRL projects (including a learning event and annual retreat to share progress and lesson learned). However, cooperation between the two projects is not strategic and does not take full advantage of commonalities they share, especially at the sub-national level.

UNDP should further strengthen project linkages as much as possible within the existing constraints presented by the fact that projects are subject to different funding sources and windows. The CO could in particular aim for further integration and consolidation of its operations at the at the sub-national level where some of its projects are currently operating and have grant components. This strategy could include integrated frameworks for project planning and implementation at the regional/local level and matched with the CO's plans at the national level. There is also potential for better coordination with the efforts of development partners in the area of climate change adaptation both at the national and sub-national levels.

³⁰ UNDP's Cambodia Community Based Adaptation Programme (CCBAP), which was closed in 2015, adopted the SGP grant model

Flow of Funds

Also, as described earlier in this report, SRL's financing mechanism has been efficient, and in certain ways superior to that of other donor-funded projects. There is one outstanding concern though that the transfer of the PBCR grant from the project to the sub-national level requires a grant notification from the Ministry of Economy and Finance which takes additional time.

Overall, on the efficiency front, there have been good achievements, but also some crucial challenges such as the delays in implementation. The efficiency rating of the project is "Moderately Satisfactory".

3.3.5. Sustainability

While the sustainability of project outcomes is shaped by a number of factors, the focus of this section is on risks related to financial, sociopolitical, institutional, and environmental sustainability of project outcomes.

Financial resources

Financing is quite relevant for the continuity of the results of the pilot initiatives involving communities and local governments at the sub-national level. At this level, continued financing is important because it is an indication of commitment and ownership from the partners, and as such an important aspect of sustainability.

The use of a clear set of performance-based conditions/criteria in the PBCR model to motivate performance and generate co-financing is a strong mechanism for strengthening financial sustainability and scaling up the grant programme in other locations. It may enhance an enabling environment at the sub-national level to attract and manage greater volume of climate change adaptation finance.

However, there are two outstanding challenges here. First, as was noted already in this report, some communes are too small and remote and unable to generate sufficient co-financing. When their real priorities do not coincide with adaptation matters (drought or flood issues), there is usually no money available for co-financing, so they cannot benefit from the financing scheme. Second, it remains to be seen how PBCR model could be institutionalized further by integrating it in the financing model through which MFE allocates and distributes funding to local governments on a regular basis.

In the coming months, the project team could look more closely into these issues and examine how it can secure stable contributions from the national, provincial and district levels for communes' infrastructure plans and how the PBCR model can be institutionalized further. As far as support from international organizations on aspects related to capacity development is

concerned, there is some degree of interest for this kind of work to ensure that some amount of financing will be available. This will also depend on UNDP's continued engagement in this area and its ability to position itself as a leading agency for this type of work.

Given these positive examples, but also challenges, the likelihood of sustainability of the project's outcomes from a financial perspective is rated as "Moderately Likely".

Socio-economic

There are always socio-economic risks to the sustainability of project outcomes emanating from the country's political stability and security situation. However, the area of climate change adaptation and rural livelihoods is less political in nature and a clear priority of Cambodia's leadership. Furthermore, the SRL project has demonstrated good ownership by socio-economic groups and local communities, which lowers socio-economic risks.

Given this, the likelihood of sustainability from the socio-economic perspective is rated as "Likely".

Institutional framework and governance

The project's sustainability from a governance and institutional perspective is related to the likelihood that project outcomes will be sustained beyond the project's completion.

The project design was driven by a recognition that for sustainability purposes the diffusion of climate resilient livelihood supports needs to be done in a way that builds and reinforces sustainable local institutions, both governmental and community-based on the existing mechanisms, rather than as piecemeal, ad hoc donor assistance. In other words, the project's logic is not based on solving specific problems in a one-off manner, but by helping local institutions take care of these problems in the long run. By integrating climate change adaptation measures into local governments' practices and development planning activities, the project provides durable solutions to concrete problems of climate change. Further, the project's focus on institutions is important because it is. This is very important for sustainability. A key focus of this institutional strengthening included the local development planning process that exists at the provincial, district and commune levels and improving the links between this process, the networks of NGOs/CSOs that have been playing a critical role of filling the gap of public service shortfalls especially in rural Cambodia in the past, community-based organizations and the private sector.

However, a number of barriers that prevent Cambodia from achieving sustainability will continue to exist. The following is a brief discussion of the major ones identified in this MTR.

- Given the heavy focus of this project on the strengthening of the capacities of sub-national administrations, it is important that they retain and further enhance their capabilities to perform the tasks promoted by the project long after it has ceased to exist.

The key question here is – Will these governments be able to keep formulating and implementing development and investment plans on their own without any external support? Will they be able to conduct vulnerability assessments, feasibility studies, etc.? Will they be able to manage and supervise construction projects? The assessment of this MTR is that capacities at the local level are quite weak and continued support for these process will be required beyond this project’s lifetime. It will be important that some of this support is provided on a sustained way by NCDD-S which does have the mandate and some of the capabilities for providing this support.

- Further, as noted earlier in this report, some of the livelihood groups created by this project are not properly institutionalized and their organization is weak. Getting these groups to operate on self-sustaining fashion is a tall order. These groups as well will require sustained support, financially, technically and also politically. The project could take a closer look at the sustainability issue of these groups and try to come up with a clearer exit strategy.
- Also, questions remain around the sustainability of some of this project’s water infrastructure initiatives, whose purpose was to demonstrate in very practical terms solutions to adaptation problems. The main question is here is that if the project contributed to the renovation/repair of a particular piece of infrastructure (i.e. an irrigation canal), how are going to make sure that the next renovation will be done by the community and the respective local government working together on the basis of the methodologies and processes promoted by the SLR project? The issue of maintenance here for the very long run is crucial. And, further, the scaling-up of these models to other communities requires stronger institutionalization in terms of maintenance, financing, and contributions of local users in the form of user fees, the role of water user associations, etc. There is a range of issues that requires more thinking and closer attention from the project stakeholders in the months to come.
- The same argument applies to some of the methodologies promoted by the project (such as the VRA process). It will take sustained support and several years of engagement before sub-national counterparts can fully internalize the methodologies that were developed with the help of the SRL project into their systems, and create the capacities for systematically implementing them.

Given this, the likelihood of sustainability from the governance perspective is rated as “Moderately Likely”.

Environmental

The project has made significant contributions to the national objectives of strengthening the resilience of rural communities to climate change effects.

The activities involved in this project do not involve any direct environmental risk. Therefore, this dimension of sustainability is rated as “Likely”.

The following table summarizes the sustainability of the project's achievements according to the four dimensions.

Table 12: Sustainability Rating

Sustainability Dimension	Risk Assessment
Financial risk	ML
Socio-Economic risk	L
Governance risks	ML
Environmental risks	L

3.3.6. Mainstreaming

The MTR found that the project has mainstreamed reasonably well cross-cutting programming principles such as capacity gender equality, human rights, and especially the rights of vulnerable groups, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), etc.

Gender

The SRL project has had a significant focus on the gender dimension. The project design places women in the project target area at the center of the project by clearly recognizing that they experience specific challenges in their daily lives which are exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The project document recognizes that the needs and priorities of women, and particularly those of poor and vulnerable women, differ from those of men. However, project document also recognizes that the roles of women and men are inter-dependent and there are few, if any, areas of social or economic activity that are purely women's concerns. Hence, project involves active participation of both sexes in most livelihood activities.

The project's gender strategy combines mainstreamed measures to ensure that women have equal opportunity with men to be heard, participate and benefit from project activities, together with measures specifically targeted to support women without overlooking the need to ensure the support and engagement of men. It adopts a three-pronged approach that ensures a meaningful participation of women, rather than mere token representation. The gender strategy has focused on (1) raising the awareness of the overall community of the differential gendered aspects of climate change; (2) ensuring and facilitating participation of women and vulnerable groups in all aspects of project implementation and (3) specific livelihoods support to poor and vulnerable women. To prioritize gender mainstreaming, the project has hired a dedicated Project Gender and Social Specialist as one of the key staff in the project. Further, capacity building on gender in livelihood and climate change adaptation has been provided to project staff, counterparts, and other project stakeholders.

As mentioned throughout this report, MoWA has played an important role in this project. MoWA has been represented in the Project Board and has also been actively involved in project activities to ensure the mainstreaming of gender principles in guidelines and training materials.

MoWA has prepared a Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan (GCCSP) with the vision that “Women and men in Cambodia are equally empowered and resilient to climate change impacts, including natural disaster risks and impacts; they join in climate change adaptation and mitigation equally; and participate in policy-making processes to transform economies into greener ones.” The MoWA plan focuses on mainstreaming gender in climate change policies and sectoral strategies. The SRL project is aligned in particular with GCCSP’s Strategic Objective 2: “The funding rules for gender and climate change initiatives are established and made operational through gender-responsive budget in the current and upcoming projects/programmes/policies (both external and national sources)” and Strategic Objective 6: “Effective mechanisms for scaling up the proven experiences on gender and climate change are identified; lessons and best practices of gender and climate change are elicited and analyzed for sharing and learning in national, regional and global forums.”

At the sub-national level, the provincial departments of Women’s Affairs, the District Women’s Affairs Office and the Women and Children Focal Persons of the District and Commune Councils have supported gender mainstreaming and have participate in climate change adaptation planning and in implementation of livelihood activities. The project has organized workshops in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap on “Climate Change and Gender Mainstreaming for Sub-National Councils”, aimed at promoting awareness on gender and climate change in order to effectively mainstream gender and climate change into local planning within the target communes.

Livelihood activities have been based on the principle that specific interventions are needed to address the climate change vulnerabilities of poor women in the community, and that these interventions need to integrate technical support for livelihood enterprises that are specifically available to women with limited land, labour and capital resources, with social capital building to assist in overcoming the disadvantages these women face within the community. The project has promoted the formation of women savings group in order to strengthen economic opportunities for women, especially those in the poorest communities. Also, the majority of participants in the livelihoods groups that have been formed so far are women. This was clearly evident during meetings with community groups formed by the project organized in the framework of this MTR.

The following are some practical activities undertaken by the project that involved women. Their participation is showed in a gender disaggregated fashion:

- 251 provincial, district and commune councilors (89 women – 35%) are better aware of gender and climate change through provincial awareness-raising workshops in the two target provinces on 26 and 28 March 2018.
- SNAs (province, district and commune) further enhanced their knowledge and skills in terms of CCA planning through refresher trainings. A total of 389 SNA participants, 129 of whom

were women (representing 33%), participated in the refresher trainings from May to June 2018.

- 46 provincial and district officials including commune planning and support units (8 women) participated in the two-day training on DVA and GIS-based vulnerability maps on 14-15 March.
- VRA conducted in 40 target communes, 20 out of which completed in the reporting period. A total of 1,992 representatives from local authorities and communities (950 women representing 47.7%) actively participated in the exercises.
- CCA and DRR priorities from VRAs, including livelihood support and infrastructure priorities, responding to CC integrated/updated in 40 CDP/CIPs. There were 1,137 Commune Councillors, PBC members and other local community representatives (230 women) actively took part in the exercises.
- District strategies for CCA in 5 districts in Siem Reap were updated through district meetings. There were 147 district officials and key stakeholders (43 women) participated and provided inputs.
- A total of 115 representatives (34 women) from key involved ministries including MoWA, MoWRAM and MoAFF/GDA as well as those from relevant provincial departments, the SNAs, importantly the Service Providers participated in/learnt from the validation/mater training workshops.
- 30 (6 women) TSCs and relevant SNA representatives trained on the monitoring and management of resilient small-scale rural infrastructures. Their knowledge improved and feel confident to monitor and manage the infrastructures supported by the SRL project.
- During the reporting period, 37 farmer groups have been formed in 37 target villages with a total of 907 group members—642 of whom are females, representing 70%.
- As of September 2018, 348 (233 women) out of 1,596 group members trained on resilient agriculture techniques (chicken raising, vegetable gardening and rice farming).

Overall, the evidence collected for this MTR indicates that women have been involved in all stages of the project, from planning to implementation and monitoring. They have participated in significant numbers in working groups, trainings, baseline survey, conduct of VRAs and formulation of development and investment plans, community group formation, infrastructure projects, and other project activities.

Human Rights Approach

Overall, the SRL project has followed a human rights approach by targeting the most vulnerable groups and regions and addressing the rights of women, people with disabilities, etc. The following is a brief summary of the main dimensions.

- Through the combination of its activities targeting resilient livelihoods through adaptation, the project has contributed to the basic right to a safe and ecologically-balanced environment.

- It has promoted participatory transparent processes not only in project activities, but also within the government through the process of participatory development planning. The project has made local governments more open, transparent and accountable to the public.
- Through the water infrastructure projects, the project has contributed to job creation, poverty reduction and reduced vulnerabilities, which are crucial aspects of human rights.
- The project has also contributed to reducing the number of people seeking jobs outside the province and country.

Sustainable Development Goals

One cross-cutting area where the SRL project could engage more actively is the adaptation and implementation of SDGs in Cambodia. The SDG process presents a unique opportunity for integrating climate change adaptation concerns into policy frameworks. UNDP's other project – CCCA – has been doing some of this at the national level, through its work with the sectoral ministries. However, the SRL project is uniquely positioned to contribute to this process at the sub-national level through its interventions related to the development planning process. The project could assist with raising awareness on the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation concerns into sub-national policy frameworks and assist SNAs in gradually becoming more engaged with SDGs in their activities. However, as of now, the role of the SRL project in SDG activities has been rather limited. The project document does not provide any references or links to the SDGs and no such references to SDG-related activities during the implementation phase were encountered in interviews with stakeholders in the MTR mission. This is something that project stakeholders and UNDP could examine more closely for the rest of the project's duration.

This does not imply that the SRL project should change its nature and allocate resources to SDG-related activities – the SRL project has a clear focus and it should remain committed to this focus. What is suggested here is that the project could use its activities and events to contribute more effectively to the raising of awareness around the mainstreaming of SDGs at the sub-national level.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The SRL project is a very relevant intervention to Cambodia's needs and priorities. It is not only relevant to Cambodia's need for climate change adaptation measures, but also to its need for strengthening sub-national level institutions. This project is as much about climate change, as it is about local governance – the two issues are tightly interwoven and contribute to each other. Climate change adaptation measures that are not integrated into local governments' practices and development planning activities would be unsustainable and inefficient. Further, the project's focus on institutions is important because it provides durable solutions to concrete problems of climate change. The project's logic is not based on solving specific problems in a one-off manner, but by helping local institutions take care of these problems in the long run. This is very important for sustainability.

Stakeholders interviewed for this MTR, including beneficiaries in Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces, highly valued the objectives and activities of this project. It was clear from the field visit in the targeted locations that this project has focused on the poorest of the poor and has pursued very practical activities in the form of water infrastructure projects that have strong demonstration effects. Most of the livelihood groups that were visited for this MTR consisted of women in very poor communities. The degree of their participation in the discussion of community problems during the meetings that were witnessed by the MTR team was impressive.

The partnership between the NCSD, NCDD-S, respective SNAs, and UNDP has everything that it takes for success. It involves highly committed and enthusiastic people striving to tackle the problems identified within the project's scope. Moreover, national institutions, and in particular NCSD and NCDD-S, have full ownership of the project and are providing strong leadership. Further, UNDP has provided a high level of support to the project, both in terms of monitoring and technical advice. And quite importantly, the project team is competent and committed.

Overall, the SRL project has been marked by two periods. The first period was one of a very long delay in kick-starting the project. But, once the project got off the ground with the Inception Workshop in March 2017 implementation has proceeded fast and a lot has been accomplished, as evidenced in the results section of this report. During the implementation stage some challenges have been encountered and delays have been experienced in certain areas, as with the hiring of the Service Provider or the Research Firm for the conduct of the baseline survey. But these are contingencies that are common in projects of this nature that involve many transactions among multiple agents. As described in this report, the project has been able to adapt to evolving circumstances and respond effectively to emerging challenges. The effective use of adaptive management by the project team and board has been critical for dealing with unexpected circumstances.

As outlined in this report, there are two crucial areas where there is a need for further progress and greater attention in the coming months – the design, approval and construction of infrastructure projects and the formation of the community groups (women, water users, livelihoods, etc.). To some extent these activities are interdependent, because some of the groups will be formed as infrastructure construction gets underway (i.e. water users). Already good progress has been made, as evidenced by a second round of meetings with project stakeholders in March 2019. In the remainder of this project, stakeholders should prioritize these two areas to ensure that activities are accelerated. The intervening rainy season will make it difficult to complete the water infrastructure projects on time. There are two windows of opportunity for doing this. One is the current dry season that ends early next year and the other is the following dry season. The project team should plan around these two openings to complete the infrastructure projects, and use the rest of the time to focus on the livelihoods activities.

Table 13 (below) provides the summary of the project's performance rating, using the standard scale for GEF-funded projects.

Table 13: Overall Project Performance Rating

Monitoring and Evaluation	
Overall quality of M&E	MS
<i>M&E design at project start up</i>	MS
<i>M&E Plan Implementation</i>	MS
IA & EA Execution	
Overall Quality of Project Implementation/Execution	MS
<i>Implementing Agency Execution</i>	S
<i>Executing Agency Execution</i>	S
Outcomes	
Overall Quality of Project Outcomes	MS
<i>Relevance</i>	HR
<i>Effectiveness</i>	MS
<i>Efficiency</i>	MS
Sustainability	
Overall likelihood of Sustainability:	ML
<i>Financial resources</i>	ML
<i>Socio-economic</i>	L
<i>Institutional framework and governance</i>	ML
<i>Environmental</i>	L
Overall Project Results	MS

There are many lessons that can be drawn from the experience of this project reviewed in this report, but the following are worth highlighting:

Lesson 1: Kick-starting a Project Requires Strong Coordination

One lesson that can be learned from this project is related to its late start. Late starts are common when the project involves multiple parties playing key roles in the project. In this case, it took time for project implementing partners to agree on specific roles and responsibilities, although they were outlined in some degree of detail in the project document. The key lesson here is that to get the project started on time, a lot of preparatory work and coordination is necessary while the project document is receiving approvals from the funder (GEF).

Lesson 2: Effective Use of Adaptive Management

Given the project's late start and evolving circumstances, the use of adaptive management by the project team and board was crucial for dealing with a number of unexpected contingencies and taking advantage of emerging opportunities. Examples of the project team's ability to respond swiftly to evolving needs and emerging opportunities were the modification of the funding scheme, the change in the scope of work for the Service Provider, the decision to conduct only two surveys (baseline and endline), etc.

Lesson 3: Building Resilient Local Communities Takes Time and Requires Sustained Engagement

The development of institutional and human capacities at the sub-national level, especially at the commune level in small and remote locations, is a challenging task that requires a long engagement and repeated interactions. As has been outlined in this report, a number of interventions by development partners and the government have taken place in this area. The SRL project builds on foundations laid out by these previous interventions. But the building of capacities of local governments and communities does not end here. Building resilient local communities takes time and requires sustained engagement.

Lesson 4: Climate Change Adaptation and Local Governance are an Inseparable Tandem

The SRL project is classified as a "climate change adaptation" project, but it is equally a project about local governance. This project's contributions in the area of local governance are inseparable from its contributions in the area of climate change adaptation. Working with sub-national governments on the assessment of vulnerabilities, formulation of development plans, preparation of investment programmes and feasibility studies, monitoring and management of infrastructure projects, and so on, is extremely important for strengthening governance at the local level. It is precisely this focus on the governance aspects of climate change adaptation that makes these initiatives more sustainable and efficient.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Reassess at the Onset of the Rainy Season Progress with Infrastructure Projects and Chart the Way Forward

As has been shown in this report, one of the most critical aspects of the project is the design and construction of the water infrastructure projects. Activities on this front are behind the schedule and need to be accelerated. As discussed in the report, there are two limited windows of opportunity during the dry seasons to make quick progress with construction works.

At the end of the current dry season, the project team and board should take stock of the situation and assess the likelihood of completing the remainder of the infrastructure projects by mid-2020. This will require a detailed analysis of the progress of each infrastructure project supported by the project. If the prospect of completing all infrastructure projects by mid-2020 will look unlikely, then the Project Board should come up with a clear plan of action that sees all the infrastructure through and also outlines the necessary timelines for completion, including need for project extension.

The project team should also develop a clear action plan targeted to the formation of community groups. This is another area that is lagging behind and that would benefit from a clearer acceleration strategy. Transferring funds to these groups and supporting their economic activities will require a lot of engagement that takes time and resources. The project team should develop a matrix that shows in great detail the stage at which every group's formation is, including a preliminary assessment of their sustainability. The project team needs to develop a clear plan for how this engagement will take place for each group in the remainder of this project.

Also, the end-line survey is a complex survey that will require time to organize adequately. The project team should start with preparations without wasting time.

Recommendation 2: Safeguard the Sustainability of Infrastructure Projects

The project team should examine more closely the issue of sustainability of the water infrastructure projects. The analysis suggested under **Recommendation 1** for each infrastructure project should also cover the dimension of sustainability and include a preliminary assessment of potential exit strategies. Ideally, for each infrastructure project there should be a sustainability plan that specifies what will happen to that piece of infrastructure upon the completion of the project. Who will own it? Who will pay for the maintenance? Who will pay for repairs when needed? How is it going to be managed? Are the water users groups created in some locations going to be able to maintain these assets? Will local governments be able to step up to the challenge of organizing maintenance on a regular basis? All these questions, and others, should be addressed in a systematic way and for each project individually because the circumstances and context around each project are different.

Project stakeholders should also discuss the issue of insufficient funding for some of the infrastructure projects that are completed only partially because of limited resources from the project and local government's own contributions (i.e. renovation of only half of an irrigation canal). Also, the possibility of further institutionalizing the role of the national government (MEF) in providing additional funding through the PBCR model should be examined. Where feasible, the Project Board could identify possible ways for creating more depth in these projects by allocating a sufficient amount of financing.

Recommendation 3: Build on Existing Community Groups rather than Reinventing the Wheel

This report has also noted that some of the community groups that are created by the project are quite weak and their sustainability is questionable at this point. Given that Cambodia has a long history with the creation of such groups, the important question is - What have we learned from the previous experiences with these groups? In the locations that were visited for the MTR, it was noted that there were a number of community groups that had been established by previous projects. Would it have been more appropriate to focus on strengthening existing community groups, rather than creating new ones? Would it not be more effective to channel funds to villagers' cooperatives, where they exist and require strengthening, rather than create new community groups? There is still time for project stakeholders to focus on these questions and examine the experience of existing groups in each location and see how current efforts could build on those existing groups. So, two specific recommendations are associated with this analysis. First, the project could conduct a systematic assessment/study to understand what is the experience of these other groups in each location and to identify challenges and opportunities related to the groups that are being formed with the aim of strengthening their sustainability. Second, the project team could develop for each community group that is created under the project an exit strategy that identifies the challenges that the group will face after the end of the project's life and ways to mitigate those challenges.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen Synergies and Linkages between Projects

NCSD/DCC should strengthen collaboration and linkages between the SRL project and other technical assistance projects under its leadership, particularly the CCCA project. Where feasible, it should establish more integrated frameworks for project planning and implementation.

At the same time, UNDP should strengthen synergies between its projects operating in the area of climate change adaptation and sub-national governance – and, in particular, between SRL and CCCA. Further, UNDP should recognize that there are no actual divisions between climate change adaptation projects at the local level and local governance. These are two sides of the same coin. UNDP should explore the establishment of mechanisms for managing more closely together aspects of projects that share similar objectives, especially when the sub-national level is concerned. Such mechanisms may involve not only integrated implementation of activities

related to information sharing and data systems, but also joint implementation tools related to training, awareness raising, planning, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Recommendation 5: Using the M&E System to Track Important Parameters

The project team should examine how the M&E system is used to track important aspects of the project with a view to improving the availability of information for management purposes. Measuring some of these dimensions was a challenge in this MTR. The following are a few dimensions worth considering.

- *Uptake of project outputs (studies, training, etc.) and the degree to which they serve their intended purpose* – The project should monitor more systematically the extent to which project activities related to research and training get absorbed by beneficiaries.
- *Capacity of stakeholders/beneficiaries* – The project should track the degree to which the capacity of participants taking part in the various training programmes organized by the project has improved.
- *Experience of infrastructure initiatives, lessons they generate and the extent to which they get scaled up* – It is too early to talk about replication of infrastructure projects, but one characteristic of them is that they serve to produce lessons which when shared may lead to replication in other locations. They can be vehicles for transmitting experience and play a crucial role for upscaling and replication. However, it is not clear how their lessons are collected, analyzed, synthesized and shared by the project. This requires more systemic thinking and actions. The project should develop a tracking mechanism for pilot initiatives, including documenting results, lessons, experiences and good practices.
- *Co-financing* – The project should track co-financing for infrastructure projects more effectively by strengthening the monitoring database (PID) that has already been developed.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen Engagement with SDGs at the Sub-national Level

The SRL project has significant potential linkages to the SDG process in the country, especially at the sub-national level, but there has been little explicit recognition of this in the project document or implementation strategy, and no significant action on the ground. Given the commitment of the Cambodian government to the SDG agenda and its importance for UNDP, the project team, NCSD and UNDP could consider linking more effectively some of the project activities to the SDG-related activities going on in the country. At a minimum, project stakeholders should explore how to use the SRL platform to promote more actively the SDGs at the subnational level. This will require a clearly articulated strategy, approved by the Project Board, and should be done in close coordination with other national and UN structures that promote the SDGs in the country.

ANNEX I: MTR'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

Over the last 20 years, Cambodia has attained impressive economic growth. With an average GDP growth of 7 percent, Cambodia has been among the fastest growing economies in Asia and becoming a lower middle-income country (LMIC). Approximately 70% of Cambodian households derive all or an important part of their income from agriculture and the majority of agricultural production is dependent on the monsoon rain and natural floods/recession of the Tonle Sap River and Lake. Climate change is likely to disrupt the natural cycle of the monsoonal system and the hydrological function of the interconnected Mekong-Tonle Sap River drainage system and therefore cause a significant impact on the livelihood and welfare of rural Cambodians.

This project has been designed to reduce the vulnerability of rural Cambodians, especially land-poor, landless and/or women-headed households. This will be achieved through investments in small-scale water management infrastructure, technical assistance to resilient agricultural practices, and capacity building support, especially targeting poor women, for improved food production in home gardens. Importantly, these services will be delivered by sub-national administrations (communes, districts and provinces) with a view to strengthen their overall capacity to plan, design and deliver public services for resilience building. The objective of the project, therefore, is to improve sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution. The objective will be achieved through three Outcomes: 1). Climate Sensitive Planning, Budgeting and Execution at Sub-National Level Strengthened, 2). Resilience of Livelihoods of the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfall, floods and droughts, and 3). Enabling environment is enhanced at sub-national level to attract and manage greater volume of climate change adaptation finance for building resilience of rural livelihoods.

The Department of Climate Change (DCC) of the General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), chaired by the Minister of the Ministry of Environment (MoE) is the Implementing Partner, with support from a number of key technical ministries including the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, etc. To ensure cross-sectoral integration as well as responsiveness to local needs and sustainability, sub-national activities of the Project have been integrated with the National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD) under the coordination of National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDDS). The Project is implemented in 89 communes of 10 districts in Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces over a four-year period, starting from June 2016. However, due to a number of institutional arrangement and mobilization of the project team, the practical implementation of the project activities have been started since March 2017 following the official launch of the project inception workshop to the stakeholders.

Duties and Responsibilities

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Midterm Review (MTR) of the project titled “Reducing the vulnerability of Cambodian rural livelihoods through enhanced sub-national climate change planning and execution of priority actions”, known as the SRL project. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process would be initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). However, due to the delay in starting up the project, the Project Board decided in its second project board meeting to postpone the MTR to October 2018, which is after the second PIR. This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR.

The purpose of MTR is to examine the performance of the project since the beginning of its implementation. The review will include both the assessment of progress in project implementation, measured against planned Outputs set forth in the Project Document, in accordance with rational budget allocation and the assessment of features related to the process involved in achieving those Outputs, as well as the initial and potential impacts of the project. The review will also address underlying causes and issues that have contributed to targets not adequately achieved.

The MTR is intended to identify weaknesses and strengths of the project design and provide recommendations for any necessary change alignments in the overall design and orientation of the project. This is done by evaluating the adequacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of project implementation, as well as assessing actual achievements of project Outputs and Outcomes to date. Consequently, the review mission is also expected to make detailed recommendations on the work plan for the remaining project period. It will also provide an opportunity to assess early signs of project success or failure, and prompt necessary adjustments.

The review mission will identify lessons learnt and best practices from the project which could be applied to future and other on-going projects. The review will also make recommendations on setting up a strategic vision for the time after the project has ended.

The consultant will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for extended descriptions.

ANNEX II: KEY QUESTIONS DRIVING THE ANALYSIS OF DATA

Dimension	Key Questions
Relevance	<p>Were project activities relevant to national priorities? Were project activities relevant for the main beneficiaries? Were project activities aligned to UNDP goals and strategies? Has the project tackled key challenges and problems? Were cross-cutting issues, principles and quality criteria duly considered/mainstreamed in the project implementation and how well is this reflected in the project reports? How could they have been better integrated? How did the project link and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals? To what extent was the project relevant to the strategic considerations of the governments involved? To what extent was the project implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?</p>
Effectiveness	<p>To what level has the project reached the project purpose and the expected results as stated in the project document (logical framework matrix)? What challenges have been faced? What has been done to address the potential challenges/problems? What has been done to mitigate risks?</p>
Sustainability	<p>How is the project ensuring sustainability of its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices, etc.)? Did the project have a concrete and realistic exit strategy to ensure sustainability? Were there any jeopardizing aspects that have not been considered or abated by the project actions? In case of sustainability risks, were sufficient mitigation measures proposed? Is ownership of the actions and impact on track to being transferred to the corresponding stakeholders? Do the stakeholders / beneficiaries have the capacity to take over the ownership of the actions and results of the project and maintain and further develop the results?</p>
Efficiency	<p>Have the resources been used efficiently? How well have the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness? (in comparison to the plan) Were the management and administrative arrangements sufficient to ensure efficient implementation of the project?</p>
Stakeholders and Partnership Strategy	<p>How has the project implemented the commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability?</p>
Theory of Change	<p>Is the Theory of Change or project logic feasible and was it realistic? Were</p>

or Results/Outcome Map	assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?
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ANNEX III: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

For each interview obtain the following information of all the people who were part of the meeting

Name of Interviewee	Title, Department	Institution
Date of Interview	Time	Location
Other Persons present/title	Team members present	

Below is the list of indicative questions which we need to answer for the MTR. Depending on who we interview, we need to choose among the questions below the suitable ones to ask (particularly given that we have normally just around 1 hour for each interview). For example, with implementation partners of specific projects, we may want to focus on part A and some additional questions in other parts as appropriate. For donors and other development partners we may want to focus on part B.

1. EFFECTIVENESS:

- 1.1. To what extent has the project **achieved its expected objectives**? Were all the planned project outputs and outcomes achieved? What were the **key results achieved** (Please describe, in particular, what “**changes**” have been brought about by the project)?
- 1.2. Were there any key results not achieved and why? Were there any positive or negative unintended results?
- 1.3. What was the quality of the deliverables?
- 1.4. Do you think that all the strategies and plans that were supported will be implemented?
- 1.5. What were the major **factors contributing** to the achievements of this project? What were the **impeding factors**?
- 1.6. **Partnerships**: Who were the partners in implementing the project? In your view, how effective has UNDP been in using its partnerships?
- 1.7. To what extent were government counterparts engaged and interested in the project activities? What roles did they play? Can you mention specific government actors and specific roles they played?
- 1.8. UNDP’s role in **policy guidance**: What was the quality of upstream policy advisory services provided through this project? To what extent was this project able to affect

policy change? If yes, can you mentioned some specific examples? What is the implication of such policy change to the country?

- 1.9. In what ways can UNDP strengthen its policy advisory role (what worked and what didn't work; why)?

2. RELEVANCE:

- 2.1. To what extent do you think the project objectives were **aligned with country needs and national priorities, policies or strategies**?
- 2.2. How was the work conducted under this project connected to the broader reform agenda under way in the transport sector? Was it integrated with the existing reform architecture in the area of transportation? Please provide specific examples.
- 2.3. To what extent were the **approaches taken by the project** appropriate in terms of the project **design and 'focus'**?
- 2.4. How coherent was the project in terms of how it fit with the policies, programmes and projects undertaken **by other government counterparts**?

3. EFFICIENCY:

3.1. **Managerial and operational efficiency:**

- a) Has the project been implemented **within expected dates, costs estimates**? Explain **'factors'** influencing the level of efficiency.
- b) Has the project management taken prompt actions to solve implementation and other operational issues? What was **project management structure** (incl. reporting structure; **oversight** responsibility)?
- c) How adequate were the Project Management arrangements put in place at the start of the project? Did the project display effective adaptive management?
- d) What were the implications of the project's organizational structure for its results and delivery?

3.2. **Programmatic efficiency:**

- a) Were the financial resources and approaches envisaged appropriate to achieving planned objectives? Was there a 'good' mix of upstream and downstream efforts to maximize the results?
- b) Were the resources focused on a set of activities that were expected to produce significant results (**prioritization**)? Has the project achieved 'value for money'?

c) Has the project followed any known ‘best practices’?

d) Were there any efforts to ensure ‘synergies’ with other donor initiatives in the target countries? Explain results, and contributing factors.

3.3. What could have been done to improve the overall efficiency of the project?

4. SUSTAINABILITY:

4.1. To what extent are **project benefits likely to be sustained** after the completion of the project? What are the supporting/impeding factors?

4.2. What are the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes?

4.3. What plans were put in place to ensure the continuity of the efforts (e.g., funding, technical capacity)? Has there been an **exit strategy** that describes these plans?

4.4. Do you think that the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?

4.5. Would you want to see this project extended in its current form or some other form?

4.6. Do you think a project like this would be useful in promoting the achievement of SDGs in targeted countries?

B. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT’S STRATEGIC POSITIONING

5.1. To what extent has the project been **responsive** to meeting the needs of the country?

a) How responsive was the project to changes in development priorities in the sector?

b) To what extent has the project been able to adapt its ongoing programme to take into account the changing realities and sensitivities in the sector?

c) To what extent has UNDP been able to adjust its implementation approach specifically to respond to the challenges created by political and institutional changes?

5.2. To what extent has the project been able to **integrate the concept of sustainable development** in the transportation sector (design, allocation of resources and implementation)? Examples?

- 5.3. What **was the comparative advantage of UNDP**, when compared to other actors in the same area?
- To what extent has UNDP been able to provide **technical guidance**, and knowledge?
 - What are UNDP's **comparative strengths**, vis-à-vis other partners, if any?
 - To what extent do UNDP have the skills and expertise needed to support this area?
- 5.4. To what extent has the project been able to establish **partnerships and networks** with relevant partners and build strategic alliances in supporting key national priorities in the transportation area?
- 5.5. What do you think would be the **role of UNDP in helping planning for, implementing strategies to achieve and/or monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals**?

C. OTHER ISSUES

Are there any issues that you would like to raise about the project's performance that have not been covered in this interview?

ANNEX IV: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS MTR

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
<i>Day 1: Tuesday, 30 October 2018 (Briefing and Meeting in Phnom Penh)</i>					
08:30–9:15	<p>Briefing meeting with UNDP Country Office</p> <p>Topic(s): Overview of the field mission and general introduction of the MTR.</p>	UNDP CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Pen Rany, ACD and Head of Programme and Project Result Unit, Ms. Nimnuon IvEk, Oversight Analyst, Mr. Pinreak Suos, PA 		
09:30-10:15	<p>Meeting with Implementing Partner (NCSD/DCC)</p> <p>Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall introduction of the MTR Strategic direction and achievements of the SRL project. 	NCSD Office, Ministry of Environment (MoE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H.E. Tin Ponlok, Secretary General, NCSD Mr. Sum Thy, Project Manager & Director Dr. Hak Mao, Project Coordinator NCSD/DCC/SRL team 		
10:30–12:00	<p>Meeting with the Responsible Partner (NCDDS and SRL project team)</p> <p>Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on 	NCDDS Office, Story 2, Building T, Ministry of Interior (MoI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H.E. Ny Kimsan, Head of PMSD/NCDDS Mr. Chhun Bunnara, Deputy Head of PMSD/NCDDS 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
	<p>evaluation methodology, expected results and work plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflection of overall aspects and progression of SRL project. ▪ Progress and experiences in CC mainstreaming and execution at sub-national level. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NCDDS/SRL team ▪ Mr. Kong Chanthan, Climate Change Specialist, ASPIRE ▪ Mr. Sun Sornsopheak, Climate Change Specialist, LGCC 		
13:30 – 14:15	<p>Meeting with CCCA</p> <p>Topic(s): status of CCSP and their implication on the current and future CC projects/programmes.</p> <p>VRA and mainstreaming CCA in local and national planning.</p>	CCCA Office, MoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr. Julien Chevillard, Trust Fund Admin., UNDP/CCCA ▪ Mr. Va Vuthy, Adaptation Officer 		
14:30 – 15:15	<p>Meeting with SGP</p> <p>Topic(s): Status of CC projects/programmes implementation.</p> <p>VRA and mainstreaming CCA in local planning processes.</p>	UNOPS Office, Phnom Penh Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ms. Ngin Navirak, National Coordinator, UNDP/SGP 		
15:30 –	Meeting with the Ministries	Tung Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr. Am Phirum, Deputy 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
17:00	involved in the SRL project. (MAFF, MoWA and MoWRAM) Topic(s): Update on Government policies related to CCA and the relevant of SRL project.	Room, 3 rd story, DCC Office, MoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director, GDA ▪ Ms. Sav Kimsoeun, Deputy Director, MoWA ▪ Mr. Oum Ryna, Director, MoWRAM 		
Field Visits (Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces)					
<i>Day 2: Wednesday, 31 October 2018 (Travel to Kampong Thom province, and meeting with project stakeholders)</i>					
08:00 – 11:30	Travel to Kampong Thom province (KPT)	PNP – KPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTR Team ▪ Mr. Pinreak Suos ▪ Mr. Keth Vanthan, Driver 		
14:30 – 17:00	<p>Separate meetings with concerned provincial departments (PDAFF, PDoWRAM, PDoWA, and PDoE)</p> <p>Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of the project (implementation, achievements, challenges and partnership)</p>	Provincial Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTR Team ▪ Prov. Departs. staff (PDAFF, PDoWRAM, PDOWA) ▪ Ms. Vorn Sokuntheary, Provincial Advisor ▪ Provincial Project 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
			Team Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial Project Staff Service Providers (CADTIS) Technical Supporters (TSC) 		
<i>Day 3: Thursday, 01 November 2018 (Continue mission in Kampong Thom province to meet with project beneficiaries, and travel to Siem Reap province)</i>					
08:00-9:00	Meeting with District and commune officers Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)	Commune Office (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District project staff Commune councils District service providers Provincial Project Advisor 		
09:00-12:00	Meeting with project beneficiaries Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)	1 – 2 groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commune representatives Village Chiefs Farmer groups District service providers 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
13:00 - 14:00	Meeting with District and commune officers Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)	Commune Office (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District project staff ▪ Commune councils ▪ District service providers ▪ Provincial Project Advisor 		
14:00-15:30	Meeting with project beneficiaries Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)	1 group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commune representatives ▪ Village Chiefs ▪ Farmer groups ▪ District service providers 		
15:30 – 18:30	Travel to Siem Reap province (SRP)	KPT - SRP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTR Team ▪ National Project Advisor ▪ Mr. Keth Vanthan, Driver 		
Day 4: Friday, 02 November 2018 (Meeting with stakeholders/local authorities and project beneficiaries at Siem Reap province)					
08:30– 11:30	Meeting with Siem Reap provincial officers, and concerned provincial departments (PDAFF,	Provincial Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTR Team ▪ Provincial project chief 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
	<p>PDoWRAM, PDoWA, and PDoE).</p> <p>Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project (implementation, achievements, challenges, partnership and suggestions)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Chhun Sophal, Provincial Advisor SNA/SRL Team Service Providers (CADTIS) Technical Supporters (TSC) Prov. Departs. staff (PD AFF, PDoWRAM, PDOWA) 		
13:30– 14:30	<p>Meeting with District and commune officers</p> <p>Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)</p>	Commune Office (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District project staff Commune councils District service providers Provincial Project Advisor 		
14:30 – 17:30	<p>Meeting with project beneficiaries</p> <p>Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of project at the commune (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)</p>	2 groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commune representatives Village Chiefs Farmer groups District service 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
			providers		
Day 5: Saturday, 03 November 2018 (Continue meeting with stakeholders/local authorities and project beneficiaries at Siem Reap province, and travel backward to PP)					
08:30 -11:30	Meeting with project beneficiaries Topic(s): Reflection of overall aspects of the project (implementation, achievements /results, and challenges)	1-2 groups (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Governor ▪ Dist. Service Providers ▪ Concerned District staff ▪ Village chiefs, ▪ Farmer groups 		
12:30 – 16:00	Ended of field visit , and travel back to Phnom Penh	SRP - PNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MTR Mission Team 		
Day 6: Sunday, 04 November 2018 (Preparation of primary findings and summary report)					
Full day	Desk review and writing of summary findings	Hotel/Home	Intl. and National Consultants		
Day 7: Monday, 05 November 2018 (Debriefing meeting with UNDP Management, Partners and Donors in Phnom Penh)					
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with Ministry of Economy and Finance (National Treasury) Topic(s): Partnership and financial management at sub-national level.	1 st floor meeting room, National Treasury Office, MEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H.E Ming Bansovannatichsila ▪ H.E Chhean Hieng, Advisor to MEF 		

Date/Time	Activities/Meetings	Venue	Who	Contact No./Address	Remarks
10:30 – 11:30	Swedish Embassy Topic(s): Partnerships and Financial Supports on climate change adaptation and environment	Swedish Embassy Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Johanna Palmberg Swedish Embassy, PNP 		
14:00 – 15:00	Debriefing meeting to present the preliminary findings and observations	NCSD Office, MoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H.E. Tin Ponlok, Secretary General, NCSD Project Board, Project Managers, Project Staff, Advisors, MoWA, MAFF, MoWRAM 		
15:30 – 16:30	Wrap up meeting with UNDP	UNDP Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Nick Beresford, CD Ms. Pen Rany, ACD Ms. Nimnuon IvEk 		
End Country Mission – International Consultant flight back					

ANNEX V: PROJECT'S RESULTS FRAMEWORK

This project will contribute to achieving the following Country Programme Outcome: ⇒ CP Outcome 2: By 2015, national and local authorities, communities and private sector are better able to sustainably manage ecosystems good and services and respond to climate change					
Country Programme Outcome Indicator Outcome 2 ⇒ Indicator: Number of national and sectoral strategies, plan, and programmes integrating climate change ⇒ Baseline: 4 in 2010 ⇒ Target: 10 by 2015					
Primary Applicable Key Environment and Sustainable Development Key Result Area ⇒ National and local institutions and individuals are better prepared and able to respond to and reduce climate change-induced and other disaster risks					
Applicable SOF (e.g. GEF) Strategic Objective and Programme ⇒ Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)					
Applicable GEF-AMAT Objectives CCA-1 Reduce the vulnerability of people, livelihoods, physical assets and natural systems to the adverse effects of climate change CCA-3 Integrate climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes					
Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Risk/ Assumption
<u>Project Objective:</u> Sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods are improved through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution	Impact: % increase in income from agriculture and linked activities of target smallholder households Sustainability: Number of Districts and Communes integrating CCA in their development plans and investment programmes following NCDDS guidelines	To be collected in the first year of the project 10 Target Districts and their Communes do not have formal climate change adaptation strategies	At least 6,000 households increase income from agriculture by 20% compared with baseline 10 Target Districts and 89 Communes have formulated climate change adaptation strategies integrated in plans and IP	Major Impact Survey Commune Database Adaptation actions identified and recorded in project database	<u>Risks:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale climate resilience building investments, such as SPCR, channelled through sectoral budget allocation, undermine the incentives for climate resilient planning perceived by SNAs Confusion caused at national and sub-national levels due to the number and volume of externally funded projects and programmes. Power dynamics and political-economic structure at the sub-national level undermine the adaptive impacts of the LDCF investments
<u>Outcome 1</u> Climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution at the sub-national level strengthened	# District and Commune Investment Programmes that include specific budgets for adaptation actions (AMAT Indicator 13) Number of engineers and technicians (public sector,	SNA in target Districts do not explicitly list adaptation actions in their investment programmes None	10 DIP and at least 50 CIP include specific budgets for adaptation activities At least 50 engineers and technicians trained using hands-	Adaptation actions identified and recorded in project database Training records	<u>Assumptions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised planning guidelines (under development with UNDP assistance) facilitate specific identification of climate change adaptation strategies in plans and programmes Institutions (technical departments, NGO and private sector) willing to

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Risk/ Assumption
	private sector and civil society) trained in delivery of climate resilient water infrastructure		on, demonstration scheme approach. At least 20% female		<ul style="list-style-type: none">commit staff time to trainingProject generates new knowledge Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none">The cycle of sub-national development planning process limits the window through which climate risks are mainstreamed.Insufficient engineers / technicians with suitable skills and learning potentialInsufficient extension agents with required basic skills / learning potential
Output 1.1 Capacity of sub-national councils (communes and districts) and Planning and Commune Support Units in two provinces enhanced for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting					
Output 1.2 Technical capacity of agricultural extension officers and grass-roots NGOs enhanced for climate-resilient livelihood techniques and sustainable assistance to communities					
Output 1.3 Technical capacity to execute climate resilient water infrastructure design and construction enhanced for about 50 Government technical officials and private contractors					
Output 1.4 Knowledge management platform for sub-national Climate Change Adaptation Planning and resilient livelihoods support established					
<u>Outcome 2</u> Resilience of livelihoods for the most vulnerable improved against erratic rainfalls, floods and droughts	# Resilient infrastructure measures introduced to prevent economic loss and co-financed by Commune/Sangkat Fund	None	At least 100 climate resilient infrastructure schemes have been successfully implemented	NCDD-S Project Information Database	Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Opportunities exist to improve agriculture livelihoods through improved climate-resilient techniquesFarmers willing to commit time to training and resources to adopting new techniques
	% of targeted households that have adopted resilient livelihoods under existing and projected climate change (AMAT Indicator 3)	None	At least 60% of households participating in livelihoods trainings adopted at least one resilient livelihood technique (half of the uptake is by women)	Major Impact Survey	Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quality and cost-effectiveness of sub-projects undermined by collusive practicesNew techniques fail to demonstrate benefits within short timescale (e.g. because of exceptional weather)Material support too complex to administer or creates perverse incentivesMAFF and MoWRAM unable to agree on integrated agriculture and irrigation responsibilities for FO
Output 2.1 Climate-resilient small-scale water infrastructure designed and put in place in at least 10 districts following the resilient design standards specifically targeting rain-fed farmers					
Output 2.2 Climate-resilient livelihood measures demonstrated in at least 10 districts targeting landless women and farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture					
<u>Outcome 3</u> Incentive mechanism is in	Fiscal incentive structure that incorporates adaptation as	Performance measurement system piloted by	Improved system developed, introduced successfully in target	Project Reporting	Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Districts and Communes are

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Risk/ Assumption
place at sub-national level to manage greater volume of climate change adaptation financing aligned with local development plans	climate change risk management (i.e Performance Measurement for PBCRG) successfully introduced (AMAT Indicator 14)	NCDD-S needs improvements and has not been implemented in target Districts	districts and adopted for widespread use by NCDD-S		<p>sufficiently motivated by opportunity to access additional resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change adaptation financing continues to be accessible to target SNA after the project period <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weaker or more disadvantaged Districts unable to meet performance targets and therefore cannot access full amounts of PBCRG
Output 3.1 Performance-based adaptation financing mechanism is strengthened and applied in 10 districts covering 89 communes and integrated into the enhanced climate-smart development planning					
Output 3.2 Capacity of Districts for self-monitoring of climate change adaptation and resilient livelihood support enhanced					

UPDATED RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
<p>Project Objective:</p> <p>Sub-national administration systems affecting investments in rural livelihoods are improved through climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution</p>	<p>Impact: % increase in income from agriculture and linked activities of target smallholder households</p> <p>Sustainability: Number of Districts and Communes integrating CCA in their development plans and investment programmes following NCDDDS guidelines</p>	<p>To be collected in the first year of the project</p> <p>10 Target Districts and their Communes do not have formal climate change adaptation strategies</p>	<p>At least 6,000 households increase income from agriculture by 20% compared with baseline</p> <p>10 Target Districts and 89 Communes have formulated climate change adaptation strategies integrated in plans and IP</p>	<p>Major Impact Survey</p> <p>Commune Database Adaptation actions identified and recorded in project database</p>	<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large scale climate resilience building investments, such as SPCR, channelled through sectoral budget allocation, undermine the incentives for climate resilient planning perceived by SNAs Confusion caused at national and sub-national levels due to the number and volume of externally funded projects and programmes. Power dynamics and political-economic structure at the sub-national level undermine the adaptive impacts of the LDCF investments

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
Outcome 1 Climate sensitive planning, budgeting and execution at the sub-national level strengthened	# District and Commune Investment Programmes that include specific budgets for adaptation actions (AMAT Indicator 13) # of Districts and Communes have formulated climate change adaptation strategies integrated in plans and IP. Number of engineers and technicians (public sector, private sector and civil society) trained in delivery of climate resilient water infrastructure	SNA in target Districts do not explicitly list adaptation actions in their investment programmes None	10 Target Districts and 89 Communes have formulated climate change adaptation strategies integrated in plans and IP 10 DIP and at least 50 CIP include specific budgets for adaptation activities At least 50 engineers and technicians trained using hands-on, demonstration scheme approach. At least 20% female Percentage increased in budget allocation in DIP and CIP.	Adaptation actions identified and recorded in project database Training records	Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised planning guidelines (under development with UNDP assistance) facilitate specific identification of climate change adaptation strategies in plans and programmes Institutions (technical departments, NGO and private sector) willing to commit staff time to training Project generates new knowledge Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cycle of sub-national development planning process limits the window through which climate risks are mainstreamed. Insufficient engineers / technicians with suitable skills and learning potential Insufficient extension agents with required basic skills / learning potential
Output 1.1 Capacity of sub-national councils (communes and districts) and Planning and Commune Support Units in two provinces enhanced for climate sensitive development planning and budgeting	# local councils and key stakeholders at sub-national level are aware of gender and climate change # provincial/district officials attended CCA Planning Workshop: Introduction to VRA and CC mainstreaming in CDP/CIPs. # commune Support Officers trained on DVA and GIS-based vulnerability maps and vulnerability scorecards # communes conducted VRA # CDP/CIP with priority actions from VRA, including livelihood support and infrastructure investments,	None None None None None	At least 400 local councils and key stakeholders at sub-national level At least 100 provincial/district officials attended the 3 times (time/year) At least 100 commune Support Officers and district stakeholders. VRA conducted in 89 communes 89 CDP/CIPs integrated CC related priority actions	Annual progress report Quarterly progress report Workshop report Field report	

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	End of Project Target	Source of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	responding to climate change risk. # District CCA Action Plan formulated	None	10 districts		
Output 1.2 Technical capacity of agricultural extension officers and grass-roots NGOs enhanced for climate-resilient livelihood techniques and sustainable assistance to communities	TNA for agricultural extension officers and LNGOs # extension packages for climate resilient agriculture # agricultural extension officers and LNGOs received ToT training. # farmers (sex disaggregated) carry field test on Innovative Technologies.	None N/A None None	100 officers and LNGOs One extension package adopted 60 extension officers and LNGOs 500 farmers (60% women) carry out field test	Annual progress report Quarterly progress report Training report Field report	
Output 1.3 Technical capacity to execute climate resilient water infrastructure design and construction enhanced for about 50 Government technical officials and private contractors	# training manual on climate resilient small scale irrigation system developed. # technical officers (sex disaggregated) trained on climate resilient infrastructure	N/A None	A training manual improved 50 technical officers (20% women)	Annual progress report Quarterly progress report Training report	
Output 1.4 Knowledge management platform for sub-national Climate Change Adaptation Planning and resilient livelihoods support established	# impact assessment administered: baseline and final assessment # knowledge products (case studies, policy briefs, reports).	None None	2 assessments: baseline and final assessments 12 knowledge products	Annual progress report Quarterly progress report Assessment report	

ANNEX VI: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder	Relevant Mandate	Potential Role in the Project and Rationale for Involvement
National Climate Change Committee (NCCC)	NCCC is an inter-ministerial body established in 2006 whose responsibilities include, inter alia, coordinating and cooperating with concerned ministries and institutions in the preparation of draft policies, strategies, regulations, plans and programmes on climate change, and coordinating and cooperating with concerned ministries and institutions in the preparation of draft policies, strategies, regulations, plans and programmes on climate change.	Strategic oversight of project implementation; the overall progress of the LDCF project will be periodically reported to this Committee.
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	MoE is responsible for coordinating government efforts on environmental issues including climate change. The Climate Change Office was established in MoE in 2003 and then upgraded to CC Department in 2009. DCC was designated as the secretariat for the NCCC. The DCC has five units: the Administration Office; the GHG Inventory and Mitigation Office, the Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Office; the Policy Coordination Office and the Education and Outreach Office.	Implementing partner, with project management assigned to the Department of Climate Change. Coordinate project M&E Implement Output 1.4 (knowledge platform)
Climate Change Technical Team (CCTT)	Along with the NCCC, CCTT was established as an advisory body to NCCC members on climate change issues. It comprises representatives from Government ministries and agencies.	CCTT will act as the coordinating body for inputs to the project from technical Ministries (MAFF, MoWA, MoP, etc.).
National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development - Secretariat	NCDD is an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism to promote the D&D reform agenda. It was established in 2008 and is chaired by the Minister of the Ministry of Interior. NCDD's primary mandate is to strengthen institutions at sub-national levels – provinces, districts/municipalities, and communes/sangkats. NP-SNDD was formulated by NCDD and IP3 will be executed by NCDD through its secretariat (NCDDS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Party for sub-national operations of the project: funding and technical assistance to sub-national administrations, integrated with the NP-SNDD • Coordinating with Ministry of Planning on planning guidelines • Coordinating with MoWRAM on development of technical guidelines for climate proofing small-scale water infrastructure
Association of Local Councils (formerly National League of Communes/ Sangkats)	NLC/S was originally established by the UNDP/EU Democratic and Decentralized Local Governance project (DDLG 2006-2011), the predecessor of ACES project, as a membership organization that advocates for commune and sangkat council's interests to national- and provincial-level counterparts such as MoI, NCDD and provincial	In the proposed LDCF project, ALC is envisaged to play a critical role to disseminate best practices and lessons learned for wider replication and expansion of project results leveraging the nation-wide membership of

Stakeholder	Relevant Mandate	Potential Role in the Project and Rationale for Involvement
	councils. NLC/S is currently the only local government association in Cambodia. It has representatives from all of 1,633 C/S councils and each of the 24 provinces has Capital/Provincial Associations of Communes and Sangkats. IP3 envisages that NLS/C will provide support to local councils as “autonomous governance bodies responsible for policy and decision making” supervising the local unified administrations, and promoting and coordinating democratic development. With support from the ACES project, reflecting greater inclusion and functional reassignment of district councils envisaged in IP3, NLC/S is in the process of expanding its membership to district councils, accompanied by the name change to ALC.	NLC/S. ALC will conduct awareness raising and capacity development of District and Commune Councilors for CCA, through the UNDP ACES project.
Council for Agriculture and Rural Development	Inter-sector coordination of rural development. Specific focus on social protection through the Social Protection Coordination Unit which is piloting measures including conditional cash transfers	Membership of the Steering Committee and partnership in dialogue and knowledge management; specific sharing of expertise on social protection and conditional cash transfers.
Ministry of Planning	With NCDD-S, development of sub-national planning guidelines, and management of the Commune Database (CDB) including data entry through its Provincial departments	Analysis of CDB data and preparation of maps and figures for District Vulnerability Assessment
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	MAFF consists of five departments: Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Forestry, Rubber and Economic Land Concession. Representatives of the agriculture, fisheries administration, and Forest Administration (FA) are members of the CCTT. The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) is charged with contributing to the improvement of food security, rural income and agricultural production in Cambodia. DAE adopts and uses the participatory training and extension approach and methodology for delivering and transferring agricultural knowledge, information and technology including farming system development, farmer organization development and extension and household food security. MAFF currently hosts the PMU of the first UNDP-supported LDCF project and is also an implementing entity of PPCR/SPCR in partnership with MoWRAM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through GDA: development of technical guidelines for climate-smart agriculture and master training of extension agents; coordination with IFAD-ASPIRE programme. • Through PDA/DAO: technical support to Outcome 2 activities through the Technical Facilitation Committees at Province and District level.
Ministry of Water Resources and	MoWRAM is mandated to be responsible for 1) water resources management and development; 2) flood and drought management; 3) water-related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With NCDD-S, development of technical guidelines for climate resilient small-scale water

Stakeholder	Relevant Mandate	Potential Role in the Project and Rationale for Involvement
Meteorology	<p>legislation and regulation; 4) water resources information management; and 5) administration, management and human resources development. MoWRAM has been maintaining, rehabilitating and developing a number of irrigation infrastructures, but in recent years, in line with the D&D reform, it is promoting irrigation management transfer and Participatory Irrigation Management and Development (PIMD). MoWRAM is a responsible party for the first UNDP-supported LDCF project and is coordinating programmes on Climate Risk Management and Rehabilitation of Small- and Medium-scale Irrigation Schemes in the Tonle Sap Basin, and on the Enhancement of Flood and Drought Management, with support from PPCR/SPCR. MoWRAM also oversees the establishment and provides technical/administrative assistance to Farmer Water User Committees (FWUCs), who in turn are responsible for community management of water resources. PDoWRAM is responsible for technical clearance of irrigation investments by SNA</p>	<p>management infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through PDoWRAM: technical support to implementation of irrigation works through the Technical Facilitation Committees at Province and District level.
Ministry of Women's Affairs and Provincial Departments of Women's Affairs	<p>MoWA/PDoWA is responsible for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. In the first UNDP-assisted LDCF project, MoWA is playing a critical role in ensuring that adaptation activities are gender-sensitive and integrating adequate criteria in the vulnerability assessment (VRA). Their participation in the project enabled a Rapid Gender Assessment as an integral part of the VRA and strengthened the gender aspect of the project significantly.</p>	<p>Ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into the development of this climate change adaptation programme and female farmers and women headed households gain full benefit from the intervention. Through PDoWA/DOWA, support to implementation of Outcome 2 activities through the Technical Facilitation Committees at Province and District levels.</p>
Sub-National Administrations	<p>SNAs are divided into three tiers of sub-national administrations: Commune/Sangkat, District/Municipality, and Provincial Councils. Each of the C/S Councils, which represent the lowest tier of administration in Cambodia, consists of five to 11 members and one clerk hired by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The councils are given a broad mandate of representing the state and addressing local needs, ranging from security and public order and basic public services to social and economic development and the environment. C/S councils are required to present their development priorities, through C/S Investment Programme, in a district integration workshop. Currently there are</p>	<p>Provincial: Coordination of technical support to the Districts and Communes through the NP-SNDD-IP3 and through the Technical Facilitation Committee</p> <p>District and Commune:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and implementation of District CCA plans integrated with the DDP/DIP. • Responsible, under NCDD-S, for implementation of livelihood activities (Outcome 2) and for

Stakeholder	Relevant Mandate	Potential Role in the Project and Rationale for Involvement
	<p>1,633 communes/sangkats.</p> <p>District and Provincial councils are elected by C/S council members. So their election is not directly by citizens. District and Provincial Governors are appointed by the MoI. IP3 explicitly states that the responsibilities of bulk of service delivery will be transferred gradually to districts while provinces build capacity for strategic planning and investments as well as provision of effective support and oversight of districts/municipalities.</p> <p>District-level administrations are the main target of the IP3 implementation as their functional roles and responsibilities, as well as financial autonomy, have been vague in the D&D reform process. Their capacity as a key service provider to C/S is likely to be enhanced significantly through IP3.</p>	<p>monitoring CCA performance and meeting targets under Outcome 3.</p> <p>RATIONALE: Under NP-SNDD, the District level is expected to become the main level of local service provision and of support to the Communes. Implementation through the District Administrations will facilitate cross-sectoral integration of project activities.</p> <p>Communes: Preparation and implementation of climate change adaptation activities mainstreamed in the CDP/CIP.</p>
Farmer Organisations	<p>Farmer cooperatives strongly promoted by MAFF for savings, input purchase, produce marketing and coordination of extension activities</p> <p>Farmer Water User Communities assigned responsibilities for irrigation operation and maintenance by MoWRAM</p>	<p>Support to introduction of climate resilient agriculture.</p> <p>Establishment of local farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing networks.</p> <p>Cooperative activities (input purchase, marketing, savings group etc).</p> <p>Maintenance of small scale water infrastructure</p>
IFAD	<p>Agriculture development financing focused on poor farmers worldwide.</p> <p>Co-finances TSSD with ADB</p> <p>Preparing ASPIRE which has focus on climate resilient agriculture and extension service reform.</p>	<p>Cooperation and parallel financing of certain activities (e.g. development of guidelines for climate resilient infrastructure; climate resilient agriculture techniques).</p>
UNCDF	<p>Local Development Practice area with focus on performance-based grant financing to SNA</p> <p>Global Local Climate Adaptive Living (LoCAL) project supports NCDD-S in implementing LGCC</p>	<p>Cooperation and parallel financing for improved Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant and performance measurement.</p>
USAID	<p>Support to Cambodia agriculture sector through HARVEST programme</p> <p>Global Feed the Future (FTF) programme has developed standardized monitoring tools</p>	<p>Shared use of the FTF Household survey instrument and shared data in Kampong Thom province (covered in USAID survey plan).</p>
SNV	<p>International NGO with specialist programme in climate-smart agriculture including technical experts and relevant activities in Cambodia</p>	<p>Technical assistance to MAFF GDA for guidelines and training materials in climate resilient agriculture given their existing partnership with MAFF GDA under the IFAD's supported programme PADEE and the organisation's international</p>

Stakeholder	Relevant Mandate	Potential Role in the Project and Rationale for Involvement
		expertise in climate resilient agriculture and synergy with a multi-country Climate Smart Agriculture programme.
Local NGOs	Local NGOs are often specialized in community organization and may also implement livelihoods training activities. Some NGOs are willing to contract as service providers with projects or local government	Possible involvement as service providers (on contract basis) to District Administrations.
Finance Institutions	Many MFIs active in Cambodia and some (PRASAC, AMK, AMRET etc) have specific financial products tailored for poor and vulnerable clients. MFIs generally offer lower interest rates but more stringent conditions compared to the informal money market.	Provision of small group or individual loans to finance investments in climate resilient infrastructure activities, and possibly, handling of conditional cash transfers to poor and vulnerable women.
Private Sector	Agriculture input suppliers also provide credit (for inputs, payable at harvest) and may be involved in extension activities in partnership with major supply companies and PDA.	Possible scope for public-private partnership arrangements for extension service delivery, following existing models (e.g. GIZ – Green Belt)

ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants¹

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: _____ Elinor Bajraktari _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at _____ Edmonton _____ (Place) on _____ 23 August 2018 _____ (Date)

Signature: _____  _____

¹ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

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Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: _____ Sophat CHUN _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): ____ Individual National Consultant _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at _____ Phnom Penh, Cambodia _____ (Place) on ____21 August 2018_____ (Date)

Signature: _____  _____

¹ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

MTR Report Clearance Form

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:

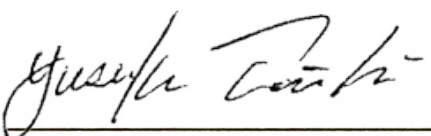
UNDP Country Office

Name: Rany Pen

Signature:  Date: 02.04.19

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: Yusuke Taishi

Signature:  Date: 03.04.19