Midterm Review Report

December 2020

Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods

GEF project ID 9199; UNDP PIMS ID number: 5713

Country: Bhutan

Region: South Asia

Focal area: Climate Change, Biodiversity

Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Implementing Partner: Gross National Happiness Commission

Project Timeframe: October 2017 to October 2023

Review period: October – November 2020; Report submission: Dec 2020

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	**Agro**-Forestry		
AWP	Annual Work Plan	KII	Key Informant Interview
BBS	Bhutan Broadcasting Service	LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
BC	Biological Corridor	LFMP	Local Forest Management Plan
BD	Biodiversity	METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
BFL	Bhutan for Life	MRG	Mainstream Referencing Group
BMU	The Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety,	MTR	Mid Term Review
BTN	Bhutanese Ngulturm	NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity	NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan
CC	Climate Change	NGO	Non-governmental Organization
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation	NIM	National Implementation Modality
CCR	Climate Change Resilience	NRM	Natural Resource Management
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
CF	Community Forest	PA	Protected Area
COVID	CoronaVirus Diseases	PB	Project Board
CSO	Civil Society Organization	PES	Payment of Ecosystem Services
DAMC	Department of Agriculture & Marketing Cooperatives	PIR	Project Implementation Review
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance	PMU	Project Management Unit
EFRC	Environment-Friendly Road Construction	RPs	Responsible Parties
EOP	End of Project	RNR	Renewable Natural Resource
FACE	Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditures	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
FMU	Forest Management Unit	SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
GC	Gewog Connectivity	TT	Tracking Tool
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SLM	Sustainable Land Management
GEF	Global Environment Facility	SMART	Spatial Monitoring & Reporting Tool
GIS	Geographic Information System	TACC	Technical Advisory Coordination Committee
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
HWC	Human-Wildlife Conflict	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
HWCMS	Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy	USD	United State Dollar
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	WMD	Watershed Management Division
ILM	Integrated Land Management	WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Information Table

Project Title	Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5713	PIF Approval Date:	22 October 2015
GEF Project ID (PMIS #):	9199	CEO Endorsement Date:	15 June 2017
ATLAS Business Unit, Award #: Proj. ID:	BTN10, 00080725, 00090310	Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began):	30th October 2017
Country:	Bhutan	Date project manager hired:	NA
Region:	South Asia	Inception Workshop date:	16th Nov 2017
Focal Area:	Climate Change, Biodiversity	Midterm Review completion date:	November 2020
GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective:	Biodiversity, Climate Change, Sustainable Forest Management	Planned closing date:	29th October 2023
Trust Fund	Multi Trust Fund (GEF/LDCF)		
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner:	Gross National Happiness Commission		
Other execution partners:	UNDP		
Project Financing			
GEF financing	USD	3,467,124	
LDCF Fund	USD	10,500,000	
UNDP contribution	USD	1,080,300	
Government	USD	41,554,000	
Total co-financing	USD	42,634,300	
Project total	USD	56,597,424	

Project Description

The "Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan (2017-2023)" project aims to operationalize the integrated landscape approach by strengthening biological corridors, sustainable forests and agricultural systems, and building climate-resilient community livelihoods.

The long-term solution envisaged by the project is to ensure effective climate-resilient management of forest areas, including biological corridors and adjoining protected areas, secure ecosystem services that underpin livelihoods, achieving local and national development; and adapting to the effects of climate change. The goal is to address the adverse impacts of climate change on community livelihood security (SDG 13) and poverty (SDG 1) and contribute to the ecological integrity of biodiversity-rich forested landscapes (SDG 15).

It has four interconnected outcomes: 1) enhanced institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and climate change resilience; 2) biological corridor governance and management established and demonstrated; 3) livelihood options for communities are more climate-resilient through diversification, Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and climate-smart agriculture; and 4) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Knowledge management system established to support sustainable management of forest and agricultural landscapes and climate resilient communities.

Project Progress Summary

The MTR confirms that the project's objectives and outcomes are fully aligned with the government development priorities. These are well reflected in the result frameworks with specific indicators and targets.

The project has made a substantial difference to the knowledge and capacity of government stakeholders and communities to promote Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) in Bhutan. At the objective level, although it was early to assess and confirm the degree of attainment of its objectives during the MTR, the project is apprised to be on track to contribute to the objective satisfactorily. For the three outcomes (outcome 1, 2 and 3), the project is also assessed as being on course with a satisfactory rating whereas a relatively weak progress was observed for outcome 4 as per the set results.

While the project delivered most of the outcome targets agreed during the mid-term and made significant progress in promoting the operationalization of landscape approach, it was observed that the project needs to pay additional attention to ensuring that objectives and outcomes of the remaining project interventions are achieved. Some of the areas that require additional attention are: institutional capacity building of Responsible Parties (RPs) for effective collaboration, consolidation of project learning and preparation of a clear strategy for the operationalization of ILM and the revitalization of Mainstreaming Reference Group (MRG).

Socio-environmental safeguard measures have been adequately administered and gender-sensitive actions integrated into project planning and implementation. However, the Project Management Unit (PMU) should ensure the systematic collection of disaggregated data on gender to address issues established in the Gender Action Plan (GAP). Data on GEF Tracking Tools are being updated and they are used in project management.

The PMU with support from the Project Board (PB) has been effectively managing the project by following an adaptive management approach, preparing result-based Annual Work Plan (AWP, continuously reviewing project progress, following the financial guidelines and regularly assessing the risk facing the project. Collaboration between PMU and UNDP, along with the implementing partners, has steered the project towards achieving greater outputs and outcomes. Most of the activities were carried out on time, and levels of achievement across most of the project outputs represent a relatively efficient use of available project funds. The project also has a good financial expenditure rate (more than 54 percent). The project has provided clear roles for the IPs and followed

a consultative process in planning and management of the interventions. Project partnerships [such as one with Bhutan for Life (BFL)] are being established to ensure effective collaboration even after the completion of the project.

An assessment of the sustainability of the project showed no major significant risks. The project, however, needs to pay additional attention to collaborative actions among the RPs for effective operationalization of ILM and financial sustainability of Protected Areas / Biodiversity Corridors (PAs/BCs) systems. The project's operational risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic also need to be assessed. Despite these minor challenges, the sustainability of the project benefits has been rated as 'likely'.

The overall rating of the project is 'satisfactory[1]', at the time of MTR.

MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

Measures	MTR rating	Achievement description
Project Strategy	N/A	The project has clear relevance, considering the description of the baseline situation in Bhutan. Project objectives and strategies are fully aligned with the government priorities, including the 11th and 12th Five-Year Plan and sectoral strategies of Natural Resource Management (NRM) and climate change. It proposes an innovative approach by addressing insufficient institutional capacity for Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA); insufficient capacity to operationalize the biological corridor systems; support for building livelihood resilience; and inadequate knowledge on natural resource status, ecosystem services, and resilient livelihood options. The Result Framework (RF) is well prepared and is logical with clear mid-term and end-of-project targets.
Progress toward Results	Objective: Satisfactory	ILM is a complex approach. It requires an iterative process and time to adopt by stakeholders. Within this challenging setting, the project has helped build the capacity of the stakeholders and support collaborative planning to operationalize the ILM approach. The planning process and implementation of field activities are increasingly following the ILM approach. Despite these efforts, stakeholders still have a limited understanding (conceptual as well as operational mechanisms) on ILM and integrated NRM processes. It is noted that the local level MRG is operational whereas a national level MRG is yet to be reactivated that can support the objective.
	Outcome 1: Satisfactory	The project has been contributing to the process of developing and using the institutional capacity for ILM and Climate Change Resilience (CCR). Specific progress include: finalization

[1] Satisfactory (S) meaning, "The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings". (For detail, refer Consultant ToR, Annex – D)

		of BC regulation, revitalization of boundaries of PAs and BCs, completion of zonation within PAs and BCs, preparation of management plans for the biological corridors 1& 8, and BC 2 (in draft stage). Similarly, 26 (out of 34 sites) Local Forest Management Plans (LFMPs) have been developed. The capacity of 54 officials (5 female) to manage new data inventory management systems in Forest Management Units (FMUs) and technical measurement has been enhanced. As of the mid-term period, 159,000 ha of forest area, including forest management units and local forests yielding an annual allowable cut of 158,353 cubic meters of timber has been brought under sustainable forest management. The updated sustainable financing scorecard indicates that the mid-term target of 60 percent score has been achieved. An analytical review of gaps, conflicts and inconsistencies in existing sectoral policy, planning and legal frameworks for developing 'Climate Resilient Integrated Landscape Management and Climate Resilient Communities' has been completed (Nov. 2018). "Mapping and assessment of risk in the Renewable Natural Resource (RNR) Sector" was produced (May 2019). However, the project is in the process of developing strong partnership with other agencies and contributing towards evidence-based policy and institutional development that ensure operationalization of the ILM approach.
	Outcome 2: Highly satisfactory	The project has been actively engaged with various actors to improve BC governance and management, and PA management. The new management plans, zonation reports and new research coupled with additional staff from Dzongkhag and BFL funding has led to an overall satisfactory rating of METT scores. In the case of BCs, there is progress, but scores are low owing to the management plans not being approved. Limited staffing and uncertainty about budgets have also led to increasing threats. Enhanced capacity of 90 officials (20 females) along with installation of high-speed internet. SMART patrolling support (equipment and 17 dirt bikes) were provided. Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy (HWCMS) is however still in draft form and requires further refinement and consultation before it is tabled for approval.
	Outcome 3: Highly satisfactory	Although establishing a clear link between climate resilience, conservation and community livelihoods is a complex process, the project has started some exemplary actions (such as climate resilient irrigation schemes, watershed management,

		climate resilient roads, agriculture land management) that have shown good initial results. The project has published a guideline on climate resilient road design, construction and maintenance. The project constructed a 47 km climate-resilient irrigation canal benefitting 10,837 people (5,180 women and 5,667 men), and helped in the revival of paddy cultivation and production of winter vegetables. So far, 1632 ha of agricultural land were brought under SLM. In addition, weekend market sheds and *Psylid*-proof citrus green-house processing units, SLM technologies, pasture development and Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes were supported.
	Outcome 4: Moderately satisfactory	Knowledge sharing events on ILM and CCR were also organized and some field case studies were documented. These actions are in line to support overall sharing of knowledge and influencing stakeholders to operationalization of ILM approach. But the project could have done more by systematically documenting project best practices and learning (on SLM, climate-resilient infrastructure development, planning and implementing climate-resilient activities, operationalization of ILM / MRG *inter alia*) and adopted a more comprehensive M&E systems for assessing the project results in more robust ways. There is no designated and full-time staff with learning documentation and communication background tasked with executing learning and communication roles.
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	Satisfactory	The project management team has been efficient in managing the project. The project adopts a practical implementation modality and adapts to challenging conditions in close consultation with the key stakeholders that lead to making tangible progress. Government agencies at central and Local levels were fully engaged during the implementation of project activities. Their engagement and leadership were instrumental in achieving project outputs and outcomes in time and with comparatively low resources, but the quality of engagement could have been improved by further ensuring collaborative work among IP and RPs, especially in ILM interventions. So far, the project has completed all the planned activities with 54 percent of financial expenditure. The project may however need to enhance its M&E strategy/plan to generate evidence-based reports for easy project performance assessment.
Sustainability	Likely	No significant risks were found associated with this project during the MTR. There is, however, a minor risk related to the implementation of the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project outputs and outcomes were relevant with a

		reasonably good possibility of continuation of project benefits, including useful learning and practices, after the completion of the project. The project, right from its design to its implementation, is fully owned and managed by the government and it is well integrated with the government's Annual Performance Agreement (APA). The project also contributed to strengthening institutional capacity and environmental aspects to a higher degree that helps to sustain and continue the good practices generated by the project. However, the project needs to generate evidence-based knowledge & learning on the ILM approach and climate resilience, and enhance greater outreach to facilitate further the continuation of the project benefits beyond the current projects sites.

Concise summary of conclusions

The project has a specific objective of operationalizing ILM in Bhutan by considering biodiversity conservation, climate, and livelihoods resilience in the three important landscapes along with four relevant and connected outcomes. The RF provides indicators, and targets, and over-all program logic and assumptions are found appropriate. The project is assessed as relevant in the country's context and serves the country's priorities along with the priorities of the SDGs, the GEF, and UNDP.

The project has been contributing to the operationalization of ILM and resilience approaches. Given the complex nature of these interventions, there, however, exist some room to further improve and strengthen the project performance through institutional capacity building, stakeholder collaboration, and strengthening and revitalizing of MRG. The project has improved management effectiveness in the PAs and BCs, reduced wildlife encroachment, and initiated integration of resilience approaches in infrastructure and other livelihoods activities. The project also received adequate support from stakeholders in managing NRM sustainably (such as biodiversity management, sustainable forests management, Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) schemes, and integrating resilience) and provided a foundation to improve the ILM approach in the country along with improvement in an institutional, technical and individual capacity.

Despite some significant achievements in contributing to biodiversity management and adoption of climate resilience approaches at the landscape level, the project should focus on following recommendations to ensure a better project delivery during the remaining project period.

Recommendation Summary

The MTR team proposed the following recommendation to further strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

Recommendation 1: Revise the existing Results Framework based on the new GEF-7 indicators and the project local context.

To align with GEF core indicators, the MTR team recommends to the project to revise the indicators in the existing RF. The project should include management effectiveness of protected areas (GEF core indicator 1.2) and carbon sequestration (from PAs, BCs, SFM, SLM and improved grassland)

(GEF core indicator 6.1) whereas the project can take out indicators no 3 (Increased status of all indicators in the GEF Climate Change Adaptation Tracking Tool') and 6 (Financing gap for sustainable management of the protected area and biological corridor system closed as indicated by improvement in GEF BD-1 Financial Sustainability Scorecard' as the project do not need to report these indicators to GEF. However, given the usefulness of the indicators, the project can still keep these indicators for the internal assessment.

Recommendation 2: Strategizing the operationalization of Integrated Landscape Management (ILM).

The project should consistently provide conceptual clarity on various integrated landscape models and approaches and possible working approaches and modalities on ILM in Bhutan. This can be done during the stakeholder workshop between the IP, RPs, UNDP and other important stakeholders. Based on the ongoing learning (for example integration of irrigation for drinking water and agriculture along with watershed management), the project should identify and share other possible tools, techniques and approaches to facilitate easy field implementation.

The project should work towards reactivating MRGs at the national level and develop clear roles and responsibilities for RPs to strengthen collaborative actions during the project implementation. Central level MRGs can provide strategic guidance to address the integrated approach for the already existing local level MRGs.

Assessing the existing challenges and opportunities of ILM approach, the project should convene a multi-stakeholder dialogues to sensitize relevant (multi-sectoral) stakeholders and identify strategic actions that help operationalize ILM approach even after the completion of the project.

The Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Strategy is in a draft stage, but it does have rich content related to human-wildlife interactions, conflicts and solutions. Hence, wider consultations to include inputs of all the stakeholders in streamlining, synergizing and clarifying strategies, seeking investment opportunities and setting of context is crucial. As this is a 10-year strategy, sufficient time and discussion should be allocated for its preparation.

Recommendation 3: Further strengthening the collaborative work with relevant stakeholders.

The project should formalize and institutionalize on-going working modalities with BFL and expand the partnership with other stakeholder where possible.

Further strengthening of the Technical Advisory Coordination Committee (TACC) can improve the collaborative work culture within the project. For this, the project should revisit the current number of representations and maybe reduce it to not more than 10 members with each member assigned clear roles and responsibilities. Making it mandatory for them to hold two meetings per year is also recommended.

Recommendation 4: M&E, knowledge management and learning.

The project should review its current M&E plan, including data collection and management systems, and enhance it by making it more comprehensive and result-oriented so that it provides better opportunities for periodic assessment of project implementation and performance of activities, and evaluation of their results in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Although, disaggregated data on women are being collected at the representation level (e. g, number of women attending the training or meeting), improvement could be made by focusing on collecting

disaggregated data of women (such as intermediate results on women's access to and control over resources) and other socially & environmentally deprived community members.

Although, the knowledge management aspects of the project are shared between UNDP and the PMU, assigning a dedicated communications person would add value to the documentation of best practices/lessons and dissemination to policy makers and wider audiences. It is expected that a communications person would also be able to fully dedicate his/her time on developing information, communication and education materials that would eventually contribute to operationalizing the ILM, not undermining current practices.

Recommendation 5: Preparing a practical sustainability plan or exit-strategy.

A more strategic and achievable sustainability plan or exit strategy should be prepared by the project in close coordination with stakeholders to ensure a smooth continuation of project results even after the completion of the project. The plan should also include the expected role of government stakeholders and be agreed upon by major stakeholders.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1. This MTR report outlines the performance of the "Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan" and provides recommendations for formative purposes.

2. The main project objective is to operationalize an integrated landscape approach through the strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and build climate resilience of community livelihoods. This is planned to achieve through the strengthening of biological corridors and sustainable agricultural systems, integrating investments for forest and biodiversity management and climate-resilient livelihoods, thus increasing the resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable communities under the conditions of climate change and conserving globally significant biodiversity. The Project aims to achieve its objective through the following four interrelated outcomes.

    - Outcome 1. Enhanced institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and climate change resilience.
    - Outcome 2. Biological corridor governance and management established and demonstrated.
    - Outcome 3: Livelihood options for communities are more climate-resilient through diversification, SLM and climate-smart agriculture.
    - Outcome 4. M&E and Knowledge management system established to support sustainable management of forest and agricultural landscapes and climate resilient communities

3. As indicated in the ProDoc, the project is to undergo an independent Mid-Term Review at the mid-point of project implementation. The review has taken place from October to November 2020.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE MTR AND OBJECTIVES

4. The objective of the MTR was to conduct an independent analysis of the progress mid-way through the Project. The purpose of the MTR was to determine progress being made toward the achievement of objectives and outcomes and to identify course correction when necessary. It focuses on the relevancy; effectiveness and efficiency of the Project implementation; and sustainability. It also highlights issues requiring decisions and actions and presents initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings of this review also lead to recommendations for enhanced implementation during the remaining timeframe of the Project.

1.3 SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

5. The overall approach and methodology follow the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting MTRs of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects (2014) as elaborated in the MTR ToRs (annex 1).

6. The MTR assessed progress towards the achievement of the Project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assessed early signs of project success or failure to identify the necessary changes to be made to set the Project on-track to achieve its intended results. The evaluation covered the four major OECD DAC criteria i.e. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and

sustainability while ascertaining all aspects of the Project intervention related to the Project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation, adaptive management and sustainability taking into account the views of all relevant stakeholders. The MTR also reviewed the Project's strategy, its sustainability risks.

7. The MTR was an evidence-based assessment carried out in a participatory and consultative manner with a review of project documents, relevant literature, interactions with the Project stakeholders at the national level and a field mission with feedback from beneficiaries and other Responsible Partners (RPs). The evaluation process focused on the RF and the Theory of Change (ToC) as a yardstick in assessing progress related to the approved project indicators but also considered the changing project operational context mainly COVID-19 pandemic. An evaluation matrix was developed (annex 2) and an interview guide was also developed (annex 3) during the inception phase. Due to COVID-19 induced travel restrictions, the international consultant led the review process remotely with the support of a national consultant. The Project team played an important role in providing the Project related information and reports including project documents, progress reports, baseline reports and other technical assessments. The MTR team reviewed the Project documents including the recent PIRs and GEF tracking tools on climate change adaptation, Sustainable Forest Management and Biodiversity (METT) tracking tools.

8. The MTR team review the progress through discussions with project management Unit (PMU) staff, the responsible government agencies (particularly Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Ministry of Works and Human Settlement, Gross National Happiness Commission and Protected Areas and Territorial Forest Divisions), UNDP officials and the Project partners in the 3 landscapes (six out of twelve districts). The national consultant visited six project districts that included Trongsa, Zhemgang, Bumthang, Mongar, Haa and Thimphu in October 2020.

9. Despite the COVID-19 risks and travel restrictions, the MTR team carried out 22 national-level consultations, 23 field meetings, 45 KII in the field and consulted seven Project beneficiaries (farmers, women, youth, and excluded communities). Data collection was also carried out through telephone and virtual zoom meetings. The mission itinerary, list of persons interviewed and list of documents reviewed during the MTR are presented in annex 5, 6 and 7 respectively. The MTR also reviewed the financial performance. The financial audit of the project (annex 11) and the co-financing report (annex 8) were also reviewed to assess the financial performance of the Project.

10. The review was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the MTR team has signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form (annex 9). In particular, the MTR team ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of individuals who were interviewed and surveyed.

11. The MTR used the UNDP-GEF grading scales to assess the Project performance and other evaluation criteria (annex 4).

1.4 Structure of the MTR report

12. The evaluation report is structured with an executive summary, followed by project summary, project rating tables, and with project progress, conclusions and recommendations of this report. The second section introduces review purpose, objective, scope and methodologies of the MTR. A third section provides an overall project description, including the problems the Project sought to address and the Project expected results. The findings (section 4) contains evaluation findings

of the Project implementation and are divided into project strategy, progress towards results, implementation and management, and sustainability. The latter three are also subject to an assessment with a rating under the UNDP-GEF grading scale. The fifth section provides a brief conclusion and recommendations for enhancing implementation. Lastly, a list of annexes includes MTR support documentation.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

2.1 BACKGROUND

13. Bhutan is a landlocked country characterized by mountainous topography with elevations ranging from around 100 to more than 7,000 masl and forest coverage of 70.46 per cent of land area (LCMP, 2010). Renewable Natural Resource (RNR) sector such as agriculture, livestock production and forestry, is the primary sector of economic development that generates the largest employment in the country. These sectors employ about 50.8 per cent of the population and contribute 15.82 per cent to the national economy in 2020[2]. Tourism (nature and culture-based) is a rapidly growing industry: Hydroelectric power is Bhutan's largest export product, and in rural areas electrification is being extended to all households. However, many still depend on firewood for heating and cooking. Overall, the poverty rate in Bhutan is 12 per cent. However, poverty in rural areas (16.7 percent) is significantly higher than in urban areas (1.8 percent).

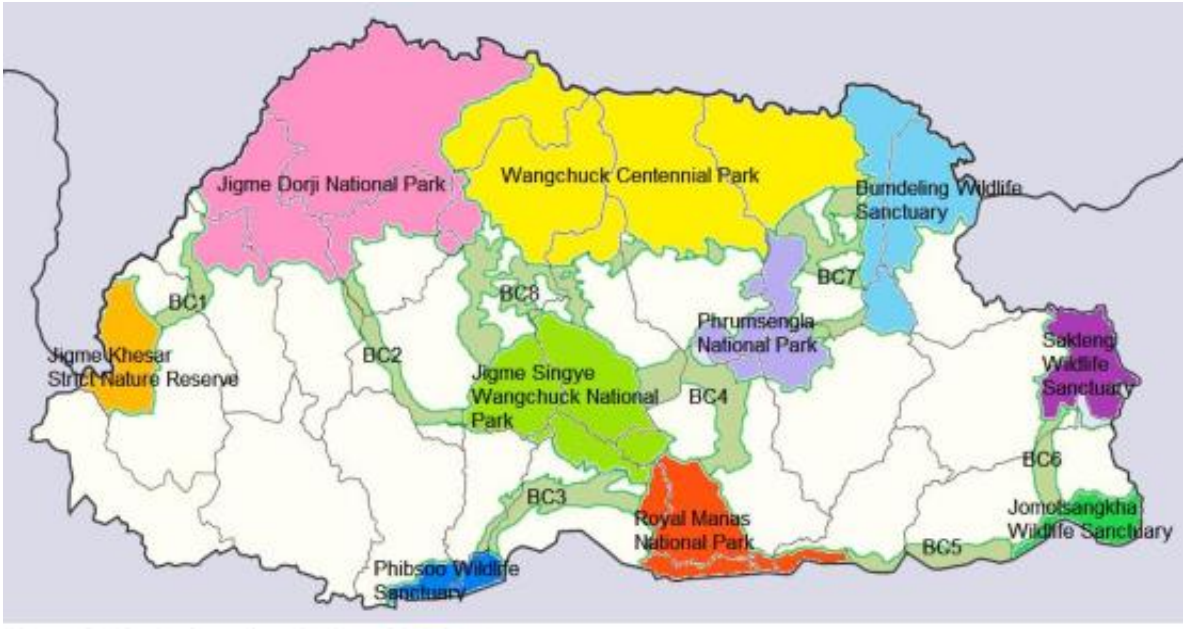


Figure 1: Project sites

14. Bhutan has some of the richest biodiversity in the world despite its small land area, ranking in the top ten per cent of countries with the highest species density. It has the highest proportion of forest with tree-cover of any Asian country (70.46 per cent forest with 51.44 per cent of the land area covered by protected areas and biological corridors). Bhutan is located at the junction of two major biogeographic realms (the Indo-Malayan and the Palearctic); and three global ecoregions. It hosts viable populations of globally threatened species including tiger, leopard, snow leopard, red panda, golden langur, capped langur, wild dog, takin and black-necked crane.

15. Bhutan remains highly vulnerable to emerging climate change impacts due to its geographic location and the dependence of its economy on the climate-sensitive renewable. In Bhutan's case, the sources of inherent vulnerabilities to climate change impacts can be found in the combination of the country's geology and topography, existing land-use practices, and poverty. Climate change and variability have a direct impact on natural resources (mainly forests, water

[2] Statistical Yearbook of Bhutan 2020, NSB, Thimphu (page 91 and 385)

and agriculture) and people's livelihoods. This nexus between sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation and the climate resilience of rural livelihoods is not well integrated into national and local government policy and planning processes, with the result that climate vulnerability and biodiversity losses are increasing as natural capital is eroded and fragmented.

16. The impact of climate change on biodiversity occurs in concert with well-established stressors such as habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species, species exploitation, and environmental contamination, amongst others. Although there are no systematic studies of climate change impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems *per se*, Bhutan's forests are threatened by a combination of climate change and associated human disturbances through changes such as a shift in forest boundaries, altered ecosystems, change in the composition of forests, and loss of species affecting ecosystem functions and services. Climate change combined with human-induced impacts can accelerate damage to freshwater ecosystems,

17. In addition to the climatic impact, the already scarce agricultural land is progressively being lost to a combined effect of land degradation, floods, population growth, land fragmentation and infrastructure development. Studies revealed that an increasing trend was observed with the most crop loss due to climate-induced factors. The increasing outbreaks of forest fires and pests and disease are becoming serious threats to blue pine, spruce and fir and oak forests. Climate change can speed up the colonization of invasive species, with severe implications for native species.

18. With the increasing climate change impact and rising trend of disaster, access and security on the sustainable livelihoods opportunities are limited. Where communities are impoverished or lacking livelihood opportunities, threats to the environment are greater in the form of rampant use of natural resources and other unsustainable practices such as incompatibility between land capability and land use, which in turn exacerbate climate change impacts.

19. Women constitute 53.3% of the population engaged in agriculture. Due to gender-differentiated traditional roles in society such as in agriculture, health and NRM, women are amongst those who are likely to face the heaviest burdens from these changes and benefit less from related policies, programmes and projects. Women are more likely to be vulnerable given their roles in rural communities as they are largely confined to agricultural and domestic activities within the household while men go for off-farm non-agricultural work or conduct heavier tasks such as ploughing and collecting firewood.

2.2 PROBLEMS THAT THE PROJECT SOUGHT TO ADDRESS: THREATS AND BARRIERS

20. The main development challenge that this project seeks to address is the adverse impacts of climate change on rural livelihood security (SDG 13) and poverty (SDG 1); and the effects of sector-led development practices on the ecological integrity of biodiversity-rich forested landscapes (SDG 15).

21. Bhutan's renewable natural resource (RNR) sector, which is made up of agriculture, livestock production and forestry, forms a significant part of the national economy, as the largest employer as well as the main source of rural employment. However, the RNR sector is very vulnerable to climate change impacts, which have been increasing as a result of heavy rainfall, drought, frost, hailstorms, windstorms and related land degradation. Climate change and variability have a direct impact on natural resources (mainly forests, water and agriculture) and people's livelihoods. Besides, climate change impacts and other anthropogenic threats such as land

conversion, forest fires, infrastructure development and unsustainable agriculture are placing increasing pressure on biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems in the country. The Project also addresses the direct threats to biodiversity (land-use conversion, habitat fragmentation and degradation, forest fire, overharvesting of natural resources, poaching and illegal harvesting, human-wildlife conflict) and (indirect) pressure from climate change, population growth, economic growth and poverty.

22. The long-term solution envisaged by the Project is to ensure the effective climate-resilient management of forest areas including biological corridors and adjoining protected areas, securing ecosystem services that underpin livelihoods, local and national development and climate change adaptation (CCA). However, several barriers need to be overcome: a) insufficient institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and CCA; b) insufficient capacity to operationalize the biological corridor system; c) limited capacity, awareness and support for building livelihood resilience; and d) inadequate knowledge on natural resource status, ecosystem services and resilient livelihood options.

2.3 Project Description and Strategy: Objective, Outcomes, Outputs and Project Sites

23. The Project Objective is to operationalize an integrated landscape approach through the strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and build climate resilience of community livelihoods. The expected project impacts are to support SDG 1, 13 and 15 and improve climate resilience forests, agriculture and livelihoods systems. The Project aims to achieve its objective and impacts through the following four interrelated outcomes and outputs:

Project outcomes and outputs

Outcome 1. Enhanced institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and climate change resilience.
Output 1.1: Strengthened policy and planning frameworks and institutional capacity for integrated forest and agricultural landscape management and climate change resilience within key national agencies.
Output 1.2. Strengthened monitoring systems for forest condition, biodiversity status and carbon stocks in DoFPS
Output 1.3. Sustainable financing system for the biological corridor and PA system and sector-oriented valuation policy and tools developed to measure ecosystem services benefits.
Output 1.4. Strengthened national systemic and institutional capacity for management of the biological corridor and PA system
Output 1.5: Enhanced planning and monitoring capacity for sustainable forest management in FMUs and LFMPs.
Output 1.6 Strengthened institutional mechanisms and tools for integration of Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)and environmental sustainability needs in the local development planning system at dzongkhag and gewog levels.
Outcome 2. Biological corridor governance and management established and demonstrated

Output 2.1: Conservation management plans integrating CCA needs in place for the four BCs in the target project landscapes.
Output 2.2: Governance operationalized and management effectiveness enhanced for the targeted biological corridors, including strengthened personnel capacity.
Output 2.3: Law enforcement and biological monitoring capacity increased through SMART patrolling and strengthened biological monitoring systems for key ecosystems for threatened species in the target BCs and adjacent PAs.
Output 2.4: Sustainable human-wildlife conflict response strategies developed and systems strengthened through innovative mechanisms based on global best practices in the target BCs and Adjunct PAs.
Outcome 3: Livelihood options for communities are more climate-resilient through diversification, SLM and climate-smart agriculture.
Output 3.1: Strengthened climate resilience and productivity of agricultural and livestock management.
Output 3.2: Community livelihoods strengthened and sources of income diversified and enhanced in the target landscapes
Output 3.3: Transformation of market access is demonstrated for selected rural communities to enhance their climate resilience
Outcome 4. M & E and Knowledge Management
Output 4.1: Institutionalized knowledge for ILM and Climate Change Resilience
Output 4.2: Enhanced generation, documentation and sharing of knowledge and best practices in ILM and climate-resilient livelihood practices
Output 4.3: Project monitoring and evaluation system in place and used to inform project management decision-making

24. Three landscapes identified by the names of the protected areas and biological corridors are Landscape 1, covering Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve and Biological Corridor 1, in the west of the country; Landscape 2, covering Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and Biological Corridors 2 and 8, in the central-west; and Landscape 3, covering Phrumsengla National Park and Biological Corridor 4, in the central-east.

2.4 Project Implementation Arrangements

25. The overall coordination of the GEF/LDCF project has been led by the GNHC as the (RPsI) for the Project. Given the relatively large geographical area covered by this project, and the focus on integrated forest and landscape management, the Project engaged with a wide range of government agencies and other stakeholders at all levels, and both built on the results of, and intersect with several significant initiatives.

26. The Project has been implemented in accordance with the National Execution (NEX) Manual agreed between the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) and UNDP. In this case, all management aspects of the Project are the responsibility of the national authority. However, the national authority remains accountable to the UNDP Country Office (CO) for production of the

outputs, achievement of objectives, use of resources provided by UNDP, and financial/technical progress reports. UNDP CO in turn remains accountable for the use of resources to the UNDP Executive Board and the Project donors.

27. The main Implementing Partner (IP), or the national authority, for this Project, is the Gross National Happiness Commission-Secretariat (GNHC-S). Within the GNHC-S, the Local Development Division (LDD) has been managing the Project. The main IP is responsible and accountable for managing this project, including the monitoring and evaluation of project interventions, achieving project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP resources. A Project Management Unit has been established within the office of the IP.

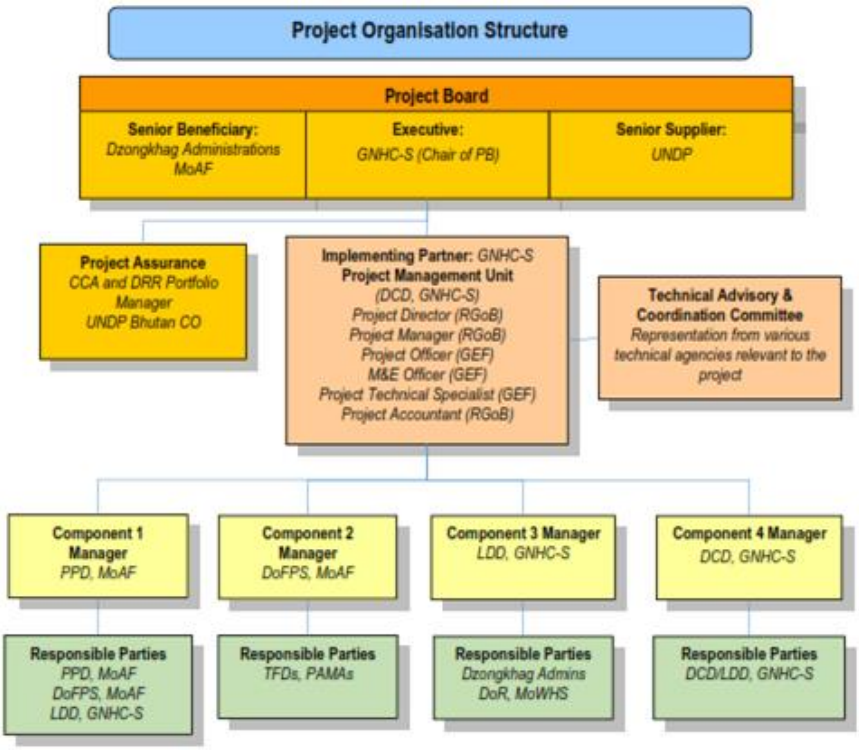


Figure 2: Project Organization Structure

28. At a broad level, participation and representation of stakeholders were ensured through the governance structures put in place by the Project as outlined and depicted in the organogram in the Governance and Management Arrangements (see figure below). Stakeholders have been consulted and engaged throughout the Project implementation phase to (i) promote understanding of the Project's outcomes; (ii) promote stakeholder ownership of the Project through engagement in planning, implementation and monitoring of the Project interventions; (iii) communication to the public in a consistent, supportive and effective manner; and (iv) maximisation of linkage and synergy with other ongoing projects.

29. A Project Board (PB) is established to provide high-level guidance and oversight to the Project. The PB is being chaired by the Honorable Secretary of GNHC. The PB is responsible for making consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the PMU, including recommendations for UNDP/IP approval of project plans and revisions. Technical Advisory and Coordination Committee (TACC), a multi-disciplinary team of technical people from various government agencies and RPs, is also formed to provide technical advice to the Project, ensuring that the Project interventions are technically sound in keeping with RGoB and UNDP/GEF standards including social and environmental standards, and safeguarding a coordinated and integrated approach to project implementation.

30. Project Management Unit (PMU): A PMU has been established to run the Project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the RPs. Under the oversight and guidance of the Project Director, GNHC-S, as the Project Manager, the PMU is responsible for day-to-day project management, including monitoring and evaluation, and coordination with the various responsible parties for planning and implementation of the activities for the delivery of project results in a timely and effective manner and as per standards set for UNDP/GEF projects.

31. The Project assurance role is specifically assumed by the UNDP Bhutan CO. Additional quality assurance has been provided by the UNDP Regional Hub for Asia and the Pacific as necessary.

32. Responsible Parties for implementation: The Project partners can receive project funds through the PMU for implementation of the assigned project activities, and, therefore, are made accountable for implementation and reporting of the Project activities as per approved work plans and budgets.

2.5 PROJECT TIMING AND MILESTONES

33. The Project started on 30th October 2017 and it has a planned duration of six years and ends on 29th October 2023. The planned total cost is US$ 3,467,124 from GEF, US$ 10,500,000 from LDCF. The project received co-financing from the Government and UNDP US$ 41,554,000 and 1,080,300 respectively.

34. Some of the major (end of the) Project targets included:

Objectives
● Increased partnership mechanisms in form of functional MRG system ● Improvement in climate change adaptation status ● 46,600 women and 49,800 men benefited (total beneficiaries =96,400)
Outcome 1:
● BC system mapped in detail and included in n comprehensive integrated land use plans ● 100,000ha forest area brought under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices financing gap closed and management of PAs/BCs more self-reliant. ● METT targets improved
Outcome 2:
● Key species populations are stable or increased over MTR level in PAs. ● Sightings of animals or indirect signs of animals ● The proportion of HHs affected by crop and livestock depredation reduced by at least 25% ● Poaching cases reduced by at least 25% ● Forest Fires- number and area reduced by at least 25% of baseline
Outcome 3:
● Livelihood program reached at least 70% population of the Project area ● At least a 25% increase in annual household incomes associated with project interventions ● All project area households aware of gender roles and women's role in HH decision making

● Women's contribution to productive work increased to 75% ● At least 30% increase number of people adopting climate-resilient livelihood activities ● At least 50% increase quantity of climate resilience infrastructure ● 2000ha under SLM [total 38 SFM groups (100,000ha forest)], increased no. of water sources protected/erosion rate decrease ● Women's access to and control of land and natural resources decision making and benefits increased by 75%. Women's participation in commodity user groups, project meetings, training and development activities reaches 60% of total participants.
Outcome 4:
● Information sources, best practices, lessons learned and project results available online. ● Case studies presenting project-supported best practices and traditional knowledge of ILM /CCR Biodiversity portal on the PAs and BCs, including GIS maps of BCs

35. The stakeholder analysis carried out at the design stage. Major stakeholders include:

Government stakeholders

● Gross National Happiness Commission
● Ministry of Agriculture and Forests:
  o Department of Forests and Park Services, MoAF
  o Department of Agriculture, MoAF
  o Department of Livestock, MoAF
  o Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, MoAF
● National Environment Commission
● Department of Roads, Ministry of Works and Human Settlement
● Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home &Cultural Affairs
● Department of Public Health, Ministry of health

Local government and partners
● Local Governments: Dzongkhag (District) Administrations, Gewog (Block/County) Administrations ● Rural Communities
Civil society organizations
● Tarayana Foundation, Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, Training service providers: Ugyen Wangchuck Institute for Conservation and Environment, College of Natural Resources and WWF Bhutan Program
Other development partners
● Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation ● UNDP

3. FINDINGS

This chapter presents key findings of the MTR prepared based on the review of the project documentation, interactions with the project management team and consultations with main stakeholders and beneficiaries during the review period. The findings are divided into four evaluation categories: i) Project strategy, ii) Progress towards results, iii) Project implementation and adaptive management, and iv) Sustainability.

36. The overall rating of the project is 'Satisfactory' at the time of MTR.

3.1 PROJECT STRATEGY

Project Design

37. The project is being implemented with the objective of operationalizing ILM approach that aims to protect forest areas and conserve biodiversity through sustainable forests, climate-resilient practices and agricultural land management. It also aims to operationalize four pilot BCs and adjoining protected areas. These actions are expected to help enhance existing ecosystem services that underpin people's livelihoods, and promote CCR through nature-based solutions.

38. In order to achieve the objective, the project has been working to overcome barriers related to insufficient institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and CCA/CCR; insufficient capacity to operationalize the biological corridor system; limited capacity, awareness and support for building livelihood resilience; and inadequate knowledge on natural resource status, ecosystem services and resilient livelihood options.

39. This project was designed in 2015 but is still relevant to the current local, national and international context. The project strategies are aligned to the current policy on environment, the twelfth five-year plan, NAPA, climate change, national development plans, SDGs, Convention on Biological diversity, Bhutan's sixth National Report on Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity[3] and Bhutan's National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan, 2020 (NBSAP). In specific, the project supports the implementation of national targets (i.e. 1, 4 and 7) and strategies identified in the NBSAP[4].

> Quote 1: "This project has been such an eye-opener for me, working in the non-environmental sector. The stakeholder meeting has helped me understand biodiversity and climate change-related issues and now when I plan interventions, I am more environmentally conscious". A National Stakeholder (31 yrs)

40. The project design followed a multi-stakeholder engagement process and various government agencies are involved in the project implementation process. A review of the stakeholder engagement suggests that the project has been successful in engaging and working with community based organizations (youth and women's groups) while implementing project activities.

[3]Sixth National Report,https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=241425
[4]National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan, Bhutan, 204, https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/bt/bt-nbsap-v4-en.pdf

41. The project also focused on gender roles in NRM and ILM, and aimed to increase their role by increasing their awareness level, improvement in decision making, increasing contribution to productive work and improvement in access to and control over productive resources.

42. The project contributed to UNDP Bhutan's development objectives and priorities. The UNDP Country Programming Framework (2014 –2018) outlined its support as providing cutting-edge policy advice and technical assistance on climate resilience, biodiversity, and food security, and sustainable agriculture, management of natural resources and people's livelihoods. In specific, the project has contributed to objective one (improve the sustainability of Protected Area Systems), three (sustainably use of biodiversity) and four (maintain biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscape and sectors) of GEF 6 biodiversity result framework as well as climate change adaptation and resilience. The environmental and social risks were adequately incorporated into the project design as well as implementation.

43. The project adopted an innovative design approach by integrating various NRM (green sector), infrastructure (brown sector) and social aspects, and followed a multi-disciplinary approach. Although there are some challenges in the operationalization of ILM approach, the MTR confirmed that the project design and operational modality are still relevant. The MTR team consulted various stakeholders at national, district and local levels and most of the (about 95 percent) stakeholder agreed to this opinion. It, however, appears that the assumption of quick adoption of ILM approach by the stakeholders provided in the ProDoc did not hold. Hence, it requires additional work to review the project assumptions considering the existing knowledge based and institutional capacity.

44. Besides, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) is in the process of re-orienting the 12th Five-Year Plan. The re-orientation and re-prioritization process might have some implications on the existing project priorities. The project, therefore, requires to follow the process closely and to adapt within the project.

Results Framework

45. The project document developed a conceptual model and Theory of Change (ToC) that outlined major interventions and program logics. The ToC identified four main barriers (i.e. institutional capacity, capacity to operationalize BC, poor opportunity/support for building livelihoods resilience including technical and financial capacities and knowledge in NRM/ecosystems), interventions, their proposed outputs and outcomes, project objectives and longer-term proposed project impacts. The ToC provides the logical process of change through expected outputs, outcomes and objective of the projects. The analysis showed that the connections of barriers to objectives are logical, but there are no intermediate/longer term results and the project assumptions that are important for the project management. For example, there are no references of policy context and other potential implementation barriers or enablers both at institutional and local levels.

46. The project hierarchy of objectives and targets are logical. However, it was noted that the potential risks for operationalization of integrated landscape management while involving various sectoral agencies with the 'silo' approach were not adequately considered in the Result Framework.

47. The project document provides targets for the project's midterm and its project end. The MTR team noted that most of the indicators and targets are quantitatively defined and gender-specific

targets are also captured in some outcomes. It is noted that the Result Framework has not been revised or adjusted once it is approved. The RF contains 12 indicators and they are generally 'SMART' toward achieving the project outcomes

48. According to new GEF policy, the exiting projects should aligned with the GEF 7 core indicators. This project was approved during the GEF – 6 period (2014 – 2018), so the existing RF should also be aligned with the new requirements. The MTR team reviewed the project RF and the GEF 7 indicators. The review revealed that the project needs to add two additional indicator to fulfill the requirements and they are indicator 1.2 and 6.1. It also noted that the existing indicators 3 (increased status of all indicators in the GEF Climate Change Adaptation Tracking Tool) and 6 (Financing gap for sustainable management of the protected area and biological corridor system closed as indicated by improvement in GEF BD-1 Financial Sustainability Scorecard) can be taken out as the project do not need to report these indicators to GEF. However, given the usefulness of the indicators, the project can still keep these indicators for the internal assessment.

49. The project document and the project inception report present potential nine risks. There was no 'high' level of risks, however. Risk number 2 (Pro Doc - Table 5) mentioned the risk of 'coordination amongst different agencies'. The MTR noted some challenges of collaborative work among IPs to operationalize the ILM approaches. This is not a serious risk so far but, as indicated in the mitigation sections, the project needs to work more to sensitize relevant stakeholders to manage this risk.

Gender mainstreaming analysis

50. A brief gender analysis summary is presented by using the criteria provided in the MTR guideline.

Criteria		**Midterm Assessment**
G	**Gap-minded:** Addressing the gaps and inequalities between women and men, boys and girls	Yes, for women, gender analysis carried out and Gender Action Plan (GAP) prepared.
En	**Encompassing:** Developed based on participatory approaches and inclusive processes	Yes, participatory approaches used, gender-specific actions and targets are laid out.
D	**Disaggregated:** By sex, and wherever possible by age and by socioeconomic group (or any other socially significant category in society)	Yes, indicators are disaggregated by gender but not further disaggregated with other socio-economic issues such as youth, poverty.
E	**Enduring:** Having a long-term, sustainable perspective, because social change takes time	Yes, although gender is not a major development challenge in Bhutan the project has an adequate focus on this aspect.
R	**Rights observing:** In accordance with human rights laws and standards	Yes in NRM. The project works on gender equity issues in NR access and control.

51. Gender equality is one of the priorities of this project (Prodoc page 61). The project aims to contribute towards narrowing gender gaps by improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance and access to and control over resources in project

sites. The project carried out a gender analysis during the PPG stage to ensure an inclusive approach through which women and men can participate actively and benefit equitably, have equitable access to the project resources and receive fair social and economic benefits. Based on these, a gender action plan was developed for the project to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in the project.

3.2 Progress Towards Results

Achievement toward the Project Objectives:

52. The project has been contributing towards improving the partnership mechanisms for sustainable management solutions for NRM and ecosystems services in Bhutan such as with BFL. The MRG at the national level is yet to be functional and the local level MRGs are still to be matured. The tracking tools are updated and are generally being used.

53. In terms of the project beneficiaries, the project supported more numbers of people than originally planned (96,400- 46,600 women and 49,800). The project has so far directly supported 102,395 beneficiaries (48,183 female and 54,212 male) through its sustainable land management interventions, climate-resilient irrigation interventions, low emission livestock practices, organic program, forest resources management interventions, and marketing infrastructure and support.

54. ILM is widely recognized as a good strategy to reconcile multiple and competing environmental and developmental objectives. Despite a wealth of literature on ILM, ideas relating to landscape approaches and management are diverse and often vague, resulting in the ambiguous use of the terms and approach. The level of operationalization of ILM approach is at the forming stage (identification of objectives, jointly agreed strategy and generic implementation process) whereas the process has also gone through a storming process, such as inadequate conceptual understanding, sectoral conflict and clear implementation guidelines for integration), before it is institutionalized. This has also been reflected in the Capacity Assessment Report (2018[5]). It may be noted that there is also high turnover (transfer/resignation) of RGoB project focal persons. Besides, the proposed MRG has yet to be effective to support the process of operationalization of ILM especially at the national level. In a couple of cases, it was noted that stakeholders have different interpretations of ILM that make the project implementation largely sectoral and follow the business as usual 'silo' approach. For example, the Agriculture Department promoted fodder trees as a part of SLM intervention whereas the Livestock Department has also been promoting the same fodder trees for the improved livestock breeds. In many cases, the field visit showed, these two departments within the Ministry of Agriculture are implementing their activities without adequate collaboration. The role of outcome 4 is for knowledge generation and sharing the knowledge is particularly important to promote operationalization of ILM approach but the results under this outcome are not evident so far to support incremental reasoning and, thus, enhance the process of ILM operationalization.

55. The MTR team viewed some key concepts which are important to help operationalize landscape approaches in Bhutan. They are multi-functionality, trans-disciplinary, participation, complexity,

5 Capacity Development Assessment carried out by the project (2018)

and sustainability (also see Freeman et al, 2015)[6]. In addition, a clear understanding of benefit-sharing from the landscape resources among the different stakeholders is also important. It also requires collaborative work of the stakeholders and communities, and adequate learning appetite through an iterative process that can address the inherent complexity of the landscape management. These integrated landscape management issues are partly covered in the Policy Gap Analysis report[7] and highlighted the need for a policy framework for integrated natural resources management. Given the multi-functionality and complexity of landscapes and their management processes, an overarching policy framework is required to support ILM operationalization in Bhutan.

56. The GEF Tracking Tool for Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) was updated by the PMU, and the tracking tool is annexed in a separate file to this report. CCA TT has 13 indicators along with four gender-specific indicators. The review showed the indicators are aligned with the project targets and being updated. The tracking tool showed that the project has made good progress as per the set targets (see annex 12).

57. Scaling up of project results within the project sites and outside is a key factor for success. The project has so far implemented more than half of the planned activities[8] (with the disbursement of about 54 percent fund). Field level observations showed that farmers are interested in scale-up of some of the project results/benefits. For example, the district level consultations revealed that farmers outside the project were interested to adopt the SLM approach with their financial resources. Similarly, based on the learning from this project, the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement and Thimphu Thromde is integrating climate change into their planning and design process.

58. The review noted that the operationalization of ILM is an approach that is highly relevant to address the existing conservation-development barriers within the country and it appears the process is going to take some time to fully internalize the approach at institutional level. It requires a series of changes in institutional practices and human behavior against existing sectoral-based approachs and mind-set. This project has been working satisfactorily so far in line with achieving the set objective. It, however, requires additional efforts to contribute the objectives effectively within the project duration. Hence, the achievement of the project objective is rated 'satisfactory'.

Outcome analysis

59. The project has already delivered a significant number of outputs and disbursed over half of the GEF budget by mid-term. The project targets are on track for the project proposed achievement. The project is managed well so far and has remained as responsive with the changing context such as the COVID -19 pandemic. The following table provides a brief status with a rating scale and justifications:

[6] Freeman, O. E., L. A. Duguma, and P. A. Minang. 2015. Operationalizing the integrated landscape approach in practice. Ecology and Society 20(1): 24. http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-07175-200124

[7] Analytical Review of Gaps, Conflicts and Inconsistencies in Existing Sectoral Policy, Planning and Legal Frameworks for Developing Climate Resilient ILM and Climate Resilient Communities, 2018)

[8] Out of more than 45 respondents that have been interviewed, 90 percent of them have stated that the project implementation is on track and they have implemented more than 60 percent of the activities.

Table 1: outcome analysis

Project strategy	Indicators	Baseline level	1st PIR	Midterm target	End of the Project target	Midterm level and assessment	Achievement rating	Justification for rating
To operationalize an integrated landscape approach through the strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and build climate resilience of community livelihoods	1. Number of new partnership mechanisms with funding for sustainable management solutions of natural resources and ecosystem services at the national and/or sub-national level.	Limited partnership mechanism MRG system not yet operational Weak financing mechanisms	NA	Increased partnership mechanisms in form of functional MRG system	Increased partnership mechanisms in form of functional MRG system	Partnerships are being expanded but further consolidation for a collaborative and integrated approach is required.	On target to be achieved.	The partnership still has to evolve fully and institutionalized.
	2. Number of direct project beneficiaries	No or very less	NA	19,350 women and 20,650 men benefited (total beneficiaries =40,000)	46,600 women and 49,800 men benefited	Met the required targets	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets
	3. Increased status of all indicators in the GEF Climate Change Adaptation Tracking Tool	See baselines in the GEF CCA TT (Annex 4b)	NA	At least 40% progress towards targets set at CEO Endorsement in the updated GEF CCA TT For MTR	GEF CCA TT for TE	Targets are being met but some additional work required to fulfil all criteria	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets
Outcome 1. Enhanced institutional capacity for integrated	1.1. Status of Biological Corridor system delineation	BC system neither operationalized nor reviewed	NA	BC system delineation reviewed against criteria	BC system mapped in detail based on results of delineation review	BC regulation finalized Re-validated the boundaries of PA	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

landscape management (ILM) and climate change resilience.						& BC with new geo-references		
	1.2. Area under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices indicated by the SFMTT	National protocols for monitoring habitats and biodiversity in BC/PA systems lacking. No systematic consideration of climate resilience in management plans. DoFPS and relevant agencies. See GEF SFMTT	NA	Updated GE SFM TT For MTR (Annex 4c) 50,000ha forest area brought under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices.	Updated GEF SFM TT (Annex 4c) 100,000ha forest area brought under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices	159,000 ha of forest area brought under sustainable forest management through six Local Forest Units and 27 Local Forest Management Plans	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets but there was no information available related to SFMTT
	1.3 Financing gap for sustainable management of the protected area and biological corridor system closed as indicated by improvement in GEF BD-1 Financial Sustainability Scorecard	GEF BD1 Tracking Tool (Annex 4a) Total Score 44% Financing gap of US$4,447,000 to achieve basic management of targeted PAs/BCs. Bhutan for Life (BFL) initiative by RGoB and WWF aims to provide a	NA	GEF BD1 Tracking Tool (Annex 4a) Targeted Score:60% Specific policy, planning, regulatory and fiscal barriers to sustainable PA/BC financing removed.	GEF BD1 Tracking Tool (Annex 4a) Target Score:75% Financing gap closed and management of PAs/BCs more self-reliant through use of at least two new financial sources.	Targets are met, additional efforts require for ensuring sustainability	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

Outcome 2. Biological corridor governance and management established and demonstrated	2.1Percentage increase in METT Score for three protected areas and four Biological Corridors	JKSNR:6; JSWNP: 66; PNP:73; BC1:35; BC2:26; BC4:32; BC8:20;	NA	JKSNR:68; JSWNP:70; PNP:77; BC1:45; BC2:40; BC4:45; BC8:35;	JKSNR:75; JSWNP:75; PNP:80; BC1:65; BC2:65; BC4:65; BC8:65	JKSNR:69; JSWNP:72; PNP:74; BC1:50; BC2:42; BC4:48; BC8:43;		Mostly achieved set targets
	2.2 Population size of key species: tiger in lower elevation, Snow leopard and Musk deer in the higher elevation of PAs and sightings of animal or evidence of movement of animals in the BCs:	Tiger: JKSNR=0 but found in BC) JSWNP= TBC*(9 Tigers - 2020 updated) PNP= TBC* (2 Tigers 2020 updated) Musk deer: all PAs/BCs, data will be available once the analysis is completed by the Wildlife Conservation Division Snow Leopard JKSNR=9 (10 = 2020 updated); JSWNP and PNP will be studied in a baseline study*.	NA	Populations of key species stable or increased over the baseline in PAs. Sighting of animals or signs of animals (droppings marks etc.) using BCs stable or increased compared to a baseline level., pug	(4) Key species populations stable or increased over MTR level in PAs. Sightings of animals or indirect signs of animals (droppings, pug marks etc.) using BCs stable or increased compared to MTR level.	Provided patrolling equipment supported the drafting and field-testing national level wild biodiversity monitoring protocol Carried out a recording of the selected key specifies	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

		Snow Leopard JSWNP = 1; Snow Leopard PNP =1 (2020 updated) Animal sign information in BCs will be added after baseline survey* BC 4: 6; Tigers BC 2: 1 Tiger BC 1: 5 Tigers 5 snow leopards 7 musk deer (2020 updated)						
	2.3 Reduction in threat cases reported over the Project period in project landscapes: - % decrease in the annual number of human-wildlife conflict cases for sample areas totalling 2,000 ha; - % decrease in the annual number of poaching and	HWC: 100% of respondents affected by crop depredation and 61.8% by livestock depredation; Poaching: 13 cases of megafauna poaching detected; 2015 baseline: 9 forest fire incidents covering 12,265.33 acres	NA	HWC: the proportion of HHs affected by crop and livestock depredation reduced by at least 25% of baseline in targeted areas; Poaching: Poaching cases reduced by at least 25% of baseline	HWC: the proportion of HHs affected by crop and livestock depredation reduced by at least 50% of baseline in targeted areas; Poaching: Poaching cases reduced by at least 50% of the baseline Forest Fires: number and area		Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

	illegal wildlife trade cases; - % decrease in the annual number and area of forest fires.			Forest Fires: number and area reduced by at least 25% of baseline.	reduced by at least 50% of baseline.			
Outcome 3: Livelihood options for communities are more climate-resilient through diversification, SLM and climate-smart agriculture.	3.1 Gender-equitable livelihood options for at least 70% of the population in project landscapes made more resilient to climate risks, indicated by: change in annual household income for selected sample communities attributable to project interventions % reduction in women's unpaid domestic work with a corresponding increase in productive work and socio-political engagement	Baselines to be quantified in Year 1 through impact assessment (see Annex 21) (2020 updated: Baseline: Household income for the selected sample is BTN 150,000 [equivalent to US$ 2,149) Roles of men and women vary in agricultural production: Vegetable production, kitchen garden and marketing of processed products and livestock are dominated by women. Ploughing, cardamom production and marketing are dominated by men.	NA	Livelihood program reached 35% of the population of the Project area At least a 10% increase in annual household incomes associated with the Project interventions over baseline; The awareness generated regarding the consequences of women's unpaid domestic role; women's role in HH decision making	Livelihood program reached at least 70% population of the Project area At least a 25% increase in annual household incomes associated with the Project interventions over baseline; All project area households aware of gender roles and women's role in HH decision making or consultation; women's contribution to productive work increased to 75% over baseline	Baseline created (BTN 150,000 / year??) and 44% women – unpaid domestic work (2018). Support on: Women unpaid work reduced Sustainable land management interventions, pasture development, organic groups, climate-resilient irrigation channel, climate-proof critical stretches, environment-friendly road construction, climate-proofing connectivity road	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

	Number of people adopting climate-resilient livelihood activities associated with conservation management and processing of renewable natural resources (gender-disaggregated) as quantified by the impact assessment Quantity of climate-resilient infrastructure including irrigation systems (types by the area covered), climate-proofed roads (length in km), post-harvest storage and agricultural extension facilities	Women's participation in HH decision making is 34%. See Annex 14.		increased to 50%; At least a 10% increase over baseline number of people adopting sustainable livelihood activities At least a 20% increase over the baseline quantity of climate-resilient infrastructure.	At least a 30% increase over the baseline number of people adopting climate-resilient livelihood activities At least a 50% increase over the baseline quantity of climate-resilient infrastructure.			
	3.2 Sustainable land and water resource management instituted in targeted landscapes through community-based and gender-equitable SLM, SFM and climate-smart agriculture	112.5ha under SLM (to be confirmed) 5 SFM groups* No of water sources protected *	NA	1000ha under SLM 25 SFM groups Increased no. of water sources protected *	2000ha under SLM vi. Total 38 SFM groups (100,000ha forest)	1,632 ha of agriculture land were brought under Sustainable Land Management (SLM) 27 Local Forest Management Plan (LFMP) developed	Achieved	Mostly achieved set targets

	practices indicated by: Area of agricultural land under SLM Number of community SFM groups (CF/NWFP), with gender-disaggregated membership data Number of water sources protected Soil erosion rates in one sample site for each of 3 landscapes Improved gender equity in land and natural resources decision-making and benefits between men and women Increased women's participation and executive role in decision-making in commodity user	Soil erosion plots to be established in Year 1 at each site Access and control of men are higher in agriculture machinery and forest product collection 61% of political decisions are made by both genders. Men's participation is higher in government-organized training, meetings and other programs		Erosion rate values for reference plots (bare), traditional practices and SLM practices (t/ha/yr) At each site, Women's access and control over agricultural machinery and forest product collection increased by 50% over baseline. Gender parity of participation in commodity user groups, project-supported meetings, training and field activities.	Increased no. of water sources protected Erosion rate values for reference plots (bare), traditional practices and SLM practices (t/ha/yr) at each site Women's access and control of land and natural resources decision- making and benefits increased by 75% over baseline. Women's participation in commodity user groups, project meetings, training and development activities reaches 60% of the total participants.	Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme in operation in one place supported irrigation schemes Four soil erosion (research) plots established and data collected Construction of processing unit of turmeric and ginger for selected Women's organic group		

	groups and project committees							
Component 4. Knowledge Management	4.1Effective sharing of knowledge, lessons learned and project results enable replication and up-scaling of the Project approach including: Status of knowledge on information sources, best practices, lessons learned & mapping of knowledge gaps on existing ILM/CCR practices in Bhutan # of case studies presenting project-supported best practices and traditional knowledge of ILM /CCR Biodiversity portal with updated comprehensive information on the PAs and BCs,	No baseline on this as the Project is at the development phase.	NA	Information sources and initial best practices, lessons learned & knowledge gaps on existing ILM/CCR practices in Bhutan documented & made available online. Initial documentation of project supported best practices and traditional knowledge of ILM/CCR Biodiversity portal with updated information on the PAs and BCs.	Information sources, best practices, lessons learned & remaining knowledge gaps on ILM/CCR practices in Bhutan including all project results available online. Series of case studies presenting project-supported best practices and traditional knowledge of ILM /CCR Biodiversity portal with updated comprehensive information on the PAs and BCs, including GIS maps of BCs.	Sharing online the best practices, lesson learned and other knowledge Sharing case studies – best practices/ traditional knowledge of ILM /CCR; and Analytical Review of Gaps, Conflicts and Inconsistencies in Existing Sectoral Policy, Planning and Legal Frameworks Running Biodiversity portal – to showcase updated information of PAs and BCs Assessment of institutional gap/	On target to be achieved.	The M & E, knowledge management and sharing part is still to be improved to meet the set targets/objective.

	including detailed GIS maps of the BCs.					running project website A video documentary on project issues		

Outcome 1:

60. The outcome intends to enhance institutional capacity for ILM operationalization through improving BC systems, enhancing sustainable forests and climate-resilient management practices and increasing the financial sustainability of PAs and BCs. To achieve these results, BC regulation of Bhutan 2018 has been finalized in a participatory way. Re-validated boundaries of PAs and BCs have been carried out and a new geo-referenced shape file was produced. Zonation within PAs and BCs are completed. Similarly, management plans for the biological corridors developed for 1 and 8, drafted for BC 2 whereas for BC 4 it is yet to be prepared. Out of 34 sites, 26 Local Forest Management Plans (LFMPs) are developed. These plans are formulated in consultation with the communities and the Local Government. Also, when these LFMPs and FMU plans are developed, gender and vulnerable groups concerns are included.

61. The project has assessed the existing institutional capacity of the RNR sector to support the planning and implementation of Climate Resilient Integrated Landscape Management and Community Development (CRILMCD) activities. Besides, another study on 'analytical review of gaps, conflicts, and inconsistencies in existing sectoral policy, planning, and legal frameworks' for developing climate-resilient integrated landscape management and climate-resilient communities was also carried out. The policy study recommended a policy framework for an integrated landscape approach. While this is an important suggestion that has also been reflected in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008[9].

62. The project also provided capacity building support [54 officials (five of whom are female) from 3 protected areas and 14 territorial forestry divisions] on a new data inventory management system in FMUs and technical measurement. So far, 159,000 ha of forest area is brought under Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) including forest management units and local forests yielding an annual allowable cut of 158,353 cubic meters of timber. This has provided a basis for further work to manage sustainably the forest resources ensuring livelihood opportunities for the communities.

63. The project has also gained some good learning to ensure sustainable financing. Many PAs have started exploring options for ecotourism, PES and other forms of sustainable financing. The project has helped to explore opportunities of PES and ecotourism in various PAs and BCs. For this, some advocacy and educational programs, for instance training on SEA, exposure visit outside countries, mainstreaming climate change adaptation, climate smart agriculture, sensize communities on conservation policies and rules and regulations, are organized. It is also noted that the project has been collaborating with Bhutan for Life (BFL) initiative by contributing and implementing US$ 2.2 million in different activities. The updated sustainable financing scorecard indicates that the mid-term target of 60 percent score has already been achieved. However, there are reports of prevailing gaps as PAs and BCs are still highly dependent on national budgets and donors due to lack of proper funding for research. This indicates BFL is fully implemented in all BCs and PAs that help to explore options for sustainable financing. Also, with BFL, there is increased advocacy and monitoring on the use of funds and budgets including measuring against indicators.

64. The project also aims to support low carbon development through initiating some activities on carbon sequestration. For this, the project proposed to work through Sustainable Forest

[9]Article 22, Section 1 and subsections 18 (e) has elements that advocated an integrated landscape approach.

Management and agricultural land management related activities (Pro doc pp 30 & 46). It is noted that the project is yet to start field level carbon sequestration assessment from its interventions (also see under Project's Transaction to GEF7 core indicator section).

Outcome 2:

65. This outcome anticipates improving BC and PA governance through enhanced management efficiency, improving the population size of key indicator species, and reduction of threats to biodiversity. The MTR team reviewed the baseline data with the recently updated METT. Although it is not verified by external evaluators, interacting with the various national and local stakeholders, indicates there is increasing progress in management effectiveness. The MTR noted that all parks having new management plans and they are expected to meet the end of the project (EoP) targets. The new Management Plans, Zonation reports and new research coupled with additional staff from Dzongkhag and BFL funding has led to an overall satisfactory rating of METT scores. Although there is a substantial amount of fund set-aside for the establishment of the HWC-endowment fund, operationalization has been halted due to RGoB policy. Operationalization of the endowment fund would to a large extent help in consolidation of the piecemeal approach/interventions to HWC issues.

66. In the case of BCs, there is progress, however, scores are relatively low owing to management plans pending approval, limited staff and uncertainty about budgets that leads to increasing threat. BCs still lack a baseline to understand the functionality of the corridors. The current management and research paradigms are mostly conventional. The existing management systems are not comprehensive enough to consider all important variables/factors in BCs management to know the actual functionality BCs (such as presence of some selected animal species may not confirm the actual functionality of BCs). In addition, the research methods are not robust enough (tools and capacity) to capture the complexities and uncertainties of the ecosystems functions in the BCs. While it may increase the overall METT score and achieve its targets, it is, however, difficult to confirm now whether BCs will achieve the overall functionality of the corridors. The METT scores for the PAs and BCs are as below:

Table 2: BD TT performance

Park	Baseline Score	Midterm target and achieved Score	BC	Baseline Score	Midterm target and achieved Score
JKSNR	62	68 - 69	BC 1	35	45-50
JSWNP	66	70 -72	BC 2	26	40- 42
PNP	73	77 -74	BC 4	32	45-48
			BC 8	20	35-43

67. The project also provided capacity building (mainly training and exposure visits) to about 90 officials (70 male and 20 females). It has also supported high-speed internet connections, which is being used effectively. Patrolling support was provided with some equipment[10]. The project

[10]70 camera traps and accessories, 17 dirt bikes for mobility, 180 SMART data logger, 2 rafts and accessories, 26 hypsometers, 26 Clinometer, 35 wedge prisms, 35 compasses, 35 metric diameter tape, 30 four men tents, 35 measuring tapes to territorial forest divisions and parks to enhance the capacity of monitoring

supported drafting of a national biodiversity monitoring protocol which is approved and will help in gathering crucial information of plant and animal species. During the project baseline survey, the missing baseline for the 'population size[11]' of key indicator species such as tiger, snow leopard, and musk deer was gathered.

68. One vital sign of functional BCs is the sightings of key wildlife species in the PAs and BCs. The records[12]maintained by the project show sightings of the key indicator species both in PAs and BCs. The record showed an increasing number of wildlife sightings against the baseline.

69. There is a draft Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy (HWCMS) waiting to be approved and continuous capacity building and awareness-raising support[13] on HWC, illegal poaching and forest fire prevention have been provided. The project also implemented some activities[14] to address illegal poaching, controlling HWC and preventing forest fire. The interactions with the stakeholders and the project records[15] revealed that there has been reduced wildlife depredation in the project sites. It was also noted that the RGoB has withdrawn the compensation schemes[16] against the wildlife depredation; as the government is in process of operationalizing the HWC-endowment fund. This withdrawal may have resulted in the fewer numbers of reporting of depredation cases by local communities to the local authorities.

70. The process of recording or monitoring wild life and seeing the changes of wildlife population need reliable and continuous data collection systems. Although records showed increasing wildlife sights, the project may however need to develop robust and longer-term monitoring systems to assess the actual contribution of the project interventions. The role of the communities in the monitoring process could be vital in this case, as the engagement of communities in biodiversity conservation will enhance ownership from communities and the cost of monitoring would also be less.

71. Overall, the project has achieved most of the targets as outlined above, thus rated highly satisfactory.

Outcome 3:

[11] See indicator 8 in the result framework and subsequent baseline

[12]Wildlife record: improved. JKSNR recorded 10 snow leopard; JSWNP recorded 9 tigers, 1 snow leopard and 1 illegal timber harvesting case; PNP recorded 2 tigers and 1 snow leopard; Zhemgang TFD recorded 6 tigers in BC-3; Wangdue TD recorded 1 tiger in BC-2; Paro TD recorded 5 snow leopards, 7 musk deer and 5 tigers (outside of BC 1),

[13]JSWNP (covering 136 Households), 719 participants (students, community and armed forces) in JKSNR and 400 households by Territorial divisions. / Conducted 2 stakeholder consultation meetings

[14]The core group was formed with members from the Policy and Planning Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Nature Conservation Division, Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock and Representatives from Research institutions. Community awareness educations were conducted in the communities to reduce forest fires and regular anti-poaching patrolling

[15]There are 141 HHs whose livestock have been affected and 47 HHs whose crops have been affected by HWC. This is a huge decline as compared to the baseline (2017) which indicated 16000 HHs (crop depredation) and 9800 HHs (livestock depredation). Poaching cases reported have also declined to 3 cases as compared to 13 cases reported during baseline (2017). / The total area damaged by fire is 73 acres which have decreased from 12,265 acres (baseline in 2017).

16 The HWC compensation scheme has been withdrawn with the RGoB's intent to come up with more holistic intervention with the operationalization of the HWC-endowment fund.

72. This outcome focuses on climate resilience livelihoods practices. The project supported in various areas such as SLM, sustainable /organic agriculture, low emission livestock practices, agriculture extension and market chain, climate-resilient irrigation systems, pilot climate-proofing of a gewog connectivity road considering gender approach. Some of the major achievements are:

73. Climate-resilient infrastructure: The project supported revision of Environment Friendly Road Construction (EFRC) guideline integrating climate resilient features and it is being applied in the construction of pilot Nyimshong-Shingkhar GC road. Besides, 47 km of climate-resilient irrigation schemes were constructed that benefited 10,837 people (5,180 women and 5,667 men). The Irrigation schemes have brought about drastic changes in livelihood outcomes of the participating communities such as the revival of paddy cultivation in Tsirang and winter vegetable cultivation in Tsirang and Punakha. Similarly, the Irrigation schemes have been successful in adopting the integrated approach, where the irrigation schemes not only use water for crop production but also cater communities with drinking water and in addition, the watershed management is also integrated at the water sources.

> *Quote 2: "The SLM technology specifically the land consolidation and terracing has been such a boon for us villagers. Now we can cultivate crops and supplement our income. We want to thank the Royal Government of Bhutan and the organization that is giving us money to do this". A Villager in Mongar (32 yrs)*

74. Agriculture: So far, 1632 ha of agricultural land were brought under SLM across 12 districts and 38 gewogs/blocks benefiting 9,747 population (4,796 women and 4,951 men). This intervention has been very popular among the beneficiaries as it helped farmers to get good harvest and increase family income (Figure 3). The project supported weekend market sheds construction (benefit 19 HHs), *Psylid*[17] proof citrus greenhouse (with a capacity of 90,000 citrus saplings), established four soil erosion plots to monitor soil erosion under different agricultural land use systems and construction of processing units of turmeric and ginger for Dakphel and Takabi Women's organic group (case study I). To create a niche market, organic farming has been promoted through 17 organic groups. This has benefitted 2,807 farmers (960 women and 1,335 men). The field consultation, however, showed that there have been challenges of getting

[17] Diaphorina citri, the Asian citrus psyllid, is a sap-sucking, hemipteran bug in the family Liviidae. It is one of two confirmed vectors of citrus greening disease.

excavators easily as the RGoB is deploying the machines for some other prioritized activities and the ones that are available in the market are not suitable for the terrain.

75. Livestock: With the pasture development (ha) intervention, 2,206 farmers (961 women and 1,335 men) were benefited which enabled improved cattle rearing. Other associated activities such as Napier plantation for land stabilization at SLM sites supported by the project has also led to improved livestock rearing activities.

76. Forests and ecosystems services: 27 Local Forest Management Plans (LFMP) out of 34 were developed covering 122,000 ha. Community groups were formed to manage local forest resources and ensure sustainable harvesting. Each LFMP group is also responsible for plantation

Figure 3: Change in land management after SLM intervention

of the trees in the harvested areas and ensures that the unsustainable harvesting is avoided. There was, however, some challenges noted related to financial resources.

77. Ecosystems services: Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme in Yakpognag, Mongar was renewed; 102 service providers of Yakpogang Watershed community would be paid Nu. 226,000 annually by the service users (297 hhs of Mongar Town). In addition, water sources in the upstream are conserved that support irrigation schemes in downstream. Two PES sites and water sources in Zhemgang near Mithun farm and Tsirang (Kuchi Khola and Pow khola) are protected with the support from the project.

Gender equity and women empowerment

78. Considering the men and women's needs and priorities for transformational change in gender relations, the project interventions aim to influence access to and control of land, agricultural, livestock, and forest resources. The interactions with the project stakeholders and local beneficiaries including women, it is noted that the participation of women is promoted as considering the project document as well as UNDP Bhutan guidelines, in most of the project intervention including training, community group meetings, NR user group formation, and local employment. Impact on women was also considered while constructing EFRC road construction.

79. The project promoted energy and labor-saving technologies to reduce the disproportionate workload of women. For example, electric/solar fence installation helps to reduce women's crop-guarding time; gender-friendly farm mechanization (harvesting, post-harvest and cardamom drying) minimizes the long hour and stressful labor requirements of women. The project has

generally been working with poor and resource constrained women and their families, and these interventions significantly reduced drudgery on one hand, improved income and increased access to and control over resources on the other (see Case I, II and III). As a result, the participation of women in community services and decision-making roles has increased over time.

80. From the discussions with stakeholders, local level beneficiaries and women participants showed that the project has considered gender aspects during the project planning and implementation. These interventions enable women to actively participate in the NRM decision-making processes. Some of the specific examples included: participation of women in SLM activities (50 percent participation); pasture development and improved cattle rearing (44 percent); and organic agriculture (28 percent) was encouraging. Besides, the project supported numerous international training and visit programmes and 38 percent of the women participated in those events.

81. Despite some encouraging activity implementation and results noted on gender equality at the field level, there is an inadequate disaggregated data record-keeping system available to assess the up to date and consolidated progress on gender. There exists activity level data but it is noted, they need to be properly stored and analyzed to allow somebody to assess the progress being made on gender issues against the baseline and also provide opportunities to assess the performance and impact of the interventions. For example, the Pro Doc has aimed to reduce women's unpaid domestic work with increased socio-political roles; support equitable distribution of land and natural resources and benefits between men and women; increase women's participation and executive role in decision-making by 50 percent in commodity user groups and project's technical/coordination committee, and provide gender-equitable livelihood options for at least 70 percent of the population in project landscapes. The project is yet to work on a systematic data collection with an adequate level of disaggregation on these aspects and it was difficult for MTR team to assess the actual progress that the project has made during the review.

Case I: a turmeric and ginger processing plant for women group

A support in the establishment of a turmeric and ginger processing plant for women group in Zhemgang is a good example of gender-focused intervention. With the sole purpose to improve the income of the farmers by enhancing the production of ginger and turmeric and to enable the sale of farmers' produce locally, the processing machinery (pulveriser, slicer, drier and digital weighing machine) have been supplied to the women group in Trong Gewog with the budget of Nu.0.7 million. This intervention not only benefits the women's group, but it would also contribute to the livelihoods of 3290 farmers (1608 female and 1685 male) through the sale of raw materials (ginger and turmeric) to the processing unit (a case from Zhemgang).

Case II: Income generating activities for women

An example is provided for the Lull Village. Similarly, in Kazhi sub-district, with a population of 2623 farmers, of which 1245 are female, was supported with the construction of a market outlet. Now, these farmers do not need to travel outside their village to procure farm tools and agricultural inputs. These essential items can be procured from the market infrastructure supported under this project. The outlet serves the communities in not only providing access to agricultural tools, fertilizers, seeds, and grocery items, they also buyback surplus farm produce from the farmers.

Case III: Biogas plant and enhancement of capacity of local masons

Bepjee is one of many villages in Trong Gewog under Zhemgang Dzongkhag and is situated 15 kilometers via GC road from the Gewog center. The average fuel wood consumption by each of the households was significant and for some of the households who used petroleum gas, consumption was about 5 cylinders per year. Moreover, there was pressure on the natural forest and negative impact on climate change. Further, the farmers used to spend a lot of money/time for purchase of LPG gas and collection of firewood. In order to reduce forest degradation and enhance the livelihood of the people, GEF-LDCF Project supported construction of 30 biogas plant for 30 households with 33 % subsidy. As a part of this activity, the training on biogas plant have been provided to 10 local masons in the Gewog.
Today 30 households with population of 150 persons including 70 female beneficiaries have the access to pollution free cooking. Other benefits include reduced pressure on forest, improved health, eliminated the need to spend money on LPG, availability of time to do other household works, reduced cost for firewood and electricity cost and creation of local employment. The slurry produced from the plant is used as manure for the vegetables.

82. The review of this outcome showed that the proposed activities are mostly completed on time. This is the largest and the most complex outcome in this project as it requires working at field level with so many external variables. The MTR noted inadequate collaborative work among the RPs and some operational delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the overall management is under control and proposed targets are effectively delivered on time. Thus, the outcome is rated highly satisfactory.

Outcome 4:

83. The outcome deals with the M & E and knowledge management systems to support the sustainable management of forest and agricultural landscape and climate-resilient communities. This includes documentation and effective sharing of best practices and lessons learned, and development of biodiversity portals. Additional KM activities by engaging private media such as the Happiness Journal was also carried out with an objective of reaching out to the students of high schools on the project intervention to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

84. Documentation of best practices and traditional knowledge of ILM and CCR was undertaken in collaboration with national television centre Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS). They are i) video-documentation of integrated irrigation intervention, Sustainable Land Management and Climate

proofing of gewog connectivity road was prepared and shared in Social Media.; and ii) organized a talk show on climate-resilient irrigation schemes. Besides, a panel discussion was hosted to raise awareness on wildlife conservation and protected areas systems by a national television centre. In addition, the project also carried out brief case study notes on 'marketing infrastructure', 'development of Lull as organic village', 'turmeric and ginger processing', 'land development', 'biogas plant' and 'Barbed wire support'.

85. The project is expected to strengthen institutional and human resource capacities for long-term knowledge management and M&E for integrated forest & agricultural landscapes and climate-resilient livelihoods. The project carried out some studies (such as capacity assessment, policy gaps) but the project should have focused on documenting more field based best practices and institutional level learning from the project. The MTR team viewed that the project has carried out some activities regarding evidence-based knowledge generation from the project but they are not adequate given the project scope and the expected results under this outcome. The MTR noted several opportunities to document such practices and learning (such as from SLM, climate-resilient infrastructure development, challenges/opportunities of planning and implementing climate-resilient activities, operationalization of ILM / MRG just to name a few). These knowledge and learning derived from the project would provide a basis to a smooth implementation of field activities, create awareness among relevant stakeholders, influence decision-makers and finally positively contribute to the operationalization of ILM approach. Given the complex nature of the project objective, the project is slightly behind in carrying out the knowledge management related activities.

86. The M & E part is covered separately under the efficiency section. The MTR team views the current project management structure is effective but there are some gaps under this outcome. The primary objective of this project is the operationalization of the integrated landscape approach and how this is achieved is to the large extent impinged on how the interventions of outcome 4 are carried out. Whatever knowledge and lessons generated through the project interventions (from other three components), those are expected to be effectively and efficiently shared with policymakers, institutional partners, donors and individuals. It is noted that there is no designated full-time staff with knowledge documentation and communication background tasked with these roles and responsibilities. Considering these situations, the outcome is rated as moderately satisfactory.

Project's Transition to GEF7 core indicators

87. According to new GEF policy, the projects approved during the GEF-6 period (from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018) that have not yet been completed are required to shift to core indicators and sub-indicators at the next available opportunity in the project cycle and no longer required to submit tracking tools. Further, for full sized projects that have received CEO endorsement/Approval during GEF-6, Agencies are required to apply the core indicators and sub-indicators at mid-term-if applicable -or project completion. Therefore, in keeping with the new GEF policy on transition from the tracking tools to core indicators, the project is going to contribute to GEF 7 indicators (one core and 3 sub-indicators) and a brief assessment of these indicators is provided below.

<u>Indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness</u>

86. The project has been supporting the improved management effectiveness of Protected Areas (Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park, Phrumsangla National Park, and Jigme Khesar Strict

Nature Reserve) and Biological Corridor 1, 2, 4 and 8. The Project in partnership with the BFL is working toward improving the management effectiveness of 1,149,400 ha of PAs and 176,400 ha of BCs which is also indicated by improved METT score. The project planned to continue to maintain these areas under improved management effectiveness.
The METT scores of various PAs and BCs are as below.

Name of Protected Area	Hectares	METT Score			
		Baseline		Achieved	
			Endorsement	MTR	TE
Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park	1,149,400		66	72	
Phrumsangla National Park			73	74	
Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve			62	69	
Biological Corridor 1	*176,400*		35	50	
Biological Corridor 2			26	42	
Biological Corridor 4			32	48	
Biological Corridor 8			20	43	
Sum	1,325,800				

Indicator 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity

88. This indicator includes i) 'Area under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices including incorporation in Local Forest Management Plans and Forest Management Units indicated by the GEF Sustainable Forest Management Tracking Tool' and ii) Area of agricultural land under SLM. In case of SFM, the project proposed to achieve 50,000 ha under SFM practice in the RF whereas the project at the time of MTR managed to convert159,000 ha forests under SFM. Similarly, the project proposed to support SLM activities for 1000 ha by midterm while the project actually assisted for 1632 ha. In both cases, the project has exceeded its achievement as per the project Result Framework.

	Hectares			
	Expected		Achieved	
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Area under sustainable and climate-resilient management practices including incorporation in Local Forest Management Plans and Forest Management Units indicated by the GEF Sustainable Forest Management Tracking Tool			*159,000*	
Area of agricultural land under SLM		112.5 ha	*1,632 ha*	
			160,632 ha	

Indicator 6.1: Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector

89. Global carbon sequestration benefits is one of the priority theme of this project. The project supported improved management of conservation areas, promoting sustainable forest management and adoption of climate resilient agriculture approaches and SLM. The project document (page 30) mentioned that 'lifetime direct avoided GHG emissions through forest protection, SFM, SLM and smart livestock practices that will reduce land degradation and secure ecosystem services, totaling 3,578,372 tCO2eq over a 10-year period, plus a lifetime indirect GHG emissions avoided of 580,632 tCO2 eq'.
90. Despite the priority given during the project design, these issues are not part of the results framework. It was noted that there were no required field work carried out to assess the carbon sequestration from the project initiative once the project started its implementation[18]. The project team reported that the project did not have adequate expertise to carry out assessment on carbon sequestration. With the support from the Forest Resources Management Division, (Department of Forest and Park Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests) however provided a rough estimation of carbon sequestration amount[19] from the project intervention. The main sources of low GHG Management Practices included Protected Areas (32,937 ha), Biological Corridors (55,860.00 ha), SFM (159,000 ha), SLM (1632 ha) and improved grassland (500 ha). The MTR team viewed that the project should give focus on this activity and carry out more authentic estimation by following an internally credible assessment methodology before the terminal evaluation of the project.

	Expected metric tons of CO_2e			
	PIF stage	**Endorsement**	**MTR**	**TE**
Expected CO2e (direct)			*4,134,000*	
Expected CO2e (indirect)			832	
Anticipated start year of accounting			*2018*	
Duration of accounting			*30 months*	

Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

91. The project proposed support to 19,350 women and 20,650 men (total beneficiaries 40,000) but by mid-term the project beneficiaries exceeded its target and directly supported 102,395 beneficiaries (48,183 female and 54,212 male) from Sustainable Land Management interventions, climate resilient irrigation interventions, low emission livestock practices, organic programme, forest resources management interventions and marketing infrastructure & support.

	Number	
	Expected	**Achieved**

[18] REDD+ and Carbon Assessment Report Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan UNDP, Bhutan, August 2016 (baseline created for the project).

[19] Carbon dioxide avoided was calculated based on the standard emission factor i.e. 26 tons of carbon dioxide avoided for every hectares of forest protected or brought under improved management practices. For $_{lifetime}$ direct GHG emissions avoided – Area of forest brought under SFM practices through the project is 159,000 Ha (against 100,000 planned in the beginning) and standard emission factor of 26 tons per ha have been used. In case of lifetime indirect GHG emissions avoided – Area under new plantation is 32 ha and the same multiplication factor is used in getting the figure indicated.

	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Female	n/a	n/a	48,183	
Male	n/a	n/a	54,212	
Total			102,395	

Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

92. The MTR team noted that there are no significant barriers to the Project from existing policy framework and institutional arrangements. The on-going global health pandemic has however had some impacts in the last two quarters of 2020. Travel restriction on travel and community gathering delayed implementation of some planned activities. As it is still uncertain how long the pandemic will affect people's livelihoods and development process. It can be expected that the pandemic will have some impacts on the project planning, stakeholder engagement and smooth Project implementation at least for some time and could delay in delivering the outputs and outcomes. The project management, therefore, needs to consider this fact while reviewing the risk of the project for the immediate future and prepare an appropriate mitigation plan.

3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements

93. The project is being implemented within the framework of UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM) agreed between UNDP and the Government of Bhutan. The lead Implementing Partner for this project is Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC), which has the government mandate to coordinate the formulation and implementation of climate change, and forest and land restoration policies, and related programs and strategies respectively. It has been responsible and accountable for managing the project, achieving project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP/GEF/LDCF resources. A project Board (PB) has been instituted to provide a strong oversight role.

94. The PB is chaired by GNHC and has representation from the relevant ministry (agriculture) and UNDP. The Board is responsible for overall coordination (technical and financial) and oversight. The RPs are given specific responsibilities to implement the project activities, as decided by the PB and they are made responsible to achieve the agreed results outlined in the project's RF. The Board convenes bi-annually and, so far, the Board sat for five times (on 16th Jan 2018; 12th July 2018; 25th June 2019; 16th Jan 2020; and 9th July 2020). For a national project like this, a bi-annual frequency of the board meetings is realistic. The MTR team found that proceedings of all project Board meetings were well recorded and shared amongst all the members. The meetings used to discuss various operational and coordination issues, and guide PMU as per the need. For example, the second PB meeting asked the project team to explore further and work on Climate Proofing GC Road, re-work on activities and budget for Department of Agriculture & Marketing Cooperatives (DAMC) component, and keep the head of agencies and the Dasho Dzongdags informed on all communications about the project. The fourth PB meeting instructed to work on crop and livestock insurance, and support sheep farming and sustainable land management. There were discussions on activities and progress made during the PB meeting. It, however, appears that the PB may need to work more strategically to influence the IPs, take lead on operationalizing MRGs and lead to devise comprehensive policy framework that support ILM and climate resilience.

95. Technical Advisory and Coordination Committee (TACC) (comprising 17 members from various sectors) was formed as a part of the secretariat of the PB. The committee provides technical and monitoring oversight of the project activities and technical implementation challenges. The TACC meeting was carried out as demanded by the PB and the project. Considering the focus of the project is on an integrated landscape approach along with inter-sectoral complexity, it is important to strengthen this committee to provide adequate technical backstopping to the PB and IP/RPs.

96. The project followed an adaptive management approach in its implementation process. Adoption of the operational manual for the project aimed mainly to serve as a practical manual and to facilitate the smooth implementation of the proposed project. The project has carried out five quarterly reviews so far and adjusted the activities as per the demand from RPs remaining within the broader framework of the project work plans.

97. The MTR team noted that the PMU followed the project interventions as prescribed in the RF. The MTR visits in the project sites also revealed that the project team is, in general, flexible in managing the project. In the case of project implementation challenges, most of the beneficiaries

reported that the project team provided quick and efficient alternative solutions when they required guidance in certain aspects while implementing the project interventions. It is however noted some minor delays in implementation of some project activities that can be attributed to inadequate coordination among the implementers and due to delay in fund transfer.

98. GNHC has effectively been able to run the project on a day-to-day basis and within the guidelines laid down by the PB, UNDP and GEF. It was also found that the PMU was constituted of the key personnel i.e. Chief Planning Officer, Local Development Division, GNHC (with overall strategic direction); a project Manager, GNHC–PMU (overall coordination); a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; and a project Office and Project Technical Specialist from UNDP.. Considering the present project scope, geographic areas covered, workload, range of activities of the project management team, it appears that the team is probably not optimally staffed. There is a component dedicated for M&E and Knowledge management, and acknowledging that documenting lessons, experience and information as a key part to ensuring the operationalization of integrated landscape approach, it is well justified to have a designated staff with knowledge documentation and communication background in addition to the work carried out by UNDP staff and PMU staff.

99. UNDP Bhutan has been closely working with the project Board. It has also regularly performed reviews such as the inception report, Project Implementation Review (PIR), and progress reports. It has also undertaken several field missions. UNDP has provided adequate guidance to the project through periodic reviews, as well as representing the interests of those developing, implementing, procuring, testing, and operating project products. The need for oversight role of UNDP RO on the project management and monitoring has been very minimal due to strong CO/PMU capacities. However the RTAs do provide assistance as and when there is a request from UNDP CO.

100. The project risks are being monitored generally by PMU and the UNDP. The review showed some operational challenges (delay in operation and collaborative work of the RPs at field level) which have been mostly solved through regular assessments and provision of support from the PMU. UNDP CO has continuously followed up in the application and compliance of UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy. The MTR team noted that UNDP CO and the IP have established a good rapport and have regular consultation and communication. The interaction with the project stakeholders revealed that there was no significant risk witnessed except the COVID -19 pandemic.

Work planning

101. The project regularly organized a review meeting where the project Annual Work Plan (AWPs) was prepared with the active participation of RPs. The project has multi-year work plan and the project's AWP are derived from the multi-year work plans which are aligned with outputs and outcomes and have a detail of itemized cost, and time-frame for implementation.

102. During the field consultation, some of the RPs suggested that a need to re-identify and target issues in consultation with the field staff (Territorial Division/PAs and Communities). For example, the ProDoc and the RF has indicated a broad activity on PES/REDD+ but within the project landscape, this intervention might not be uniformly applicable. Therefore, it was suggested that some level of consultation with the field implementers (Territorial Divisions/Parks and communities) be carried out to assess the feasibility of PES and identification of other Nature-Bases Solution to address water security, food security, and climate change and disaster risk

reduction. Another suggestion from a responsible implementing agency was that their role should be only to provide technical backstopping to the field implementers. ..

Finance and co-finance

103. According to the project documents, the total cost of the project is USD 41.554 Million where GEFTF and LDCF provided USD 13,967,124 grant. The Government and UNDP co-financed USD 41,554,000 and USD 1,080,300 respectively. UNDP, as the GEF Partner Agency, is responsible for the execution of the GEF/LDCF resources. The finance and co-financing arrangement of the project has been working well and all allocated finances have been used efficiently and effectively. The co-financing for the project from various stakeholders is as below (Table 3):

Table 3: Status of Co-financing

Co-financing source	**Co-financing type**	**Co-financing amount (US$ M)**	**Actual expenditure in M USD**	**Expenditure** M **(Nu.)**
Department of Forest and Park Services, MoAF	Grant	3.199	2.627	168.108
GNH Commission	Grant	0.809	0.02	1.28
National Land Commission	Grant	1.797		
Department of Agriculture, MoAF	Grant	8.122	6.582	421.250
Department of Livestock, MoAF	Grant	3.917	4.370	279.680
Department of Agriculture Marketing and Co-operatives	Grant	0.647	0.454	29.056
Council of RNR Research of Bhutan, MoAF	Grant	0.072		
National Biodiversity Centre	Grant	0.234		
Rural Development Training Centre, MoAF	Grant	0.075		
Department of Roads, MoWHS	Grant	2.000	2.340625	149.8
Department of Engineering Services, MoWHS	Grant	2.821		
Department of Hydromet Services, MoEA	Grant	2.659		
Department of Hydropower and Hydropower Systems, MoEA	Grant	5.486		
Department of Trade	Grant	1.557		
Central Government Agencies	In-kind	1.577	0.7546875	48.3
Local Government (38 gewogs)	Grant	6.498	0.179	11.456
RNR Extension Agencies	In-Kind	0.085	2.3	147.2
TOTAL		**41.554**	19.62703125	1256.13

104. The project has been monitoring the use of co-financing regularly. The MTR noted that the co-financing components have been used strategically to help the objectives of the project. They are aligned with financing priorities and annual project work plans. For instance, the interactions with

stakeholders revealed that both PMU and BFL have started consulting each other during project planning which, however, needs to be further institutionalized.

105. The co-financing partners are also part of the PB. The partners regularly meet and discuss evolving priorities and financial allocations. Some of the activities funded through co-financing are sustainable management of forest landscapes and conservation of biodiversity, integrated watershed management, poverty interventions, land and rehabilitation services, agriculture infrastructure development, marketing and cooperative development, construction and up-gradation of gewog connectivity roads and engineering adaptation and disaster reduction (annex 8).

106. By midterm, defined as 30 June 2020, USD 7,452,583 USD or 54 percent of the USD 13,697,124 USD implementation grant had been spent. Financial expenditure analysis showed that 13 activities have already been achieved, with 100 percent expenditure, out of which three outputs (activities 1.5.1, 3.1.3 and 4.2.1) had over expenditure (i. e more expenditure than allocated fund).

Table 4: Financial performance of the project (up to June 2020)

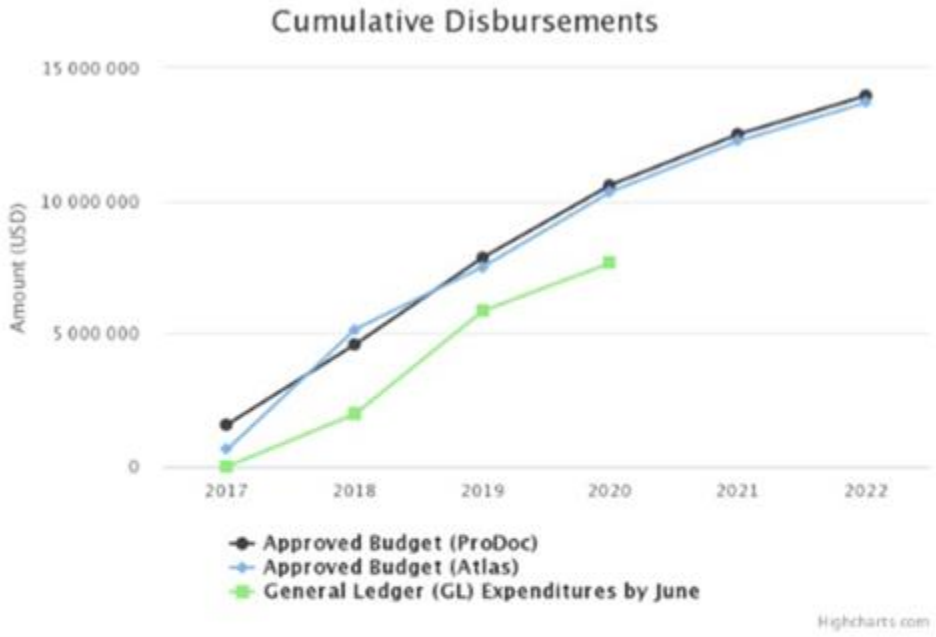
Activity No.	Total allocated (USD)	Total Released (USD)	Balance USD	Percent utilized
Outcome 1	1524000.0	974846.4	549153.6	64.0
Outcome 2	1860000.0	719679.0	1140321.0	38.7
Outcome 3	8954000.0	5122123.1	3831876.9	57.2
Outcome 4	695000.0	319427.1	375572.9	46.0
PMU	664124.0	316507.4	347616.6	47.7
Total	13697124.0	7452583.0	6244541.0	54.4

107. Cumulative project management costs are USD 316,507, or 4.25 percent of the total USD 7,452,583 used by the midterm. The project management cost in 2020 was, however, increased than in previous years. The financial audit was carried out by Royal Audit Authority (RAA), Thimpu from 01 July 2017 to 30 June 2019. Based on the audit and assessment of the internal control systems, program and financial management system, FACE forms and transactions testing for PMU, there was some minor deficiency and lapses (for instance irregularities observed during construction of green house[20]). In overall, the assessment showed that there is very less financial risk in this project. The interactions with stakeholders showed that, in a few instances, there were reports of a delay in implementation of the project due to delay in fund disbursement at the initial stage of the project. This was however not a significant issue.

108. The MTR team noted that the budget is tied to outputs, outcomes, and components by project year. The project resources are managed according to best practice accounting principles and project management, with no major issues reported so far in audited financial statements.

[20] HACT AUDIT REPORT OF NAPA III, GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS COMMISSION, THIMPHU, PERIOD: 01/07/2017 TO 30/06/2019, MARCH2020 (see page 18-23)

109. Financial Management oversight was carried out by UNDP/PMU with periodic reporting to the UNDP Task Manager. The project manager ensures proper use of project funds. Goods and services are procured using agreed procurement practices that meet both the government and UNDP's standards. The MTR Team found that the project financial management and controls are appropriate including annual reporting and planning. It has however noted that the existing procurement is stuck with the proposed cost during the project design and arguably it has not been adequately flexible to purchase quality materials as the originally proposed cost did not match with current market price (such as good quality Camera). It is also noted that there have been budget readjustment provisions but there exist some mix-ups, which needs to be considered by the senior project management team.



Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc):	54.92%
Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year:	72.31%
Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August):	7,670,550

Figure 4: Financial disbursement trend of the Project

110. The MTR review financing arrangement for the project and the efficiency aspects. The PIR (2020) showed the approved budget lines and the actual utilizations. Based on the physical and financial Performance Reports review thus far, the MTR team's opinion is that the project implementation has been efficient in the utilization of financial resources.

Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

111. The project Manager, with the support from an M & E officer, is managing regular activity monitoring of project results and risks, including social and environmental risks. The team has

been ensuring that all project staff maintain a high level of transparency, responsibility and accountability in M&E and reporting of project results. The Board meetings have provided opportunities for project partners to be informed and provide strategic guidance. The project implementation review (PIR) reports are the main M&E tools to share the project status.

112. A draft project M & E plan is developed following established UNDP/GEF procedures. The plan provides reporting mechanisms, and roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders including the project Board, Technical Advisory Group, and other RPs. Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements are also integrated following the GEF M&E policy and other relevant GEF policies and use of GEF tracking tools to assess biodiversity and financial sustainability, climate change adaptation, and management effectiveness (METT) of protected areas, and biodiversity corridors. The M&E plan is made gender-sensitive and the project provided training on gender analysis and planning. The review, however, realized that data (with disaggregation of beneficiaries) is yet to be collected, stored, analysed, and used as elaborated in the draft M & E framework and the project baseline. It was difficult for the MTR to figure out how the existing M & E systems and data collected can be used for assessing the immediate results and possible impacts considering the cause and effect relation of the project interventions.

113. UNDP provided the required back-stopping support to the project through the provision of technical support and the timely disbursement of project funds. The UNDP Country Office has been supporting the project Manager as needed, and more especially review meetings and field missions. UNDP Country Office organized key GEF M&E activities including the annual GEF PIR, and indeed this current independent mid-term review (MTR). The MTR team has been following the UNDP - GEF M&E requirements and guidelines for this evaluation but they also lack clear data based evidence. The UNDP RO through the technical officers provides its technical support as and when demanded by the UNDP country office.

114. A project baseline was created using a concurrent Triangulation Design of Mixed Method Research approach. Representative samples were chosen by using a Stratified Multi-stage Cluster Sampling design of Probability Proportion to Size (PPS). Altogether 1,900 samples (treatment 950 and control 950) were taken from the three landscapes. No independent midline has been created so the MTR team was not able to compare the mid-term progress by using the baseline data. The project proposed to carry out impact assessments with some broader guidelines on 'how' to explore the evidence-based answer to the cause-and-effect of the major interventions. The baseline created by the project suggested employing a quasi-experiment approach using Propensity Score Matching with Difference-in Differences model to evaluate the project's impact after midline and end-line surveys. The baseline also suggested using a propensity score of selected independent variables (age, gender and education) on outcome variables (agriculture/livestock yield; income; access to post-harvest storage facilities). This requires a credible data collection and creation of end-line by following the same methods for adequately supporting the proposed evaluation method and empirically capturing the impact of the interventions.

115. The project has used three GEF TT i.e. SFM, BD, and CCA. These Tools are important M&E tools for the project. The baseline tracking tool outlines several indicators in those areas. The midterm tracking tool assessment was prepared by the project team at the time of MTR. The MTR team received information related to CCA and BD TT to review.

116. The estimated cost for implementation of the M&E plan, as recorded in the project document, is USD 551,000, which is approximately 4 percent of the USD 13,697,124.00 GEF/LDCF implementation grant. The budgeted M&E line items include USD 1,500 for the inception workshop and report, USD 50,000 for the midterm review, USD 35,000 for the terminal evaluation, USD 140,000 for impact assessment and audit 24,000 (USD 4,000 per year). The MTR viewed that the allocated financial resources are adequate to carry out M&E functions but effective use of the resources is required to match with the project M&E needs.

Stakeholder engagement:

117. The stakeholder engagement plan provided the major roles and responsibility of the stakeholders. They have been engaged at varying degrees based on the roles identified in the stakeholder engagement plan. The project partnerships are country-driven, based on the nature of the project activities and the background of the national agencies working in the project thematic issues. GNHC acts as the chair of the PB. Local government and other stakeholders are working on the fulfillment of the project objectives and have an active role in decision-making through regular networking meetings. They have supported the participatory planning exercises, implementation and review. Local-level stakeholder engagement is mostly taken care of by the PMU and the responsible component managers of the project.

118. It appears that the stakeholder awareness in ILM, CC resilience and other technical issues has been increasingly enhanced over the years, it was however noticed that knowledge generation related to best practices and lessons learned from the project implementation have yet to be adequately captured and widely shared with other important stakeholders. The MTR field visit also revealed the good partnership between local implementations (i.e. irrigation work with watershed management to protect the upstream water sources) but there is a need for an enhanced coordination and collaboration among IP and RPs (e.g., collaboration is possible between SLM {hedge row plantation and Napier grass plantation} and fodder development if it is within the same district).

Reporting:

119. The MTR team assessed the project has established reporting systems. The required reports are being prepared and shared with relevant stakeholders. The MTR team found that UNDP CO has been performing a thorough analysis of all project assessments, monitoring, tracking and evaluation reports. In quarterly meetings, PMU has been taking into consideration lessons derived from project implementation and likely adaptive management processes/approaches for project performance enhancement. In some cases, the project reports, however, lack to report implementation challenges, risks and good practices. Quarterly and PIR reports could have been more explicit in capturing the project implementation complexities and challenges for the evidence-based decisions making.

120. So far, two-project implementation reviews (PIR) were produced to date, one for 2019 and the most recent one for 2020. The 2019 PIR provided information about the progress of the development objectives. The project management team also carried out field visits regularly and prepared reports for future reference, decision-making, and learning.

121. The PIR 2020 rated the progress toward development objective as satisfactory and progress in implementation as highly satisfactory by the key project implementers. The MTR team noted that the project has been dealing with diverse landscape systems, natural resources governance

systems with a wide range of actors having their perspectives and sectoral interests. This results in complex interactions at a different level to manage the integrated landscape in the changing and uncertain climate, country development needs, market and resource governance. The interactions with the stakeholders also view that there are some challenges to understand how the operationalization of ILM unfolds in real-world situations.

Communication:

122. The project has had effective internal communication, facilitated through project level workshops and meetings both at the national and local level to share the findings and implementation challenges of the project. The PB meetings have provided opportunities for high-level communication of the project progress. The interactions with stakeholders showed that they are mostly satisfied with the level of information shared in time. The project used regular memo, written directions; in-person meetings (at the national and local level) and telephonic conversations are common tools to share the important project decisions. During the COVID-19 pandemic period, the project also used virtual tools to communicate among the stakeholders and local communities.

123. The project convened a national stakeholder workshop to share the project learning which was well appreciated by the stakeholders. Given the scope of the project and plenty of opportunities available to share learning from the project to wider stakeholders, it is noted, the project paid inadequate attention on preparing project generated knowledge dissemination materials (such as case studies, operational tools, policy briefs) to influence the decision makers and sharing with relevant stakeholders. This type of outreach would also help to identify project scaling-up possibilities with the project sites and outside.

124. In summary, despite some minor challenges, the implementation of most of the components is without any doubt leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. Most of the components are being managed well whereas the remaining needs some corrective actions. The project managed implementation arrangements through the PB and followed adaptive management, prepared an annual work plan considering the RF in a participatory way, followed the financial procedures and maintained bookkeeping systems as per the standards, and engaged stakeholders in overall planning and implementation of the stakeholders, and prepared reports on time and submitted on time. Overall, the project performance is rated 'satisfactory'.

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Financial risks to sustainability

125. The continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project are dependent on financial resources. This is intimately linked to whether or not the sustainable financing is ensured through the government policies & planning processes and from other international donors and development partners on the continuation of the ILM approach including management of PAs and BCs, climate-resilient interventions and people's CCR based livelihoods.

126. The project is in the process of developing innovative financing mechanisms for the management of the biological corridors and associated PAs. During interactions with stakeholders, it comes to that a good level of synergy has been developed within government programs and other international projects to support PAs/BCs. The project has been working to complement and enhance synergy through innovative sustainable financing efforts under BFL initiative. Besides, WWF-Bhutan has recently secured around nine million euros under the BMU grant for the project 'Living Landscapes – Securing ecological connectivity of high conservation value areas in Bhutan'. These initiatives show that there will be continued support for the outputs generated by the project.

127. The proposed project interventions are known to have measurable impacts on the livelihoods of beneficiaries in terms of improved agriculture production, income generation, better land management, improved access to the market for their agriculture products, among others, in the changing climate. The MTR team ascertained that certain short-term benefits associated with this project are already evident during project implementation. There are examples of enhanced family income, and improved agriculture practices (i.e. SLM practice) and climate-resilient infrastructure. Some project benefits (some of them are public resources such as increased biodiversity) may not be visible in the short term and only be realised after the completion of the project. In this context, strengthening eco-tourism and agro-tourism through private sector involvement would be helpful. Considering all these facts, the MTR believes that there are no financial risks that inhibit the sustainability of this project's results.

Socio-economic to sustainability

128. There are no major social or political risks identified during the MTR that may seriously jeopardize the sustainability of project outcomes. After reviewing the project document and implementation arrangements, the MTR team noted that the project has a high level of stakeholder engagement and ownership. Gender-responsive actions also resulted in some good initial outcomes. From the various interviews conducted during the MTR, it was evident that the project has addressed key issues of local development (income generation, gender, market, HWC, land management, forests), involving needy people (gender, beneficiaries from remote areas and climate-vulnerable communities). Project beneficiaries are satisfied with the project interventions. Besides, various key stakeholders view that the project interventions are in their interest and believed that the project benefits would continue to flow even after its completion. It was also noted that a good level of public awareness is present at the local level and the project team has been sharing the project's progress and challenges transparently.

Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

129. The sustainability of the results of the project and the progress towards impact may be dependent on institutional and policy frameworks, and governance related to natural resources management. The MTR found that there are no legal frameworks, policies and governance structures that significantly pose risks and endanger the continuity of the project's benefits. The MTR team, however, noted that the policy review carried out by the project suggested there is a need to introduce a broader policy framework to further strengthen provisions related to ILM, along with climate resilience, in existing policies. For example, the compensation scheme for crop/livestock depredation has been withdrawn expecting that HWC endowment and crop/livestock insurance policies provide cover for it. But, the insurance scheme itself suffered from other challenges such as scale, monitoring and reliable data including potential high premium cost, and availability of insurance/reinsurance companies in the country. This type of practical issues should be addressed through a broader policy that supports ILM approach.

130. The assessment found that bureaucratic and institutional inertia is limited. The MTR found that necessary project management systems for accountability and transparency are in place. However, during the MTR team's discussion with stakeholders, concerns were raised over issues related to the institutional and technical capacity, and collaborative actions among government departments, which may not be adequate to operationalize ILM effectively. The MTR team believes that the risk can be addressed through continuous dialogues and interactions with the IPs through proper training and sensitization, both at the local and national level.

Environmental risks to sustainability

131. The MTR team did not find any significant environmental risks that may jeopardize the continuity of the project outcomes. The project has addressed most of the environmental issues in an integrated way to improve the livelihoods of communities. The project is going to contribute towards improving the resilience and capacity of the local communities that help to moderate the impacts of climate change. There are no foreseeable environmental risks associated with the sustainability of the project's outcomes. There is a distinct environmental risk if the project does not succeed.

132. To sum up, the sustainability analysis revealed that there are no distinct risks during the MTR in continuation of the benefits after the completion of the project. The sustainable financing of the PAs/BCs are in increasing trends, communities are increasingly participating in project activities and realizing the benefits, policies and institutional frameworks are also being improving in a positive direction and there are no environmental risks. There is, however, a minor concern over the institutional capacity for collaborative actions among the IP/RPs and operationalization of ILM. This can be mitigated through continuous dialogues and initiation of collaborative implementation of project activities. Hence, the sustainability indicator has been rated as 'likely'.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

133. The project objectives and results remain relevant to both national and international priorities on sustainable natural resources, including ILM through biodiversity conservation, climate resilience investments and sustainable livelihoods enhancement. The project was designed in a widely consultative manner and with active participation of government agencies to address specific barriers to operationalizing ILM in Bhutan. The project has four interconnected outcomes with a clear focus on improving institutional capacity, establishing BC management practices, improving climate resilience in development actions and contributing to knowledge management. These interventions were timely and highly relevant for the ongoing process of sustainable landscape management in Bhutan. The design of the project components, outcomes and outputs are well aligned with the Royal Government of Bhutan's national objectives, the 12th FYP's National Key Result Areas, Agency Key Result Areas and the SDGs), as well as with SDGs (directly SDG 1, 13 & 15) UNDP and GEF strategic objectives.

134. Considering the complex landscape management processes, the project addressed major challenges, i.e. the inadequacy of institutional capacity, the weakness of stakeholders' capacity and a lack of proven practices on ILM. The project's achievements are significant and people have reaping benefits from landscape management. All this has contributed to the attainment of its intended objectives. Through the capacity development of government agencies in planning and management for biodiversity conservation, land management and enhancement of sustainable livelihoods, the project has laid a considerable foundation for institutional, technical and individual capacity building at the national, district and community levels. There are, however, some challenges related to understanding of basic concepts and operationalization of ILM, collaboration among RPs, and management work—all of which can be corrected easily. The project has been well managed and its activities are owned and managed up by the government. This leads to a satisfactory achievement of outcomes such as increased awareness of ILM, use of climate resilience approach and increased management effectiveness of PAs and BCs.

135. The MTR found that most of the project targets and objectives have been achieved. The project has demonstrated good progress and is moving towards meeting its targets. A review of the baseline indicators and mid-term evaluation indicators, shows clear progress in achievement of the project's targets. For example, the project managed to enhance the status of BC systems through the development of BC regulation. It also re-validated the boundaries of PAs and BCs with geo-referencing, finalized zonation in PAs and BCs, brought large forest areas under sustainable forest management and worked on minimizing the financial gap for sustainable management of PA and BC systems (outcome 1). The project also managed to improve BC governance and management by improving the effectiveness of PAs and BCs, enhance the population of key wildlife species (such as tigers, leopards, musk deer) and reduced HWC at the local level (outcome 2). Similarly, livelihood options for communities are increasingly improving through gender-responsive interventions (considering gender equity in land and natural resources decision-making and benefits, participation and executive role in decision making), It supported diversification of livelihoods options, SLM and soil and forest management (outcome 3). In the case of M&E and knowledge management, the project has shared its progress reports regularly. There is, however, room to improve its M&E and knowledge management system by

considering strategic case studies from the field to strengthen the process of operationalization of ILM and also to sensitize policymakers effectively (outcome 4).

136. The project has been managed efficiently. Project governance and management is well structured (in terms of management and operations), and is represented by a high-level team. The project outputs were fully owned by the government and implementation was relatively cost-effective, mainly due to the participatory engagement of government agencies and local communities and the adoption of standard budget management systems. The efficiency of the project was also increased through enhanced capacity building of stakeholders at the local level, although there are some concerns related to the rigidity in financial re-allocation processes. High-level stakeholder engagement was noted at all levels of project implementation. The alignment of project goals with the national development priorities was instrumental in promoting a high level of ownership of the project in the country. More collaboration among RPs could have been achieved, had the project initiated the MRG from the early stage of its project implementation.

137. While the project is being implemented commendably, there are, however, some areas where the project could have paid additional attention to so as to contribute towards the effective achievement of the project objectives and outcomes. ILM is a relatively new concept and understanding it and operationalizing it in a specific situation is a complex endeavor. This is further complicated by a diverse bio-physical setting with a diverse socio-economic context. In this project as well, RPs and other stakeholders are not fully aware of the operational significance of the integrated landscape approach and majority of the IPs are implementing the projects as they would implement any other project following the 'silo' approach. In this backdrop, the trade-off and synergies of collective actions and the issue of 'conservation' versus 'development' need to be further understood in the context of the country. The MRG could have mitigated these challenges to a great extent but it is yet to be fully functional.

138. The management of knowledge (under outcome 4) appears to be relatively weak compared to other outcomes of the project. A robust and systematic M&E, adequate learning-oriented case studies and sharing of knowledge with wider stakeholders could have been emphasized more. Considering the present scope of the project, the geographic areas covered, its workload, and the range of activities covered by the project management team, it appears that the team is not optimally staffed.

139. The project generated many good results in collaboration with the government departments and local communities while working under the theme of integrated natural resources management in Bhutan. To continue getting good results and safeguard useful learning in the future, there is a strong role for the government, in general, and the GNHC, in particular to play. Hence, the GNHC needs to take the leadership in promoting collaborative actions, operationalizing cross-learning of ILM approach at the local level, and promoting a conducive policy environment at the national level with support from the MRG and RPs, and district-level agencies that enhance collaboration.

140. In conclusion, despite some minor operational challenges, the project is making progress and is on track. It has been providing a great learning opportunity in technical domains and has provided a good case on how a project on landscape management in complex NRM settings could be jointly managed by the government and UNDP.

2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Revised the existing Result Framework based on the new GEF – 7 indicators and the project local context.

141. To align with GEF core indicators, the MTR team recommends to the project to revise the indicators in the existing RF.

    a. The project should include management effectiveness of protected areas (GEF core indicator 1.2) and carbon sequestration (from PAs, BCs, SFM, SLM and improved grassland) (GEF core indicator 6.1).

    b. Based on the review project current context, changes in GEF policy on TTs and their reporting requirements, the MTR team recommends removing the following two indicators from the existing result framework.

        - Existing indicator 3 - 'Increased status of all indicators in the GEF Climate Change Adaptation Tracking Tool': Key aspects of CCA TT are already covered in core indicator and the project requires completing TT so this could be taken out from the existing RF. The project however can take it for internal assessment if useful.
        - Existing indicator 6 - 'Financing gap for sustainable management of the protected area and biological corridor system closed as indicated by improvement in GEF BD-1 Financial Sustainability Scorecard': The Project does not have direct intervention to support sustainable financing. It is also noted that the income from PAs are very less and commercial activities within PAs are being restricted leaving little room for adequate resource mobilization. The MTR team noted, BFL is working in this objective to which the project is collaborating. In addition, this is one component of TTs, which no longer require to report to GEF. Hence, this indicator can also be taken out from the existing RF.

Recommendation 2: Strategizing the operationalization of Integrated Landscape Management (ILM).

142. As the primary focus of the project is to operationalize the ILM approach through the strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and build climate resilience of community livelihoods, it will be vital that GNHC and the project reinforce and build a strong knowledge base and document field lessons/experiences. It is expected that a need for a strong knowledge base will grow to trigger policy formulation to support the operationalization of ILM.

143. To move from the existing 'silo' approach of management towards a truly integrated management of landscapes, the following specific activities should be initiated:

    a. The project should provide additional conceptual clarity on various integrated landscape models and approaches and possible working approaches and modalities on ILM in Bhutan. This can be done through a joint workshop between the IP, RPs, UNDP and other important stakeholders. Based on the ongoing learning (for example integration of irrigation for drinking water and agriculture along with watershed management), the project should identify and share other possible tools, techniques and approaches to facilitate easy field implementation.

b. The project should work towards reactivating MRGs at the national level and develop clear roles and responsibilities for RPs to strengthen collaborative actions during the project implementation. Central level MRGs can provide strategic guidance to address the integrated approach for the already existing local level MRGs.

c. Assessing the existing challenges and opportunities of ILM approach, the project should convene a multi-stakeholder dialogues to sensitize relevant (multi-sectoral) stakeholders and identify strategic actions that help operationalize ILM approach even after the completion of the project.

d. The Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Strategy is in a draft stage, but it does have rich content related to human-wildlife interactions, conflicts and solutions. Hence, wider consultations to include inputs of all the stakeholders in streamlining, synergizing and clarifying strategies, seeking investment opportunities and setting of context is crucial. As this is a 10-year strategy, sufficient time and discussion should be allocated for its preparation.

Responsibility: Jointly shared by GNHC, the PB and UNDP
Duration: Within three months.

Recommendation 3: Further strengthening the collaborative work with relevant stakeholders

144. To capitalize on the leadership role of the GNHC and results achieved so far and to take advantage of the momentum generated by the project, the project should further strengthen collaboration with other organizations to address financing gaps for the PAs and BCs. For this,

a. The project should formalize and institutionalize on-going working modalities with BFL and expand the partnership with other stakeholder where possible.

b. Further strengthening of the Technical Advisory Coordination Committee (TACC) can improve the collaborative work culture within the project. For this, the project should revisit the current number of representations and maybe reduce it to not more than 10 members with each member assigned clear roles and responsibilities. Making it mandatory for them to hold two meetings per year is also recommended.

Responsibility: Jointly shared by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At the earliest.

Recommendation 4: M&E, knowledge management and learning

145. For effective project delivery, outreach and influence:

a. The project should review its current M&E plan, including data collection and management systems, and enhancing it by making it more comprehensive and result-oriented so that it provides better opportunities for periodic assessment of project implementation and performance of activities, and evaluation of their results in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Although, disaggregated data on women are being collected at the representation level (e. g, number of women attending the training or meeting), improvement could be made by focusing on collecting disaggregated data of women (such as intermediate results on women's access to and control over resources) and other socially & environmentally deprived community members.

b. Although, the knowledge management aspects of the project are shared between UNDP and the PMU, assigning a dedicated communications person would add value to the documentation of best practices/lessons and dissemination to policy makers and wider audiences. It is expected that a communications person would also be able to fully dedicate his/her time on developing information, communication and education materials that would eventually contribute to operationalizing the ILM, not undermining current practices.

Responsibility: Jointly shard by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At the earliest

Recommendation 5. Preparing a practical sustainability plan or exit-strategy

146. A more strategic and achievable sustainability plan or exit strategy should be prepared by the project in close coordination with stakeholders to ensure that benefits from the smooth project continue even after completion of the project. The plan should also include expected roles for government stakeholders and be agreed upon by major stakeholders.

Responsibility: Jointly shared by GNHC, PB and UNDP

Duration: At least one year before project completion

Annexes

Annex 1: MTR ToR

Annex 2: MTR evaluative matrix

Annex 3: Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection

Annex 4: Rating Scales

Annex 5: MTR mission itinerary

Annex 6: List of persons interviewed

Annex 7: List of documents reviewed

Annex 8: Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)

Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Annex 10: Signed MTR final report clearance form

Annex 11: Annexed in a separate file: Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report

Annex 12: Annexed in a separate file: Relevant midterm CCA tracking tools

Annex 13: Annexed in a separate file: GEF-UNDP Co-financing template for MTR-TE

Annex 1: MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

MID-TERM REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Position Information

Post Title:	Expert to conduct Project Mid Term Review
Practice Area:	Environment and Livelihoods
Post Level:	International Consultant
Duration of the assignment:	Maximum 25 working days during the period of 25th September – 30 November 2020
Duty station:	Thimphu, with travel to the target field sites (about 10-13 working days)
Cluster/Project:	Environment &Livelihood Portfolio
Supervisor:	Portfolio Manager, Environment &Livelihood Portfolio

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full* -sized project titled ***"Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan"*** (PIMS 5713) implemented through the *Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC)*, which is to be undertaken in *2017-2023*. The project started on the *October 30, 2017* and is in its *third* year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated after the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In order to reduce climate change vulnerabilities and improve the sustainability of local livelihoods and biodiversity of the country, the Royal Government of Bhutan requested support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through UNDP for a full-size project titled ***"Enhancing Sustainability and***

Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan."
The project was designed to operationalize an integrated landscape-based approach to climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation. It seeks to do so through: (a) improvement of institutional capacity at national, sub-national and local levels to manage forest and agricultural landscapes sustainably for enhanced climate resilience; (b) emplacement of governance system for biological corridors and operationalization of conservation management system in the pilot corridors; and (c) development of climate-resilient livelihood options for the local communities.

The project will deliver simultaneous global benefits, in terms of improved conservation, reduced land degradation, reduced loss of carbon stocks and reduced GHG emissions, as well as improved local livelihoods.

The objective of this project is to operationalizing an integrated landscape approach through strengthening of biological corridors, sustainable forest and agricultural systems, and building climate resilience of community livelihoods. The results will increase forest cover, its quality, wildlife population, and make agriculture and livelihood climate resilient. It will also increase community participation in conservation and enhance capacity of personnel from National to grassroots level to monitor, analyse, plan and manage Protected Areas (PAs), Biological Corridors (BCs) and agriculture landscape. By increasing carbon sink it also contribute in carbon sequestration.

The project has Four main components:

Component 1: Enhanced institutional capacity for integrated landscape management (ILM) and climate change resilience

Component 2: Emplacement of biological corridor system governance and management system at pilot corridors

Component 3: Climate Adaptative communities

Component 4: Knowledge Management and Monitoring & Evaluation

The project implementing partner is the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC). Other ministries, like the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF), the Ministry of Works and Human Settlements (MoWHS), NGOs, Local Governments (Districts) and community groups are also involved in implementation process. The collaborative arrangement has been set up at the technical level through the designation of focal persons in the line ministries and departments.

The project interventions focus on three landscapes covering 38 gewogs/blocks across 12 dzongkhags/districts in the central belt of the country, focusing on four Biological Corridors (BCs) and three Protected Areas (PAs). The project has a total budget of USD 56,597,424 comprising of a grant

from GEF resources of USD 13, 967, 124 and co-finance from UNDP CO and the government of USD 42,630,300.

The project implementation was slightly delayed in the first two quarters of 2020 due to COVID-19. With the first case of COVID-19 detected on March 5, 2020, the government put in several restrictions on travel and public gatherings. While there wasn't complete lockdown until mid-2020 given that all cases were imported, travel restriction and restriction on gatherings hampered implementation of some activities particularly those activities that required community consultations. However, national wide lockdown in the month of August 2020 affected project implementation. Further, lockdown in India also slightly affected the project as most materials are imported from India. Despite this, government's focus on economic contingency plan on agriculture sector provided required impetus to even frontload livelihood related activities besides extension of all possible support in ensuring effective project implementation.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability.

- The main purpose of the MTR is to assess whether the project is on course in line with its project strategic target setting and UNDP Country Programme Document, and make recommendation to enhance and improve the project performance as well as suggestion for future improvement (i.e. in the areas related to the appropriate project design, process of implementation, effectiveness, efficiency, partnership and sustainability).
- Using the results findings and lessons learnt to improve the project document and framework to reflect on the current project context and situation with strong connection to the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) / Country Programme Document and related current strategic country focused areas.

4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach[1] ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.[2] Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *(list of stakeholders*); executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Considering the COVID-19 situation, the MTR team should consider using technologies and tools to effectively engage stakeholder virtually. Additionally, the MTR team may require conducting field missions to three project landscapes along central Bhutan, including the following project sites[3].

- **Landscape I**, covering Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve and Biological Corridor 1, in the western part of the country (Paro and Haa districts including 4 gewogs/blocks).
- **Landscape II**, covering Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and Biological Corridors 2 and 8, in the central-west part (Punakha, Sarpang, Thimphu, Trongsa, Tsirang, Wangdiphodrang and Zhemgang including 23 gewogs/blocks all together).
- **Landscape III**, covering Phrumsengla National Park and Biological Corridor 4, in the central-east part (Bumthang, Lhuntse, Mongar and Zhemgang including 10 gewogs/blocks altogether).

The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world. Travel to the country has been restricted since 6th March 2020 and travel within the country was also restricted but later lifted. However, depending on the situation, in-country travel restriction may apply. Considering international travel restriction in the country due to COVID-19, the international consultant may not be able to travel to Bhutan. However, national consultant can still travel within the country unless there is community transmission and government impose further lockdown. If it is not possible to travel to or within the country for the MTR mission then the MTR team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the MTR virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the MTR Inception Report and agreed with the Commissioning Unit.

If all or part of the MTR is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the final MTR report.

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[1] For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results, 05 Nov 2013.

[2] For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, Chapter 3, pg. 93.

[3] Note that Travel bans, restrictions and requirements will likely affect the dates and structure of the missions. Flexibility is expected from the selected candidate in terms of the possibility of having alternative mission and consultation arrangements (i.e. desk review, online consultations and data collected remotely, etc.).

If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). International consultants can work remotely with national evaluator's support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel. No stakeholders, consultants or UNDP staff should be put in harm's way and safety is the key priority.

A short validation mission may be considered if it is confirmed to be safe for staff, consultants, stakeholders and if such a mission is possible within the MTR schedule. Equally, qualified and independent national consultants will undertake the MTR and interviews in country as long as it is safe to do so.

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team 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.

i. Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

ii. Progress Towards Results

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets).

Project Strategy	Indicator[4]	Baseline Level[5]	Level in 1st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target[6]	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment[7]	Achievement Rating[8]	Justification for Rating

[4] Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards
[5] Populate with data from the Project Document
[6] If available
[7] Colour code this column only
[8] Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):							
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
Outcome 2:	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

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

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Review the project's alignment/transition to GEF Core Indicators in accordance with the GEF 2019 Guidelines on Core Indicators and Sub-indicators.
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool/Core Indicator at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.

- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?

Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)

For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

iv. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.[9]

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Ratings

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for "Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan" Project

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

TIMEFRAME

[9] Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.

The MTR consultancy will be approximately 25 working days over a time period of 8 weeks starting August 2020 and shall not exceed FOUR months from when the consultant is hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
20th September 2020	Application closes
21st September 2020	Select MTR Team
28th September 2020	Prep the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
5th October 2020 [4 days]	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
8th October 2020 [3 days]	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission[10]
12th October 2020 [10-13 days]	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits[10]
27th October 2020	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
6th November 2020 [10 days]	Preparing draft report
12th November 2020 [2 days]	Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report (note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report)
20th November 2020	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
25th November 2020	(optional) Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (not mandatory for MTR team)
30th November 2020	Expected date of full MTR completion

6. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	**MTR Inception Report**	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission: 28th September 2020	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	**Presentation**	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission: 27th October 2020	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	**Draft Final Report**	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission: 6th November 2020	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP

[10] Note that Travel bans, restrictions and requirements will likely affect the dates and structure of the missions. Flexibility is expected from the selected candidate in terms of the possibility of having alternative mission and consultation arrangements (i.e. desk review, online consultations and data collected remotely, etc.).

4	**Final Report***	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft: 30th November 2020	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

7. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP Bhutan Country office. Supervision and monitoring performance of the consultant shall be provided by Project Technical Specialist. The Portfolio Manager of Environment & Livelihood Cluster will provide overall quality assurance on the draft reports.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements in Bhutan for the MTR team, if the travel is permitted. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

The Commissioning Unit and Project Team will provide logistic support in the implementation of remote/ virtual meetings if travel to project site is restricted. An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the Commissioning Unit to the MTR team.

7. TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one international team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one local expert from the country of the project. The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The National Consultant will be recruited separately to support the International Consultant, who will be the team leader. The International Consultant will be required to work with the National Consultant as a team to complete the assignment.

The national consultant will work closely with the International Consultant in supporting any work that needs to be undertaken as laid out in this ToR, and other tasks, as required. The National Consultant will also act as a focal point for coordinating and working with relevant stakeholders in Bhutan. In the case of international travel restriction and the mission is not possible, the MTR team will use alternative means of interviewing stakeholders and data collection (i.e. Skype interview, mobile questionnaires, etc.) including the field visit by the National Consultant under the International Consultant's guidance.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;

- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to GEF focal areas including Biodiversity, Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Forest Management-REDD.
- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
- Experience working in least develop countries particularly in Asia Region);
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and GEF focal areas such as Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Forest Management-REDD; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
- Experience with implementing evaluations remotely will be considered an asset.
- A Master's degree in fields of Agriculture, Natural Resource Management, and Climate Change Adaptation, or other closely related field.

Qualification Criteria

The Team Leader/International Consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

Education:	Master's degree or equivalent in fields related to Agriculture, Natural Resource Management, and Climate Change Adaptation and relevant field.
Experience:	Strong technical background in biodiversity conservation, protected areas management, livelihoods, or related areas of natural resource management in Bhutan or region. A minimum of 10 years of relevant experience is required. Substantive experience in reviewing and evaluating similar projects, preferably those involving UNDP/GEF or other United Nations development agencies or major donors;
Competencies:	Demonstrate ability to assess complex situations, succinctly distills critical issues, and draw forward-looking conclusions and recommendations; Ability and experience to lead multi-disciplinary and national teams, and deliver quality reports within the given time; Highly knowledgeable of participatory monitoring and evaluation processes, and experience in evaluation of technical assistance projects with major donor agencies;

	Familiarity with the challenges developing countries face in adapting to climate change; and Familiarity with Bhutan or similar countries; Excellent interpersonal, coordination and planning skills, and ability to work in a team. Ability and willingness to travel to districts; and Computer literate (MS Office package).
Language Requirements:	Excellent English writing and communication skills

10. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

First payment: 20% of the contract lump-sum amount will be paid within 15 days after submission and acceptance of the consultancy inception report which includes work-plan, key milestones and approach of conducing the assignment consistent with the Terms of Reference.

Second payment: 40% of the contract lump-sum amount will be paid within 15 days after submission the draft evaluation report and draft revised RRF.

Last payment: 40% of the contract lump-sum amount will be paid within 15 days after submission and acceptance of the final evaluation report and final revised RRF.

Every payment is subject to receipt of certification of payment and performance evaluation for last payment duly completed and signed by Portfolio Manager, Environment and Livelihood Cluster, UNDP – Bhutan.

In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Commissioning Unit and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the MTR, that deliverable or service will not be paid.

Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her control.

11. **Criteria for selection**

A combined scoring method will be used to evaluate the offers. Technical Evaluation Criteria will be weighted a maximum of 70% and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a maximum of 30%.

Criteria	Weight	Max. Point
Technical The technical assessment will be based on the following criteria: 1. Technical competency of the Consultant; 2. Experience of the Consultant; 3. Quality of technical proposal;	70	 20 20 30
Sub-total A. (Technical)		**70**
Financial	30	30
Sub-Total B. (Financial)		**30**
Total (A+B)		**100**

12. APPLICATION PROCESS

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

a) Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the template[11] provided by UNDP;

b) CV or a Personal History Form (P11 form[12]);

[11] https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx

[12] http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

c) Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)

d) Financial Proposal that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted to the address (UNDP Country Office, Bhutan) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference "Consultant for (Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihoods in Bhutan) Midterm Review" or by email at the following address ONLY: (procurement.bt@undp.org) by (12.00 pm and September 20, 2020). Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Annex 2: MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
Is the project objectives/activities and assumptions are still relevant in the changing context and for the future?	Changes occurred in underlying conditions that affect design assumptions Stakeholder views of the relevancy of project design (use of past lesson learnt, assumptions), project objectives and activities	Project documents Key partners and Beneficiaries	Document analysis Interview
Is the project relevant to government development priorities and plan (or address the gap) and international commitments (i.e. SDGs and MEAs)	Degree to which the project objective supports national development priorities including SDGs, environmental objectives climate change /biodiversity objectives Degree of ownership / of national stakeholders on the support	Project documents National policies and strategies Key project Partners.	Document analyses Interviews with government, UNDP and other project partners
Is the project addressing the specific needs of the target beneficiaries	Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of stakeholders in project design/planning and implementation	Project documents, project reports Key partners and Beneficiaries	Document analysis Interview
Is the project internally coherent in its design? Are the components of the project consistent for the achievement of the goals of the project? Is the project intervention is consistent with other institution's interventions in the same context? Has the project played a complementary role with other actors working in the same/similar issues?	Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic Level of coherence between project Design and project implementation approach Level of coherence with other interventions	Project documents, project reports Key partners and Beneficiaries	Document analysis Interview

Are gender equality and social inclusion integrated into the pro docs?	Level of integration of relevant gender and social inclusion issues project design and implementation level of involvement of key actors (most affected groups) in project implementation	Project documents, project reports Key partners and Beneficiaries	Document analysis Interview
Whether the project logframe (indicators, objectives and components) are clear, practical and feasible within its time frame and in the changing context? Is it necessary to change the programme logic in the changed context?	SMART-ness of the indicators/targets Level of valid programme logic considering challenges, time and resources Level of impact of COVID-19 risk and other changes in the project logic and indicators	Project documents, project reports Key partners and Beneficiaries	
Is the project relevant to GEF/UNDP priorities (biodiversity, climate change and NRM)?	Existence of a clear relationship between the project objectives and GEF priorities (GEF) Level of incorporation of priorities and work areas are incorporated (UNDP)	Project Documents, GEF focal areas strategies and UNDP Country Action Plan and national plans	Documents analyses GEF /UNDP website Interviews with UNDP and project staff
Effectiveness/results: Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
Has the project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives? How the project has been contributing to SDGs?	The extent to which indicators in project document results framework and log frame have been achieved Analysis of GEF/Tracking tool with baseline Goals and targets contributed by the project activities Innovative approaches developed from the project	Project documents, Project team, relevant stakeholders Data reported in project reports	Document analysis Interviews Site visit

How has the project risk-managed as planned?	Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed	Project documents UNDP, project team, and relevant stakeholders	Document analysis Interviews Site visit
Were the relevant representatives from government and civil society involved in project implementation, including as part of the project team?	Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach Role of (coordination/steering) committee in guiding the project management	Project partners and stakeholders Media articles/reports	Document analysis and discussion
How well has the project involved and empowered communities including the women, excluded / disadvantaged groups to implement the project? Are the project beneficiaries satisfied with the project deliverables and outcomes? Does it deal with the women and other socially excluded groups' priorities? Why or why not?	Involvement of beneficiaries in project development and implementation Level of satisfaction of beneficiaries on major project targets i.e integrated landscape management, climate-resilient livelihoods options, managing the BC Level of satisfaction of women and socially excluded communities on project performance (i.e. livelihoods improvement), training/ capacity-building activities Level of distribution of benefits among the different targeted groups	Project documents, project staff, project partners, Annual and Quarterly Reports Data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.)	Individual interviews Document analysis/ Desk reviews Reports FGDs Other
What are the major barriers for implementation (implementation challenges)/ are the partners fully aware of the concept of the project? Do they work in tandem? What	Discrepancies between expected outputs/outcome by the time of mid-term and actual achievements	Findings of the project documents, the achievement of indicators, field	Document analysis Interview / interactions

impact on overall project achievement? What can be improved?	Set of challenges documented/shared during project implementation	notes during data collection	
What lessons (technical, management and financial) has been drawn regarding effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	Lessons learned from activities that have been implemented so far	Data collected throughout the evaluation Other project reports	Data analysis
Efficiency: Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?			
Are inputs (resources and time) used in the best possible way to achieve the outcomes? Was the project support provided in an efficient (economic and timely) way to achieve outputs and outcomes?	Extent of project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting and communication support to the project implementation Level of influence of institutional arrangement in the project's achievement of results.	Project documents, project staff, project partners, Data collected throughout the MTR mission, project Reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/ Desk reviews Reports FGDs Other
Management arrangements: Has the project followed an adaptive management approach? Is the decision timely and transparent? What can be improved?	Level of pro-active actions of management bodies (adaptive management) Level of satisfaction of timely and transparent decision making A compilation of suggestions	Project documents Project team and relevant stakeholders Project reports	
Is the project executed in a quality manner? To what extent have the GEF /UNDP country / regional offices ensured oversight and guidance functions?	GEF: Number of visits to project sites Sharing of lessons learnt and responsiveness to requests for TA UNDP: degree of the role played by UNDP country and regional offices and its effects on project performances Quality of technical reports	Program reports, Project staff, Regional office staff Local /national partners	Document analysis Interview

How effective has Technical Advice been in supporting the program?			
Work planning: Is the project implementation delayed? If so why? Is there any field-level implementation challenges?	Work implementation schedule Justifications provided for the delay in the project reports	Data sources of M&E unit, reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview
Are the work planning process result based? is result framework used as a management tool? Are they revised based on the changing context?	Workplan template and information provided in the workplan Level of use of result framework for managing the project No of revision and reason for the revision of workplan/result framework	Data sources of M&E unit, reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview
Financial management: Is the financial management of M & E appropriately (strategically, efficiently and in time) used to achieve the project outcomes? Are there changes in fund allocation/budget revisions? If so – are they appropriate and relevant?	Level of satisfaction of stakeholder on the cost-effectiveness of the revision	Data sources of M&E unit, financial reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview
Does the project adequately control the finance? Was the fund transfer to local partners in time?	Timely and adequate reporting Management decisions when necessary Trend of fund disbursement on time Comments from audits	Data sources of M&E unit, financial reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview
Is the co-financing being used strategically as mentioned in the project document?	Trend /no of meetings of co-financing partners Co-financing meeting notes	Data sources of M&E unit, financial reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview

Project level monitoring and evaluation systems: How well has monitoring and evaluation been linked to the management processes? Is this involve key partners/ participatory/inclusive and align with national systems?	Existence of baseline data The structure of M&E systems Evidence that an ME system updated Availability of up to date indicators of progress, regular and informative reports with necessary information	Data sources of M&E unit, reports, Project staff,	Document analysis Interview
Is the financial management of M & E appropriately used? Are there sufficient resources? Is that used effectively?	Amount and trend of financial resource use Satisfaction level of experts and stakeholders	Data system used by M&E unit; M&E reports; Interviews with M&E and Project staff	Document analysis Interview
Are M&E data and reporting used to share/ disseminate information and/or to inform strategic decisions?	Degree of use of data from M&E to inform investment decisions (cost-effectiveness) Degree of use of data and reports to enhance knowledge base of local and national policy makers Specific contribution of M&E structures to the overall project efficiency.	Data system used by M&E unit; M&E reports; Interviews with M&E and Project staff	Document analysis Interview
Stakeholder engagement: How efficient are partnership arrangements (direct and tangential) for the project? Is there a clear role and responsibility among the stakeholders? Did the project efficiently utilised local capacity in implementation?	Level of engagement and ownership of stakeholders in planning, implementation and monitoring/examples of supported partnerships Satisfaction level of the partners in the decision-making role in the project Level of involvement of local stakeholders in the project in implementation	Project documents and Project partners and relevant stakeholders UNDP Beneficiaries	Document analysis Interview
Do the project partners understand the project concept, approaches and implementation arrangement adequately? Do they have adequate knowledge, skill and ability to perform the tasks? Are	Stakeholder analysis report Capacity gap analysis Perceptions from the project staff and partners	Project documents and Project partners and relevant stakeholders UNDP	Document analysis Interview

they any institutional issues that affect the ability of partners to act?		Beneficiaries	
Reporting: Is the project reported the progress and other changes adequately and timely manner?	Reporting of changes (adaptive management) Adequacy of GEF reporting requirements? Documentation and sharing of the project lesson		
Communication: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are proper means of communication established to share the project progress to the public	No of publications (policy, technology, guidelines) appropriate to the project stakeholders No of outreach/public awareness events? Well-functioning of web-sites or similar type of open and transparent communication tools?		
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
To what extent is the project contributing towards its longer-term goals? What unanticipated positive or negative consequences is the project having? Why did they arise? What is the trade-off (if any)?	Level of alignment with policy, priorities Actions/strategies are in place to guarantee the sustainability of the results Ownership of the government Commitment from the government to continue Level of satisfaction by primary beneficiaries	Project documents, project staff, project partners, Project reports, government/UN DP development reports Media articles/reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/ Desk reviews Reports FGDs Other
What are the major risks to sustainability? Is the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date? What are the remaining risks to project sustainability?	Risk profiles and their relevancy to present context Status of sustainability plans and exit strategy Status of risk logs and risk monitoring mechanisms	the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module	Individual interviews Document analysis/

What are financial risks to sustainability?	Level of support for financial and economic sustainability in the medium to long run after the project? Financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project results	Respondent perceptions, policies of the government, stakeholder ownership, and country driveness, project reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/
What are the socio-economic risks to sustainability?	Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages Level of stakeholder awareness in the longer-term benefits of the project outcome Level of sharing of good lesson from the project	Respondent perceptions, policies of the government of the day, stakeholder ownership, and country driveness, project reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/
What are institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability?	Level of risk (and support) from the existing legal framework, policies and governance structure and processes Level of accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer mechanisms within the country	Respondent perceptions, policies of the government of the day, stakeholder ownership, and country driveness, project reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/
What are environmental risks to sustainability?	A list of environmental risks that can influence the future flow of project benefits Mitigation measures adopted by the stakeholders	Respondent perceptions, policies of the government of the day, stakeholder ownership, and country driveness, project reports	Individual interviews Document analysis/
Has the program been conducive to replicating in other areas	Level of resources being planned to replicate?	Respondent perceptions,	Individual interviews

	Type of policy/institution support to replicate? Consideration of the value chain/market/incentive in project outputs/work?	policies of the government of the day, stakeholder ownership, and country driveness, project reports	Document analysis/
COVID-19 pandemic impact in project implementation and future strategy			
How COVID-19 risk did impact project implementation? What issues and challenges did the project encountered due to COVID-19 risk? What is the key project milestone affected (delayed, deferred, cancelled) due to COVID-19 risk?	Types of risks discussed/documented on project implementation Level of impact/effect in planning, management (travel, activity implementation/physical progress) and monitoring Status of financial delivery due to COVID-19 risk List of activities /targets affected	Standard Progress Reports, Country COVID-19 risk reports, Country priorities, stakeholders perceptions	Interviews Desk Review
Is there any implication on the project relevancy, programme logic, objectives and activities due to COVID-19 risk?	List of possible impacts /effects on the project relevancy, programme logic, objectives and activities	Standard Progress Reports, Country COVID-19 risk reports, Country priorities, stakeholders perceptions	Interviews Desk Review
What mechanisms are put in place to tackle issues and challenges related to COVID 19 risk impact?	A list of possible options to mitigate COVID19 risk	Standard Progress Reports, Country COVID-19 risk reports, Country priorities, stakeholders perceptions	Interviews Desk Review

Annex 3: Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection

The following is a set of lead questions that may be used in a general manner to prompt and guide the evaluation discussions. It is a guide only and not a questionnaire. More specific questions will be added depending upon the interviews with project staff, implementing partners and beneficiaries. These questions are to national stakeholders, UNDP staff, project staff (at national and local level), local beneficiaries
Questions
Evaluative Questions

Introduction and objective:

- Pls tell about your involvement in this project?
- Which component of the project are you implementing? Could you list the activities?

Relevancy

- Is the project relevant to your organization's priorities and plan?
- Is the project addressing the specific needs of the target beneficiaries ?
- Is gender equality and social inclusion parameter(s) addressed during the project implementation?
- Whether the project logframe (indicators, objectives and components) are clear, logical, practical and feasible within its time frame and in the changing context?
- Has the project adequately address or consider the multi-sector and multi-sector issues during design? Do you have any suggestion to improve the project components?

Effectiveness/results

- Has the project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives? How does it contributing to National Key Result areas and SDGs?
- Were the relevant representatives from government and civil society involved in project implementation, including as part of the project team?
- How well has the project involved and empowered communities including the women, excluded / disadvantaged groups to implement the project?
- Is there any output not delivered as expected? What are the major barriers for implementation (implementation challenges)?

Efficiency:

- Are inputs (resources and time) used in the best possible way to achieve the outcomes?
- Is the project implementation delayed? If so why? Is there any field level implementation challenges?
- Has the project followed an adaptive management approach? Is the decision timely and transparent?
- Is the co-financing being used strategically as mentioned in the project document?
- How well has monitoring and evaluation been linked to the project management processes?
- Are M&E data and reporting used to share/ disseminate information and/or to inform decision making?
- Is there clear role and responsibility among the stakeholders? Did the project efficiently utilized local capacity in implementation?

- Do the project partners understand the project concept, approaches and implementation arrangement adequately? Are there any institutional issues that affect the ability of partners to act?
- Is communication regular and effective? Are the Board, key stakeholders and beneficiaries made aware of project progress?

Sustainability:

- What are the major risks to sustainability of the project? (Social, financial, institutional and environmetnal)
- Do you feel that such project can be replicated in other areas? Why?
- How has COVID-19 pandemic impacted project implementation?

Cross-Cutting :

- Are you aware of the Mainstreaming Reference Group (MRG)? If yes, what is its role?
- How are gender dimensions considered in your project?
- Do you take into account gender issues in your project? How? What are positive changes? If not, why not?
- Has this project helped in gender mainstreaming/equality?

Concluding:

- Do you have anything to share about the project which has not been discussed so far?
- What is your overall satisfaction level?
- What you would like to see improvement in this project?

Annex 4: Ratings Scales

Ratings for progress towards results:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The Project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The Project has failed to achieve and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environmental objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

Ratings for project implementation and adaptive management:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The Project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only a few that are subject to remedial action.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for sustainability (one overall rating):

Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key Outcomes on track to be achieved by the Project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some Outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on Outcomes at the Midterm Review
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	A significant risk that key Outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project Outcomes, as well as key outputs, will not be sustained

Annex 5: MTR mission itinerary

Sl.No.	Date	From	To	Back	Day	Remarks
1	18-Oct-20	Thimphu	Trongsa	Halt	Sun	Travel
2	19-Oct-20	Trongsa	Trongsa	Halt	Mon	
3	20-Oct-20	Trongsa	Zhemgang	Halt	Tue	Travel
4	21-Oct-20	Zhemgang	Zhemgang	Halt	Wed	
5	22-Oct-20	Zhemgang	Tingtibi	Halt	Thur	
6	23-Oct-20	Zhemgang	Bumthang	Halt	Fri	Travel
7	24-Oct-20	Bumthang	Bumthang	Halt	Sat	
8	25-Oct-20	Bumthang	Mongar	Halt	Sunday	
9	26-Oct-20	Mongar	Mongar	Halt	Mon	
10	27-Oct-00	Mongar	Bumthang	Halt	Tue	Travel
11	28-Oct-20	Bumtang	Thimphu	Halt	Thur	Travel
12	29-Oct-20	Thimphu	Haa	Halt	Fri	
13	30-Oct-20	Haa	Thimphu	Thimphu	Sat	Travel

Annex 6: List of persons interviewed

Sl. No	**Name**	**Role**	**Designation**	**Organization/Dzongkhag**
1	Rinchen Wangdi	Project Board Member	Director	GNHC, RGoB
2	Azusa Kubota (F)	Project Board Member	Resident Representative	UNDP
3	Sonam Desel	Responsible Parties for implementation	Chief Environment Officer	PPD, MWHS
4	Sonam Choden	Responsible Parties for implementation	Engineer	DOR
5	Mr. Sherab	Responsible Parties for implementation	DCPO	PPD, MOAF
6	Mr. Kaka	Responsible Parties for implementation	Sr.Forest Officer	WMD
7	Mr. Letro	Component Manager	Sr.Forest Officer	NCD
8	Mr. Jigme Tenzin	Responsible Parties for implementation	National Focal Officer for Citrus Program	DoA
9	Mr. Karma Chewang	Responsible Parties for implementation	DAO	Trongsa Dzongkhag
10	Mr. Tashi Norbu Waiba	Responsible Parties for implementation	Sr.Forest Officer	FRMD
11	Mrs. Sonam Yangchen	Responsible Parties for implementation	Sr. LPO	DoL
12	Mr. Chenga Tshering	Responsible Parties for implementation	Agriculture Officer	NSSC
13	Mr. Pema Wangda (Phd)	Responsible Parties for implementation	Executive Director	BFLS
14	Ms. Kuenzang (PhD)	Responsible Parties for implementation	Program Manager	BFLS
15	Mr. Tobgay	Responsible Parties for implementation	Finance manager	BFLS
16	Mr. Deepak Acharya	PMU	M&E Officer	PMU
17	Tshering Penjor	UNDP	Technical Specialist	UNDP
18	Ngawang Gyeltshen	UNDP	National BIOFIN Project Coordinator	UNDP
19	Chimmi Rinzin	UNDP	Portfolio Manager	UNDP
20	Ugyen Dorji	UNDP	Specialist	UNDP
21	Ms. Lisa Farroway	Regional Technical Advisor	Regional Technical Advisor	UNDP Bangkok
22	Ms. Mariana Simoes	Regional Technical Advisor	Regional Technical Advisor	UNDP Bangkok

23	Ms. Somaya Bunchorntavakul	Regional Technical Advisor	Program Associate	UNDP Bangkok
24	Phurpa	PMU	PO	PMU
25	Pema Bazar	PM	PM	PMU
26	Phuntsho	Responsible Parties for implementation	DAO	Zhemgang
27	Jambay Ugyen	Responsible Parties for implementation	ADAO	Zhemgang
28	Prem Lal Sharma	Responsible Parties for implementation	Sr. Ex Officer	Zhemgang
29	Tenzin	Responsible Parties for implementation	Executive Engineer	Tingtibi, Zhemgang
30	C.B Mongar	Responsible Parties for implementation	Chief Engineer	Tingtibi, Zhemgang
31	Sangay Duba	Responsible Parties for implementation	Project Engineer	Shinkhar, Zhemgang
32	Mr. Phub Dorji	Responsible Parties for implementation	FO	Zhemgang
33	Mr. Abir Mann	Responsible Parties for implementation	FO	JSWNP, Trongsa
34	Dhuphu Zam	Responsible Parties for implementation	Sr. Ex. Supervisor	Trongsa
35	Tshewang Jamtsho	Responsible Parties for implementation	ADLo	Trongsa
36	Karma Tshering	Responsible Parties for implementation	LPO	Trongsa
37	Kinzang Tshering	Responsible Parties for implementation	DAO	Mongar
38	Phub Dorji	Responsible Parties for implementation	ADAO	Mongar
39	Mr. Pankey Drukpa	Responsible Parties for implementation	CFO	Bumthang TFD
40	Mr. Ugyen Tshering	Responsible Parties for implementation	FO	JKSNR
41	Karchung	Responsible Parties for implementation	DAO	Haa
42	Kunzang Wangmo	Benificiary	Villager	Bimrey, Trongsa
43	Thinley Dorji	Benificiary	Villager	Bimrey, Trongsa
44	Pema Zangmo	Benificiary	Villager	Jangdung, Mongar
45	Tawala	Beneficiary	Villager	Jangdung, Mongar
46	Sonam Dema	Beneficiary	Tshogpa	Jangdung, Mongar
47	Dorji Euden	Beneficiary	villager	Jangdung, Mongar
48	Nidup	Benificiary	Gup	Shinkhar, Zhemgang

49	Mariana Simoes	UNDP RO	Climate Change Adaptation Specialist	Bangkok
50	Lisa Farroway	UNDP RO	Regional Technical Adviser, Ecosystems and Biodiversity,	Bangkok

Annex 7: List of documents reviewed

1. Analytical Review of Gaps, Conflicts and Inconsistencies in Existing Sectoral Policy, Planning and Legal Frameworks for Developing Climate Resilient Integrated Landscape Management and Climate Resilient Communities, November 2018, PPD, MoAFs, RGoB
2. Assessment of Existing Institutional Capacity of the RNR Sector and its related Agencies to Plan and Implement Climate Resilient Integrated Landscape Management and Community Development, October 2018, PPD, MoAFs, RGoB
3. Bhutan for Life Environmental and Social Management Plan for Biological Corridor 1, March 2020, Bhutan For Life Secretariat, Thimphu
4. Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihood in Bhutan, 2017, Gross National Happiness Commission, RGoB.
5. A Baseline Survey Report: Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscape and Community Livelihood in Bhutan, (Undated).
6. Forest Management Plan for Longchu Forest Management Unit, January 2020, DoFPs, RGoB
7. Independent Annual Review of Gender Mainstreaming for the Bhutan for Life Project (2019), Bhutan For Life Secretariat, Thimphu.
8. PIF, Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods, July 2015, UNDP-GEF.
9. Project Inception Report: Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods, December 2017, GNHC, RGoB.
10. Initiation Plan for GEF Project Preparation Grant, Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agricultural Landscape and Community Livelihoods, December 2015, UNDP, Bhutan.
11. Statistical Year Book of Bhutan, 2020, National Statistics Bureau, RGoB
12. Project Documents
13. Various Project Reports including 3 GEF TT
14. UNDP country programme framework
15. Government development plans, priorities, policies and sectoral strategies (i.e. NBSAP, NAPA)
16. Project Communication strategy

Annex 8: Co-financing table

Co-financing source	Co-financing type	Co-financing amount (US$ in million)	Planned Activities/Output	Actual expenditure in M USD (2017 to 2020)	Expenditure (Nu.)
Department of Forest and Park Services, MoAF	Grant	1.337	Sustainable Management of Forest Landscapes and conservation of Biodoversity	0.7646875	48.94
		1.862	Integrated Watershed Management	1.862	119.168
GNH Commission	Grant	0.809	Poverty interventions	0.02	1.28
National Land Commission	Grant	1.797	Land and rehabiliation Services		
Department of Agriculture, MoAF	Grant	1.545	National Field Crop Development	1.11328125	71.25
		0.827	National Horticulture Commodity Development		
		5.750	Agriculture Infrastructure Development	5.46875	350
Department of Livestock, MoAF	Grant	3.720	National Livestock Commodity Development	4.37	279.68
	Grant	0.198	Targeted Highland Development		
Department of Agriculture Marketing and Co-operatives, MoAF	Grant	0.647	Marketing and cooperative Development	0.454	29.056
Council of RNR Research of Bhutan, MoAF	Grant	0.072	RNR Research & Extension Services		
National Biodiversity Centre, MoAF	Grant	0.234	Biodiversity Conservation programme		
Rural Development Training Centre, MoAF	Grant	0.075	Rural Development Training		

Department of Roads, MoWHS	Grant	2.000	Construction and up gradation of Gewog Connectivity Roads	2.340625	149.8
Department of Engineering Services, MoWHS	Grant	2.821	Engineering Adaptation and Disaster Reduction		
Department of Hydromet Services, MoEA	Grant	1.118	Enhancing Hydrological Network for Water Resources Assessment and Improvement of Flood Information/GLOF Early Warning System		
		1.540	Strengthening Meteorological Network Coverage and enhancing weather and climate information services		
Department of Hydropower and Hydropower Systems, MoEA	Grant	5.486	Promotion and development of renewable and alternative energy technologies		
Department fo Trade	Grant	1.557	Export promotion and market access		
Central Government Agencies	In kind	1.577	Office space, communication and RGoB staff salary for realizing above activities	0.7546875	48.3
Local Government (38 gewogs)	Grant	6.498	38 gewogs under the Local Government of Trongsa, Bumthang, Mongar, Zhemgang, Lhuentse, Haa, Paro, Wangduephodrang, Punakha, Thimphu, Tsirang and Sarpang.	0.179	11.456
RNR Extension Agencies	In Kind	0.085	Staff salary for RNR extension staff (Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock) in 38 gewogs	2.3	147.2
TOTAL		**41.554**		19.62	1256.13

Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

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.

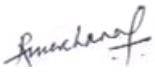
MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name: Ram Chandra Khanal, International consultant
Name: Chukey Wangchuk, National Consultant

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

Signed at Kathmandu *(Place)* on _*9th October*_____ *(Date)*

Signature: _____ 

Signed at *Thimpu (Place)* on *9th October 2020 (Date)*

Signature: Chukey Wangchuk 

Annex 10: Signed MTR final report clearance form

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared by

Commissioning unit:

Name: ..... Position

Signature: ..... Date: .....

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: ..... Position

Signature: ..... Date: .....