MID TERM REVIEW

“MAINSTREAMING CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SOARING BIRDS INTO KEY PRODUCTIVE SECTORS ALONG THE RIFT VALLEY / RED SEA FLYWAY” GEF ID number 9491 Tranche II”

**“MSB II Project”**

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

FINAL REPORT

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February 2021

## Basic information of the project

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of the Project** | Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into Key productive sectors along the Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyway |
| PIMS Number / GEF ID | 1878 / 9491 Tranche II |
| MTR Execution period | 01/11/20-1/12/20 |
| Report’s date | December 2020 |
| GEF Focal Area | BD 2 Program 3 |
| Implementing Agency | UNDP |
| Executing Agency / Implementing Partner | BirdLife International; UNDP Egypt[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| Acknowledgements | The evaluator wishes to thank the large number of people interviewed for this evaluation. Having carried out the evaluation from the distance has had the advantage of reaching a large number of stakeholders. It’s not possible to name them all and thus I wish to thank them all for their time and patience. Also, I wish to thank the Project Management Unit for the invaluable help setting up all the interviews and providing me with all the required information as well as UNDP and BirdLife International staff, management, for their valuable time. |

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

Table 1 Accronyms List

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| BD | Biodiversity |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| EEAA | Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency |
| EEP | Ethiopian Electric Power |
| EEU | Ethiopian Electric Utility |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ELEAP | Ethiopian Electrification Program |
| EU | European Union |
| EWHNS | Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| HHC | Hunting Higher Council of Lebanon |
| IFC | International Finance Corporation |
| IFI | International Finance Institution |
| JICA | Japan International Cooperation Agency |
| KfW | KfW German Development Bank |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MOMA | Ministry of Municipal Affairs of Jordan |
| MOT | Ministry of Tourism of Lebanon |
| MOI&M | Ministry of Interior & Municipalities of Lebanon |
| MSB | Migratory Soaring Bird |
| MTR | Mid Term Review |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NCE | Nature Conservation Egypt |
| NCS | Nature Conservation Sector |
| NIA | National Implementation Agents |
| NREA | New and Renewable Energy Authority of Egypt |
| PB | Project Board |
| PDD | Plant Protection Directorate |
| POPP | Programme & Operations Policies and Procedures |
| PIR | Project Implementation Review |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |
| RFF | Regional Flyway Facility |
| RSCN | Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature |
| SPNL | Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon |
| SWS | Sudanese Wildlife Society |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| WWWTA | Water & Wastewater Treatment Authority |

## Executive Summary

Table 2 Project Information

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of project | | | | |
| UNDP-GEF PIMS ID number (PIMS#): | **1878** | PIF Approval Date: | | **May 11, 2017** |
| GEF ID number | **9491** | CEO Endorsement: | | **July 17, 2017** |
| Atlas Ouput ID (formerly project ID): | **00098004** | Project Document (Prodoc) signature date (Project start date): | | **February 13 & 18, 2018 respectively** |
| Lead Country | **Jordan** | Project Coordinator hiring date: | | **September 15, 2011[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| Countries to Benefit from GEF resources under the project | **Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan[[3]](#footnote-3)** | LPAC date: | | **September 11, 2017** |
| Regions | **Middle East & Eastern Africa** | Inception workshop date: | | **January 22-24, 2018** |
| GEF Focal Area | **Biodiversity** | MTR end date | | **15 December 2020** |
| GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective: | **Reduce Threats to Globally significant biodiversity / Preventing the Extinction of known threatened species.** | Expected end date | | **May 2022** |
| Trust Fund (indicate GEF TF; LDCF; SCCF; NPIF): | **GEF Trust Fund** | In case of revision, new proposed end date | |  |
| Executing Entity /Implementing Partner: | **BirdLife International, with BirdLife Partners as Responsible Partners** |  | |  |
| Other Executing Partners: | **UNDP Egypt, EEAA** |  | |  |
| Project funding | *At CEO Endorsement (US$)* | | *AT MTR (US$)\** | |
| 1. GEF Funding | **3,500,000.00** | | 1,609,127 | |
| 1. UNDP Jordan TRAC Resources: | **100,000.00** | | 88,578.70 / 131,814.37 (UNDP Egypt TRAC) | |
| 1. Total Parallel Co-financing:: | **10,434,885.00** | | 8,578.67 | |
| 1. Total co-financement (2+3): | **10,534,885.00** | | 8,799,160 | |
| TOTAL PROJECT COST (1+4): | **14,034,885** | | 10,408,287 | |

### Brief Project Description

The Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway is the second most important flyway for migratory soaring birds (MSB) in the world, with over 1.5 million birds of at least 37 species, including 5 globally threatened species, using this corridor between their breeding grounds in Europe and West Asia and wintering areas in Africa each year. The aim of this umbrella programme approved under GEF-3 as a 2-tranche project, is to mainstream migratory soaring bird considerations into the productive sectors along the flyway that pose the greatest risk to the safe migration of these birds – principally hunting, energy, tourism development, agriculture and waste management. The second tranche builds on the successes of the first tranche, which established the Regional Flyway Facility (RFF) to act as a locus for conservation efforts related to MSBs along the flyway and to implement mainstreaming activities specifically aimed at MSBs. The focus of the mainstreaming has been to integrate flyway issues into existing national or donor-funded “vehicles” of reform or change management in the key sectors through the provision of technical tools, content, services, and support. A key aspect of the project is that it involves governments and civil society organisations to conserve MSBs and mainstream conservation measures. The RFF provides a platform allowing the eleven countries in the flyway as well as the southern and northern range states to coordinate efforts and resources. In linking the flyway countries, it provides a strong case for sustainability because it is supported by CSOs and an international NGO and it links the conservation efforts in the north and the south with the flyway which is a critical weak point in MSB conservation. The project focuses on seven out of the 11 flyway countries, namely Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti.

### Project Progress Summary

Tranche II of the 10-year umbrella GEF finance project is managing to have an impact at all levels in a highly complex and volatile region. The second tranche wisely adapted and changed its implementation arrangements from the first to the second tranche to make better use of the NGO modality. The project is managing to have an impact at the legislative and normative arena in the countries through their work at the outcome level, increasing MSB conservation awareness, improving BirdLife’s partners overall capacity, directly impacting with tools and content the five sectors directly affecting MSB’s in the region by means of “vehicle” projects being implemented. BirdLife International is positioning RFF as a key player in the flyway with national governments, private sector stakeholders from the different sectors and IFIs to help continue the good work and effectively monitor MSB on the flyway. Awareness is being raised and they shall be able to monitor actual change shortly. There is great presence on the social media in the different countries and public and private actors are aware of the importance and potential. The project is effectively influencing the enactment of new and revised country sector policies and the project has won two prices won by the project this year, the Energy Globe National Winner 2020 in Egypt and RSCN Environmental Protection “Good Practice of the Year” in Jordan. Moreover, together with BirdLife partners, they have concrete advances in the different sectors in Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon and moving ahead in Ethiopia and Sudan. RFF continuous monitoring of the regional and national activities is very time consuming but enables them to quickly identify potential mainstreaming activities in the countries. The project is also working to ensure the sustainability of the actions by strengthening RFF as a key player in the region and establishing the groundwork to conduct robust monitoring to support better planning and decision making in the flyway region. The project is generating additional beneficial development effects, like job creation, and they should monitor and communicate it. BirdLife and its partners have managed to mobilize outstanding cofinaincing resources from private and non-profit sector to maximize the project’s impact. The organization’s good positioning with the private sector, job generation and access to cofounding should be the basis for a potential new initiative in the region to follow up this 10-year initiative and continue supporting the countries enforcing MSB conservation in the different sectors.

Table 3 MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
| **Project Strategy** | **N/A** |  |
| **Progress Towards Results:** | Objective Achivement Rating:  **Higly Satisfactory** | The project is effectively influencing the enactment of new and revised country sector policies ranging from Jordan’s signature of the Raptor MOU, the inclusion of IBA’s and flyway bottleneck sites into national Land Use Plan, national wind energy guidelines, the establishment of the Center of Environmental Excellence for Renewable Energy Projects in Egypt; revision of national licensing, standards for campsites; reviewed the CITES for Permit or Certificate, amongst many other initiatives. Worth mentioning the two awards won by the project this year, the Energy Globe National Winner 2020 in Egypt and RSCN Environmental Protection “Good Practice of the Year” in Jordan. |
| Outcome 1:  ***Satisfactory*** | PMU and BirdLife through the work of their national partners have greatly surpassed the expected numbers of published articles and media coverage designed to raise awareness. They have recently shared an awareness questionnaire which can help determine the change in MSB awareness. RFF is becoming a key player in the region sought by partners from public and private sector for technical support. |
| Outcome 2:  ***Satisfactory*** | BirdLife’s approach to mainstream MSB conservation counts with the organization’s capacity to support the ongoing efforts and to strengthen their capacity to ensure the sustainability of the actions. Through their capacity building activities, they are effectively improving the organizations capacity. The project is managing to work and have an impact in the selected countries through the vehicle projects being implemented in such an unstable region with multiple risks they are obtaining tangible and replicable results. |
| Outcome 3:  ***Satisfactory*** | This outcome has been designed to ensure the initiative’s sustainability. The goal is to have RFF integrated into global conservation efforts and within BirdLife International structure. The project has shown considerable progress in terms of positioning RFF I the region and monitor regional and national impacts and shall concentrate on its continuity in the coming two years. |
| **Project Implementation & Adaptive Management** | **Satisfactory** | This a complex Project with regional and multi-national scope ranging over five different sectors in a highly volatile region with multiple risks. PMU is navigating through the problems and very effectively, through the knowledge of their staff, adapting to unpredictable risks. |
| **Sustainability** | **Moderately Likely** | RFF is key to sustain the efforts to mainstream and conserve MSB in the region. BirdLife International has demonstrated commitment by maintaining RFF between tranche I and II. Nonetheless, BirdLife will need external resources to help finance RFF. As such, they will need to work with UNDP and public and private sector stakeholders to identify and design the next steps. |

### Concise summary of conclusions

The summary of conclusions is presented according to MTR criteria.

**Relevance**

* **Relevant** and perfectly allocated to national and UN priorities. **Well-designed project** in a participatory way, although without theory of change. It is an **ambitious Project** planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries.
* **NGO execution**, changing to NGO execution has **simplified the implementation arrangements and reduced the operational costs**.
* Overall, the project **strategy** proving to be an **effective** **route** towards expected / identified results.
* The project has found a **niche** to **mainstream** **MSB** conservation with **IFI’s** and **safeguards** work on **energy** sector and potentially with ecotourism.
* **RFF governance** is a **vital component** of the project and the flyway as a whole.
* The results framework does not directly link the components outputs to the proposed indicators making it slightly harder to monitor at output level.
* Component 1 indicator regarding **awareness** **raising** **does not reflect change**.
* Component 1 indicators and targets are **too generic not allowing for detailed monitoring** and well-informed decision making.
* PMU is **not**, through the results framework, **monitoring** on **CMS** **coordination**.
* Component 2 indicator 4 on “number of joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships” **target includes all national partners** where project vehicles are being implemented. Not all countries are doing equally well and there is a **risk of not achieving this target**.
* The results framework highlights the projects contribution to UNDP & IRRF’s outcome 1, **output 1.3.2**: Number of **new jobs** and **livelihoods** **created** through management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals, and waste, disaggregated by sex. The project is **not monitoring this indicator**.
* Component 3 **outcome 3.4** is **key to the initiative’s sustainability**.
* The project is impacting its partners by **ensuring compliance with gender capacity triggers** and helping them to put in place **organizational gender strategies and action plans**.
* Certain Project vehicles are generating **beneficial** **development** **effects** (i.e.. Employment) but it is **not properly monitored nor communicated**.
* Identified risks are still present and mitigation actions are well designed. New risks have arisen that could not have been identified, i.e.. COVID-19.

**Effectiveness**

* **Long approval process** (26 months) that **caused** **changes** with the identified project vehicles. Project started immediately after prodoc signature since RFF already in place and operating during transition period.
* Project **risks** and **mitigation** **measures** are **well** **identified** and appropriate. PMU through adaptive management have effectively adapted to the global pandemic and continued operating.
* The project is monitoring all indicators and are on the **right track** of being achieved but one, related to the number of dead birds in the Sunday Flee Market in Jordan.
* PMU and BirdLife elaborated the **COVID-19 Adaptive Management** **Approach**. The document is proof of how the **project** has managed **to** **adapt**. **PMU revised all AWPs to adjust them to the new reality** and managed to continue operating.
* The Steering Committee is a great **coordination and information sharing space** amongst public and private stakeholders.
* The project suffered some **changes** in its **workplan** due to the **delay** that took place **from end of Tranche I to beginning of Tranche II**.
* **Implementation** of **vehicle** **projects** at country level **varies** depending on the national context but most importantly on the **partners** **capacity**.
* There is evidence of **joint work planning** with other GEF and EU funded projects but also thanks to the partners involvement they bring substantive collaboration with their **own** **donors** and projects ensuring **greater** **reach** and **potential** **impact**.
* In terms of work with the different sectors, **energy has great visibility**, Tourism and **ecotourism** also has **great** **potential**. The **private sector shows great interest** and if the sector picks up after the pandemic they will most likely continue supporting and investing. **Waste** **management** has a lot of **potential** as well as demonstrated in Egypt. **Hunting** also shows **progress** although is a more traditional and complex sector and **agriculture** results will be seen at the **long** **run**.
* In terms of **renewable** **energy**, need to have **common** **understanding** of the **flyway as a whole**.
* The Egyptian PMU under EEAA is **understaffed** for the amount of work they carry out and supervise.
* The project is being **adequately** **monitored**. Monitoring regional activities as well as five country vehicle projects is very time consuming although allows the team to **spot potential mainstreaming opportunities**.
* Countries start to have legal and regulatory tools to mainstream MSB conservation but there is a general **lack of enforcement**.
* There is still a huge **challenge** for **civil society** to work in countries like Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan, or Ethiopia.
* Country instability in **Ethiopia** might **jeopardize** current **vehicle** **project**.

**Efficiency**

* **Distributing** the GEF grant **by** **sector** rather than by countries has **provided** **greater** **flexibility** to the Project Board to allocate grant resources.
* Project **financial** **execution** is **on** **track** and **duly** **monitored**. Project has **executed 50.8%** of the total assigned resources. The project has not had significant budget revisions and its still aligned with the original prodoc.
* PMU is closely monitoring the pledged **co-funding**. **USD 8,7 million** are accounted for at MTR equivalent to **87% of the total**. In terms of sectors, the greatest co-funding is from the energy sector followed by tourism, multi-sector, hunting, agriculture and waste management.
* In terms of countries and vehicles and funds executed, Jordan has executed 98%; Lebanon 89%; Egypt 46%; Ethiopia 45% and Sudan 11%.
* **Impossibility** to **transfer** **funds** to **Sudan**. The **vehicle project has not yet started but has had minimum operational expenses**.

**Sustainability**

* Sustainability varies from country to country and sector. Greatly depends on the Government’s commitment, interest, and enforcement capacities.
* The project is demonstrating great potential to engage with the private sector mainly through energy and tourism. This provides a great opportunity to design a **new project** focusing on **private sector engagement**, **green jobs and biodiversity conservation**.

The following table shows a summary of the recommendations:

Table 4 Recommendations Summary Table

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rec #** | **Recommendation** | **Responsible Entity** |
| R.1 | Use findings of recent awareness questionnaire as baseline and conduct end-of-project questionnaire to measure change | PMU; PCCD; PB |
| R.2 | Brake down indicator target “flyway sensitive guidelines, best practices and related materials” per vehicle and country according to their real capacities. | PMU; PB |
| R.3 | Establish new CMS related indicator | PMU; PB |
| R.4 | Split component 2 indictor 4 target by country | PMU; PB |
| R.5 | Link, when elaborating the AWPs and if feasible, the outputs per component to the correspondent indicators. This is feasible for certain outputs of, for example, component 2. Linking output 2.1 to indicators 9, output 2.2 to indicator 10. Not all outputs have direct indicators. | PMU; PB |
| R.6 | Monitor number of green jobs being generated | PMU; PB |
| R.7 | Update the risks matrix to include new risks identified and propose adequate mitigation measures. | PMU; PB |
| R.8 | Work with UNDP to find a feasible financial solution to transfer the vehicle project funds to Sudan. | PB; UNDP |
| R.9 | Lessons learnt from mix NGO and NEX execution vs higher delivery under complex situations | PMU; PB; UNDP |
| R.10 | Work on flyway financial plan at the same time as with the exit strategy. Start planning the “new phase” of the project considering a shift from mainstreaming conservation of MSB to enforcement of existing rules and regulations and generation of green jobs through conservation. Explore GEF private sector engagement strategy. | PMU; PB; UNDP; GEF Focal Point |
| R.11 | Consider hiring more technical staff to support EEAA PMU. | PB; Egypt Steering Committee |
| R.12 | Ensure NCE’s participation in all capacity building exercises and find way to subcontract them to implement some of the activities. | PB; UNDP; Egypt Steering Committee |
| R.13 | Focus the capacity building exercises on strengthening SWS capacities. | PB; PCCD |
| R.14 | Establish **new vehicle selection criteria** to ensure GEF resources are fully utilized including **efficiency**. | PMU; PB; UNDP |
| R.15 | **Identify critical entry points for sectors with greater impact potential** to determine best vehicle projects to invest. | PMU; PB; BirdLife International country partners. |

## Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of the MTR and objectives

Evaluation is a technical and independent assessment exercise, commissioned by the client, in this case the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which contributes to accountability processes towards donors, national partners and other relevant actors. In addition, it is designed, implemented, and presented in a way that facilitates learning from good practice and, in the case of Mid-Term Review (MTR), is primarily a monitoring tool aimed at identifying challenges and setting out the corrective actions needed to ensure that a project is on track to achieve the maximum number of results before its completion. The main output from this process is the MTR report[[4]](#footnote-4).

The MTR will focus on the following four areas:

1. **Project Design;**

The project design analysis seeks to determine whether the strategy is effective in achieving the expected results and, if not, to identify changes to achieve the expected results. To this end, the evaluator will analyse in detail the project document (Prodoc) looking for whether lessons learned from other projects were indeed incorporated, whether the project is aligned with national development priorities and country priorities, whether possible externalities, environmental and social risks, decision-making processes during the project design phase and gender and human rights approach during the formulation phase have been taken into account. In parallel, the evaluator will carry out a thorough analysis of the Results Framework or Logical Framework. To this end, the indicators and targets will be reviewed to see if they meet the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) and the "GENDER" gender criteria (Gap sensitive, Inclusive, Disaggregated, Durable and Rights Respectful). This review seeks to recommend improvements in the indicators that will facilitate monitoring and the goals of these to ensure that the project can achieve them in the remaining time of its implementation.

1. **Progress towards the achievement of results;**

As the Guide indicates, this is one of the main objectives of the MTR and consists of examining the progress made in achieving the expected results. To carry out this analysis, the evaluator will review the GEF Tracking tool, both the one completed during the CEO approval phase and the one recently introduced at mid-term. The assessor will also provide assessments on the progress made in achieving the objectives and each project result. To do so, the evaluator will rely on the information provided in the Prodoc, the Project Implementation Review (PIR) of the first two years which will be corroborated during the interview phase in order to then triangulate the information that will serve as a basis for the recommendations. This process will be concluded by filling in the Progress in Achievement Matrix table which will be included in the executive summary of the final MTR report. The table will allow progress in achieving results to be presented in a very visual way which will also help to detect those areas that need to be strengthened and where changes need to be made to achieve the expected results. For indicators marked as "not achieved", the evaluator will make recommendations which will be presented in summary form in the Table of Recommendations.

Finally, the evaluator will assess the progress of the project in achieving the objective and each of the results following Table 4 of the UNDP\_GEF Project MTR Guide.

1. **Project execution and adaptive management;**
   1. As in the previous section, the evaluator will analyse the implementation of the project and its adaptive management with the aim of identifying the challenges that the project may have and will propose additional measures to achieve a more efficient and effective implementation. More specifically, the evaluator will analyse the following aspects:
   2. **Management tools;**

In this section the evaluator will analyse the quality of the support provided by UNDP Jordan to the project, as well as the implementation carried out by BirdLife International and its national partners as the Executing Agency. To this end, the existing management systems will be compared with those originally proposed in Prodoc and different aspects involved in the implementation of the project will be analysed.

* 1. **Work Planning;**

In this section the evaluator will analyse possible delays in the implementation and execution of the project, identify the causes and examine whether these have been resolved. The evaluator will pay particular attention to the planning processes to determine whether they are results-based and will examine the correct use of the results framework as a management tool.

* 1. **Financing and co-financing;**

For the financial analysis, the evaluator will analyse the financial controls and whether these have enabled informed decisions to be taken regarding the budget and how these were reflected in the Annual Work Plans (AWPs), will also analyse possible variations between what was originally designed and what was actually implemented and whether the project demonstrates the necessary control in the management of resources. Special attention will be given to the co-financing of the project. According to Communications maintained with BirdLife, the co-financing is updated annually, more specifically in the report produced for the period covering 01.01.18 to 30.06.2020.

* 1. **Monitoring and evaluation systems at Project level;**

Monitoring and evaluation is a key part of the project gear. The evaluator will analyse the monitoring carried out by UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency as well as the monitoring carried out by BirdLife International as the Executing Agency. The monitoring and evaluation plan will be analysed to see whether sufficient resources have been designated, whether key parties or partners are involved in monitoring, whether effective monitoring is assisting in adaptive management and whether the plan also includes gender perspectives, as well as the adequacy of environmental and social risk management and mitigation measures.

* 1. **Implication of the interested parties;**

The Prodoc sets out how stakeholders and external partners will be involved in the project. Establishing links with stakeholders is vital to achieve the expected results and maximise the potential impact of the project. However, one thing is what you think will happen during the project design phase and another is what actually happens. The evaluator will therefore analyse whether appropriate partnerships have been developed to achieve the results, whether national partners continue to play a leading role in the project's decision-making, and whether stakeholders are committed to the long-term success and sustainability of the project.

* 1. **Information**;

This section will focus on the analysis of the mechanisms used by the Project Team to report on potential changes in adaptive management, as well as compliance with reporting requirements to the GEF and how the information generated has been shared with the Project Board and finally, whether lessons from adaptive management have been documented and shared.

* 1. **Communication**;

In this section the evaluator will analyse both the internal communication of the project with the stakeholders, as well as the external communication towards the target audience. From the analysis of the work carried out the evaluator will also seek to make recommendations in line with the improvement of the communication of project achievements and results.

Finally, the evaluator will assess, as it was done in the previous section, the implementation of the project and the adaptive management according to table 5 of the Guide.

1. **Sustainability**.

The sustainability analysis in the MTR will provide the basis for such analysis during the Final Evaluation of the project. At this stage, the evaluator will not analyse financial, socio-economic, institutional and environmental sustainability in this exercise, but will examine the likely risks faced by the project in achieving the results. More specifically, the evaluator will validate the risks identified in the Prodoc, PIR and safeguards and whether the assessments are up to date and appropriate. This exercise should help the Project Team to focus its work, now that the project has reached the mid-point, on the sustainability of its actions. Finally, the evaluator will make an overall assessment of sustainability.

All this analysis, triangulation of information and interviews will serve the evaluator to make a section of conclusions based on the collected data and proven facts that will allow to make practical and feasible recommendations for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project, recommendations that reinforce the benefits of the project and others that mitigate possible risks identified to achieve sustainability.

### 2.2 Scope & Methodology: principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR

The evaluation covers the mid-cycle of the project under study, from the start of the second Tranche in June 2018 to date. The geographical dimension of the evaluation covers Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway concentrating on Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, and Eritrea.

In terms of content or programmatic scope, the results framework articulates a series of processes, outputs, intermediate results, and medium-term outcomes that could be grouped into three areas of analysis. In this sense and to abstract the different strategies, lines of work, products, intermediate results, actions outside the results framework, in their orientation towards the achievement of the project goal, the evaluator has specified three areas of analysis. These areas are obviously linked:

1. The support of the Project (and its level of contribution) to national capacities in the design/implementation of policies, programmes/services needed to effectively mainstream MSB at national and regional levels. This work is to be achieved by increasing the visibility of the flyway and the MSB by different means and ensuring the RFF becomes the locus of decision-making for conservation policies, plans and activities.
2. The support of the Project by means of the provision of content, tools and capacity to continue mainstreaming MSB/flyway concept into the different sector processes, practices and programmes by strengthening the capacity of BirdLife partners in the countries and designing and supporting intervention methodologies to reduce harmful impacts on MSBs validated and implemented through vehicles and
3. Ensuring RFF capacity to sustain its work overtime by improving its M&E capabilities, promoting lessons learnt and best practices and integrating the flyway into global conservation efforts.

#### Methodology

#### Scope of the MTR

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the Norms and Standards, ethical and conduct guidelines defined by the UN System Evaluation Group (UNEG) and will take as reference the procedures and guidance set out in the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results and the Guide for Conducting the Mid-Term Review of UNDP-Supported and GEF-Funded Projects developed by the UNDP-GEF Bureau in 2014. The evaluation will make judgements on their definition/design, implementation and achievements based on two main pillars: accountability and learning. It should be noted that the main purpose of the EMT is to identify challenges and set the necessary corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track to achieve the maximum number of results before its completion.

The evaluation will take a mixed methodological approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods.

In this respect it is important to conceptually define the nature of the products:

"Products are considered as operational changes: products and services - knowledge, skills, capabilities. They are the tangible products, capital goods, and services that result from development interventions. Outputs must be achieved within the project cycle and managers have a high level of control over them".

A first approach to evaluation is that it will be based on the analysis of the achievement of outputs and progress in achieving results. Therefore, evaluation will prioritise the focus on effectiveness in the implementation of activities.

The evaluation will also take a participatory approach: it will seek to combine the evaluator's external assessment with the experience of internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, the evaluator will maintain a fluid communication with the Project Office teams, as well as representatives of implementing partners. Perspectives and proposals will be discussed during the different stages of the evaluation and a learning community will be formed through the exchange that will be useful for the strategic objectives of this evaluation.

#### Criteria and Evaluation questions

**Project Strategy (Relevance/Coherence)**

The relevance analysis will focus on the strategic formulation of the project, its coherence with the situational analysis and the problems raised, the degree of participation of the beneficiary population in the construction of the project, considering its link with the priority areas of the GEF.

This work will be carried out by the consultant mainly through documentary analysis. It will also emerge from the elements gathered from the different interviews and focus groups carried out with actors of the Project.

**Progress towards achieving results**

The evaluator, by analysing the documentation, as well as the information obtained first-hand through interviews with stakeholders, will analyse the progress of the project towards achieving the results defined in the project design phase. To do this, the evaluator will use the Progress Towards Results Matrix which will be completed with the available information. In addition, the evaluator will compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool as a baseline against the last one completed before the MTR. This exercise will allow the evaluator to identify existing barriers to the achievement of the objectives and to identify successful aspects of the project. All this information will be collected in the Progress Matrix.

**Project Implementation and Adaptive Management (Efficiency)**

The efficiency analysis will stop at the cost/benefit study mainly, it will analyse the agility of the administrative processes and the fulfilment of the times established in the planning and the fluidity of the financial processes; it will look especially at the analysis of the administrative/financial action and at the application of the work approach based on results (including the monitoring systems and instances of direction of the Project); all this to determine the capacity that the Project had to correct directions and strategies in the course of it, therefore, its capacity of adaptive management.

The analysis will consider the budget revisions and changes that have been made during implementation. To this end, programmatic and financial monitoring tools, monitoring reports from both UNDP and BirdLife International, operational plans and programmatic reports will be reviewed. Interviews will be held with key management and administrative personnel.

**Effectiveness**

The Effectiveness analysis will focus on determining, through the monitoring of the results chain, the correct sequence of and the fulfilment of the assumptions established for its development, the way in which the activities contribute to the achievement of the results, these in turn point to the achievement of the specific objectives, and finally to the achievement of the general objective.

In turn, special attention will be paid to the fulfilment of the indicators proposed by the Project, both for results and objectives, as well as the monitoring and evaluation instruments developed.

It will be considered the group of "key informants" that are proposed for the phase of information gathering, and others that the evaluator considers appropriate. There will be a special section for the analysis of good practices.

The concrete progress of the components, results and indicators will be consolidated in a matrix and comments will be made on each of them. Special attention will be given to progress on the proposed indicators. In addition, the quality of the indicators will be reviewed and, where appropriate, specific recommendations for future interventions will be provided.

**Sustainability**

Sustainability will be analysed from four areas: financial risks to sustainability, socio-economic sustainability, institutional and governance risks to sustainability and environmental risks. Given the relevance of financial sustainability to the project, special emphasis will be placed on this issue.

It will also analyse the action carried out to strengthen individual and institutional capacities with the partners and the appropriateness of the strategies defined for this capacity transfer.

It will carry out this work through documentary analysis, field verification by taking elements of the results obtained, and perceptions of the main actors through guided interviews.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**: Make proposals and recommendations to improve the project during the second half of implementation, including the critical actions required to solve the problems encountered and generate a proposal to improve the impact. The consultant will follow the recommendations set out in the Guide for Conducting the Mid-Term Review of UNDP-Supported and GEF-Funded Projects.

#### Data Collection Methods

Given the nature of the object of study, the methodology of data collection and analysis has been selected to combine qualitative (including participatory techniques) and quantitative methods (data collection, processing, analysis and presentation of information), as well as deductive and inductive analytical methods, which will allow the evaluator to conclude on the achievements at the level of the project being evaluated.

The different techniques for collecting and analysing information that will be used during the MTR are detailed below:

**Desktop review:** The main documents related to the Project will be reviewed and analysed from different perspectives such as the quality and relevance of the information provided, identification of gaps, coherence, and correlation between documents, etc. The control table of the information provided by the project is attached in Annex 3.

**Interviews:** Key people from each organisation/institution, authorities, heads of partner organisations, heads of public institutions, local authorities, project managers; will be interviewed in a minimum duration of 40 minutes, depending on the relevance and amount of information the interviewee can offer. A specially designed interview guide has been produced for each interview, which means that there will be several models of interview guide. They will take the form of semi-structured interviews for better conducting. See annex 4.

**Focal Groups**: To collect information from certain groups, focus groups will be held. As can be seen in Annex 2 of the Draft Agenda, the focus groups will be held specifically with RFF management Unit as well as the project’s Supervisory Board.

**Debriefing and validation workshops:** At the end of the second phase, a debriefing will be held with the Evaluation Reference Group and other stakeholders in which the assessments arising from the phase will be offered. This debriefing will take place in person at the end of the online mission.

**Processing and systematization** of all the information collected and analysed. The synthesis on the one hand and the deepening on the other of all the information that the evaluator will accumulate through the different instruments, will be ordered in structured and standardized documents previously prepared (Excel matrix), organized based on the evaluation questions by criteria, also considering the logical order of presentation of the information referred to in the annotated index of the final report (which will be adjusted and/or expanded).

**Triangulation techniques** will be used for the interpretation of the findings and their subsequent assessment. To this end, the results of the analyses will be verified by comparing two or three times the same information from different sources and through different collection methods. For example, verify the answers obtained in interviews with government personnel with opinions of the beneficiaries or with other sources of statistical information.

At the end of the online interviews, a feedback loop is planned with BirdlLife and UNDP and the Reference Group to validate the preliminary findings of the assessment.

#### Limitations to the MTR

Evaluability is the extent to which a programme can be reliably evaluated, i.e., maintaining consistency between data, information and evaluation judgements so that these judgements can be relied upon. In addition to considering aspects associated with the evaluation process (favourable conditions for carrying out the fieldwork, which also means having a good programmatic and contextual documentation base), evaluability refers to the quality of the results framework and/or effects map (coherence and alignment between effect, outcome, output, indicator) and the monitoring system in place, in order to be able to state that these elements can be verified.

The **limitations found** are linked to the results framework (in Prodoc) as well as the logistics surrounding the evaluation and are summarized as follows:

Some of the indicators, for example, for component or outcome 1 regarding raising awareness of the flyway speak are characteristic of activities and not outcomes. The number of articles published does not really tell us if the outcomes are being achieved. Also, the chosen indicators do not provide any data on the actual achievement of the proposed outputs, for example, output 1.4. This is particularly the case for outcome 1.

**Lack of Direct observation.** Direct observation provides additional information that allows the evaluator to learn about the context in which the events and processes being evaluated occur routinely and/or extraordinarily. In this case, given that the phenomena related to the project spans over a wide range of countries and actors and that most vehicle projects are affected by most excluded groups and populations, observation could provide concrete elements that would support and reinforce the conclusions and recommendations. It is important to highlight that since the entire evaluation exercise will be conducted online, the observations will be limited to online interviews and will not have the relevance that they could have if the field mission was to be conducted.

#### Selection of key informants

The identification of informants is being carried out under a selective approach led by the Project Management Unit in Jordan together with the advice of BirdLife. Obviously, the aim is to produce exchanges with qualified informants, both in terms of the quality of their participation and the role they currently play in the structures they represent, to be able to extrapolate arguments and assessments. The consultant is particularly interested in learning what is working and what is not working in each of the target countries and in relation to the different vehicles. In this regard, sectoral stakeholders have been chosen representative of the different vehicles.

The Project Office has provided a preliminary list of key actors linked to the different processes carried out and underway, which will be adjusted in the coming days. An agenda is outlined in Annex 2 of this report.

## Project Description and Background Context

### 3.1 Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope

The project covers Tranche II of a two-tranche project originally approved for financing by the GEF under its third funding cycle for a 10-year period. The original project document under Tranche I encompassed eleven countries although it concentrated its efforts mainly on Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. Under Tranche II, the project covers 7 flyway countries, namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea. Support for national level activities will be provided to five of these countries, namely, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon and Sudan.

The total population of the eleven countries in the flyway exceed 271 million people. The poorer countries are still largely agrarian-based (% GDP from agriculture: Ethiopia 47%, Sudan 39%) while elsewhere the industrial base is well established (Egypt 33%) but these agrarian-based countries also exhibit the fastest rates on industrial growth. Overall, national agendas are focused on rural development, industrialization, and economic growth. Economic growth and employment tend to dominate political thinking and can be overriding factor of government and political decision-making. Conservation is not a priority. Five key sectors are seen as impacting MSBs along the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway – hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism. In the northern states (Lebanon but also Jordan and Egypt) recreational hunting has a very strong cultural basis in society.

In terms of the policy and legislative context, the Convention on the Conservation of Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) provide a broad multi-lateral framework for agreement along the flyway. The project is essentially about translating the CMS, as it relates to MSBs, into effective actions on the ground. The project has also been effective in encouraging countries to sign up to various CMS Agreements and in operationalizing these along the flyway. No country had legislation that related specifically to MSBs in the productive sectors. The translation of such policy statements into effective national legislation has in many cases not happened or, where the legislation exists, the institutional capacity and resources for effective implementation are lacking. Tranche I of the project strongly influenced the application of the International Finance Institutions (IFIs) safeguards on wind energy projects. Also, hunting requires a much broader and holistic approach. Given the experience gained through Tranche I, a ban on hunting has had little impact on the intensity of hunting and thus a responsible hunting approach is more preferable and effective than a prohibitive approach.

### 3.2 Problems that the Project sought to address; threats and barriers targeted.

The Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway is the second most important flyway for migratory soaring birds (MSBs) in the world. Over 1.5 million birds of prey and 300,000 storks migrate along this corridor between their breeding grounds in Europe and West Asia and wintering areas in Africa each year. At least 37 species of soaring birds regularly use the flyway. Their passage along the narrow flyway is still relatively poorly managed from a conservation perspective. This is where MSBs are most physiologically stressed and for some species 50-100% of their global or regional populations pass along the route and through flyway “bottlenecks”. As a result, these birds are highly vulnerable during the migration along the flyway to localized threats such as hunting and collision with wind turbines and associated power lines which could have severe impacts on global populations.

The main critical sectors identified and threats to MSB passing along the flyway are the following:

1. Hunting;
2. Energy (specifically related to wind farms and power lines);
3. Agriculture;
4. Waste Management and
5. Tourism.

At midterm of the overall two-tranche umbrella project several barriers remain that impede the long-term solution to MSB conservation in the flyway. These are the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Barrier** | **Current situation** |
| Barriers to raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours amongst target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-makers, and the general public | Persistent misunderstanding of the flyway concept and value of the birds. |
| Barriers to increased national and regional capacity to effect mainstreaming and application of the flyway | Difficulty in gaining sector entry. |
| Barriers to developing content and tools to develop, deliver and mainstream into sector processes and programmes the flyway friendly practices | Shortage of technical information on which to base decision-making. |
| Barriers to learning, evaluation and adaptive Management | Difficulty in addressing change within complex sectors, and  A lack of coalition along the flyway. |

### 3.3 Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites (if any)

The project on its tranche II will follow the mainstreaming approach as defined by the GEF as “embedding biodiversity considerations into policies, strategies and practices of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, so that is conserved and sustainably used both locally and globally requiring interventions in policy, planning, production practice, and financial mechanisms”. It shall have the RFF at its heart as a “nerve centre” ensuring that the flyway countries follow a common path acting as a link between the countries in the northern breeding and southern wintering ranges of the MSB species.

The project’s **overall** **goal** remains as originally designed in 2007, “to ensure that globally threatened and significant populations of soaring birds that migrate along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway are effectively maintained. The **immediate** **objective** is that conservation Management objectives and actions for MSB are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds. To achieve the goal, the project has three components/outcomes:

1. **Component 1**. Raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours among target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-making, and the general public.
2. **Component 2**. Content, tools, and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSBs/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices, and programmes.
3. **Component 3**. Learning, evaluation, adaptive management, and upscaling.

It is important to highlight that the project will continue to mainstream into the five key production sectors largely using sector “vehicles” identified by the targeted flyway countries. A “vehicle” is defined as a planned or existing reform process or project in a targeted sector.

The Project is being executed by BirdLife International and its national partners following the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International in all countries but Egypt and implemented by UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency. Egypt represents an exception to the overall arrangements due to the current circumstances relating to non-governmental organizations and their inability to receive funds from international sources. The Project is being supervised by a Project Board responsible for making management decisions comprised of UNDP Jordan, BirdLife International and main beneficiaries.

. The MSB Tranche II management arrangements have evolved over time. During Tranche I management arrangements consisted of UNDP Jordan as the Executing Agency for the overall regional activities with RFF/BirdLife and for the national activities in Jordan; UNDP Lebanon and UNDP Egypt were Executing Agencies within their respective countries with project management units in both countries. However, the RFF was responsible for reporting and in fact BirdLife was accountable for the whole project delivery to UNDP-GEF but had in effect execution responsibility for part of it. Tranche I Terminal Evaluation (also referred to as MTR) concluded that this arrangement prevented the project from attaining its overall goal of strengthening the RFF and mainstreaming MSB throughout the flyway. The evaluation concluded that the arrangements had a number of weaknesses and inefficiencies characterised as:

* Effectively four projects operating within one project;
* Additional reporting and accounting requirements within the project;
* Undermining the role and function of the RFF;
* Reduced the likelihood of post project sustainability;
* Capture of project resources for purposes weakly related to the projects focus; and
* National interests can override the larger strategic interests of the flyway per se.

In Tranche II, the Project follows an NGO Implementation Modality through BirdLife International with BirdlLife Partners as Responsible Partners in country and UNDP as GEF Executing Agency. This applies to all the work conducted regionally and with Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti vehicle projects. Important to highlight the exception for Egypt. This country represents an exception to the overall arrangements due to the current circumstances relating to NGOs and their inability to receive funds from international sources. As it happened during Tranche I of the project, the management arrangements in Egypt go through UNDP Country Office as responsible party. The specific details of these arrangements are further analysed below.

In terms of the geographic location of the Project, it intends to impact numerous areas within the flyway.

Figure 1 Map of the flyway



Tranche 1 of the project covered 11 countries of the flyway whereas Tranche 2, after negotiation with the GEF Secretariat during project design, reduced the number of countries to seven: Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti.

The project proponents carried out a very thorough planning of the vehicle projects during Tranche 2 project design phase with a sector prioritization by participating country looking at the following criteria: importance, feasibility, effectiveness, and ranking priority from 1-5[[5]](#footnote-5). This planning exercise led to the identification of the following sectors per country; Energy in Ethiopia; Land Use Planning in Jordan; Agriculture, hunting and tourism in Lebanon; Agriculture in Sudan and Energy, Tourism and Waste Management in Egypt.

At MTR, the project has four vehicle projects plus the four sector initiatives in Egypt. These are located approximately according to the following table.

Table 5 Geographic location of approved vehicle projects

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country, vehicle Project and partner** | **Geographic location** |
| Ethiopia, Ethiopian Electrification Program (ELEAP), Ethiopian electric Utility (EEU) and Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) | While the program envisages outreaching quite several the mushrooming industrial parks distributed in various Regional States of Ethiopia, and rural and urban communities, the definite geographic areas of specific projects are yet to be identified. |
| Jordan, Land Use Planning Process, MOMA | The Jordan Rift Valley extends from Lake Tiberias in the North to the Gulf of Aqaba in the South. The study area is located mainly within the following governorates: Irbid, Balqa, Madaba, Karak, Tafieleh, Maan and Aqaba. |
| Lebanon, Mainstreaming MSB conservation in the three areas sectors of agriculture, hunting and tourism; Ministry of Tourism, WBCC, Hunter Groups. | Mount Lebanon region and West Bekaa region on the Rift valley. Special consideration will be on the flyway extending from Ras Al Metn (Pine Forests & Valleys as Roosting area), plus Aley region, Ras Souk Algharb, Chemlan, Keyfoun as the priority areas for eco-tourism. |
| Sudan, Mainstreaming of MSB into existing policy of agrochemical use in Sudan; PDD | 1. Irrigated schemes in: Gazeira state, White Nile State, Northern State, Kassala State) and sub-irrigated schemes in Sinnar state  2. Rain-fed schemes in: Gadaref State, Blue Nile State and South Kordofan State,  3. Horticultural holdings: Khartoum State, Gazeira State and northern State |
| Egypt, Energy with NREA including private projects), Egyptian Electricity company Waste Management with W&WTTA; Hunting with Hunting Clubs and Tourism (Jaz Hotels) | Planned wind farm projects along Gulf of Suez; Sharm El-Sheikh treatment plant, South Sinai Governorate. |

The vehicle project suffered some changes from the design phase to the start of the project.

### 3.4 Project implementation Arrangements: short description of Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements.

As indicated on the prodoc, the management arrangements for Tranche II evolved from Tranche I and were designed to: i) apply the NGO execution modality to benefit from the regional structures and national partnerships of BirdLife International and its specific expertise in bird conservation that is critical to the MSB project; ii) avoid having to establish numerous PMUs across the participating flyway countries; iii) use the project to strengthen the NGO network along the flyway to ensure continuity and sustainability. Important to highlight that these changes in implementation follow the recommendations of the Tranche I MTR and as indicated above, look to overcome the difficulties encountered. The Project is being implemented by BirdLife International for the regional component and its national partners in Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan and Ethiopia and, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) through the Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) in Egypt. As indicated previously, this is a special case due to the inability to transfer funds to national NGOs in Egypt. Thus, we observe **a mixture of NGO Implementation and National Execution for Egypt**. There are two aspects to the project’s execution: firstly, with the execution of the RFF and secondly with the execution of the national activities (e.g. the vehicles). The RFF and regional coordination component are through NGO execution modality, through BirdLife International with the RFF acting as the PMU for the entire project although in reality it is not. The RFF/PMU and BirdLife International report and account directly to the executing agency (UNDP Jordan). Jordan has national NGO execution modality as well through the national BirdLife partner, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). RSCN reports directly to the Steering Committee comprised of UNDP Jordan, Government Representatives as well as RFF Coordinator. Ethiopia, Sudan and Lebanon have national NGO execution modality as well through BirdLife International local partners, namely, Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), Sudanese Wildlife Society (SWS) and Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) who report to RFF. The situation is different in Egypt. As indicated previously, the country has national Execution modality through the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) with a national PMU nested in the Nature Conservation Sector reporting directly to UNDP Egypt. The Project is governed, according to the Project, by a Project Board (refer to figure 2) and a BirdLife Supervisory Committee.

Figure 2 Project Governance

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Source: prodoc

The prodoc establishes the following coordination mechanisms:

1. The ***Project Board (PB).*** Specifically established to oversee the management of project activities, as well as strategic direction necessary to achieve or maintain the commitments of the parties. The Board will review progress reports, approve programmatic modifications to AWPs in accordance with UNDP procedures and provide programmatic recommendations. The PB can approve the use of non-GEF budgets and work plans that fall under its authority. It plays a critical role in implementing recommendations emerging from the independent evaluation. It is comprised of the GEF Operational Focal Point in Jordan representing all flyway countries, UNDP Jordan Resident Representative acting as UNDP PPRR, Director of BirdLife International Conservation Department, RFF Coordinator as Secretary and any additional stakeholders invited by the PB.
2. **BirdLife International** as **Implementing Partner and UNDP as Executing Agency/**. Important to highlight that BirdLife International will have “full control over project operations and can use its own supply channels for recruitment and procurement in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP’s principles based on “best value for money” and in line with UNDP’s Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP).
3. For the duration of the project, the **RFF** functions as the Project Management Unit (PMU) for the regional endeavour. Establishment of the RFF was funded during Tranche I and its costs and operations will be fully absorbed by the Secretariat’s budget and institutional organisation by the end of Tranche II of the project. The PMU is staffed with a Project Coordinator assisted by one Communications, Education and Public Awareness Officer and two Regional Flyway Officers (one based in Amman and the other in Nairobi), two Conservation Managers for Africa & the Middle East and one part-time Finance and Administration Officer.
4. ***BirdLife Supervisory Committee.*** Responsible for guiding and supervising RFF and comprised of the Regional Director for the Middle East, Regional Director for Africa, and the Senior Programme Manager, Conservation Department.
5. ***National Implementation Agents (NIAs).*** In those countries with vehicle projects being implemented, the project has several types of NIAs under the overall guidance of BirdLife’s RFF. These include BirdLife Partner and Affiliate NGOs as well as further national CSOs/NGOs not affiliated with BirdLife and national project/vehicle/sector agents including the private sector. National activities and vehicle projects will be delivered through the RFF together with any of the above NIA and governed by a contractual agreement. Where the project supports national-level activities, the project will set up, where appropriate and national investments justifies, **national consultation and engagement committees** linked to and building on the proposed vehicle projects.
6. ***UNDP Egypt as Responsible Party.*** In Egypt, the PMU is hosted by NCS within the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)
   1. ***National Steering Committee in Egypt*** established consisting of UNDP Egypt, the RFF, the GEF-OFP and the Government’s Nature Conservation Sector (NCS), the BirdLife Partner in Egypt (Nature Conservation Egypt/NCE) and any national implementing agents. The minutes of the Committee meetings show greater participation than expected during prodoc formulation with representatives of NERA, private sector representatives, South Sinai Governorate, amongst others.

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### 3.5 Project timing and milestones

Tranche II has been designed to last 5 years. The prodoc does not present a timeline and only the results framework speaks of the targets at the end of the project. Therefore, it is possible to determine the main milestones to be achieved during the development of the project through the established targets by year end. **The results framework does not provide mid-term targets**. The following table presents the components, results and expected outputs of the project.

Table 6 Relation of Project components, outcomes and outputs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Outcome** | **Output** |
| C1 Raised awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours among target groups that threaten MSBs in the key sectors, decision-makers and the general public | 1.1 Public “visibility” of the flyway and MSBs increased | 1.1. Concept of MSB Flyway established and promoted  1.3 Targeted awareness and media / social media campaigns on MSB flyway issues designed and carried out |
| 1.2 MSB Project /RFF website is a source of information for public, politicians and production sectors |  |
| 1.3 RFF is the locus of decision-making for conservation policies, plans and activities to coordinate MSB conservation efforts along the flyway. | 1.2 RFF promotes mainstreaming of MSB considerations and moves from being the “custodian” of the MSB project to being the “custodian of the flyway”  1.4 Coordination of Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) translated into sector activities and actions. |
| C2. Content, tools and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSBs/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices and programmes | 2.1 Capacity of national BirdLife partners and other key national stakeholders in government, private sector and civil society to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased | 2.1 Capacity of national partners strengthened to develop and promote concept of Flyway, respond to new opportunities and monitor content standards. |
| 2.2 Capacity of national government and private sector institutions strengthened to understand, promote and adopt “flyway friendly” practices |
| 2.2 Ecological/conservation status of Flyway monitored and showing local improvements and/or significant reduction of harmful development impacts at target sites. | 2.3 MSB-related technical content and guidelines developed, especially for targeted key sectors (energy, agriculture and pesticide use, hunting, tourism and waste management) |
| 2.4 MSB project content and guidelines tested, adapted and implemented through appropriate sector reform vehicle projects and programmes along the flyway. |
| 2.5 Regular surveillance of Flyway and MSB conservation status and of known and emerging threats, including to predict impacts on MSBs of sector developments and to identify other potential project target sectors and vehicles. |
| 2.3 Mainstreaming and intervention methodologies for reducing harmful impacts on MSB/Flyway tested, validated and implemented through “vehicles” in target countries in key sectors (at least 8, in hunting, energy, agriculture, tourism and waste management) | 2.4 MSB Project content and guidelines tested, adapted and implemented through appropriate sector reform vehicle projects and programmes along the flyway |
| C3. Learning, evaluation, adaptive management and upscaling | 3.1 M&E of socioeconomic and environmental impacts at regional and site level tracked | 3.1 Project monitoring, evaluation, reporting and dissemination frameworks and structures established and operational at regional level and at selected sites, to fully and regularly assess quantitative and qualitative environmental and socio-economic impacts of all interventions. |
| 3.2 Adaptive project management reflects M&E recommendations | 3.2 Flyway/RFF adaptive management framework developed |
| 3.3 Project lessons, best practices and case studies analysed, codified and disseminated nationally and internationally for replication in other sites along the flyway and beyond | 3.4 Selected learning and knowledge management products developed. |
| 3.4 The flyway is integrated into global conservation efforts and newly raised / assigned financing allows the application of lessons learned from demonstration activities in other sites along the flyway- | 3.3 RFF is fully absorbed into BirdLife International |
| 3.5 Coherent financial plan developed for the RFF including key funding areas, sources of financing, financing gaps, financial strategy for flyway conservation activities. |
| 3.6 Targeted promotion and fundraising through BirdLife at international events such as the annual BirdLife Bird Fair. |

The project’s budget reflects the financial weight of the different components and outputs. Overall, 20% of the budget was assigned to component 1, awareness raising, more than 50% assigned to component 2, content, tools and capacity developed (out of which 42% assigned to sectors supports) and 15% to learning, evaluation, adaptive management, and upscaling. To run the project implies less than 10% of the budget allocated.

Figure 3 Percentage Budget distribution by component

Source: Own elaboration from prodoc analysis

In terms of the sector support, the prodoc assigned the following percentages to the different sectors; agricultural sector (close to 29.43%), followed by energy (23.98%), hunting (17.17%), waste (17.17%) and tourism (12.26%).

Figure 4 Budget distribution per sector

Source: Own elaboration from prodoc analysis

### 3.6 Main stakeholders: summary list

The Project document identified type of stakeholder. These stakeholders vary considerably due to the geographic scale of the MSB project and its focus on different sectors. Thus, the project will work with very diverse Government Agencies that go beyond the statutory environmental agencies in the countries because of the sector engagement. Other key stakeholder are NGOs and Civil Society groups. In five of the seven project countries that are receiving GEF resources through vehicle projects, the lead executing agency is a national NGO which forms part of the Middle East or Africa Partnership of BirdLife. The private sector is also involved in the project mainly through the vehicle projects as well as International Funding Institutions. The list is very extensive. The following table presents a screenshot of actors at regional and international level as well as at national level currently working with the vehicle projects.

Table 7 List of current stakeholders

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scope** | **Stakeholder** |
| International | BirdLife International |
| IFI | Kfw, IFC, JICA, FIEM, World Bank |
| International Conventions | Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), AEWA, CITES |
| Governmental ministries | NREA |
| EEAA |
| EETC |
| RECREEE |
| ELEAP |
| EEU |
| EEP |
| MOMA |
| Ministry of Interior & Municipalities – MOI&M |
| HHC |
| WWT |
| PDD |
| NGOs | SPNL |
| NCE |
| RSPN |
| SWS |
| EWNHS |
| Private sector | Jordan Wind Project Company |
| Al Rajef Wind Farm |
| Fujeij Wind Farm |
| Shobak Wind Farm |
| Maan Wind Farm |
| KOSPO Daehan Wind Farm |
| Abour Wind Farm |
| MASS Group Wind Farm |
| ORASCOM, TOYOTA and ENGY consortium amongst others |
| Jordan Wind Project Company |
| Bakker Brother Company |
|  | Syngenta |
| Saraya Aqaba Hotel |
| Homat Hima International |
| West Bekaa Country Club-WBCC |
| Bioland Organic Company |
| Lush Cosmetic Company |

## 4. Findings

### Project Strategy

This section analyses the relevance of the project design. It seeks to answer the following questions:

#### What has been the quality and relevance of the overall formulation process?

#### What has been the relevance of the project's intervention logic and indicators?

#### What is the current status of the risks and assumptions formulated in Prodoc?

#### Is the project still relevant in relation to the socio-political context in the region?

#### Project Design

The stakeholders interviewed who participated in the formulation process agree that it was a participatory process and consider the Prodoc to be of very good quality. **This second prodoc takes tranche I terminal evaluation recommendations into consideration and upgrades the management arrangements accordingly**. This project is the second phase or tranche of a bigger 10-year initiative. The following table shows the key stages in the project formulation process.

Table 8 Main stages project formulation phase

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Date** |
| PIF approval date | 11 May 2017 |
| GEF CEO Endorsement | 17 July 2017 |
| Project document signature date | 13&18 February 2018 |
| Hiring of the national coordinator | 15 September 2011[[6]](#footnote-6) |
| Inception workshop date | 22-24 January 2018 |

The evaluator estimates that the formulation and approval process has taken a considerable amount of time and therefore **unsatisfactory** considering that 26 months have passed from the end of the regional component of tranche I (31 December 2015) while the Egyptian component continued until 30 June 2017 to the actual start of Tranche II with the prodoc signature in February 2018.

**Once the prodoc was signed the project started right away since the team was already in place in Amman**. Nonetheless, and as it will be shown further down the document, several vehicle projects were lost and time had to be invested in the identification, negotiation, and design of new vehicle projects, specifically, in Ethiopia and Sudan.

The logic of the project, in its design, is as follows.

Figure 5 Project's logic

Although the project has 4 components, it was only considered relevant, for the purpose of describing the logic of the project, to present the 3 main components. The fourth component relates to the effective management of the project and is therefore considered to be crosscutting to the project logic.

**The project’s overall strategy**, MSB mainstreaming conservation management objectives into the sectors through awareness, capacity building of BirdLife International national partners to sustain the work in the future, the provision of content and tools to effectively mainstream MSB conservation into the five sectors as well as strengthening the RFF as a leading facility for bird conservation **is proving to be an effective route towards expected/intended results**. As can be observed on table 9, the intervention logic is showing results. Through the MSB project during its two tranches, MSB conservation objectives are being mainstreamed in flyway countries strengthening partners capacities, raising awareness, and developing interesting tools to replicate good practices. This translates into policy and regulations affecting most sectors as well as interesting replicable projects. Nonetheless it is clear that this **must be a long-term commitment**. A change of this magnitude will happen in the long run. The project will strengthen capacity and provide especially useful contents and tools in quite different sectors. Its proven very difficult and challenging to work on agriculture and hunting for different reasons. Agriculture in the flyway and most countries is the foundation of their economy (ie. In Ethiopia accounting for half of gross domestic product (GDP), 83.9% of exports and 80% of total employment and 39% in Sudan) and we see strong Government incentives and policies to increase yields and production. Hunting, on the other hand, is a very traditional sector. Information gathered through interviews indicates that it has taken the project quite some time to gain hunters trust and it is proving to be a slow process. **The project has found a niche to mainstream MSB conservation on IFIs and safeguards work on wind energy sector**. Most Governments intend to increase renewable energy potential to diversify the grid and attain universal electrification. To do so, they are counting with International Funding Institutions to finance the projects. This implies that they must follow their existing safeguard systems while developing projects and reducing the death tolls produced by windmills is indeed one of their top priorities. The same **applies to tourism**. Ecotourism and bird watching can bring considerable resources to the tourist sector and as such governments and private sector show considerable interest.

As it is stated on the prodoc, Tranche II design took into consideration Tranche I MTR recommendations. More precisely:

* Changing the execution modality to NGO execution;
* Strengthening the role of the RFF as coordinator and flyway “manager”;
* Distributing the GEF grant by sector rather than by countries;
* Maintaining the engagement with each sector, despite making considerable headway, the complexity of engaging with sectors was greater than anticipated in the original design and sectors such as wind energy are emerging as very serious and extensive threats;
* Developing the RFF governance is a vital component of the project and as such, investment in addressing the adaptive challenges as well as the technical challenges was a necessary and wise use of the GEF project funds.

The current **prodoc** **takes into consideration all these recommendations** and they have proven to be quite effective. Changing to NGO execution has **simplified the previous implementation arrangements and reduced considerably the operational costs** by reducing the number of PMUs as well as reporting and accounting requirements. The RFF is now supervising the National Implementation Agents which sign a contractual agreement clearly specifying objectives, deliverables and budget and which report directly to RFF, supervised by BirdLife International. They in turn report to UNDP Jordan. The RFF is seen as a key player by both Governments and private sector and most importantly, distributing GEF resources by sector rather than by country has provided greater flexibility to the Project Board to allocate grant resources. The Project Board is not pressured to allocate resources to countries specifically but rather per sector which implies that NIAs with RFF assistance have identified and will continue to do so suitable vehicle projects to help mainstream MSB conservation on the five sectors.

When we look at **country ownership** and if the project addresses country priorities, it is clear that the project is essentially about translating the CMS, as it relates to MSBs, into effective actions “on the ground”. The project, through Tranche I and now while working on Tranche II, can greatly **assist different states to enact appropriate legislation and regulation**, for example, addressing MSB on EIA legislation as well as the signature and ratification of international treaties like the Raptor MOU. It is also well described on the prodoc that national agendas are focused on rural development, industrialization, and economic growth and therefore, **conservation is not a priority**. Economic growth and employment do dominate the political agenda even more so now after the current pandemic and political and financial crisis in several countries in the region.

As it relates to the revision of decision-making processes during project formulation, very few of the stakeholders interviewed had actually participated or were involved in the prodoc design phase. The evaluator does **not** have **proof** that 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, were taken into account during project design processes. There is proof though of a Phase II Preparatory Workshop held in Aman, Jordan, December 2014 were participants (mainly NIAs and other partners) assessed the different sectors according to their importance as a threat to MSB, feasibility and likely effectiveness to help prioritize them per country and sector. As indicated, this took place in 2014 and thus, at the time the project actually started, a few of the vehicle projects were no longer viable and the opportunity to intervene had passed.

#### Results Framework/Logframe

In this section the evaluator proceeds to 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 suggests specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.

The prodoc does not present a theory of change. Nonetheless, the project and its logical framework follow this hypothesis: “(1) if target groups that threaten MSBs in key sectors, decision-makers and the general public raise their awareness of the flyway and altered social and cultural behaviours; (2) if the capacity is developed and delivered to mainstream MSB/Flyway concept into sector processes, practices and programmes by providing content and tools and if (3) MSB mainstreaming is upscaled by learning, evaluating and through adaptive management; then the conservation management objectives and actions for MSBs are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway, making this a safer route for soaring birds.

The project’s results framework monitoring system is composed of 5 objective indicators with its respective baseline and end of project targets, 4 indicators for component 1, 20 indicators for component 2 (4 for hunting, 4 for energy, 3 for tourism, 2 for waste management and 2 for agriculture) 6 for component 3. None of the indicators presents mid term project targets. **The outputs per component are presented at the end of each component/outcome section and they are not directly related to the proposed indicators. This makes it slightly harder to link the outputs to the indicators being measured**. The component’s results are described on section 2.2 of the prodoc but do not appear on the results framework. Nonetheless, for ease of reference, the evaluator has graphically related the components to the proposed results and outputs on table 7 above. As can be observed there is one result (1.2 MSB Project /RFF website is a source of information for public, politicians and production sectors) which is not related to an output and no indicator proposed to monitor its progress.

The 5 high level **indicators** at Project **objective** level are **very appropriate** and give a good sense of the scope and all that the Project intends to achieve at policy level, engagement with the private sector, MSB conservation integration into production sectors, number of hectares under “flyway sensitive” practices and sites with practices.

On the other hand, **component 1** **indicators** regarding awareness **do not show change**. These are process indicators. **The indicator “awareness questionnaire developed and applied including to selected focus groups** in national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSO, etc” **has potential for improvement**. The questionnaire is being shared during MTR and its findings could be used to set a realistic baseline. **A second questionnaire could be developed** and shared with key stakeholders at the end of the project **to show change in awareness.** Also, the indicator tells us if the activity is undertaken but does not reflect a change in awareness. It could be changed to “% or level of positive attitude by national stakeholders”. Indicator number 4, the “number of government and private sector requests to project for “flyway sensitive” guidelines, best practice, and related materials” presents a general target of “at least 100 requests by project end”. Government and private sector requests are linked to the vehicle projects and the NGOs work in country. Some countries are receiving a considerable number of requests, mainly Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt with 5, 8 and 6 respectively in 2020 for 1 in Egypt and 0 in Sudan. **Breaking down the target per vehicle country would enable more accurate monitoring** and better decision-making. Also, under component 1 we see output 1.4. “Coordination of Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) translated into sector activities and actions”. The output doesn’t appear on the AWP nor on the PIR. Whatever is achieved regarding CMS might get lost in translation. **Establishing a new indicator** related to the work conducted on CMS would facilitate monitoring.

Outcome 2 indicators related to capacity building were modified and adjusted during the inception meeting which took place in January 2018. Indicator 1 on capacity of national BirdLife partners / civil society to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased as per the partner’s capacity assessment scorecard was modified to include the gender perspective and the baseline and target for the second capacity related indicator were also included in the results framework during the inception. Indicator 4 “number of joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships” target includes all national partners where project vehicles are being implemented. As it will be shown on the progress towards results section, **not all countries are doing equally well** and thus **there is a risk of not achieving this particular target**. The target aims at achieving 2015 baseline figure plus a minimum of 10 partnerships by project end for each national partner. As it happened in component 1, three countries are doing particularly good and shall reach the target whereas the other two (Ethiopia and Sudan) are lagging behind. Thus, it could be advisable to **split up the target per country differentiating between the potential number of partnerships actually achievable per country and vehicle**. The set of indicators designed to show the work related to the sectors (hunting, energy, tourism, agriculture, and waste) as well as the baseline and targets are well designed and give a good sense of what the project is doing through the vehicle projects in the countries.

Component 3 indicators and targets perfectly demonstrate the work carried out under this component and are well designed and measurable.

One particular matter that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis is a **beneficial developmental effect being generated by the project**. The vehicle projects and the capacity building exercises being carried out specifically on the energy and tourism sector and potentially on the agricultural one are in fact **generating jobs**. Project partners have data on numbers of jobs being created, for example, conducting carcasses counts on wind farms or as ecotourism guides. This would be a very useful information pertinent to the project but also in line with the government’s interests to promote job creation and help reactivate economies.

Throughout the results framework, gender is directly monitored via one indicator under component 2 related to capacity of BirdLife partners. The rest of indicators and targets are not disaggregated. Nonetheless, partners are collecting disaggregated data from, for example, number of male and females attending training events or receiving capacity building exercises or numbers of men and women employed by the different NGOs. This is reflected on their QPRs.

* + 1. *Project’s relevance to national policies and strategies and UNDP’s framework of intervention.*

The evaluator considers the intervention logic to be **relevant** and perfectly aligned with UN priorities and of the upmost importance to help countries prioritize MSB conservation and mainstream it in its legislations and regulations. The project is essentially about translating the CMS, as it relates to MSBs, into effective actions “on the ground” by means of country’s adoptions of laws and regulations as they apply to the different sectors. During Tranche I, the project contributed to different resolutions at country level (hunting, renewable energy and agricultural poisoning). Nonetheless, no country had legislation that related specifically to MSBs in the productive sectors. Egypt and Jordan now have a specific amendment to the EIA law to take into account MSBs in various developments. As stated on the prodoc, in several countries, overall policies and strategies for biodiversity and wildlife conservation are well designed although the translation of such policy statements into effective national legislation has in many cases not happened or, where the legislation exists, implementation is absent.

To Jordan’s UNDAF:

Under UNDAF priority area 4: Preserving the Environment; Outcome 5: Government and national institutions have operationalized mechanisms to develop and implement strategies and plans targeting key cultural, environmental and Disaster Risk Reduction issues (including the transition to a Green Economy) at national and sub-national levels.

To UNDP Strategic Plan / IRRF Outcomes, Outputs and Output-Level Indicators:

Outcome 1. Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (output 1.3; Indicator 1.3.1 and output 1.3.2

Outcome 2. Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (output 2.5; Indicator 2.5.1)

It is interesting to highlight that the **project identifies its potential contribution** to output **indicator 1.3.2**: **Number of new jobs and livelihoods created through management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals and waste, disaggregated by sex**.

To the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):

As an environmental treaty of the United Nations, CMS provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. Djibouti (2004), Egypt (1983), Ethiopia (2010), Eritrea (2005), Jordan (2001) and Lebanon (2019) are all party members. Sudan is non-party. Djibouti signed the Raptors MOU in 2008, Egypt in 2013, Ethiopia signed 19th of February 2020, Eritrea is a range state, Jordan in 2018 and Lebanon in 2015.

* + 1. *Relevance of the gender dimension in the project*

The prodoc, on its section 2.11 on gender mainstreaming, indicates that the Project will work to achieve a UNDP Gender Marker 2 rating and that BirdLife International will apply its own internal gender policies and codes of practice to the Project. To do so, they propose to achieve it by means of striving gender parity through personnel recruitment, ensuring & documenting participation of men and women during field visits and capacity building exercises and in all Project activities amongst other. The evaluator has verified that indeed the ratio of women working within RFF and BirdLife partners is appropriate, women are indeed participating on the events and consideration is being placed to **keep the gender balance**. BirdLife, during the inception meeting, also included the gender dimension to the capacity building indicator of the results framework. All this is good but when interviewing different stakeholders, most are not aware about the gender approach and do not even take into consideration. Gender was not included on the vehicle projects design. Nonetheless it is important to highlight the work PCCD is carrying out with the different partners. One of the capacity triggers being evaluated throughout the project is gender. As such, the Project has the objective to improve, with each of its partners, the gender approach. They are doing so by helping with gender mainstreaming strategies, hiring personnel and communication. The evaluator finds that this is a **much stronger approach than the traditional “gender mainstreaming” all throughout the project document by simply counting how many man and women do participate on different activities and training events**.

* + 1. *Pertinence of the risks identified*

The prodoc makes an analysis of the environmental and social risks. More specifically, it lists 7 risks (1. Political unrest and security concerns (H);2. Strategic, existing reform vehicles don’t accept, or chose not to implement MSB technical content (M); 3. Recipients of flyway content question technical standard or added value (M); 4. Amendments to legislation & regulations modifications not officially approved (M); 5. Different countries with different priorities making management & administration difficult; 6. Not able to reach consensus on long term flyway objectives (M); 7. Birdlife structure seeks consensus which makes implementation challenging (M)) The evaluator considers that the proposed **mitigation** **measures** are **relevant** and are currently being **maintained**. Stakeholders interviewed agreed with the rating of the identified risks and that all of them still apply. **The project through the continuous monitoring** and **supervision provided by RFF, UNDP and BirdLife** are **coping extremely well, given the complex circumstances** in some countries (ie. Lebanon, Sudan and Ethiopia) and the **global pandemic**, with these risks and have **managed to continue operating** throughout the years.

In the PIRs, it can be seen that the 7 identified risks are being monitored in a systematic way. Most of the actors interviewed consider that the risks identified during the preparation of the project are appropriate, and it has also been noted that these have not increased and that therefore the proposed mitigation measures are the correct ones. It is important to highlight that **there are other risks** that should be taken into account and **possibly start monitoring** and **propose adequate mitigation measures** more systematically. The new risks identified are the following:

1. High staff turn-over rate within Governmental institutions (ie. Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt);
2. COVID-19 forced lock down and the delay this has caused on project’s operations in all countries;
3. National NGOs diminishing income due to COVID-19 worsening financial situation of the organizations and;
4. Growing inflation which makes it difficult for vehicle projects to meet costs.

### Progress Towards Results

* + 1. *Progress towards outcomes analysis*

As the Guide indicates, this process consists of examining the progress made in achieving the expected results. The evaluator has reviewed the GEF tracking tool, both the one completed during the CEO approval phase and the one recently introduced at mid-term as well as all the QPR and PIR and has interviewed all partner organizations, government and private sector stakeholders going over the achievements to date per country and sector.

The progress towards results is presented using the following Indicator Assessment key

**Indicator Assessment Key**

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

Table 9 Comparison of targets reported during MTR and designed during prodoc conception.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Indicator** | **Target** | | **Rating Justification** |
| **End of project Target** | **@ MTR** |
| **Objective** | Number of new and revised country sector policies (hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism) incorporating MSB issues i) submitted as recommendation to and ii) approved by national governments, in the 7 GEF project countries | At least i) 30 policies submitted as recommendation and ii) 20 policies approved by project end | New cumulative total 27 submitted, with 6 new policies approved (for a total of 13 tbc): 2 in Jordan, 2 in Egypt, 2 in Lebanon and 1 in Ethiopia | The project, through the regional awareness and at national level with the support of local partners and vehicle projects is influencing the development of certain policies. It can not be directly related to the work being done but indeed it helps to mainstream MSB and its conservation. |
| Number of new private sector projects and schemes incorporating MSB concerns in each target sector | At least 1 in each participating country by project end | Cumulative total (74) projects and schemes | Greatly successful in some countries while others are lacking behind (ie. Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti) due to geopolitical context (internal conflict in Ethiopia) as well as financial constraints to transfer funds (ie. Sudan). |
| Degree of MSB conservation integration into production sectors (as measured by GEF BD-2 Tracking Tool) | BDT TT shows positive gains over time | BD2 TT score at MTR: 71/116 (8 Djibouti, 23 Egypt, 15 Lebanon & 25 Jordan) | The 2016 baseline under tranche I of the project was 59/116. Therefore, Tranche II has already managed to show positive gains and it is expected to continue to do so. |
| Land managed for hunting, energy, agriculture and waste management under ‘flyway sensitive’ practices at selected sites along flyway | 40% increase by project end | Cumulative total (5,742,509.12) ha | The target has already been greatly achieved |
| Number of sites with "˜flyway sensitive' practices along flyway | Minimum of 23 bottleneck sites by project end | 14 | The project is conducting a survey that included an updated list of bottlenecks in Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan. This survey is part of a Situational Analysis that aims to pave the way into a future flyway-scale monitoring program. No bottlenecks identified for Sudan or Ethiopia. Regardless if the target of 23 is not reached, the RFF is following an appropriate strategy linked to the establishment of a future flyway-scale monitoring program through the situational analysis. |
| **Component 1** | Number of articles or other substantive media releases highlighting MSBs and flyway importance, per country each year by the end of the project | Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end | 543 | The target has been met in quantitative terms but not per country. Sudan and Djibouti do not reach the target. |
| Awareness questionnaire developed and applied including to selected focus groups in national and local governments, local communities near sites, private sector, CSOs, etc. | At least 70% of the national stakeholders in the relevant sectors at national level have positive attitude and 50% applying appropriate measures to reduce threats to MSBs. | An awareness questionnaire developed to assess the understanding of MSBs with the stakeholders in the five sectors of the project and at the time of the MTR is was ready to be shared with selected stakeholders per sector.  It is designed to collect baseline data that will inform the current understanding and inform the appropriate interventions to enhance greater understanding of MSBs. Questionnaire was rolled out in July 2020, except for Djibouti and to date 69 questionnaires were returned for processing | Although the indicator has been achieved, ie, the development of the awareness questionnaire, this does not tell us if there has been a change in terms of stakeholder’s awareness and sensitivity towards MSB mainstreaming. The baseline is also not properly formulated since it does not indicate the % of national stakeholders which have a positive attitude but rather it is designed as a target (at least 30%). The awareness questionnaire could in fact assist RFF to determine 2020 baseline level and inform appropriate interventions to enhance greater understanding. It could be interesting to conduct an end-of-project questionnaire with the same stakeholders to measure change |
| Number of government and private sector requests to project for ‘flyway sensitive’ guidelines, best practice, and related materials | At least 100 requests by project end | 90 | The great number of requests for project guidelines is mainly focused on three countries: Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. The success in these three countries will ensure the project achieves the target but it doesn't reflect the slow progress on other countries like Djibouti and Sudan |
| **Component 2** | Capacity of national BirdLife partners / civil society to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased, as indicated by partner capacity assessment scores including new gender-specific component (number of staff trained and have experience on gender equality and women empowerment; number of women engaged in project work.) Additional organisational development (OD) indicators will be cross-referenced with the BirdLife International Quality Assurance System (an OD diagnostics tool). | National BirdLife Partners in all participating countries in the capacity program score over 20 at final assessment | EWNHS = 23;  NCE = 26;  RSCN = 28;  SPNL = 25  SWS = 18 = 26;  ADN = Suspended | Overall, we see an improvement with 4 out of 5 organisations scoring above 20 but SWS and ADN Djibouti suspended. **The strength and capacity of the local partners in both Jordan and Lebanon reflect the success on both outcome 1 and 2 targets as well as the slow progress in countries with less capable organizations** (ie. Djibouti and Sudan). Refer to figure -6 for the analysis of the partner’s organizations capacity triggers analysis. |
| (New) Capacity of other key national stakeholders in government and private sector to mainstream MSB/flyway issues increased, as indicated by an adapted new scorecard built on the UNDP-GEF capacity development scorecard | At least 1 national stakeholder per country where vehicle project is supported score a minimum of 2 for each trigger on the assessment scorecard developed informed by the UNDP/GEF scorecard for government  /private sector. | The scorecard system was explained and increase of stakeholder capacity assessed during MSB Workshop in December 2019. This UNDP-designed tool will be taken forward to Partners for review and calibration to make it fit for purpose. | The target will be achieved given its generality. One national stakeholder showing greater mainstreaming capacity ought to be feasible in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. It is not so clear for Ethiopia and Sudan since the vehicle projects run at lower speed. As with the questionnaire, it would be interesting to run the scorecard by project-end. |
| Existence of a MSB/Flyway monitoring programme tracking conservation status, impact sectors, threats, drivers of change and effectiveness of RFF interventions | Flyway-wide monitoring programme established by project end | The project is conducting an analysis to understand the status of migratory bottleneck monitoring in the Red Sea/ Rift Valley Flyway. The study will also assess the potential gains of linking up migration monitoring initiatives across the flyway, and how current efforts could be sustained and expanded. The document will be shared with interested stakeholders, including the CMS Raptors MOU, for further discussion. The study is expected to be ready in the second half of 2020. | This Situational Analysis aims to pave the way into a future flyway-scale monitoring program. This monitoring program could be of great use for present and future wind energy projects and most likely to help IFI's comply with international safeguards. |
| Number of joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships established in key sectors during project period to achieve mainstreaming of MSB concerns | 2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner | Cumulative total (47) partnerships | Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon have the greatest number of partnerships, 7, 4 and 4 respectively whereas Ethiopia had 2 in the electricity sector which might not materialize and 1 in Sudan. It is unclear to the evaluator if this target will be reached as it is. |
| Number of MSB/ flyway-mainstreaming “vehicle” projects implemented in target countries in key sectors | At least 10 programmes with MSB issues integrated into project activities by project end | Cumulative total of 5 vehicle projects. Jordan (1 multi-sector); Lebanon (Hunting, Agriculture and tourism); Egypt (1 on energy and another one under negotiation); Ethiopia (1 on energy) and Sudan (1 on agriculture) | MSB II is managing vehicle per sector (ie, a sum of monetary resources per sector) rather than per country. This helps if vehicle project fell, alternatives can be found within the beneficiary countries. The indicator is on target to be achieved although there are doubts that the new vehicles will be able to be implemented in the remaining two years of the project. |
| Hunting:  Number of hunters and tour guides trained in MSB conservation awareness and best (sector) practices | Lebanon: 2,000 hunters trained  Jordan: 50% of hunters are licensed | Jordan; 2,275 hunters licensed by RSCN in 2019 and 5 from Egypt. 140 tour guides trained. | Although it is not clear how to measure the target of 50% of hunters licenses (in relation to the baseline or total number of hunters nationally), it is clear that the target has already been met and the project is having significant impact in a highly complex and traditional sector. 4.875 hunters have renewed their licenses in Jordan. |
| Number of MSBs recorded for sale (live and dead) at specific markets in Beirut including Sunday flea market, and Jordan | 80 % reduction in number birds traded by project end compared to year 1 | 106 soaring birds in Jordan; market survey postponed in Lebanon due to COVID-19 | There is a considerable increase in number of soaring birds dead in the market for Jordan. Although Lebanon indicates that due to COVID-19 and an increase in price of shells the hunting has decreased they have no proof of it. |
| Number of hunting groups along the flyway endorsing responsible hunting practices | At least 12 hunting groups | 24 between Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt | The target has already been greatly achieved. |
| Number of ammunition and gun suppliers in Lebanon endorsing responsible hunting | At least 50% of suppliers in Lebanon endorse responsible hunting by project end | SPNL is launching contacts with ammunition suppliers to pave the way in a collaborative scheme leading to the endorsement of responsible hunting principles. | in order for the target to be achieved it will depend on the actual number of suppliers endorsing the responsible hunting principles and if that number is representative (at least 50%) of the total in country. COVID-19 and the recent financial crisis has increased considerably the price of ammunition bringing down the purchase. |
| Energy: Number of planners taking account of bottlenecks in national and local energy planning | At least 5 countries by project end | 5 | The project reports 5 countries although the evaluator has evidence of three countries working with government and private sector planners (Jordan, Egypt and Ethiopia). |
| Number of new energy projects adopting best practice in avoidance and mitigation of MSB risks | Minimum of 10 projects by project end | Cumulative total of 41 projects in Jordan, Egypt, and Ethiopia | The target has already been greatly achieved. The project has managed to identify a niche with IFI's safeguards assisting them with MSB and bird monitoring with new and ongoing projects. The guidelines, specially the Shut Down on Demand, are highly used and international awards have been won in both Egypt and Jordan. |
| Number of collaborative monitoring schemes in place at existing and new energy projects to assess mortality rate | Monitoring schemes in place for at least 10 projects by project end with full stakeholder participation/endorsement | Cumulative total (17) monitoring schemes between Egypt, Jordan and Ethiopia | The work being carried out in, especially in Egypt and Jordan is highly positive and seen by government actors as highly relevant and will be sustained in the future through MOUs and PPAs. |
| Number of cases where mitigation measures have been adopted following the detection of high levels of MSB mortality | 10 cases | Cumulative total (6) cases (3 in Egypt, 2 potential sites in Ethiopia and 1 in Sudan) | Given the complex political situation in Ethiopia it is not clear what will happen with these potential projects. Thus, there is a risk that the project might not reach the target, at least not in Ethiopia. The same applies with Sudan and the financial constraints to actually receive project funds. Also, the vehicle project is for the agricultural sector, so it is not clear why PMU has included Sudan in this indicator. |
| Tourism:  Number of locations with demonstration of benefits to tourism sector from MSB activities | 15 tourist locations at project end | 16 locations distributed between Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. | Although the target has been met COVID-19 has had a serious impact on tourism sector and thus, although the project has financed and helped develop bird observatories and birdwatching tourism, it is not clear how the sector will react post pandemic |
| Number of hotels and tour operators including MSB conservation concerns in their labelling/ certification schemes | 15 by project end | 0 | The target can be reached if the Lebanese training takes place in 2021 and specially if the implementation of the Green Star Hotel Guidelines is in Egypt together with GEF-funded project at all 80 hotels participating in this labelling. |
| Number of hotels and tourism operations (e.g. guides, etc.) implementing labelling/ certification schemes especially adapted for MSBs | At least 30 | 100 certified tour guides in Egypt and there are prospects of doing so also in Lebanon in Hima sites. | The target has been greatly reached in terms of number of guides but not hotels. If the Green Start Hotel Guidelines are implemented by the 80 participating hotels the target in terms of number of hotels will also be exceeded. During interviews with the private sector and government actors, they embraced the idea of promoting ecotourism sector to help rebamp the sector |
| Waste management:  Number of EIAs for new waste management projects that address MSB concerns in project area | At least 5 new EIAs address MSBs by project end in areas receiving mainstreaming support | 5 new EIAs in Jordan | RSCN has managed to mainstream MSB into waste management EIAs and helped reach the target. |
| Number of existing waste management sites where ‘flyway sensitive ’ best practice measures have been adopted | At least 5 sites | Cumulative total ( 6) existing waste management sites | Both in Egypt and Jordan work is well underway in relation to sewage ponds, waste management plans and isolation of towers plus establishment of bird watching towers. Interviewed waste site managers understand its a win win concept and are fully engaged to continue promoting good practices. For example, in Jordan, insolation helps the company reduce operational costs by stopping power cuts due to bird collision and death. |
| Agriculture:  Number of agriculture development plans incorporating MSB conservation considerations | At least five agriculture development plans by project end | The action plan between SPNL and Litani River Authority includes development/update of agriculture development plans incorporating MSB conservation considerations including reducing use of agrochemicals which would decrease the impact of poisoning on MSBs from agrochemicals. | Most progress can be observed in Lebanon with SPNL's work with Litani River Authority and the Hima Farm programme. This community based programme has great replication potential. Although it can't be counted as an agricultural development plan it is a worthy experience. Sudan is planning its vehicle project with the Plant Directorate although the project has not as yet been able to start due to the political unrest and financial difficulties transferring the money to SWS. This target is not on track. |
| Number of agricultural projects incorporating MSB conservation considerations | At least three projects by project end | The Hima project and the work with the Litani River Authority in Lebanon and 1 in Jordan (to be specified) | In terms of number fo projects the target will be met. |
| **Component 3** | Quality of yearly Progress Implementation Reports | PIR quality rated S or HS each year | PIR submitted for 2019/2020 period rated Satisfactory as well as all QPRs. MSB Project in Egypt submitted all progress reports | The project is being properly managed and obtaining Satisfactory rating from all parties |
| Existence of Flyway/RFF adaptive management plan and implementation | Developed  Implemented as required | The MSB project is following adaptive management actions within all its countries and vehicles and in June 2020 developed a COVID-19 Adaptive Management Approach | The adaptive plan under covid-19 exists and there is also proof that RFF and national partners are adapting well to constant changes due to regional instability, COVID-19, etc |
| Existence of project-based learning and knowledge management products | At least 1 major dissemination report by project end | The full comprehensive report to be produced second half of the project. MSB has produced interesting documents such as Radar-based Shut Down on Demand; the establishment of Centre of Excellence to build capacities on bird identification with EEAA and NREA; EIAs developed by Egyptian Holding Company for Water and Wastewater Treatment in Egypt; Adapted MSB Guidance on Agriculture & National Map for Responsible Hunting Areas in Lebanon and scientific papers published in Ethiopia. | The project is well on track and will have very interesting products to share by project end. The success stories are so far concentrated in three of the countries, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan. |
| Existence of a coherent approach to Flyway and MSB financing and fundraising | Coherent financial plan for the RFF including key funding areas, sources of financing, financing gaps, financial strategy for flyway conservation activities | A Flyway Financing plan will be developed along with the Flyway Monitoring Program | To be produced second half of the project |
| Number of other sites along the flyway in which newly raised / assigned financing allows the application of lessons learned from demonstration activities | At least 10 further sites along flyway by project end | 3 | One of the key selection criteria for new vehicle projects is the actual co-financing that the project can bring to the table. With the remaining funds from Component 2 available and clear selection criteria established for the remaining of the project life, they might be able to reach the target. |

Figure 6 Organization’s capacity triggers



The stronger NGOs are RSCN and SPNL whereas EWNHS shows a decrease in its capacity and NCE has improved. EWNHS shows, through the capacity scorecard and status on triggers that they had less technical expertise and thus less potential for regional/global mentoring. PCCD opted to support them with a Communication Officer for 2 years to push the communications trigger up as well as to work on the gender mainstreaming strategy. PCCD ought to concentrate on strengthening SWS. The project has managed to work on gender mainstreaming with all organizations.

* + 1. *Remaining barriers to the achievement of the project’s objectives*

The analysis of the progress towards the achievement of the results also implies an analysis of the remaining barriers to the achievement of the project objectives. The barriers identified through documentation review and stakeholder interviews are presented below by expected result:



### Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

BirdLife International, a non-governmental organization established in and incorporated under the laws of England and Wales, is the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner for Tranche II of the MSB Project, run under the NGO modality. BirdLife has full control over project operations and can use its own supply channels for recruitment and procurement, provided that the process does not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP and are based on “best value for money”, in line and compliance with UNDP’s Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP). BirdLife has two Regional Offices spanning the flyway, BirdLife Middle East (based in Amman, Jordan) and BirdLife Africa (based in Nairobi, Kenya).

BirdLife is responsible for the regional components of the project delivered through the RFF, and for the national level activities carried out through BirdLife Partners and Affiliates (based upon capacity assessment) where these have sufficient capacities or directly through the RFF where no such arrangement exists.

The Lead Office is BirdLife’s Middle East Regional Office in Amman, Jordan. Day to day reporting by the RFF Coordinator is to the Director of the ME Regional Office. The project is overseen by a Project Supervisory Committee comprising the BirdLife Directors for the Middle East and for Africa and the Director for Conservation. The Director for Conservation provides technical and programmatic oversight.

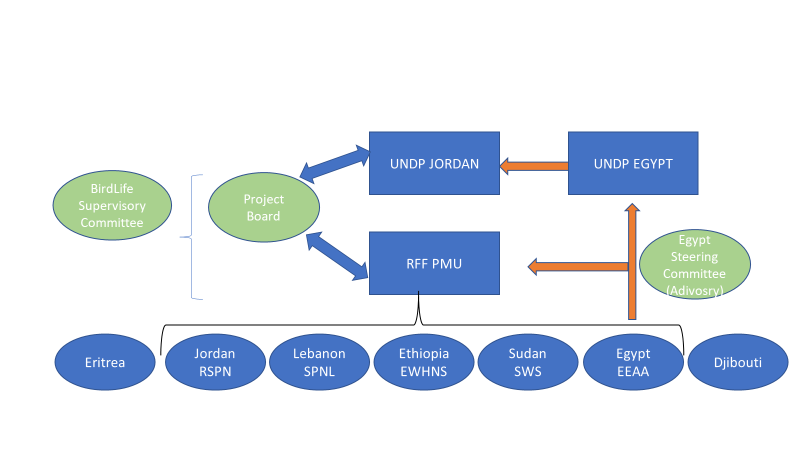
The project is also overseen by the Project Board specifically established to oversee the management of project activities and comprised of GEF Operational Focal Point in Jordan, UNDP Jordan Resident Representative, Director of BirdLife International Conservation Department and RFF Coordinator.

Egypt activities are planned and supervised by the MSB Egypt Steering Committee comprised by EEAA, NREA, UNDP, NCS, NCE and private sector representatives.

#### Management Arrangements

The project is implemented under the NGO Implementation Modality (NGO). BirdLife International, through the RFF and with the support of Headquarters in Cambridge and Regional Office in Kenya are in charge of the execution of the project. Please refer to section 3.4 above for further explanation of how the project operates.

Figure 7 Project's management arrangements



The project presents different levels of managerial arrangements and coordination. RFF plays a pivotal role in the whole structure coordinating with the seven countries, identifying together with local partners vehicle projects, negotiating contracts, supervising and monitoring their progress and providing all sorts of technical support. All **stakeholders** interviewed, without exception, **highlighted the high quality of the technical support provided by RFF and the key coordination role they play**. RFF also coordinates with Egypt’s PMU sitting at the Government’s EEAA’s NCS. In parallel, the project has its Board supervising all the work as well as BirdLife Supervisory Committee providing the link with the international support provided by the different departments of the organization (ie. PCCD; BirdLife Global Policty, etc) and an Advisory Steering Committee specific for Egypt.

The prodoc refers to the Project Board as the maximum body for project coordination and decision-making and should meet at least once a year to review the progress of the project, approve work plans and approve the main project deliverables. To date, the project has convened two Steering Committees (December 2019 and March 2020). In both meetings, presentations were held on project progress. A review of the minutes of the meetings shows that, although the name changes, the functions are the same. The following table shows the main decision taken during the Board Meetings.

Table 10 Summary of strategic decisions taken by the Project Board and Supervisory Committee

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Decisions** |
| 05 December 2019 | Board recommended the project to prepare a special document regarding Eritrea’s situation to validate impossibility to work in the country. |
| Recommendation to BirdLife to increase its communication efforts up to the level of project delivery and achievements. |
| Highlighted importance to link-up with other projects and initiatives at country level to lead the way to sustainability. |
| Concern over complicated situation in Lebanon and how this could affect the vehicle project. |
| 05 March 2020 | Follow-up on the monitoring of all windfarms in Jordan, especially Ma’an windfarm by implementing a fact-finding mission. |
| Brainstorm ideas on the third phase of the Project. |
| Prepare sector-specific five concept notes to highlight the successes of the project |
| Update communications plan with UNDP team and update website |
| **BirdLife Supervisory Board** | |
| 18 January 2018 | Approval of Inception Workshop Agenda |
| Approved PCCD input to the project including the Inception Workshop and partner’s status & suggested vehicles for MSB II |
| Agreed Project Senior Technical Advisor to attend future BSC |
|  | Highlighted need to apply adaptive management as a key method in the implementation of MSB II |

The Project’s work in Egypt is also supervised by the Egyptian Steering Committee. This Committee meets on a yearly basis. The following table presents the main discussions and recommendations provided during these meetings:

Table 11 Summary of key decision taken by Egypt's Steering Committee

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Decisions** |
| 05 July 2018 | Signature of MOU between EEAA, NREA and MSB Project. Approval of Annex 1 with the establishment of the Environmental Excellence Center for Wind Energy Projects in Egypt. |
| Necessity for continuous coordination between EEAA and NREA to publish success story |
| Highlighted necessity to coordinate with CBD Conference of the Parties responsible unit |
| 27 January 2019 | Presented project achievements and challenges during 2018 |
| Approved 2019 AWP |
| 30 January 2020 | Presented project achievements and challenges during 2018 |
|  | Approved 2020 AWP |

Besides the approval of the AWPs for Egypt, it is clear from the minutes that this is a **great** **coordination** **space** that goes beyond the project. Where stakeholders share relevant information for both the Project and their respective agencies and interaction as well with the private sector.

BirdLife, as the implementing partner, provides support services for the administrative and operational implementation of the project and participates in all the Steering Committees organised by the project. There has also been a continuous flow of communication with UNDP Jordan as the lead executing agency. Therefore, the evaluator considers, from the documentary review and the interviews carried out, that the **support** given to the project by **BirdLife** **International** is **appropriate** and **satisfactory** since, in addition to participating in the Project Board, it supports and monitors continuously the actions of the project and serves as an effective nexus between what is being carried out in the different sectors at national level and the international arena through their different departments and linkages with international conventions (i.e. CMS, Raptor MOU, CMS Energy Task Force, etc).

#### Work planning

**The project has suffered**, from end of Tranche I to the actual start of Tranche II, **a considerable delay**. 26 months passed from one to the other. During prodoc formulation BirdLife and its partners identified 9 vehicles in 5 countries. Once the project started, some of these vehicles were no longer available (concluded or lost interest) and thus, this implied that some Partners had to start the identification, negotiation and planning process over again. Of course, this was **time** **consuming**. This is particularly the case for Ethiopia and Sudan. As can be observed on the following table, the project has undergone certain changes.

Table 12 Comparison of identified vs current vehicles

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TII Design** | | **MTR** | |
| **Country** | **Sector** | **Country** | **Sector** |
| Egypt | Energy | Egypt | Energy |
| Waste Management | Waste Management |
| Tourism | Tourism |
|  | Hunting |
| Ethiopia | Agriculture | Ethiopia | Energy |
| Jordan | Mult-sector | Jordan | Mult-sector |
| Lebanon | Hunting | Lebanon | Hunting |
| Tourism |  | Tourism |
| Agriculture |  | Agriculture |
| Sudan | Energy | Sudan | Agriculture |

Note: No vehicle Project identified in Djibouti at TII Design phase. Currently pursuing energy Project with private sector.

In the case of Egypt, the opportunity arose to include hunting whereas in Ethiopia the project changed from agriculture to energy and in Sudan the other way around.

It is worth mentioning that the project is monitoring potential work in both Eritrea and Djibouti. In the case of Eritrea, several missions were conducted to the country to evaluate the potential and it was decided not to push forward due to lack of organized civil society but stay alert for potential opportunities. Djibouti is different because its partner in country, Association Djibouti Nature, was withdrawn from BirdLife International Partnership (decision of the BirdLife International Council Meeting 9th June 2020). This implies that RFF will have to monitor potential work directly in country. They are currently close to sign a MOU Ghoubet Wind Farm Project.

Due to **COVID-19**, both the regional activities and the **work** conducted in countries **suffered** **delays**. Most countries and its Governments were locked down from mid-March to June-July 2020. This of course impacted all activities on the ground. Nevertheless, **project management moved swiftly** and thanks to the investment on IT conducted by BirdLife in 2019, they **were able to continue some of their operations remotely**. The project prepared a COVID-19 Adaptive Management Approach in June 2020 establishing the following:

* + 1. Concise schedule for regular meetings (RFF team members, monthly catch up, partners, BirdLife Middle East and Africa offices as well as UNDP meetings);
    2. Work-planning:
       1. Review current year work plans to consider what activities can run on time and keep it on track;
       2. Review current year work plans and identify activities that cannot be delivered under current circumstances and postpone them until they can be carried out; and
       3. Review overall workplans to identify some actions that can be fast tracked/advanced into the current year workplan from other years.

Most importantly, each partner sent an updated work plan with amendment or postponed or cancelled activities allowing **RFF** and the **Project’s** **Board** to be totally **informed** **on** **progress**. Given the global pandemic and the struggle it has caused worldwide is remarkable that the project managed to continue its operations and executed part of its 2020 budget.

Sudan vehicle project was due to start in January 2020. The project has not yet started. Besides being impacted by COVID-19 and the Government lock down, the project has not been able to transfer their funds. SWS, if funds are finally received, will need to redo its workplan completely since they have lost 2020.

In terms of the work plans, Egypt follows UNDP format and as such it is a results-based exercise. Also, project partners contracts clearly identify the vehicle project’s objectives, outcomes and outputs and identifies the way to mainstream MSB into their actions. Partners present AWPs to RFF which are then shared with the Project Board for approval. All these planning instruments are results based.

Finally, the **PMU is using the project’s results framework as an effective monitoring tool**. They are reporting on all the indicator’s and targets set as per the original prodoc.

Also, through UNDP and BirdLife partner’s in the countries, the **project** has **managed** to effectively plan for **joint activities with other GEF and EU projects** (ie, EU Egyptian Vulture Project and GEF Mainstreaming Biodiversity in the Tourism Sector) but also, thanks to the Partner’s involvement, they bring substantive collaboration with their own donors and projects ensuring greater reach and potential impact.

**The evaluator concludes that the PMU within RFF together with the Project Board and Supervisory Committee are working in a very coordinated manner and have been able to adapt to the challenging situations.**

#### Finance and co-finance

From the analysis of the PIRs and Combined Delivery Reports (CDR), it appears that the budgetary execution of the project is **on track** and that the execution foreseen in the AWPs is being fulfilled except for the transfer of funds for SWS vehicle Project in Sudan. The financial monitoring is **appropriate** having the PMU reporting to UNDP and collecting, through their internal QPRs from partner organizations, the financial data from the vehicle projects. As of September 2020, the **project has executed 48.86% of the total assigned resources**. As can be seen in the following table on annual expenditure, the project has invested the largest number of resources in Component 2 with 62.59% of the total spent, followed by 17.5% in Component 1, 11.20% in Component 3 and 8.63% on managing the project. These percentages are **aligned** to the **prodoc** **budgetary** **provisions**.

The financial analysis presented is done from three angles. First, the evaluator analyses total reported expenses per project components as well as what was originally budget for and executed. Second, we will look at how the sectors are behaving within component 2 and lastly, the Egyptian case is analysed on its own as its managed separately from the rest.

The following table shows the combined expenses reported separately by UNDP Jordan and Egypt.

Table 13 Combined reported on the CDR



(Source: UNDP Jordan CDR)

As the above figures indicate and as it can be observed on the below figure, overall, the project has executed more resources on component 2 which implies capacity building of local partners and governments as well as mainstreaming MSB conservation into the five prioritized sectors.

Figure 8 Spent resources per project component

Table 14 Comparison of approved budget vs expenditure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Approved Budget** | **Total Expenditure** | **%** |
| Component 1 | 770.509 | 309.242 | 40,13% |
| Component 2 | 1.977.000 | 1.100.812 | 55,68% |
| Component 3 | 544.731 | 196.977 | 36,16% |
| PMU | 307.757 | 151.791 | 49,32% |
| **Total** | 3.599.997 | 1.758.822 | 48,86% |

When looking at the original budget and the approved GEF and TRAC resources per component it can be observed that overall, the **project is on track**. Greater resources have been spent on Component 2 and 1 than 3. This is normal since component 3 will imply greater use of resources during the second half of the project when lessons learnt will be identified and upscaled as well as key financial and exit strategies need to be developed.

In terms of the sector analysis, the following tables present the reported expenditure by national country partner as well as the country analysis.

Table 15 Analysis per sector and country



Table 15 shows the expenditure to date reported by vehicle project compared to the approved budgets per contracts. As can be seen in yellow, both Jordan and Lebanon have almost spent all the money allocated to their vehicle projects although in some cases some of these contracts still have a year or so to go. For Jordan, this applies to all five sectors. As for Lebanon, they have spent almost everything in tourism and hunting sectors and are still working on agriculture through their Hima farms. In green we see those vehicle projects with a positive balance ranging between 40-50%. Within this range we see, besides Lebanon and agriculture, both Egypt and Ethiopia with energy and Egypt with tourism. Lastly, in blue, we see the vehicle projects with highest positive balance, thus more resources still to be utilised. More precisely, Egypt with hunting and waste. This does not mean that the vehicle projects are not obtaining results but rather that they are not spending as much as expected. This is the case of Egypt and waste, a clear example of over dimensioned project. Sudan is a special case. The project has not been able to transfer funds through the banking system due to the economic sanctions imposed on the country and even if they did manage to receive them, they would not be able to simply withdraw them. For SWS to use the money, the bank would give them 50% in local currency and 50% in USD which can only be used to purchase air tickets, medic care, etc. The project also tried to transfer the funds through UNDP, but it was also not possible. Right now, the project cannot start due to lack of funding.

Table 16 Analysis per-country



Note. The amounts here presented as expenditure were provided by PMU gathered through the partner’s QPR except for the amount from Egypt. The figures do not exactly match to the amounts reported on the CDR. This is probably because the reported expenses per vehicle project were up to November 2020 whereas the CDRs presented by UNDP Jordan and Egypt cover the period from January to September 2020.

As reflected on table 16, both Jordan and Lebanon have the greatest expenditure percentages followed by Egypt, Ethiopia and lastly, Sudan. Ethiopia vehicle project on energy has conducted field work to identify the threats for MSBs, revamped EWNHS web site, worked on awareness raising and trained game wardens on the value of bird conservation. As per Sudan, the project managed to send USD 10.000 when SWS project coordinator attended a meeting in Jordan. With this resources SWS worked on Plant Protection Directorate revision of procedures to include MSB conservation (spray programmes); translated and customized agricultural guidelines for Sudanese context and held trainings.

**The case of Egypt**

Table 17 Expenditure reported on the CDR Egypt



At MTR level, **Egypt has spent 51%** of the assigned resources per prodoc (according to CDR presented by UNDP Egypt).

Table 18 Comparison of approved, allocated and spent resources - Egypt



From the allocated resources it is clear that the energy sector has utilized most of the resources whereas hunting and waste still have resources to be spent from the first allocation.

The following table presents the cofounding planned at prodoc level and what is been obtained. In yellow we see unexpected co-financement and in green unattained. The data here presented clearly reflects the changes suffered with the vehicle projects from its design to its implementation 26 months after Tranche I ended.

Table 19 Co-financement Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Cofunding Entity name | Type of cofunding | Expected Amount at CEO Endorsement (US$) | Amount disbursed at MTR (US$) | Real Percentage (%) of the foreseen amount |
| International | BirdLife | Cash | 797,956 | 1,720,496 | 76% |
| BirdLife | In-Kind | 1,458,085 |
| Egypt | Jaz Hotels and Resorts | In-Kind | 2,000,000 |  |  |
| NREA | Cash | 3,500,000 | 1,618,520 | 46% |
| RECREE, EETC, EWWT, UNDP | Cash |  | 2,578,018 |  |
| Ethiopia | Pesticide Action Nexus Association | In-kind | 121,609 |  |  |
| EWNHS | In-Kind | 122,500 |  |  |
| Horn of Africa Environment Centre and Network | In-Kind | 303,235 |  |  |
| Jordan | UNDP | Cash | 100,000 | 25,926[[7]](#footnote-7) | 25% |
| Ministry of Municipality Affairs | In-kind | 2,000,000 |  |  |
| RSPN | Cash |  | 916,702 |  |
| Lebanon | SPNL | In-kind | 116,500 | 1,876,805 |  |
| Sudan | SWS | In-kind | 15,000 |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  | **10,034,885** | **8,736,729** | **87%** |

Note: Full detail of co-financement is provided in Annex 6.9

It is important to highlight that the project has obtained other sources of co-funding. This has happened since some of the expected vehicles have not taken place and the project has identified others brining additional co-funding. These are:

1. RECREE, EETC, EWWT, NREA and UNDP in Egypt; and
2. RSCN in Jordan

Sudan and Ethiopia have not reported co-funding through their respective vehicle projects. Overall, at Mid Term, the **project has reached 87% of its co-funding commitments** and thus it is safe to assume that it will go well beyond the 10 million USD pledged during project formulation. The following figure presents co-financement per sector:

Figure 9 Co-financement per-sector



Source: own elaboration with data provided by PMU

The project is obtaining the greatest co funding on energy with 54% of the total followed by 15% on tourism, 12% on hunting and multisector, 6% on agriculture and 2% on waste.

**The analysis of the financial instruments reflects that the project is being properly monitored and that all the reports required by the GEF are generated. The project is reporting adequately.**

The project has been audited in 2018 and 2019. No major issues were reported. In 2018 BDO, an external auditor, highlighted the following finance finding:

Table 20 Audit findings

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Condition** | **Impact** | **Priority** | **Recommendation** | **Man Response** |
| Accounting system | Partner does not maintain proper accounting system for UNDP in Jordan branch. Excel sent to HQ | Lack of control; affected accuracy of accounting records; difficulty in tracking vouchers, time consuming | High | Partner to implement separate accounting system | BirdLife developing new IT and cloud solutions. |

2019 audit highlighted this finding again and BirdLife explained they are working on a new ERP system estimated to start October 2020 to be used in all offices including a finance module. Both UNDP and the auditor applauded this decision. UNDP Egypt has not presented audited accounts for their project.

#### Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation system

The prodoc identifies how the project is to be monitored throughout the lifetime of the project by means of the following reports:

Table 21 List of reports

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Report** | **Date** |
| Inception report | 21st January 2018 |
| Quarterly Progress Report | 4 QDR in 2018; 4 in 2019 and 2 in 2020 |
| Project Implementation Review | 2018 and 2019 |

Also, RFF requests its partners to present interim vehicle project technical and financial reports per sectors. The evaluator has had access to all the reports presented to date and there is **evidence of the effective monitoring being conducted by RFF**. The format allows for a thorough description of the activities undertaken, hyperlinks to publications and published materials as well as financial reporting. Thus, they receive very well-organized information which helps to build the QPR as well as the IPR.

RFF has also conducted site visits and they prepare a back to office report each time. The evaluator has had access to five back to office reports from the project’s participation on CBD COP in Egypt, a mission to Djibouti in 2018, two missions to Ethiopia in January and march 2019 and their participation on the Safe Flyways MAVA II – Illegal Killing of Birds (IKB) Project inception workshop in Brussels in February 2020.

The prodoc indicates an M&E budget of USD 80,000 for the entire period. There is no data in terms of resources already used for the period thus it is **not possible to determine if the budget will suffice to cover the monitoring and evaluation activities** from now until the end of the project.

**The PMU spends a lot of time monitoring and reporting**. Although it is time consuming, it is also a **very good way to keep track of developments and spot potential mainstreaming interventions** on the ground.

As indicated previously, the project is monitoring effectively the financial resources spent by the project on regional activities, awareness, capacity building carried out by PCCD as well as the partner’s vehicle projects. RFF monitors financial expenditure through the partner’s technical and financial reports per sector. A minimum gap has been observed from the expenditure reported to the evaluator at MTR vs the CDR. This is because the last CDR covers from January to September whereas RFF shared the figures per country and sector up until November.

Overall, the evaluator considers that BirdLife, RFF together with UNDP both in Jordan and Egypt are **monitoring the project very efficiently** and providing the necessary support to all stakeholders to produce the necessary reports.

#### Stakeholders Engagement

When we talk about stakeholder participation or involvement, what the evaluator is asking is the following:

In relation to Project Management: Has the project developed and forged the right partnerships, both with direct stakeholders and with other tangential actors?

The project has been **designed to facilitate collaboration with public and private stakeholders**. BirdLife with its national partners and affiliates have managed to **establish** very interesting **working relationships with both government ministries and agencies as well as private sector actors**. Proof of it is their participation on Project Board meetings as well as numerous project activities. Stakeholders interviewed highlighted their continuous participation on project coordination events, meetings, awareness raising activities, joint monitoring of specific project activities, etc.

In terms of public awareness, the project reports on a wide range of activities and is indeed key to the achievement of the overall goal, mainstreaming MSB conservation into the five sectors. The general public as well as targeted audiences are being reached by the publication of news articles, scientific papers, thematic awareness campaigns, etc. The project is even working on measuring the level of awareness of selected stakeholders. This information will be very useful to determine the impact of the project’s component 1.

The **level of coordination**, as mentioned throughout the report, has been **very high**. The project has achieved alliances with public and private actors (please refer to table 7). The project has worked very well with the technical commissions, through bilateral meetings and through the Project Board. All this has meant that **the level of participation of public and private actors has been very high**. The level of knowledge of the subject matter on the part of the technical team has helped a lot in this achievement as they themselves have brought other actors to the table and have a deep understanding of the region and its people.

#### Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

The project’s SESP clearly defines how the project integrates the overarching principles to strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability. It defines how it mainstreams human-rights based approach through their continued work with CSOs and promote development agenda by building the capacity of these organizations and promoting their development. It also describes how it plans to improve gender equality and women’s empowerment. More important than gender balance or recognition of gender differentiated roles, the project is actively supporting its partners to properly take into consideration gender by means of generating gender strategies and action plans at the organizational level. Lastly, it describes how the project will mainstream environmental sustainability. Given the nature of the project and its overarching goal, this principle is well taken care of. The prodoc clearly states that the project shall not have any social or environmental risks. This situation persists. The project and its board have not made any revisions to the SESP during these three years of operation.

### 4.4 Sustainability

As the guide specifies, "the purpose of reviewing the sustainability of the project during the MTR is to set the basis for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) to assess its sustainability from each of the four categories established by the GEF (financial, socio-economic, governance and institutional and environmental framework)". At this stage, the evaluator has examined the likely risks faced by the project in achieving the results. As indicated on section 4.5, the 7 risks identified are still valid and the mitigation measures proposed are relevant. Four new risks have been identified by stakeholders ranging from the consequences to the project of COVID-19 to high staff turn-over rate slowing down the project’s execution to growing inflation in the region and in particular in Lebanon. Mitigation measures ought to be designed and monitored during the remaining years.

**Financial risks to sustainability**

MSB conservation highly depends on the RFF and its continuous work in the region. To financially sustain the Facility is the challenge. As indicated by BirdLife International, it is their intention to assume RFF costs in their operation. They did so during the end of Tranche I and the beginning of Tranche II. The office was downsized but maintained. Of course, like any other organization, BirdLife also relies on external funding. As such, it will be important to quickly work on the financial strategy. Component 3 result 3.4 states “the flyway is integrated into global conservation efforts and newly raised / assigned financing allows the application of lessons learnt from demonstration activities in other sites along the flyway”. To do so, the project intends to fully absorb RFF into BirdLife international by means of establishing a coherent financial plan as well as targeted promotion and fundraising. This strategy is to be designed during the second half of the project. In conversations with BirdLife management, they are very aware of the **need to find additional resources to help cover the RFF operating costs**. Thus, they will need to plan and initiate the financial strategy process while at the same time start the design and negotiation process for a potential new project to continue pushing these efforts. It would be recommendable to **shift the scope of a potential new initiative to green economy, green jobs, given the high co-financement potential with the private sector in sectors** like energy, tourism and even agriculture. This would be **in line**, for example, with the **GEF’s new private sector engagement strategy** recently endorsed during the 59th meeting of the GEF Council. The strategy seeks to strengthen the ties with civil society organizations, local communities, and the private sector toward shared goals for the global environment and create opportunities for the private sector to invest in tackling the drivers of environmental degradation and delivering global environmental benefits with a systems-level impact. Successful examples to date include the [Good Growth Partnership](https://goodgrowthpartnership.com/), the  [[Food Land Use and Restoration Impact Program](https://www.thegef.org/publications/food-systems-land-use-and-restoration-impact-program), the [Sustainable Cities Impact Program](https://www.thegef.org/publications/sustainable-cities-impact-program), [planetGOLD](https://www.planetgold.org/about), and the [Global Plastic Action Partnership](https://globalplasticaction.org/)](https://www.thegef.org/publications/food-systems-land-use-and-restoration-impact-program) - all platforms that have made great strides with GEF support.

**Socio-economic risks to sustainability**

These risks have been duly identified on the prodoc and are still valid as are the mitigation measures proposed. The region is unstable and there are numerous situations of instability related to political, social unrest or even threats of war. RFF is well positioned and staffed with national personnel who are very much aware of their surrounding and fully understand how to best approach the different situations. The project has managed to maneuver during these complex times and shall continue to do so.

**Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability**

The project has effectively assisted, by mainstreaming MSB conservation, Government counterparts to enact policies and regulations directly related to the overall objective. The countries have now in place laws and regulations but do lack enforcement. The situation differs from one country to the other but it is clear that CSO have a role to play to ensure certain continuity of the achievements of the project. RFF and BirdLife International partners and affiliates can continue supporting the institutions although they also have limited capacity. There is an obvious risk to sustainability if the policies and regulations cannot be implemented and enforced through time.

**Environmental risks to sustainability:**

No environmental risks were identified.

Overall, the evaluator rates the project’s **sustainability** as **Moderately** **likely** (ML) since there are moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at MTR.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

#### 5.1.1 Strategy

* It is an **ambitious Project** planning to impact 5 different sectors in highly complex and volatile countries.
* Overall, the project **strategy** proving to be an **effective** **route** towards expected / identified results.
* Countries start to have legal and regulatory tools to mainstream MSB conservation (ie. Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon) but there is a general **lack of enforcement**. In some instances, **NGOs playing the role of the government**.

#### Project design

* **Long approval process** (26 months) that **caused** **changes** with the identified project vehicles.
* The project has found a **niche** to **mainstream** **MSB** conservation with **IFI’s** and **safeguards** work on **energy** sector and potentially with ecotourism.
* **Distributing** the GEF grant **by** **sector** rather than by countries has **provided** **greater** **flexibility** to the Project Board to allocate grant resources.
* There is still a huge **challenge** for **civil society** to work in countries like Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan or Ethiopia.

#### Log-frame

* The results framework does not directly link the components outputs to the proposed indicators making it slightly harder to monitor at output level.
* Component 1 indicator regarding **awareness** **raising** **does not reflect change**. The indicator “awareness questionnaire developed and applied to selected focus groups” has **potential for improvement**.
* Component 1 indicators and targets are **too generic not allowing for detailed monitoring** and well-informed decision making.
* PMU is **not**, through the results framework, **monitoring** on **CMS** **coordination**. The output is not present on the AWP nor the PIR. Although the project is actively engaged with CMS, this is not properly reflected and might get lost.
* Component 2 indicator 4 on “number of joint national project partner-government and project partner-private sector partnerships” **target includes all national partners** where project vehicles are being implemented. Not all countries are doing equally well and there is a **risk of not achieving this target**.
* The results framework highlights the projects contribution to UNDP & IRRF’s outcome 1, **output 1.3.2**: Number of **new jobs** and **livelihoods** **created** through management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals and waste, disaggregated by sex. The project is **not monitoring this indicator**.
* Component 3 **outcome 3.4** is **key to the initiative’s sustainability**. It seeks **RFF full absorption into BirdLife International** and the development of a coherent financial plan including key funding areas and sources of financing, financing gaps and a financial strategy for flyway conservation activities.

#### 5.1.4 Progress towards results

* **RFF governance** is a **vital component** of the project and the flyway as a whole.
* The project pursues gender parity and follows gender policies and codes of practice. More importantly, through PCCDs work, the project is impacting its partners by **ensuring compliance with gender capacity triggers** and helping them to put in place **organizational gender strategies and action plans**.
* Project **financial** **execution** is **on** **track** and **duly** **monitored**. Project has **executed 50.8%** of the total assigned resources. The project has not had significant budget revisions and its still aligned with the original prodoc.
* PMU is closely monitoring the pledged **co-funding**. Some of the expected co-funding sources did not come through due to changes with vehicle projects but the project has managed to obtain new co-funding from other sources. **USD 8,7 million** are accounted for at MTR equivalent to **87% of the total**. In terms of sectors, the greatest co-funding is from the energy sector followed by tourism, multi-sector, hunting, agriculture and waste management.
* Project **risks** and **mitigation** **measures** are **well** **identified** and appropriate. PMU through adaptive management have effectively adapted to the global pandemic and continued operating.
* In terms of work with the different sectors, **energy has great visibility** and the guidelines, stop on demand programme, monitoring, all is highly appreciated by all parties which by means of MOU and PPAs ensure the sustainability of the actions. Tourism and **ecotourism** also has **great** **potential** in an area with huge cultural and natural potential. The **private sector shows great interest** and if the sector picks up after the pandemic they will most likely continue supporting and investing on birdwatching and ecotourism. **Waste** **management** has a lot of **potential** as well as demonstrated in Egypt although is not as visible as energy. Managers see it as a win-win since MSB conservation implies savings on their operations (i.e preventing power cuts at landfills due to birds deaths with power lines). **Hunting** also shows **progress** although is a more traditional and complex sector and **agriculture** results will be seen at the **long** **run**.
* Certain Project vehicles are generating **beneficial** **development** **effects** (ie. Employment) but it is **not properly monitored nor communicated**.
* In terms of **renewable** **energy**, need to have **common** **understanding** of the **flyway as a whole**. Each Project alone might not have a significant impact but rather all of them in different countries could have considerable cumulative impact on bird populations of MSB on the flyway and bottlenecks.
* In terms of countries and vehicles and funds executed, Jordan has executed 98%; Lebanon 89%; Egypt 46%; Ethiopia 45% and Sudan 11%.
* Country instability in **Ethiopia** (war with the Tigray region up north) plus the government’s decision not to pursue wind farm development in the north might **jeopardize** current **vehicle** **project**.

#### Adaptive Management

* In June 2020 PMU and BirdLife elaborated the **COVID-19 Adaptive Management** **Approach**. The document is proof of how the **project** has managed **to** **adapt** thanks to BirdLife’s prior investment on IT. They coordinated effectively all activities that could be executed and advanced to be implemented remotely and were clear as to those that had to be postponed. **PMU revised all AWPs to adjust them to the new reality** and managed to continue operating.
* The Steering Committee is a great **coordination and information sharing space** amongst public and private stakeholders.
* The project is monitoring all indicators and are on the **right track** of being achieved but one, related to the number of dead birds in the Sunday Flee Market in Jordan.
* The project suffered some **changes** in its **workplan** (mainly with the identified vehicle projects) due to the **delay** that took place **from end of Tranche I to beginning of Tranche II**. This implied that partners had to invest time and resources to identify, negotiate and initiate new projects.
* **Implementation** of **vehicle** **projects** at country level **varies** depending on the national context but most importantly on the **partners** **capacity**. RSPN and SPNL are the strongest partners and have almost concluded their respective vehicle projects whereas EWHNS and SWS are lagging behind.

#### 5.1.6 Implementation arrangements

* Prodoc takes into consideration **Tranche I MTR recommendations** and updates management arrangements accordingly. Project management changed from tranche I to tranche II to **NGO execution**. Changing to NGO execution has **simplified the implementation arrangements and reduced the operational costs**.
* Project started immediately after prodoc signature since RFF already in place and operating during transition period.
* There is evidence of **joint work planning** with other GEF and EU funded projects (i.e. EU Egyptian Vulture and GEF’s Mainstreaming of Biodiversity in Tourism Sector) but also thanks to the partners involvement they bring substantive collaboration with their **own** **donors** and projects ensuring **greater** **reach** and **potential** **impact**.
* The Egyptian PMU under EEAA is **understaffed** for work they carry out and supervise.
* The project, through RFF and utilizing all required reporting formats is being **adequately** **monitored**. Monitoring regional activities as well as five country vehicle projects is very time consuming. Nonetheless, this allows to keep track of developments and **spot potential mainstreaming opportunities**.
* **Impossibility** to **transfer** **funds** to **Sudan**. Country still sanctioned and international transfers can not be used in USD. The national currency is highly depreciated. PMU, UNDP and SWS have explored different options to transfer the funds but have not managed to. The vehicle project was signed early 2020 but with the inability to transfer funds plus the pandemic, the **vehicle project has not yet started**.

#### 5.1.7 Sustainability

* Sustainability varies from country to country and sector. Greatly depends on the Government’s commitment, interest, and enforcement capacities.
* The project is demonstrating great potential to engage with the private sector mainly through energy and tourism. This provides a great opportunity to design a **new project** focusing on **private sector engagement**, **green jobs and biodiversity conservation**.

### 5.2 Recommendations

#### The recommendations have been divided between those actions related to corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and those focused on continuing or reinforcing the initial benefits of the project.

#### 5.2.1 Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

* The **findings** of the **awareness** **questionnaire** recently shared with stakeholders to be used to set a realistic **baseline** for Component 1 indicator. Conduct a **second** **questionnaire** by **project**-**end** to measure awareness change in the selected focus group.
* **Brake down indicator** target “flyway sensitive guidelines, best practices and related materials” **per vehicle country** to enable more **accurate monitoring** and better inform decision making.
* Establish a new **CMS related indicator** to fully capture the work being done with the Convention.
* Split component 1 indicator 1 target “Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end” and 3 “At least 100 requests by project end” and component 2, indicator 5 target “2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner” by country and according to the reality in each country to ensure the target will be met”.
* Split component 2 indicator 4 target “2015 baseline figure plus a minimum of 10 partnerships by project end for each national partner” by country differentiating between potential number of partnerships achievable per country and vehicle.
* Link the outputs per component to the correspondent indicators for ease of monitoring.
* Include the **number of green jobs being generated** directly or indirectly by the project at country level due to mainstreaming MSB conservation at the objective level as an indicator in the logframe.
* **Update the risks matrix** to include new risks identified (high staff turn-over rate; COVID-19 effects and inflation) and propose adequate **mitigation measures** and monitor them throughout the remaining two years.
* Work with **UNDP** Sudan to find a feasible financial solution to transfer the vehicle project **funds** to **Sudan**.
* Lessons learnt from mix NGO and NEX execution vs higher delivery under complex situations (armed conflicts, financial and political crisis, etc)

#### 5.2.2 Actions to continue or reinforce the initial benefits of the project

* Start working in 2021 on the flyway financial plan at the same time as with the exit strategy. Do not propose a tranche III of the project since it might not be considered sustainable. Start planning the “new phase” of the project. To do so consider a shift from mainstreaming conservation of MSB to **enforcement of existing rules and regulations and generation of green jobs through conservation**.
* Consider looking into **GEF private sector engagement strategy** recently approved by the 59th meeting of GEF council or even the GCF. Both funds have as a priority to engage the private sector in conservation and mitigation, adaptation to climate change.
* Consider hiring **more technical staff** to support EEAA PMU and thus ensure activities are executed.
* Ensure **NCE’s participation** in all capacity building exercises and find way to subcontract them to implement some of the activities.
* Focus the capacity building exercises on strengthening SWS capacities.
* Establish **new vehicle selection criteria** to ensure GEF resources are fully utilized within the remaining lifespan of the project. Besides importance, feasibility and effectiveness of mainstreaming, include **efficiency**, the good use of time and resources in a way that does not waste any and there is **assurance that the funds can be utilized by 2022**.
* **Identify critical entry points for sectors with greater impact potential** to determine best vehicle projects to invest in during the second half of the project. Focus and concentrate on those countries with greater impact potential and sustainability (Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon) with stronger NGOs to ensure delivery and project closure. Propose selection criteria with agreed variables such as Partner NGO capacity; Relationship with Host Government; Potential impact; Job creation, etc.

## 6. Annexes

### 6.1 MTR Terms of Reference

### 6.2 MTR Evaluation Matrix

| **Evaluative Criteria Questions** | | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Methodology** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels? | | | | |
|  | * How and why have project outcomes and strategies contributed to the achievement of the expected results? Have the project outcomes contributed to national development priorities and plans? | * Number of laws and policies approved by beneficiary countries | * APR; QPR | * Review reports and semi-structured interviews |
|  | * Are the project’s objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within the project’s timeframe? | * Number and type of AWP and budget revisions | * AWPs; CDRs | * Revision of AWPs and semi-structured interviews |
|  | * Were the capacities of executing institutions and counterparts carefully considered when the project was designed? | * Degree of outputs accomplished | * APR; QPR; CDR | * Comparison of expected targets versus actual performance |
|  | * Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at project entry? | * Degree of outputs accomplished | * Semi-structured intervews | * Review reports and semi-structured interviews |
|  | * What are the underlying factors beyond the project’s immediate control and to what extent they have influenced outcomes and results? How appropriate and effective were the project’s management strategies for these factors. | * Risks mitigation measures implementation | * APR; semi-structured interviews | * Review reports and semi-structured interviews |
| Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved? | | | | | |
|  | * To what extent have the project objectives and outcomes, as set out in the Project Document, project’s Logical Framework and other related documents, have been achieved? | * Degree accomplishment targets set on logical framework | * APRs; semi-structured interviews | * Review APRs, QPRs; interviews |
|  | * Review planned strategies and plans for achieving the overall objective of the project within the timeframe. | * Degree accomplishment targets set on logical framework | * APRs; semi-structured interviews | * Review APRs, QPRs; interviews |
|  | * Were the assumptions made by the project right and what new assumptions that should be made could be identified? | * Degree of change in assumptions | * APRs; semi-structured intervews | * Analysis of data obtained from APRs plus interviews |
|  | * Were the project budget and duration planned in a cost-effective way? | * % expenditure vs planned budget | * Prodoc Budget + CDRs | * Review of Project Budget vs CDRs and interviews |
|  | * How and to what extent have implementing agencies contributed and national counterparts (public, private) assisted the project? | * Number of MOUs | * APRs; semi-structured intervews | * Analysis of data obtained from APRs plus interviews |
|  | * Has COVID 19 crisis affected the implementation of the project`s activities | * Change in AWPs | * semi-structured interviews | * Analysis of data obtained from interviews |
| Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards? | | | | | |
|  | * How useful was the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it? | * Partners appraisal of log frames usefulness | * semi-structured interviews | * Analysis of data obtained from interviews |
|  | * Were the risks identified in the project document and PIRs the most important and the risk ratings applied appropriately? | * Number of new risks identified and changes in risk ratings | * PIR; interviews | * Review of PIRs plus interviews |
|  | * How and to what extent have project implementation process, coordination with participating stakeholders and important aspects affected the timely project start-up, implementation and closure? | * Current % delivery rate vs planned at prodoc level | * Prodoc; CDRs; PIRs; semi-structured interviews | * Desktop review plus interviews |
|  | * Do the outcomes developed during the project formulation still represent the best project strategy for achieving the project objectives? | * Acceptance of Project strategy by main actors. | * Semi-structured interviews and desktop review | * Analyze degree of acceptance by different stakeholders interviewed. |
|  | * How have local stakeholders participated in project management and decision-making? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project? What could be improved? | * Number of Board Meetings and local stakeholders participation | * Steering committee minutes | * Review of relevant documents plus interviews. |
|  | * Does the project consult and make use of skills, experience and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, NGOs, community groups, private sector, local governments and academic institutions in the implementation and evaluation of project activities? | * Number of local experts consulted during project implementation | * Minutes of meetings | * Review minutes of meetings plus interviews. |
| Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results? | | | | | |
|  | * Was project sustainability strategy developed during the project design? | * Existence of sustainability strategy on Project Document | * Project Document | * Review of Project Document |
|  | * How relevant was the project sustainability strategy? | * Perception of sustainability potential by stakeholders | * Semi-structured interviews | * Question all stakeholders on project sustainability strategy |
|  | * Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that in future there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)? | * RFF financial sustainability and BirdLife International will to maintain RFF | * Semi-structured interviews | * Review of stakeholders’ perceptions and data |
|  | * Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there a sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? | * Number of new identified risks and assessment of existing risks | * PIR; semi-structured interviews | * Desk top review and interviews |
| **Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?** | | | | | |
|  | * How has the project contributed to the reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status? | * Change in the status of environmental and ecological status indicators | * Prodoc results framework; PIR | * Review and comparison of status of all indicators at results framework. |
|  | * Are the project outcomes contributing to national development priorities and plans? | * Number of new laws and regulations | * PIR | * Review of PIR to determine impact at outcome level. |

### 6.3 Semi structured interview guide

**Semi-structured interview guide for Project stakeholders (Government partners, NGOs, private sector) of the Project “Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway”**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** |  |
| **Interviewees** |  |
| **Name** |  |
| **Position** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Tel.** |  |
| **Mail** |  |

**Introduction:**

* **Thank interviewees / participants for their availability for the interview.**
* **Brief presentation.**
* **Brief introduction of the evaluations main objective and how information is going to be obtained.**

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 and its risks to sustainability.

* **Ask if the interviewee has any specific question or doubt before starting the interview.**
* **Clarify that the information gathered will be strictly confidential.**
* **Ask if the interviewee gives his/her consent to record the interview; indicate that the interview will be recorded to better capture the information. If the interviewee does not feel comfortable ensure that the interview will not be recorded.**

**Part I: General Information**

1. Please explain briefly the work of your organization and your relationship with the project.

*Note: It is important here to know exactly who we are talking to: Is it a representative of the Government directly involved in the implementation of the project? A representative of another Project collaborating with the Project. A member of an NGO? Depending on the nature of the collaboration, the questions should be adapted to make them more specific.*

*Important information:*

* *What sort of relationship has with the project?*
* *Is there any sort of evidence of the relationship, an agreement perhaps?*

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**Part II: Project Strategy**

1. Please briefly explain if you consider that the Project with its main objective (Conservation management objectives & actions for MSB are mainstreamed effectively into the hunting, energy, agriculture, waste management and tourism sectors) and three components (Raised awareness; Content, tools and capacity developed and delivered to mainstream MSB concept; Learning, evaluation, adaptive management and upscaling) is well aligned and relevant.

(Pay special attention with national Development strategies and nature conservation, etc)

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1. Did you or someone from your unit/organization participate in the project formulation process? Please describe the process

(n/a with certain partners and actors)

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Do you think that the Project has considered all possible risks?

*Note: Reference the identified risks (1. Political unrest and security concers (H);2. Strategic, existing reform vehicles don’t accept, or chose not to implement MSB technical content (M); 3. Recipients of flyway content question technical standard or added value (M); 4. Amendments to legislation & regulations modifications not officially approved (M); 5. Different countries with different priorities making management & administration difficult; 6. Not able to reach consensus on long term flyway objectives (M); Birdlife structure seeks consensus which makes implementation challenging (M))*

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1. At your discretion, does the results framework or budget include gender-relevant outputs and activities? Please specify.

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1. Do you believe that the results and output indicators are well designed and can be measured?

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1. Do you think the project has generated or can generate beneficial development effects for the country or could catalyze them in the future (e.g. income generation, reduction of MSB casualties, biodiversity conservation, ecotourism) so that they should be included in the results framework?

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**Part III: Progress towards results**

To what extent does the Project support your Ministry/Secretariat/Organization in achieving its results? Explain briefly.

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1. ¿ Does Birdlife have a good system of financial tracking, budgeting, spending and expense forecasting of the system itself?

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1. What do you think have been the main obstacles to achieving the results? Please explain.

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1. What do you think have been the facilitating factors for the achievement of the results? Please explain

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1. Has the project achieved an appropriate partnership strategy and should any other partners or key players be added to the process? Please explain

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1. Is the RFF solid? (governance, management, investment, and grant plans)

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1. 14. Is the project providing enough tools to mainstream MSB in their respective countries and governments?

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1. Do you think your organization has or has received enough training to continue promoting bird conservation in the corridor? What else do you need?

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1. What staff and budget does your organization have to ensure the continuity of this conservation approach?

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1. Do you think the general population is aware? Is the project succeeding in transmitting the importance of the conservation of these birds? What else can be done?

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**Part IV: Project Implementation & adaptive management**

1. Do you think that the structure and organization of the Project are adequate (central office, regional office)? Does the project have enough human and technical equipment and resources to achieve the results?

*Note: If you do not know, ask if you have been informed of changes in the project and if you have been able to influence or transmit concerns to the different coordination bodies*

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1. Have there been any substantive changes to the project and has the project been able to adapt to these changes?

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1. ¿ How has coordination been between actors, between donors? Have the different coordination committees worked? (board of directors, national coordination committee) Can it be improved?

(n/a for certain actors)

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**FOR GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS**

1. Do you think there has been duplication of effort with other projects?

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1. Do governments support the project's objectives, and do they have an active role in decision-making?

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1. Have the different partners contributed to the co-financing? How is it being followed up?

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1. Have you or the organization you represent been involved in monitoring the project? Do you think it has been effective? Can it be improved? Do you know if national data, statistics, nationally generated information are being used?

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**FOR CSO and NGO COUNTERPARTS**

1. Do you think there has been duplication of effort with other projects?

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1. Do governments support the project's objectives, and do they have an active role in decision-making?

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1. Have the different partners contributed to the co-financing? How is it being followed up?

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1. Have you or the organization you represent been involved in monitoring the project? Do you think it has been effective? Can it be improved? Do you know if national data, statistics, nationally generated information are being used?

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**Part V: Sustainability**

1. Once the Project and the financial support of the GEF is concluded, will the Governments, NGOs partnering with Birdlife be able to continue promoting this initiative and guarantee the functioning of the RFF?

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1. Has the Project partners been able to ensure non-GEF resources for RFF operations?

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1. Are there new risks to be considered for the sustainability of the project? What measures could be taken to mitigate these risks?

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Thank you very much!

Do you have anything else you’d like to add?

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### 6.4 MTR Ratings

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| **Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)** |

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| 6 | Highly Satisfactory (HS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”. |
| 5 | Satisfactory (S) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings. |
| 4 | Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings. |
| 3 | Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets. |

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| **Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management:** (one overall rating) | | |
| 6 | 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”. |
| 5 | Satisfactory (S) | Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action. |
| 4 | 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. |
| 3 | 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. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |

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| **Ratings for Sustainability:** (one overall rating) | | |
| 4 | 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 |
| 3 | 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 |
| 2 | Moderately Unlikely (MU) | Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on |
| 1 | Unlikely (U) | Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained |

### 6.5 Mission Agenda

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day &Date** | **Time** | **Persons to meet** | **Organisation** | **Title** | **Email address** | **Skype name** | **Status** |
| Sunday  1 Nov. | 12:00PM (Amman Time) | Ibrahim Kaher – Regional Director  Osama Al Nouri – Project Coordinator + Muna Al Taq + Alex Ngari | BirdLife International | ME Regional Director + Regional project coordinator – ME & Africa Flyway Officers | [Osama.Alnouri@birdlife.org](mailto:Osama.Alnouri@birdlife.org)  [Ibrahim.khader@birdLife.org](mailto:Ibrahim.khader@birdLife.org) | n.osama777 | Completed |
| Monday  2 Nov. | 11:00 AM (Cairo Time) | Amany Nakhla –Egypt | UNDP | Program Analyst | [amany.nakhla@undp.org](mailto:amany.nakhla@undp.org) | Anakhal123 | Completed |
| 12.30 PM (Cairo Time) | Osama El Gebaly Egypt | MSB Egypt | Project Manager |  | osamagebaly1 |
| Wednesday 4 Nov | 15:00 – 16:00 (Amman /Cairo time) | Mohamed Raouf | NCE | CEO of NCE | [raouf@natureegypt.org](mailto:raouf@natureegypt.org) | Phone:00201003092738 Skype ID:mohamed.raouf88 | Completed |
| Thursday  05 Nov. | 14:00 -15:00 (Amman time) | MSB Project Supervisory Committee:  Ibrahim Khader (IK)  Richard Grimmett (RG)  Ademola Ajagbe (AA)  Barend van Gemerden (BVG) | BirdLife International: | IK: ME Regional Director  RG: Director of Conservation  AA: Africa Regional Director  BVN: Global Flyways Programme Coordinator | [Ibrahim.Khader@birdlife.org](mailto:Ibrahim.Khader@birdlife.org)  [Richard.Grimmett@birdlife.org](mailto:Richard.Grimmett@birdlife.org)  [Ademola.Ajagbe@birdlife.org](mailto:Ademola.Ajagbe@birdlife.org)  [Barend.vanGemerden@birdlife.org](mailto:Barend.vanGemerden@birdlife.org) | Phone Number:  00962777424831 | Completed |
| Sunday  8 Nov. | 10:00 AM (Amman/Cairo Time) | Egypt –  Dr .Ayman Hamadah | EEAA: Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency | Director-General of Species Diversity,  Nature Conservation Sector,  Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency | [aymanhamada@yahoo.com](mailto:aymanhamada@yahoo.com) | Mobile: +20 100 041 8222 | Completed |
| 11:15 AM (Amman /Cairo Time) | Egypt -  Dr Mohammad Mostafa El-Khayat | NREA: New and Renewable Energy Authority | Executive Chairman | e-mail official: chairperson@nrea.gov.eg  e-mail Personal: [mohamed.elkhayat@yahoo.com](mailto:mohamed.elkhayat@yahoo.com) | Mobile: +20 122 809 0810  Skype: dr.elkhayat | Completed |
| 13:00  (Amman /Cairo Time) | Egypt  Mr. Tarek Abdel Moneim | TRAVCO | CEO, Chamber of Tourism Companies/ Director of TRAVCO company | [tarek.abdelmoneim@travco.com](mailto:tarek.abdelmoneim@travco.com) | Mobile:  +201555527100 | Completed |
| 14:00-15:00 Amman Time. | Mengistu Wondafrash – Ethiopia | EWHNS | CEO | [wondafrash.mj61@gmail.com](mailto:wondafrash.mj61@gmail.com) |  | Completed |
| Monday 9 Nov | 9:30 AM  Amman Time | Tareq Qaneer - Jordan | RSCN | Head of Birds Unit | tareq.qaneer@rscn.org.jo | Mobile:00962799068647  live:tareq.qaneer | Completed |
| 11:00 AM  ( Amman -Cairo time) | Egypt Eng. Hanan Omar  Translator  Adel Soliman | Water and Waste water treatment company | Head Sector of water and waste water treatment company, south Sinai | [nsscww.ss@gmail.com](mailto:nsscww.ss@gmail.com)  Adel email: adelnbu@gmail.com | Mobile: +201285032555  +201005067915 | Completed |
| 13:00  Amman Time | Belal Qtishat – Jordan | Ministry of Environment | MOEnv -Director of  Nature protection Directorate | [bqtishat@yahoo.com](mailto:bqtishat@yahoo.com) | Mobile: 00962776123488 | Completed |
| 17:00 Beirut Amman Time | Tourism Sector  Petra Obeid  -Lebanon | Ministry of Tourism | Head of Youth and Local Bodies Department | [petra.p.obeid@gmail.com](mailto:petra.p.obeid@gmail.com) | Mobile number:  00961 3 559 576 | Completed |
| Tuesday 10 Nov | 10:30 AM  Amman Time | Assad Serhal,  Bassima Khatib - Lebanon | SPNL | Director General –  Assistant Director General | [aserhal@spnl.org](mailto:aserhal@spnl.org)  [bkhatib@spnl.org](mailto:bkhatib@spnl.org) | Skype ID: ibrham  Mobile: +961 3 057 716 | Completed |
| 12:00-13:00  Amman Time | PCCD - Partnership & Capacity Development Team - Kiragu Mwangi | BirdLife International | Programme Manager | [Kiragu.Mwangi@birdlife.org](mailto:Kiragu.Mwangi@birdlife.org) |  | Completed |
| 13:00  Amman Time | Noelle Kumpel  Harvey Rich | BirdLife International | Head of Policy  Global Policy Officer | [Noelle.Kumpel@birdlife.org](mailto:Noelle.Kumpel@birdlife.org)  [Harvey.Rich@birdlife.org](mailto:Harvey.Rich@birdlife.org) | Skype for Business ID:  Harvey.Rich@birdlife.org |  |
| Wednesday  11 Nov | 12:00-13:00  Amman Time | Global Science Team- Tris Allinson | BirdLife International | Senior Global Science Officer | [Tris.Allinson@birdlife.org](mailto:Tris.Allinson@birdlife.org) | Tris Allinson | Completed |
| 14:00  Amman Time | Tareq Qaneer - Jordan | RSCN | Head of Birds Unit | [tareq.qaneer@rscn.org.jo](mailto:tareq.qaneer@rscn.org.jo) | Mobile:00962799068647  live:tareq.qaneer | Second Meeting |
| 15:00 Khartoum/Amman time | Dr. Ibrahim Hashim | The Sudanese Wildlife Society | President of SWS | [Ibramaha35@gmail.com](mailto:Ibramaha35@gmail.com) | Skype ID:Ibramaha35  Phone Number:000249912165374 | Completed |
| Friday  13 Nov | 18:30  Amman/Beirut time | Hunting Sector –  Dr.Ghassan Jaradeh | Higher Hunting Council-Lebanon | Member of Higher Hunting Council | [ghassan.jaradi@gmail.com](mailto:ghassan.jaradi@gmail.com) [grjaradi@hotmail.com](mailto:grjaradi@hotmail.com) | Mobile Number:  00961 3 689 840.  Skype ID:[grjaradi@hotmail.com](mailto:grjaradi@hotmail.com) | Completed |
| Tuesday  17 Nov | 9:00 AM Amman Time | Energy Sector –  Laith.elmoghrabi  Jordan | ECO Consult | Ecological Research Manager | [laith.elmoghrabi@gmail.com](mailto:laith.elmoghrabi@gmail.com) | Laith.elmoghrabi  Mobile: +962 79627 3181 | Completed |
|  | 14:00 -15:00 (Amman time) | MSB Project Supervisory Committee:  Ibrahim Khader (IK)  Richard Grimmett (RG)  Ademola Ajagbe (AA)  Barend van Gemerden (BVG) | BirdLife International: | IK: ME Regional Director  RG: Director of Conservation  AA: Africa Regional Director  BVN: Global Flyways Programme Coordinator | [Ibrahim.Khader@birdlife.org](mailto:Ibrahim.Khader@birdlife.org)  [Richard.Grimmett@birdlife.org](mailto:Richard.Grimmett@birdlife.org)  [Ademola.Ajagbe@birdlife.org](mailto:Ademola.Ajagbe@birdlife.org)  [Barend.vanGemerden@birdlife.org](mailto:Barend.vanGemerden@birdlife.org) | Phone Number:  00962777424831 | Completed |
| TBC | TBC | Abdalmunem Hamid  Agriculture Sector – Sudan | PPD  Plant Protection Directorate | PPD official | [Ppdsudan@hotmail.com](mailto:Ppdsudan@hotmail.com) | Skype ID: To be provided  Phone Number: To be provided |  |
| Sunday 22 Nov | 11:00 Amman time | Waste Management Sector -Jordan | Ikaider Landfill | Ikaider Manager |  |  |  |
| TBC | TBC | Agriculture Sector –  Lebanon | TBC |  |  |  |  |

### 6.6 List of Stakeholders interviewed

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** |
| Ibrahim Kaher | Regional Director, BirdLife International |
| Osama Al Nouri | Project Coordinator |
| Muna Al Taq | Project Assistant |
| Alex Ngari | Project Assistant |
| Amany Nakhla | Programme Analyst, UNDP Egypt |
| Osama El Gebaly | MSB Egypt |
| Mohamed Raouf | CEO, NCE |
| Richard Grimmet | Director of Conservation, BirdLife International |
| Barend van Gemerden | Global Flyways Programme Coordinator |
| Dr Ayman Hamadah | Director General of Species Diversity, Nature Conservation Sector, EEAA |
| Dr Mohammad Mostafa El-Khayat | Executive Chairman, NREA |
| Tarek Adbel Moneim | CEO, TRAVCO |
| Mengistu Wondafrash | EWHNS |
| Tareq Qaneer | Head of Birds Unit, RSCN |
| Hanan Omar | Head of Water and Waste Water Sector, Water and Waste Water Treatment Company |
| Belal Qtishat | Director of Nature Protection Directorate, MOENV |
| Petra Obeid | Head of Youth and Local Bodires Department, Ministry of Tourism, Lebanon |
| Assad Serhal | Director General, SPNL |
| Bassima Khatib | Assistant Director General, SPNL |
| Kigaru Mwangi | Programme Manager, PCCD |
| Noelle Kumpel | Head of Policy, BirdLife International |
| Harvey Rich | Global Policy Officer |
| Tris Allinson | Senior Global Science Officer |
| Dr Ibrahim Hashim | President, SWS |
| Dr Ghassan Jaradeh | Member of Higher Hunting Council |
| Laith Elmoghrabi | Ecological Research Manager, Eco Consult |
| Mrs Hoda | GEF Focal Point, Egypt |

### 6.7 List of documents reviewed



### 6.9 Cofinancement matrix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Cofunding Entity name | Type of cofunding | Expected Amount at CEO Endorsement (US$) | Amount disbursed at MTR (US$) | Real Percentage (%) of the foreseen amount |
| International | BirdLife | Cash | 797,956 | 1,720,496 | 76% |
| BirdLife | In-Kind | 1,458,085 |
| Egypt | Jaz Hotels and Resorts | In-Kind | 2,000,000 |  |  |
| NREA | In-Kind | 3,500,000 | 1,618,520 | 46% |
| RECREE | Cash |  | 1,714,092 |  |
| EETC | Cash |  | 592,112 |  |
| EWWT | Cash |  | 140,000 |  |
| UNDP | Cash |  | 131,814 |  |
| Ethiopia | Pesticide Action Nexus Association | In-kind | 121,609 |  |  |
| EWNHS | In-Kind | 122,500 |  |  |
| Horn of Africa Environment Centre and Network | In-Kind | 303,235 |  |  |
| Jordan | UNDP | Cash | 100,000 | 25,926[[8]](#footnote-8) | 25% |
| Ministry of Municipality Affairs | In-kind | 2,000,000 |  |  |
| RSPN | Cash |  | 916,702 |  |
| Lebanon | SPNL | In-kind | 116,500 | 1,876,805 |  |
| Sudan | SWS | In-kind | 15,000 |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  | **10,034,885** | **8,736,729** | **87%** |

Note: The total co-funding to date differs from the figure provided by PMU of USD 8,578,729 since it includes UNDP Track resources in the calculation.

### 6.10 UNEG Code of Conduct for Evalutors/Midterm Review Consultants

**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.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Consultant: Guido Fernández de Velasco

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed at *Barcelona, Spain (Place)* on *01st December 2020 (Date)*

Signature: 

### 6.11 MTR Report Clearance Form

*(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and RTA and included in the final document)*

|  |
| --- |
| **Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:**  **Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)**  Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)**  Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

### 6.12 Audit Trail Template

*Note:* The following is a template for the MTR Team to show how the received comments on the draft MTR report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final MTR report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the final MTR report.

**To the comments received on (*February 2, 2021*) from the Midterm Review of “Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into key productive sectors along the Rift Valley / Red Sea Flyway” GEF ID # 9491 Tranche II (UNDP Project ID-*PIMS # 1878/9491 Tranche II)***

*The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Midterm Review report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column) and not by the person’s name, and track change comment number (“#” column):*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **#** | **Para No./ comment location** | **Comment/Feedback on the draft MTR report** | **MTR team**  **response and actions taken** |
| UNDP |  | Email | The 2020 Egypt Budget figures are not correct. | Numbers have been corrected. |
| UNDP | 1 | 52 | A typo, please fix | Corrected |
| UNDP | 2 | 73 | In the design of the indicator, it is challenging when the same target is requested from all countries while countries perform under different levels due to many reasons | That is correct. This is precisely what the conclusion regarding indicator 4 aims for. |
| UNDP | 3 | Table 4 R.2 | The project then might be at risk of resetting targets that will be difficult to achieve in some countries as per the previous comment | The following has been added to the recommendation R.4 “according to their real capacities” |
| UNDP | 4 | Table 4 R.5 | Can this be further clarified to assess its implications | The recommendation has been modified: “Link, when elaborating the AWPs and if feasible, the outputs per component to the correspondent indicators. This is feasible for certain outputs of, for example, component 2. Linking output 2.1 to indicators 9, output 2.2 to indicator 10. Not all outputs have direct indicators” |
| UNDP | 5 | Table 4 R.14 | Not sure if this is really necessary in light of the yet unallocated resources and project remaining lifetime | The evaluator is of the impression as well as several of the interviewees of the necessity to establish clear allocation criteria which shall assist project Board members to identify potential projects and ensure they are executed within the existing time frame. |
| UNDP | 6 | 182 | GEF Tracking Tool | Corrected |
| UNDP | 7 | 350 | GEF Tracking Tool | Corrected |
| UNDP | 8 | 476 | This section needs to include a little bit more analysis regards the development context related to the project | More analysis has been included from paragraph 484 to 506 |
| UNDP | 9 | 504 | I think best to present barriers in a different way so easier to follow | Barriers and its current status presented in a tabular manner |
| UNDP | 10 | 549-557 | No enough analysis provided regards the different roles of partners so no clear enough who does what. Would suggest that the report to elaborate more on the different roles and responsibilities of partners and those engaged in the implementation including UNDP Jordan, UNDP Egypt, RFF, Egypt’s PMU, and Birdlife partners to make it clear for audience and readers of the report. I would like also to see if there is any need exists to engage UNDP Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to help address some of the implementation bottlenecks and risks identified in these countries. | The paragraph has been adapted.  The evaluator recommends (R.8) to actively work with UNDP Sudan to find a feasible financial solution to transfer the vehicle project funds to the country. |
| UNDP | 11 | Figure on page 22 | Please insert a caption for this map | The caption “figure 1. Map of the flyway” is on previous page 21 |
| UNDP | 12 | 567 | Please explain the codes of the scale in footnote | Footnote added: “Priority ranking ranges from 1 (Low) to 5 (high) as per page 30 of the prodoc”. |
| UNDP | 13 | 576 | As noted above, I would suggest again to elaborate more on the different roles and responsibilities of partners and those engaged in the implementation including UNDP Jordan, UNDP Egypt, RFF, Egypt’s PMU, and Birdlife partners to make it clear for audience and readers of the report. I would like also to see if there is any need exists to engage UNDP Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to help address some of the implementation bottlenecks and risks identified in these countries. | New paragraph has been added: “. The MSB Tranche II management arrangements have evolved over time. During Tranche I management arrangements consisted of UNDP Jordan as the Executing Agency for the overall regional activities with RFF/BirdLife and for the national activities in Jordan; UNDP Lebanon and UNDP Egypt were Executing Agencies within their respective countries with project management units in both countries. However, the RFF was responsible for reporting and in fact BirdLife was accountable for the whole project delivery to UNDP-GEF but had in effect execution responsibility for part of it. Tranche I Terminal Evaluation (also referred to as MTR) concluded that this arrangement prevented the project from attaining its overall goal of strengthening the RFF and mainstreaming MSB throughout the flyway. The evaluation concluded that the arrangements had a number of weaknesses and inefficiencies characterised as:   * Effectively four projects operating within one project; * Additional reporting and accounting requirements within the project; * Undermining the role and function of the RFF; * Reduced the likelihood of post project sustainability; * Capture of project resources for purposes weakly related to the projects focus; and * National interests can override the larger strategic interests of the flyway per se. |
| UNDP | 14 | 579 | Wouldn’t describe this as theoretical – there is a PMU in EEAA | The paragraph has been changed to ” The Project is being implemented by BirdLife International for the regional component and its national partners in Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan and Ethiopia and, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) in Egypt”. |
| UNDP | 15 | 583 | This is interesting and would be very useful to elaborate more why this arrangement proved to work fine? | New paragraph has been added: “There are two aspects to the projects execution; firstly with the execution of the RFF and secondly with the execution of the national activities (e.g. the vehicles). The RFF and regional coordination component are through NGO execution modality, through BirdLife International with the RFF acting as the PMU for the entire project although in reality it is not. The RFF/PMU and BirdLife International report and account directly to the executing agency (UNDP Jordan). Jordan has national NGO execution modality as well through the national BirdLife partner, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). RSCN reports directly to the Steering Committee comprised of UNDP Jordan, Government Representatives as well as RFF Coordinator. Ethiopia, Sudan and Lebanon have national NGO execution modality as well through BirdLife International local partners, namely, Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), Sudanese Wildlife Society (SWS) and Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) who report to RFF. The situation is different in Egypt. As indicated previously, the country has national Execution modality through the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) with a national PMU nested in the Nature Conservation Sector reporting directly to UNDP Egypt.” |
| UNDP | 16 | 616 | Please clarify who is executing and who is implementing | Text corrected to: “ BirdLife International as Implementing Partner and UNDP as Executing Agency. |
| UNDP | 17 | 682 | Please clarify whta are the roles of Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) in Egypt as outlined in par 3.4 | Corrected and developed further in previous paragraphs. |
| UNDP | 18 | 742 | It wasn’t the formulation process but the review and particularly approval process within GEF and UNDP that took the time, complicated by uncertainties regarding applicable GEF cycle, that it was treated as a new Project rather than two stage single Project. Some weaknesses in the initial Pro Doc were partly to blame. Yves at UNDP/GEF could elaborate on the issues and what lessons might be learnt. | Paragraph changed to “the evaluator estimates that the formulation and approval process has taken a considerable amount of time” |
| UNDP | 19 | 774 | Can you elaborate more on this conclusion being effective? | New paragraph included “As can be observed on table 9, the intervention logic is showing results. Through the MSB project during its two tranches, MSB conservation objectives are being mainstreamed in flyway countries strengthening partners capacities, raising awareness, and developing interesting tools to replicate good practices. This translates into policy and regulations affecting most sectors as well as interesting replicable projects” |
| UNDP | 20 | 782 | Please explain a bit why MSB mainstreaming in these two sectors is difficult | Text added “Agriculture in the flyway and most countries is the foundation of their economy (ie. In Ethiopia accounting for half of gross domestic product (GDP), 83.9% of exports and 80% of total employment and 39% in Sudan) and we see strong Government incentives and policies to increase yields and production. Hunting, on the other hand, is a very traditional sector. Information gathered through interviews indicates that it has taken the project quite some time to gain hunters trust and it is proving to be a slow process.” |
| UNDP | 21 | 788 | Not clear why MSB mainstreaming in energy is a niche compared to other sectors. Please clarify | Text added “Most Governments intend to increase renewable energy potential to diversify the grid and attain universal electrification. To do so, they are counting with International Funding Institutions to finance the projects. This implies that they have to follow their existing safeguard systems while developing projects and reducing the death tolls produced by windmills is indeed one of their top priorities.” |
| UNDP | 22 | 801 | Something missing here | Text added “headway, the complexity of engaging with sectors was greater than anticipated in the original design and sectors such as wind energy are emerging as very serious and extensive threats” |
| UNDP | 23 | 809 | This is very interesting and suggest to elaborate a little bit on this conclusion | Text added “by reducing the number of PMUs as well as reporting and accounting requirements. The RFF is now supervising the National Implementation Agents which sign a contractual agreement clearly specifying objectives, deliverables and budget and which report directly to RFF, supervised by BirdLife International. They in turn report to UNDP Jordan.” |
| UNDP | 24 | 815 | Please elaborate since this is important conclusion | Text added “The Project Board is not pressured to allocate resources to countries specifically but rather per sector which implies that NIAs with RFF assistance have identified and will continue to do so suitable vehicle projects to help mainstream MSB conservation on the five sectors.” |
| UNDP | 25 | 832 | This is probably true in some cases yet the statement perhaps understates the extent to which stakeholder were involved in reviewing the Project design and framework and certainly the formulation of vehicle projects | Text added “There is proof though of a Phase II Preparatory Workshop held in Aman, Jordan, December 2014 were participants (mainly NIAs and other partners) assessed the different sectors according to their importance as a threat to MSB, feasibility and likely effectiveness to help prioritize them per country and sector. As indicated, this took place in 2014 and thus, at the time the project actually started, a few of the vehicle projects were no longer viable and the opportunity to intervene had passed.” |
| UNDP | 26 | 927 | This section has also to provide more analsyis on how the project is aligned to national priorities. Please provide more analysis. | Text added “and of the upmost importance to help countries prioritize MSB conservation and mainstream it in its legislations and regulations. The project is essentially about translating the CMS, as it relates to MSBs, into effective actions “on the ground” by means of country’s adoptions of laws and regulations as they apply to the different sectors. During Tranche I, the project contributed to different resolutions at country level (hunting, renewable energy and agricultural poisoning). Nonetheless, no country had legislation that related specifically to MSBs in the productive sectors. Egypt and Jordan now have a specific amendment to the EIA law to take into account MSBs in various developments. As stated on the prodoc, in several countries, overall policies and strategies for biodiversity and wildlife conservation are well designed although the translation of such policy statements into effective national legislation has in many cases not happened or, where the legislation exists, implementation is absent.” |
| UNDP | 27 | 943 | This is very interesting and would be useful if the report can present number of green Jobs created. Please provide a table with a number of green jobs created if possible | This is not possible. Several interviewees did mention that jobs were being created but there is actually no account as to the numbers of jobs being created. Its one of the recommendations of the report. |
| UNDP | 28 | 998 | Tracking tool | Corrected |
| UNDP | 29 | Table 9 | With 27 out of 30 at MTR, maybe we need it be Green! | As per the indicator assessment key presented on page 37, the colour green is given when the target has been achieved. Yellow is given when the indicator is “on target to be achieved” and red when is “not on target to be achieved”. Thus the evaluator considers the indicator as yellow since the target has not yet been met. |
| UNDP | 30 | Table 9 | I think there is substantial risks that this target is not achieved in these other countries. Clear recommendations should be proposed to help address these risks to make sure that the targets are achieved at the end of the project | There are some risks which are unavoidable and impossible to mitigate. For example, COVID-19 and the heavy impact its had on economic activity and private sector, war, civil unrest, etc. A recommendation has been made to “Split component 2 indicator 4 target “2015 baseline figure plus a minimum of 10 partnerships by project end for each national partner” by country differentiating between potential number of partnerships achievable per country and vehicle”. |
| UNDP | 31 | Table 9 | With 14 out of 23 at MTR, maybe we need it be Green! | As per the indicator assessment key presented on page 37, the colour green is given when the target has been achieved. Yellow is given when the indicator is “on target to be achieved” and red when is “not on target to be achieved”. Thus the evaluator considers the indicator as yellow since the target has not yet been met. |
| UNDP | 32 | Table 9 | Subestential risks exist that the targets not to be achieved at the end of the Project in these countries. Need exist to make clear recommendation to help Project take forward to achieve this importnat target | New recommendation has been made “Split component 1 indicator 1 target “Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end” and 3 “At least 100 requests by project end” and component 2, indicator 5 target “2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner” by country and according to the reality in each country to ensure the target will be met”. |
| UNDP | 33 | Table 9 | I think the total number of requests under this indicator should be split by country rather than an aggregated target so it can reflect difficulties across flyway countries. This is critical to make sure that appropriate recommendations are taken forward to address this high risk of not reaching progress in these other countries | New recommendation has been made “Split component 1 indicator 1 target “Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end” and 3 “At least 100 requests by project end” and component 2, indicator 5 target “2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner” by country and according to the reality in each country to ensure the target will be met”. |
| UNDP | 34 | Table 9 | Insert figure | Corrected |
| UNDP | 35 | Table 9 | This needs concrete recommendations to remove unclarity regards achievement of the target by other countries including Sudan | New recommendation has been made “Split component 1 indicator 1 target “Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end” and 3 “At least 100 requests by project end” and component 2, indicator 5 target “2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner” by country and according to the reality in each country to ensure the target will be met”. |
| UNDP | 36 | Table 9 | High risks that the targets not achieved in the other countries where not enough progress is made. So there should be a major recommendation on this as well as mentioned above | Please refer to recommendation “Establish **new vehicle selection criteria** to ensure GEF resources are fully utilized within the remaining lifespan of the project. Besides importance, feasibility and effectiveness of mainstreaming, include **efficiency**, the good use of time and resources in a way that does not waste any and there is **assurance that the funds can be utilized by 2022**. |
| UNDP | 37 | Table 9 | Target is met so maybe suggest Green despite the fact that COVID heavily impacted the tourism sector | Despite the fact that the target has been met the evaluator still considers, there is high uncertainty if these activities will be maintained specially due to the duration of the pandemic. |
| UNDP | 38 | 1010 | Please explain if there are any reasons why EWNHS capacity is decreasing? | Text added “EWNHS shows, through the capacity scorecard and status on triggers that they had less technical expertise and thus less potential for regional/global mentoring. PCCD opted to support them with a Communication Officer for 2 years to push the communications trigger up as well as to work on the gender mainstreaming strategy”. |
| UNDP | 39 | 1045 | Management arrangement including NGO modality was concluded by the report being more efficient in terms of facilitating implementation and reducing operational costs which I find very interesting. However, there was not enough analysis to what extent this successful especially that Birdlife has no partners in Djibouti, and funds transfer to NGOs in Egypt and Sudan is constrained. I would suggest that the report to include a little more analysis on the NGO modality. Also, the roles and responsibilities by different partners is fully unclear and sometime confusing. Therefore, would suggest that the report to elaborate more on the different roles and responsibilities of partners and those engaged in the implementation including UNDP Jordan, UNDP Egypt, RFF, Egypt’s PMU, and Birdlife partners to make it clearely presented in the report. I would like also to see if there is any need exists to engage UNDP Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to help address some of the implementation bottlenecks and risks identified in these countries. | Greater detail of the project management with roles and responsibilities is provided in section 3.4. In this section the evaluator analysis how its being implemented. |
| UNDP | 40 | 1213 | As noted in table 9 that not enough progress is being made in Ethiopia, and Sudanbut still there are some expenditures in these countries. Please clarify. | Text added “Ethiopia vehicle project on energy has conducted field work to identify the threats for MSBs, revamped EWNHS web site, worked on awareness raising and trained game wardens on the value of bird conservation. As per Sudan, the project managed to send USD 10.000 when SWS project coordinator attended a meeting in Jordan. With this resources SWS worked on Plant Protection Directorate revision of procedures to include MSB conservation (spray programmes); translated and customized agricultural guidelines for Sudanese context and held trainings. |
| UNDP | 41 | 1222 | I Will double check the figures Based on UNDP CDR | Numbers have been updated |
| UNDP | 42 | 1224 | 46% | 51% |
| UNDP | 43 | Table 19 | In Cash | Corrected |
| UNDP | 44 | 1239 | NREA to be added | Corrected |
| UNDP | 45 | 1390 | I would suggest clustering the long-list of conclusions around the key aspects of the review such as strategy, project design, log-frame, progress towards results, adaptive management, communication, social and environmental risks, and implementation arrangements, etc. | Corrected |
| UNDP | 46 | 1461 | I think there is a need to create an indicator on green job creations to capture the broader development impact of the Project and then integrated into the logframe to ensure proper monitoring of this important progress | The recommendation exists under “corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project” as   * Include the **number of green jobs being generated** directly or indirectly by the project at country level due to mainstreaming MSB conservation at the objective level as an indicator in the logframe. |
| UNDP | 46 | 1481 | On track across some countries like Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon but may not be achieved in other flyway countries including Sudan, Eriteria, Djibouti and Sudan and therfore would suggest to make concerté recomendations to help address this issue | This observation is dealt with under section 5.2.1 with this recommendation:   * Split component 1 indicator 1 target “Minimum 15 articles (and other media releases) in each country annually by project end” and 3 “At least 100 requests by project end” and component 2, indicator 5 target “2015 figure + minimum of 10 by project end for each national partner” by country and according to the reality in each country to ensure the target will be met”.   Difficult to make concrete recommendations in countries with such instability like Ethiopia or impossibility to work due to lack of Civil Society structure in country like Eritrea. |
| UNDP | 47 | 1487 | Need recommended action to help speed up progress to move vehicles by EWHNS and SWS | Two recommendations directly related to SWS work:   * Work with **UNDP** Sudan to find a feasible financial solution to transfer the vehicle project **funds** to **Sudan**. * Focus the capacity building exercises on strengthening SWS capacities.   Difficult to make a viable recommendation for Ethiopia given the country is at war. |
| UNDP | 48 | 1518 | It is obvious that there are extremely substantial risks that the project may not be on track to achieve related the associated targets in these countries as noted in the draft MTR report given political instability and ongoing conflict. There is not any recommendation made to help address such issue of lacking enough progress in these flyway countries including Ethiopia, Criteria, Djibouti, and Sudan. Therefore, suggest to make major recommendations to help address lack of progress in these countries. | Two recommendations refer to Sudan. The agricultural vehicle project in Ethiopia is on track although it seems they will not be able to identify a new project related to energy. Also, the country is at war in the Tigrai region.  The situation in Eritrea will not allow for identification of vehicle projects and in Djibouti BirdLife International needs to find a new partner. Thus, the only viable recommendation has already been made:   * Establish **new vehicle selection criteria** to ensure GEF resources are fully utilized within the remaining lifespan of the project. Besides importance, feasibility and effectiveness of mainstreaming, include **efficiency**, the good use of time and resources in a way that does not waste any and there is **assurance that the funds can be utilized by 2022**.   This recommendation might make the Project Board to focus on those countries that, given the current geopolitical situation on the Flyway, can deliver on time, ie. Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan. |

**Management arrangement:**

The consultant is expected to work with project management unit with a full guidance and supervision from the UNDP Team leader of the Environment, climate change and DRR portfolio.

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| --- | --- |
| **UNDP Signature** | **IC Signature** |
|  | Texto, Carta  Descripción generada automáticamente |

1. Egypt represents an exception to the overall implementing arrangements due to national NGOs inability to receive funds. UNDP Egypt appointed and acting as Responsible Party. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Project Coordinator was hired during Tranche 1 of the project in 2011 and has been renewing his contract on a yearly basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In Sudan the Project will work with and through the Sudanese Wildlife Society (SWS) – no funding will be provided to the Government of Sudan or its authorities. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Guide for the elaboration of Mid Term Reviews of UNDP supported projects financed by GEF, UNDP-GEF, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Priority ranking ranges from 1 (Low) to 5 (High) as per page 30 of the Prodoc [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The national coordinator signed his first contract on 15th of September 2011 during the project’s first tranche. His contract has been renewed on a yearly basis since. BirdLife International covered his salary in between tranche I and II. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 2018 and 2019 amounts reported on CDR [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 2018 and 2019 amounts reported on CDR [↑](#footnote-ref-8)