



**United Nations Development Programme
Global Environment Facility**

Lebanon



Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment, Lebanon
**GEF Full-size Project
(PIMS 4642)**



TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Date: 10/06/2020



i. Opening page

Title of the UNDP supported GEF financed project
Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment, Lebanon

Project ID#S

UNDP Atlas Project ID: 00081592

UNDP PIMS ID : 4642

GEF Project ID: 5229

Project start date

January 2016

Project end date

Planned: December 2019 Actual: July 2021

Project duration

Planned 4 years (48 months), revised 67 months

Region

Middle East

Country

Lebanon

GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program

Land Degradation

Executing Agency/Implementing Partner

Ministry of the Environment

Evaluation timeframe

April/June 2021

Date of the Evaluation Report

10 June 2021

International Evaluator

Giacomo Morelli



ii. Acknowledgement

A deep thanks to all the people who have taken the time to provide the author with information utilized for the formulation of this evaluation report. A special thanks to the PMU for their support in organizing the entire process of remote meetings and interviews that made the evaluation exercise possible.



iii. Table of contents

i. Opening page	i
ii. Acknowledgement	ii
iii. Table of contents	iii
iv. Acronyms and abbreviations	v
1. Executive summary	1
1.1. Project Information Table.....	1
1.2. Brief project description	1
1.3. Evaluation Ratings Table.....	2
1.4. Summary of findings and conclusions	3
1.5. Synthesis of the key lessons learned	4
1.6. Recommendations Summary Table.....	4
2. Introduction.....	5
2.1. Evaluation purpose.....	5
2.2. Scope of the evaluation.....	5
2.3. Methodology	6
2.4. Data collection and analysis	6
2.5. Ethics	7
2.6. Limitations.....	7
2.7. Structure of the TE report	8
3. Project description	8
3.1. Project start and duration	8
3.2. Development context.....	8
3.3. Problems that the project sought to address.....	9
3.4. Immediate and development objectives	9
3.5. Expected results	10
3.6. Total resources.....	11
3.7. Main stakeholders.....	11
3.8. Description of the project’s Theory of Change.....	13
4. Findings	14
4.1. Project Design/Formulation	14
4.1.a. Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators	14
4.1.b. Assumptions and Risks	15
4.1.c. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design.....	16
4.1.d. Planned stakeholder participation	17
4.1.e. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector.....	17
4.1.f. Gender responsiveness of project design	17
4.1.g. Social and Environmental Safeguards.....	17



4.2. Project Implementation	17
4.2.a. Adaptive Management	17
4.2.b. Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements.....	18
4.2.c. Project Finance and Co-finance	18
4.2.d. Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry, implementation, overall assessment of M&E ...	19
4.2.e. UNDP implementation/oversight, Implementing Partner execution and overall assessment of implementation/oversight and execution	19
4.2.f. Risk Management.....	20
4.3. Project Results and Impacts	21
4.3.a. Progress towards objective and expected outcomes	21
4.3.b. Relevance	28
4.3.c. Effectiveness.....	29
4.3.d. Efficiency	33
4.3.e. Sustainability: financial, socio-political, institutional framework and governance, environmental, overall likelihood of sustainability	34
4.3.f. Country ownership.....	36
4.3.g. Gender equality and women’s empowerment.....	37
4.3.h. Cross-cutting Issues	37
4.3.i. GEF additionality.....	37
4.3.j. Catalytic/Replication Effect	38
4.3.k. Progress to Impact.....	39
5. Main findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons learned.....	39
5.1. Main findings.....	39
5.2. Conclusions.....	40
5.3. Recommendations.....	41
5.4. Lessons learned	43
6. Annexes	I
Annex 1 - TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)	II
Annex 2 - TE virtual mission agenda	VIII
Annex 3 - List of persons interviewed	X
Annex 4 - List of documents consulted	XII
Annex 5 - Evaluation Question Matrix.....	XIV
Annex 6 - TE Rating scale.....	XIX
Annex 7 - UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators	XX



iv. Acronyms and abbreviations

AFD	French Agency for Development (<i>Agence Francaise pour le Developpement</i>)
AFDC	Association for Forest Development and Conservation
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany
CAS	Central Administration of Statistics
CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DGA	Directorate General of Antiquities
DFID	Department for International Development of the Gov. of the United Kingdom
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoL	Government of Lebanon
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDSS	Inquiry-based Decision Support System
ILA	Integrated Landscape Approach
INRM	Integrated Natural Resources Management
LARI	Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute
LD	Land Degradation
LRA	Litani River Authority
LRI	Lebanese Reforestation Initiative
LUP	Land Use Plan
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoC	Ministry of Culture
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoEW	Ministry of Energy and Water
MoPWT	Ministry of Public Works and Transport
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAP	National Action Programme to Combat Desertification
NCSR	National Center for Scientific Research
NDVI	Normalized Difference Vegetation Index
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OMSAR	Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reforms
PMU	Project Management Unit



SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SLMQ	Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment, Lebanon
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attributable, Relevant, Time-bound/Trackable/Targeted
SPIMS	Sustainable Planning Information Management System (SPIMS)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOB	University of Balamand
USJ	Saint Joseph University
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme



1. Executive summary

1.1. Project Information Table

Project Details		Project Milestones	
Project Title:	Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment Project	PIF Approval Date:	8 Jan. 2013
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	4642	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP) / Approval date:	26 Nov. 2014
GEF Project ID:	5229	ProDoc Signature Date:	28 Jan. 2016
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	Atlas Award ID: 00081592 Project ID: 00090788	Date Project Manager hired:	1 Aug. 2016
Country/Countries:	Lebanon	Inception Workshop Date:	30 Nov. 2016
Region:	Arab States	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	8 Dec. 2018
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Terminal Evaluation Completion Date:	10 Jun. 2021
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/Objectives:	Land Degradation	Planned Operational Closure Date:	27 Jul 2021
Trust Fund: [indicate GEF TF, LDCF, SCCF, NPIF]		GEF TF	
Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity):		United Nations Development Programme Lebanese Ministry of Environment	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		N/A	
Private sector involvement:		N/A	
Geospatial coordinates of project sites: [Coordinates are available in the annual PIRs]		lat=33.67481599999999 lng=35.854279399999996	
Financial Information PDF/PPG		at approval (US\$)	at PDF/PPG completion
GEF PDF/PPG grants for project preparation		100,000	100,000
Co-financing for project preparation		0	0
Project		at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	at TE (US\$)
[1] UNDP contribution:		150,000	3,514,940
[2] Government:		17,600,000	19,859,940
[3] Other multi-/bi-laterals:		0	0
[4] Private Sector:		0	0
[5] NGOs:		0	0
[6] Total co-financing [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5]:		17,750,000	23,374,880
[7] Total GEF funding:		3,187,671	3,187,671
[8] Total UNDP funding:		300,000	300,000
[9] Total Project Cost [7 + 8]:		3,487,671	3,487,671
[10] Total Project Funding [6 + 9]		21,237,671	26,862,551

1.2. Brief project description

The project aimed at the promotion of sustainable land use for the Qaraoun Catchment by developing institutional tools upstream at national level in the best interest of the land owners, farmers and communities as well as the nation. Land-use plans at the landscape level are meant to benefit from the project through the identification of land productivity values and ecosystem services and how they could be protected, and an effective monitoring system established to maintain all data up to date and discover any worrying trends before they become irreversible.



The implementation of the proposed project aimed at immediate global environmental benefit, albeit on a small scale, through the increased management efficiency of arable land and rangelands and the expansion of the area under forests through land use plans, buffer zones, and riparian strips for the restoration of natural productivity and conservation of the habitats. As a result, globally significant biodiversity is meant to be conserved and valuable ecosystem services safeguarded.

Specifically, SLMQ project’s design included an objective and three outcomes.

Project’s objective: Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment.

Outcome # 1: Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment.

Outcome # 2: Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced.

Outcome # 3: Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape.

The project was built on existing structures put in place by the GoL to coordinate with the different institutions and departments relevant in the context of sustainable land management (SLM). The three outcomes correspond to three levels of intervention:

1. A local approach in the three targeted districts of the catchment (West Bekaa, Zahle and Rachaya) to implemented specific SLM practices on farms, forests and rangelands;
2. The formulation of land use plans (LUPs) to upscale SLM practices in the three targeted districts in order to enable the institution to oversee the local development and its impacts on natural resources; and
3. Finally, a third level of intervention with the aspiration to improve capacity both at local and national level to promote SLM beyond the area of intervention, possibly countrywide.

1.3. Evaluation Ratings Table

1. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E design at entry	3 – Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)
M&E Plan Implementation	5 – Satisfactory (S)
Overall Quality of M&E	5 – Satisfactory (S)
2. Implementing Agency (IA) Implementation &	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
Effectiveness	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
Efficiency	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
Overall Project Outcome Rating	6 – Highly Satisfactory (HS)
4. Sustainability	Rating
Financial sustainability	4 – Likely (L)
Socio-political sustainability	Unable to assess (AU)
Institutional framework and governance	3 – Moderately Likely (ML)
Environmental sustainability	4 – Likely
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	3 – Moderately Likely (ML)



1.4. Summary of findings and conclusions

The adoption of the recommendations of the MTR exercise, specifically those related to the revision of indicators and target levels reformulation and to the project extension was key to ensure the success of the project in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The high level of thematic relevance of the project and the capacity, the attitude and the will to collaborate of the PMU were recognized as the main elements that enabled the project to act as a catalyser of development actions in the Qaraoun catchment.

Competences of project-hired consultants and the high level of participation at the centre of the consultative process promoted by the project were as well considered key elements to achieve project results and ensure a great level of country ownership that goes beyond its institutional boundaries.

The M&E activities were appropriate to project needs.

The efficiency of the project implementation is very high. The work coordinated by the PMU resulted to be successful in achieving very ambitious targets at outcome level. Without a coordination effort, the project would have not fulfilled, just with its funds and personnel, its ambitions.

PMU's work, the support from UNDP country office and the collaboration with the MoE were adequate for a smooth implementation of project activities. In particular, all the stakeholders interviewed on the matter considered the dedication and the capacities of the PMU's members outstanding.

The consequences of the economic downturn, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut blast, although mitigated, had a significant impact on the SLMQ project. This impact spanned across the three outcomes of the project and had its negative effect in term of consolidation of the achievements in terms of capacity building. It slowed down the all process and therefore hampered the capacity development dimension of the project, which would have been broader and deeper if the crisis had not happened. The impact of the crises on the sustainability of the project may have been significant, too.

SLMQ project helped the positioning of MoE within the institutional landscape of Lebanon. The ministry is now perceived not only as a conservationist entity; instead, its role as a development actor is recognized more widely.

The project promoted the GEF additionality across all the relevant GEF areas, i.e. environmental area, legal/regulatory area; institutional/governance area; financial area, socio-economic area and innovation area.

There is a vast consensus amongst stakeholders' interviews: activities related to natural resource management are very suitable for the food-for-asset approach that characterizes the work of the humanitarian community in Lebanon. They are labour intensive and may produce a significant environmental impact.

SLMQ achieved its objective and outcomes. Project achievements are significant in terms of environmental benefits for the implementation of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD), i.e. the most important for the GEF. The project contributed to the implementation of the three Rio Conventions at country level. The GEF funds were utilized in a very pertinent way and enabled the country to move forward in the right direction.

The project contributed to the reforestation of 314 ha. It promoted five new economic opportunities for local dwellers. It also developed a masterplan and 57 detailed Land Use Plans (LUP) and, final, produced a wide array of technical guidelines, i.e. National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests; National Forest Management Guidelines; Riparian Management



Guidelines; Urban Planning Management Handbook and a Regulatory framework for the local production of biopesticides and import of biological agents.

1.5. Synthesis of the key lessons learned

Lesson learned n. 1 - General Approach: Adaptive management and participation are the key for a project to achieve ambitious objectives. Participation of relevant stakeholders in the project formulation phase, application of corrective actions, the coordination of different capacities, search for consensual solutions, and dedicated project staff are the necessary elements to ensure that a well-formulated project can prove to be successful on the ground. This approach coincides with the general approach that should characterize the formulation of all UN initiatives at field level. The SLMQ project confirmed the validity of such an approach.

Lesson learned n. 2 – Maximization of efforts: Coordination amongst stakeholders, use of competent consultants, support from the country office, and promotion of synergies outside the boundaries of a development initiative, such as the SLMQ project, towards the maximization of resource available constitute an effective strategy to promote the GEF additionality in all its relevant aspects.

Lesson learned n. 3 – Project Management Staff: The thematic relevance of an initiative in a given territory is evidently the pre-requisite for a development project to be successful. However, those in charge of project management should be able to secure the attention of other stakeholders operating in the area to produce beneficial effects. Relevant managerial competencies, commitment and capacities to listen and understand different interests, openness to dialogue and personal commitment are key factors to promote an effective engagement of stakeholders in development initiative.

1.6. Recommendations Summary Table

#	TE recommendation	Entity Responsible	Timeline
Category A: Design			
A.1	To include an articulated Theory of Change in the design of new initiatives. A Theory of Change help both project designers and implementers to navigate in the complexity of the context in which an initiative is implemented. It helps in setting/revising project ambitions, in formulating results, indicators and target levels. Moreover, its visualization within the specific context supports the identification of risks that may undermine the likelihood of success of the project. It also constitutes a tool to understand who in the project area and/or at national level may share interests beneficial for the initiative and for the sector in general. It is then important, that the team in charge of writing project documents include both thematic specialists and M&E specialists. The two kinds of expertise are important to get to a project design that later can guide the implementation towards its goals.	UNDP / MoA / MoE	During the identification phase and/or the inception phase of implementation of new environmental and/or agricultural initiatives
A.2	To include indicators and targets to capture broader development impacts/effects (e.g. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance, livelihood benefits, and others) to which a new initiative/project is expected to contribute. Indeed, to move forward the Agenda 2030 and the fulfilment of its SDGs at country and global level, it is necessary to highlight that actions in one area related to an SDG will affect other SDGs and that sustainable development must advance taking into account its	UNDP / MoA / MoE	During the identification phase and/or the inception phase of implementation of new environmental and/or agricultural initiatives



	social, economic and sustainable dimensions. Under this perspective, UNDP/GEF initiatives represent an ideal tool to promote and visualize concepts related to the environment and sustainable development and related benefits.		
Category B: Promotion of environment and development agenda			
B.1	To share the results of the initiative, especially the Masterplan, Local Development Action Plan and the LUPs, within the humanitarian community (GoL, UN agencies, NGOs and Donors) in order to promote the alignment of humanitarian interventions to the local development of Qaraoun catchment area. The alignment of humanitarian initiatives with the Masterplan, LDAP and LUPs is critical to promote the “triple nexus” of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding (HDP) efforts, which is widely accepted as relevant work approach within the development and humanitarian community. This will also help UNDP to keep positioning itself as a leading development agency within the Lebanese context.	UNDP	During relevant meetings and events of humanitarian platforms operating in the country
B.2	To promote environmental restoration activities as a privileged/priority sector for food-for-asset interventions. Restoration activities, in fact, provide opportunities for labour intense temporary jobs, and, at the same time, ensure a significant impact for the improvement of the environmental status of the country. The guidelines produced by the project represent in this regard a valuable tool because humanitarian organizations may lack the necessary capacities to conduct environmental activity in a technically robust manner.	UNDP / MoA / MoE	Within other relevant initiatives and during relevant meetings and events of humanitarian platforms operating in the country
Category C: Knowledge generation and dissemination			
C.1	To involve the academic sector in environment and development initiative. The implementation of the Rio Conventions and the attainment of related SDGs constitute a challenge for all countries. Creation and diffusion of scientific knowledge on this regard is crucial. Environment/development projects represents an ideal means to produce scientific knowledge rooted in practical experience.	UNDP / MoA / MoE	Within other relevant initiatives

2. Introduction

2.1. Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) is to assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming in Lebanon. The TE also aims at promoting accountability and transparency, and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

2.2. Scope of the evaluation

The TE evaluated the results according to the criteria established in the “Guidance for conducting terminal evaluation of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed projects”. It involved all beneficiary actors, as well as those responsible for the execution and implementation of the project indicated in the Project Document (ProDoc).



The exercise covered the design, execution and results of the project focusing, therefore, on the following three categories:

- **Project Design/Formulation** including the following sub-categories:
Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy (as per its revision following the MTR); Indicators; Assumptions and Risks; Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design; Planned stakeholder participation; and Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector.
- **Project Implementation including the following sub-categories:**
Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation); Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements; Project Finance and Co-finance; Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry, implementation, and overall assessment; UNDP implementation/oversight and Implementing Partner execution, overall project implementation/execution, coordination, and operational issues; and Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards).
- **Project Results and Impacts including the following sub-categories:**
Progress towards objective and expected outcomes; Relevance; Effectiveness; Efficiency ; Overall outcome; Sustainability (financial, socio-political, institutional framework and governance, environmental, and overall likelihood of sustainability); Country ownership; Gender quality and women's empowerment; Cross-cutting Issues; GEF Additionality; Catalytic/Replication Effect; and Progress to Impact.

Based upon findings, the TE exercise exposes conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

2.3. Methodology

A theory-based and utilization-focused approach was used for the TE.

Theory-based evaluations focus on analysing a project's underlying logic and causal linkages. Indeed, projects are built on assumptions on how and why they are supposed to achieve the agreed results through the selected strategy. This set of assumptions constitutes the "program theory" or "theory of change", which, in UNDP/GEF project is visualized in the Results Framework. The TE was based on the theory of change analysing the strategy underpinning the project, including objectives and assumptions, and assessing its robustness and realism.

An utilization-focused approach is based on the principle that evaluations and reviews should be judged on their usefulness to their intended users; therefore, they should be planned and conducted in ways that enhance the likely utilization of both the findings and of the process itself to inform decisions: the TE report at hand ends with a of actionable recommendations.

2.4. Data collection and analysis

As planned in the inception report, the research design of the evaluation exercise has used the following primary and secondary data collection methods:

- Desk review
- Individual interviews
- Group interviews

Different methodological approaches to data analysis were applied to identify key findings from the collected data as well as to draw conclusions, identify lessons learned, and make recommendations. These approaches included: contribution analysis, trend analysis: To understand how activities and outputs contribute to common objectives over time; and comparative analysis.

The TE Evaluative Matrix is included in Annex 5.



2.5. Ethics

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) “Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations”.

2.6. Limitations

The entire evaluation exercise was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in accordance with what was planned in the inception report.

The International Evaluator met all the actors foreseen in the Inception Report and covered satisfactorily all activities of SLMQ project.

The occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity to conduct the evaluation remotely had the following implications for the development of the evaluation process:

- The actors in the project areas were interviewed individually or in groups and it has not been possible to carry out focus groups.
- Field visits to project sites were not possible.

The TE took place in the months of April, May, and June 2021. It was fully conducted remotely, with the International Evaluator working in home-office.

It entailed three phases:

1. Inception phase

It took place from the April 1 to April 16. The International Evaluator delivered the inception report that later was approved by UNDP.

2. Data collection phase

It took place from April 26 to May 7. At the end of the mission, the International Evaluator had a wrap-up meeting with the Project Manager and the Energy and Environment Programme Manager.

The International Evaluator worked in close collaboration with the project staff to carry out the data collection phase, who set up a well-organized schedule of meetings.

Project staff participated in some meetings to support the International Evaluator with translation.

The International Evaluator conducted 29 individual and 10 group interviews. Two interviews were conducted during the reporting phase. The whole process of interviews involved 59 individuals amongst UNDP staff members (9), representatives of national (10) and local authorities (6), representative of the academic and research sector (3), project direct beneficiaries (23, 11 women and 12 men), NGOs (5), and staff members of other UN agencies (2), and consultants (1).

3. Reporting phase

It took place from May 10 to June 10. The deliverables of the reporting phase were the Draft ET Report and the Final ET Report, i.e. the report at hand. In the Final TE Report, the International Evaluator addressed the comments received on the Draft Report from UNDP and its partners. In addition, the International Evaluator delivered a TE audit trail form.

As already mentioned in the Inception Report, the effect of remote communication on the perception of the questions (by the interviewees) and the responses (by the International Evaluator) is not estimable.



Annex 2 shows the TE virtual mission agenda, annex 3 the list of persons interviewed, and annex 4 the of documents reviewed.

2.7. Structure of the TE report

The TE report consists of three core sections:

Project Description and Background Context

The section briefly describes the project and the context in which it was designed and implemented.

Findings

This section provides answers to the three categories of Project Design/Formulation, Project Implementation and Project Results and Impacts.

Main Finding, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Lessons Learned

The section includes the main findings, evidence-based conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

3. Project description

3.1. Project start and duration

SLMQ project started in January 2016 and will end in July 2021. The duration of the project expected, as per the ProDoc, was 48 months. The project will have a total duration of 67 months. It was extended by 19 months. Specific project cycle management (PCM) milestones are not described neither in the Project Document nor in the Results Framework.

3.2. Development context

The project Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment (SLMQ) was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and was nationally implemented by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) of the Government of Lebanon (GoL) and by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the support to National Implementation Modality (NIM) mechanism.

Land degradation is a significant problem in the Qaraoun Catchment, and ecosystem services and livelihoods of communities are consequently being jeopardized. In fact, the catchment is an important source of water for urban use and food production, an important source of ecosystem services and a habitat for threatened biodiversity.

As noted in the in Project Document (ProDoc), “...*the National Action Programme (NAP) to Combat Desertification (2003) of Lebanon stressed the importance of land use planning by proposing “to encourage land use planning at the local level within the framework of regional and national plans”. The project aims to address this issue at the regional level...*”

The central idea of SLMQ project was aligned with the NAP, i.e. development should be promoted, but not at the expense of the environment. SLM practices were identified as the main tools to align agriculture, rangeland, and forest practices to this idea.

SLMQ project also acknowledged that national and local authorities lack the capacity to promote integrated land use management plans with a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Definitely, the project intended to promote improvement at regulatory and institutional level as well.



It is important to highlight that three crises have been hitting Lebanon during the implementation period of the SLMQ project adding to the protracted Syrian crisis, which started in 2011 before the identification of the project. These crises are:

- The economic downturn of Lebanese economy that started in October 2019 and now of the evaluation is still ongoing;
- The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which hit Lebanon, as most of the countries in the region starting from February/March 2020; and
- The Beirut blast that happened on August 4, 2020.

3.3. Problems that the project sought to address

As noted by the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification (NAP), development and productivity are essential but should not be at the expense of the environment. The ambition of the was “...to engineer a paradigm shift from unsustainable to sustainable land management in the Qaraoun Catchment...”, as clearly pointed out in the ProDoc. In doing so, the project intended to promote an integrated approach towards fostering sustainable land management (SLM) seeking to balance environmental management with development needs.

The ProDoc identified the following root causes for land degradation, which the project would attempt to address:

Institutional

Lack of an effective Integrated Land Use Management Plan. This was the root cause for encroachment and loss of productive land. It was also the reason why national policies, plans and strategies were not applied at local level, and this in turn, made enforcement exceedingly difficult.

Governance

Lack of clear national land use policy and direction. Legal frameworks were weak or ambiguous; institutional mandates, roles and responsibilities were unclear and at times conflicting.

Technical

Low level of awareness and understanding of the vulnerability of land, biodiversity and ecosystem services. In addition to that, a low level of farming knowledge and expertise.

Socio-economic

Poverty and lack of choices and strategies for a better environmental management.

3.4. Immediate and development objectives

SLMQ project aligned with the GEF-5 Land Degradation (LD) Focal Area Strategy aiming at the following global environmental benefits:

- Improved provision of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystem goods and services;
- Reduced GHG emissions from agriculture, deforestation and forest degradation and increased carbon sequestration; and
- Reduced vulnerability of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystems to climate change and other human-induced impacts.



More specifically, the project tried to address each of the four GEF LD objectives, namely:

- Maintain or improve flows of agro-ecosystem services to sustain the livelihoods of local communities;
- Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones, including sustaining livelihoods of forest-dependent people;
- Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape; and
- Increase capacity to apply adaptive management tools in SLM.

The project also intended to advance the strategic objectives of the 10-year strategic plan, specifically of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) at country level:

- Improving the living conditions of affected populations;
- Improving the condition of affected ecosystems; and
- Generating global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD.

SLMQ intended to contribute towards the Agenda 2030, specifically to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) n° 15 “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” and related indicators:

- 15.1 ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements;
- 15.2 promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally; and
- 15.3 combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

3.5. Expected results

Project’s objective was formulated as “Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment”.

Three were the main outcomes of the SLMQ project:

- Outcome # 1 “Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment”.
- Outcome # 2 “Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced”.
- Outcome # 3 “Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape”.

The project was built on existing structures put in place by the GoL to coordinate with the different institutions and departments relevant in the context of sustainable land management (SLM). The three outcomes correspond to three levels of intervention:

1. A local approach in the three targeted districts of the catchment (West Bekaa, Zahle and Rachaya) to implemented specific SLM practices on farms, forests and rangelands;
2. The formulation of land use plans (LUPs) to upscale SLM practices in the three targeted districts in order to enable the institution to oversee the local development and its impacts on natural resources; and



- Finally, a third level of intervention with the aspiration to improve capacity both at local and national level to promote SLM beyond the area of intervention, possibly countrywide.

3.6. Total resources

The total resources allocated to the project at CEO endorsement of the ProDoc are presented in the table below:

Project Financing & Co-financing	Amount (in USD)
1. GEF financing	3,187,671
2. UNDP (as IA)	300,000
3. Total financing [1+2]	3,487,671
4. Government (co-financing)	17,600,000
5. UNDP (co-financing)	150,000
6. Total co-financing [4+5]	17,750,000
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [3+6]	21,237,671

3.7. Main stakeholders

The ProDoc identified the following stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Role and/or relationship with
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	MoE is the Executing Agency/Implementation Partner for the project as the national environment agency in Lebanon, responsible for all environmental protection issues. Its responsibilities are: (i) to strengthen environmental inspection and enforcement; (ii) to promote sustainable management of land and soil; (iii) to preserve and promote Lebanon's ecosystem capital (iv) to promote hazardous and non-hazardous waste management; (v) to control pollution and regulate activities that impact the environment. MoE facilitates functioning of the Project Management Unit (PMU), especially concerning liaison with government authorities from different sectors. MoE takes a lead in the upstream activities of the project as well as the SEA on which the LUPs are founded. It oversees the integration of conservation measures and monitoring system into the integrated land-use (management) plans and/or annual work plans and contribute to capacity building of stakeholders (public/private/community) in the Qaraoun Catchment project sites. MoE ensures coordination with other relevant projects and initiatives and is active in monitoring PCU performance.
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	MoA oversees the majority of land use in Lebanon. It is also the National Focal Point for the UNCCD. More specifically, it has responsibility for the management of forests, rangelands and agricultural activities. MoA is therefore a key stakeholder and partner for the project. It provides advice and expertise for project activities at the local level, facilitates forests activities, as well as leads in the development and implementation of rangeland management protocols.
Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI)	The LARI is a public institution dedicated to research for the development and advancement of the agricultural sector in Lebanon. It falls under the aegis of MoA but continues to enjoy administrative and financial autonomy. LARI is involved in the project agricultural activities and provides advice and expertise for the innovative approaches and tools that the project develops in its search for sustainable land management practices.
Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)	CDR has three main tasks: compiling a plan and a time schedule for the resumption of reconstruction and development, guaranteeing the funding of projects, supervising their execution and utilization by contributing to the process of rehabilitation of public institutions, thus enabling it to assume responsibility for the



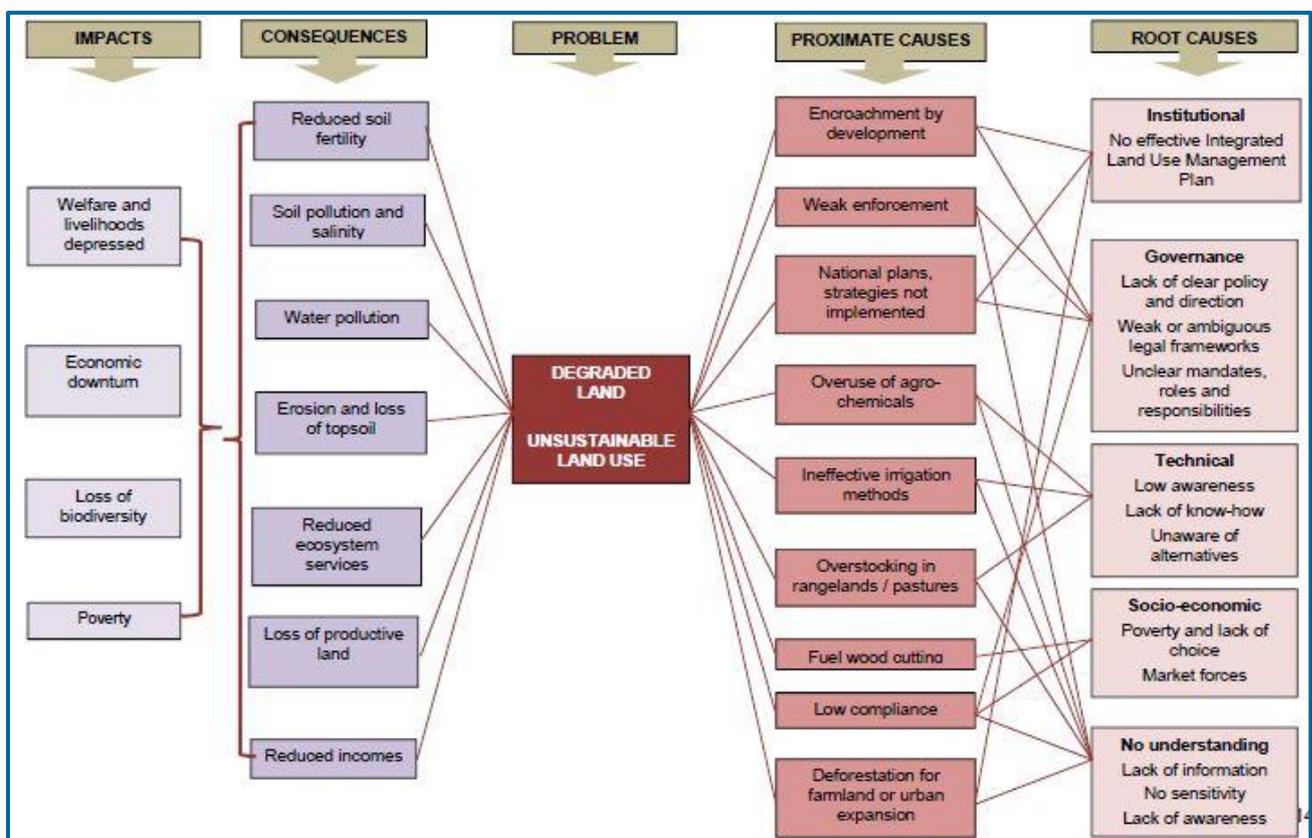
	<p>execution of a number of projects under the supervision of the Council of Ministers. More recently, CDR has focused on land use and land use planning and as such is a key stakeholder and partner for the project. It provides advice and expertise for the LUP activities of the project and shares ownership of the resulting plans.</p>
<p><i>Qaraoun Catchment Districts, Municipal Unions and other Municipalities</i></p>	<p>The three Districts of interest to the project comprise a number of Municipalities many of which have combined to form Unions. These local administrations are charged with the day-to-day management of all public works within their area of jurisdiction including water and waste networks, waste disposal, internal roads, and urban planning. They are key stakeholders and partners for the project Land Use Planning activities for which they will provide local knowledge and collaboration. They also adopt and implement the LUPs and as such are among the main beneficiaries of the project. Furthermore, they cooperate with the project in its reforestation and related activities, as well as the coordination of rangeland management.</p>
<p><i>Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MoPWT)</i></p>	<p>The Directorate General for Urban Planning (DGUP) of MoPWT has responsibility for land use planning in Lebanon although to date this has focussed on the urban environment. As the entity with legal responsibility for land use planning the DGUP is a major stakeholder for the project and advises and assists the project with its LUP activities and provides the legal framework for their development, adoption and ultimate implementation.</p>
<p><i>Wider Public, Communities and the Private Sector</i></p>	<p>The involvement of the wider public and communities in ecosystem conservation is an important part of the project. Land owners and employers, other private sector exponents, farmers, shepherds, farmers associations and cooperatives, and other communities in the localities where the project is active, are the prime beneficiaries of the project. They are involved fully in the design, testing, evaluating and eventually upscaling of project approaches and tools for SLM. They are identified more specifically during the Inception Phase and brought in as appropriate during project implementation.</p>
<p><i>Environmental NGOs and community groups</i></p>	<p>The environmental NGOs and community groups experienced in various aspects of the project are involved as much as possible e.g. Forests activities (Jouzour Loubnan, Friends of the Cedars of Bcharre Committee, Association for Forests, Development and Conservation); Arable land activities such as organic farming and slow food (Greenline Association); Protected Areas designation and management (Al Shouf Cedars Society); Nature based tourism development (e.g. trail development – Lebanon Mountain Trail Association, Baldati, etc.). Others are identified during the Inception Phase.</p>
<p><i>Academia</i></p>	<p>University staff and students from relevant institutions are invited to participate in activities for which they are seen to have the necessary expertise, advice, knowledge and/or capabilities. These could include the survey work which forms part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and which underpins the Land Use Plans, as well as the subsequent environmental and land use monitoring which follow.</p>
<p><i>Professional Organisations</i></p>	<p>Organizations such as Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Syndicate of Industrialists, Order of Engineers and Architects are invited to participate in project activities as relevant to their areas of interest and expertise.</p>
<p><i>The Litani River Authority (LRA)</i></p>	<p>The Litani River Authority (LRA) was formed in 1954 to facilitate the integrated development of the Litani River Basin. Its major achievement is the hydroelectric development project that has brought about major hydrological changes to the Litani River Basin. The project sees the LRA as a most important institution in the Qaraoun Catchment and is seen as a source of advice on hydrologic matters. The</p>

	LRA is also a prospective beneficiary of the project as a result of its expected positive impact on lake water quality.
Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW)	MoEW collaborates with the project by monitoring water quality and quantity in the Litani River and the evaluation of the project success, as well as in the process of policy and legislation review.
Central Administration of Statistics (CAS)	The CAS has published Environment statistics with data on water, the seabed, air pollution, soil, biodiversity, forests, wildlife and flora and waste. Some of this data is of interest to the project and CAS will be invited to collaborate in project activities such as surveys which will lead to the SEA and the LUPs. Statistics will also be helpful in evaluating the project's results and impacts.

3.8. Description of the project's Theory of Change

An explicit Theory of Change was not included in the project design. However, a causal chain analysis for land degradation in the Qaraoun Catchment is included.

The project is designed to work on the root and proximate causes of the land degradation in the



Qaraoun catchment. The project's Theory of Change can be visualize as a backward path aiming at mitigating these causes in order to tackle the problem.



4. Findings

4.1. Project Design/Formulation

4.1.a. Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators

As mentioned in the MTR report, stakeholders from various ministries, universities, and local authorities were consulted for the preparation of the ProDoc to ensure its alignment with national priorities:

- Activation of the national strategy for the management of forest fires
- Follow up the implementation of the national plan for reforestation and combating desertification
- Promotion of natural sites and reserves and biodiversity
- Activation of the environmental management of water basins
- Planning for urbanization and reducing its environmental implications
- The project also aimed at contributing to the alleviation of pollution in the Litani River and Qaraoun Lake, which is a national priority of the GoL.

The project design included features related to:

- Development of regulatory and planning tools;
- Support to direct implementation; and
- Awareness promotion and capacity development.

These features are typical of technical cooperation support projects that aim at improving the quality of aid effectiveness in the long term.

Expected results are linked to the achievement of the Project outcomes, and activities are logically sequenced to achieving many of the expected results. As already mentioned in section “3.8. Description of the project’s Theory of Change”, the causal chain analysis for land degradation in the Qaraoun Catchment is well formulated and corresponds, if visualized as a backward path, to the Theory of Change of the SLMQ project.

The project hypothesis is that working to remove and/or mitigate the root cause of the problem “land degradation” (i.e. lack of land use management plans, weak legal frameworks, lack of relevant technical know-how, and weak awareness about environmental concerns and opportunities) leads to an amelioration of the land degradation status. A better land management, in turns, may induce improvement on the environmental status of Qaraoun catchment and on the livelihoods of the communities residing there.

The strategy underpinning the Project is robust and logic: the outcomes and the general objective of the Project were conceptually related to each other; however, target levels of indicators were very ambitious and their “achievability” within the implementation overestimated. It is important to keep in mind that the project intended “to engineer a paradigm shift from unsustainable to sustainable land management in the Qaraoun Catchment”. It is evident from an expeditious analysis of baseline values indicators of Results Framework that SLM was a relatively new concepts in the country, legal frameworks to mainstream SLM were weak, the integrated land use institutional planning were almost completely missing and there was a very low level of awareness of the importance of ecosystem services.

The Result Framework was revised during the MTR (November 2018). The review suggested changes to the formulation of indicators that were later accepted and adopted by the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) as new indicators. All indicators, but one, were changed. Modifications of the formulations were necessary to make indicators easier to understand (by removing ambiguities of the previous formulation) and to make possible a proper measurement of the level of achievement. The



ideas behind their original formulation remained unchanged. All revised indicators are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attributable, Relevant, Time-bound/Trackable/Targeted).

This evaluation exercise considers the changes made to the indicators appropriate because they allow a better understanding of the work carried out by the project and of the effects to which it contributed. In this way, a better capacity to monitor the project was promoted. Ultimately, the changes allowed a vision of the project that increased the overall accountability and transparency of project implementation.

Both the original and the revised Result Frameworks do not capture any broader development impacts as income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, and livelihood benefits.

4.1.b. Assumptions and Risks

The Result Frameworks of the SLMQ project includes eight elements under the column “assumptions and risks” split throughout project objective and outcomes. However, these elements are not assumptions and risks¹ and, therefore, have no utility to help/guide the implementation of activities and achieve expected results.

The table below presents the evaluation considerations about all assumptions and risks:

Assumptions	Risks
Project objective: Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment	
<i>Awareness and sensitivity to the value and vulnerability of land and ecological resources will reach an effective critical level among Government officials, landowners and others in the private sector, communities and individuals, leading to an alleviation of land degradation, protection of ecosystem services and improvement in livelihoods.</i>	<i>The risk is that the project timescale is somewhat short for some of the project benefits to manifest themselves, resulting in a lack of appreciation.</i>
Evaluation consideration	
This was one of the challenges of the project, one of its <i>raison d’être</i> . Government officials, landowners and other stakeholders are beneficiaries of the project. Their lack of engagement with the project would prove that the project is not relevant to them. It would represent a project failure.	The implementation period is an internal feature of a project. It is an element of its design, not an external factor of risk.
Outcome 1: Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment	
<i>The Outcome assumes that the uptake of SLM measures will lead to very specific beneficial results in the catchment; and that these results will be evident soon enough to ensure the sustainability of project benefits.</i>	<i>If the planned outputs are indeed obtained through the project and if awareness is raised to an effective level, there is very little or no risk that the outcome will not be achieved.</i>

¹ Assumptions and risks are elements, included in the design of a project, which are out of the sphere of control of the project management team. Usually, they are accompanied by mitigation measures, i.e. what the management team/project can do in order to mitigate/enhance their negative/positive effect on project implementation in case an assumption, identified in during the project identification phase, does not held true or a risks materializes. This definition of “assumption and risks” is acknowledged both in the “UNDP - Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results” (2009) and in the GEF document “Theory of Change Primer” (2019).



Evaluation considerations	
Again, This was one of the challenge of the project, one of its <i>raison d'être</i> . SLMQ Project intended to promote SLM measures.	The risk is very badly formulated.
Outcome 2: Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced	
<i>The Outcome assumes that pressures on natural resources can be reduced and that this can be obtained through the elimination of competing land uses through effective land use planning and management.</i>	<i>The risk is that the capacity at local levels will not be adequate to carry on with the benefits of the project.</i>
Evaluation considerations	
Again, this was one of the challenges of the project, one of its <i>raison d'être</i> . SLMQ Project intended to reduce pressures on natural resources.	Again, this was one of the challenges of the project, one of its <i>raison d'être</i> .
Outcome 3: Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape	
<i>The Outcome seeks ultimate results – sustainable forests and land management, and it is assumed that stronger institutions and enhanced capacity will achieve this.</i>	<i>The risk that stronger institutions and enhanced capacity may not lead to the desired results is low and the likelihood is reduced further through the economic incentives and disincentives that will be developed by the project and the fact that the framework will be developed with the full participation of the private sector</i>
Evaluation considerations	
Again, this was one of the challenges of the project, one of its <i>raison d'être</i> . SLMQ Project intended to develop capacities.	Again, this was one of the challenges of the project, one of its <i>raison d'être</i> . SLMQ Project intended to develop capacities.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut blast and the economic downturn of Lebanese economy, were obviously not foreseen as a risk. The occurrence cannot be regarded as a flaw of the project design. The three events are extraordinary.

4.1.c. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design

Project design did not incorporate any specific lessons learned from other projects. Indeed, SLM is a relatively new concept in Lebanon. However, experiences from past projects on ecosystem restoration and environmental management have been helpful for the formulation of the project.

Specifically, the UNDP Project - “Mainstreaming Biodiversity Management into Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) Production Processes in Lebanon” which was implemented by LARI in the mountains of Mejdal Akkar in north Lebanon and through which women harvested and processed wild sage and oregano – was identified as a model for similar activities in its search for eco-friendly income generating activities.

The idea to work on SLM and land use stemmed out from the technical work mapped out in the Business Plan for Combating Pollution of the Qaraoun Lake (2011), which was very important to scope the project.



4.1.d. Planned stakeholder participation

The participation of stakeholders, who actually later took part in project implementation was already envisaged in the ProDoc. Indeed, some implementation partners confirmed through various consultation meetings during project formulation their will and interest to participate in the project during the formulation phase.

A dedicated chapter of the ProDoc defined the roles of each stakeholder (refer to section the “3.7. Main stakeholders). Later, the implementation adhered substantially to the ProDoc.

4.1.e. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

The potential linkages with other six interventions within the sector is highlighted in the project document. The projects relate to different sectors, e.g. waste management, forestry, agriculture and governance. From an evaluation perspective, it is important to highlight that the potential to create synergies between the SLMQ project and other initiative was evident since its formulation. The PMU was later able to understand this potential.

4.1.f. Gender responsiveness of project design

Although no indicator captured any gender related issues in the Results Framework, a gender strategy was included in the project document. The strategy focused on the inclusion and participation of both women and men in the implementation of activities related to all project outcomes. No specific activities aimed at promoting gender equity or any change in gender roles.

The ProDoc stressed the importance for UNDP to commit to *gender equality and women’s empowerment not only as human rights, but also because they are a pathway to achieving the project’s goals of SLM*. Therefore, in the ProDoc, an even participation of women and men in the decision-making process was envisaged to ensure the success of the project itself.

The gender marker of the project is 1. The environmental and social screening annexed to the ProDoc stated clearly that SLMQ project is not likely:

- to impact significantly gender equality and women’s empowerment; and
- to affect significantly the cultural traditions of affected communities, including gender-based roles

The evaluation exercise concurs with the score 1 as Gender Marker of the design, i.e. limited attention is given to gender issues.

4.1.g. Social and Environmental Safeguards

The environmental and social screening checklist included as annex in the ProDoc does not identify any risks associate with the implementation of the SLMQ project. The evaluation exercise concurs with the results of such screening exercise.

4.2. Project Implementation

4.2.a. Adaptive Management

SLMQ project management adhered to the Results Framework included in the ProDoc. Management arrangements and roles of project partners and stakeholders the roles identified in the document did not deviate from it during the implementation.

Project Board made two main decisions particularly significant in terms of adaptive management:

- The indicators of the Results Framework were reformulated in the MTR report and adopted by the project.
- The extension of the project duration was as well amongst the recommendations of the MTR and was approved by the Project Board.



Both decisions were transparent and well discussed based on the findings and recommendations of the MTR and approved during a Project Board meeting. The evaluation values that, under this perspective, the PMU and Project Board made the right choice to improve the overall quality of the implementation of the project adjusting the main monitoring and reporting tool, i.e. the Results Framework and to increase the overall degree of effectiveness and sustainability of the project. Briefly, the two decisions were absolutely necessary to project's performances.

PMU was as well able to engage with stakeholders in order to promote collaborations, which resulted extremely valuable in order to achieve project results and increase the degree of sustainability of all project's actions.

4.2.b. Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements

SMLQ project was implemented in close collaboration with all stakeholders identified in the ProDoc. Due to the nature of the project, a collaborative and participatory approach was, actually, a pre-condition for a successful implementation of the project itself.

As already noted in the MTR, the designation of separate focal points within the relevant ministries for forest, rangeland and agricultural restoration respectively has aided project implementation.

Participation of the GoL, through the most relevant ministries and national authorities, i.e. MoE, MoA, MoC, MoPWT, MoEW, CDR and LARI, was a fundamental element due to the high national relevance of the initiatives put in place by the project.

The importance of the involvement of the local stakeholders is self-evident, it was about the development of the Qaraoun catchment area.

The project also enjoyed a favourable conjuncture, which in turn confirms the great importance of the project: in the Qaraoun catchment, important projects were/are being implemented. Hence, there's was room to articulate the work with a broad audience of stakeholders and these other initiatives.

The coordination effort of the PMU is valued as very effective by the evaluation exercise. The PMU grasped its importance of the favourable conjuncture was favourable to create collaborations, and made them happen: the coordination of activities went beyond the boundaries of the initiative, i.e. SLMQ project becomes a sort of catalyser of efforts in the area for a broader array of activities. This was made possible by the will and the managerial, technical and interpersonal skills of the members of the PMU to aggregate efforts towards a common objective, i.e. a betterment of the overall natural resource management of national and local stakeholders. The collaboration was respectful of the roles of each stakeholders and focused on their technical and institutional scope of work.

4.2.c. Project Finance and Co-finance

Project finance:

Year	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Project Management	Total GEF	Total UNDP	Total (GEF+UNDP)
2016	18.140	13.051	8.827	12.796	52.815	14.674	67.490
2017	136.397	45.483	18.216	5.165	205.263	70.432	275.695
2018	541.755	113.173	33.715	29.737	718.382	87.538	805.921
2019	604.442	302.409	32.889	7.788	947.528	81.799	1.029.328
2020	307.580	90.712	83.332	4.488	486.113	40.983	527.097
2021	392.666	280.825	68.100	35.975.69	777.566	4.570	782.137
Actual	1.869.700	920.200	248.000	149.691	3.187.671	300.000	3.487.671
Budget	2.000.980	845.655	245.082	95.952	3.187.671	300.000	3.487.671
Balance	-131.280	74.544	2.917	53.738	0	0	0



Project co-finance:

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP financing (US\$)		Government(US\$)		Total (US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	150.000	3.514.940	17.600.000	19.859.940	17.750.000	23.374.880

The actual co-finance actually exceeded the planned one. This should not be considered as a surprise because, in fact, since the beginning of the Syria crisis (2011), Lebanon has been receiving funds feeding into livelihood sector including cash for work on forest management, agriculture, etc.

4.2.d. Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry, implementation, overall assessment of M&E

The Project's M&E plan foresaw all the relevant elements for the purpose:

- The Results Framework as the main monitoring tool,
- Three milestones included in the project evaluation plan, i.e., an inception report, a mid-term review, and this terminal evaluation.

The M&E design at entry had significant problems with the formulation of indicators and their targets level to the extent that the MTR suggested the revision of 11 indicators (out of 12) and their respective target levels. Instead, the project's Theory of Change was well articulated.

The TE values the **M&E design at entry** of the project as **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

In terms of M&E, the most important decision made by the PMU, with the approval of the Project Board, was the acceptance of the revision of the indicators.

The rest of the M&E activities did not face any important challenges. The PMU was very much dedicated to the implementation and monitoring of activities on a daily basis through direct implementation and discussion with other actors operating on the ground. The direct actions of the project and the elements replicated by other organizations were well monitored and/or coordinated by the PMU. In this regard, it is important to notice that the PMU had two staff members that spent most of their time in the project area, i.e. the UNV Site Engineer and the Project Officer.

To monitor regularly the implementation, CCCD project made use of the two common UNDP tools:

- Quarterly Monitoring Reports drafted by the PMU and approved by UNDP
- Project Implementation Reports (PIR)

As per the M&E plan, the GEF Tracking Tool was repeated at the time of the Mid-Term Evaluation and again at the Terminal Evaluation (i.e. the present exercise). The two evaluation exercises were carried out in a timely manner.

The TE values the **M&E Plan Implementation** of the project as **Satisfactory**.

The TE values the **Overall Quality of M&E** of the project as **Satisfactory**.

4.2.e. UNDP implementation/oversight, Implementing Partner execution and overall assessment of implementation/oversight and execution

The project was implemented by the MoE and by the UNDP under the “support to NIM (National Implementation Modality)”. A Project Management Unit (PMU), contracted by UNDP, was hosted within the MoE premises and coordinated project activities. The Head of the Natural Resources Protection Department was the designated technical focal for the project.

The role of UNDP, and specifically the role of the Project Manager and PMU staff, was appreciated by all stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation exercise. All the stakeholders interviewed on the matter considered their understanding of the needs of the different parties involved, their dedication



to the work and their coordination capacity as well above the average in comparison to other projects implemented by UNDP and/or other international organizations (including other UN agencies) in which they had previously participated.

The roles and responsibilities of national and local project partners were well identified, tailored on their specific technical capacities and in line with their mandates.

The responsiveness of UNDP to request from all parties was timely. PIRs were well articulated. Finally, the two relevant risks that materialized during the implementation period, i.e. those related to the autumn 2019 protest (associated by the economy crisis) and the COVID-19 were properly reported and mitigated.

UNDP was in charge of the full administration, execution and implementation of all project activities in accordance to the support to NIM modality chosen for the management of the project. Relevant administrative and procurement procedure were, consequently, applied.

Finally, the UNDP Country Office provided good and timely support to the PMU through the Energy and Environment division, whenever needed.

The TE values the **Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight** of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

PMU and staff from the MoE, namely from the Natural Resource Service, discussed and collaborated on the daily basis with the PMU staff. These discussions and the formal decision-making process, which took place during the Project Boards, constituted the main elements for MoE to steer the activities of the project that was implemented under the support-to-NIM modality.

Finally, all official communication of the project was endorsed and channelled through MoE to ensure its ownership of the project towards other stakeholders.

The evaluation exercise could not understand the rationale of having a Project Board restricted to MoE and UNDP. A Project Board open to other institutions would have been more aligned with the great participation that characterized the whole implementation. However, to allow a smooth decision-making process, the PB was kept simple and included the participation only of UNDP and MoE. Under this perspective, the choice of keeping it restricted to the two institutions is understandable and justified.

The TE values the **Implementing Partner execution** of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

The TE values the **Overall Implementation/Oversight and Execution** of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

4.2.f. Risk Management

The PIF identified five risks. The evaluation exercise considers four of them as not well formulated. Actually, they represent the *raison d'être* of the SLMQ project itself. Indeed, they are internal challenges of the project and, consequently they were not even reported in the annual PIRs.

The risk associate to the general insecurity and political unrest resulting in considerable delays and postponement of project implementation, instead, was well identified. Indeed, PIRs reported the mitigation measures taken in consideration during the protest of autumn 2019 related to the economic crisis that is still affecting negatively the national economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has been hitting the entire world since the end of 2019, was identified in the 2020 PIR and mitigation measures described.

The evaluation exercise concurs that these two risks were actually well managed during the implementation of the project.



4.3. Project Results and Impacts

4.3.a. Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

Project objective - Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment		
Indicators	Target value	Progress at the end of project
<p>0.1. Alleviation of land degradation – Area in target districts managed according to SLM principles</p>	<p>24,300 ha of land in the target districts managed according to SLM principles.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a general management plan (covering around 18,000 ha) that divides Bekaa’s forest ecosystems into groups to facilitate planning based on management objectives, which include 4 forest management plans • Development of general management plan (covering 6,137 ha) including 5 rangeland management plans, which are site specific (for a total of 1,755 ha) and based on clusters with similar ecological characteristics • Reforestation equivalent to 314 ha • 10’000 ha of degraded rangelands recovered in targeted areas through SLM techniques • Capacities of relevant stakeholders at national and local level improved <p>The achievement is considered full</p>
<p>0.2. Improvement in livelihoods - Improved quality of life among target communities, measured as number of new economic opportunities created within targeted communities</p>	<p>Five new economic opportunities created in target communities</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <p>Five new economic opportunities created in target communities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grape molasses and grape for wine making The number of new jobs are not known. For some, the activities are complementary source of income. 2. Bee-keeping 17 new jobs created 3. Aromatic plants and dried fruits The number of new jobs are not known. For some, the activities are complementary source of income. 4. High value dairy products and soap production from goat milk 42 new jobs created 5. Rural tourism 23 seasonal jobs created <p>During the implementation of the project, temporary jobs were created</p> <p>The achievement is considered full</p>
<p>The objective of the project is considered achieved by the evaluation exercise.</p>		



Outcome 1 - Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment

Indicators	Target value	Progress at the end of project
<p>Ind. 1.1. Rehabilitation of degraded forest to improve forest patch connectivity, measured by:</p> <p>For areas with direct assisted restoration activities (on 300 ha): # of seedlings planted with >50% survival rate;</p> <p>For areas left to natural regeneration (on 10,000 ha): # of emerging seedlings/ha in sample plots</p>	<p>300 ha of degraded forest – in targeted areas that improve overall forest patch connectivity – restored by the end of the project</p> <p>For areas with direct assisted restoration activities: Assuming planting density of 500 / ha * 300 ha @ 50%: 75,000 surviving seedlings, to be extrapolated from sampling plots</p> <p>For areas left to natural regeneration: # of emerging seedlings/ha at least double, to be extrapolated from sampling plots</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforestation of 114 ha direct implementation • Reforestation of 150 ha by PARSIFAL programme financed by <i>Agence Francaise pour le Developpement</i> (AFD), in the project area alone. • Rehabilitation of the riparian corridor of 25 km (targeted area of 50 ha) <p>The total are of reforestation is equivalent to 314 ha. The assessment of the survival rate of seedlings is going now of the evaluation.</p> <p>The project reached 114 ha of reforestation with its own funds. The choice of the sites accounted for the important roles of landscape ecology principles namely patches, edges and boundaries, corridors and connectivity, and mosaics.</p> <p>SLMQ also provided support (coordination and selection of species) to the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) on planned reforestation activities in the framework of the project “PARSIFAL” financed AFD: These reforestation activities are expected to cover 280 ha (in West Bekaa and Rachaya over 6 plots). Now of the evaluation, implementation is on-going in 2 sites and the other sites will be planted starting October 2021 (new reforestation season).</p> <p>Restoration of degraded riparian ecosystems connecting the wetland of Ammiq to the wetland of Kfarzabad (rehabilitation plans were developed for a stretch of 25km including revegetation and restructuring and also using other innovative, low cost and environmental techniques). 9 km stretch was damaged by heavy machinery of the municipalities (Deir Zanoun, Rawda, Ammiq, and Al Marj) to make some works for flood control. Every year the area get flooded: since the Syrian crisis, floods have become a serious issue, because the area is populated by informal settlement of Syrian refugees. The replanting was done (March 2021) in a way to allow heavy machine to work without destroy</p> <p>The achievement is considered full, although the assessment of survival of seedlings was not yet finalized now of the evaluation.</p>
<p>Ind. 1.2. Area of 10,000 ha of degraded rangelands recovered in targeted areas through SLM techniques, measured by XX samples across the targeted area, on: - Soil/Site Stability</p>	<p>Overall increase, or at least no net loss</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The measures of soil/site stability, hydrologic function, total solid organic carbon, cover with native vegetation and alpha species diversity was not yet implemented now of the evaluation. However, a baseline land degradation mapping assessment was done in January 2018 for three different land uses (agriculture, rangeland and forest). The end line assessment of land degradation was in its draft form now of the evaluation.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hydrologic function - Total soil organic carbon - Cover with native vegetation - Alpha species diversity 		<p>The achievement is considered full, although the precise assessment on soil/site stability, hydrologic function, total soil organic carbon, cover with native vegetation and lpha species diversity was not done. However, Land degradation mapping and assessment in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya, and West Bekaa (2021) reported that the most of the areas of intervention showed a stable condition in vegetation cover followed by slight or moderate/high improvement in vegetation categorized by changes in NDVI values. Only a very small part of the area resulted categorized as weakened.</p>																
<p>Ind. 1.3. Area of agricultural lands in targeted areas where SLM measures are being applied.</p>	<p>SLM measures are being applied, either directly or through replication, in 4,000 ha of agricultural land in targeted areas.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator 10 ha direct implementation + contribution to around 6,500 ha</p> <p>The achievement is considered full, The direct implementation of SLM measures on agricultural lands and specifically abandoned terraces (overall surface of about 200 ha) started in Autumn 2020 using a combination of structural and agronomic SLM measures on around 10 ha in the three project districts. The choice of the pilot sites was based on the land degradation assessment, which highlighted the high degradation scores on abandoned (and previously productive) terraces but also on the potential for replicability. Clusters of terraces have been mapped and assessed for suitability. The prevailing economic situation has created a momentum for the rural population to engage in farming activities with the support of other donor funded projects and their respective municipalities. Old cultivars of grapes (Obeidi and Merwah) and Rosa damascena were procured (for the production of grape molasses, wines, dried raisins, etc. and rose water, respectively), distributed, and planted. It's as well a spill over from the socio-economic assessment identifying business opportunities in the area. The SLMQ project supported the UNDP project "Support to host communities in Lebanon" in the wash sector in advising the team on promoting the rational use of surface water (to limit groundwater abstraction) and rainwater harvesting, Accordingly, irrigation canals were implemented or rehabilitated in 7 villages in the project area, over a total length of 37 km, namely Machghara (West Bekaa), Kherbet Kanafar and Ain Zebde (West Bekaa), and Zahle, Anjar Qab Elias and Jdita (Zahle). These canals cover a total area of agricultural lands of 6,277 ha (benefiting over 5,700 farmers). It also promoted rainwater harvesting namely in Kefraya benefiting some 130 farmers and 380 ha of agriculture lands.</p>																
<p>Ind. 1.4. Percentage of land users (gender-disaggregated) in project localities in each of the three Districts that are applying SLM approaches in upland forests, rangelands, and valley arable lands</p>	<p>>15% of land users (of which at least 30% are women) in project localities in each of the three Districts that are applying SLM approaches in upland forests, rangelands, and valley arable lands.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not available <p>The assumption of the project is that those beneficiaries who have actually understood the principles of SLM may be considered as land users applying SLM practices.</p> <p>SLMQ conducted the following trainings to promote SLM practices with its direct beneficiaries:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="913 1278 1662 1398"> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Men</th> <th>Women</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bee keeping</td> <td>102</td> <td>84</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Small ruminants value chain</td> <td>166</td> <td>97</td> <td>69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rural tourism</td> <td>47</td> <td>21</td> <td>26</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	Total	Men	Women	Bee keeping	102	84	18	Small ruminants value chain	166	97	69	Rural tourism	47	21	26
Activity	Total	Men	Women															
Bee keeping	102	84	18															
Small ruminants value chain	166	97	69															
Rural tourism	47	21	26															



The achievement is not assessable

Outcome 1 is considered achieved by the evaluation exercise. 3 out of 4 outputs were satisfactorily achieved.

Outcome 2 - Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced

Indicators	Target value	Progress at the end of project
<p>Ind. 2.1. Number of local or district level land use plans in the targeted areas that integrate SLM approaches and thereby reduce pressure on natural resources.</p>	<p>At least 10 newly developed local or district level land use plans in the targeted areas that integrate SLM approaches.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57 detailed Land Use Plans (LUP) were developed for 57 localities in the targeted districts. <p>A consultancy firm was hired by UNDP with the purpose to lead the process. The firm deployed a multidisciplinary team to lead the process, which was carried out in a participatory way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A top-down approach to develop the Strategic Masterplan in coordination with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MoPWT) • A bottom-up approach to develop the local masterplan/detailed urban plans. In addition to the municipalities, stakeholders involved in the process belonged to different sectors, e.g. farming/herding, tourism, industry, tourism, etc... <p>MOE was the initiator. The approach was agreed upon with MoPWT that recommended having the strategic/general plan approved before moving to the endorsement of the detailed urban plans to reduce objections from local authorities.</p> <p>Starting point of the process was the Diagnostic for the Masterplan. After that, the consultants work in parallel on two following documents, i.e. the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Masterplan. Finally, the detailed LUPs and a Local Development Action Plan (LDAP) were developed.</p> <p>Detailed urban plans for all West Bekaa and All Rachaya districts (8.7% of Lebanon) were developed. Zahle was not covered with detailed LUPs because it is heavily urbanized: the circumstance left little room for changes.</p> <p>Now of the present evaluation exercise, the strategic environmental assessment is under review of the MoE. Once that institution approves it, the Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGUP) and the Higher Council for Urban Planning (HCUP) of MoPWT will revise for its final approval. Most probably, the approval will be issued after project's closure. It is intended to have the necessary follow-up done through the GEF UNDP Land Degradation Neutrality in Mountain landscapes project considering the similarity of the outcomes and the synergies in approaches. The project is implemented through UNDP.</p>



		<p>LDAP is divided into Short term actions “soft projects” reflecting the high priority of protecting and valorising the territory in order to conserve existing natural and cultural resources and Medium and long-term ones “hard projects” that have a tangible output, such as major equipment/ buildings, networks, services, roads, renewable energy projects, etc.</p> <p>The achievement is considered full.</p>
<p>Ind. 2.2. Existence of a Land Use Management System (LUIMS) and Land Use Monitoring System to inform the integration of SLM into land use plans.</p>	<p>A Land Use Management System (LUIMS) and a Land Use Monitoring System developed to inform the integration of SLM into land use plans</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system is expected to be in place by mid-June 2021. A first demo was delivered on April 29th. <p>A consulting firm hired by the project is developing a Land Use Management System and supplemented by an individual consultant in machine learning to develop and train a model on the extraction of 3 indicators namely (i) land degradation related to land cover change (ii) rate of urbanization and (iii) urban morphology analysis.</p> <p>The Land Use Management System, named Sustainable Planning Information Management System (SPIMS) as will run on open source software and, as such, will not entail any cost related to licensing. Once completed, it will be hosted within the server of Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reforms (OMSAR) and will be open for public consultation. The Platform will enable the GoL and Administrators to monitor changes in the land use in the Qaraoun catchment, and ultimately to undertake informed decision-making in matters related to planning in line with existing natural resources. The system can alert, act as repository, and predict on indicators identified through the SEA process. SPIMS is based on indicators capturing the sustainability of the use of natural resources. Relevant national institutions provided the consulting firm with more than 70 layers (shape files) to set up the system. National authorities are required to update the data under their responsibility every 5 years, while local authorities every year. Three indicators populated through machine learning may be, instead, updated on real time with the support of immap.org. The three indicators will be tested in the framework of SPIMS and if successful, could then be up scaled to the entire country and to additional indicators of national relevance; instead the remaining indicators can be populated nationally. Finally, the system is built to cater for additional indicators if need be.</p> <p>The achievement is considered full.</p>
<p>Outcome 2 is considered achieved by the evaluation exercise.</p>		

Outcome 3 - Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape		
Indicators	Target value	Progress at the end of project
<p>Ind 3.1. Capacity development indicator score for Land Use</p>	<p>> 50% overall capacity development indicator score for</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <p>The overall capacity development indicator moved from 33% (baseline value) to 53% (end of project value)</p>



<p>Planning and Management in West Bekaa and Rachaya Districts</p>	<p>Land Use Planning and Management in West Bekaa and Rachaya Districts at districts and municipalities level.</p>	<p>The achievement is considered full.</p>
<p>Ind. 3.2. Percentage change in the knowledge level of SLM as a rational approach for land use.</p> <p>Target group: Key stakeholders (district and municipality officials, selected households of farmers, shepherds, etc. in Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya)</p>	<p>20% increase in the knowledge level of SLM as a rational approach for land use.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not available. <p>The percentage change in the knowledge level of SLM will be calculated and included in the socio-economic assessment as part of the perception survey currently being finalized now of the evaluation.</p> <p>SLM approaches have been discussed and incorporated into the various local consultation meetings, workshops and trainings. A strong engagement with local decision makers, farmers and community members has taken place that although does not specifically target awareness raising activities, these interactions were introducing the concepts of SLM.</p> <p>The achievement is considered satisfactory although not full. During the evaluation exercise, many anecdotal evidences were collected during the interviews with various stakeholders: the necessity to implement SLM practices and the consequent benefits were, at least, grasped by all stakeholders interviewed.</p>
<p>Ind. 3.3. Extent of mainstreaming of SLM:</p> <p>Existence of targets for SLM in national and/or local: policies, regulatory frameworks, strategies, and land use plans.</p> <p>Existence of extension services to support the implementation of SLM.</p>	<p>Targets for SLM are included in national and/or local level.</p> <p>Policies, regulatory frameworks, strategies, and land use plans</p> <p>There are extension services available to communities in Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya to support the implementation of SLM.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of the project in the set up and revision (2020-2021) of the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets (UNCCD) • Contribution to the MoA strategy 2020. <p>In the framework of a pilot action, Lebanon has participated in the regional capacity building workshop and set national targets by February 2018 (presented as draft at the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in China at the end of 2017). As the new reporting round has been initiated for the UNCCD LDN, the project acted as focal point on behalf of the Ministry of Environment and provided policy advice on the topic in order to integrate experiences learned into the national reporting exercise. Actually, the project was the first initiative to tackle all SLM principles at the same time: rehabilitation of natural resources (forest, rangeland and agriculture), the prevention of further land degradation through planning.</p> <p>The project was involved in MoA's efforts in revising the existing forest law and mainstream SLM concepts as needed, namely with forest management planning and rangeland management planning.</p> <p>SLMQ project developed the following regulatory/planning tools:</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests ○ National Forest Management Guidelines ○ Riparian Management Guidelines ○ Urban Planning Management Handbook (n the process) ○ Regulatory framework for the local production of biopesticides and import of biological agents (in the process) <p>In addition, SLMQ project provided an enabling tool for replication through the assessment of local fodder production and also drafted a concept note for resources mobilization for production on marginal lands (for the revival of abandoned lands and income generating activities).</p> <p>The achievement is considered full.</p>
<p>Ind. 3.4. Existence of SLM tools and techniques for the improved management of degraded rangelands in targeted areas to achieve the main three attributes of ecosystem status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soil/Site Stability - Hydrologic function - Integrity of the Biotic Community 	<p>SLM tools and techniques exist for the improved management of degraded rangelands in targeted areas.</p>	<p>Level of achievement of the indicator</p> <p>The following tools have been developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is updating of the existing Forest Law (now Forest and Rangelands Law) by developing the section relating to rangelands management. • The project developed the National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands Outside Forests based on participatory processes. The guidelines have been finalized and are undergoing a national consultation process for validation and testing. The guidelines were approved by the MoA and, at the moment of the evaluation exercise, are under translation English to Arabic • A map for rangelands with adopted land cover categories/classification used for all Lebanon was developed and validated. Delineation of rangelands management units was based on several criteria, including: type of species present in the forests, ecological and topographic criteria, ownership, size of the parcels/clusters, etc. <p>The achievement is considered full.</p>
<p>Outcome 3 is considered achieved by the evaluation exercise.</p>		



4.3.b. Relevance

SLMQ project was highly relevant for Lebanon. Its alignment with national priorities was full.

The strategic importance for the country's development of Qaraoun catchment is out of question. The Upper Litani Watershed was declared as a national priority about 10 years ago and the fight against its pollution is a top environmental concern of GoL since then. Actually, the project was identified and designed keeping in mind this priority in order to reconcile development and environment concerns. Under this perspective, land planning and SLM were considered core elements as they are key to promote natural resource conservation.

The relevance was not only thematic. SLMQ project resulted to be relevant also in terms of approach and stakeholders engagement. The approach to work was holistic and the actual work was done on three level: at policy/ level, the work included the development of a regional masterplan and the LUPs, at technical level many different tools were produced/developed (refer to section 4.3.c. Effectiveness for details) and activities at field level were conducted as well. Both a top-down approach and a bottom up, which eventually resulted to be key for project achievements, characterized the engagement with stakeholders.

The knowledge generation work and participation were as well promoted by the SLMQ project. All different products/outputs responded to the needs of the relevant stakeholders: the project equipped institutions and individuals with proper instruments, which filled gaps identified through a joint participatory exercise.

The evaluation highlights that the promotion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was essential to involve local stakeholders and to make the nexus development/environment evident and better understandable. Consequently, the evaluation states that the project was as well methodologically relevant to pursue its aims.

As per ProDoc's aspirations, SLMQ project resulted aligned with no doubts with the GEF-5 Land Degradation (LD) Focal Area Strategy by improving provision of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystem goods and services and reducing vulnerability of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystems to climate change and other human-induced impacts.

The project also advanced the strategic objectives of the 10-year strategic plan, specifically of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) at country level:

- Improving the living conditions of affected populations;
- Improving the condition of affected ecosystems; and
- Generating global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD.

SLMQ project was definitively relevant to move ahead with the Agenda 2030 with its focus on SDG n° 15 "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss".

The project was as well aligned with:

- The UNDP Country Programme Document for Lebanon (2017-2020). Specifically with the two objectives: bolstering the resilience of communities and improving environmental management systems.
- The UN Strategic Framework 2017-2020. Namely, with the priorities: enhancing governance and the legitimacy of institutions by improving institutional representation, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability; and improving environmental governance, including low-emission, climate resilient actions, and environmental management programmes that protect national resources and steer the country towards a green economy.



SLMQ focused its efforts in selecting beneficiaries of livelihoods related activities scrupulously in accordance to selection criteria, which includes gender and social and economic vulnerability considerations, and technical feasibility elements. Furthermore, priority was given to individuals who did not receive support from other projects implemented in the recent past (equity consideration). Beneficiaries confirmed the relevance of the project and its support for their needs during all interviews conducted in the frame of the present evaluation exercise.

Finally, the project was deemed very relevant by all stakeholders interviewed on the issue to promote the triple nexus between humanitarian aid, development, and environment: this element is very important because of the very specific conditions that are characterizing the current socio-economic situation of the country.

The TE values the **relevance** of the implementation of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

4.3.c. Effectiveness

As mentioned (refer to section 4.3.a. Progress towards objective and expected outcomes), the evaluation exercise considers that the objective and all the outcomes of the SLMQ project were achieved.

The strategy set up by the project in order to achieve the expected results, the SLMQ project was very well articulated. In order to achieve its ambitious targets, it promoted collaboration, participation, share of information.

Outcome 1 - Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment

- The project coordinated efforts with other initiatives run by National NGOs, Lebanese Reforestation Initiative (LRI) and Association for Forest Development and Conservation (AFDC).
- SMLQ project prepared the National Forest Management Guidelines by hiring a consultant. The consultant was asked to work, and actually worked, in participatory way with the main national stakeholders, i.e. MoA, MoE, national NGOs, with FAO and Lebanese universities, i.e. University of Balamand (UoB) and Saint Joseph University (USJ) and the National Center for Scientific Research (NCSR).
- SLMQ also provided support (coordination and selection of species) to the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) on planned reforestation activities over 280 ha (in West Bekaa and Rachaya) in the framework of the project “PARSIFAL” financed by the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD).
- Now of the evaluation, the management of the Yammouni nature reserve (2,100 ha) is currently on-going implemented through AFDC with financing from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ) under the management of WFP. The Forests is degraded at sites and a management plan is being developed to account for the eco-tourism potential of the site and the conservation and regeneration of its biodiversity. AFDC is applying the National Forest Management Guidelines.
- The SLMQ project developed a general management plan (covering around 18,000 ha) that divides Bekaa’s forest ecosystems into groups to facilitate planning based on management objectives. The Saghbine and Manara Forest Management plans are being implemented by Lebanese Reforestation Initiative (LRI) using funds by Department for International Development (DFID) of the Government of the United Kingdom. The total area covered is estimated at 653 ha including grazing as a major activity in state owned lands. Now of the evaluation, activities are on-going. Two other site-specific management plans (Anjar and Bakkifa) were developed but not implemented yet now of the evaluation.



- Finally, SLM approaches were mainstreamed into the riparian restoration plans for the Litani River Authority in project under design to be financed by the World Bank to clean the Litani river and its subsidiaries and rehabilitate riparian areas. WB project also tackles forest and rangelands restoration.
- The project participated in the update of the existing Forest Law (now Forest and Rangelands Law) by developing the section relating to rangelands management and also to integrate forest management planning as part of the text. The following was achieved:
 - Extensive review of legal texts in comparable settings.
 - Development of a policy brief for rangelands management.
 - Development of the legal text to be incorporated in the draft law.
 - The draft law was discussed at MoA. Due to COVID-19 the process was suspended.
- The project developed the National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands Outside Forests based on participatory processes. The guidelines were finalized and approved by the MoA and, now of the evaluation exercise, are under translation from English to Arabic.
- The project developed the programme for a study tour for herders and MoA, MoE and NGO officers to Italy for displaying successful rangelands management planning (data collection, planning process, etc.). The study tour initially planned for spring 2020 was rescheduled to Spring 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was replaced by short videos on rangeland management to be distributed to the same audience of stakeholders, knowing that on-site trainings on the assessment of carrying capacity and ecological assessment were undertaken.
- A green house for the propagation of rangelands species was provided by the project to LARI. This support increased the capacity of LARI to perform its institutional mandate of supporting the agro-biodiversity of the country. The samples of legumes and cereals collected and multiplied increased the stock of the institute.
- The project developed 5 rangeland management plans, which are site specific (for a total of 1,755 ha) and based on clusters with similar ecological characteristics, through a participatory and consultative process in the frame of an overarching process that led to the development of a general management plan covering 6,137 ha. The general management plan considers degradation scoring assessed by remote sensing and through visual techniques and takes into account the ecological profile of rangelands species to draw management objectives and recommendations for the restoration of these areas.
- In February 2021, SMLQ project distributed 18 tons of fodder (barley and vetch) seeds (locally produced) to 138 herders (134 men and 4 women) for planting over 72 ha in the three districts. The project engaged the municipalities in an attempt to start dialogue between herders and local authorities to reduce tensions and facilitate collaboration for the application of improved management practices and implementation of management plans. All herders that applied through the municipalities got the seeds by the channel of the municipalities who contributed to the project by providing the transportation and facilitation of the process. The activities aimed at engaging them in abiding to SLM principles and practices, namely the intercropping of legumes and grasses to improve fertility of agricultural lands while reducing pressures of overgrazing on natural rangelands (and income generation).
- The project set up a holistic process for restoration pilots, including rangelands species assessment (rigorous sampling and seed bank assessment), seed collection, propagation through a designated seed propagation unit at the Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute (LARI), design and manufacturing of an imprinting tool in 3 prototypes for the rehabilitation of degraded rangelands. While the imprinter was successfully tested, rehabilitation works on 465



ha were done in February 2021| this is to total area suitable for rehabilitation using this technique based on ownership, slope, rockiness, stoniness, and accessibility characteristics including security risks, with a about one year of delay due to COVID-19. The choice of location was based on the nature and morphology of rangelands outside forest on one end but most importantly on the results of the land degradation assessment undertaken as part of the baseline assessments of the project and will serve as basis for monitoring at project end. The assessment showed the potential of natural regeneration where protection regimes are implemented (experimental cages are installed by the project in specific locations: harvested biomass allows for the assessment of nutritional value, species mix, and natural regeneration potential). For reseeding site action, palatable and high nutritious species were promoted based on the ecological assessment, in addition to, melliferous, commonly wild harvested, medicinal/herbal, endangered and endemic species considering their multi-functional characteristics. Proposed species genera were Medicago; Vicia; Trigonella; Lathyrus; Astragalus; Onobrychis; and poaceae. Most of these species were collected and propagated for the first time in Lebanon as they are not commercially available.

- Species diversity: a detailed ecological assessment of rangelands was completed for the forests and rangelands in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa. In rangelands, the assessment showed the potential of natural regeneration where protection regimes were implemented (experimental cages are installed by the project in specific locations: harvested biomass allows for the assessment of nutritional value, species mix, and natural regeneration potential).
- In efforts to engage the public sector in sustaining rehabilitation efforts, a MOU was signed LARI end 2017 not only for seed propagation as mentioned above but also for the assessment of nutritional value of fodder sampled from the wild (first time ever assessment) in the three project districts. Rangelands management units assessed ecologically in order to propagate the most interesting mix of seeds and use for rehabilitation of degraded rangelands.
- In coordination with academic/research bodies, the SLMQ project put at the disposal of the American University of Beirut and the University of Balamand the collars for small ruminants procured through the project for routing assessments in the Bekaa. This will allow these institutions to build on the results of the SLMQ project and improve data collection through time series across seasonality and allow for correlation of degradation status with movement of the herds within the management units. It is intended to translate the outcomes of their work into practical solutions for the herders and publications. It is worthwhile noting that the SLMQ project is the first project using such techniques to understand better the behaviour of the herds and the correlation with rangelands' degradation. At project end, the collars will be handed to MoA for them to continue implementation or coordination of routing assessment in the framework of rangelands management planning.
- The SLMQ project also initiated activities for the creation of the technical and regulatory set up for the use of bio-pesticides, locally formulated and imported, in collaboration with MoA. Now of the evaluation, a regulatory framework is inexistent and constitutes a major impediment for local production and use of bio-pesticides.
- SLMQ project assessed the marginal lands and low productivity cropland suitability for fodder production (national level). Total irrigated area identified is 12,500 ha (3,416.75 ha in project areas). The assessment also broke down the areas suitable per type of forage group (Corn, Soybean, Barley, Wheat, Sorghum, Alfalfa - Medicago Sativa, Clover - Trifolium spp (legume), Fava bean – Vicia Faba, Millet, Vetch - Vicia Sativa). A concept note is expected to be finalized by end of the project to include the project design from production to market in efforts to reduce pressures on rangelands, create job opportunities, and restore unused and low



productive areas with minimal investment. The project aims to share the concept note with MoA and circulate for donor financing.

Outcome 2 - Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced

The development of a masterplan and 57 LUPs at municipal level represents the most notable achievement of the project. In fact, land use is a very political sensitive issue at local level, and it was reported to the International Evaluator, that local authorities countrywide are usually quite resistant to endorse detailed land use plan. Having broken that resistance under the current economic and social conditions of Lebanon, is considered an outstanding achievement by the evaluation exercise.

The masterplan is important because it regulates as well the land uses within the buffer zone of the natural reserves, Mount Hermon and Shouf.

Outcome 3 - Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape

- As part of the various workshops and stakeholder consultations that took place in 2020 for the preparation of the land-use management plans, awareness on sustainable land management and the need for environmental considerations in local planning work was raised. 10 workshops and/or focus group meetings were held at the local level to raise awareness and discuss issues on SLM integration into land-use plans, including rangelands management.
- A draft programme for a study tour on Sustainable land Use Planning was developed in coordination with the Department of Territory and Sustainability of the Government of Catalonia. The study tour initially planned in Spring 2020 was deferred to Spring 2021 and finally cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic at global level. As an alternative, a webinar was planned tentatively for May 2021 for municipalities, NGOs, academia, think tanks and activists. The three-day webinar was intended to raise the capacity of local actors in matters related to legal urban matters. Also, upon the completion a roadmap to improve the legal and regulatory framework will be developed.
- In response to the COVID-19, now of the evaluation the project is in the process of preparing the following videos for capacity development
 - Training on Pinus pinea care and harvesting and by-products processing (AFDC)
 - Training on assessment of carrying capacity for rangelands
 - Training on production of goat milk soap
 - Training Establishment of vineyards and post care
 - Training on Rosa damacena value chain

The overall effect of the SLMQ project on the capacities on the country at all levels, i.e. governmental, local, non-governmental and individual is considered the main feature of the project. Defined training activities and demonstrations coupled with the generation of knowledge achieved through a participative way ultimately paved the way for this effective capacity development process. The process also covered specific needs: in this regard, it is important to highlight the training for forest guards of the MoA. They are in charge of rangeland management, and the SLMQ project tailored specific training for them, which were very much appreciated.



SLMQ project contributed towards the Agenda 2030, specifically to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) n° 15 “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” and related indicators:

- 15.1 ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements;
- 15.2 promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally; and
- 15.3 combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

Finally, in the frame of the SLMQ project a scientific publications “Assessing land degradation and identifying potential sustainable land management practices at the subnational level in Lebanon” was published in an international journal “Environmental Monitoring and Assessment”, which is devoted to Progress in the Use of Monitoring Data in Assessing Environmental Risks to Man and the Environment. It is a direct contribution of the SLMQ project to the international debate around environmental conservation promoting a learning process also outside the country’s borders.

The evaluation exercise points out that all the SLMQ project was implemented in a period marked by four crisis affecting the country: the protracted Syrian crisis started in 2011; the national economic crisis, which has been hitting the Lebanese economy since October 2019, the blast of Beirut of summer 2020 and the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. The capacity of the SLMQ project to deliver its expected results within this context speaks for itself.

The TE values the **effectiveness** of the implementation of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

4.3.d. Efficiency

The adoption of the recommendations of the MTR exercise, i.e. the extension of the project and the reformulation of outputs and indicators, is considered by the evaluation as a key element of efficiency of the implementation because three main reasons:

- The extension of the period of implementation enabled the achievements of project outputs and outcomes;
- The reformulation of outputs and indicators clarify the path to follow and enable a better monitoring of project activities; and
- Ultimately, the accountability and transparency of project implementation promoted.

The management approach characterized by a great level of information and knowledge sharing amongst stakeholders, a continuous search for collaborations to deal with the ambitious outcomes and objectives of the project, and a proactive attitude of PMU to accommodate the necessities of stakeholders was another significant element of efficiency. If implemented in isolation from the context, the project would have failed. All the stakeholders interviewed during the data collection phase shared this opinion. Sharing information and knowledge, PMU attitude towards collaborations turned the SLMQ project into a catalyser of development actions in the Qaraoun catchment. Obviously, the high thematic relevance of the project for all stakeholders was the basis upon which a high level of efficiency could have been reached.



Other important elements of efficiency were:

- Collaboration with the academic sector, very important for the knowledge generation
The capacities generated by the project are expected to be spread to a wider audience thanks to the inclusion of the academic sector. Moreover, the formulation of the scientific article “Assessing land degradation and identifying potential sustainable land management practices at the subnational level in Lebanon” promote beyond the boundaries of the project and the country’s borders relevant knowledge aligned to the GEF priorities.
- Hiring capable consultants
Consultants, hired by UNDP in the frame of the project, were considered well prepared by all stakeholders interviewed on the matter.
- Ensuring a participative approach
The participation ensured a great level of consensus around the various products generated by the project
- Beneficiaries selection modalities
Direct project beneficiaries were selected through the application of relevant criteria and transparent procedures.
- Linking project activities to humanitarian necessities
Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese people were reached by the project through the application of cash-for-work modalities.
- Adequate support of UNDP country office to the PMU, good M&E activities, the deployment of staff at field level.

The project coordinated well with the FAO and the MoA to avoid duplication of interventions with the FAO/MoA intervention “Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods in Marginal Areas”. The coordination could not avoid the duplication of production of two difference Guidelines for Forest Management. SLMQ project guidelines are judged more technically sound and complete by the vast majority of stakeholders interviewed on the matter.

Finally, in valuing the efficiency of the SLMQ project, it is important to keep in mind the national context, which was characterized by four crisis: the Syrian crisis, the economic crisis starting from end of 2019, the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic and the Beirut blast of summer 2020. Although the specific repercussions of each crisis could not be assessed by the present evaluation exercise, it is self-evident, that operating in a four-crisis context represented a challenge faced by the SLMQ project.

The TE values the **efficiency** of the implementation of the project as **Highly Satisfactory**.

4.3.e. Sustainability: financial, socio-political, institutional framework and governance, environmental, overall likelihood of sustainability

Financial sustainability

PMU was able throughout the implementation process to turn the SLMQ into a sort of catalyser of initiative in the Qaraoun catchment. Most of the key actors, who can have or can access to financial resources to build upon the achievements of the project, are aware of these achievements. The likelihood that they will continue the work of SLMQ in the next years is promising.

Indeed, the projects is well known by Lebanese development actors the MoE, MoA, MoPWT, LRI, local consultants, and municipalities and by relevant actors of the international community operating in Lebanon, such as FAO, AFD and WFP.



The likelihood that additional resource will be devoted to the Qaraoun catchment area is likely to happen. In fact, the SLM approaches were mainstreamed into the riparian restoration plans for the Litani River Authority in the work currently going on to design a WB initiative to work with the Litani river and its subsidiaries, which will cover land use planning as well.

It is highly probable that other initiatives supported by the international community will continue to some extent the work done by the SLMQ project. In this regard, the LDAP is an ideal tool, which can also be used for fund-raising.

The TE assesses the **financial sustainability** of the project as **Likely**.

Socio-political sustainability

As already mentioned in other parts of the report at hand, the Syrian Crisis, the economic downturn, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut blast are crisis that are deeply affecting the lives of people in Lebanon. The assessment of the magnitude of the combined effects of these crises and the uncertainty about their future development are clearly out of the scope and reach of the present evaluation exercise. The incidence and magnitude of socio-political risks associated to the four crisis on project achievements is an exercise that cannot be done.

The **socio-political sustainability** of the project as **Unable to assess**

Institutional framework and governance sustainability

SLMQ project developed the following regulatory/planning tools:

- National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests
- National Forest Management Guidelines
- Riparian Management Guidelines
- Urban Planning Management Handbook
- Regulatory framework for the local production of bio-pesticides and import of biological agents.
- 57 LUPs
- A masterplan

SLMQ project has also updated of the existing Forest Law (now Forest and Rangelands Law) by developing the section relating to rangelands management. The revised law is not yet officially approved. This achievement has great relevance in term of improved environmental governance.

The work done in term of capacity development of important actors of the environmental sector, LRI, MoA and MoE is as well an element of sustainability. The great consensus generated around the products and the enthusiasm of some key actors, such as universities and independent consultants, is as well an element of sustainability. LRI, Universities and independent consultants may be considered as project champions interested in promoting the project approach in their respective spheres of influence. On this regard, it is important to highlight that a project consultant is already working on the development of a masterplan, in another area of Lebanon, applying the same approach used during the implementation of the SLMQ project.

Now of the evaluation, the actual capacity and will of municipalities to have their LUPs actually implemented and the zoning enforced may be negatively affected by the development of the current crises that affect Lebanon. This represents the major concern in term of Institutional framework and governance sustainability.

The TE assesses the **institutional framework and governance sustainability** the project as **Moderately Likely**.



Environmental sustainability

The evaluation exercise did not identify any factors that may affect the environmental sustainability of the project.

The TE assesses the **environmental sustainability** of the project as **Likely**.

Overall likelihood of sustainability

The risks to overall sustainability of the project are those related to its socio-political and institutional framework and governance dimensions.

The TE assesses the **overall likelihood of sustainability** of the project as **Moderately Likely**.

4.3.f. Country ownership

Relevant stakeholders such as ministries, universities, and local authorities were consulted for the preparation of the ProDoc to ensure its alignment with national priorities. Such an alignment was as well pursued during the implementation.

The SLMQ project paved the way for an improved implementation of the UNCCD in line with its original intentions: an integrated approach to towards fostering sustainable land management (SLM) seeking to balance environmental management with development needs was actually promoted. In accordance with the lines of action of the NAP, the project supported priority actions via a broader consultative process contributing to the betterment of the institutional and legislative framework, to the adoption of environmental sound land use planning, and to the promotion of environmental sustainable production (agriculture, livestock and tourism).

The contribution of the SLMQ project towards the NAP implementation was considerable, specifically to all subcategories of the natural resource category identified: management, sustainable agriculture, rangeland management, forest management, sustainable agriculture, rangeland management, soil conservation and protected areas. The institutional ownership of the project at country level is very high.

The project arise enthusiasm with all other stakeholders interviewed during the data collection phase. Stakeholders saw involvement and actual participation as distinctive features of the initiative, whose results were appreciated by all interviewees. The country ownership was beyond the mere boundaries of the national institutions and interested the vast majority of stakeholders, including local authorities and communities, NGOs and academia. The importance of the project for the country is undoubted.

It is important to note that the “National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests” and the “Riparian Management Guidelines” as per the now of the evaluation are already officially national technical tools. Instead, the “National Forest Management Guidelines” and “Regulatory framework for the local production of bio-pesticides and import of biological” are awaiting the endorsement of MoA to become officially adopted by the institution and consequently nationwide. Finally, the “Urban Planning Management Handbook” does not need any official endorsement or approval.

The project is participating in the update of the existing Forest Law (now Forest and Rangelands Law) by developing the section relating to rangelands management and by integrating forest management planning as part of the text. The draft law was discussed at MoA. Due to COVID-19 the process was suspended. A future approval of the update will make the country ownership of the SLMQ project even more significant. The assessment of the likelihood of the approval of the update is out of the possibilities of the present exercise.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the GoL maintained its financial commitment to the project in term of co-finance, which actually exceeded the planned USD 17,600,000 significantly.



4.3.g. Gender equality and women’s empowerment

Gender issues were not at the centre of project implementation, which adhered to the gender strategy included in the ProDoc. Gender equality and women’s empowerment was mainstreamed into project activities, ensuring that women have a real voice in project governance as well as implementation. Women participated equally with men in any dialogue or decision-making initiated by the project and had the same opportunities to influence decisions. The selection of direct beneficiaries took into account a fair distribution of benefits between women and men taking into consideration the actual engagement at field level of women and men in the sector of interest of the project, i.e. herding, bee-keeping and rural tourism.

PMU made sure the gender considerations were included in all ToRs included in the contracts of the consultants hired in the frame of the project. Finally, it is important to highlight that the SEA framework of objectives and indicators addresses gender issues.

4.3.h. Cross-cutting Issues

As for gender issues, cross-cutting issues such human rights and poverty were not at the centre of project implementation. Indeed, they were not included in the project design as well. However, the approach to implementation followed by the PMU took into consideration vulnerable people. Indeed, the selection of direct beneficiaries took into consideration the vulnerability of the households. The utilization of cash-for-work modalities made as well possible a short-term economic support to Vulnerable Lebanese individuals.

Furthermore, as the all activities were conducted in a participative and transparent way, accountability, good governance and inclusion were features characterizing the work of the PMU and the UNDP country office. The evaluation exercise finds the overall approach to the implementation adequate: the nature of the project did not make necessary a direct promotion of actions to promote human rights and/or to tackle poverty. The idea of the project theory of change is that working to promote SLM will have beneficial effects on poverty in the long term.

4.3.i. GEF additionality

In accordance to the “Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF’s Additionality”, the evaluation exercise identified the following elements for each of the six areas of GEF’s additionality:

Areas of GEF’s additionality	Elements identified by the evaluation exercise
Specific Environmental	SLMQ project had an important added value in terms of Global Environmental Benefits. It substantially achieved its targets and provided the basis for better future implementation of environmental related international obligations of the country.
Legal / Regulatory	The ambition to change to environment sustainable legal /regulatory forms and to promote an improved environment institutional governance was at the centre of project design and implementation, which result ultimately in essential achievement to promote SLM practice in the project area, i.e. the Qaraoun catchment and more generally at country level.
Institutional / Governance	Refer to Legal / Regulatory area of GEF’s additionality
Financial	After the closure, its catalytic effect (please refer to section 4.3.k. Catalytic/Replication Effect) will allow the project to keep building over other development initiatives, which are the main source of financing for the environmental sector in the country, due to the various crisis, which were/are hitting Lebanon , the project was very important.

Socio-economic	The project involved beneficiaries and promoted a betterment of their livelihoods through the in-kind distribution of inputs and capacity development activities (trainings). It also provided the tools for coordinating efforts to promote the nexus between development, environmental and humanitarian needs. These tools may play an important role to support the socio-economic development of the country.
Innovation	SLMQ project was innovative. It went into details of planning with the Masterplan and the LUPs, which represented a novelty for the country. The use of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to mainstream environmental aspects in land use planning was key. Moreover, the five products of the project, i.e. National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests, National Forest Management Guidelines Riparian Management Guidelines, Urban Planning Management Handbook, and Regulatory framework for the local production of bio pesticides and import of biological agents, represent a first step for a better management of natural resources for Lebanon. In addition, there were other three elements of innovation: (1) the imprinter fitted with a seeder for rangelands for restoration activities; (2) the land degradation mapping assessment combining remote sensing and field work; and (3) the toolkit for decision making on land conversation and management based on the Integrated landscape approach.

4.3.j. Catalytic/Replication Effect

The catalytic or replication effect is an element that characterized the SLMQ project in its design and during its implementation. Actually, its importance lay on its catalytic/replication effect. In fact, as mentioned in section 4.1.a. “Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators”, the feature of the project design were related to development of regulatory and planning tools, support to direct implementation and awareness promotion and capacity development.

The catalytic effect was already visible during the implementation, too. Actually, the guidelines were utilized by other organizations, e.g. the Parsifal initiative to actually replicate the work done by the SLMQ project.

SLMQ project developed the following regulatory/planning tools, which are elements that are expected to the replication of project approach elsewhere in the country:

- National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests
- National Forest Management Guidelines
- Riparian Management Guidelines
- Urban Planning Management Handbook
- Regulatory framework for the local production of bio-pesticides and import of biological agents
- Regional Masterplan
- LUPs

Two examples show very well the potential of the work done in the frame of the SLMQ project:

- The National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests have been already used by the MoA in the frame of a IFAD project titled “the Climate Smart Agriculture: Enhancing Adaptive Capacity of the Rural Communities in Lebanon (AgriCAL)” to rehabilitated about 400 ha of land.
- It was reported that the Union of Municipalities of Bouhayra will work soon with funds from the Italian Agency Development Cooperation on a reforestation project in three municipality using the LUPs and the Forest Management Plans as main management tools. The work will make use of the food-for-asset modalities (i.e. cash-for-work) to support vulnerable Lebanese community members and Syrian refugees.



The catalytic effect of SLMQ project may become even more significant if the Forest and Rangelands Law, whose drafting process was informed by the project, will be approved.

Other two elements with potential catalytic effect are:

- The support to LARI to set up a green house for seed replication and the imprinter. Availability of local species is a limiting factor affecting the capacity to improve rangeland management at large scale.
- Sustainable Planning Information Management System (SPIMS). It is important to have better decision-making process in matters related to planning in line with existing natural resources.

Finally, SLMQ project provided lessons learned, i.e. the use of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for local planning and also for improving the awareness of the environment/development nexus.

In principle, the great variety of elements, especially regulatory and planning tools and guidelines, are applicable potentially in the frame of any environmental initiatives aiming at reforestation and/or improving land use planning and practices elsewhere in the country.

4.3.k. Progress to Impact

In the long term, some beneficial contributions of SLMQ project can be identified. They substantially overlap with the elements associated with the catalytic effect of the project (refer to section 4.3.k Catalytic/Replication Effect).

These elements have the potentiality to produce relevant changes resulting in environmental status change as increase in biodiversity, increase reduction of soil losses and increase water quality amongst other.

Finally, it is important to note that the SLMQ project, during its life span, already contributed to different degree to the establishment and/or management of three natural reserves, i.e. Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Mount Hermon Biosphere Reserve (in collaboration with UNESCO) and Yammouni nature reserve. In addition, its work will be taken into consideration for the management of the buffer zone of the natural reserves.

The contribution of the project towards the implementation of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD), i.e. the most important for the GEF, is significant. According to the final update of the GEF LD Tracking Tool the impact related to improvement of agricultural management, rangeland management, forest management, reforestation, and landscape management. The project had a significant impact also for the establishment of new protected areas.

5. Main findings, conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned

5.1. Main findings

Main findings of the present TE are:

Relevance

1. All stakeholders interviewed recognized Land degradation as a limiting factor for a sustainable development of the country. The project was thematically very relevant for institutional stakeholders encountered during the remote interviews carried out in the data collection phase.
2. Stakeholders from various ministries, universities, and local authorities were consulted for the preparation of the ProDoc to ensure its alignment with national priorities.
3. The original Results Framework included indicators not well formulated. The MTR reformulated them. The new indicators were SMART.



4. The design did not include any indicator capturing gender issue and any other cross-cutting issues. The ProDoc was correctly Gender-marked 1, i.e. limited attention is given to gender issues.
5. The project design did not identify significant risks associated with the implementation of the SLMQ project.
6. The attention given to stakeholders' engagement and participation was pertinent to create a fruitful dialogue at country and local level.

Efficiency

7. The MTR and the adoption of its recommendations were the main adaptive management measures characterizing the implementation of the project.
8. The M&E activities were appropriate to project needs.
9. PMU's work, the support from UNDP country office and the collaboration with the MoE were adequate for a smooth implementation of project activities. In particular, all the stakeholders interviewed on the matter considered the dedication and the capacities of the PMU's member outstanding.
10. The implementation was characterized by a great level of participation of relevant stakeholders.
11. Role of each partner identified in the ProDoc was substantially respected during the implementation.
12. During the implementation period, three unexpected crises, i.e. downturn of country economy, COVID-19 worldwide pandemic and the Beirut blast, added to the Syrian crisis, which was hitting the country at the time of project formulation. They were mitigated properly by the PMU, who ultimately managed to achieve all project's outputs.
- 13.

Effectiveness

14. SLMQ project achieved satisfactorily its objective and all its outcomes.

Sustainability

15. The project was effective in catalysing the attention and efforts towards the objective of the project, and more generally towards a better comprehension of the nexus development and environment at all level. The project captured the interest of all project stakeholders. It acted as a sustainable development catalyser in the Qaraoun area.

5.2. Conclusions

Main conclusions of the present TE are:

Relevance

1. The adoption of the recommendations of the MTR exercise, specifically those related to the revision of indicators and target levels reformulation and to the project extension was key to ensure the success of the project in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.
2. The high level of thematic relevance of the project and the capacity, the attitude and the will to collaborate of the PMU were recognized as the main elements that enabled the project to act as a catalyser of development actions in the Qaraoun catchment.
3. The way the project approach gender and other cross-cutting issues was deemed appropriate by all stakeholders interviewed on the matter.



4. SLMQ project helped the positioning of MoE within the institutional landscape of Lebanon. The ministry is now perceived not only as a conservationist entity; instead, its role as a development actor is recognized more widely. **IMPACT**

Efficiency

5. Competences of project-hired consultants and the high level of participation at the centre of the consultative process promoted by the project were as well considered key elements to achieve project results and ensure a great level of country ownership that goes beyond its institutional boundaries.
6. The efficiency of the project implementation is very high. The work coordinated by the PMU resulted to be successful in achieving very ambitious targets at outcome level. Without a coordination effort, the project would have not fulfilled, just with its funds and personnel, its ambitions.
7. The consequences of the economic downturn, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut blast, although mitigated, had a significant impact on the SLMQ project. This impact spanned across the three outcomes of the project and had its negative effect in term of consolidation of the achievements in terms of capacity building. It slowed down the all process and therefore hampered the capacity development dimension of the project, which would have been broader and deeper if the crisis had not happened. The impact of the crises on the sustainability of the project may as well result significant.

Effectiveness

8. The project promoted the GEF additionality across all the relevant GEF areas, i.e. environmental area, legal/regulatory area; institutional/governance area; financial area, socio-economic area and innovation area.
9. There is a vast consensus amongst stakeholders' interviews: activities related to natural resource management are very suitable for the food-for-asset approach that characterizes the work of the humanitarian community in Lebanon. They are labour intensive and may produce a significant environmental impact.

Sustainability

10. Project achievements are significant in terms of environmental benefits for the implementation of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD), i.e. the most important for the GEF. The project contributed to the implementation of the three Rio Conventions at country level. The GEF funds were utilized in a very pertinent way and enabled the country to move forward in the right direction.

5.3. Recommendations

The TE exercise provides the following recommendations:

Category A: Design

1. To include an articulated Theory of Change in the design of new initiatives. A Theory of Change help both project designers and implementers to navigate in the complexity of the context in which an initiative is implemented. It helps in setting/revising project ambitions, in formulating results, indicators and target levels. Moreover, its visualization within the specific context supports the identification of risks that may undermine the likelihood of success of the project. It also constitutes a tool to understand who in the project area and/or at national level may share interests beneficial for the initiative and for the sector in general. It is then important, that the team in charge of writing project documents include both thematic



specialists and M&E specialists. The two kinds of expertise are important to get to a project design that later can guide the implementation towards its goals.

Responsible entity: UNDP/MoA/MoE

Timeline: during the identification phase and/or the inception phase of implementation of new environmental and/or agricultural initiatives

2. To include indicators and targets to capture broader development impacts/effects (e.g. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance, livelihood benefits, and others) to which a new initiative/project is expected to contribute. Indeed, to move forward the Agenda 2030 and the fulfilment of its SDGs at country and global level, it is necessary to highlight that actions in one area related to an SDG will affect other SDGs and that sustainable development must advance taking into account its social, economic and sustainable dimensions. Under this perspective, UNDP/GEF initiatives represent an ideal tool to promote and visualize concepts related to the environment, sustainable development and the benefits that can result from it.

Responsible entity: UNDP/MoA/MoE

Timeline: during the identification phase and/or the inception phase of implementation of new environmental and/or agricultural initiatives

Category B: Promotion of environment and development agenda

1. To share the results of the initiative, especially the Masterplan, Local Development Action Plan and the LUPs, within the humanitarian community (GoL, UN agencies, NGOs and Donors) in order to promote the alignment of humanitarian interventions to the local development of Qaraoun catchment area. The alignment of humanitarian initiatives with the Masterplan, LDAP and LUPs is critical to promote the "triple nexus" of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding (HDP) efforts, which is widely accepted as relevant work approach within the development and humanitarian community. This will also help UNDP to keep positioning itself as a leading development agency within the Lebanese context.

Responsible entity: UNDP

Timeline: during relevant sections of humanitarian platforms operating in the country

2. To promote environmental restoration activities as the sector for food-for-asset interventions. Restoration activities, in fact, provide opportunities for labour intense temporary jobs, and, at the same time, ensure a significant impact for the improvement of the environmental status of the country. The guidelines produced by the project represent in this regard a valuable tool because humanitarian organizations may lack the necessary capacities to conduct environmental activity in a technically robust manner.

Responsible entity: UNDP/ MoA/MoE

Timeline: within other relevant initiatives and during relevant meetings and events of humanitarian platforms operating in the country

Category C: Knowledge generation and dissemination

1. To involve the academic sector in environment and development initiative. The implementation of the Rio Conventions and the attainment of related SDGs constitute a challenge for all countries. Creation and diffusion of scientific knowledge on this regard is crucial. Environment/Development projects represents an ideal means to produce scientific knowledge rooted in practical experience.

Responsible entity: UNDP/MoA/MoE

Timeline: during the identification phase and/or the inception phase of implementation of new environmental and/or agricultural initiatives



5.4. Lessons learned

The TE exercise identifies the following lessons learned:

Lesson learned n. 1 - General Approach

Adaptive management and participation are the basis for a project to achieve ambitious objectives. Participation in the project formulation phase, application of corrective actions, the coordination of different capacities, search for consensual solutions, and dedicated project staff are the necessary elements to ensure that a well-written project can prove to be successful on the ground. In other words, the general approach that should characterize all UN initiatives at field level finds in the SLMQ project confirmation of its validity.

Lesson learned n. 2 - Maximization of efforts

Coordination amongst stakeholders, use of competent consultants, support from the country office, and promotion of synergies outside the boundaries of a development initiative, such as the SLMQ project, towards the maximization of resource available constitute an effective strategy to promote the GEF additionality in all its relevant aspects. These aspects directly related to environment, legal/regulatory framework, governance, financial concerns/opportunities, socio-economic circumstances and promotion of innovation. In this regard, it is important to highlight that additionality is a core concept at the foundation of GEF initiatives, which have the ambitions to add to existing national efforts for environmental benefits.

Lesson learned n. 3 - Project Management Staff:

The thematic relevance of an initiative in a given territory is evidently the pre-requisite for a development project to be successful. However, those in charge of project management should be able to secure the attention of other stakeholders operating in the area to produce beneficial effects. Relevant managerial competencies, commitment and capacities to listen and understand different interests, openness to dialogue and personal commitment are key factors to promote an effective engagement of stakeholders in development initiative.



6. Annexes



Annex 1 - TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

ANNEX I - TERMINAL EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the *Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment Project* (PIMS # 4642).

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment			
GEF Project ID:	5229		at endorsement (Million US\$)	at completion (Million US\$)
UNDP Project ID:	4642	GEF financing:	3.18	
Country:	Lebanon	IA/EA own:		
Region:	Arab States	Government:	17.6	
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other (UNDP)	0.3	
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	Land Degradation	Total co-financing:	18.05	
Executing Agency:	Lebanese Ministry of the Environment	Total Project Cost:	21.23	
Other Partners involved:	Ministry of Agriculture, Center for Development and Reconstruction	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		January 2016
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 27 July 2021	Actual: 27 July 2021

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project titled “Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment” or “SLM Qaraoun” is financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and is nationally executed by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) of the Government of Lebanon (GoL) and is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) using the Support to National Implementation Modality (NIM).

The project was designed to: achieve sustainable land management in the Qaraoun Catchment. More specifically, it is aiming to obtain alleviation of land degradation, maintenance of ecosystem services and an improvement in livelihoods as targeted by the Objective. The Qaraoun catchment is characterized by its important role in providing ecosystem services in the area in addition to being a source of water for urban use and food production. Despite its crucial functions, the catchment



suffers from accelerating land degradation attributable to historic deforestation, expansion of urban settlements, and inappropriate infrastructure placement. National momentum has shed the light on the increasingly important pollution levels in the area creating an enabling environment for the Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Catchment project, and specifically for introducing improved land management practices at the local level.

To achieve the intended outcomes, project worked at 3 levels. Firstly at the local level through interventions under Outcome 1 where specific SLM practices were implemented in 3 districts in specific farms, forests and rangeland areas within selected landscapes. Secondly, at the district level through the formulation of land use plans under Outcome 2. Thirdly, a set of activities were implemented preparing for higher level replication under Outcome 3 including the development of legal and regulatory texts, training curricula, communication material and more.

The project is hosted by the Ministry of Environment in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Works & Transport & DGUP, Ministry of Energy & Water, Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR), Litani River Authority (LRA), Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute (LARI), Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities, NGOs, Investment Development Authority of Lebanon, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and other international organizations.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method¹ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the [UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects](#). A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([fill in Annex C](#)). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders.

The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Beirut, Lebanon, and site visits will be organized to one or more of the project **beneficiaries'** sites that are located in different districts/areas in the Bekaa Governorate. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum: UNDP Lebanon Energy and Environment Programme team, Project Managers of other donor-funded projects that are relevant, including but not limited to land degradation, natural resources management and biodiversity, the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture (various individuals), etc.. The evaluator may be requested to undertake these meetings online depending on the COVID-19 context in observance to precautionary measures. The Project Team will be responsible for organizing these interviews and will support the consultant in the logistics of these meeting. Approximately 5 – 10 meetings/interviews will be undertaken.

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents

¹ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163



that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework (see [Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>Rating</i>	2. IA& EA Execution	<i>Rating</i>
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	<i>Rating</i>	4. Sustainability	<i>Rating</i>
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								

• In-kind support								
• Other								
Totals								

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender. The evaluators can use the following tools, inter alia: (i) Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation - Towards UNEG Guidance².

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.³

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations and lessons**.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in *Lebanon*. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 20 days according to the following plan spread over a period of 11 calendar weeks (but no later than 10 June 2021):

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
----------	--------	-----------------

² <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>

³ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)



Preparation	5 days	16 April 2021
Evaluation Mission	5 days	31 April 2021
Draft Evaluation Report	8 days	21 May 2021
Final Report	2 days	10 June 2021

The evaluation mission is tentatively scheduled to end of April 2021. Should travel not be feasible during this time and a mission not possible, the meetings will be undertaken virtually and the estimated mission costs deducted.

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission.	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO
Presentation	Initial Findings	End of evaluation mission	To project management, UNDP CO
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission	Sent to CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs
Final Report*	Revised report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC.

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#).

PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

%	Milestone
10%	Upon approval of the final TE Inception Report
30%	Upon submission of the draft TE report
60%	Upon finalization of the TE report



Annex 2 - TE virtual mission agenda

Week 1

Monday 26th, April 2021

- 1) 10:00 – 10:50: Meeting with Dr. Manal Moussallem
- 2) 11:00 – 11:50: Meeting with Ms. Nancy Awad
- 3) 14:00 – 14:55: Meeting with Ms. Jihan Seoud
- 4) 15:00 – 15:50: Meeting with Ms. Nour Masri

Tuesday 27th, April 2021

- 5) 10:00 – 10:50: Meeting with Ms. Lara Samaha and Dr. Adel Yacoub
- 6) 11:00 – 11:50: Meeting with Dr. Chadi Mohanna
- 7) 12:00 – 11:50: Meeting with Ms. Sylva Koteich and Ms. Zeina Tamim
- 8) 14:00 – 14:30: Meeting with Ms. Aline Saker
- 9) 14:30 – 15:00: Meeting with Mr. Dominique Choueiter

Wednesday 28th, April 2021

- 10) 10:00 – 10:40: Meeting with Ms. Joelle Breidy
- 11) 11:00 – 10:50: Meeting with Mr. Dany Yammouni
- 12) 12:00 – 12:30: Meeting with 4 beneficiaries (women) of bee-keeping activities
- 13) 12:30 – 13:30: Meeting with 3 beneficiaries (men) of the bee-keeping activities
- 14) 14:00 – 14:50: Meeting with Mr. Nadim Mroueh
- 15) 15:00 – 15:30: Meeting with Ms. Tala Moukaddem

Thursday 29th, April 2021

- 16) 10:20 – 11:00: Meeting with Eng. Yehia Daher
- 17) 11:00 – 11:40: Meeting with Mr. Jihad Mouallem, and a beneficiary (man) of vineyards's rehabilitation
- 18) 12:00 – 12:30: Meeting with Mr. Farid Ammouri
- 19) 12:50 – 13:20: Meeting with Mr. Maher Mckanna
- 20) 14:00 – 14:50: Meeting with Mr. Kamal Saykali and Mr. Joe Saad
- 21) 17:00 – 17:45: Meeting with Mr. Sheikh Saleh Bou Mansour

Week 2

Tuesday 4th, May

- 22) 10:00 – 10:50: Meeting with Dr. Maya Nehme
- 23) 11:00 – 11:40: Meeting with Ms. Karma Bouazza
- 24) 12:00 – 12:30: Meeting with Ms. Mireille Jazi
- 25) 13:00 – 14:00: Meeting with 5 beneficiaries (2 women and 3 men)

Wednesday 5th, May

- 26) 11:00 – 11:40: Meeting with Ms. Fatima Hammoud
- 27) 12:00 – 12:30: Meeting with 5 beneficiaries (all women)
- 28) 12:30 – 13:00: Meeting with 5 beneficiaries (all men)
- 29) 14:00 – 14:45: Meeting with Joseph Bechara, LRI
- 30) 15:00 – 15:45: Meeting with Mr. Elie Chnais



Thursday 6th, May

- 31) 10:00 – 10:55: Meeting with Dr. George Mitri
- 32) 11:15 – 10:50: Meeting with Dr. Chadi Abdallah
- 33) 12:00 – 12:50: Meeting with Dr. Serge Yazigi
- 34) 14:00 – 14:20: Meeting with Ms. Nour Masri

Friday 7th, May

- 35) 10:00 – 10:45: Meeting with Mr. Kassem Jouni
- 36) 11:00 – 11:40: Meeting with Mr. Walid Ali
- 37) 12:30 – 13.00: Meeting with Ms. Celine Moyroud and Mr. Mohammed Solih
- 38) 15:00 – 16:00: Wrap-up Meeting with Ms. Jihan Seoud and Ms. Nour Masri

Monday 17th, May

- 39) 10:00 – 10:30 Meeting with Mrs. Gaelle Kibranian



Annex 3 - List of persons interviewed

- Dr. Manal Moussallem, Senior Environmental Advisor, UNDP/MOE and Member of the Project Board
- Ms. Nancy Awad Land Use Management Specialist, CDR
- Ms. Jihan Seoud, Energy and Environment Programme Manager, UNDP
- Ms. Nour Masri, Project Manager, UNDP
- Ms. Lara Samaha, Head of Ecosystems Department, MOE
- Dr. Adel Yacoub, Head of Natural Resource Protection Department, MOE
- Dr. Chadi Mohanna, Director of Directorate of Rural Development and Natural Resources, MoA
- Ms. Sylva Koteich, Head of Forest Service, MoA
- Ms. Zeina Tamim, Head Rangeland Department, MoA
- Ms. Aline Saker, Head of Rural Development and National Resources in Bekaa Region, MOA
- Mr. Dominique Choueiter, the Project Officer, UNDP
- Ms. Joelle Breidy, National Seed Bank Manager, LARI
- Mr. Dany Yammouni, Head of Bee-Keeping Unit, LARI
- 4 beneficiaries (women) of the bee-keeping activities
- 3 beneficiaries (men) of the bee-keeping activities
- Mr. Nadim Mroueh, Director of Natural Resource Service, MoE and Project Technical Focal Point
- Ms. Tala Moukaddem, Project Assistant, UNDP
- Eng. Yehia Daher, Head of Union of Municipalities of Bouhayra and President of Qaraoun municipality
- Mr. Jihad Mouallem, Mayor of Qab Elias municipality
- 1 beneficiary (man) vineyards
- Mr. Farid Ammouri, Vice President Municipality of Ain Zebde
- Mr. Maher Mckanna, UNV Site Engineer
- Mr. Kamal Saykali, President of Municipality of Kfar Mechki
- Mr. Joe Saad, President Municipality of Rachaya
- Mr. Sheikh Saleh Bou Mansour, Former Head of Union of Municipalities of Jabal El Sheikh
- Dr. Maya Nehm, Director, LRI
- Ms. Karma Bouazza, Riparian Rehabilitation Project Manager, LRI
- Ms. Mireille Jazi, Rural Tourism Project Manager, LRI



- 5 beneficiaries (2 women and 3 men) of the rural tourism activities
- Ms. Fatima Hammoud, Small Ruminants Project Manager, LRI
- 5 beneficiaries (all women) of the small ruminants activities
- 5 beneficiaries (all men) of the small ruminants activities
- Mr. Joseph Bachara, LRI
- Mr. Elie Chnais, Manager of Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism Project, FAO
- Dr. George Mitri, Associate Professor, University of Balamand
- Dr. Chadi Abdallah, Director of Early Warning System, CNRS
- Dr. Serge Yazigi, Team Leader - Masterplan Bekaa
- Mr. Kassem Jouni, Programme Policy Officer, WFP
- Mr. Walid Ali, Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP/GEF
- Ms. Celine Moyroud, Country Representative, UNDP
- Mr. Mohammed Solih, Deputy Country Representative, UNDP
- Ms. Gaelle Kibranian, Gender Country Officer, UNDP



Annex 4 - List of documents consulted

Documents:

- ⇒ A Human Rights-based Approach to Development Programming in UNDP – Adding the Missing Link
- ⇒ Annual work plans
 - 2016
 - 2017
 - 2018
 - 2019
 - 2020
 - 2021
- ⇒ Beneficiaries selection criteria
- ⇒ Business Plan for Combating Pollution of the Qaroun Lake
- ⇒ Capacity Development Scorecard
- ⇒ Draft Master Plan report (2020)
- ⇒ Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- ⇒ Improving small ruminants value chain in the Qaraoun catchment
- ⇒ Improving small ruminants value chain in the Qaraoun catchment - Marketing study for the goat milk products
- ⇒ Inception Report “Promoting the Rural Tourism Sector in the Districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa” (March 2020)
- ⇒ General Management Plan & Training Plan (General Forest Management Plan)
- ⇒ Land degradation mapping and assessment in the districts of Zahleh, Rachaya, and West Bekaa
 - Assessment report (2018)
 - Midterm report (2019)
- ⇒ Mid Term Review report
- ⇒ National Action Programme to combat Desertification (2003) towards fostering sustainable land management (SLM) seeking to balance environmental management with development needs.nap
- ⇒ National Forest Management Guidelines
- ⇒ National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands outside forests
- ⇒ ProDoc and annexes
- ⇒ Project Identification Form
- ⇒ Project Implementation Reviews:
 - 2017



- 2018
- 2019
- 2020

- ⇒ Project Inception Report
- ⇒ Project GEF LD Tracking Tool
- ⇒ “Promoting the rural tourism sector in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa” – Training Plan (2020)
- ⇒ Riparian Management Guidelines
- ⇒ Socio-Economic Assessment and Monitoring & Evaluation Guidelines Report
 - Baseline (2017)
 - Enline (2021)
- ⇒ UNDP Country programme document for Lebanon (2017-2020)
- ⇒ UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (Policy Update, OPG approved in 2019)
- ⇒ Urban Planning Management Handbook

Websites:

- ⇒ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10661-019-7739-y#Ack1>
- ⇒ www.thegef.org
- ⇒ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/05/lebanon-currency-inflation-exchange-rates>
- ⇒ www.lb.undp.org
- ⇒ <https://sdgintegration.undp.org/>
- ⇒ <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>



Annex 5 - Evaluation Question Matrix

Key evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources of data	Methodology
Criterion of 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 level?			
Was the project aligned with the national development priorities?	Extent to which the project's objectives were in line with the national development priorities	ProDoc, PIRs, National policies and programme, Project staff, UNDP Officers, Public Officers, NGOs	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Was the implementation of the project responsive to to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?	Extent to which the project was appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country	ProDoc, PIRs, National policies and programme, Project staff, UNDP officers, National Officers of GoL, NGOs	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Was the project formulated in accordance to national and local strategies to advance gender equality?	Extent to which the project was formulated according to national and local strategies to advance gender equality	ProDoc, PIRs, National policies and programme, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Was the project in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, UNDAF, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), SDGs and GEF strategic programming?	Extent to which the project was in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, UNDAF, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), SDGs and GEF strategic programming	ProDoc, PIRs, UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, UNDAF, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), SDGs and GEF strategic programming	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did the project contribute to the Theory of Change for the relevant country programme outcome?	Extent to which the project contributed to the Theory of Change for the relevant country programme outcome	ProDoc, PIRs, CPD, UNDP Officers	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did project stakeholders participate actively in the project?	Extent to which relevant stakeholders participated in the project	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Extent to which the project was formulated according to the needs and interests of all targeted and/or relevant stakeholder groups	Extent to which the project was formulated according to the needs and interests of all targeted and/or relevant stakeholder groups	ProDoc, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Extent to which the intervention is informed by needs and interests of diverse groups of stakeholders through in-depth consultation	Extent to which the intervention is informed by needs and interests of diverse groups of stakeholders through in-depth consultation	Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews



Extent to which lessons learned from other relevant projects were considered in the project's design	Extent to which lessons learned from other relevant projects were considered in the project's design	ProDoc, Project staff and UNDP Officers	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Criterion of effectiveness: to what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
Did the project contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, GEF strategic priorities, and national development priorities.	Extent to which the project contributed to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the development priorities.	ProDoc, PIRs, other project documentation, UNDP Strategic Plan, CPD, UNDAF, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), SDGs and GEF strategic programming	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did the project achieve expected outputs and outcomes?	Extent to which the intervention achieved, or expects to achieve, results (outputs, outcomes and impacts, including global environmental benefits) taking into account the key factors that influenced the results	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
What are the Areas in which the project had the greatest and fewest achievements? And what were the contributing factors?	Identification of areas in which the project had the greatest and fewest achievements; and the contributing factors	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
What were the constraining factors for project achievements?	Identification of constraining factors, such as socio-economic, political and environmental risks; cultural and religious festivals, etc. and how they were overcome	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Were there alternative strategies that would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives?	Identification of alternative strategies that would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and to the promotion of a human rights-based approach?	Extent to which the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and to the promotion of a human rights-based approach	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did the project incorporate gender responsive and human rights-based approach in its design and implementation?	Extent to which a gender responsive and human rights-based approach were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention.	ProDoc, PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Criterion of efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
Was the use of financial and human resources and strategic allocation of resources (funds, human	Extent to which there was an efficient and economical use of financial and human resources	ProDoc, PIRs, National policies and programme, Project staff, UNDP	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews



resources, time, expertise, etc.) to achieve outcomes of efficient and economical?	and strategic allocation of resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) to achieve outcomes	officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	
Did the project achieved expected outcomes according to schedule, and as cost-effective as initially planned in the ProDoc?	Whether the project completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes in terms of achievement of global environmental and development objectives according to schedule, and as cost-effective as initially planned	ProDoc, PIRs, National policies and programme, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Were resources at disposal of the project adequate for for integrating gender equality and human rights in the project as an investment in short-term, medium-term and long-term benefits?	Provision of adequate resources for integrating gender equality and human rights in the project as an investment in short-term, medium-term and long-term benefits	ProDoc, PIRs, Project Budget, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did the the allocation of resources to targeted groups took into account the need to prioritize those most marginalized?	Extent to which the allocation of resources to targeted groups took into account the need to prioritize those most marginalized	ProDoc, PIRs, Project Budget, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Was the project extension necessary?	Extent to which a project extension could have been avoided (for cases where an extension was approved)	ProDoc, PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?	Extent to which the project management structure as outlined in the project document was efficient in generating the expected results	ProDoc, PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Were project funds and activities delivered in a timely manner?	Extent to which project funds and activities were delivered in a timely manner	ProDoc, PIRs, Project Budget, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Did M&E system in place ensure effective and efficient project management?	Extent to which M&E systems ensured effective and efficient project management	ProDoc, PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Criterion of sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-political, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
What is the likelihood that financial resources will be available once the GEF assistance ends to support the continuation of benefits (income generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is	Identification of the likelihood that financial resources will be available once the GEF assistance ends to support the continuation of benefits	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews



likely that there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project outcomes)?			
What opportunities for financial sustainability exist?	Identification of opportunities for financial sustainability	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
What additional factors are needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing?	Identification of enabling factors	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Has there been the establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends (i.e. from the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and market transformations to promote the project's objectives)?	Identification of financial and economic instruments to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries, relevant public policies and programmes	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Are there any social or political risks that can undermine the longevity of project outcomes?	Identification of social or political risks that can undermine the longevity of project outcomes	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?	Identification of the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?	Identification of stakeholders' interest and perception of it.	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?	Extent to which public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project exist	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis?	Identification of documentation of lessons learned	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Are the project's successful aspects being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?	Extent to which project's successful aspects of the project have been transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others for replication or upscaling	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Indicate whether the gender results achieved are short-term or long term.	Identification of circumstantial evidences related to gender issues	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews



Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose any threat to the continuation of project benefits?	Indetification of threats to the continuation of project benefits which derive from legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Has the project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure?	Extent to which project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
How has the project developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?	Extent to which project developed appropriate institutional capacity that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
How has the project identified and involved champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society) who can promote sustainability of project outcomes?	Identification of champions who can promote sustainability of project outcomes	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Has the project achieved stakeholders' (including government stakeholders') consensus regarding courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date?	Identification of a project exit strategy	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Does the project leadership have the ability to respond to future institutional and governance changes (i.e. foreseeable changes to local or national political leadership)?	Evidence around the ay of project leadership to respond to future institutional and governance changes	Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Individual interviews - Group interviews
Can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?	Identification of incorporation of project strategies into future planning	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Is the institutional change conducive to systematically addressing gender equality and human rights concern?	Extent to which gender equality and human rights concern are mainstream into the institutional change promoted by the project.	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Are there environmental factors that could undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits?	Identification of environmental factors that could undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews
Will certain activities in the project area pose a threat to the sustainability of project outcomes?	Indetification of threats and activities that to the continuation of project benefits	PIRs, other project documentation, Project staff, UNDP officers, Public Officers, NGOs, Beneficiaries	- Desk review - Individual interviews - Group interviews



Annex 6 - TE Rating scale

Ratings for M&E, IA & EA Execution and Assessment of Outcomes (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Overall Project Outcome Rating)	Rating for Sustainability
<p>6= Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings</p> <p>5= Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings</p> <p>4= Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings</p> <p>3= Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings</p> <p>2= Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/o major shortcomings</p> <p>1= Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):severe shortcomings</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment</p>	<p>4= Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability</p> <p>3= Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability</p> <p>2= Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability</p> <p>1= Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability</p>

The ratings will be derived from the findings described in the relevant section of the final TE report. , Instead, The Overall Project Outcome rating will be calculated. Such calculation will be based on the ratings for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical.

The rating on relevance will determine whether the overall outcome rating will be in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is in the unsatisfactory range then the overall outcome will be in the unsatisfactory range as well. However, where the relevance rating is in the satisfactory range (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either in the satisfactory range or in the unsatisfactory range. The overall outcome achievement rating cannot be higher than the effectiveness rating. The overall outcome rating cannot be higher than the average score of effectiveness and efficiency criteria.

In cases where a project’s result framework has been modified and approved, and if the modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the TE team should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account and despite achievement of results as per the revised results framework, where appropriate, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given.



Annex 7 - UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

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 imitations, 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 and did not carry out the project mid term review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of the International Evaluator: Giacomo Morelli

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

Signed at Bern, Switzerland on 01/04/2021

Signature: