## UNDP-GEF TER Report Audit Trail

**To the comments received on October 14, 2019 from the Terminal Evaluation Report (TER) of full-sized UNDP-GEF project**

**Project Title: SCRL**

**UNDP PIMS ID:**

**GEF Project ID:**

*The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Terminal Evaluation Report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column) and track change comment number (“#” column):*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **# Para No./ comment location** | **Comment/Feedback on the draft TER report** | **MTR team**  **response and actions taken** |
| **PM** | **Page 1, the 9th line** | Project Start Date (actual): the date September 17, 2016 | **Accepted** |
| **PM** | **Page 26 Chapter 2. Project Description, Subsection 2.1 Project start and duration** | Its target group were farmers in two pilot regions – in **Galkynysh etrap of Lebap** velayat and Gorogly etrap of Dashoguz velayat – two of the country’s driest regions.  It was proposed to correct the name of the etrap.  Its target group were farmers in two pilot regions – in **Danew (former Galkynysh)** etrap of Lebap velayat and Gorogly etrap of Dashoguz velayat – two of the country’s driest regions. | **Corrected**  Its target group were farmers in two pilot regions – in **Danew (former Galkynysh)** etrap of Lebap velayat and Gorogly etrap of Dashoguz velayat – two of the country’s driest regions. |
| **PM** | **Page 26 Table 3: Key Project dates; the 4th line** | Date of Inception Workshop May 20, 2016 was proposed to indicate the right dates: December 22-23, 2016 | **Corrected** |
| **ICTA** | **Page 27 Chapter 2.2 Development context**  The 3rd sentence: | It is a water stressed country with one of the harshest climates in the Central Asian region. Turkmenistan has **one of the harshest climates in the region** and residents of northern regions have been severely affected by the Aral Sea crisis, land degradation, salinization, and desertiﬁcation.  It was proposed: to revise the phrase, as was repeat from previous sentence. | **Was done**  “Residents of northern regions have been severely affected by the Aral Sea crisis, land degradation, salinization, and desertiﬁcation”. |
| **ICTA** | **Page 28 the 2nd paragraph, the 1 sentence** | These changes will lead to a **decrease in total volume of water availability** that are likely to have a profound impact on agricultural production systems and local farmers.  *Such comment*: Decrease in total water volume also (and to a larger extent) is impacted by water resources development under climate change in the upstream Amu Darya river basin. | **Was accepted**  The remark was indicated in the footnote #7: Decrease in total water volume also (and to a larger extent) is impacted by water resources development under climate change in the upstream Amu Darya river basin. |
| **ICTA** | **Page 36 Chapter 3.1. Project design/Formulation** | *The remark*: Several sub-sections under this section 3.1 on project design describe also the actual activities, not so much the design. But then an opinional statement is not given. A bit confusing | **Was accepted and indicated in the footnote** |
| **ICTA/PM** | **Page 36 Subsection 3.1.1, the 5th subpoint** | Building social capacity by organizing **an association of tenants** based on production or other characteristics;  **An association of tenants** was recommended to be changed into: **Society or union of farmers** | **Was done** |
| **ICTA** | **Page 37 the last sentence** | The removal of the word “agricultural” | **Was done** |
| **ICTA** | **Page 37; the last sentence; the continuation is at the next page** | Therefore, the SCRL project could have been designed more effectively if aspects of capacity development for local governance had been included more prominently in the conceptualization of the project. The next comment of the ICTA was done to this sentence: “While I agree with the statement, it may be additionally noted here that during the implementation phase the project actively and successfully engaged representatives of local governance structure in capacity building activities, thus through adaptive management having addressed this design weakness”. | **Was accepted and indicated in the footnote #20:**  \*During the implementation phase the project actively and successfully engaged representatives of local governance structure in capacity building activities. |
| **ICTA** | **Page 39 the last paragraph of the 3.1.1. Chaper, the 2nd sentence** | A substantive revision of the project’s results framework was one of the **key recommendations** of the project’s MTR which was not acted upon.  Such view was expressed; “In our view, the MTR included a general note on the RRF revision, to further clarify in detail two specific recommendations, which were addressed by the project, as well all other specific recommendations issued by the MTR. The project’s actions to MTR recommendations were all described in detail in the management responses”. | **The paragraph was revised**  “A revision of the project’s results framework was one of the key recommendations of the project’s MTR which was not acted upon. While the project has delivered a number of important activities and results that will be reviewed in the following sections of this report, it was impossible to capture them and build a coherent story of the achievements of the project using the results framework in the way it was constructed in the Project Document”. |
| **ICTA** | Page 40;3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks; the first sentence of the 5th (last paragraph of the page; | The first one was **obvious** at the time of the formulation of the project, but somehow its importance was underestimated and therefore no mitigation measures were identified.  Such explanation: “UNDP CO did not consider this risk as obvious at the time of project formulation similar projects under implementation, for instance Adaptation Fund project (lasted 2011-2016) did not have such a problem with exchange rate. Thus, this risk was conceived as being not-existing and accordingly not indicated in SCRL project document” was presented. | **Agreed**    The paragraph was changed. |
| **PM** | Page 41 | The end of the 1 paragraph…**and the number of grant initiatives under the second round (9 initiatives) had to be significantly reduced compared to the number of grants in the first round (20 initiatives).**  It was advised to paraphrase the sentence given above**: “**We do not consider the number of grant initiatives financed the correct indicator. The reason of a lower number of grant initiatives approved during the second round is because (i) several grant proposals from Abadanlyk farmers’ association were forfeited due to abolishment of the farmers’ association in autumn 2020; (ii) several adaptation measures proposed by local communities of the Serdar livestock farm have been combined into one grant application, because of the analogical set of measures for different remote areas. In fact, the amount spent for the first cycle of grants is 170,295 USD, while for the second cycle of grants it is 120,327 USD, hence there is no significant difference between the two cycles of grants in terms of financial resource allocated. We propose to reword the phrase. | **Agreed**  **The statement: “**For these reasons, the number of planned activities had to be reduced, and the number of grant initiatives under the second round (9 initiatives) had to be significantly reduced compared to the number of grants in the first round (20 initiatives)” **was deleted.** |
| **ICTA** | Page 43; the 2nd paragraph | The ICTA remark: “The ICTA was only hired more than half-way through the project, after the MTR based on the recommendation” was given to the next statement: “The PMU also **included an international adviser** who provided strategic support on key aspects of the project”. | **Accepted**  **The statement: “**The PMU also included an international adviser who provided strategic support on key aspects of the project” **was deleted**. |
| **ICTA** | Page 44 | The figure below shows the project’s organizational structure.  **The remark sounds:** “There is no conclusion or summary finding to this section”. | **Accepted**  The conclusion was given under the Figure 6:  “Overall, the setup of the project at the design stage was adequate. One modification that was made at the recommendation of the MTR was the inclusion in the PMU of an international chief technical adviser, hired half way through the project, who provided strategic support on key aspects of the project”. |
| **ICTA** | Page 48 the last concluding sentence of the subpoint 3.1.5. | The proposal: “*May be add a concluding summary statement/opinion on linkages? Alternatively, if this is part of the “project design analysis” maybe the factual information should be presented below in the findings on “project implementation” or “project results”. As said above, a bit confusing structural buildup of the report”* was given to this statement: “Further, the SCRL project supported the revision of Turkmenistan’s report on the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement (NDC-2) in the area of climate change adaptation”. | **Accepted**  Such concluding statement was added:  “Overall, the SCRL project was designed to interact and cooperate with other initiatives with similar objectives”. |
| **ICTA** | Page 50 ; the concluding sentence of the subpoint 3.1.6 | It was proposed to add a concluding summary statement/opinion on gender. | **Added:**  Overall, the project design has to a large extent taken into account the country situation and challenges. It has also addressed the need for gender disaggregated data in the project’s results framework. |
| **ICTA** | Page 51 subpoint 3.2.1. the 2nd sentence | To paraphrase the word in the sentence:  “**Despite** the challenging circumstances that the project faced during its implementation and which will be described further in this section, the project team and stakeholders took a flexible approach and tried a variety of options, approaches and alternatives to achieve the set objectives”. | **Accepted**  “**In response** to the challenging circumstances that the project faced during its implementation and which will be described further in this section, the project team and stakeholders took a flexible approach and tried a variety of options, approaches and alternatives to achieve the set objectives” |
| **ICTA** | **Page 52 the 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence** | Such proposal: “Maybe add that this decision was taken in close consultation with the government partner?” was given to the statement below:  **In its place** the project elaborated the Methodological Guidelines for the Development of Technological Standards for the Use of Water, which was submitted to the State Committee for Water Management. | **Accepted.**  **The new version:**  “**In close consultation with the government partner**, in its place the project elaborated the Methodological Guidelines for the Development of Technological Standards for the Use of Water, which was submitted to the State Committee for Water Management”. |
|  | **Page 52 the last sentence of the 1st paragraph** | **The ICTA opinion:** Maybe add a concluding summary statement/opinion on gender? to the subpoint (iii):  (iii) further revision of previously drafted regulatory legal acts, taking into account comments received from key parties and local communities and the promotion of their formal adoption by relevant state **authorities.** | **Added**  **S**uch concluding statement: **The legal consultant also acted as intermediate between the project and government stakeholders on explanations of drafts prepared.** |
| **ICTA** | **Page 52 the last subpoint** | The sentence beginning with: **For these reasons**, the project team reduced the number of grant initiatives in the second round to 9 initiatives from 20 initiatives in the first round.  It is proposed to correct: “Not correct. The changes in exchange rate led to some approved grants to be implemented in lower than agreed volumes, but the number of approved grants was not affected. See explanation on page 29 (section 3.1.2)” | **Accepted**  **The sentence: “For these reasons**, the project team reduced the number of grant initiatives in the second round to 9 initiatives from 20 initiatives in the first round” **was deleted.** |
| **ICTA** | **Page 53 the 1st subpoint, the 3rd line.** | To add to the phrase “in-country travel” “the international travels” as well. | **Accepted**  The new version contains the word “travel” |
| **PM/ICTA** | **Page 53; 3.2.1. Adaptive Management, the last sentence** | Also, the project would have benefitted from the involvement of the Ministry of Finance and the **Ministry of Justice** as financial/budgetary issues and the approval of draft laws created delays that could have been avoided by a closer involvement of these institutions in project activities.  The ICTA remark: Clarify that our legal expert(s) tried to coordinate the project with MoJ. The efforts of the project should be acknowledged.  PM’s remark: During project implementation the project’s team of legal experts did several attempts to engage the MoJ in the working process, however progress / engagement was not achieved. | **Accepted:**  It should be noted that during the implementation the project’s team of legal experts made several attempts to engage the MoJ in the process, however no engagement was achieved |
| **ICTA** | **Page 66 subsection 3.2.1** UNDP Implementation/Oversight, Implementing Partner Execution …….**; the 3rd sentence** | Ministry specialists and the National Project Coordinator visited the pilot regions of the project in **2017-2018**, got acquainted with the activities of the AICs………  Suggested to add: NPC also visited in December 2021 / January 2022 | **Revised**  New version: Ministry specialists and the National Project Coordinator visited the pilot regions of the project several times, got acquainted with the activities of the AICs, communicated with local people, and as a result………. |
| **PM** | **Page 66** | The remark to the evaluation mark: Given the ownership challenges and the urgency of the handover matters noted above, the rating of Executing Agency’s performance in the project is “Moderately **Satisfactory**”  PM’s statement: We do not agree with the “moderately satisfactory” performance assessment. The PIU is fully satisfied with performance of the main national partner/ implementing agency to date, as all necessary support has been provided during the period of project implementation towards achievement of the expected results. With regards to the handover of AICs and their sustainability after project completion, this is an ongoing process in which the Executive Agency is very supportive. For instance, the NPC has visited the AICs in December 2021 and January 2022 in order to discuss with local partners (hyakimliks of pilot etraps, local communities, local project staff) the future operationlity of the AICs and the best solution to handover. Afterwards, the National Project Coordinator unofficially announced that the AICs will continue functioning within the newly initiated projects on NAP and Aral Sea, under which it is envisioned to further strengthen their human and technical capacities. This proposed decision will be discussed at the Final Project Management Board (PMB) meeting, and we expect the decision to be endorsed. As such, the continued functioning, and hence their sustainability, of the AICs after EOP is considered to be secured. In light of the Executive Agency’s past and continuing support to the project, we propose to revise the performance rating into “Satisfactory” | **Reasons were accepted**  The evaluation mark is “Satisfactory” |
| **ICTA/MP** | **Page 67 the 3rd subpoint** | * This report has described the **failure** of one procurement process, but also the successful completion of another;   ICTA: “We did not actually have a failure, but delays / long procedures. Propose to revise, as the statement is incorrect”.  PM: “No we did not have any failure” | **Accepted**  New version:   * UNDP also provided operational support to the project, especially with regards to the procurement process. Given the infrastructure-related nature of the project, procurement was an essential part of activities. This report has described some delays of the procurement process; |
| **ICTA/PM** | **Page 77 the 2nd paragraph** | ***The ICTA remark was given to the text:*** These were handed over to farmers’ associations and clients under the remote agro-consulting services in Lebap velayat, but only agricultural technologies for corn have been applied by one of the farmers based on his own request.  Here is the remark: “The information is too general and not quite correct. We propose to rephrase this paragraph as follows: “These were handed over to farmers’ associations and clients under the remote agro-consulting services in the two pilot regions in autumn 2021. Currently as part of the field-based agricultural consultations provided to farmers through the AICs, the agri-technical protocols are being studied by farmers for use in the 2022 cropping season. In addition, remote and field-based agricultural recommendations provided in earlier years specifically to 10 farmers were applied by the farmers, albeit with varying successes, related to e.g. insufficient farmers’ capacities to timely apply practices, lack of availability of water resources, recommended chemicals, high costs of proposed alternative cropping practices, etc”.  PM supports the remark. | The corrections have been adopted: “These were handed over to farmers’ associations and clients under the remote agro-consulting services in the two pilot regions in autumn 2021. Currently as part of the field-based agricultural consultations provided to farmers through the AICs, the agri-technical protocols are being studied by farmers for use in the 2022 cropping season. In addition, remote and field-based agricultural recommendations provided in earlier years specifically to 10 farmers were applied by the farmers, albeit with varying successes, related to e.g. insufficient farmers’ capacities to timely apply practices, lack of availability of water resources, recommended chemicals, high costs of proposed alternative cropping practices, etc.” |
| **PM** | **Page 92** | Table 13: Key Adaptation Measures Promoted by the Project  ***Correction of the quantity of the*** irrigated agricultural lands instead of 17,000 ha it should be 21,964 ha according to RRF table | The correction was done |
| **PM** | **Page 93** | Table 13: Key Adaptation Measures Promoted by the Project  *Correction of the quantity of the* pasturelands. Instead of 331,180 ha, it should be 500,116 ha of pasture lands according to RRF table | The correction was done |
| **PM** | **Page 93 the 2nd paragraph, the last sentence** | The project has benefitted about 38,000 people as direct beneficiaries, half of whom were women.  **The amount should be changed into -40,018** people according to the RRF table  But it was changed into 40,000 | **Not fully**  The next numbers in the next sentence were corrected rightly: More than **52%** of participating households, **20%** of which headed by women, have increased their well-being and improved knowledge on greenhouse development. |
|  | **Page 95 -98 Chapter 3.3.6.**  Financial Sustainability, at the end of the Chapter | **ICTA expressed his disagreement with the mark** “Moderately Unlikely” **given to the dimension of sustainability in this Chapter:** “We do not agree with given rating on financial sustainability. We recall that the Government of Turkmenistan (GoT) continues financing various adaptation activities, as also mentioned in sections of this report (mainly in 3.1.5), although, it needs to be noted, often are not titled or “recognized” as adaptation measures. Examples include annual recommendations to farmers on adaptive agro-technical practices for the main crops, tree planting In parallel, the more climate-resilient technologies taking into account natural and climatic factors (soil, water, weather etc) as demonstrated by the SCRL project in addition to GoT ongoing practices serve to strengthen the adaptation of best practices and innovative solutions. An example of the positive assessment by the GoT of such approach as well as readiness to finance is the GoT’s procurement of 40 laser leveling devices for use in different regions of the country that will be scale-up climate change adaptation measures.  In addition, we note that farmers’ associations in the pilot regiona regularly implement climate change adaptation measures as a part of the agrotechnical activities financed from their own resources, e.g. maintenance of irrigation and drainage canals, leaching irrigation for soil desalinization, installing water regulating constructions etc. The contribution of the SCRL project focused on helping farmers’ associations with better planning, monitoring, application of M&E data, dissemination and scaling-up the good practices.  An example is the farmers’ associations regular cleaning of the drainage network, to maintain / improve the conveying capacity of the canals. The UNDP project demonstrated how to properly clean up based on topographic survey data.  In addition, on November 17th, 2021 UNDP organized an inception Workshop of the project "Developing a National Adaptation Planning Process in Turkmenistan". This new three-year project implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan is financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and aims at increasing the resilience and adaptation capacity of the country through the development of the National Adaptation Planning (NAP) process focusing on strengthening the institutional framework for the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change, increasing the national adaptation planning capacity and building a strong evidence base for adaptation planning in the water sector of the country. Thus, it can be concluded that GoT intends to scale-up climate change adaptation and implement actions toward it by securing the financial sustainability for certain measures”. | **No changes**  **T**his dimension of sustainability is still rated as “Moderately Unlikely”. |
| **PM/ICTA** | **Page 102 Chapter 3.3.8. subtitle:** Sustainable Development Goals. The 5th sentence |  | **No changes**  **In the latest PRE version the statement: “**However, the role of the SCRL project in SDG activities has been absent” is present |
| **ICTA** | Page 104 Subpoint just before Figure 13: Study Tour to Uzbekistan and Israel | The SCRL project **organized study tours for representatives of relevant government departments participated** in Israel and…… was asked to be paraphrased by ICTA. | **Accepted**  The last version: “The SCRL project organized study tours for representatives of relevant government departments in Israel and Uzbekistan to learn about best practices in sustainable agriculture and water management “ |
| **PM** | Page 110 Recommendation 1 | * PM’s remark to the subpoint: Also, the project should finalize arrangements for the handover of the multicluster agro-ecological maps. What will happen to this product was still not clear at the point of this evaluation. If a clear arrangement is not secured by the closure of the project, the project should make arrangements for an orderly handover of the products to MAEP- “ SCRL project implemented similar recommendation of MTR regarding handover of Multicluster agro-ecological maps. See attached file, Annex 3. With regards to the use of multicluster agro-ecological maps, the Scientific-Information Center (SIC) of the Interstate Sustainable Development Commission of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea formally expressed interest to obtain the project products for use in further scientific and practical work of the SIC in cooperation with the National Institute of Desert, Flora and Fauna (letter #30, dated 5 November 2021). Also the State Agriculture Institute has informed the project that the multicluster agro-ecological maps will be used as educational tool (toolkit) for students. As such, planning of hand-over arrangements are ongoing and will be completed before EOP | **The 1st subpoint in the Recommendation1:**   * The project should finalize the preparation of the “Concept note on modelling the AEZs”. |
| **MA&EP** | Recommendation 2 page 111, the 1st point | This recommendation is not accepted, since the country already has the interdepartmental commission on environmental protection whose functions include issues on climate change. | **The recommendation was reformulated:**   * GoT is recommended to widen and strengthen the formal responsibilities and engagement of the Interdepartmental Commission on Environmental Protection in the coordination of sectoral policy development and implementation, to ensure the proper uptake, and promotion and sustainable use of best practice experiences, including those of the SCRL project. |
| **MA&EP** | Page 111 Recommendation 2  Point 4 | This recommendation is not accepted, since the proposed maps are not technically compatible with the maps used by the Ministry for the Land Cadastre, and there is also no potential necessary to carry out this work. | **The recommendation was reformulated:**   * Following the handover of MCLM to MAEP, and in acknowledgement by MAEP that the maps are a useful tool for the climate change adaptation planning process, it is recommended that the GoT considers investing in the necessary capacity building and awareness raising among decision-makers and experts on the usefulness of MCLM, the requirements and conditions for the application of this sophisticated tool necessary for incorporating the digital tool on climate change adaptation into policy development and planning. |
| **UNDP CO**  **Farhat Orunov[[1]](#footnote-1)** | General remarks to the ER and to the structure of the earlier version of the ER | *Remarks:* “There were not Executive Summary section, summary of finding and conclusions, table with TE rating, Key lessons learned”.  One more remark was concerning **Recommendation table** – it was advised to split it into Category format (Category A, category B and C recommendations) | The remarks and comments were taken into account; all missing documents were included in the final version of the ER.  Regarding to the Recommendation Format, SCRL Project Manager has considered it appropriate to seek views of the UNDP Regional Office for this reason.  The UNDP CO has forwarded the template, which was used in the ER. |

1. Program Analyst for Environment and Energy Portfolio [↑](#footnote-ref-1)