Terminal Evaluation

REDD+ Investment Program 2017-2020

Final Report

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Acronyms

ANR	Assisted Natural Regeneration
AR	Afforestation Reforestation
BoFED	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DD	Deforestation Degradation
EDRI	Ethiopian Development Research Institute
EEFRI	Ethiopian Environment and Forestry Research Institute
EFCCC	Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission
EFD	Ethiopian Forest Development
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSDP	Forest Sector Development Program
FSTU	Forest Sector Transformation Unit
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GHG	Green House Gases
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
ISFSDP	Institutional Strengthening for Forest Sector Development Program
KII	Key Informant Interview
LH	Livelihood
MFI	Micro Finance Institutions
MM tCO2e	Million Metric tons Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRV	Monitoring Reporting and Verification

MTR	Mid Term Review
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFSDP	National Forest Sector Development Program
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NICFI	Norway International Climate and Forest Institute
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
NPCO	National Program Coordination Office
NRS	National REDD+ Secretariat
OECDDAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation, and the conservation, sustainable management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SNNPR	Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Regional States
SWC	Soil and Water Conservation
SWEPRS	South -West Ethiopia Peoples‟ Regional State
SWFB	Southwest Forest Bloc
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WGCF&NR	Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources
WoFED	Woreda Finance and Economic Development
ZoFED	Zonal Finance and Economic Development

Executive Summary

Table1. Basic program information

Program Identification	
Program Title	REDD+ investment Program
Program ID	ETH-16/007
Program Objectives	
Scale-up community-based afforestation/reforestation; prevent deforestation and forest degradation targeting carbon rich forests; build capacity in the forestry sector to generate new models and proactively seek funding; strengthen public-private partnerships; and create forest-based livelihoods, and pilot PPP/CSO models.	
Program Information	
Program Duration	4 years (June 2017 to December 2020) Extended to June 2023
Implementing Partners	MoF, EFD and UNDP
Regions Covered	Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Tigray, and Gambella
Budget	NOK 600 (80 per cent Phase II funds)
Donor	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Program Description

Implementation of the program 'REDD+ Investment Program' commenced in June 2017 and was slated to end in June 2020 but was extended until June 2023. The program is supported by the Royal Norwegian Government under the Framework Agreement signed between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) and the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance (MoF) on REDD+ Partnership (Phase II) and is being implemented by the Ethiopian Forest Development (EFD) in collaboration with UNDP. The expected impact of the program is to enable Ethiopian forestry sector achieve goals of reaching 8 per cent GDP contribution and reducing 26 MMtCO2e emission. program

Primarily, the program's activities are designed and implemented to achieve the following outcomes:
(i) large scale community forestry program established, (ii) large scale DD program and targeted PFMs covering carbon rich forests established, (iii) capacity in forestry sector built to generate new models and to proactively seek funding, (iv) public private and civil society partnership strengthened, and (vi) forest-based livelihood enhancement interventions developed for forest dependent communities.

The program intervention logic is well aligned to national priorities identified in the Ethiopian Forest Policy and Strategy, the Forest Proclamation 1065/2018, the CRGE, the REDD+ Strategy, the Forest Sector Development Program, the updated Nationally Determined Contribution of July 2021, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

The program complements previous and on-going interventions by the Norwegian funded FSDP, the Sida/UNDP/Ethiopian Government funded CFSD and the World Bank funded ISFL programs and contributes to the country's commitments to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, as well as address the country's vulnerability to climate change induced disasters.

The achievements of the program at output and outcome levels have been assessed using the following criteria: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency** and **sustainability,** and are summarized in the TE ratings and achievement summary below.

Description of the evaluation rating

The rating of various elements of the program is subjective but it is carried out according to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) guidance and ethics used for environmental programs and based on the experience of the evaluator.

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The program has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The program has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The program has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The program has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U): The program has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The program has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Regarding Sustainability, the consultant used a rating system as described in the following:

Likely (L): Program has proper exit and handing over strategy that is already in place with firm signed commitment by relevant government partners

Moderately Likely (ML): Program has proper exit and handing over strategy, however, the program partners particularly government partners need to take the full ownership of the program after handover which is not yet confirmed.

Not Likely (NL): Program has no proper handing over strategy

Table 2. TE Ratings and Achievement Summary

Measurement	TE Rating	Achievement summary
Program Design and Relevance:		
Program design and results framework	S	The program document clearly shows a sound implementation approach that are informed by a well thought through and realistic program intervention logic/theory of change with the intended impact, which in turn enables identification of achieved intermediaries. The TE established satisfactory adherence to the implementation structure and stakeholder arrangement stipulated in the program document. A number of stakeholders (Forestry, Agriculture, Energy) at all levels of program implementation (federal, regional, woreda, and landscape/watershed committee at kebele level) were identified during the design phase and satisfactory efforts have been made to achieve their effective involvement. As a result, several stakeholders particularly at woreda level (SCs, TWGs) have made tangible commitments through demand-led technical assistance and follow up of the program progress; a factor on which the program's sustainability potential hinges. The program has also designed robust exit strategy that ensures the ownership by the community and government

		structures at local levels. Each expected outcome, targets to be achieved annually during the program's lifetime were identified portraying a logical linkage among the key program variables/performance measures (outcomes, indicators, baseline values, and targets). The consultant would like to appreciate the thorough description of the program document that committed many pages to show how and what is intended to achieve with the program.
Effectiveness -Progress Towards Results		
Objective Achievement: **Ethiopian Forestry sector enabled to achieve goals of 8 per cent GDP and 26 MMtCO2e carbon sequestered/emissions reduced by 2020**	S	The program has successfully put in place strong implementation structures and systems that are potentially able to accelerate achievement at output and outcome levels which will inevitably impact positively the objective indicators (8 per cent GDP contribution estimated at USD 664 M and sequestering/reducing 26 MMtCO2e emission). • The results of the AR/ANR DD and FSTU intervention are on the right track towards achieving the objectives. • Considerable progress has been made with the interventions to restore degraded lands by afforestation, reforestation, and assisted natural regeneration; conservation of natural forests through participatory forest management; innovation, technology generation, and adoption of best practices to enhance forestry practices through establishment of model nurseries and pilot restoration sites. • The program is implemented through coordinating the experts of the government at regional, zonal and woreda levels involving them as SC and TWG members; the community organized as associations and PFMs, and other stakeholders such as universities, EEFRI, WGCF&NR etc. • However, more work is still required amongst others with CSOs, the private sector, other related sectors (Agriculture, Energy, and research institutions), to enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related development and research issues at all levels. • The challenges and barriers both external (e.g., security) and internal (late start of the program), were the major barriers for that slowed the progress.
Outcome 1. Achievement: **Large scale community Program in place**	HS	The delivery of the output under this outcome is achieved. • The planned large-scale community forestry program is realized in 54 woredas. • Out of the planned 54,000 ha new plantation, 57,774 ha have already been established in all implementing regions surpassing the target. • Concerning ANR, the plan was to put 729,000 ha degraded areas under restoration schemes and achievement was 765,357 ha. • All plantations and rehabilitation sites have georeferenced shapefiles and have secured user right certificates. • RIP-AR under this outcome has provided farmers the opportunity to grow economically important trees according to their preference. It has motivated farmers to allocate more land to tree-based land management and inspire more farmers to join the effort. However, it is important to point out here that post planting and rehabilitation monitoring such as regular assessment of survival of seedlings, rehabilitation structures, etc. need to be conducted to

		ensure the results secured under this outcome can be scaled-up and sustained.
Outcome 2. Achievement: **Large-scale forest protection program, and targeted Participatory Forest Management (PFM) covering carbon rich forest in place**	HS	Key achievements under this outcome are: • Demarcation of 670,014.97 ha of forest under PFM for joint management this is more than 10000 ha than compared to the plan • Organizing 331 legally certified CBOs. • A reduction of deforestation by 48 per cent is reported based on comparison of the periods 2000-2013 and 2018-2022. As the period 2013-2018 is not included in the dataset it may not be enough to use the 2000-2013 as a baseline to attribute all the reduction to RIP-I. • A total of 25,624,612 (95 per cent of the plan) seedlings of diverse species are planted in buffer zones and as enrichment planting in open areas of the conservation forests.
Outcome 3. Achievement: **Capability built in forests sector to generate new models and pro-actively seek funding**	S	Key achievements: • FSTU is established as a unit at EFD in 2018 • FSTU has developed 8 bankable proposals that includes RIP II • FSTU has organized several skill trainings and facilitated the development of training manuals; facilitated regular performance reviews, and conducted more than 20 strategic studies, etc. Prominent among the trainings are: Result Based Program Management, Payment for Ecosystem Service, Sustainable Forest Management, Forest Based Livelihoods, and Value Chain Development. • FSTU has also financed several studies among them include: Strengthening the Private Sector Associations Engaged in Commercial Forestry & Wood Processing Industries; the Evaluation of Wood and Bamboo Resources for the Development of Enterprise Opportunities; the Designing and Managing of a Basic Tree Nursery and a Guideline to the Model Nursery Establishment, etc. • Developed tree nursery and landscape restoration models. • The unit has led the process of revising the 2007 Forest Policy and Strategy of the country. • FSTU has established a working relationship with 12 universities.
Outcome 4. Achievement: **Public-private (PPP) and civil society organization (CSO) partnerships strengthened**	MS	Efforts have been made to establish working relationships with private sector (e.g., Chamber of commerce, companies producing forest-based products and promoting green businesses), introducing challenge fund guideline to encourage the engagement of the private sector, and laying the foundation to attract the private sector.
Outcome 5. Achievement: **Forestry Related livelihoods created**	S	• About 20 livelihood options are designed to support the community until their forests can supply them with benefits. Provision of agroforestry seedlings, goat production and fattening through cut and carry system, modern honey production, poultry, energy saving cook stoves, solar lanterns, etc. are among the livelihood options offered to the community. • 122,693 hhs have benefited from the livelihood interventions. • Out of the livelihood beneficiaries 30.5 % are women
Efficiency - Program implementation and cost effectiveness		
Program implementation and work planning	S	• The program has successfully mobilized all relevant stakeholders whose participation in, ownership of, and contribution towards the program forms a strong foundation for enhanced program sustainability.

		• Internally, the program has established sound implementation systems that are informed by a well thought through and realistic program intervention logic/theory of change.
		• Implementation is guided by Annual Financial and Work Plan divided by a monthly physical activity. Each activity in the program proposal document is attached to a budget for the planned monthly operation. The reporting, in most of the cases is activity based
		• There is adequate awareness about results to be achieved that forms the driving force behind activity planning and budget execution.
		• The establishment of revolving fund by the program to implement livelihood activities is an important step that ensures sustainability
		• Significant number of the stakeholders interviewed at woreda level indicated delays in fund transfers in some cases for more than two quarters. According to respondents from the CRGE Facility, disbursement delays are either due to delayed disbursement from Norway to the CRGE Facility or lack of fulfilment of the minimum disbursement conditions by woredas or regions.
Adaptive management	MS	Because of staff turnover at FSTU, a realignment was made to distribute duties and responsibilities to cope up with the situation and to be responsive to the demands of the work. Moreover, due to the new regional states that emerged from splitting SNNPR, new program zonal coordinator was recruited and placed to support the Southwest Ethiopia People's Region. The impacts of the split of South West Ethiopia Peoples Regional State needs attention from the SNNPR should be properly assessed in the future programming
Sustainability and Gender and other cross-cutting issues		
Sustainability	MS	There is great sustainability potential for the program being rooted on the program design. It has set up a robust program delivery landscape. Vital program management structures and systems (program coordination, steering committee, technical working groups, etc.) including the facilities have successfully been set up forming a foundation for the program's enhanced results delivery in the next implementation phase. The program has well integrated all the key stakeholders. However, relentless effort is required to enhance their participation, ownership, and willingness to contribute to the achievement of the program goals. Private sector and NGOs are among the stakeholders that the program needs to attract.
Gender and other cross-cutting issues	MS	Environmental and social concerns were explicitly integrated in the program design. From the stakeholder interviews it was clear that the safeguards process has been very positive and helped raise the profile of many equity and rights-linked issues. However, there are limitations in the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed into the program's implementation and monitoring.

Note: HS-Highly satisfactory, S-Satisfactory, MS-Moderately satisfactory, U-Unsatisfactory, HU-Highly unsatisfactory, L-Likely, ML-Moderately likely, NL-Not likely

Summary of conclusions

Despite several challenges, the program has progressed well   in setting up a robust program delivery landscape. Internally, the program has established sound implementation and management framework that are informed by a well thought through and realistic program intervention logic/theory of change that provide assurance for success. Vital program management structures and systems (program

coordination, steering committee, technical working groups, etc.) including the facilities have successfully been set up forming a very strong foundation for the program's results delivery. The targets for public private partnerships were not achieved at the end of the program. However, important groundwork has been laid out particularly by influencing the policy to encourage the private sector. The main barriers to private sector investment according to many KIs is associated to the land use policy and land availability. Awareness of the benefits and impacts of forest development and protection by local communities, reducing the dependency of the local community near the remaining forests through livelihood interventions, the link to local government and other institutions are among the major achievements that can ensure program's sustainability. Program alignment with the national development priorities has set the stage for cooperation with key government stakeholders that are vital for the sustainability of the program after its closure. The program has successfully mobilized all relevant stakeholders. There is adequate awareness about results, which form the driving force behind activity planning and budget execution. Aligning expenditure reporting with the program results as stated in the logframe could enable the in-depth analysis of the value for money of the program. The M&E plan and format requires further consolidation with specific M&E activities, timelines, responsible parties, definition of indicators, etc.

Lessons learnt

There are many lessons that can be learned from the implementation of RIP.

- Due to the program intervention, an opportunity is created to establish large tree plantations that are in some cases over 400 ha through associations/cooperatives and cluster plantations of individual farmers.
- Georeferencing and shape files are breakthrough to forest management. These good practices are copied by the government (e.g., Green Legacy, government plantations).
- Community acceptance is very fast if it sees the benefits in the initial implementation of the program. Hence, striving for early impact would likely contribute to sustainability.
- Cost of inputs and labor have increased unexpectedly by many folds. Hence, it is advisable to have regular market assessment of forestry inputs and labor cost during budget and physical planning and adjust regularly.
- Many of the livelihood interventions increased the confidence of forest dependent communities. The program has created new business opportunity for entrepreneur farmers. For example, a farmer in Enemor has succeeded to get income from selling Desho grass that is very much demanded for SWC works in plantation and rehabilitation areas. Alfalfa, Elephant grass are also sold for animal fodder by the entrepreneur farmers around many PFM sites.
- The program has demonstrated the possibility of forest governance in different forms such as associations, cooperatives, customary governance of clan forests, and hybrid (co-management with government).
- The use of harmonized guideline for establishing PFM connected with safeguards has created confidence for sustainability.
- Social mobilization has helped to implement the program in some cases up to 30 per cent of the activities (e.g., Enemor woreda). Farmers are more attracted to plant trees that are fast growing to get quick economic return.

Table 3. Recommendation summary

Recommendation	Summary description	Remark
**Program implementation and adaptive management**		
R1.	**Program Management:** To improve coordination between the three components of RIP, there is a need to set up a PMU that coordinates all the activities under one umbrella. See **Annex 5** for the proposed management structure and responsibilities.	
R2	The consultant recommends to constitute expert meetings at the outcome level under each program entity (AR/ANR, DD, FSTU, LH) every two weeks and management meetings at PMU level every month on common management issues to follow up progress of activities, outputs, and financial expenditures. Minutes of the meetings should be recorded on each occasion.	
R3	**Planning:** Planning should start at woreda level and must include stakeholders from collaborating organizations to secure strong accountability and responsibility for their engagement by including in their work plan not as extra work as it is seen currently.	
R4	**Reporting:** As they currently stand, most of the reports are focusing on activities. There is a need to regularly assess what these activities are contributing to outcome and impact results. The reporting should be made following the results framework in RIP II. Quarterly reports should capture implementation progress of the recommended changes in the program implementation from the previous reviews and monitoring reports.	
R5	Conduct a thorough value chain analysis of the whole RIP program to identify bottlenecks and design a workable remedial strategy to achieve the desired goal. FSTU as a transformation unit must reflect on what it has achieved so far in this regard and how it could better function in the future.	
R6	**Knowledge Management:** The program has produced a body of knowledge including numerous studies, assessment reports, guidelines, results of testing and demonstrating innovative solutions for sustainably managing forests, etc. As part of managing knowledge, it needs to end up with knowledge products that capture lessons learned and to identify the way forward to communicate, replicate and scale up these results. Better documentation and profiling of best practices should be supported through initiatives like documentaries, lessons learnt papers as well as exchange visits	
R7	**Private sector:** Continue to advocate for policy direction on the establishment of a funding window for PPP to engage the private sector and other non-government players that will work in specific investment areas and contribute to reducing emissions and the development of overall forestry sector.	
R8	**Gender:** Specialist input should be obtained to ensure that gender mainstreaming and audit occur throughout the program cycle.	
R9	**Land use:** Land shortage is considered as limitation for program scale up in most implementing woredas. The absence of land use policy is still an obstacle to the development of forestry. This requires a coordinated approach of the stakeholders to advocate for land use policy.	
**M&E**		
R1	**M&E:** conducting regular monitoring and discussions on progress by providing opportunity for all concerned parties to take part can help to overcome challenges. The M&E mechanisms need to be linked to key milestones that have greater contribution to outcome and impact and can be monitored every six months.	
R4		
**Finance**		

R1	To fix the reported disbursement delays particularly in DD woredas, it is important to hire dedicated finance officers, who facilitate financial reporting and ensure compliance to financial and procurement management. Furthermore, disbursement from the embassy to CRGE Facility and to regions should be improved. Regional Bureau of Finances should be able to effect disbursements to woredas, which have met the disbursement conditions and requirements. The Finance Officers from the CRGE Facility and Regional Bureau of Finance should be able to conduct period spot checks and provide on-job training and assistant to woredas that have capacity limitations; Regular training and follow up is required to improve the financial quality and timely reporting particularly at woreda level.	
R2	Ensure alignment of Budget release calendar with Forestry activities such as tree planting, which mainly take place from June-August. This is the time when the Ethiopian fiscal year closes. Hence, special consideration should be negotiated to adjust the budget planning comply with the calendar of forestry activities.	
R3	**Regional Budget:** The allocation of budget to regional states and woredas and the financial reporting of the same must be copied to the federal, regional and woreda program coordination offices and EFD.	
R4	**Daily wage rate:** Many KIs mentioned that the daily wage is the least in forestry programs compared to other similar programs. The daily rate currently paid (ETB 51) is even below safety net daily wage rate (ETB 61). The normal daily wage rate in most of the woredas are currently between ETB 120-150. The reasons given by the woreda KIs is that labor in rural areas has become expensive due to the increased migration to the cities and abroad in recent years and the increased cost of living. Going forward, it is important to revise the daily wage rates	
R5	**Livelihood Support:** The program should design a strong capacity development in bookkeeping and small business management to offer the opportunity and create a strong base for enhanced sustainability of the cooperatives or individual businesses set up by the program. This will ensure the repayment of revolving funds is settled on time and reach out to more beneficiaries. Program sustainability-oriented trainings with stronger market emphasis should be supported towards the end of the program to facilitate smooth transitioning and enhance business confidence. The division of tasks between the cooperatives and local institutions with official mandate of financial management and administration should be further cleared.	
Sustainability		
R1	RIP-I has accumulated valuable experiences in designing and implementing forest management plans and has invested in many pilot demonstrations of various innovative solutions to establish new forests, rehabilitate degraded forests and protect old forests. It has also supported the implementation of livelihood initiatives to reduce pressure on the demand of forest products. Nevertheless, it is also important to consolidate the results gained by AR/ANR through different post planting measures, such as: - Diversification of tree species - Construction of road networks - Proper silviculture of the planted trees and rehabilitation sites and maintenance of structures - Introduction of value-added wood processing technologies for small sized trees It is recommended to organize a workshop showcasing model program achievements as a lesson for future programming.	

1. Context of the RIP Implementation

Ethiopia is rich with diverse physiographic, altitudinal, climatic, and edaphic resources that are endowed with various types of vegetation ranging from alpine to desert plant communities that have given the opportunity to get innumerable economical, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits. Economically, the contribution of forests to the overall economy is wide ranging that extends to processing, trade of forest products, and investments creating employment for millions of households. Forests provide benefits that include wood for construction, for tools, furniture, energy as well as serve as a source of medicine, fodder grass, forest coffee, honey, spices, herbage, and edible fruits. Forests also serve in absorbing carbon dioxide to reduce global warming, give off oxygen thereby renewing the atmosphere. Not least, forests also prevent lakes, dams, and rivers from siltation; clean, regulate and distribute water resources and generate income by attracting tourists. Hosting and protection of sites and landscapes of high cultural, spiritual, or recreational value is another dimension of the important benefits we get from forests. Moreover, maintaining the productivity of the environment; providing food for animals; serving as a standing cover to protect the land from wind and water erosion; stabilizing the water cycle; facilitating the process of evaporation and keeping the soil porous are among the major environmental benefits that can be mentioned.

Despite this multidimensional benefit of forests on which Ethiopia's food crop and livestock production depend, extensive clearing for agricultural use, overgrazing, cultivation of steep slopes, exploitation for fuel wood, fodder and construction materials, setting of fire to create pastureland and expansion of settlements have dwindled most of these benefits during the last 50 years. The condition has brought far-reaching adverse consequences on human health, food security, economic activity, rural employment, physical infrastructure, natural resources, and environment of the country. According to the CRGE strategy document, the seriousness of the forest destruction is articulated by its prediction of 9 million ha of deforestation and huge rise in fuelwood consumption during the period of 2010-2030 if the country continues with the current business-as-usual trend. Moreover, the Forest Sector Review conducted in 2015 estimated that Ethiopia needs an additional plantation estate of around 7.2 M ha (MAI of 20 m3/ha/year, 5-year rotation) to fulfill the wood fuel supply gap. Hence, it recommends the need to reverse this situation by putting the forest sector as one of the four major pillars of the strategy that should be realized through multiple interventions. Among the interventions are protecting the existing forests; increasing further the forest cover through afforestation and reforestation schemes; promoting area closure via rehabilitation of degraded pastureland and farmlands; reduction of demand for fuel wood by disseminating fuel efficient stoves; agricultural intensification, diversification and promoting agroforestry practices.

To this end, in recent years, the government of Ethiopia has launched a National Forest Sector Development Program (NFSDP) to implement the commitment of the country to build green economy outlined in consecutive Growth and Transformation Plans (GTPs) and Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy (CRGE). Amongst the objectives of this program are the promotion of forest conservation for multiple benefits, promotion of science and innovation based sustainable forest management, and increasing stakeholder engagement in forest development.

In the GTP I and II, the forestry sector had received strategic attention and being considered as a key sector that can contribute to Ethiopia's industrialization goals, especially through expansion and

sustainable management of the forest resource base to feed the growing demand of wood products for construction, furniture, electrification, the pulp and paper industry, etc., of both public and private sector.

For instance, the five-year GTP II (2015-2020) has targeted at creating enabling environment for the private forestry sector and related industry to enhance stronger link between forest industry and forest development; eventually even increasing exports and public revenues; enhancing the establishment of community-based organizations to allow active community participation in the sustainable management and conservation of forests; and providing economic and ecological benefits to vulnerable communities, especially for women and youths. Following, the GTP series, the government has launched a 10-Year Development Plan, based on the 2019 Home-Grown Economic Reform Agenda, which is expected to run from 2020/21 to 2029/30. The plan aims to sustain the remarkable growth achieved under the Growth and Transformation Plans of the previous decade, while aspiring to realize climate resilient and carbon neutral middle-income country as one of its key strategic objectives in which the forestry sector has also been mentioned as one of the major contributors.

Moreover, following the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC 2015 (COP 21), Ethiopia submitted the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) (FDRE, 2015). The INDC emphasized mainly on the forest sector amongst others afforestation/reforestation, REDD+, sustainable forest management, degraded land rehabilitation, forest fire management, and improved cook stoves. The updated NDC from July 2021 was submitted to UNFCC presents a vision for achieving climate resilient, low-carbon, resource efficient, and inclusive development as a contribution to sustainable development. Afforestation, reforestation, and rehabilitation of degraded areas supported by scientific management plan are expected to lead to additional economic benefits by creating employment, income from sustainable forestry for the managing communities, a stronger link between forest industry and forest development, and eventually even increasing exports and public revenues. The additional benefits such as erosion control, wildlife protection, and other ecosystem services are also secured through the implementation of these measures.

In summary the implementation of the CRGE with its forest carbon strategy; the establishment of responsible government authority to streamline efforts in the sector; the scaling up of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) that can lead to the empowerment of communities in forest management; the promotion of area closure via rehabilitation of degraded pastureland and farmlands; an extensive green legacy campaign of reforestation and afforestation to address land degradation; and the land registration and certification to enhance land tenure security particularly farm lands are among the best opportunities to transform the forestry sector in Ethiopia's development endeavor.

2. The Terminal Evaluation

This report presents the findings of the Terminal Evaluation of "REDD+ Investment Program 2017-2020" that includes the Costed Extension to June 2023. The field work in the regional states was undertaken from December 14, 2022 to January 12, 2023 under the auspices of MoF and the implementing partners. At the Federal level, the data collection was conducted on two occasions, namely, December 5 – 12, 2022 and January 14 – 16, 2023. This independent evaluation was guided by the following purpose and scope.

2.1. Purpose of the Terminal Evaluation

As stated in the TOR, the purpose of the task is to assess the achievement of program results and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from the program, and also intended to serve the following main purposes:

1. Take stock of RIP achievements, lessons learnt and good practices.
2. Assess whether the agreed recommendations from the MTR have been addressed in the current program, and to what extent they have led to change/improvements
3. Provide input and inform RIP phase II based on the experience of the ongoing RIP Implementation.

a. Scope of the Terminal Evaluation

The overall scope of the Terminal Evaluation was based on the OECDDAC evaluation criteria with particular focus on **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability**. Under each of these review criteria, several parameters were assessed ultimately to support the generation of lessons learnt, best practices and recommendations for improved future programming and implementation.

As clearly stated in the ToR, the consultant was required to assess, analyze, and verify the issues outlined in the ToR and compare against what was planned to see the changes made by the program. The major tasks of the assignment were:

- Assess results against the program targets based on the program log-frame
- Assess to what extent the RIP I MTR recommendations have been implemented as specified in Management Response Matrix (MRM) agreed between the then EFCCC and the RNE.
- Identify strengths and gaps/challenges in the institutional arrangement/set-up of the RIP, and provide recommendations for future improvements
- Assess whether the program implementation is on track to achieve results in terms of Emission Reductions from reduced deforestation and forest degradation.
- Assess whether the MRV system in place can measure, report, and verify emission reductions if results are achieved.

Moreover, the following tasks were also expected to be addressed in this assignment.

- **Component 1 FSTU:** Review the current FSTU setup, its mandates and how the unit has been executing its mandate, identify gaps, recommend how the setup can be improved to best deliver RIP-II and its mandate.
- **Component 2 Afforestation/Reforestation and Assisted Natural Regeneration:** Review the process of identifying land for the activity implementation, if/how national safeguard instruments have been implemented and reported on, how the plantation and restoration areas are owned and managed, and the likeliness of sustainability.
- **Component 3 Participatory Forest Management (PFM) for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation:** review the process of PFM establishment: if/how have the communities been consulted, how have PFM cooperatives been established/strengthened, how are the CBOs benefiting from the program and/or which incentives motivate communities to manage their forest, what are the livelihood options identified and implemented and are they

compatible with sustainable forest management, how has the component been working with other partners to complement each-other, or has there been duplicating efforts?

b. The evaluation rating system

The rating of various elements of the program is necessarily subjective but it is carried out according to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) guidance and ethics used for environmental programs and based on the experience of the evaluator.

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The program has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

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Unsatisfactory (U): The program has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The program has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Regarding **Sustainability**, the consultant used a rating system as described in the following:

Likely: Program has proper exit and handing over strategy that is already in place with firm signed commitment by relevant government partners

Moderately Likely: Program has proper exit and handing over strategy, however, the program partners particularly government partners need to take the full ownership of the program after handover which is not yet confirmed.

Not Likely: Program has no proper handing over strategy

c. Approach and Methodology

The Terminal Evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methods as an overarching methodology. The qualitative methods were based on primary data sources (Consultation with key stakeholders and beneficiaries and own field observation) while quantitative methods were focused on collecting data from secondary sources (the program document, annual reports, M&E reports, Mid-term, and baseline reports). The evaluation used techniques (series of tailored questions, judgement criteria and indicators) and tools against the Theory of Change/Logic Model, OECD-DAC criteria, and principles (**relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, Impact, and sustainability**) and descriptive statistical analysis as methodological framework. The program log-frame was used to visualize the pathway connecting inputs and activities to anticipated outcomes of the program to determine program design appropriateness and link to outcomes. The overall methodological approach was guided by a "Triple Results Focus Model" based on three universal review questions namely: i) Is the program doing the right things? ii) Is the program doing things right? iii) What corrective actions are needed based on the identified gaps and limitations? Furthermore, guided by "Assessment to Action" approach, the Terminal Evaluation findings were also informed by both primary and secondary data. Cross-cutting issues

such as social and environmental impacts, gender equality and risk management were included in the evaluation.

While the emphasis is on the evaluation in terms of the program's successes, the TE has also amplified the scope for reflecting on how to take these successes, lessons, and associated opportunities forward. Hence, the TE was backward and forward looking with an intention of learning from the present and past practical experiences to inform the future programming of the program. The focus was on analyzing all available information to obtain evidence-based conclusions by combining primary data (interviews) with secondary data (documents). To this extent therefore, the review was structured around three core pillars namely: i) Review of the program strategy and implementation arrangements; ii) Progress towards results; and iii) recommendation for improvement of program implementation in future programming.

Primary data were collected through face-to-face in-depth interviews with key program staff both at implementation and management levels as well as program beneficiaries during field missions. Most stakeholders and beneficiaries were consulted in person. A total of 36 individual interviews (11 federal, 6 regional, 1 zonal, and 15 woreda, and 3 kebele level key informants,) were conducted (see list of TE participants in Annex 1) with different program stakeholders. In-depth interviews made use of an interview guide. Due to security reasons, woreda level stakeholders in regions with security concern were consulted through telephone interviews. An online self-assessment tool was used for Federal main implementing stakeholders to get their views. Out of 9 self-assessment tools that were mailed to regional bureaus, 4 were responded and mailed back.

FGDs were held face to face with representative of Livelihood beneficiaries around PFM areas. A total of 10 FGDs were conducted. The number of FGDs participants' ranges from five to ten per each session. The consultant made use of checklist to guide the FGD and not to overlook key points while facilitating the discussion.

In addition to primary data sources, the consultant reviewed several documents guided by the TE matrix. The desk review took a three-phase process namely, i) identifying the required information, ii) securing the relevant documents, and iii) extracting summarised data for subsequent analysis. These were the major source of quantitative data used in this report. The review used the proposal for REDD+ investment in Ethiopia (2017-2020) which was submitted in May 2017 and was the only document that described the full information about the program. In reviewing this proposal, the consultant assumed that all planned activities in the proposal were approved and were covered by the Grant funding agreement ETH-16/0007 REDD+ phase 2 Investment of the results-based payment signed between the Norwegian Government and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

As indicated above, the overall analytical framework was based on the OECDDAC evaluation criteria focusing on the answers for following questions:
   a. Did the program identify and respond to a real need in the intervention areas? (**Relevance and design -** internal and external consistence**)**
   b. Did it achieve the targeted results**? (Effectiveness -** achievements based on the outcome indicator analysis as well as facilitators and inhibitors of performance**)**
   c. Did it do it well? (**Efficiency -** cost effectiveness of program implementation strategies)

d. Will the results survive beyond the life of the program? (**Sustainability -** analysis of opportunities and threats)

Thematic and content analysis procedures were employed to facilitate the corroboration of data from different sources to answer the review questions and support generated conclusions and recommendations.

As part of quality assurance procedure, the consultant prepared and submitted an inception report that was distributed through UNDP to the key program stakeholders for review and comments. This was important for building consensus on the Terminal Evaluation approach as well as mobilizing the inputs of key stakeholders in the planning and execution of the exercise.

Field missions were undertaken in four regions: Amhara (3 woredas), Oromia (2 woredas), SNNPR (3 woredas), and Southwest Ethiopia (3 woredas) out of seven regions that participated in program implementation. Tigray (post conflict inaccessibility) and Gambella (program just on preparation phase) were not included. The mission to Oromia region was limited to the regional RIP coordination office and two woredas in Jima Zone (Shebe Sombo and Seka Chekorsa woredas). However, the consultant also conducted a telephone interview with three more woreda coordinators in Oromia, namely, Shirka, Sigmo, and Sele Nono. The onsite field mission in Amhara was conducted in 3 woredas (Tarma Ber, Wore Babbo, and Dera). Additional information was also collected through telephone interview of the RIP coordinators from 2 woredas (Shebel Berenta and Goncha Siso Enese Woredas). The consultant was able to visit more than 50 individual beneficiaries organized in livelihood intervention in the regions where the onsite missions were conducted. Out of these beneficiary participants three individuals and two FGDs were used for a case study. A table showing summary information on participants list on KII and FGD is given in Annex 1.

By and large, the process of conducting the Terminal Evaluation was highly participatory with adequate quality assurance measures that were sufficiently adhered to. Triangulation was used to ensure that empirical evidence collected from one source, for example documentation such as reports, was validated from other sources, for example through interviews. Sometimes, the information was not available in document form and only available from consultations (the livelihood intervention types, the satisfaction of the livelihood intervention beneficiaries, etc.). In this situation, the TE sought to corroborate opinions expressed and information given, by posing the same questions to more than one respondent. Anecdotal evidence was considered only if in the judgment of the evaluator, the information was important, and the source was reliable. In such cases, the possible limitations of this information have been noted.

d. Structure of the review report

The report is structured in five major sections following the template provided for UNDP-supported programs. The report opens with a rich executive summary that provided an overview of both the program design and review findings that form the basis of the conclusions and recommendations as highlighted in this preliminary section. Section one presents a general introduction of the context and the problem the program addresses. Section two presents the Terminal Evaluation with particular focus on purpose and objectives, scope, and methodology as well as the layout of the report. Section three presents program description and development context focusing on the problem the program is seeking to address: program design and strategy, implementation arrangements, program timing and milestones as well as the

program's main stakeholders. This section sets the pace for the analysis of the program's internal and external consistence (relevance) which is a doorway into the analysis of the program effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability as contained in section three of the report. Primarily, this section presents analysis of program design, progress towards results hitherto, program implementation and adaptive management as well as sustainability. The results presented in this section form the basis for deriving the conclusions and recommendations presented in section five. Section six is a collection of different documents relevant to the TE which are presented as annexes.

3. Program Description

The REDD+ investment program is supported by the Royal Norwegian Government under the Framework Agreement on REDD+ Partnership (Phase II). The four-year program was launched in July 2017 with a budget of 600 million Norwegian Kroner (NOK) and was slated to end in July 2020. However, implementation began in the second quarter of 2018, somewhat delayed after the signing of the grant agreement because of the considerable amount of time needed to recruit staff, set up the facilities, and consult with stakeholders. To make up the delay, the program was granted a Costed Extension (CE) until June 2023. The program aims to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation effectively through on-the-ground targeted interventions, re-enforced by the establishment of appropriate policy environment, legal frameworks, institutional arrangements, and capacity building. REDD+ Investment Program (RIP) is intended to transform the way degraded landscapes are restored, natural forests are protected in Ethiopia's major forest regions, models, technologies and best practices adopted to reduce carbon emissions or increase removal through: a) implementation of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) for forest conservation that aims to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (DD); b) forest development and forest landscape restoration to increase carbon storage and sequestration (AR/ANR); and c) unlocking the potential of forest resources by developing and applying innovative approaches to landscape restoration and engaging the private sector and civil society organizations in forestry development and management.

According to the latest report by MoF (October 2022), the program was implemented in seven regional States (Amhara, Oromia, Gambella, SNNPRR, Sidama, Southwest Ethiopia, and Tigray) covering 54 woredas (AR), 59 woredas (DD), and 24 woredas (FSTU). In addition, some program activities by the FSTU are also under implementation in Somali regional State and Dire Dawa Administration. The AR/ANR and DD woredas are selected based on their considerable potential for developing commercial plantations, rehabilitating degraded land as well as enhancing carbon stocks through the sustainable management of existing forests and expanding forest cover through afforestation and reforestation activities for socio-economic development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and reduction of other environmental crises. The Woredas where the FSTU working are based on proposals submitted by partner universities and evaluated for their potential and feasibility for model development, implementation and adoption. The program is expected to foster equitable and sustainable low carbon development by enhancing countrywide and local institutions; providing incentives and information to create an enabling environment for the NFSDP implementation; implementing on-the-ground activities that address deforestation to reduce land-use based emissions; and enhance forest carbon stocks through afforestation, reforestation, and landscape restoration. Through these interventions the program is expected to reduce poverty, establish resilient livelihoods, enhance ecosystem resilience, conserve

biodiversity, and ensure sustainable water supply to the community by regulating surface and ground water flow.

3.1. Problems that the program sought to address

Despite Ethiopia's food crop and livestock upon which millions depend are underpinned by its forests, extensive clearing for agricultural use, overgrazing, cultivation of steep slopes, exploitation for fuel wood, fodder and construction materials, setting of fire to create pastureland and expansion of settlements have dwindled large proportion of forest lands and their benefits during the last 50 years. The condition has brought far-reaching adverse consequences on human health, food security, economic activity, rural employment, physical infrastructure, natural resources, and environment to the country. The current 15.5 per cent (17.2 million ha) forest cover is inadequate to provide the minimum economic and ecological support system in this mountainous and climatically vulnerable country. According to the CRGE strategy document, the seriousness of the forest destruction is articulated by its prediction of 9 million ha of deforestation and huge rise in fuelwood consumption during the period of 2010-2030 if the country continues the current business-as-usual trend. Under BAU, greater pressure on forests will increase the rate of deforestation and forest degradation and prevent the country from reaping its long-term environmental and economic benefits. Moreover, the current gaps that we see in the implementation of forest policy and regulations; mobilization of sufficient finance; unclear forest user rights (including carbon rights); absence of clear benefit-sharing mechanisms; lack of private investment in forestry development; absence of information and coordination of CSO activities; weak law enforcement; population growth; institutional gaps; absence of land use plan; gap in participatory forest management-related (PFM) implementation; poor environmental impact assessment (EIA) legislation enforcement and practices.

The current RIP-I is part of Ethiopia's REDD+ Program that aims to reduce or prevent Deforestation and Degradation (DD/) targeting carbon rich forests; rehabilitate degraded forests and scale-up or establish new forests for their economic and ecosystem services. Forest management activities are complemented through capacity building, introducing, and piloting innovation, and by creating enabling environment to enforce legal provisions and institutional arrangements at strategic and operational levels and create sustainable and cost-effective models and stronger engagement with private sector and civil society partners.

3.2. Program Strategy

The overall objective of the program is to contribute to the Ethiopian forestry sector to achieve goals of reaching **8 per cent** GDP and sequestering /reducing **26 MMtCO2e** emission by 2020. The outcomes as indicated in the framework agreement are:
1. **Establishing large scale community forestry programme**
2. **Establishing large scale DD program and targeted PFMs covering carbon rich forests**
3. **Building capacity in the forestry sector to generate new models and proactively seek funding**
4. **Strengthening public private and civil society partnership**
5. **Creating forestry related livelihoods**

The overall program strategy as summarised in the Program Results Framework is presented in Table 4

below.

Table 4.: Program goal, outcomes, and related outputs (Source program document, 2017)

Program Goal	Outcomes	Outputs
Ethiopian Forestry sector enabled to achieve goals of 8per cent GDP and 26 MMtCO$_2$e carbon sequestered/emissions reduced by 2020	Outcome 1: Large scale community Program in place	Output 1.1. Sustainable tree planting, ANR, and PFMs set up in 54 woredas
	Outcome 2 Large-scale Forest protection program, and targeted Participatory Forest Management (PFM) covering carbon rich forest in place	Output 2.1. Scaled SWFB deforestation and degradation prevention program in place, covering 3.8per cent of Ethiopia's Forest by 2020
		Output 2.2. Targeted PFMs set up in deforestation hotspots, reducing deforestation by at least 50per cent by 2020
	Outcome 3: Capability built in forests sector to generate new models and pro-actively seek funding	Output 3.1. Setup a Forest Sector Transformation Unit including a dedicated unit to develop scalable and bankable programs and program delivery support to national and regional implementation teams
	Outcome 4: Public-private (PPP) and civil society organization (CSO) partnerships strengthened	Output 4.1. At least five innovative partnership models piloted and scaled by 2020
	Outcome 5: Forestry Related livelihoods created	Output 5.1. 60, 000 households with livelihood generated from community-based forestry activities
		Output 5.2. 160 cooperatives or community-based enterprises setup for community forest activities

3.3. Program implementation arrangements

The RIP program has been implemented through three components:
1) A Forest Sector Transformation Unit (FSTU) set up to develop and test new ideas for accelerated action in the forest sector.
2) An afforestation/reforestation component managed by the National Program Coordination Office (NPCO) of the National Forest Sector Development program (NFSDP).
3) A deforestation and degradation prevention program that is managed by the National REDD+ Secretariat (NRS).

The FSTU, the NPCO and the REDD+ Secretariat are all units within the EFD - the then Ethiopian Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC). The program is implemented in 7 regional

States: Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), South-West Ethiopia Peoples' Region, Gambella, and Tigray[1].

The accountability structure for the program is stated in the program Grant Agreement (ETH-16/007) between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC, now Ministry of Finance, MoF). MoF represents the Government of Ethiopia and has overarching responsibility for the planning, financial management coordination, and reporting of the program's progress. The ministry receives biannual disbursement from the Norwegian Embassy based on approved Annual Work Plan. The CRGE Facility within MoF manages the program funds. Regional Bureaus of Finance and Economic Development (BoFED), Zone Finance and Economic Development (ZoFED) and Woreda Finance and Economic Development offices (WoFED) disburse and monitor fund utilization at their respective levels. MoF has also a sub-agreement with UNDP to facilitate the procurement of materials, services, and technical support of the forest sector transformation through the FSTU. UNDP receives its required fund directly from the Norwegian Embassy but reports progress and financial utilization to MoF before requesting subsequent budget disbursement.

The lead implementing entity is the EFD and is responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination, development, and implementation of program plans, providing policy directions, links between implementing partners, risk assessment and mitigation. Program progress resorting and, requests for fund disbursement are coordinated through the Forest Sector Transformation Unit. At the regional level there are program coordination units. Zonal coordination is conducted either through focal persons (e.g., Oromia) or full-time coordinators (e.g., Southwest Ethiopia region).

At woreda level the day-to-day implementation is overseen by woreda coordinators in collaboration with relevant sector offices. Each woreda, zone, and region has a technical working group and steering committee. The Steering committee are chaired by the respective administrators at woreda and zonal level. At the regional level the deputy regional president is the chair of the steering committee.

By its nature and design, the RIP program is being implemented under a multi-stakeholder approach. For example, at woreda level this includes Administration, Agriculture, Rural Land Administration & Use, Cooperative, Women and Children, Water and Energy, Enterprise Development, Environment and Forest, etc. who support the daily implementation of the program; a factor on which the program's sustainability potential hinges.

3.4. Program timing and milestones

According to the Program Document, program implementation was envisaged to commence in June 2017 and end in June 2020. Actual program implementation was however delayed by more than a year due to the considerable amount of time needed to recruit staff, set up the facilities, and consult with stakeholders. However, since commencement, program implementation is being fast track to compensate for the lost time. The program's results framework clearly sets out key milestones under 5 outcomes to be achieved by the end of the program period.

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[1] Note: The implementation in Tigray may not be as planned and hence could be only partial that may be found in reports

4. Main Findings of the Evaluation

The findings focus more closely on the actual results of the TE. The results of the findings are broken down into sub-sections, addressing the full range of issues, from program relevance to the wider impact of the program.

4.1. Program Formulation

4.1.1. Program Design and Relevance

The RIP design reflects the background analysis undertaken to determine the objectives and target outcomes. It was based on a contextual review which provided the necessary background studies for the formulation of the program. It reflects well the context and socio-economic development of the country. Most importantly, RIP reflects the genuine development needs of the participating organizations, namely EFD, MoF, and other government and non-government stakeholders at federal, regional and woreda level. It is well aligned with most government policies and legislations and international commitments of the country to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, as well as to address the country's vulnerability to climate change and related disasters and the responses by the country including the policies and regulations. The direct and indirect threats and gaps in the forestry sector are well articulated in the program document. In each intervention component AR, DD and FSTU the strengths and gaps are articulated very well. In general, low operational capacity, ineffective regulatory measures, and weak institutional arrangements are identified as gaps that impede sustainable forest management. The program design with its multi-dimensional intervention strategy allows broader community engagement, safeguards equitable and effective benefit sharing mechanism and builds the necessary institutional capacity, policies, laws, regulations, monitoring systems that are fundamental for sustainable forest management.

The TE established satisfactory adherence to the implementation structure and stakeholder arrangement stipulated in the program document. A number of stakeholders (Forestry, Agriculture, Energy) at all levels of program implementation (federal, regional, woreda, and landscape/watershed committee at kebele level) were identified during the design phase and satisfactory efforts have been made to achieve their effective involvement. As a result, several stakeholders particularly at woreda level (steering committee, technical committee) have made tangible commitments through demand led technical assistance and follow up by steering committee; a factor on which the program's sustainability potential hinges. The program has also designed robust exit strategy that ensures the ownership by the community and government structures at local levels.

There are 19 identified risks presented in the program proposal document in four categories political and governance, macro-economic, design and implementation, and environmental and their respective mitigation measures. After reviewing the risks listed under each category the TE consultant found out that the risk matrix covers key aspects of the program where issues can arise and the risks identified in the program document are properly analyzed in terms of adverse impact, level of risk, and mitigation measures.

In general, RIP is well articulated and is **relevant** to development policies and needs of the Ethiopian Norway REDD+ Partnership Agreement. RIP has provided a significant boost to the country's forestry sector. The interventions are aligned with the Forest Policy and Strategy, the Forest Proclamation 1065/2018, the National Conservation Strategy, and the Environment Policy of Ethiopia. The commitment Ethiopia made to restore 22 million ha of degraded land and sequester carbon emission makes the RIP intervention most appropriate. The approaches taken by the program are strongly aligned and can demonstrably contribute to the national greenhouse gas emission reduction goals while working towards a global objective through transforming the way landscapes are managed in Ethiopia's major forest regions and focusing on restoration in areas where forests have been lost. Its complementarity with existing interventions (Sida/UNDP funded FSDP and the World Bank funded ISFL programs), enhances the country commitments to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, as well as address the country's vulnerability to climate change and related disasters. With the same caveats, the emphasis on safeguards around rights-based issues makes it very relevant to government policies on poverty reduction, governance, gender equity, etc. RIP is very relevant to several of the 2030 SDGs, most directly to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). It is also relevant, although slightly more indirectly, to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). By enhancing countrywide and local institutions and providing incentives and information, RIP has a potential to create an enabling environment for the National Forest Sector Development Program. It can be considered that the RIP has provided a significant boost to the country's forestry sector and its commitment to Paris Agreement through its NDC. The program can also fulfill its aims of equitable and sustainable low carbon development through REDD+ on-the-ground activities that address deforestation to reduce land-use based emissions; and enhance forest carbon stocks through afforestation, reforestation, and landscape greening.

4.1.2. Results framework

The program Results Framework/Log-frame is a critical tool to track the program's progress based on baseline data, which are compared against the performance indicators. The Log-frame of the program presented in the program document is shown in table 5 below. It includes one objective, five outcomes, seven outputs (Table 5), and fourteen indicators.

Table 5. Log-frame impact and outcome indicators

	Indicator	Baseline	2017 goal	2018 goal	2019 goal	2020 goal
Ethiopian forestry sector enabled to achieve goals of an 8% GDP contribution and 26MM tCO2e carbon sequestered/ emissions reduced by 2020	• % forest sector GDP contribution from REDD+ Investment Plan	0	0	0.3	0.5	0.6
	• Forest sector GDP contribution from REDD+ Investment Plan, USD Milliona	0	~38	~226	~442	~664
	• MM t CO2e annual carbon sequestration (under NICFI programme)	0	~0.6	~2.3	~5.0	~8.0
1 Large-scale community forestry program in place	• # of Woredas where a sustainable community-based forestry programme has been established	0	9-18	18	36	54
2 Large-scale forest protection programme and targeted PFMs covering carbon rich forest in place	• % of Ethiopia's high forest covered by PFM (under NICFI programme)	0	0.5%	1.4%	2.6%	3.8%
	• % reduction in deforestation in areas covered by PFM	N/A	>50%	>50%	>50%	>50%
	• % reduction in degradation in areas covered by PFM *(to be added in 2018/'19, pending national definition of degradation)*	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
3 Capability built in forestry sector to generate new models and proactively seek funding	• Forest Sector Transformation Unit driving Ethiopia's forestry transformation	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	• $ of "match" funding attracted from PPPs / CSO (running total)	-	-	$ 2MM	$ 6MM	$ 10MM
4 Public-private and civil society partnerships strengthened	• # of PPPs / CSO partnerships set up within the forestry sector (per year, under NICFI programme)	N/A	0	1	2	2
	• % of organization involved in PPPs (under NICFI programme) rating their experience as either "very good" or "excellent"¹	N/A	60%	60%	80%	80%
5 Forestry-related livelihoods created	• # of cooperatives or community-based forestry enterprises created	N/A	25	55	107	159
	• # of households with improved livelihoods from community-based forestry	N/A	~6,820	~19,670	~38,570	~59,630
	• % individuals with improved livelihoods that are women	N/A	>40%	>40%	>40%	>40%

1 Based on survey, to be designed

Source: Program proposal document

The program document clearly shows a sound implementation system that is informed by a well thought-out, thorough and realistic program intervention logic/theory of change[2] with the intended impact, which in turn enables identification of achieved intermediaries. The goal, **impact**, **outcomes**, and **outputs** of the program to be delivered are clearly described in the theory of change and the log-frame. Each expected outcome and targets to be achieved annually during the program's lifetime were identified portraying a logical linkage among the key program variables/performance measures **(outcomes, indicators, baseline values, and targets)**. The consultant would like to appreciate the thorough description of the program document, which   shows how and what was planned to be achieved.

However, some project targets, such as contribution of the program to GDP (**8 per cent**) seems ambitious and difficult to achieve during life of the program.

As the evaluation is forward looking, the log-frame for the next programming must be carefully prepared to avoid all the observed confusions.

There are clear descriptions on progress reporting, monitoring, evaluation, and joint missions in the program proposal document. Yet, there should be consolidated M&E plan that shows how each indicator is measured, the timetable, and the responsibility to conduct the measurements. It is vital to

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[2] Proposal for REDD+ investment in Ethiopia (2017-2020) May 2017, Addis Ababa. Section 8 (pp 70-72) Theory of Change and Results/Logical Framework

comprehensively review the log-frame and set up a standardized Indicator **Performance Tracking Table and** a **Template** for collecting information from the field to track progress that is clear to every stakeholder involved in the program implementation at all levels.

4.2. Effectiveness – analysis of the objective and outcome indicators

4.2.1. Progress towards objective

The overall objective of the program is to contribute to the Ethiopian forestry sector to achieve goals of reaching 8 per cent GDP and sequestering/reducing 26 MMtCO$_2$e emission by 2020. The program is part of Ethiopia's REDD+ Program that aims to reduce deforestation and degradation across different forest types and increase forest cover at a scale and speed through enhancing system capacity and greater focus on driving innovation and stronger engagement with private sector and civil society partners who can create sustainable and cost-effective models. The objective also encourages to promote significantly greater engagement of rural communities in the program areas and surroundings.

Although it is too early to conclude that the objectives of the program are fully met, it is safe to state that the results achieved so far in AR/ANR DD and FSTU interventions are on the right track towards achieving the objectives and have contributed to the following impact:

- Protection of natural forests, reduction of deforestation and forest degradation in the intervention areas.
- Afforestation/reforestation and assisted natural regeneration have increased forest cover and carbon stock. This has the potential to boost carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and enhance ecosystem services.
- Degraded landscape restoration and forest protection activities are complemented through capacity building
- Model nurseries and landscape restoration sites have been developed.
- Studies and assessments have been conducted to inform decision-making and establish the knowledge base learning, which in turn could contribute to improve program implementation, monitoring,
- An enabling environment has been created by training members of law enforcement agencies to improve the enforcement of legal provisions
- Forest dependent families, particularly women have benefited from the livelihood opportunities and the market linkages created.

Considering the complex socio-economic situation, deficiencies in policy, governance, institutional capacity, and capability constraints there is a need for building capacity to measure forest degradation and emission reduction by strengthening the MRV system, which needs to be equipped with adequate expertise, lab, and field equipment facilities at all levels. Designing a proper management plan for the plantations, supporting the engagement of private sector **(Outcome 4**) by addressing the issue of land shortage and facilitating credit financing for commercial forest plantations, and introducing wood processing technologies for producing value added products, etc. would be important.

4.2.2. Progress towards outputs and outcomes

Outcome 1: Large Scale Community Forestry Program in place

RIP-AR under this outcome has provided farmers the opportunity to grow economically important trees according to their preference. Before the farmers or the community decide to grow trees on their land, they undergo established rigorous procedures. Among the procedures they undergo are:

- Adequate awareness about the program's objective and the benefits of tree planting.
- Presenting application as individual or cooperative to set aside their land for tree planting or rehabilitation.
- Agreement between the individual or cooperative with the woreda steering committee.
- Approval of the application by the woreda land use authority after onsite inspection.
- Demarcation of the individual or cooperative plantation/rehabilitation site using GPS coordinates
- Mapping of the plantation/rehabilitation site and creation of a GIS shape file.

This has motivated farmers to allocate more land to tree-based land management and has inspired more farmers to engage in tree-based livelihood. It has mobilized communities to restore and rehabilitate a significant hectare of degraded areas through area closure with soil conservation measures. In general, the delivery of the output under this outcome is achieved.

It is important to emphasize that in RIP II programming in addition to expanding plantation and rehabilitation sites, needs to consolidate the gains of RIP I. Among the activities to be given priority are:

- Diversification of tree species
- Construction of road networks
- Proper tending of the planted trees
- Introduction of value-added wood processing technologies for small sized trees

Outcome 2: Large Scale Forest protection program and targeted PFMs covering carbon rich forests in place

RIP DD under this outcome focused on designing and implementing PFM interventions as an approach to sustainably manage the carbon and biodiversity rich forests in the southwest forest block of the country. All PFMs are established following the harmonized PFM guidelines. Membership is open for all the community members. By engaging communities and relevant stakeholders, this component has been organizing communities into CBOs to manage their forests and reduce and eventually avoid deforestation. A safeguards instrument is in place to manage potential social and environmental risks that are compliant with the country's environmental laws and regulations. This outcome is fully achieved.

Outcome 3: Capacity built in forestry sector to generate new models and proactively seek funding

FSTU was established June in 2018 and became operational in October of the same year. The RIP Program Document and the FSTU Mandate document describe three "shifts" that are required to transform the forest sector to enable it achieve the targets set out in the CRGE, NFSDP and GTP II goals. These shifts are: 1) Unlocking more bankable, innovative, and scalable programs; 2) Developing rigorous program

execution capabilities; and 3) Creating improved coordination to facilitate cross-functional collaboration across the forestry, agriculture, and energy sectors.

In relation to No 1, FSTU has discharged its responsibilities by preparing proposals as listed in **Annex.5**. The RIP II program which is currently under appraisal, the dry forests program proposal; the livelihood program for fuelwood collector women and children; the bamboo concept note on Piloting Tree-based Landscape Restoration to Enhance Socio-economic and Ecological Resilience in Lake Tana and Borkena sub basin are among the major ones that are expected to attract funding. FSTU has also been preparing bankable concept notes in collaboration with other institutions, for instance with GGGI focusing on urban regreening.

To enhance the program execution capacities which is indicated in the shifts that need FSTU facilitation, it has conducted several policy analysis and capacity development activities. It has supported the national and regional implementation teams through organizing several skill trainings, regular performance reviews, strategic studies, etc. Prominent among the trainings are: Result Based Program Management, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Sustainable Forest Management, Forest Based Livelihoods, and Value Chain Development. FSTU has also led several studies among them include: Strengthening the Private Sector Associations Engaged in Commercial Forestry & Wood Processing Industries; the Evaluation of Wood and Bamboo Resources for the Development of Enterprise Opportunities; the Designing and Managing of a Basic Tree Nursery and a Guideline to the Model Nursery Establishment, etc. The unit has led the process of revising the 2007 Forest Policy and Strategy of the country. It has also made significant contribution in the preparation of the EFD regulation (which determines the powers and duty 0f the organization) approved by the Council of Ministers.   FSTU also played pivotal role in preparation of the institutional structure of EFD. FSTU has tried to lobby the government for the introduction of challenge fund window to attract the private sector for investment in forestry. FSTU has developed tree-based landscape restoration and livelihood models and model nurseries as learning and research centers to transform the traditional way of landscape and nursery management in the country that can be extended to large areas and/or become net revenue-generating green investments. Tree-based pilot landscape restoration and livelihood models were established. It has introduced the much-appreciated root trainer tray technology that demonstrated improvement in the quality of seedling and their survival after planting. The presence of the FSTU has enabled EFD to be strongly represented in various complementary national initiatives to provide valuable input related to the forestry sector. For example, in forums organized to develop and review national polies and strategies, mechanisms established to provide technical leadership such as the Green Legacy Initiative. Because of the experience and expertise of the FSTU staff the Unit has become a go-to entity for policy, strategic and policy advice.

Concerning cross sectoral collaboration, the RIP program is a very good example for involving stakeholders across sectors under a multi-stakeholder approach. For example, at woreda level the program involves Administration, Agriculture, Rural Land Administration and Use, Cooperative, Women and Children, Water and Energy, Enterprise Development, Environment and Forest, etc. The stakeholders are engaged either in the SC or TWG to support the implementation of the program; an important factor, among others, on which the program's potential to be sustainable hinges.

As described above, it can be confirmed that FSTU has done a lot that have a bearing on the transformation of the Forestry Sector. It is very difficult to imagine such kind of achievements within the operational environment EFD, which operates following government policy and procedure for the

procurement of goods and services. This doesn't provide the FSTU with the requisite flexibility and efficiency to innovate, promote and support best practices. For instance, the FSTU proposition to establish a challenge fund to attract private sector investment has not been implemented because of the government's financial regulation, which doesn't allow the transfer of funds disbursed from government coffers to the private sector.

Nevertheless, the consultant believes that FSTU is a very important unit for the forestry sector and hence suggests the RIP II programming to strengthen the unit's contribution by conducting a review of its mandate, operational modality and space with the aim of making the Unit more agile and providing it autonomy for decision-making.

Outcome 4: Public private and civil society partnership strengthened

Although the program proposal emphasized the importance of engaging the private sector and other non-government players including CSOs in forestry development, the TE was not able to find adequate evidence that the output under this outcome was delivered. The TE agrees with the intention of the program that this is strategically an important approach to be followed for attracting private sector and CSOs in forestry development. To realize this, the FSTU needs to be given autonomy to work with private sector. One of the ways of achieving this could be for the FSTU to work with institutions such as CIFOR and GGGI, which have better operational flexibility. It also needs to be noted that the efforts that have been made so far for example, establishing a working relationship with the private sector, , the proposal to introduce the challenge fund, the studies, policy briefs, model nurseries, etc. could be the bases for the success of this intervention.

Outcome 5: Forestry related livelihoods created

Livelihood support for forest dependent communities is an essential part in the program. About 20 livelihood options have been designed to support the community until their forests can supply them with benefits. Among the livelihood options Community Nursery, Homestead Agroforestry, Community Fuelwood Plantation, Bee Keeping, etc. are directly related to forestry. Livelihood enhancement trainings were provided for a total of 31,301 PFM members on Climate Smart Agriculture, Livestock Value Chain Development, and Promotion of Sustainable Energy. The interventions together with other capacity development interventions have been enhancing access to income, to nutrition, health, and education. Particularly, these benefits have lot of meaning for jobless youth and women. The revolving fund mechanism (mostly livestock for individuals and chicken for groups) is used to support the community with alternative livelihood options. The revolving fund is managed by the CBOs. Access to revolving fund as individual or group requires to get support letter and guarantee from the kebele administration. The loan is given in kind to individuals or groups. Beneficiaries are targeted based on selection criteria that is specific to the type of livelihood they choose (e.g., livestock: availability of land, feed, experience, membership). Preference is given to women or marginalized communities. The focus on improving the livelihoods of local communities through integrating restoration and forest conservation interventions with the income generating activities, embedded in the program, made it particularly relevant to local stakeholders and contributed towards greater effectiveness and sustainability of results achieved by activities that targeted the local communities. This was especially the case with the introduction of forest-based alternative livelihood interventions like apiculture, eco-tourism, buffer zone tree planting around

PFM sites, developing innovative business models that enhance access to green jobs and market for women and youths. Case businesses are presented in Section 5.3. under best practices.

4.2.3. Summary of the overall achievements

Overall, the program has made considerable progress in: a) reversing the loss of forest cover through protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation of large area; b) enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits that can improve the livelihoods of forest dependent communities; c) developing model nurseries and restoration sites, conducting various studies to boost the knowledge base in forestry and crosscutting issues (gender and social inclusion), developing the challenge fund guideline to initiate private sector engagement in forest development; d) enhancing program execution capacities through training and strategic studies. A summary of key achievements is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Summary of the RIP-I implementation status

Goal	Ethiopian Forestry sector enabled to achieve goals of 8per cent GDP and 26 MMtCO2e carbon sequestered/emissions reduced by 2020					
	Remark					
Outcome 1	Large scale community forestry program in place	**Indicator**	**Plan**	**Achieved (MTR 2020)**	**Achievement (TE - 2022)**	**per centage achievement**	**Remark**
		Number of woredas where sustainable community-based forestry program has been established	54	54	54	100	SWC works were conducted on 21,319.87 ha on plantation and on 78,728 ha rehabilitation sites. A total of 224 nurseries were established, and 243,613,153 seedlings were produced and planted.
			54,000 ha of AR	10,006.67 ha of AR.	57,774 ha of AR	107 per cent	
			750,000 ha of ANR	377,000 ha of ANR	765,357 ha of ANR	105 per cent	
Outcome 2	Large-scale forest protection program, and targeted Participatory Forest Management (PFM) covering carbon rich forest in place	Scaled SWFB deforestation and degradation prevention program in place	3.8 per cent (660,000 ha)	2 per cent (343,743 ha)	3.86 per cent (670,014.97 ha)	102 per cent	PFM is established in 59 woredas covering 13 zones and 198 kebeles. A total of 25,624,612 (95 per cent of the plan) seedlings of diverse species are planted in buffer zones and as enrichment planting in open areas of the conservation forests.

Out of 59 woredas where the program is implemented 51 woredas have their own nurseries to produce seedlings

Training was provided for 488 PFM leaders, woreda cooperative experts, PFM facilitators, on basic concept of cooperative establishment, its principle and legalization process, livelihood business plan preparation, market and marketing principles and value chain analysis leadership, bookkeeping and financial management. Most of the |
| | | Targeted PFMs set up in deforestation hotspots reducing deforestation | up to 50per cent | | 48 per cent | 96 per cent | |

							targets under this outcome are met by putting large forests under legally constituted PFM scheme.
Outcome 3	**Capability built in forestry sector to generate new models and proactively seek funding**	Forest Sector Transformation Unit driving Ethiopia's forest transformation	Establish a Forest Sector Transformation Unit		FSTU established and functional	100 per cent	
		$ of "match" funding attracted from PPPs / CSO (running total)			FSTU has prepared over 10 proposals. Out of this 5 CN are submitted for funding to donors		
Outcome 4	**Outcome 4: Public-private (PPP) and civil society organization (CSO) partnerships strengthened**	Number of PPP/CSO partnerships set up within the forestry sector per year	2	The FSTU developed a challenge fund guideline to initiate the engagement of the private sector. However, the guideline has not been implemented because government regulation doesn't allow the disbursement of government funds to the	0	0	FSTU has established partnership with 12 government universities. Among the universities Haromaya, Bahir Dar, Wellega, Semera, Wochamo, and Jigjiga, signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) formerly with EFCCC to jointly implement degraded land restoration models and other innovations that could contribute to transforming the forestry sector. This, is in addition to the two universities (Selale and D/Markos) who signed agreement with EFD to restore the severely degraded Abay Gorge by planting bamboo – a practice that hasn't been tried before. MoU is also signed with, Wolita and D/Birhan and Gonder Universities to develop additional innovative restoration models. The progress the four universities have made so far, is encouraging with a promise of best practices to emerge from the
		Number of cooperatives or community-based enterprises created	160		331	208 per cent	

			private sector. Various attempts were also made to consult with private companies engaged in forest-based green businesses and to work with private sector associations, which are members of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce.				interventions. For example, the transfer of knowledge and practice the University of Gondar tried, has paved the way for addressing shortage of land that impedes the expansion of tree growing. In addition, the livelihood enhancement interventions undertaken by D/Tabor University aimed at conserving a natural forest has facilitated the economic empowerment of women in participating households. It is now possible for women to use the income they generate from small-scale businesses as they see fit. This, in the words of beneficiaries, has eliminated conflict at household level arising from income inequality between men and women.
Outcome 5	**Outcome 5: Forestry Related livelihoods created**	Number of households with improved livelihoods from community-based forestry	50000 HHs		AR/ANR A total of 47814 HHs have benefited through different livelihood schemes. and various program implementation activities DD		The TE suggests that the reporting of beneficiaries must be harmonized in future programming and reported as the number of individual beneficiaries disaggregated by gender. The summary data is then put under the corresponding outcome.

| | | | | 72,000 HHs have benefited from the forestry related and livelihoods investment in CS agriculture, livestock, fruit, sustainable energy, and forestry development

FSTU
The nursery and restoration models   created for 11,084 people (Male=5852, Female=5232), livelihood was improved for 3,290 (Male=2303, Female=987F) | | |
| | per cent of individuals with improved livelihoods who are women | 40 per cent | | 30.5 % | | |

4.3. Analysis of Response to MTR recommendation

The MTR was conducted quite late in the program period and final report was delivered on 29 January 2021. The review stated that RIP program design is highly aligned with all the relevant national plans and strategies, as well as the NICFI objectives and the objectives of the Ethiopia-Norway REDD+ Partnership, the overarching objectives of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, and to the global REDD+ effort under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The MTR also stated that program has delivered good results in a short period of time. It gave 33 recommendations for the way forward. Most of the recommendations were partially or fully accepted by the RIP-I implementers to be addressed either during the program period or in the future programming. Out of 33 recommendations only 1 is rejected with reasons that are also supported by the TE. Fourteen recommendations were accepted to be considered in the next phase programming. The other eighteen are either partially or fully implemented before this TE was carried out. The TE consultant understands that the extent to which the MTR recommendations influence the program implementation and results during the program period is limited. Hence, some relevant recommendations that are still valid are carried over in the recommendation of this Terminal Evaluation. Table 7 below provides the MTR recommendation and the comments from the Terminal evaluator.

Table 7. Analysis of Response to Mid-term Review Recommendations

MTR Recommendation	Response 1=Accepted 2=Partially accepted 3=rejected	Action taken Initiated Completed Not yet done	Comment
1. Relevance			
The FSTU needs to communicate its plans and progress to RIP staff (and indeed to other donors) more fully than it has done in the past so that there is better understanding of its role and its vision. To this end a Steering Committee to whom it presents its annual work plan and with whom it discusses new problems and opportunities over the course of the year was suggested. But any other regular mechanism would of course do as well so long as more and more regular communication occurs.	3	No change	This is already a practice implemented at EFCCC. The activities of FSTU along with other components (AR/ANR, DD) and programs (FSDP, CFSDP) are discussed extensively during the Federal Steering committee meetings in which many stakeholders are present. For example, the meeting conducted on September 21, 2020 involved EFCCC, RNE, UNDP, MoF/CRGE Facility, CIFOR, EEFRI, EBI, WGCFNR, and regional coordinators from all active programs. However, it is important to emphasize the need for regularity of this practice in future programming.
Research is needed to gather current experience from inside Ethiopia, drawn from RIP and from the experience of other donors, and coupled, at times, with research drawn from experience in other countries. If research was the beginning and the end of the goal, then EFRI would indeed be the body to provide it. However, the kinds of research that the FSTU needs to be able to undertake will always, or almost always, have a policy or regulatory component which needs to be addressed at the same time. Such applied research would seem to be the special remit of the FSTU. Suggested Research Topics Barriers and opportunities for the private sector and commercial plantations; • Barriers and opportunities for communities in pole production and marketing; •Challenges and opportunities for tree growers' cooperatives; • Access to credit; • Tree growing in clusters in order to obtain conditional cash transfers from banks; • Land availability and land-use planning at landscape level; • The value of forests for water; • Undertaking RIP activities in dryland areas; and, • Creating more opportunities for women to plan	1	Yes, initiated	Many studies have been conducted that are aimed to address the barriers mentioned in this recommendation. For more details on the studies conducted see Annex 4. The current forest research arrangement under EFD is expected to provide research support to any forest development. The working relationship with WGCF&NR should and research collaboration with universities and other federal research institutions should be enhanced further. recommends enhanced working relationship with WGCF&NR.

The FSTU might usefully improve and maintain a RIP/FSTU program website where reports produced are stored for public consumption and as a reference point for further work.	2	Yes, not yet done	The former MEFCC had website. It is not clear if the current EFD is using the same website. As this recommendation is important the TE recommends to be included in RIP II programming. In RIP II, it is proposed to establish a knowledge management hub at Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources.
The FSTU may need additional expertise in the area of economics, as well as forestry. It should aim to continue to work closely with EEFRI (the Ethiopian Environment and Forest Research Institute), EDRI (the Ethiopian Development Research Institute) and with individual consultants who have proved their value and have good knowledge of topics to be researched	2	Not yet done	The FSTU has led several studies conducted by consultants. The economist is not in place as recommended by the MTR. Concerning the close working relationship with EEFRI or any other research institute see the comment above.
The RIP's own regional and local level staff and the communities with whom they work, are also an increasingly valuable source of knowledge and understanding about how an expanded role for forestry is evolving on the ground. Writing workshops can be a useful way of gathering this information	2	Yes initiated	RIP is already involving regional & woreda staff. This needs to be strengthened in RIP Phase II and include the communities involved in the program.
2. Effectiveness			
Since staff working on PFM and DD in SNNP and Oromia are at a much earlier working stage, and have been much more challenged by the RIP's late start than have staff in the northern regions, it is suggested that they be offered additional help. There is unspent finance available in the program for Forest Resource Assessment. It has been proposed that graduates be identified from university Agriculture and Forestry Departments, that they be trained for two weeks in PFM and Forest Resource Assessment and that they are then attached to local woredas to offer their services.	1	Yes initiated	As indicated in the Report by REDD+ secretariat there was a forest monitoring assessment conducted in Southwest Forest in May 2022 to evaluate the progress made in reducing deforestation. The assessment showed a reduction by 48 per cent compared to the period 2000-2013. Identifying graduates from university Agriculture and Forestry Departments, and training them for two weeks in PFM and Forest Resource Assessment and attaching them to local woredas to provide technical assistance needs to be initiated in RIP II.
Discussion of the effectiveness of implementation guidelines provoked debate at all levels about the quality of current guidelines and the need to re-create them as manuals for more widespread use. The guidelines are currently aimed at training relatively specialized field staff and are in English. What is proposed is manuals written	1	Yes initiated	The TE has seen many guidelines, manuals, management plans, etc. prepared in English language. The recommendation to translate into local languages in a simple way that is

much more simply for local people to guide them through AR and ANR and the stages which follow on from them in terms of marketing. The manuals should be in Amharic			understandable to the local community needs to be addressed in the next phase of RIP.
There is currently a PFM manual which was produced eight years ago by Farm Africa, and which is being updated and reissued in December 2020. It would be good for RIP to look at this manual to see whether it has value for local communities as it stands, or whether it to needs simplification and translation.	1	Yes	The revised PFM guideline is at the final stage of preparation.
The World Bank produced six short manuals on coffee and forest NTFPs. It is suggested that these are revisited to see whether, with some updating they could be useful in PFM areas	1	Yes	The use of manuals for NTFPs produced by the support of WB in OFLP is already agreed to consider. The TE recommends to look for other relevant manuals that are related to PFM.
The woreda level suggested that there was a need for a better financial reporting manual for use when its staff report to the regional level Bureau of Finance. Initially this would be for RIP staff but it might be worth considering generating a model financial reporting manual usable by all other users too. Guidelines exist for this process already but there remain problems. Very high turnover of finance staff at the woreda level suggests the usefulness of a simple manual which enables a new member of staff to achieve competence rapidly.	2	The RIP follows the financial and procurement policies of the government. The CRGE Facility has prepared an abridged and customized version of a financial manual and has organized various trainings and workshops on the manual. Each of the regional BOFEDs have the manual. The manual could be further refined.	Based on the recommendation, bookkeeping and finical management training were given for 488 PFM leaders as part of training conducted for three days (See RIP Annual report 2014 E.C.) Since the problem financial reporting is still an issue at woreda level. Refining the manual to make it simpler needs to be done for RIP II implementation.
It is proposed that national level coordinators and the Ministry of Finance make themselves responsible for the production of these manuals working through consultants and testing them out with regional and woreda level staff as required.	1	Yes	Same as above
In the area of field implementation, the program must now focus much more on market access. Research aspects of this might be handled by the FSTU but that will need to be supplemented by field staff working closely with farmers and identifying the barriers to successful marketing. Recent FAO research has also focused on this topic and made recommendations for policy and business models that RIP should review and potentially build upon.	2	Yes	Following this recommendation, very recently, trainings were given to PFM leaders on business plan preparation, market and marketing principles and value chain analysis, leadership, bookkeeping, and finical management. In addition, a study was conducted on Alternative Livelihood Models for PFM Woredas of RIP Implementation Regions to enhance the economic, social and environmental benefits and value chain in the Forestry sector.
Staffing has been a problem especially at regional level. Regional coordinators need to have teams in place which contain a forester, an HR officer, a procurement officer, a livelihood expert, an environmental safeguards (and other cross-cutting issues) specialist,	2	Yes	Most of the positions at regional level are staffed. For some tasks they are using the regular government structure. Because of difficulty in getting files the

a gender specialist and a GIS expert if they are to make more rapid progress. The slow arrival of basic field equipment and of transport has made them especially eager to have the right to keep procurement functions in their own hands.			need for organizing archive and archiving personnel was mentioned during the interview in SNNPR. Moreover, the financial administration is a key challenge that all regions mentioned to be addressed as soon as possible. The staffing of MRV unit in the regions and woredas is recommended by the TE in this report
In pursuit of a more active role for women at local level there is a real case for trying out the creation of separate men's and women's committees, and possibly even women's cooperatives or more informal CBOs. Other countries have found that women generate good business ideas and good natural resource management ideas when working only with one another in the first instance. They may indeed generate ideas which can be mainstreamed across to men in due course.	2	Yes	More than 40% of daily laborers in the nurseries are women. Many women led livelihood business groups are established and functioning successfully. The program has planned consultation with relevant institution working on CBOs for the possibility of forming separate committee in RIP II programming.
Gender monitoring is limited at the moment to reporting the numbers of men and women involved in the program in a specific place and on the livelihood activities that they undertake. Monitoring of committee membership by gender, monitoring of the number of women only committees or business groups generated, and the number of women involved in, would be useful additions	1	Yes	This is planned for RIP II programming.
Since interviews suggested very good regeneration at ANR sites and better forest protection at PFM sites once forests were owned, it is suggested that satellite imagery checking might take place to try to identify some of these changes.	1	Yes	This is not yet conducted. This is one of the most important activities to be delivered in RIP II programming as it is related in results-based financing.
It is suggested that the FSTU might take on the role of developing a more robust theory of change for the program, in which thought-through impacts and the steps towards them that are needed are spelled out.			It is not yet done!
It is mentioned in 3.2.6 that the RIP has model AR and ANR sites which are used for regional government learning. It would be useful for the Embassy to know more about these – where they are and how they are used.	1	Yes	The sites are used for demonstration and inspiring smallholder farmers to consider tree farming.
Comments gathered about unexpected positive and negative results of the program during the interviewing process were of great interest. We recommend that sections that capture these go into every annual report so that they are not lost.	1	Yes	During the interviews many in ANR sites mentioned that the natural regeneration of some disappeared tree species is showing up from the soil seedbank. Wildlife is gradually returning in many rehabilitation sites.

3. Efficiency			
At a federal level, RIP should work with other programs addressing public sector financial management (those funded by World Bank and FCDO) that are reported to have contributed improvements to date and have potential to contribute further. The results from a recent study on the subject should be sought.	1	Yes	The RIP DD component is closely working with Oromia Forest Landscape program. This provides an opportunity for continuous learning about result-based payment.
The RIP I and II should also work with regional governments to implement training and capacity development in procurement, reporting on spending and disbursements, internal audit, external audit, fraud and corruption and accounting as part of Public Financial Management reform strategy and detailed action planning. The RIP should also build capacity to manage administrative requirements in the forestry sector.	2	Yes	This has been done but must be given to new incoming staff in the regions and new woredas and provide refreshment trainings for the old ones.
The lead implementer should monitor regional and woreda fund flows for RIP II under arrangements that should be described in the program document (i.e., risk assessment) and regularly examined as part of the Annual Review process.	2	Yes	Regular monitoring will be done on RIP II.
The RIP II should be realistically tailored to the public sector financial management context in terms of expected administrative performance and anticipated improvements in capacity, including realistic expectations of how capacity can be enhanced and procedures improved over the program's lifetime i.e., refine targets and timelines to be realistic. The RIP II design should also identify components where it is administratively easier to implement and target resources at these areas.	2	Yes	The TE has recommended a management structure and fund flow for the future RIP II programming. The consultant believes that EFD or the program should design financial reporting that should also be tied with outputs or activities. Continuous capacity building must be given to the financial staff at regional and woreda level.
The Norwegian and Ethiopian Governments should together review funding channels and their appropriateness for RIP II components.			This is recommended in the Terminal evaluation.
NORAD and MFA officials need to know where the planned reforms and safeguards are being implemented efficiently to improve performance and to be alert to new risks. Over time, RIP should aim to work with regional governments to implement training and capacity development in procurement, reporting on spending and disbursements, internal audit, external audit, fraud and corruption, and accounting as part of public financial management reform strategies.	1	Yes	Not yet done! This is also supported by the TE consultant and is carried over as part of its recommendation.
One of the unexpected positive spin-offs from the COVID-19 has been the growing use of 'zoom' for meetings. Several regional and woreda level staff have realized that in principle zoom could also be a very cost-efficient way of conducting certain kinds of communication, including training using PowerPoint. At the moment	1	Yes	This is supported by the TE consultant and is carried over as a recommendation for RIP II programming. The RIP II budgeting needs to consider this.

the Internet does not function reliably enough at woreda level for this to be practicable. But that is likely to change over the next year or two and in the next phase of the program it may become possible to make cost efficient use of the technology. If so, some computers will of course be needed at woreda level. Smart phone use should also be investigated.			
It is suggested that the phrase 'improved livelihoods' is unpacked through a focused piece of research. Some simple results would make a great deal of difference. For instance, it would be good to know what the per capita annual increase in income might be from poultry raising, livestock production, honey production or cookstove manufacture. Tree growing for sale, though it is a longer-term process upon which an annual figure cannot be put, could certainly identify the price of a pole at the point of sale in various parts of the country.	1	Yes	The TE has tried to conduct a case study on livelihood intervention and has shown the success stories of some livelihood business groups. In the consultant's view this should be done more objectively on annual basis and be included in the annual reports. Both successes and challenges need to be mentioned. The report should also show the gender dimension.
It is suggested that the production of a theory of change for RIP is also given more attention. Plenty of helpful manuals on this exist. A theory of change ideally enables the user to program forward in time beyond the life of the program from outcome to impact thinking through the drivers and assumptions which make the ideal pathway more or less likely.	1	Yes	This is supported by the TE consultant and is carried over as a recommendation for RIP II programming. The RIP II budgeting needs to consider this.
As the program continues to evolve in the next phase a much larger role needs to be given to the regions. It is from the regions that new knowledge and experience is coming, and it will be important to think about how regional level learning can be conveyed more effectively to the national level. The upward flow of field experience is vital. As previously suggested, writing workshops are one good way of capturing these insights.	2	Yes (The existing division of task among federal and regions shall be upheld while the roles and responsibilities of the various actors shall be elaborated in the program document)	Organizing annual writing workshops could be one way to capture such insights and sharing ideas.
Regional coordinators are already working closely with one another. They hope in the future to use one another's experience when writing funding proposals or business plans. A regional steering committee which meets regularly (even if only via zoom) and which hosts an annual face-to-face meeting of regional staff with the commission and federal staff would be of great value.	1	Yes	This kind of interaction should be conducted on a regular basis. Hence, RIP II should consider budgeting for such kind of face-to-face interaction.
At a national level where coordination mechanisms should be at their strongest, the Program Steering Committee had all but broken down. It should be co-chaired by the Commission and by MOF and managed by the EFCCC. It needs high level stakeholders if some of the policy and regulation issues which it is proposed the FSTU focus on, are to be addressed. This is also a committee where cross sectoral issues	2	Yes	This should be considered following the new EFD mandate.

such as joint planning between forestry and agriculture and water should be addressed from time to time.			
4. Sustainability			
At risk of repetition, one of the most important contributions that RIP can make to future sustainability, in the view of several federal level stakeholders, is to develop simplified manuals for local people which show them step-by-step how to raise their own seedlings and plantations, how to harvest the trees and how to sell them. Manuals need to be written in such a way that communities can ideally use them on their own with only rare inputs from forestry experts.	1	Yes	Indeed, manuals need to be written in such a way that communities can ideally use them on their own with only rare inputs from forestry experts. Hence, the recommendation to prepare simple and perhaps pictorially rich manuals with local languages for the most important forestry activities.
The more that aspects of the RIP program, which is still at early stages of implementation, are given time to evolve, mature, and gain experience the higher the options for their sustainability will be in the future. The most important aspects currently include PFM, marketing, and the institutional capacity (via CBO or cooperative arrangements) to make those two things happen.	1	Yes	The TE recommends continuous assessment of the most important interventions that ensure sustainability and work towards addressing the challenges based on the findings.

4.4. Efficiency – Program implementation and cost effectiveness
4.4.1. Implementers knowledge and understanding the program strategy

The primary question in key informant interview of the stakeholders was checking whether they know and understand the program and how they define their role in the program implementation. The response of all woreda level stakeholders was positive. Most of the stakeholders have sufficient knowledge about the program and can articulate what the it does and can explain their role in implementation. Some of the respondents told the TE that they received sufficient knowledge during the launching workshop and follow up trainings during implementation. Hence, the TE found sufficient sense of ownership developed by the stakeholders during program implementation.

4.4.2. Program Management and Coordination

As indicated in section 3.3, the MoF, and its structure at regional and woreda level are responsible for the financial management of the program. The MoF at federal level is responsible for reporting program's progress. EFD is responsible for implementing the program. UNDP is responsible for procurement of goods and services. The Royal Norway Embassy, UNDP, MoF, and EFD meet monthly to review the progress of the program and to discuss and decide on how challenges arising during implementation could be addressed. The regional level REDD+ Coordination Units are responsible for liaising among stakeholders, at federal, regional or woreda level. Program implementation is also guided by woreda, zone and region level steering committees and technical working groups that are established at region, zone and woreda level. The Woreda Coordination Units are responsible to oversee the day-to-day program implementation at grassroots level in collaboration with relevant sector offices. Several interviewees mentioned that staffing levels at regional level and dedicated program staff particularly for DD at woreda level are not adequate. Moreover, most interviewees mentioned that despite the role the FSTU is playing in compiling technical reports and providing quasi leadership role, it is important FSTU, AR/ANR and DD to strengthen coordination for delivering results.

4.4.3. Work planning

Implementation is guided by Annual Financial and Work Plan divided by a monthly physical activity. Each activity in the program proposal document is attached to a budget for the planned monthly operation. According to the KIs the planning process is to a large extent participatory involving program staff and stakeholders at all levels and is conducted in the beginning of the budget year. Reports are compiled on a quarterly and annual basis, however, the consultant cannot find the activity-based budget expenditure plan and or report.

4.4.4. Adaptive Management

Adaptive management is a key management instrument for this type of program, providing the necessary flexibility to review and adjust the approach to implement the program as needed to secure program deliverables while maintaining adherence to the overall program design. Because of staff turnover, for example, FSTU has made realignment and distribution of duties and responsibilities to cope with the situation and to be responsive to the demands of the work and the MTR recommendation. Moreover, due to the new regional states that emerged from splitting SNNPR, new program zonal coordinator was assigned for Southwest Ethiopia people's region. The splitting of woredas particularly in SNNPR (e.g., Sankura, Enemor) needs attention in future programming. Although Sidama region is a new region all the

activities are still coordinated by the SNNPR. However, the program report is separately compiled. There were also significant changes in government structure at federal level (EFCCC replaced by EFD) but it did not necessitate the use of adaptive management measures to comply to these changes. The key measures implemented were to keep the implementation of activities flexible and adapt the on-going workplans according to new realities.

4.4.5. Technical backstopping and supervision

The program implementation staff for AR at field office includes technical staff coordinator, socio-economist, one or two foresters, and support staff that includes accountant and driver. For the DD at woreda level, there are program coordinators. The program management uses assigned focal persons from key stakeholder's offices, the focal persons regularly communicate and jointly support the program implementation with community facilitators assigned by implementing partners in each woreda. This is appreciated by most of the KIs. However, they are not sure if this continues when the program terminates. Hence, they recommended to seriously consider this issue during program termination and handover as part of exit strategy.

4.4.6. Government participation and ownership

Although there is a UNDP support for procurement of goods and services, the program is fully implemented by the Ethiopian government with full participation of its staff from EFD and other government partners at all levels. Local purchases and procurement of services are also facilitated by EFD and regions. The government views RIP as a good model, and so government staff work closely with program staff as a result. The SC and the TWG setup from Federal level to woreda level engage relevant government stakeholders although there are routine changes particularly in woreda administration staff that can disturb the buy in secured with previous engagement. At Federal level, there is reasonably good coordination between relevant institutions. Despite occasional challenges in engaging all relevant stakeholders regularly, the regional SC and TWGs function to integrate the program with the government system. At woreda level SC and the Woreda level TWG are both active and function well and government and program staff jointly monitor RIP activities. However, the pool finance system at woreda level has occasionally caused delay in channeling the program fund. According to some informants, some woredas even go extra mile to support the program when there is a delay in the release of finance for salary and planned activities. For instance, in Werebabo woreda (Amhara), there were several occasions the woreda cooperated in paying for the activities and salary of staff which was later reimbursed. The active engagement of woreda stakeholders and the training provided for the experts involved has facilitated the transfer of knowledge and skill from the program to government structure that can contribute to the sustainability and scaling up of intervention areas. In general, there is a significant government investment that illustrates its commitment to sustain successful interventions.

4.4.7. Partnership and collaborations

The program document sets out clear stakeholder roles in program implementation. The partners involved in the program at all levels were appropriate from the perspective of their mandates. The level of collaboration in implementation of the program with key implementing partners and stakeholders is expressed positively. However, there was reservation on regular contact at federal and regional level although monitoring platforms (e.g., steering committee) were structurally in place to discuss and assess

the program progress and follow up activities. Nonetheless, most of the respondents at woreda level mentioned that this is not a problem at woreda level although there are some challenges to engage experts because of lack of budget set aside for such engagements. The results of the program are well articulated by the stakeholders, but they expressed their concern on sustainability if the program is not supported for some more years to consolidate the positive results gained so far. There is not any documented collaboration with NGOs and CSOs in the implementation of the program. However, FSTU has engaged a private sector in building a modern model nursery design with a capacity to recycle used water.

UNDP supported the implementation of the program in the respective area of its responsibility. Its role in the program implementation is articulated in the Letter of Agreement with MoF and includes: (i) identification and/or recruitment of program personnel; (ii) identification and support of training activities; and (iii) procurement of goods and services. Within the context of this agreement, UNDP has delivered its responsibility tasked in the implementation of the program. Its engagement in the program was vital to recruit high level technical experts that are required by the program. UNDP also supported many studies by handling the selection of consultants (mostly with the involvement of RIP staff who initiate the request for the service and prepare the terms of reference) and contract administration. However, it is not clear how these studies are influencing the policy and the implementation of the day-to-day activities of the program. The lists of studies conducted can be seen in **Annex 4.**

4.4.8. Budget and Expenditure

The total budget according to the program document was NOK 600 million which was equivalent to ~ USD 75 million at the time the program was launched. In the financial and audit reports, program budget/expenditure is tagged to budget lines specified under each outcome. The latest financial data received from MoF shows that a total of **ETB 2,619,202,363.35** was budgeted for the program. Out of this amount **ETB 2,511,357,562.40** was transferred to the account of MoF. The amount utilized so far is **2,146,375,703.93** which is 85 per cent of the transferred amount. The balance reported by March 30, 2023 was compiled **377,281,669.44.** Financial disbursement is connected to settlement of at least 75 per cent of the disbursed amount. However, there are also situations where there could be special decision to bypass this on case-by-case basis. The allocated budget for the major components is shown in Table 8. According to the financial data, close to 81 per cent of the total budget transferred to the MoF was allocated for the three components. The total utilization rate from the budget allocated for the three components is about 91 per cent in which 66per cent is for AR, 31 per cent for DD and 3 per cent for FSTU. The utilization rate for AR, DD, FSTU from the disbursed amount is 93.1 per cent, 98per cent, and 37 per cent respectively. Almost 50.5 per cent of the unutilized balance comes from AR, while 43 per cent is from FSTU. The remaining balance goes to DD which is 6.5 per cent. The utilization rate by FSTU is much lower than the budget disbursed leaving almost two-third of the amount unutilized and shows the gap in planning and implementation. There are still settlements hanging and expenditures are still expected to be incurred until the program closes in June 2023 following the Ethiopian fiscal year. COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Tigray and partly in Amhara, and the security situation in Oromia are mentioned to contribute to low budget utilization.

Table 8. RIP financial status of the key program components (2010-2014)

Key component	Total budget disbursed	Total Utilization	Balance
AR	1,325,326,359	1,233,758,627.34	91,567,741.09
DD	593,170,252	581,395,777.40	11,774,474.20
FSTU	124,270,787	46,423,427.29	77,847,359.71
Total	**2,042,767,407.43**	**1,861,577,832.43**	**181,189,575**

Source: Ministry of Finance March 20, 2023

The program has demonstrated due diligence and established strong financial controls in the management of funds. Legally recognized independent accounting firms undertook formal audits annually during the implementation of the program. Two spot checks on the audit reports and management responses (July 2020 and February 2021 audit reports Dec 20). No significant issues were identified in these spot checks.

The **UNDP** engagement according to the KIs was important to hire highly qualified professionals to speed up procurement of materials and services. Its involvement in the program implementation at both upstream and downstream activities of the AR/ANR, DD, and FSTU was very crucial. However, some partners were not happy with UNDP administrative rules and procedures and hence suggested to correct the delays observed due to these circumstances. UNDP is conducting recruitment of personnel and procurement of goods and services as per the established rules and procedures contained in the Program, Operation, Policy Procedure (POPP) at corporate level. As per POPP minimum time required to complete the Individual Consultant is one month while for simple goods from abroad including transportation and customs clearance: two months. For bigger items the duration of completion can be longer. The regular procedures can also be jeopardized by force majeure, for example in this case, COVID which has caused shortage of CONTAINERs Globally. Concerning the finance there have been budget revisions with UNDP and the MoF with three-time amendments to the original agreement.

4.4.9. Program Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation plan of the program lacks a consolidated format that outlines specific M&E activities, timelines, responsible parties, definition of indicators, etc. in which reference can be made to the program log-frame. Most of the M&E reports lack reporting following the indicators. In other words, the program's results framework/ log-frame is not adequately used for periodic monitoring and supervision. The M&E reports are mainly focusing on outputs and do not show how they are systematically contributing to achievement of the outcomes and the goals of the program. The Program Monitoring and Evaluation Officers should compile aspects such as budget expenditure, progress against targets, and risk analysis annually and should be discussed at the Federal level steering committee to get policy guidance backed by adequate information for the smooth implementation of the program.

4.4.10.   Forest Monitoring System and MRV

Policies, manuals, and guidelines for carrying out NFI and for satellite and land-based inventories have been developed. Institutional arrangement for implementing, monitoring and communicating MRV activities is already in place within EFD. The MRV Unit is placed within the Forest Resources Assessment planning and monitoring directorate. It has two teams: NFI and GIS/RS Teams with roles, responsibilities and function of the MRV Unit. Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources (WGC&NR) has

developed MRV curriculum and has been training MSc level students in three programs in which Forestry is one of them. The REDD+ program has been benefiting from this capacity building program. Capacity on REDD+ MRV is greatly increased at the Federal level but almost absent at the regional levels. The new MRV data center under development is progressing very well. There is a field manual for NFI field data collection. These guidelines can serve for developing forest carbon inventory standardized operational manual which is currently absent. Nevertheless, capacity in terms of human resources (Remote Sensing GIS), logistics (lab and field equipment), and GHG inventories needs to be addressed, particularly in the regional and woreda levels for successful measurement, monitoring and reporting RIP implementation in the future programming.

4.5. Impact

Based on the findings of this terminal evaluation, it is possible to confidently say that the program has achieved many tangible environmental and socio-economic results. Because of area closure on AR and ANR sites, the natural vegetation has started to restored. Soil erosion and flooding are significantly reduced. Tree planting has reduced landslides. Biodiversity of plants and animals are gradually back. Indigenous tree species such as Cordia, Acacia spp. and Juniperus have sprouted from the soil seed bank. The return of wild animals and plants to the restored areas is confirmed by the local communities and kebele development agents working close to ANR sites. Farmers or the stakeholder community have started collecting grass from the forest for their cattle. In some AR sites, farmers have started earning income from felling trees they planted four years ago. The program has created several thousands of green jobs for the youths, women, and other social groups. Through the alternative livelihood interventions, the pressure on the nearby natural forests is reduced due to the introduction of alternative income generating activities. The livelihood interventions played key role to diversify rural households' income and has contributed to poverty reduction. Nevertheless, it is also important to point out some deficiencies that should be seriously considered. There is no guarantee that all planted seedlings will grow to become trees. Hence, continuous follow up and reporting on survival of the planted seedlings is needed. The assessment of recovery percentage of degraded areas restored, and the quantity of emission reduced/carbon sequestered require more skill development at the local level. More work is also needed in the areas of public private partnership, engaging NGOs and Civil Society Organizations, gender mainstreaming and government institutional readiness, cross-sectoral policy coordination, and market linkage, etc.

4.6. Sustainability

The sustainability strategy described in the program proposal document (2017) for program achievements is based on recognizing a set of building blocks that include:
(i)Involving local, regional, and federal institutions (SC, TWG) help to ensure the continuity of activities and enhance the sustainability of results
(ii) The Government will continue to provide technical support (federal, regional and local) after the end of the program, although steps will be taken to gradually pass this on to the community-based organizations.
(iii) The program will pilot and scale up innovative partnerships that can be extended to large areas and/or become net revenue-generating (e.g., large-scale commercial plantations, eco-tourism, localized payments for ecosystem services).

(iv) By the end of its lifecycle, the program will have transferred extensive soft assets (administrative procedures for quality control, monitoring, evaluation, knowledge management and communication) and hard assets (equipment and infrastructure).

(v). Result-based payments coming from REDD+ performance on emission reductions in the future will continue to support institutions created (CBOs) into the future.

(vi) The program will put in place a robust and effective knowledge management and communication structure to analyze and disseminate the program's goals, actions, and results.

Despite the delayed start, the RIP program has progressed well with much of the achievements being registered in setting up a robust program delivery landscape. Although it needs slight adjustment (see proposed structure on **Annex 5**), the organizational structures and systems have successfully been set up forming a foundation for the program's enhanced results delivery in the next implementation phase. The program has also successfully mobilized all relevant stakeholders whose participation in, ownership of, and contribution towards the program forms a strong foundation for enhanced program sustainability. Important groundwork has been laid out in enhancing the capacity of RIP program staff, government stakeholders, and the community by providing training, organizing consultation platforms, exchange visits and demonstration. Internally, with still some improvement to be made, the program has established sound implementation structure that is informed by a realistic and straightforward program intervention logic/theory of change with the intended impact, which in turn enables identification of achieved intermediaries. There is adequate awareness about results which forms the driving force behind activity planning and budget execution. RIP actions reduce erosion and landslides, improve water regulation and contribute to carbon sequestration. There needs to be more awareness of these vital forest functions for agriculture, livelihoods, and well-being of the communities. The establishment of revolving fund by the program to support the livelihood of forest dependent communities is an important step to ensure sustainability. Here, the consultant would like to emphasize that the management of the revolving fund by CBOs requires closer support and must be given the highest priority to achieve the desired results. Moreover, it should be recognized that at this stage the government budget, as many KIs mentioned, is not in any way enough to cover the cost of the current institutional structure of the program at all levels. The EFD needs to provide program sustainability-oriented trainings to all stakeholders particularly the CBOs towards the end of the program to facilitate smooth transitioning.

4.7. Gender and other cross-cutting issues

The RIP Program document outlines the social, environmental, and gender impacts expected from the program. As described in the document, women's right is central to program design and ensures that it will be incorporated in the actual implementation. The necessary legal and institutional frameworks on human rights, anti-corruption, women's right and gender equality are already in place in Ethiopia. In this connection, there is a national safeguards information summary issued by the National REDD+ secretariat (EFD). Training was provided to all woreda level experts on how to prepare and implement safeguard instruments (ESMF, Checklist, REDD+ engagement of stakeholders, establishment of REDD+ conflict resolution). Despite a strong emphasis on gender in the program document, there are limitations in the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed into the program's implementation and monitoring. For example, concerning gender balance, the consultant didn't encounter any female coordinator and program staff in all the 12 woredas visited. Nevertheless, there is increasing involvement of women in livelihood activities and community mobilization. There is a willingness to put additional

efforts to facilitate broader participation of women in all aspects of the program. Effective gender mainstreaming is a complex process and takes time. It also requires the active involvement of men, women, boys, and girls. From this perspective, more work accompanied with adequate resources will be required. The consultant was told that a study on gender and social inclusion was commissioned by the FSTU, and the outcome has been used to guide program interventions. Concerning other cross-cutting issues, e.g., rights, poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, etc., it can be said that the program has positive impact. From the stakeholder interviews it was clear that the safeguards process has been very positive and helped raise the profile of many equity and rights-linked issues.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations
5.1. Conclusion

Despite several challenges such as: a) late start of the program; b) slow staff recruitment processes; c) delays in the procurement of goods and services; d) high staff turnover and (d) limited capacity at the beginning of the program, RIP program has progressed well   Vital program management structures and systems (program coordination, steering committee, technical working groups, etc.) including the facilities have successfully been set up forming a very strong foundation for the program's results delivery even if several challenges amongst others COVID, conflict have challenged program implementation.   This is evident in the delivery of some of the outcome indicator targets that fell short of the expectation. The targets for public private partnerships were not achieved at the end of the program. However, important groundwork has been laid out particularly by influencing the policy to encourage the private sector. For instance, the idea of establishing a funding window (challenge fund) to engage the private sector is among the ones that can be mentioned. The main barriers to private sector investment according to many KIs is associated to the land use policy and land availability. Awareness of the benefits and impacts of forest development and protection by local communities, reducing the dependency of the local community near the remaining forests through livelihood interventions, the link to local government and other institutions are among the major achievements that can ensure program's sustainability. Program alignment with the national development priorities has set the stage for cooperation with key government stakeholders that are vital for the sustainability of the program. The program has successfully mobilized all relevant stakeholders whose participation in, ownership of and contribution towards the program forms a strong foundation for enhanced program sustainability. There is adequate awareness about results which forms the driving force behind activity planning and budget execution. In many occasions, timely budget release was mentioned as very serious problem particularly at woreda level. Efforts have been made to monitor the program's progress not only by staff, but also through steering committees and technical working groups. It is important to note that establishing a baseline to monitor progress against indicators could have eased progress assessment. In addition, selection of PFM members for training in book keeping and administering the revolving fund through microfinance institutions could have been considered.

5.2. Lessons Learned

▪ Access to land and credit for commercial timber production are the key challenges that discourage private investment in the forestry sector.
▪ The RIP approach has created opportunity to establish large tree plantations including cluster plantations (100-400 ha).

- Institutional relationships are important to establish at the beginning of the program. Close working relationship with government stakeholders through involving in SCs and TWGs has enabled efficient program follow up at regional, zonal, and woreda level in the areas of their expertise and in solving the problem of land availability on the spot.
- Georeferencing and shape files are breakthrough to forest management. They have created the use right confidence of the associations/cooperatives particularly in AR/ANR interventions. These good practices are also copied by the government (e.g., Green Legacy, government plantations)
- Striving for early impact would likely contribute to sustainability. Community acceptance is very fast if it sees the benefits in the initial implementation of the program.
- Cost of inputs and labor have increased unexpectedly by many folds (e.g the cost Grevillea seeds has increased from ETB 260/kg to ETB 1000/kg; labor cost has increased from 60 to 150 in rural areas. This has caused shortage of inputs and labor in some woredas. Hence, the need to conduct regular market assessment of forestry inputs and labor cost during budget and physical planning is important to adjust work volume regularly.
- PFM without livelihood options does not work.
- The landscape rehabilitation work has created business options for beneficiaries. New business opportunity is created due to this intervention. For example, a farmer in Enemor has succeeded to get income from selling Desho grass that is used for SWC works in plantation and rehabilitation areas. Alfalfa, Elephant grass are also sold for animal fodder by the entrepreneur farmers around PFM areas.
- The program has demonstrated the possibility of forest governance in different forms such as associations, cooperatives, customary governance of clan forests, and hybrid (co-management with government).
- The use of harmonized guideline for establishing PFM connected with safeguards has created confidence for ensuring sustainability.
- Social mobilization has helped to implement the program in some cases up to 30 per cent of the activities (e.g., Enemor woreda).
- Farmers are more attracted to grow trees that are fast growing to quickly earn income.
- The forest and wood processing industries are still backward and not suited to small sized wood processing. The quality and diversity of product types is limited.

5.3. Best Practices

Case 1. RIP provided opportunity for Desho Grass production as a new business

Ato Hitit Asefa is a farmer currently living in Enemor Ener Woreda at Kosed Kebele where the RIP program is implemented. Formerly he was a small retail businessman in Addis Ababa. But due to his father's sickness he moved to Kosed in 1990. He started farming on his father's land of 3 ha since then. The major farm products from his farm

in the beginning were Chat, Enset, Avocado, and Eucalyptus trees, Rosemary, and a little Desho grass. He was using the Desho grass as a fodder for his 2 heads of cattle. He was also producing potato and barley on a small piece of land. He was awarded in 2007 as a model farmer in his woreda. When RIP implementation started in his woreda in 2011 E.C. (2018) it was a big opportunity for him to expand the Desho grass planting. The Desho grass was one of the most important plants that is used for SWC in ANR sites that is established in his kebele. Since he was already producing it in small quantity for his cattle (0.125 ha), he has already the knowledge required to manage Desho grass farming. However, his neighbors were warning him that the grass is using

much water and hence it can make his land very dry and may make it no more suitable for farming crops. But he didn't accept this advice and started planting. Somebody came and asked him to produce Desho grass on a contract basis to supply him for 1 year. For that he increased his Desho grass farm size by 0.125 ha making it 0.250 ha. Based on the contract, he sold for the first time 60 pickup loads of Desho grass each load for ETB 500 and earned a total of ETB 30000 which he mentioned was a big income he got for the 1st time. Seeing this new business opportunity, he increased his Desho grass production to 0.5 ha, and he earned the same amount in 2012 and 2013 E.C. (2019, 2020). But in 2021 he refused to sell Desho grass based on the previous contract. Instead, he used the 2014 production for his new cattle fattening business. Even then he was also able to sell the excess Desho grass not used for fattening for almost ETB 18000 for his neighbor. Seeing the benefit, he got as cattle fodder, he started sharing his knowledge of Desho grass farming for 40 households in his Kebele who were not aware of the benefits of the grass. Now after a year his neighbors have started selling Desho grass let alone cattle feeding.

Since he started selling Desho grass in 2018 he was able to buy two breed cows. These cows have now four calves. He has also built a house in the town of Gunchire and has 7 kids of whom 5 are already graduates from university and have jobs. One is a businessman and 2 are still going to school. All his kids have benefited from his increased income to go to school, university, and start business. He has a plan to buy a business vehicle and applied to the government to get tax-free. He wants to expand selling Desho grass for neighboring woredas and needs market linkage. He was invited to share his experiences in many workshops and was promoting RIP using the opportunity. He has a plan to increase his Desho grass farm to 1 ha since he was asked by the farmers training center and the agriculture office at the woreda to produce more Desho grass for SWC in 66 kebeles. He is selling the Desho grass these days for more than ETB 120 per pick up.

Case 2. Acacia decurrence plantation in Dera Woreda (South Gondar, Amhara)

The plantation was established in 2011 E.C. (2018) in Dera woreda, Wof Argif Kebele, at Aja Fej site by the farmers organized under PFM. Since then, the farmers have planted 42.4 ha of previously barren hill with a fast-growing Acacia decurrence tree species. Their aim is to sale the wood either as pole or for charcoal making. and currently with the help of the project coordination office they have started to explore the market to sell their harvest from the old growth that have reached the size.

Case 3. RIP Livelihood intervention as protection strategy for the remaining forests. The case of Yechiti PFM Association, Decha Woreda (Southwest Ethiopia)

Yechiti PFM association is in Decha woreda established near a large natural forest as part of DD intervention in the woreda. The association is certified as CBO by the Woreda Cooperative. The PFM association is beneficiary of many types of livelihood interventions. Among the livelihood interventions the poultry production that involved 4 women and 7 men is an exemplary intervention. The poultry production started with 104 one day old chicken bought from Gubrie (Guraghe Zone) Ethio-Chicken poultry farm site. The chicken are bought as full package that includes vaccine, fodder, and the chicken. Training is also given to the farmers on how to manage the chicken until they reach the size for sale. Vaccination is given for 4 rounds by a veterinarian employed by Ethio-chicken. An extra 2% is added to the cost for transporting the chicken from the farm site to the PFM site. The chicken will be kept 48 days in a clean growing house and are sold for the surrounding community and to the closest markets on market days in the surrounding. The group started this business with ETB 82,260 borrowed from a revolving fund of RIP set aside for the woreda. After 6 rounds of sale from this business the group has earned more than ETB 484,150. They are now in the process of paying back the revolving fund ETB 82,260 borrowed for RIP to use it other groups who are entitled to get the livelihood support from the PFM members. With the net profit they earned they have a plan to establish a flour mill and buy a truck for transporting goods. They have already bought 16 calves for fattening and will sale them in 3-4 months.

5.4. Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Program Management: To improve coordination between the three components of RIP, there is a need to set up a PMU that coordinates all the activities under one umbrella. See **Annex 5** for the proposed management structure and responsibilities.

Recommendation #2: The consultant recommends to constitute expert meetings at the outcome level under each program entity (AR/ANR, DD, FSTU, LH) every two weeks and management meetings at PMU level every month on common management issues to follow up progress of activities, outputs, and financial expenditures. Minutes of the meetings should be recorded on each occasion.

Recommendation #3: Planning: Planning should start at woreda level and must include stakeholders from collaborating organizations to secure strong accountability and responsibility for their engagement by including in their work plan not as extra work as it is seen currently.

Recommendation #4 Reporting: As they currently stand, most of the reports are focusing on activities. There is a need to regularly assess what these activities are contributing to outcome and impact results. The reporting should be made following the results framework in RIP II. Quarterly reports should capture implementation progress of the recommended changes in the program implementation from the previous reviews and monitoring reports.

Recommendation #5: Conduct a thorough value chain analysis of the whole RIP program to identify bottlenecks and design a workable remedial strategy to achieve the desired goal. FSTU as a transformation unit must reflect on what it has achieved so far in this regard and how it could better function in the future.

Recommendation # 6: Knowledge Management: The program has produced a body of knowledge including numerous studies, assessment reports, guidelines, results of testing and demonstrating innovative solutions for sustainably managing forests, etc. As part of managing knowledge, it needs to end up with knowledge products that capture lessons learned and to identify the way forward to communicate, replicate and scale up these results. Better documentation and profiling of best practices should be supported through initiatives like documentaries; lessons learnt papers as well as exchange visits

Recommendation # 7: Private sector: Continue to advocate for policy direction on the establishment of a funding window for PPP to engage the private sector and other non-government players that will work in specific investment areas and contribute to reducing emissions and the development of overall forestry sector.

Recommendation # 8: Gender: Specialist input should be obtained to ensure that gender mainstreaming and audit occur throughout the program cycle.

Recommendation #9: Land use: Land shortage is considered as limitation for program scale up in most implementing woredas. The absence of land use policy is still an obstacle to the development of forestry. This requires a coordinated approach of the stakeholders to advocate for land use policy.

M&E

Recommendation #1: conducting regular monitoring and discussions on progress by providing opportunity for all concerned parties to take part can help to overcome challenges. The M&E mechanisms need to be linked to key milestones that have greater contribution to outcome and impact and can be monitored every six months.

Finance

Recommendation #1: To fix the reported disbursement delays particularly in DD woredas, it is important to hire dedicated finance officer, who facilitate financial reporting and ensure compliance to financial and procurement management. Furthermore, disbursement from the embassy to CRGE Facility and to regions should be improved. Regional Bureau of Finances should be able to effect disbursements to woredas, which have met the disbursement conditions and requirements. The Finance Officers from the CRGE Facility and Regional Bureau of Finance should be able to conduct period spot checks and provide on-job training and assistant to woredas that have capacity limitations. Regular training and follow up is required to improve the financial quality and timely reporting particularly at woreda level.

Recommendation #2: Ensure alignment of Budget release calendar with Forestry activities such as tree planting, which mainly take place from June-August. This is the time when the Ethiopian fiscal year closes. Hence, special consideration should be negotiated to adjust the budget planning comply with the calendar of forestry activities.

Recommendation #3: Regional Budget: The allocation of budget to regional states and woredas and the financial reporting of the same must copied to the federal, regional and woreda program coordination offices and EFD.

Recommendation #4: Daily wage rate: Many KIs mentioned that the daily wage is the least in forestry programs compared to other similar programs. The daily rate currently paid (ETB 51) is even below safety net daily wage rate (ETB 61). The normal daily wage rate in most of the woredas are currently between ETB 120-150. The reasons given by the woreda KIs is that labor in rural areas has become expensive due to the increased migration to the cities and abroad in recent years and the increased cost of living. Going forward, it is important to revise the daily wage rates

Recommendation #5: Livelihood Support: The program should design a strong capacity development in bookkeeping and small business management to offer the opportunity and create a strong base for enhanced sustainability of the cooperatives or individual businesses set up by the program. This will ensure the repayment of revolving funds is settled on time and reach out to more beneficiaries. Program sustainability-oriented trainings with stronger market emphasis should be supported towards the end of the program to facilitate smooth transitioning and enhance business confidence. The division of tasks between the cooperatives and local institutions with official mandate of finance management and administration should be further cleared.

Sustainability

Recommendation #1: The program has accumulated valuable experiences in designing and implementing forest management plans and has invested in many pilot demonstrations of various innovative solutions to establish new forests, rehabilitate degraded forests and protect old forests. It has also supported the implementation of livelihood initiatives to reduce pressure on the demand of forest products. It is also important to consolidate the results gained by AR/ANR through different post planting measures, such as:

1. Diversification of tree species
2. Construction of road networks
3. Proper silviculture of the planted trees and rehabilitation sites and maintenance of structures
4. Introduction of value-added wood processing technologies for small sized trees
5. It is recommended to organize a workshop showcasing model program achievements as a lesson for future programming.

6. Annexes

Annex 1. List of persons contacted

No	Full name	Organization	Designation
Federal Level – Key Informants			
1	Ato Kebede Yimam	Ethiopian Forest Development	Director General
2	Ato Tilaye Nigussie	"	FSTU head
3	Dr Yitebitu Moges	"	REDD+ Coordinator
4	Dr Kibruyesfa Sisay	"	FSDP head
5	Dr Talemos Data	"	FSTU
6	Ato Heiru Sebrala	"	
7	Ato Zerihun Getu	Ministry of Finance	CRGE Facility Coordinator
8	Ato Desalegn Fufa	Ministry of Finance	CRGE Facility
9	Ato Lulu Likassa	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Forest and NRM program officer
10	Ato Ababu Anaghe	UNDP	Climate change specialist
11	Dr Habtemariam Kassa	CIFOR	Country Representative
Regional Level – Key Informants			
1	Dr Teshale W/Amanuel	REDD+ SNNPR	Coordinator
2	Ato Debela Tesfaye	REDD+ Oromia	Coordinator
3	Ato Sintayehu Deresse	REDD+ Amhara	Coordinator
4	Ato Kassahun Ararso	REDD+ SNNPR	Finance
5	Ato Molla	REDD+ Southwest Ethiopia	
6	Ato Habtamu	REDD+ Southwest Ethiopia	
University – Key Informants			
1	Dr Desse Asefa	Bahir Dar University	
2	Ato Wonde Mebrat	Debre Tabor University	
3	Ato Sale Alebachew	"	
Woreda Level – Key informants			
1	Ato Doliso Fufula	Sankura - SNNPR	Coordinator
2	Ato Amsalu Abera	Tembaro - SNNPR	Coordinator
3	Ato Aemero Ayalew	Enemor Ener - SNNPR	Coordinator
4	Ato Asrat Gizaw	Decha – Southwest	Coordinator
5	Ato Habtamu Nigussie	Gewata - Southwest	Coordinator
6	Ato Asaminew Sahle	Gimbo - Southwest	Coordinator
7	Ato Takele Tadesse	Shebe Sombo - Oromia	Coordinator
8	Ato Mustafa Ebre	Seka Chekorsa - Oromia	Coordinator
9	Ato Ambachew Hagos	Sele Nono - Oromia	Coordinator
10	Ato Obsuman Neme	Sigmo - Oromia	Coordinator
11	Ato Hailemarkos Tilahun	Tarma Ber - Amhara	Coordinator
12	Ato Kinfe Tamre	Tarma Ber - Amhara	Forester
13	Debebe W/Kidan	Tarma Ber - Amhara	Socio-economist
14	Desalegn Batha	Tarma Ber - Amhara	DA Livestock
15	Abebaw Yifru	Tarma Ber - Amhara	Kebele head Agriculture

16	Adugna Basha	Tarma Ber - Amhara	DA Crop
17	Ato Ali Seid Beshir	Werebabo - Amhara	Coordinator
15	Ato Alazar Chanyalew	Dera - Amhara	Coordinator
16	Ato Kindye Enyew	Dera - Amhara	Forester
17	Ato Mulugeta Tsegaye	Dera - Amhara	Socio-economist
18	Ato Habtamu Kerebih	Shebel Berenta - Amhara	Coordinator
19	Ato Ayalew Aemero	Goncha - Amhara	Coordinator
	Kebele Level – Case study participants		
1	Hussien Aliu	Sankura- SNNPR	
2	Hitit Asefa	Enemor - SNNPR	
3	Erku Kebede	Dera - Amhara	
	FGD – Participants		
1	Lemlem Beekeeping Association	Tembaro-SNNPR	
2	Yechiti PFM Association	Decha - SWEP	Case study
3	Yechit ICS producers	Decha - SWEP	
4	Dechemo PFM	Gimbo - SWEP	
5	Zenbaba Bee keeping association	Werebabo - Amhara	
6	Ajafej Watershed association	Dera - Amhara	Case study

Annex 2. Question List for Semi-Structured Interviews

(i)   Email (Telephone) Response Questions

Program Strategy: Program design

What role did you/ your organization play during Problem identification and analysis processes to inform the program design?

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………..

How appropriate have you found the program interventions in addressing the identified problem?

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………..

What are the key weakness and gaps of the program interventions in addressing the identified problem?

………

………..

To what extent do you find the program assumptions appropriate and relevant?

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………..

With specific example, how have you found the program interventions aligned with country priorities?

………

………

What strategies were employed to achieve enhanced alignment between the program and country priorities?

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………

As a key stakeholder, in which ways have you/your organization been included in the decision-making processes regarding the program.

………

………..

In your opinion, are all stakeholders involved in the decision-making processes regarding the program? Justify your answer.

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………

In your area of jurisdiction, how has gender been integrated in the implementation of the program? Is there adequate gender mainstreaming framework in the program? What gaps are evident and how they can be addressed?

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What specific improvements required in the program design and implementation arrangements?

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………

Progress towards Results

What is the status of the program compared to the planned impact- and outcome objectives?

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In accordance with the program results matrix, what intended results achieved so far?

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What unintended results have been achieved as well or envisaged?

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What strategies would you suggest to curb the negative unintended results?

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………

What do you consider as facilitators and/or inhibitors for program performance?

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To what extent has the program partnered with local communities and other stakeholders to promote environmental and disaster risk awareness?

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……..

To what extent has the program contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women and disadvantage groups?

………

……..

Program Implementation and Adaptive Management

What challenges have you noted in the overall program management arrangements and how have they affected the results?

……

……

How regularly and well are activities monitored by the program and corrective measures applied as necessary? Quality of monitoring: its existence (or not), accuracy and flexibility, and the use made of it; adequacy of baseline information;

……

……

Are the inter-institutional structures adequate to allow for efficient program monitoring and implementation, and are all partners been able to provide their contributions to the program, and are there good relations between the program management and with existing partner institutions?

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……

What changes have been made in the program management arrangements in the course of program implementation?

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……

In order for you/your office to deliver well on its program implementation requirements, what capacity gaps do you have and how can they be addressed?

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……

Is the division of task between the program's federal, regional and local stakeholders efficient in program execution, taking into consideration for instance organizational structures, coordination, management, division of roles, administrative capacities, human resources, technical support, etc.?

……

……

To what extent are approval mechanisms and processes, including Annual Work plan preparation, approval and revision, supporting or constraining the implementation process?

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……

What improvements in program management arrangements do you consider necessary for the success of the program?

…….

Finance and co-finance:

What critical gaps are notable in the program's financial management including internal control mechanisms at federal, regional and local levels?

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How did the program's financial management processes and procedures affect program implementation?

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………

What improvements are needed in the program's financial management?

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………..

Are the program activities cost effective and the expenditures justifiable when compared to the plans, progress and output of the program? And what are the options for improving the cost-efficiency of the program

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………..

Sustainability

With specific examples, to what extent are the results of this program sustainable?

……

………

The extent to which the program is embedded in local government   structures; how far good relations with existing structures and facilities have been established;

……

………

Whether the community and government structures appear likely to be capable of continuing the flow of benefits after the program ends (is it well-led, with adequate and trained staff, sufficient budget and equipment?)

……

………

Whether counterparts are well prepared for taking over of the program results technically, financially and managerially?

……

………

What are the key sustainability opportunities and threats the program face?

………

………

……..

How can the program sustainability be strengthened?

………

………

Thank you for cooperation

Annex 3. Bankable CNs/proposals prepared by FSTU

1. Sustainable management of dry forests for reducing emissions and vulnerability of communities in Dryland of Ethiopia, a proposal with a total fund of USD 95,467,105. The program is prepared with the lead of FSTU and EFD's partners, waiting for EFD to submit the program to potential donor (DCF) through appropriate line.

2. FSTU has played pivotal role in preparing the Program Document (RIP Phase II) with a proposed fund of USD 80M and the program is officially submitted to MoF to continue negotiation with the Norwegian Embassy and renew the Bilateral Cooperation between the Governments of Ethiopia and Norway that aimed to transform the forestry sector.

3. Alternative livelihood options to improve socio-economic and ecological wellbeing of fuelwood collector women and children in selected urban areas in Ethiopia, that worth 10M USD.

4. Piloting Tree-based Landscape Restoration to Enhance Socio-economic and Ecological Resilience in Lake Tana and Borkena sub basin" is developed and submitted to Amhara Region. FSTU has submitted all the proposals/CN to EFD, where some of these proposals are submitted to donor, for instance, the livelihood proposal is submitted to UNDP to explore fund.

5. A one million USD proposal on "Developing and Piloting Fruit Tree Based Agroforestry System to restore degraded landscapes and improving food security in Northern Eastern Ethiopia" is developed by FSTU and submitted to the Arab Gulf Fund through the EFD.

6. With the offer of the FAO, the FSTU has been engaged in developing a program proposal entitled Support in Institutional Capacity Building for Implementation of Ethiopia's Forest Sector Development Program. The objective of the proposal is to enhance the Implementation of National Forest Sector Development Program.

7. Efficient Charcoal Production Technology concept note developed and shared with relevant staff within EFD

8. With the offer of the FAO, the FSTU has also been engaged in developing a program proposal entitled Support in Institutional Capacity Building for Implementation of Ethiopia's Forest Sector Development Program. The objective of the proposal is to enhance the Implementation of National Forest Sector Development Program.

Annex 4. List of documents prepared

No	Title of study	Remark
1	Documentation and Analysis of Forestry Practices in Ethiopia	
2	REDD+ Program for Gambella	
3	Training and Monitoring Participatory Land Use Planning for Forest Restoration Planning in REDD+ Regions (54 Districts)	
4	Assessing Alternative Livelihood Models for PFM Woredas of RIP Implementation Regions to enhance the economic, social and environmental benefits and value chain in the Forestry sector	
5	Assessment of Opportunities, Challenges and Incentives for Private Sector Investment in Forestry and Forest Product Processing in Ethiopia;	
6	Development of Support for Public, Civil Society and Private Partnership: Strengthening the Private Sector Associations engaged in commercial forestry and Wood Processing industries	
7	Integrated forest management plan preparation for Enclosures in ANR sites of 54 program intervention districts of Ethiopia;	
8	REDD+ Monitoring Guidelines	
9	The Assessment of Gender and Social Inclusion Study on REDD+ Implementation Program	
10	Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy and Women Based Enterprise Models	
11	Developing Innovative Charcoal Production and Marketing Model	
12	Evaluation of Wood and Bamboo Resources for the Development of Enterprise Opportunities, and Assessment of Options for Securing Land for Commercial Plantation Development in Amhara and Oromia	
13	Training and Capacity Building Needs Assessment for REDD+ Investment Program	
14	A baseline & feasibility study on forestry and livelihoods in REDD+ Investment on selected 54 REDD+ Investment woredas	
15	Ground Truthing and Management Plan Preparation for Plantation Sites and Rehabilitated Degraded Lands in Nine Program Intervention Districts using GIS	
16	Baseline Study on Forestry and Livelihoods in REDD+ Investment Woredas for Development of Investment and Management Strategies in Oromia Region	
17	Baseline Study on Forestry and Livelihoods in REDD+ Investment Woredas for Development of Investment and Management Strategies SNNP Region	
18	Establishment of legal and operational Framework for the restoration of degraded landscapes and Green Legacy Fund	
19	REDD+ Investment 2nd Phase Program Document	
20	Participatory Land Use Plans (Shapefile) for 53 districts	
21	Supervised Land Cover Map (image file) for 53 districts	
22	Accuracy Assessment of the Supervised Land Cover Map (text file) for 53 districts	
23	Training Manual on Participatory Land Use Panning	

Annex 5. Proposed structure for RIP implementation
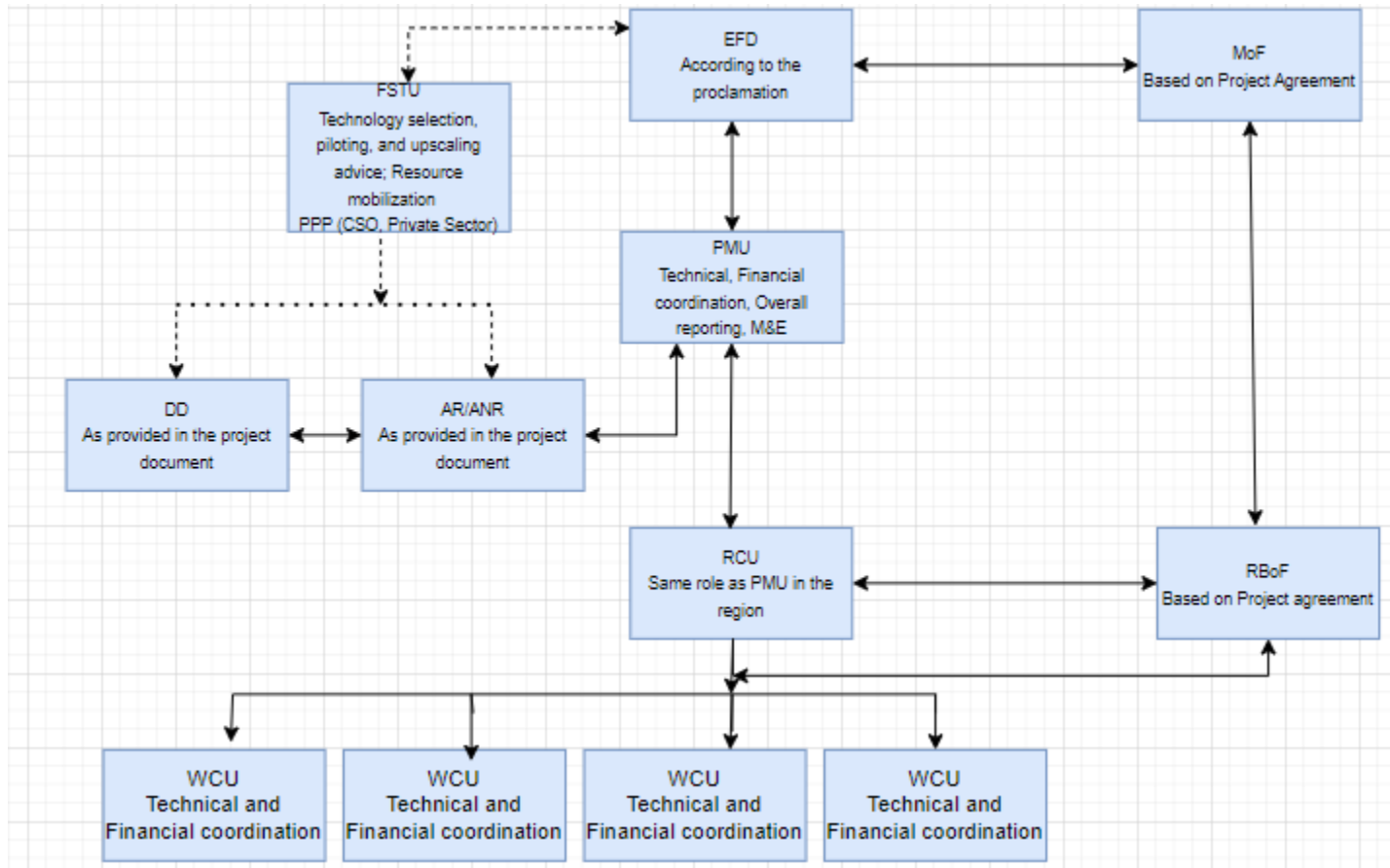
ETHIOPIA

TERM OF REFERENCE (ToR)

FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR (IC)

GENERAL INFORMAION

Services/Work Description: Recruitment of individual consultants for terminal evaluation of the REDD+ Investment of the Results-based payment (ETH-16/0007)

Program/Program Title: REDD+ Investment of the Results-based payment

Post Title: One National Consultant (IC)

Group of Individuals and/or Firms are not eligible for this consultancy assignment (only for individual level application)

Consultant Level: Level C (Senior Specialist)

Duty Station: Addis Ababa

Duration: 60 working days distributed over 2 months, October and November 2022. The draft terminal evaluation report shall be submitted to the Royal Norwegian Embassy by Mid-November 2022 and the final report shall be delivered by December 2022 latest

Expected Start Date: September 25, 2022

BACKGROUND AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

Country Context

The Government of Ethiopia has fully recognized the need to urgently manage climate change challenges and made a policy decision to pursue climate resilient and green growth pathways. This is articulated in the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy of the country. As reflected in the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy, and further committed in the Ethiopia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the country aims to reduce 64per cent of the annual emissions by 2030 compared to the emission of business as usual (BAU) pathways. This means Ethiopia's emission will be 150Mt CO_2e rather than 400 Mt of CO_2e estimated under the BAU development pathways. The strategy estimates that Ethiopia should invest $150 billion between 2011 and 2030 to achieve green growth objectives and an additional billion to achieve sectoral climate resilience objectives, notwithstanding the co-benefits of the two goals. This fund should be mobilized from domestic and external sources including from private sector in the form of Foreign Direct Investment, from bilateral and multilateral sources in the form of grant, concessional loan and other instruments. In the Climate Resilient Green Economy Vision (2011), the establishment of a National Climate Fund was identified as one of the main components for CRGE implementation. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) in collaboration with the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC) has established and operationalized the CRGE Facility to attract climate finance from bilateral, multilateral and private sources and channel such finance to implement climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience building interventions

that can deliver Ethiopia's climate resilient and green development ambitions. The Facility is also mandated to coordinate climate finance flowing to the country through different channels and support climate finance mobilization by UN Agencies and MDBs from various sources.

Ethiopia has been implementing the CRGE strategy since 2011 and has further integrated it into the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP-II) (2015/16-2019/20). Further, realizing climate resilient and carbon neutral middle-income country is one of the key strategic pillars of the Ten Years Perspective Plan for the period 2021-2030. The integration of climate change into the country's long- and medium-term development plans ensure that the CRGE is part of a comprehensive national plan and not a standalone initiative. In this regard, substantial public investments are being made to support CRGE interventions. Additionally, legal and institutional reforms necessary to create an enabling environment for private sector and community engagement in CRGE action are underway. It is also recognized that a considerable amount of investment in CRGE is being delivered through community mobilization and non-state actors. The CRGE Facility is the Government's vehicle to mobilize; access and combine domestic and international, public and private sources of finance to support the institutional building and implementation of Ethiopia's CRGE Strategy, through grants as well as guarantees and results-based payments.

Background of the Program

The REDD+ Investment Program (RIP) is a program supported by the Government of Norway to the tune of 600 million NOK and implemented by the Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC). The program has been working to enhance and intensify the way degraded landscapes and natural forests are managed in Ethiopia through: a) the implementation of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) for forest conservation that aims to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (DD); b) forest restoration to increase carbon sequestration (AR); and c) unlocking the potential of forest resources by developing and applying innovative approaches to landscape restoration and engaging the private sector and civil society organizations in forestry development and management.

The RIP program has been implemented through three components: a) a Forest Sector Transformation Unit (FSTU); b) an afforestation/reforestation initiative; and c) prevention of deforestation and degradation.

The program is implemented in seven regions – Amhara, Gambella, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNP) South-West Ethiopia Peoples' Region and Tigray.

The overall objective of the end-term evaluation is to prepare a consolidated report on the progress of the program implementation in such a way that, the report take stoke of RIP-I achievements of RIP-I against the indicators/targets set in the program document (PD) draw lessons including best practices to be scaled up during RIP-II implementation and challenges that need to be addressed during RIP-II implementation, and assesses to what extent key recommendations given by mid-term review (MTR) are integrated and addressed over the past months and reflect on how this recommendation will be integrated in RIP-II PD and program implementation, and Provide input and inform RIP phase II based on the experience of RIP Phase I, and by doing so, the end-term review will give inputs and inform RIP-II implementation.

The mid-term review of the first phase of RIP revealed that significant progress has been made in restoring extensive degraded landscapes into forests and conservation of natural forests through PFM arrangements. Among others, RIP's successes include:

Integrating soil and water conservation in ANR sites to improve rates of regeneration.

Successful restoration of degraded lands and establishment of plantations on these lands.

Introducing alternative planting season during the short rainy season and scape the effect of damaging frosts in the highlands and to maximize benefits from the longer rainy season for faster early growth and hence better survival of planted seedlings than the common practice.

Building good rapport with communities to support forest conservation and landscape restoration and ANR and AR activities.

Natural forests demarcated and participatory forest management arrangements put in place.

Challenge fund guideline developed, model restoration and nurseries established, proposals developed to mobilize resources, informed, and shaped policies and conducted studies to guide investment in the forestry sector.

Technically leading the initiation and progressive implementation of the national Green Legacy Initiative.

Building of technical and institutional capacity at national, regional and district levels.

Encouraging high level of women participation in the program though this was mainly in the areas of seedling production.

As indicated in figure 1 bellow, RIP-I PD has five outcome level and six output level results.
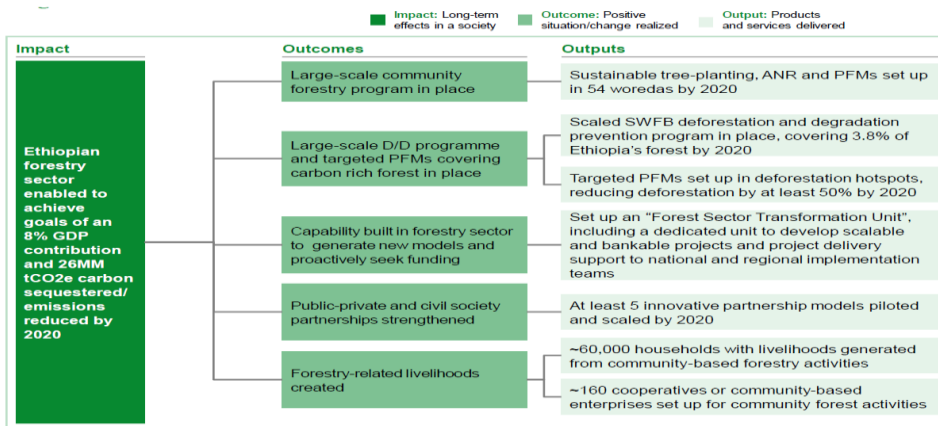

Figure 1: RIP Result framework

As also mentioned in the MTR, there is significant progresses in the implementation of the program and achievement of key targets:

Outcome 1 (large-scale community forestry in place): the plan was to establish 54,000 ha forest by AR and 729,000 ha by ANR. Out of this target, a total of 942,702 ha of degraded land/forest was brought under reforestation/afforestation and effective restoration scheme.

Approaches	RIP-AR (ha)	FSDP-Norway (ha)	Total
AR	45,184	16,239	61,423
ANR	726,970	154,308	881,278
Total	772,154	170,547	942,701

Table 1: Results of Norway Funded AR and ANR interventions

Outcome 2 (largescale DD program covering carbon rich forests in place): under this outcome a total of 660,000 ha carbon rich forests targeted to be put under sustainable PFM scheme, where so far 615,360 forests were put under PFM by RIP DD. About 400 CBOs (forest management cooperatives) have been created to manage this forest resource with the participation of close to 100,000 HHs.

Outcome 3 (capacity built in the forest sector to generate new models and proactively raise fund): under this outcome, FSTU is established, under this outcome, over ten bankable CNs/proposal were prepared including RIP-II PD. So far, 7 million USD is raised to unlock bamboo potential. There are many results not mentioned here, but the team can report to. For this purpose, the team need to review all annual reports.

Despite the above successes, the program faced several challenges such as: a) late start of the Program; b) slow staff recruitment processes; c) delays in the procurement of goods and services; d) late disbursement of funds; and e) high staff turnover and (f) limited capacity at the beginning of the program. Starting from the first quarter of 2020, COVID outbreak and insecurity in some parts of the country negatively affected the completion of planned PFM initiatives, private sector engagement, and supporting communities managing protected and restored lands. Moreover, creating working relationships with private sector, introducing, and implementing transformational change within the sector and laying the foundation to attract the private sector has required more time than expected. Furthermore, identifying gaps and overlaps in policies and mandates across sectors and incorporating new schemes such as payment for environmental services based on lessons learned from field have not been easy.

GEOGRAPHIC AND BENEFICIARY TARGETING

The program is implemented in seven regions – Amhara, Gambella, Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNP) South-West Ethiopia Peoples' Region and Tigray.

OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

General Objective:

The final program evaluation will assess progress towards the achievement of the program objectives and outcomes as specified in the program document and assess early signs of program success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the program on-track to achieve its intended results.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Terminal evaluation is to assess the achievement of program results and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from the program, and also intended to serve the following main purposes:

1. Take stock of RIP achievements, lessons learnt and good practices.

2. Assess whether the agreed recommendations from the MTR have been addressed in the current program, and to what extent they have led to change/improvements

2. Provide input and inform RIP phase II based on the experience of RIP Phase I.

The final evaluation will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and DAC evaluation criteria.

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The evaluation shall be facilitated by an individual consultant, which will be responsible for facilitating the assessment, including review of relevant documents, focus groups discussion, key informant interview and documenting conclusions and recommendations for further improvements. The facilitator/individual consultant will develop a set of guiding questions based on the accepted findings and recommendations of the mid-term review (presented in the management response matrix shared with the RNE) to guide the evaluation. The questionnaire will be developed to facilitate learning, which will be useful in improving the implementation of a possible RIP Phase II. A core team of experts composed of RIP staff from federal and regional offices, CRGE Facility staff, representatives from RNE, CIFOR, EEFRI, Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources, UNDP and other participants will provide input to the facilitator or individual consultant. UNDP shall hire deploy the consultant. The facilitator in consultation with the CRGE Facility in the Ministry of Finance, Federal Forest Development and other stakeholders is expected to prepare an action plan that will guide the evaluation and will facilitate interactive discussions, consolidate the outcomes of the discussion sessions.

In general, the approach and methodology will be

Conduct desk review

Collect primary data using appropriate tools in line with evaluation questions and log frame indicators

KII with program stakeholders and FGD with communities

Field visits to the implementation sites

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY GUIDING QUESTIONS

Evaluation Framework and Evaluation Questions

This evaluation seeks to assess the program in accordance with the OECD-DAC Evaluation criteria. The program overall performance will be assessed in terms of Impact, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Relevance and Efficiency. Each separate program objective will be assessed against the Effectiveness, Sustainability, Relevance and Efficiency criteria, to allow for an overall assessment on program performance, as well as the relative success of the different aspects of the program. Finally, the evaluation will also demonstrate the learning from the program, through highlighting best practices, program failures, and policy recommendations and opportunities to scale up. Below, the OECD-DAC

criteria by which the program will be evaluated are outlined. The criteria have been adapted to develop prompting questions that are specific to this evaluation.

Impact

Impact is the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. This evaluation will review both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as climate, weather and financial conditions.

 The following prompting questions will be used to assess the impact of the program:

What has happened because of the program?

What real difference has the activity made to the participants?

What changes that the program has resulted in have been positive and which have been negative?

How many people have been affected by the change?

Was the change that was seen expected based on the Theory of Change?

What were the unintended results of the program?

What happened that was not part of the Theory of Change?

Does the program contribute to the achievement of the overall development goal?

Did the program contribute to any unintended positive or negative impacts/effects?

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the extent to which the program outcomes and objectives were achieved. It assesses how effective the program was in bringing about change in relation to the resources at its disposal. Effectiveness assesses the change at an outcome level. It assesses the contribution of the program towards the program results that are considered within the program's sphere of influence.

 The following prompting questions will be used to assess the effectiveness of the program:

Effectiveness – To what extent has the program achieved its lower-level results (outputs) and is on track to achieve high level results -impact- and outcome objectives?

Is the program producing the expected outputs?

What is the status of the program compared to the planned impact- and outcome objectives?

What are the prospects of reaching impact- and outcome objectives?

What is the quality of the program activities in view of the relevant guidelines and standards (such as the soil and water conservation guideline, water infrastructure construction guidelines and standards)?

Has there been any unexpected results/impacts (positive or negative) as a result of the program implementation?

What measures can be taken to further strengthen the program's implementation with regards to quality and pace?

To what extent has the program partnered with local communities and other stakeholders to promote environmental and disaster risk awareness?

To what extent has the program contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women and disadvantage groups?

What was the contribution of the relevant activities towards achieving the objectives? Did other factors outside of our control lead to positive outcomes?

Was the program approach and management structure effective in delivering desired/planned outcomes? The extent that the program achieved results in terms of defined program interventions and result indicators

Whether the planned benefits have been delivered and received, as perceived by all key stakeholders;

Satisfaction of the beneficiaries and local government stakeholders in terms of timely availability and quality of program inputs (materials, finance, and human resources); quality of results (respect for standards);

To what extent did the Program's M&E mechanism contribute to meeting program outcomes?

How effective were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the program?

How effective was the program in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries?

The level of real costs involved with achieving results, and compare costs to benefits for the program and relevant program components in a pedagogical manner.

If the assumptions and risk assessments at results level turned out to be inadequate or invalid, or

unforeseen external factors intervened, how flexibly management has adapted to ensure that the results would achieve the purpose etc.;

Whether the balance of responsibilities between the various stakeholders was appropriate,

Whether unintended results have affected the benefits received positively or negatively and could have been foreseen and managed; and

Whether any shortcomings were observed due to a failure to take account of cross-cutting or overarching issues such as gender and environment during implementation.

Sustainability

Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Sustainable programs are financially stable in that the activities continue once funding has been withdrawn. They are also environmentally sustainable in that they ensure the environment in which the program operates will continue to be appropriate to program activities, and is not degraded to the detriment of other environmental needs.

The following prompting questions will be used to assess the sustainability of the program:

To what extent will activities continue after donor funding ceased?

To what extent will the impact and outcomes continue after donor funding ceased?

To what extent does the intervention reflect on and take into account factors which, by experience, have a major influence on sustainability like e.g., economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects?

What is the willingness and capability of participants to continue with the program activities after program end?

What is the willingness and capability of other stakeholders to continue with the program activities after program end?

Is there any evidence that the activities of the program are being replicated by other actors or communities?

What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program or program?

a. Policy support: How far the national, regional strategies and priorities are affecting program results positively or adversely; and level of support expected from local government and other actors;

b. Institutional capacity:

The extent to which the program is embedded in local government   structures; how far good relations with existing structures and facilities have been established;

Whether the community and government structures appear likely to be capable of continuing the flow of benefits after the program ends (is it well-led, with adequate and trained staff, sufficient budget and equipment?)

Whether counterparts are well prepared for taking over of the program results technically, financially and managerially?

c. Socio-cultural factors:

Whether the program was in tune with local perceptions of needs and ways of producing and sharing benefits;

Whether it respects local power- structures, status systems and beliefs, and if it sought to change any of those, how well-accepted are the changes both by the target group and by others; how well it is based on an analysis of such factors; and the quality of relations between the external program staff and local communities.

d. Financial sustainability:

Whether the products or services being provided are affordable for the intended beneficiaries and are likely to remain so after funding will end; and economic sustainability.

The adequacy of the program budget for its purpose particularly phasing out prospects;

e. Technical (technology) issues:

Whether

The technology, knowledge, process or service introduced or provided fits in with existing needs, culture, traditions, skills or knowledge;

The degree in which the beneficiaries have been able to adapt to and maintain the technology acquired without further assistance; factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program.

Relevance

Relevance is the extent to which the objectives of development interventions are consistent with participant requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partner & donor policies.

The following prompting questions will be used to assess the effectiveness of the program:

To what extent does the program address the underlying reasons of the program formulation and how does it contribute to Ethiopia's policies.

To what extent is the program contributing to the overarching goals of the GCF Investment objectives?

To what extent the programs is successful in assisting Ethiopia in achieving its targets as described in the CRGE strategy by 2025 and reach the targets of building communities' resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change? This should also include an assessment of other key policies, notably the NAP, CR strategies for the agriculture and forest and the water and energy sectors)

To assess the degree to which the program log-frame including the indicators and theory of change are relevant, realistic and, propose recommendations for Review, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders

To what extent are the objectives of the program still valid? Has anything changed during the program duration – have certain challenges become more or less relevant – what are the main challenges now?

Are they the same as the beginning of the program? Were the activities carried out relevant to the emerging challenges?

Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?

Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

To what extent does the intervention comply with development policy and planning of the recipient country or the partner government?

How important is the intervention for the target group and subgroups (e.g., women), and to what extent does it address their needs and interests?

To what extent did the program achieve its intended outcomes? Any unintended consequences of the program design?

The extent to which the program has been consistent with, and supportive of, the policy and program framework within which the program was implemented and whether it supports the short term and long-term strategic plans of NRC and SEM?

Whether the inputs, strategies, and program management structure realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the stated outcomes?

To what extent did the program design, approach and management help to respond to the most significant challenges of refugees and host communities?

The extent to which the objectives of the program are consistent with the target beneficiaries' needs/priorities. To what extent is the program design consistent with the local situation and coherence with on-going initiatives?

What threats and opportunities existed during the course of the program, and did the program approach and structure adjust in an effective and timely manner so that the program remained relevant? What other adjustment options might have been necessary?

To what extent was the approach and management of the program relevant to regional and national development needs and agendas?

The quality of the problem analysis and the program's intervention logic and logical framework matrix, appropriateness of the objectively verifiable indicators; analysis of assumptions and risks;

Is there a strong sense of ownership among the recipient communities and stakeholders? The stakeholder participation in the design and in the planning, management/implementation/monitoring of the program, the level of local ownership, absorption and implementation capacity?

Clarity and appropriateness of program implementation arrangements and structures;

The realism in the choice and quantity of inputs (financial, human and admin resources)

The appropriateness of the recommended monitoring and evaluation arrangements;

The extent to which the nature of the problems originally identified has changed.

Efficiency

Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the program has used the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

The following prompting questions will be used to assess the effectiveness of the program:

Are the program activities cost effective and the expenditures justifiable when compared to the plans, progress and output of the program? And what are the options for improving the cost-efficiency of the program

Is the division of task between the program's federal, regional and local stakeholders efficient in program execution, taking into consideration for instance organizational structures, coordination, management, division of roles, administrative capacities, human resources, technical support, etc.?

What tangible changes has the program brought on the beneficiaries to date?

The degree to which program coordination mechanisms established at the federal, regional and local levels properly function?

To what extent are approval mechanisms and processes, including Annual Workplan preparation, approval and revision, supporting or constraining the implementation process?

Assess the efficiency of the program financial management including internal control mechanisms at federal, regional and local levels

Was the program or program implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

Was the process of achieving outcomes efficient? Did the actual outcome justify costs incurred? What was the cost benefit ratio?

Did the program activities overlap, duplicate or complement other similar interventions funded by the Ethiopian government, other NGOs or donors? Could a different approach have produced the same or better results?

How efficient was the management and accountability structures of the program?

Assess the partnership model and its efficiency in achieving the intended outcomes.

How did the program's financial management processes and procedures affect program implementation?

Did the program produce results within the expected time frames and in line with the work plan and related planning documents?

To what extent are activities implemented as scheduled, and to what extent they are implemented at planned or below planned cost?

How regularly and well are activities monitored by the program and corrective measures applied as necessary? Quality of monitoring: its existence (or not), accuracy and flexibility, and the use made of it; adequacy of baseline information;

Are the inter-institutional structures adequate to allow for efficient program monitoring and implementation, and are all partners been able to provide their contributions to the program, and are there good relations between the program management and with existing partner institutions?

Gender, good governance, diversity and conflict sensitivity

To examine the program in relation to gender this evaluation applies the above criteria in respect to the different experiences according to gender.

To what extent was the program implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner (identification of program sites and communities, selection of beneficiaries, approach to rehabilitation of rangeland and water

points, etc.), promoted the do-no-harm principles and contributed to reduction of conflicts among and within communities?

How has the program contributed to women participation and empowerment (decision-making, livelihood support and access to resources and investments) and transformation of gender relations at household and community level? What gaps remain to be addressed in this respect?

How has the program contributed to enhanced local governance effectiveness and efficiency, social accountability, participation, transparency, non-discrimination, and rule of law in relation to the program objectives?

How was the program more or less impactful for women?

How was the program more or less effective for women?

How is the program more or less sustainable for women?

How was the program more or less relevant for women?

How was the program more or less efficient for women?

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

What lessons can be learned from the program thus far in regard to its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability, gender equity, transversal good governance and conflict sensitivity and ways of bringing about positive change at systemic, operational and institutional levels?

What are the recommendations for future engagements/subsequent program phases looking at the program focus area, set-up, partnerships, modalities and approaches, etc.?

What are the good practices and methods that could be expanded to other similar areas/communities (outreach) and scaled-up? What would be effective ways to scale up?

Cross-cutting issues, Risk Management:

What is the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place?

To what extent has gender equality and empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of program and what have been the results so far?

Are any unintended negative effects on these cross-cutting issues observed in the program?

Assess how the program has monitored, reported and addressed the risks outlined in the program document.

Assess if there are risks beyond the ones identified in the program document that may threaten or have delayed program implementation and (if applicable) how these are being or can be addressed.

SCOPE OF EVALUATION

Assess results against the program targets based on the program log-frame

Assess to what extent the RIP I MTR recommendations have been implemented as specified in Management Response Matrix (MRM) agreed between the EFCCC and the RNE.

Identify strengths and gaps/challenges in the institutional arrangement/set-up of the RIP, and provide recommendations for future improvements

Assess whether the program implementation is on track to achieve results in terms of Emission Reductions from reduced deforestation and forest degradation.

Assess whether the MRV system in place can measure, report, and verify emission reductions if results are achieved.

Component I FSTU: Review the current FSTU setup, its mandates and how the unit has been executing its mandate, identify gaps, recommend how the setup can be improved to best deliver RIP-II and its mandate

Component 2 Afforestation/Reforestation and Assisted Natural Regeneration: Review the process of identifying land for the activity implementation, if/how national safeguard instruments have been implemented and reported on, how the plantation and restoration areas are owned and managed, and the likeliness of sustainability.

Component 3 Participatory Forest Management (PFM) for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation: review the process of PFM establishment: if/how have the communities been consulted, how have PFM cooperatives been established/strengthened, how are the CBOs benefiting from the program and/or which incentives motivate communities to manage their forest, what are the livelihood options identified and implemented and are they compatible with sustainable forest management, how has the component been working with other partners to complement each-other, or has there been duplicating efforts?

EVALUATION PRODUCTS (DELIVERABLES)

The evaluation team expected to deliver the following

Draft Inception report (10-15 pages): The consultants/Evaluators will prepare an inception report which details the consultants/ evaluators understanding of the evaluation and how the evaluation questions will be addressed. This is to ensure that evaluators and the stakeholders have a shared understanding of the evaluation. The inception report must include the evaluation matrix summarizing the evaluation design, methodology, evaluation questions, data sources and collection as well as data analysis tool for each data source and the measure by which each question will be evaluated. The inception report should include the following key elements:

Overall approach and methodology

Evaluation Matrix – summarizes and visualize the evaluation design and methodology for discussion with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection, analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated.

Final Inception Report: After incorporating all comments and suggestion from key stakeholders and implementing partners, the evaluator will update and submit the final inception report

Draft Terminal Evaluation Report (30-50 Pages): The draft evaluation report will be submitted to the Norway Embassy and MOF CRGE Facility for review and comments. Comments from the stakeholders will be provided within 10 days after the reception of the Draft Report. The report will be reviewed to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria. The report expected to provide options for strategy and policy as well as recommendations.

Conduct Stakeholder Validation Workshop: After submitting the draft evaluation report, evaluators expected to present the preliminary findings of the evaluation to the wider stakeholders for validation, comments and additional suggestions.

Final Terminal Evaluation Report (30-50 Pages): This will be submitted 10 days and will include comments from the Program stakeholders. The content and the structure of the final analytical report with finding, recommendations and lessons learnt covering the scope of the evaluation should meet the requirements of the all-specified evaluation guideline.

All deliverables will be written in English. The final report shall be no more than 120 pages, including annexes. The CRGE Facility team and key stakeholders in the evaluation process should Review the draft and final terminal evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the consulting team within an agreed period, addressing the content required (as agreed in the TOR and inception report).

REQUIRED QUALIFICATION, EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE

Corporate competencies

Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards;

Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;

Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality, and age sensitivity and adaptability;

Treats all people fairly without favoritism.

Functional and technical competencies

Ability to work in a diverse and multi-cultural environment;

Self-motivated and ability to work under pressure and to meet strict and competing deadlines;

Demonstrated familiarity with the United Nations and its Agencies, Funds and Programs;

Demonstrated understanding of gender issues and women in peacebuilding within evaluation;

Demonstrated understanding of conflict analysis, conflict drivers, post-conflict recovery;

Demonstrating understanding of the governance sector, Rule of law, citizen security, justice, and human rights issues

Ability to plan effectively, prioritize, complete tasks quickly, adapt to changing context and demonstrated leadership in managing a team.

Strong analytical skills, including with qualitative and quantitative research methods;

Excellent communication skills, written and oral, including in cross-cultural contexts;

Required Skills and Experience:

Post-graduate qualification in Forestry, Agricultural Economics, Development Studies, Economics, Resources and Environmental Economics, Agriculture, Forest Management, Environmental Engineering, Gender and Development, Climate Change, Natural Resources Management, Environmental Science and other related disciplines

At least ten years of experience in result-based program planning, monitoring and evaluation with extensive experience in climate finance

Demonstrable experience in leading the design and appraisal of complex, inter-

disciplinary programs/programs of climate change related programs/programs for

multilateral organizations,

Practical experience in environmental planning and management, environmental and social safeguard assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment

Demonstrated experience in incorporating gender equality considerations in climate resilient programs/programs

Strong track record of conducting environmental/social safeguards studies for significant programs

Demonstrated experience in sustainable forest management, with good understanding of drivers of deforestation in Ethiopia

Knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis methods and tools

Knowledge of the result framework of the Adaptation Fund has an advantage;

Professional experience in result-based monitoring and evaluation of rural development programs/programs

Sound knowledge of results-based management systems, and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation methodologies;

Fluency in English is mandatory;

EVALUATION ETHICS

This final program evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG[3] 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consulting firm must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of

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[3] UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', June 2008. Available at http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ethical+guidelines.

information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. It must also ensure security of collected information before and after the review and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the review and not for other uses with the express authorization of MOF and Implementing Partners.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The international consultant will work under the daily supervision of the FSDP program manager   and the overall guidance of the Team Leader for Climate Resilient Environmental Sustainability (CRES).   The UNDP CO and the EFD will provide the required logistical facilities such as DSA; field vehicle, etc.

TIME FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The schedule of the evaluation is expected to be as follows

Activity	Deliverable	Time allocated
Desk review, briefings of evaluators, Finalizing the evaluation design and methods and preparing the detailed inception report	Inception report	10 days (October 5 2022) after Signing the contract agreement
Data collection and analysis (visits to the field, interviews, questionnaires), sharing preliminary findings, and preparing the draft report	Draft report	40 days (November 15/2022) after Inception Report
Validation workshop – the draft report will be reviewed (for quality assurance) and comments will be incorporated in the final evaluation report	Validation Workshop	5 days (November 20/2022)
Final Terminal Evolution	Final Terminal Evaluation	5 days (November 30/2022)

LOGISTICS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO PROSPECT IC (IF ANY)

The Consultants are expected to cover any transport service cost that they may be incurring during the 60 days.

DURATION OF THE WORK

Each consultant is expected to take 60 working days including for the number of days required to produce the inception report, data collection, draft report, and final report.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE BEST OFFER

Upon the advertisement of the Procurement Notice, qualified Individual Consultant is expected to submit both the Technical and Financial Proposals. Accordingly; Individual Consultants will be evaluated based on Cumulative Analysis as per the following scenario:

Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and

Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation. In this regard, the respective weight of the proposals is:

Technical Criteria weight is 70per cent

Financial Criteria weight is 30per cent

Criteria	Weight	Max. Point
Technical Competence (based on CV, and Proposal,	70per cent	100
Criteria a. [Understanding the Scope of Work (SoW); comprehensiveness of the methodology/approach; and organization & completeness of the proposal]		50 pts*
Criteria b. [International consultant - Master's degree in forestry administration, or		5 pts**
Criteria c. [International consultant Eight to ten years of evaluation experience, including the use of mixed methods. Ideally evaluation experience within development programs National consultant - At least 5 years of professional experience in program/Program evaluations, specifically in the area of forestry and natural resource management		10 pts **
Criteria d. [Extensive knowledge and understanding of evaluation methodologies, data analysis issues in peace building, conflict transformation and the role of women and youth in peace building and conflict resolutions]		5 pts**
Financial (Lower Offer/Offer*100)	30per cent	30
Total Score	Technical Score * 70per cent + Financial Score * 30per cent	

* It is mandatory criteria and shall have a minimum of 50per cent

PAYMENT MILESTONES AND AUTHORITY

The prospective consultants are expected to indicate the cost of services for each deliverable in US dollars all-inclusive[4] lump-sum contract amount when applying for this consultancy. The consultant will be paid based on the effective UN exchange rate (where applicable), and only after approving authority confirms the successful completion of each deliverable as stipulated hereunder.

Installment of Payment/ Period	Deliverables	Approval should be obtained	Percentage of Payment
The payment will be made to the consultant firm up on approval	Inception Report	EFD/UNDP	30per cent

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[4] *The term "All inclusive" implies that all costs (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred by the Contractor are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal*

Installment of Payment/ Period	Deliverables	Approval should be obtained	Percentage of Payment
and acceptance of the Inception report			
The payment will be made to the consultant firm up on approval and acceptance of the Draft report	Draft Report	EFD/UNDP	40per cent
The payment will be made to the consultant firm up on approval and acceptance of the Final report	Final Report	EFD/UNDP	30per cent

RECOMMENDED PRESENTATION OF TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Interested consultants should submit cover letter expressing their interest and outlining their qualification and motivation for the consultancy together with CV and brief proposal on the methodology, approach for the assignment with financial quotation to the UNDP.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPRIETARY INTERESTS

The Individual Consultants shall not either during the term or after termination of the assignment, disclose any proprietary or confidential information related to the consultancy service without prior written consent. Proprietary interests on all materials and documents prepared by the consultants under the assignment shall become and remain properties of UNDP.

15 Annexes

a) Intervention results framework and theory of change.

(b) Key stakeholders and partners.

(c) Documents to be reviewed and consulted.

(d) Evaluation matrix template.

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific sub questions	Data sources	Data-collection methods/tools	Indicators/ success standard	Methods for data analysis

(e) Outline of the evaluation report format.

Standard outline for an evaluation report. Annex 1 provides further information on the standard outline of the evaluation report. In brief the minimum contents of an evaluation report include:

1. Title and opening pages with details of the program/program/outcome and of the evaluation team.

2. Program and evaluation Information details: program title, Atlas number, budgets and program dates and other key information.

3. Table of contents.

4. List of acronyms and abbreviations.

5. Executive summary: a stand-alone section of maximum four pages including the quality standards and assurance ratings.

6. Introduction and overview. What is being evaluated and why?

7. Description of the intervention being evaluated. Provides the basis for report users to understand the logic and evaluability analysis result, assess the merits of the evaluation methodology and understand the applicability of the evaluation results.

8. Evaluation scope and objectives. The report should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions.

9. Evaluation approach and methods. The evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis.

10. Data analysis. The report should describe the procedures used to analyze the data collected to answer the evaluation questions.

11. Findings and conclusions. Evaluation findings should be based on an analysis of the data collected and conclusions should be drawn from these findings.

12. Recommendations. The report should provide a reasonable number of practical, feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make.

13. Lessons learned. As appropriate and as requested in the TOR, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation of the intervention.

14. Annexes