

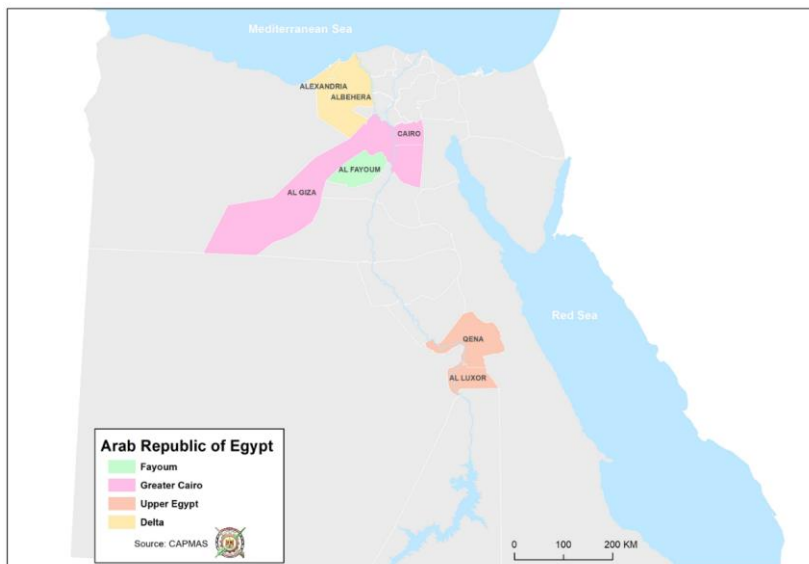


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MIDTERM REVIEW REPORT

SEVENTH OPERATIONAL PHASE OF THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME IN EGYPT (UNDP PIMS ID: 6449)

National Consultant: Dalia Nakhla



Date: May 2024

Midterm Review Report, 2024

Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt

UNDP PIMS ID: 6449; GEF Project ID: 10360

Basic Report Information

Project Information	
UNDP PIMS ID	6449
GEF ID	10360
Title	Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt
Country(ies)	Egypt, Egypt
UNDP-NCE Technical Team	Local Action
Management Arrangements	Agency
Project Implementing Partner	UNOPS
Joint Agencies	<i>(not set or not applicable)</i>
Project Type	Full Size
Implementation Status	Midterm Review
GEF Fiscal Year	FY24
Trust Fund	GEF Trust Fund
GEF Operational Focal Area	Multi-focal areas GEF7: Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Climate Change
Focal Area Objective/ Program:	BD 1-1 Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors CCM 1-1 Promote innovation and technology transfer for sustainable energy breakthroughs for decentralized power with energy storage LD1-4 Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses and increase resilience in the wider landscape
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Project Implementing Partner	<i>(not set or not applicable)</i>
Other Partners	<i>(not set or not applicable)</i>
Midterm Review Details	
Midterm Review Timeframe:	February-April 2024
MTR Consultant:	Dalia Adel Nakhla, National Consultant
MTR Reporting Language:	English

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOYE	Arab Office for Youth and Environment
BSRDA	Bioenergy for Sustainable Rural Development Association
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CPMU	Country Programme Management Unit
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EIECP	Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme
GEF	Global Environment Facility
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTR	Mid-term Review
MoALR	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoERE	Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy
MoLD	Ministry of Local Development
MoSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
NCW	National Council for Women
NHI	National Host Institution
NC	National Coordinator
NSC	National Steering Committee
NREA	New and Renewable Energy Authority
OP	Operational Phase SGP
PA	Programme Assistant
PB	Project Board
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation report
PRODOC	Project Document
PV	Photovoltaic
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SESP	Social and Environmental Screening Procedure
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGP	Small Grants Program
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCP	Upgraded Country Programmes
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDP-GEF	UNDP Global Environmental Finance Unit
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The multifocal area project is being implemented under the GEF-7 replenishment cycle through an agency implementation modality, supported by the UNDP as the GEF implementation agency. Basic project information is summarized below in Table 1.

Table 1: Project Information Table

Project Title:	Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	6449	PIF Approval Date:	Dec 19, 2019
GEF Project ID (PMIS #):	6956	CEO Endorsement Date:	Dec 1, 2021
Award ID:		Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began):	Apr 14, 2022
Country(ies):	Egypt	Date project manager hired:	May, 2022
Region:	Arab States	Inception Workshop date:	Sep 7, 2022
Focal Area:	Multifocal	Midterm Review date:	Feb-April 2024
GEF-6 Focal Area Strategic Objectives and Programs:	BD 1-1 CCM 1-1 LD1-4	Planned closing date:	Apr 14, 2026
Trust Fund:	GEF TF	If revised, proposed closing date:	N/A
Executing Agency:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)		
Other execution partners:	Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE)		
Project Financing:	at CEO endorsement (USD)	at Midterm Review (USD)*	
[1] GEF financing (incl. PPG):	2,096,119	690,850.87	
[2] GEF Agency (UNDP), grant (investment mobilized)	420,000	332,658	
[3] Donor Agency (Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme EIECP), grant (investment mobilized)	3,477,000	2,631,578	
[4] Civil Society Organizations (grantees), grant (investment mobilized)	500,000	165,907	
[5] Civil Society Organizations (grantees), in-kind (recurrent expenditures)	750,000	348,647	
[6] Civil Society Organization (Bioenergy for Sustainable Rural Development Association), grant (investment mobilized)	250,000	134,900	
[7] Civil Society Organization (Arab Office for Youth and Environment), in-kind (recurrent expenditures)	40,000	10,000	
Total cofinancing [2 + 3+ 4+5+6+7]:	USD 5,437,000	USD 3,623,690	
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	USD 7,533,119	USD 4,314,540.87	

Actual expenditures and cofinancing contributions by 30 March 2024

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Project Description

The seventh Operational Phase (OP7) of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Egypt aims to build upon the long-standing achievements of SGP in the country, specifically involving strengthening civil society organizations and improving socioeconomic conditions for local communities through implementation of participatory conservation, restoration, and climate change mitigation interventions. Expanding upon the integrated approaches initiated during the sixth Operational Phase in the target landscapes of Greater Cairo, Fayoum, and Upper Egypt, the OP7 project also includes the West Delta landscape, an important region of the country including the second largest city of Alexandria, within the Nile Delta and extending along the Mediterranean coast.

The target landscapes cover expansive and complex rural and urban geographies across desert, agricultural, and coastal ecosystems. Globally significant biodiversity in these regions faces a variety of threats influenced by a range of drivers, including poor agricultural practices, irrational utilization of scarce water resources, inefficient incentive framework, poorly coordinated development of infrastructure, weak and conflicting governance conditions. These factors, many of which have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, have led to biodiversity loss, degradation of fragile ecosystems, and restricted opportunities for local communities to sustain nature-based livelihoods. Many of the local communities in the target regions also lack knowledge and access to clean energy solutions. The project strategy addresses the threats and barriers in the target regions to generate multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, and the well-being of local communities through participatory, integrated land and resource management approaches implemented across socio-ecological production landscapes.

It is planned to reach an estimated 10,000 direct beneficiaries, 50% of whom are women, as well as facilitate community-driven interventions that generate global environmental benefits, including bringing an estimated 20,000 ha under improved management practices to benefit biodiversity, restoring 10,000 ha of degraded ecosystems, and increasing adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient solutions at the community level, resulting in the mitigation of more than 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions. The durability of the results achieved depends on implementation of integrated landscape approaches, supported by multi-stakeholder governance platforms that foster enabling partnerships among civil society organizations, national and local government entities, private sector enterprises, and academic-research institutions.

The 4-year project, which has an expected operational closure date of 14 April 2026, is implemented by UNDP and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), under an UN-agency execution modality, utilizing the existing mechanism of the GEF Small Grants Programme, e.g., approval of project activities by the National Steering Committee and results-based monitoring. The GEF project grant is USD 2,146,119 (excluding agency fee), with confirmed cofinancing of USD 5,437,000.

Purpose and Methodology

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress midway through the project. The MTR focused on identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project objective, and identifying and documenting lessons learned about project design, implementation, and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the final half of the project's term. The project performance was measured based on the indicators of the project results framework. The MTR was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, as well as beneficiaries of project interventions, and review of available documents and findings of

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the field mission.

Project Progress Summary

The MTR has found the project progress towards its indicators to be **Satisfactory** and the also the projects progress towards the outcomes is also **Satisfactory** and **no track**. There are no major obstacles that are expected to be delay the project progress and it is expected to meet all targets and outcomes by the end of the project phase on April 2026.

The GEF endorsed the project in December 2019, the government of Egypt signed the project document in April 2022 (the official start date of the project) and the inception workshop was held on September 2022.

Egypt hosted UNFCCC COP27 in November 2022, and the SGP has been deeply engaged in the preparations with concerned ministries, authorities, as well as UNDP CO and UNDP & SGP Global Program. Still the NSC formulation and Inception Workshop (External & Internal sessions) took place in a timely manner in August and September respectively.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) was reconstituted in August 2022. The OP7 NSC composes of 3 women and 7 men including concerned ministries, CSO representatives, private sector, UNDP Country Office. It has convened six times since its formulation.

One of the first activities on the project was the formulation of the landscape strategies for the four target landscapes; Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Upper Egypt and West Delta. The strategies were consolidated into one document and approved by the NSC. In support to the development of the landscape strategies, stakeholder consultation workshops were held in each of the four target landscapes to present the project, discuss priorities and obtain feedback from key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. These were informational sessions, emphasizing alignment with landscape strategies as well as national and local strategies, while also highlighting gender mainstreaming and innovative solutions.

SGP launched the first call for proposals in May 2023 and was extended until July 2023. It received 70 project proposals (65 small-scale projects & 5 strategic projects) from the 4 landscapes (20 proposals from Greater Cairo, 16 from Fayoum, 27 proposals from Upper Egypt and 7 proposals from West Delta). The proposals were reviewed and short-listed by the technical sub-committees (one on Climate Change and one on Biodiversity) and the NSC then approved 16 small scale projects from the Greater Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt landscapes. The approved proposals did not have any strategic projects nor any project from the West Delta landscape. Grants for the first call were awarded in November and December 2023 and the first payment was received by the CSOs in January and February 2024. A second call for proposals was launched in February 2024 and extended until March.

Four local platforms are in the process of being officially formulated in the four landscapes to support projects implementation. Moreover, a draft Knowledge Management Strategy is formulated as well as a draft Communication Strategy which should be finalized as projects implementation takes place.

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Midterm Review Ratings

MTR ratings and a summary of achievements are presented below in Table 2.

Table 2: MTR ratings and achievement summary table

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	Not Rated	The project strategy adopts an integrated landscape approach, consistent with the principles promoted under the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) Programme. The project design also builds upon the experiences gained in Egypt during the implementation of the previous operational phases, extending back to 1992, and does a good job identifying synergies with ongoing initiatives, including other GEF-financed projects. Targeting four landscapes in Egypt has the advantage of concentrating efforts in some Governorates instead of opening the call for the 27 Governorates of the country. Although these landscapes also cover a large area of Egypt, still the impacts of the projects can be more sensed. On the other hand, restricting the SGP to the boundaries of the 4 selected landscapes could miss opportunities of working in other Governorates and providing support to other GEF-financed projects such as in the case of Green Sharm (Sharm El Sheikh Governorate, South Sinai). It is therefore recommended to reconsider the four OP7 landscapes in the next phase OP8 to address other GEF projects.
Progress towards Results	Objective Achievement: Satisfactory	<p>By the time the MTR mission was carried out in March 2024 the first round of small grants had been awarded, covering interventions in three of the target landscapes and including the three focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change. There were no grants awarded in the West Delta landscape and no strategic projects awarded from the first call. However, the field visit and interviews done by the MTR consultant proved that the projects of the first call are already starting and are on track in terms of potential targets to be achieved. Also the second call which took place in March 2024 was expected to result in projects in the West Delta Landscape and also result in strategic projects due to the extensive capacity building initiatives provided to the CSOs from the NHI team during the first phase of the project.</p> <p>Overall, a rating of satisfactory is applied as the projects of the first call have proved to be on track and meeting the targets of the mandatory indicators as well as the potential projects expected to result from the second call. This applies to the GEF7 Core Indicator 3: Area of land restored, Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas), and Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated. Core Indicator 11: direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as a co-benefit of GEF investment targets is even expected to be exceeded by the end of the project.</p>
	Outcome 1: Satisfactory	<p>Outcome 1 on Strengthened conservation of biodiversity and protection of ecosystem services through participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood interventions is on track.</p> <p>Three projects have been approved that aim to implement activities in two protected areas namely Qaroun Protected Area (PA) in Fayoum Landscape and Dababeya in Upper Egypt Landscape (Indicator 5: Participatory management of critical ecosystems). The CSOs have prepared their proposals in coordination with PA administration and cooperation agreements are signed.</p> <p>Additionally, more than 500 households in 8 approved projects are expected to gain livelihood co-benefits from improved agroecological practices. The end of project target for Indicator 6: Strengthened agroecological systems will potentially be met and it is expected that by 2026 it will be even exceeded considerably after execution of the projects of the second phase. As for Indicator 7: Strengthening gender quality and women’s empowerment in control of natural resources, 6 projects (out of the target 8 projects) are expected to contribute to strengthening gender equality and women’s empowerment.</p> <p>Overall, a rating of satisfactory is applied as the projects of the first call have proved</p>

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	<p>to be on track and meeting the targets of the indicators as well as the potential projects expected to result from the second call.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Satisfactory</p>	<p>Outcome 2 on Increased adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and mitigation solutions at community is on track.</p> <p>With regards to Indicator 8: Livelihood cobenefits and strengthened resilience through low carbon agricultural practices, Five projects have been funded in the first phase targeting the safe management of more than 6000 tons of agricultural wastes, instead of burning them, to produce 885 tons of organic compost - 50,000 liter of liquid organic fertilizers - 1,020 tons of animal fodder. However, there were no biogas digester projects selected to date of the MTR. It is proposed to revisit the targets with regards to the biogas projects. As for Indicator 9: Strengthened resilience and increased energy security, two Projects will be implemented from the first phase aiming to use solar energy in irrigation serving more than 150 ha. Those solar PVs are expected to replace the diesel-powered units and reduce the green gas emissions. Also five projects will implement solar energy to provide electricity to projects, 2 of them are off the grid, mainly the two Protectorates; Qaroun and Dababeya. Therefore, this end of project targets for this indicator are expected to be exceeded considerably.</p> <p>Overall, a rating of satisfactory is given to this outcome as an average of moderately satisfactory given to the targets of Indicator 8 due to the absence of biogas projects and highly satisfactory given to meeting the targets of Indicator 9 as applications of energy projects are already potentially exceeding the end of project targets.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Satisfactory</p>	<p>Outcome 3 on Durable landscape resilience through participatory governance and strengthened capacities for upscaling is on track.</p> <p>Building on the experiences gained in OP6, 4 multi-stakeholder local platforms have been established in the 4 targeted landscapes in OP7 and they are expected to be fully formulated and functioning once approved projects start functioning. The program has invited relevant authorities and strategic partners in the 7 governorates (4 landscapes) to join those platforms. Those platforms gather representatives of local authorities concerned with agriculture, water resources and irrigation, youth, social solidarity, National Council for Women, local media representatives, CSOs, academia, and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Regional Branch Office). Their TOR include discussing ongoing projects, share lessons learned, exchange knowledge and experience, follow up and monitor progress the implementation of landscape strategies and provide necessary assistance to SGP grantees to overcome any obstacles and challenges facing the implementation of their projects. Therefore, Indicator 10: Participatory landscape management targets have been met and are rated Highly Satisfactory.</p> <p>Indicator 11: Empowering women in natural resource governance targets are also satisfactory met as 6 of the approved projects (out of the 8 end of project target) include measures aimed at improving participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance. This also applies to Indicator 12: Strengthening socioeconomic benefits for women as seven of the approved projects address strengthening socioeconomic benefits and services for women. However, the progress of the Indicator 13: Landscape priority actions mainstreamed into local planning instruments is rated Moderately Satisfactory as the first phase of projects did not include any strategic projects approved, however 3 projects were received during the second phase, 2-3 projects are expected to be approved and will contribute to this indicator concerning several expected issues such as climate adaptation with regards to smart agriculture and beekeeping</p> <p>Overall, a rating of Satisfactory as an average to ratings of the four indicators of this outcome as described above.</p>

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	<p>Outcome 4: Satisfactory</p>	<p>Outcome 4 on Upscaling enabled through capacity building and knowledge management is on track</p> <p>The SGP Team has updated the Knowledge Management Strategy and prepared a draft Communication Strategy under the supervision of the UNDP Consultant. The program has received a stand-alone KM project proposal submitted by a reputable CSO called “The Society of Writers on Environment and Development” which was approved by NSC and it is expected to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the KM and communication Strategies. It will also provide training to the other CSOs in documenting and presenting their project outcomes, lessons learned and success stories. Workshops will take place in the 4 landscapes to start with the 15 CSOs of the first phase of the OP7. Therefore, the Indicator 14: Knowledge shared is on track and the progress is satisfactory and is expected to meet its targets once the approved projects are implemented on the ground and the results are documented.</p> <p>The progress of Indicator 15: Mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment is highly satisfactory and is already met as 9 of the projects funded in the first phase are led by women. However, Indicator 16: Upscaling initiated is the only one not on track and not on target as during the first phase there were no strategic projects approved. However, communication with the NC and PA with regards to strategic projects, assured that this will be addressed by two strategy projects to be approved in the second phase of the project due to extensive capacity building provided by the NHI to the CSO during the first call for proposals.</p> <p>The overall of this outcome is therefore Satisfactory as an average of the performance of its indicators.</p>
<p>Project Implementation and Adaptive Management</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>There was no delay between the end of OP6 and start of OP7. Four landscape strategies were formulated and stakeholders’ consultations took place before their endorsement. The first call for proposals was on May 2023 and was extended until July 2023. The evaluation of the proposals submitted after the first call took approximately six months which might have also caused some delays in the grant awards. This is mainly due to the limited knowledge of the CSOs in proposal writing, coming up with innovative ideas and linking the projects to the GEF indicators which required extensive support from the sub-steering committees to provide advice for revisiting the potential proposals. The NHI used this time to build the capacities of the CSOs in proposal writing and explaining the requirements of the SGP.</p> <p>There is positive rapport and good working procedures among the highly experienced project team, including the UNDP country office staff, the CPMU including the National Coordinator and Program Assistant, the NHI staff, the National Steering Committee (NSC), the RTA and the UNOPS staff members. As evident in the large number of CSOs participating in the first call for proposals (70 proposals submitted), public awareness of the SGP is extensive and the CPMU has maintained a wide network among the CSO community.</p> <p>Moreover, The Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE), the national host institution (NHI) has supported the SGP in its consecutive phases from OP2 in 2003 until OP7. The AOYE is one of the first CSOs that have been working in Egypt in the field of environmental sustainability and the inclusion of the civil society in this field. It understands the challenges and CSOs in Egypt are facing and the has been involved in their capacity building for years. AOYE has also been the CSO responsible for organization of the main environmental events and initiatives and encouraging the contributions of the national CSOs as well as collaboration with international organizations. There is also good rapport between the NHI and UNDP CO as well as government stakeholders and partners due to the long standing history of operation in Egypt.</p> <p>Moreover, the role played by the National Coordinator with the Ministry of Social Solidarity has resulted in decreasing the time of the grantees to acquire the clearance for the grantees on their projects. At previous phases of the SGP including OP6, this took weeks or even months but in OP7, clearance was given in only a few days. This</p>

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		<p>is an achievement that will impact positively the timeframe of OP7 in terms of progress of projects from the second call and also is expected to impact OP8 as this logistical issue has been permanently resolved.</p> <p>Financial delivery has been low, with USD 690,850.87 expended by March 2024, equivalent to 33% of the total expected at project closure. The main reason behind this was that only the first payment was given to the CSOs' projects that were selected in the first call. It is expected that financial delivery would pick up after accepting more projects from the second call which is expected to happen mid 2024.</p> <p>Materialized cofinancing by project midterm is reported at USD 3,623,690, which is 66% of the total expected by project closure.</p> <p>The rating given is Satisfactory as implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action especially the financing which is expected to pick up during this year 2024 once the payment of the projects from the second phase is done and all the projects start execution on ground.</p>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Moderately Likely</p>	<p>The first grants were awarded in March 2024, about 2 years after the official start date of the project in April 202. Implementing the small grants for the projects of the first phase should not be an issue within the remaining timeframe, however, the time for reviewing and accepting proposal from the second call should be shorter than that of the first call so as to allow for enough time for implementation of the projects of the second phase. However, once the proposals from the second call are selected, it is expected that the project will sail smoothly and on track and the grantees will receive clearances and start immediately on their projects as of the case of that of the first call. Also, the multi stakeholder local platform established at the four landscapes are expected to support the projects and ensure their sustainability.</p> <p>There is a high level of interest among local CSOs for participating in the SGP OP7, as evidenced in the fact that 70 CSOs submitted proposals in the first round. And, after 25 years of operating in Egypt, the SGP has developed efficient procedures for administering small grants.</p> <p>There are other factors that diminish the prospects of sustainability. In March 2024, the price of all exported equipment has almost doubled due to the sudden change in the foreign exchange rate and the devaluation of the Egyptian currency. This affected the feasibility of some projects due to change in price of equipment from the time in which the proposals have been submitted and the time of payment of the first installment of the grants which were disbursed with the low currency exchange rate (before the devaluation which happened in March 2024). Examples of these equipment are the shredders of the agriculture residues and the PV stations.</p> <p>Still the risks are considered moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review</p>

Summary of Conclusions

The seventh operational phase (OP7) is the second time when Egypt is participating in the SGP Upgraded Country Programme (UCP), which has entailed development and approval of a full-sized GEF project. Partnering with other projects, including GEF-financed ones, is a clear strength of the project and the selection of the landscapes and promotion of some of the interventions are based on the results from other projects, such as grid connected small scale PV systems, biogas renewable energy, energy efficient LED light bulbs and effective management of Protected areas.

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The project is benefitting from an experienced project team, including the National Coordinator, the Program Assistant, the NHI, the UNDP country staff, the RTA and the UNOPS staff. The NSC was reviewed and adjusted to the specific scope of the full-size project as it addressed representation of the beneficiaries in the target landscapes and increased participation of CSO representatives and other development partners. The OP7 NSC composition is representative as it is composed of voluntary members from the GEF Operational Focal Point, concerned ministries, CSO sector, private sector, UNDP Country Office. The technical sub-committees supporting the NSC are examples of good practice in stakeholder engagement and inclusivity.

The Arab Office for Youth and Environment, the national host institution (NHI) has supported the SGP in its consecutive phases from OP2 in 2003 until OP7. Having a long-standing history of supporting and collaborating with the civil society organizations for years, the AOYE has proved to be successful and efficient in managing the SGP throughout its different phases. There is also good rapport between the NHI and UNDP CO as well as government stakeholders and partners. Cooperation between Country Project Management and the Ministry of Social Solidarity decreased the time of acquiring the clearance for the grantees on their projects from several months to few days. There is high level interest at the Ministry of Environment level in ensuring successful implementation of the SGP OP7. Moreover, Egypt SGP was actively engaged in the UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, November 2022.

Multi-stakeholder governance platforms were established in project locations in the four landscapes and four Landscape Strategies were approved April 2023. In OP7, the following plans were prepared; Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Analysis and Action Plan, Climate and Disaster Screening and COVID-19 Analysis and Action Framework. Also, a knowledge Management plan is drafted as well as a Communication Plan. One of the CSOs executing a small-scale project in Phase 1, "The Society of Writers on Environment and Development", is expected to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the Knowledge Management and Communication Strategies as part of its scope of work.

Some delay was faced between the first call of proposals and the acceptance of the projects mainly due to lack of capacities of the CSOs in submitting clear proposals that are directly related to GEF plans and indicators and the need for the support of the NSC and its sub-committees in providing advise to the CSOs to strengthen and clarify their projects. Also, the first call did not result in any strategic projects nor any project from the West Delta landscape. It is therefore recommended to speed up the evaluation of projects proposals received from the second call to ensure that the second round of projects are initiated by mid-2024 to allow enough time for projects implementation and monitoring before OP7 closure date.

One of the main challenges of the project design is the fact that the identified landscapes are geographically expansive, extending across more than one governorate in some cases, e.g., in the Upper Egypt and Delta regions, and encompassing complex administrative jurisdictions, such as in Greater Cairo. However, establishing multi-stakeholder governance platforms in each of the four landscapes is expected to aid the SGP OP7 in reaching its targets through facilitating governmental procedures and ensuring cooperation at the different administrative levels.

Project administrative procedures have been developed through experiences gained through the previous operational phases. For instance, payment to the local CSOs by checks, due to the under-developed banking systems among some of the target landscapes.

An estimated USD 3,623,690 of cofinancing has materialized through midterm, which is about 67%

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of the expected amount by project closure. GEF financing expenditure to date is about 33% of the total expected at project closure. Financial delivery is expected to increase significantly as the first awarded grants are booked and the second call for proposals is completed.

Recommendation Summary Table

No.	Recommendation	Measure/Outcome	Responsibility
1.	Speed up the process of proposals evaluation and approval. Evaluation and approval of projects from the first call of proposals took approximately five months which delayed the start of projects. It is recommended to shorten the time for review and approval of proposals from the 2nd call to start new projects by mid-2024.	Project Achievement	PA, NC, NSC
2	Provide more guidance to the CSOs and develop their capacities in Strategic Projects. The MTR consultant sensed that lack of strategic projects funded during the first call was due to the misconception of the CSOs of the meaning and objectives of strategic projects. However, this was strengthened by the SGP Team before the second call of proposals. It is therefore recommended that for OP8, a consultant or one of the CSOs is assigned to raise the capacities of CSOs in the targeted landscapes with regards to Strategic Projects.	Outcome 4	PA, NC, NSC
3	Adjust the wording of Indicator 5: Participatory management of critical ecosystems end of project target is stating “3 participatory management partnerships agreed between local communities and protected area administrations” and the MTR consultant proposes it is change to “3 memorandum of understanding between the local CSOs and the protected area administrations” as this will be more acceptable to the Ministry of Environment.	Outcome 1.1	PA, NC, NSC
4	Review Indicator 8: Livelihood cobenefits and strengthened resilience through low carbon agricultural practices, (b) the number of households benefitting from biogas cooking energy and digestate-sourced fertilizer (number of households, gender disaggregated) Consultations with the beneficiaries and CSOs has shown that there is a decreased interest in implementation of biogas units through the SGP especially after the establishment of the Bioenergy Foundation by the Ministry of Environment which is handling these types of projects. On the other hand, there is increased interest in composting project especially as related to agricultural residues. It is therefore recommended by the MTR consultant to adjust this indicator and omit the target of the biogas units and increase the target of the aerobic composting.	Outcome 1.2	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
5	Expand the Target of Indicator 9: Strengthened resilience and increased energy security as it indicated “the number of solar PV agricultural pumping systems replacing diesel-powered units”. The MTR consultant proposes to revise the target to be “the number of solar PV for electricity generation on-grid and off-grid to satisfy community needs for decreasing the dependency on the electricity national grid or on diesel fuel for power generation in areas not served by the electricity grid”	Outcome 1.2	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
6	Close monitoring and evaluation of the first call projects. Close monitoring for the first call projects is required to ensure timely intervention from the SGP to ensure risks mentioned in the MTR do not hinder project progress. These include resistance from the informal waste collectors to electronics waste initiative, cooperation of the Electricity Holding Company to approve PV stations and dual meters, financial obstacles due to the rise in the costs of equipment, fuel and labor from the date of project proposal and cultural and historical farmers practices that could hinder the collection and management of agricultural residues. The MTR Consultant recommends that continuous support is to be provided by the SGP Team and NSC through regular follow up meetings, monthly reports, and field visits.	Project Progress	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
7	Consideration expansion or replacement of OP7 landscapes based on national needs. According to the consultations carried out by the MTR consultant, it is proposed to consider linking SGP to other GEF full size projects or UNDP projects working in Egypt that are not located in the four landscapes of SGP OP7. It is recommended by the MTR Consultant to consult the Ministry of Environment on the landscapes of action for OP8 and if there is a need to reconsider the OP7 landscapes for the purpose of having better collaboration with other GEF or UNDP projects	Project Strategy	NC, UNDP

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the MTR and objectives

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress midway through the project. The MTR focused on identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project objective, and identifying and documenting lessons learned about project design, implementation, and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the final half of the project's term. The MTR Terms of Reference are included in **Annex 1**. As a data collection and analysis tool, an evaluation matrix (see **Annex2**) was developed to guide the review process. Evidence gathered during the fact-finding phase of the MTR was cross-checked between as many sources as practicable, to validate the findings.

1.2 Scope & Methodology

The Midterm Review (MTR) of the Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt was carried out in accordance with UNDP and GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policies and procedures. The project performance was measured based on the indicators of the project results framework. The MTR was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, as well as beneficiaries of project interventions, and review of available documents and findings of the field mission. **Annex 3** includes an example questionnaire used for data collection and **Annex 4** the ratings scales.

Stakeholders' consultation took place from 15-28 March 2024. The mission itinerary is compiled in **Annex 5**, and key project stakeholders interviewed for their feedback are listed in **Annex 6**. The MTR Consultant visited the three landscapes, Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt, and photos taken during the group interviews in the respected governorates are also included in **Annex 6**.

The MTR Consultant completed a desk review of relevant sources of information, such as the Project Document, project progress reports, financial reports, and key project deliverables. A complete list of information reviewed is compiled in **Annex 7**.

The PMU provided a self-assessment of progress towards results, using the project results framework template provided by the MTR Consultant in the MTR inception report. The project results framework was used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of project objective and outcomes.

Cofinancing details were provided by the PMU and cofinancing partners and are summarized in the cofinancing table compiled as **Annex 8** to the MTR report.

The MTR Consultant summarized the initial findings and recommendations of the MTR at the end of the mission on Wednesday 3rd April 2024 in a debriefing held online.

1.3 Structure of the MTR report

The MTR report was prepared in accordance with the outline specified in the UNDP-GEF MTR guideline. The report is structured as follows:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. Project description and background context
4. Findings

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5. Conclusions and recommendations
6. Annexes.

1.4 Rating Scales

Consistent with the UNDP-GEF MTR guidelines, certain aspects of the project are rated, applying the rating scales outlined in **Annex 4**.

Progress towards results and project implementation and adaptive management are rated according to a 6-point scale, ranging from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory. Sustainability is evaluated across four risk dimensions, including financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks. According to UNDP-GEF evaluation guidelines, all risk dimensions of sustainability are critical: i.e., the overall rating for sustainability cannot be higher than the lowest-rated dimension. Sustainability was rated according to a 4-point scale, including likely, moderately likely, moderately unlikely, and unlikely.

1.5 Ethics

The review was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the MTR Consultant has signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form (**Annex 9**).

1.6 Audit Trail

To document an “audit trail” of the evaluation process, review comments to the draft report will be compiled along with responses from the MTR Consultant and documented in an annex separate from the main report. Relevant modifications to the report will be incorporated into the final version of the MTR report.

1.7 Limitations

The review was carried out over the period from February to April 2024, including preparatory activities, field mission, desk review and completion of the report, according to the guidelines outlined in the Terms of Reference.

There were no limitations associated with language as the MTR Consultant native language is Arabic which facilitated the stakeholder’s consultation during the field mission. Moreover, the Consultant was able to review all documents available in English and Arabic languages.

Field visits were made to three target landscapes: Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt. The MTR Consultant had the opportunity to interview CSO representatives in the three landscapes in person in addition to some local government officials. The fourth landscape, the Waste Delta Landscape, was not visited since no projects were chosen at this landscape for phase 1 of the project.

Online interviews were held with a few stakeholders who were unavailable to meet in person during the consultation period. Overall, the MTR Consultant concludes that the information obtained during the desk review and field mission was sufficiently representative to enable an evaluation of progress made during the first half of the project.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

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

The seventh Operational Phase (OP7) of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Egypt aims to build upon the long-standing achievements of SGP in the country, specifically involving strengthening civil society organisations and improving socioeconomic conditions for local communities through implementation of participatory conservation, restoration, and climate change mitigation interventions. Expanding upon the integrated approaches initiated during the sixth Operational Phase in the target landscapes of Greater Cairo, Fayoum, and Upper Egypt, the OP7 project also includes the West Delta landscape, an important region of the country including the second largest city of Alexandria, within the Nile Delta and extending along the Mediterranean coast.

The target landscapes cover expansive and complex rural and urban geographies across desert, agricultural, and coastal ecosystems. Globally significant biodiversity in these regions faces a variety of threats influenced by a range of drivers, including poor agricultural practices, irrational utilisation of scarce water resources, inefficient incentive framework, poorly coordinated development of infrastructure, weak and conflicting governance conditions. These factors, many of which have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, have led to biodiversity loss, degradation of fragile ecosystems, and restricted opportunities for local communities to sustain nature-based livelihoods. Many of the local communities in the target regions also lack knowledge and access to clean energy solutions. The project strategy addresses the threats and barriers in the target regions to generate multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, and the well-being of local communities through participatory, integrated land and resource management approaches implemented across socio-ecological production landscapes.

Reaching an estimated 10,000 direct beneficiaries, 50% of whom are women, the project will facilitate community-driven interventions that generate global environmental benefits, including bringing an estimated 20,000 ha under improved management practices to benefit biodiversity, restoring 10,000 ha of degraded ecosystems, and increasing adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient solutions at the community level, resulting in the mitigation of more than 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions. The durability of the results achieved will be ensured through implementation of integrated landscape approaches, supported by multi-stakeholder governance platforms that foster enabling partnerships among civil society organisations, national and local government entities, private sector enterprises, and academic-research institutions.

2.2 Problems that the project sought to address threats and barriers targeted

Egypt is uniquely positioned midway between Africa and Asia, with its long coasts of the Mediterranean Sea in the north (approximately 970 km) and the Red Sea in the east (approximately 1,100 km). The country covers an area of about one million square kilometers, with arid desert ecosystems covering 92% of the country's surface area. The remaining 8% of the country is arable, in areas restricted to the Nile Valley, the Nile Delta and a few oases scattered in the Western Desert.¹ Given the country's physiography, Egypt's population is unevenly distributed, where 99% of Egyptians live on less than 4% of the land. Also high population growth rates and densities pose

¹ Egyptian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2030), Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Environment.

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formidable pressure on the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.²

Egypt has a rich and diverse biota, supported by a wide range of habitats, including desert ecosystems, mountains, coastal wetlands and mangroves, and coral reefs. Overall, Egyptian biodiversity comprises 800 species of non-flowering plants, 2,302 flowering plants, 111 species of mammals, 480 species of birds, 109 species of reptiles, 9 species of amphibians, and more than 1,000 species of fish.³

With more than 95% of the country's water needs met by the Nile River, Egypt has been susceptible to climate shocks throughout its long history, and several sectors are highly vulnerable to forecasted climate change. The fast-growing population is expected to double its water demand in the coming 30–40 years. Climate change will aggravate water scarcity. In addition, recent tensions between Egypt and Nile Basin countries and the construction of the Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia could affect water quotas and the actual supply that reaches the country. Saltwater intrusion into groundwater will cause soil salinization, deterioration of crop quality, loss of productivity, and freshwater fisheries. This will have negative impacts on the Delta's agricultural land, particularly the northern areas bordering the Mediterranean coast. Climate change is also expected to exert multiple threats to coastal zone ecosystems, including seawater intrusion into agricultural lands, erosion from intensified flood and storm surges, and declining fish stocks resulting from changes to seawater temperature and acidity. These compounded consequences will have severe socioeconomic impacts, from the destruction of homes and infrastructure on land, loss of lives and migration of affected populations, increase in unemployment, rise in the occurrence of health hazards, and spread of disease and food shortages.

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been operating in Egypt for more than 30 years to strengthen the capacities of local communities to deliver mutually beneficial conservation and socioeconomic outcomes. Over the past two decades, SGP has developed strong multi-stakeholder partnerships with local governments, national agencies and ministries, CSOs, the private sector and others. SGP interventions have been implemented in alignment with government priorities and programmes and have supported Egypt in meeting international commitments. The view of national stakeholders shared during PPG phase consultations is that the SGP is a successful and visible program that continues to generate positive environmental and development benefits, with strong buy-in and ownership at local and national levels.

Starting in the GEF's sixth Operational Phase (OP6), Egypt was included in the Upgraded Country Programmes (UCP) of the SGP. With the aim of achieving impacts at scale and ensuring sustainability of results achieved, the programme level strategy of the UCP is based on a landscape approach, following the UNDP approach of community-driven planning and management of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS).⁴ Expanding upon the achievements initiated during OP6 in the target landscapes of Greater Cairo, Fayoum, and Upper Egypt, the OP7 project also includes the West Delta landscape, an important region of the country including the second largest city of Alexandria, within the Nile Delta and extending along the Mediterranean coast, as shown below on the country map in **Figure 1**.

² Source: Egyptian Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the Arab Republic of Egypt.

³ Country Profile, Biodiversity Facts. UN Convention on Biological Resources, www.cbd.int

⁴ Socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes are commonly characterized as dynamic bio-cultural mosaics of habitats and land and sea uses where the interaction between people and the landscape maintains or enhances biodiversity while providing humans with goods and services needed for their well-being (UNU-IAS, Bioversity International, IGES and UNDP (2014) Toolkit for the Indicators of Resilience in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS).

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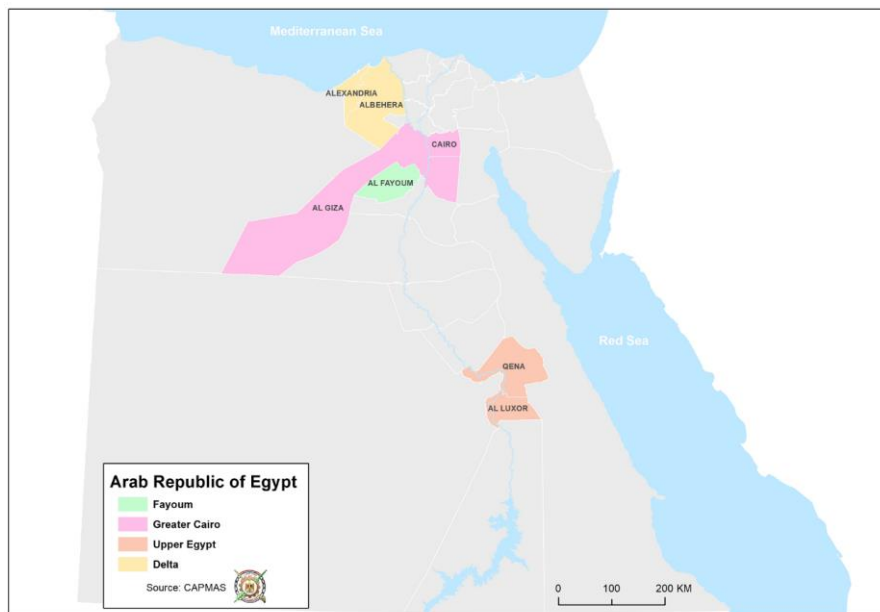


Figure 1: Country map showing target landscapes

Moreover, the following barriers were identified in the project document:

- CBOs have weak organisational capacities to implement initiatives of their own design.
- Limited evidence-based policies for enabling CBOs to manage their own landscapes.
- CBOs lack strategic vision for ecosystem and natural resource management.
- CBOs rarely coordinate to pursue collective action for landscape management.
- Conventional relationships between communities and government often impede genuine participatory landscape management.
- CBOs lack sufficient financial management skills and financial resources for scaling up successful interventions.
- Knowledge from project experiences is not systematically recorded and disseminated.

These barriers result in poor coordination among stakeholders within the landscape, inadequate skills and capacities, lack of awareness and information, inadequate funding and incentives, and poor implementation of projects and other initiatives.

2.3 Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites

Since 1992, the Egypt SGP Country Programme has supported more than 270 CSOs with over USD 9 million in grants for more than 350 distinct initiatives. Over the past two decades, the Country Programme has followed a trajectory of greater and greater strategic focus both geographically and thematically, as articulated in successive Country Programme Strategies, guided, reviewed, and approved by the National Steering Committee (NSC). In the early stages of Country Programme implementation, grants were awarded for a wide variety of community projects. As experience was gained and knowledge acquired regarding efficiency and effectiveness of project interventions and CSO capacities, the Country Programme Strategy became more focused on

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specific areas of action, aligning CSO capabilities and sustainable development objectives with national priorities, global environmental commitments and emerging institutional and organizational capacities. Using the knowledge and experience gained from global and national landscape level initiatives delivered by SGP Country Programmes worldwide – through COMPACT and COMDEKS initiatives and individual SGP Country Programme approaches - SGP Egypt in OP6 followed a landscape approach focusing on four landscapes: Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Upper Egypt and East Delta. By adopting the landscape approach, the SGP enables local actors to better understand the complex relationship they have with a given environment and how best to effect sustainable impacts on the landscape through their individual and collective efforts.

The project objective is “to build socio-ecological resilience in Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Delta, and Upper Egypt landscapes through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.” The project strategy as the GEF alternative aims at removing the barriers outlined above in the Development Challenge section through achievement of the following mutually supportive outcomes:

Component 1: Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection

Outcome 1.1: Strengthened conservation of biodiversity and protection of ecosystem services through participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood interventions

Outcome 1.2: Increased adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and mitigation solutions at community level

Component 2: Durable landscape resilience through participatory governance and strengthened capacities for upscaling

Outcome 2.1: Strengthened community institutions for participatory governance to enhance socio-ecological resilience

Outcome 2.2: Upscaling enabled through capacity building and knowledge management

Component 3: Monitoring and evaluation

Outcome 3.1: Sustainability of project results enhanced through participatory monitoring and evaluation

Target Landscapes:

The four target landscapes are described below.

Greater Cairo Landscape

The Cairo and Giza governorates are included in the Greater Cairo metropolitan area. The Greater Cairo landscape is complex and expansive, with a number of challenging environmental issues to be addressed under OP7, including strengthening participatory conservation, combatting desertification through community solutions, and wider adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

Fayoum Landscape

The Fayoum landscape encompasses the Fayoum Governorate, including Fayoum City, and Lake Qarun and the Wadi-El-Rayan protected areas. Threats to the desert and wetland ecosystems in the Fayoum landscape are extensive, and there are pressing needs to further strengthen participatory conservation and restoration models and facilitate wider adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions. Envisaged interventions under OP7 include community-supported ecotourism, improving agricultural practices to benefit biodiversity, restoring degraded agricultural land and enhancing water conservation, solar PV pumping for irrigation, LED lighting, and composting agricultural wastes for reducing burning and increasing supply of organic fertilizer.

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Upper Egypt Landscape (Qena and Luxor Governorates):

The project landscape focuses on the Qena and Luxor governorates. The Upper Egypt landscape is expansive and continued landscape level action is needed on improved agricultural practices through best agroecological management practices, enhancing soil and water conservation through rehabilitation of irrigation canals, expanding application of renewable energy solutions, introducing sustainable transport (e.g., bicycle-sharing), and strengthening beekeeping and honey production practices.

West Delta Landscape

The West Delta landscape for the OP7 project covers the two neighboring northern governorates of Alexandria and El Beheira. Envisaged interventions in this landscape include Combating soil salinization through applying more efficient irrigation regime, improved organic fertilisation, and more suitable cultivated crops as well as improving soil fertility through replacing chemical fertilisers with organic fertilisers, improving soil fertility and reducing salt content of soils.

2.4 Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.

The Implementing Partner for this project is **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)**. The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in this signed project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document. The Implementing Partner is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:

- Project planning, coordination, management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The Implementing Partner strives to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national institutes and is aligned with national systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports national systems.
- Risk management as outlined in this Project Document.
- Procurement of goods and services, including human resources.
- Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets.
- Approving and signing the multiyear workplan.
- Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year.
- Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures.

The **Project beneficiary Groups** are the CSOs in the target landscapes: These stakeholders, with support of the multi-stakeholder governance platforms in each of the four landscapes, as well as technical and strategic assistance from the SGP, design and implement the projects to generate global environmental benefits and community livelihood benefits.

The **UNDP** is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes oversight of project execution to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and provisions. UNDP is responsible for delivering GEF project cycle management services comprising project approval and start-up, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation. UNDP is also responsible for the Project Assurance role of the SGP National Steering Committee.

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The roles and responsibilities of the various parties to the project are illustrated in the organogram shown below in **Figure 2**.

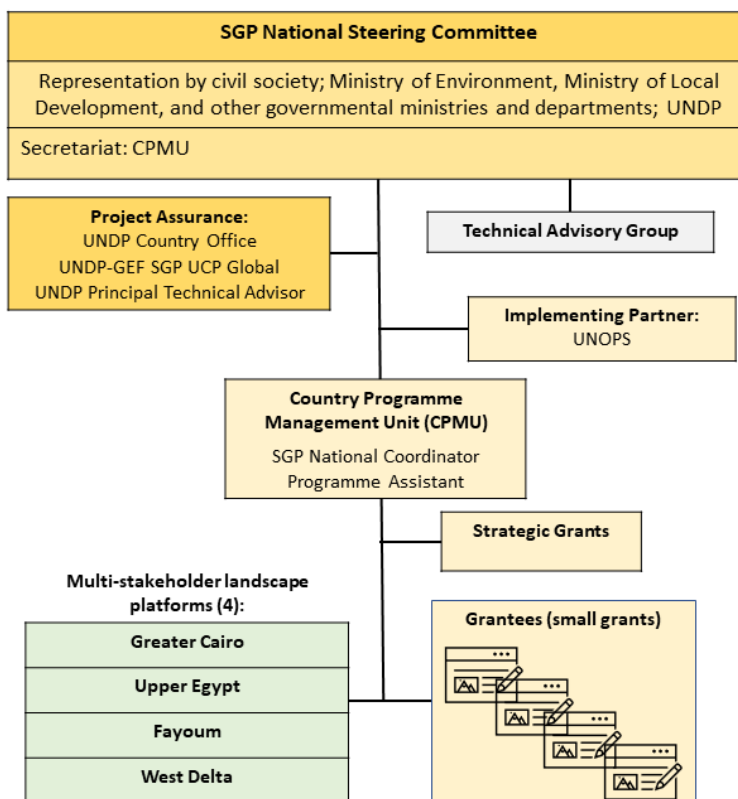


Figure 2: Project organization

The Project Board (**SGP National Steering Committee, NSC**) is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. In order to ensure UNDP’s ultimate accountability, NSC decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition. Establishment and operations of SGP National Steering Committees are carried out in accordance with the SGP Operational Guidelines. Specific responsibilities of the NSC include:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints.
- Address project issues as raised by the project manager (SGP National Coordinator).
- Provide guidance on new project risks and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks.
- Agree on project manager’s tolerances as required, within the parameters set by UNDP-GEF, and provide direction and advice for exceptional situations when the SGP National Coordinator’s tolerances are exceeded.
- Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP-GEF.

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- Ensure coordination between various donor and government-funded projects and programmes.
- Ensure coordination with various government agencies and their participation in project activities.
- Track and monitor co-financing for this project.
- Review the project progress, assess performance, and appraise the Annual Work Plan for the following year.
- Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report.
- Ensure commitment of human resources to support project implementation, arbitrating any issues within the project.
- Provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans.
- Address project-level grievances.
- Approve the project Inception Report, Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports and corresponding management responses.
- Review the final project report package during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lesson learned and opportunities for scaling up.
- Ensure highest levels of transparency and take all measures to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

The composition of the National Steering Committee of OP7 is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Composition of the SGP OP7 National Steering Committee

	Name	Affiliation		Focal Area
1	Dr. Aly Abou Sena	GEF OFP & EEAA CEO	Government	
2	Ambassador Yasser El Abd	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Government	
3	Mr. Ashraf Adeeb	Ministry of Social Solidarity	Government	
4	Dr. Mostafa Al Hakeem	Member of Al Ramis Society for Local Community Development of Barrani	CSO	Land Degradation / International Waters
5	Dr. Ahmed Zaki Abou Kenez	Environmental Union Federation in Aswan	CSO	Climate Change / Biodiversity / Land Degradation
6	Dr. Hala Yosry	Professor of Sociology – Desert Research Center Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF)	CSO	Socio-economics / Gender / Land Degradation
7	Dr. Sabah Khalifa	Institute for Cultural Affairs (ICA)	CSO	Climate Change / Community Development
8	Dr. Salah El Hagggar	Egypt Green Building Council	CSO	Climate Change
9	Ms. Laila Hosny	Alexandria Bank	Private Sector	Climate Change
10	Dr. Mohamed Bayoumi	Environment Officer - United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	UNDP	Climate Change/International Waters/POPs

UNDP provides overall Programme oversight and take responsibility for standard GEF project cycle management services beyond assistance and oversight of project design and negotiation, including project monitoring, periodic evaluations, troubleshooting, and reporting to the GEF. UNDP also provides high level technical and managerial support from the UNDP GEF Global

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Coordinator for the SGP Upgrading Country Programmes, who is responsible for project oversight for all SGP Upgraded Country Programme projects.⁵ The SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) monitors Upgraded Country Programmes for compliance with GEF SGP core policies and procedures.

In accordance with the global SGP Operational Guidelines, the NSC has established a **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)** with a pool of voluntary experts on call to serve as a technical sub-committee, for review of proposals and in relation to specific areas of programming and partnership development. Two technical sub-committees were formed; one of climate change and one for biodiversity issues.

The UNDP **Country Office** is the business unit in UNDP for the SGP project and is responsible for ensuring the project meets its objective and delivers its targets. The Resident Representative signs the grant agreements with beneficiary organizations on behalf of UNOPS. The Country Office makes available its expertise in various environment and development fields as shown below. It also provides other types of support at the local level, such as infrastructure and financial management services, as required. UNDP is represented in the NSC and actively participates in grant monitoring activities. The CO participates in NSC meetings, promoting synergies with other relevant Programmes, and support the design and implementation of the SGP strategy, among other things.

The Arab Office for Youth and Environment is the **national host institution (NHI)**, a role that it has held since operational phase 2 in 2003 until this current phase OP7. The project management unit is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of project activities and for the overall coordination of the project, including operational planning, supervision, administrative and financial management and the adaptive management of the project based on inputs from the project monitoring and evaluation plan and the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR). The PMU is comprised of two full-time staff, including the National Coordinator and the Program Assistant (PA).

2.5 Project timing and milestones

The project timing and milestones are as follows:

- The GEF endorsed the project in December 2019 and the government of Egypt signed the project document in April 2022 (the official start date of the project).
- The National Steering Committee was formed in August 2022 and has held six meetings since its formulation.
- The Inception workshop was held on September 2022.
- Egypt SGP was actively engaged in the UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh in November 2022.
- A National Consultant was recruited in January 2023 to formulate the Country Programme Strategy.
- Four multi-stakeholder consultations in the four landscapes were held January-February 2023. One national multi-stakeholder consultation was held March 2023 to present the four landscape strategies and the four Landscape Strategies were approved on April 2023.
- The first call for proposals was in May-July 2023 and SGP received 70 project proposals (65 small-scale projects & 5 strategic projects) from the 4 landscapes. The NSC reviewed summary of project proposals prepared by SGP and two technical sub-committees formed (climate change and biodiversity) to give recommendations to the NSC on project

⁵ GEF/C.54/05/Rev.01 GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7, approved by GEF Council.

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proposals. As a result, sixteen small-scale projects were approved by NSC from the Greater Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt landscapes. The approved proposals from first call did not have any strategic projects nor any project from the West Delta landscape. Grants for the first call were awarded on November-December 2023 and the first payment was received by the CSOs on January and February 2024.

- The second call for proposals was launched Feb 2024 and extended to March 2024.
- The Midterm Review of the SGP was carried out during March and April 2024
- Four local platforms are in the process of being officially formulated in the four landscapes to support projects implementation.
- A draft Knowledge Management Strategy is formulated and a draft Communication Strategy is being formulated and will be finalized as projects implementation takes place.
- The planned closing date of the project is April 2026.

2.6 Main stakeholders: summary list

The key project stakeholders and their envisaged role on the project is provided below in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Key project stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities

Key stakeholders	Planned involvement on the project
Main Project Stakeholders	
Ministry of Environment, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)	The Ministry of Environment is responsible for defining environmental policies, setting priorities and implementing initiatives within a context of sustainable development. The EEAA represents the executive arm of the Ministry with a mission to formulate environmental policies; prepare, implement, and oversee environmental protection plans and environmental development projects; and promote and uphold environmental relations between other countries and international / regional organizations (EEAA 2020). EEAA is focal agency to the CBD and other multi-lateral environmental agreements. The Ministry will be represented on the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC). And the project will engage with the EEAA in advancing the involvement of local communities in conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs is GEF political focal point
Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS)	The MoSS is responsible for providing social safety for vulnerable groups in Egypt. The MoSS will be engaged on the project, in providing information on available financial support to vulnerable groups, facilitating CSOs in obtaining the required authorisations/clearances to participate in government grant and subsidy programmes.
New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA), Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy (MoERE)	The NREA is the national focal point for expanding efforts to develop and introduce renewable energy technologies (i.e. solar, biogas, wind) to Egypt on a commercial scale together with implementation of related energy efficiency and conservation programs.
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	Responsibilities include effective implementation of SGP projects. They are also responsible for dissemination of knowledge gained through peer-to-peer exchanges.
Stakeholders in the Local Platforms	
Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MoALR)	The project will engage with the MoALR project interventions involving agro-ecological practices, good agricultural practices such as use of organic fertilisers, apiculture, and restoration-rehabilitation of degraded agricultural land and coastal ecosystems.
Desert Research Centre (DRC)	The project will engage with the DRC on project interventions on restoration-rehabilitation of degraded agricultural land and coastal ecosystems.
Ministry of Local	The Ministry of Local Development (MLD) will provide guidance on mainstreaming

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Key stakeholders	Planned involvement on the project
Development (MLD)	the landscape strategies into local development planning frameworks, e.g., in the context of the National Project for the Development of Egyptian Villages.
Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI)	MWRI is the ministerial body in charge of managing the water resources of Egypt mainly the Nile, and for monitoring all water resources in the country. The project will engage with the MWRI on project interventions involving rehabilitation of irrigation canals and promotion of efficient irrigation technologies.
National Council for Women in Egypt (NCW)	The NCW is responsible for drafting and implementing a national plan on the advancement of women in Egypt. The NCW has a technical secretariat based in Cairo, specialised committees on education, youth, civil society, rural women, disabilities, environment, among others, and has 27 branches among the governorates in the country. The NCW will be represented in the local landscape platforms, and the project will engage with the NCW in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, through awareness campaigns and skills training.
Universities, research institutions	Fayoum University was involved in a bicycle-share project implemented under SGP OP6, and the OP7 strategy involves advocating for broader replication of similar initiatives at other universities. Academic and research institutions could also be engaged in delivering capacity building services and providing technical assistance.
Local government units (LGUs)	Local government units (LGUs), including governorate administrations in the four landscapes and lower tier administrative divisions. LGUs will be key partners on the multi-stakeholder landscape platforms and will be closely involved in the development of the landscape strategies and implementation of the project interventions.
Other Stakeholders	
Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Phase III (EIECP III)	The EIECP III is one of the co-financing partners on the project. The OP7 project will engage with the EIECP III in regard to further developing the protected area (PA) system in Egypt, particularly with respect to the promotion of income-generating activities for local communities residing near PA's.
Green Climate Fund (GCF) CCA project in the North Coast and Nile Delta Regions	The OP7 project will engage with the GCF project, particularly in the West Delta landscape, on strengthening resilience of local communities, e.g., through community involvement in wetland restoration, establishment of conservation zones to protect coastal habitats, and raising awareness.
Bio-Energy Association for Sustainable Development (BSRDA)	The BSRDA is one of the co-financing partners on the project. The project will engage with the BSRDA on climate change mitigation (CCM) interventions, including technical assistance for biomass technologies (e.g., biogas, agro-food recycling), capacity building and awareness-raising on biomass technologies, and financing of biomass technologies, including through the Bio-Energy Fund in partnership with the Medium, Small and Micro Enterprise Development Agency (MSMEDA).
Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (MSMEDA)	The MSMEDA provides financial assistance to MSME for community development projects, including environmental protection. The project will engage with MSMEDA (including their microfinance sector and gender unit) as a potential co-financing partner to local CSOs for projects implemented in the four target districts and for upscaling innovative approaches across the landscapes and other regions of the country.
Agricultural Credit and Development Bank (ACDB)	The ACDB is a long-standing institution providing financing for farmers, for equipment and raw materials. The bank has a social mission to support the agriculture welfare, particularly for small farmers. The project will work with the ACDB on interventions involving local farmers, e.g., land reclamation, irrigation improvements, agro-ecological farming practices, etc., advocating for co-financing support to local CSOs and for upscaling innovative approaches.
Other GEF and donor projects and initiatives	Synergies and complementary opportunities will be advocated among other GEF and donor financed projects and initiatives.

3. Findings

3.1 Project Strategy

3.1.1 Project Design

The project design was based on the three GEF focal areas of biodiversity (BD), climate change mitigation (CCM) and land degradation (LD). The landscape strategies and multi-stakeholder platforms developed and established provide guidance to the selection and prioritization of actions to be addressed by the community-level projects. The project's landscape approach provides an ecological and socio-economic framework for participatory biodiversity conservation and restoration initiatives, sustainable agroecological practices, and restoration of degraded land and coastal ecosystems.

The project strategy was developed in accordance with the SGP global programming directions and experiences during earlier operational phases of GEF-SGP in Egypt, as well as the results in other countries involved in the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS). The project design integrated the concepts and approaches demonstrated under the COMDEKS program, such as socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS).

Having declared protected areas (PA's) within or near each of the four landscapes reinforces the project's contributions towards protecting globally significant biodiversity. The project design also related to the national plans, strategies and priorities in the baseline discussion in the Project Document.

The proposed GEF alternative to overcoming the barriers hindering achievement of genuine sustainable development in the target landscapes was predicated on a participatory and integrated landscape management approach, as outlined in the project theory of change in **Figure** . As shown in this diagram, the theory of change for the project is broken down into the following three causal pathways:

Causal Pathway 1: Enhancing landscape resilience

Participatory models of conservation and restoration-rehabilitation of ecosystems under the project will feed into the government's commitment and regulatory frameworks, assuming that governance conditions in the target landscapes permit restoration and conservation and local stakeholders are motivated and committed to participate. Over the longer term, ecosystem functions and environmental services will be ensured through conservation and restoration, with co-benefits generated for participating local communities. The effectiveness of these models will depend on enabling policies and incentives that are assumed will adapt to changing circumstances over time. The theory of change is also driven by mainstreaming agroecological practices and other biodiversity-focused approaches into production sectors.

Sustaining and upscaling the low emission RE and EE solutions at the community level are similarly a function of having local capacity developed for operating and maintaining the systems. Moreover, the systems or solutions need to be reliable and affordable. Changing behaviors and preferences is also critical, which takes time and concerted effort. The project will be promoting RE and EE solutions through awareness campaigns, workshops and community meetings. Having accessible incentive mechanisms is also considered an impact driver for achieving upscaling and sustaining low emission energy interventions.

Causal Pathway 2: Mainstreaming the landscape approach

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One of the key assumptions outlined in the project theory of change for advancing from project level outcomes to longer-term outcomes and ultimately to durable impacts is that the landscape approach is mainstreamed, e.g., through integrating the landscape strategies and priority action plans into local development mechanisms. Sustaining the multi-stakeholder landscape governance platforms is also important in ensuring the landscape strategies are maintained. The project will endeavour to strengthen existing governance platforms (including the ones developed under OP6) rather than establishing new ones, and advocating for broader representation, including women and other marginalized groups. The role of “change agents” in facilitating the requisite stakeholder engagement is critical. Such change agents could be local government officials, members of local CSOs, or other individuals or groups. Identifying and strengthening the capacity of change agents will be a part of the landscape approach in each of the target landscapes. Further development of enabling partnerships is an important impact driver, supporting upscaling across the project landscapes. Durable partnerships will help ensure alternative livelihood models are sustained, and unsustainable approaches, such as poor agricultural practices and inefficient use of water resources, will be reduced.

Causal Pathway 3: Enabling adaptive management

Achieving durable changes in attitudes and practices depends on ensuring CBOs attain and keep abreast of knowledge and best practices and models. One of the enduring strengths of the SGP is the transfer of knowledge to local communities, including women and marginalized groups. The project will implement an inclusive knowledge management strategy that is also linked with the UCP and SGP knowledge management priorities, facilitating collaborative interactions across local, national, regional, and global levels. The receptiveness of stakeholders to knowledge inputs is an important impact driver in this regard, and it is assumed that human resources and institutional frameworks remain stable. Another important assumption is that the causal linkage on this pathway is achieved in a macro-policy context that remains stable, i.e., committed to sustainably managing the globally significant biodiversity and important natural resources in Egypt. The coordination, collaboration, and knowledge management strengthened by the project will foster systemic change and replication, thus maximizing the effectiveness, durability, and scale of socio-ecological resilience.

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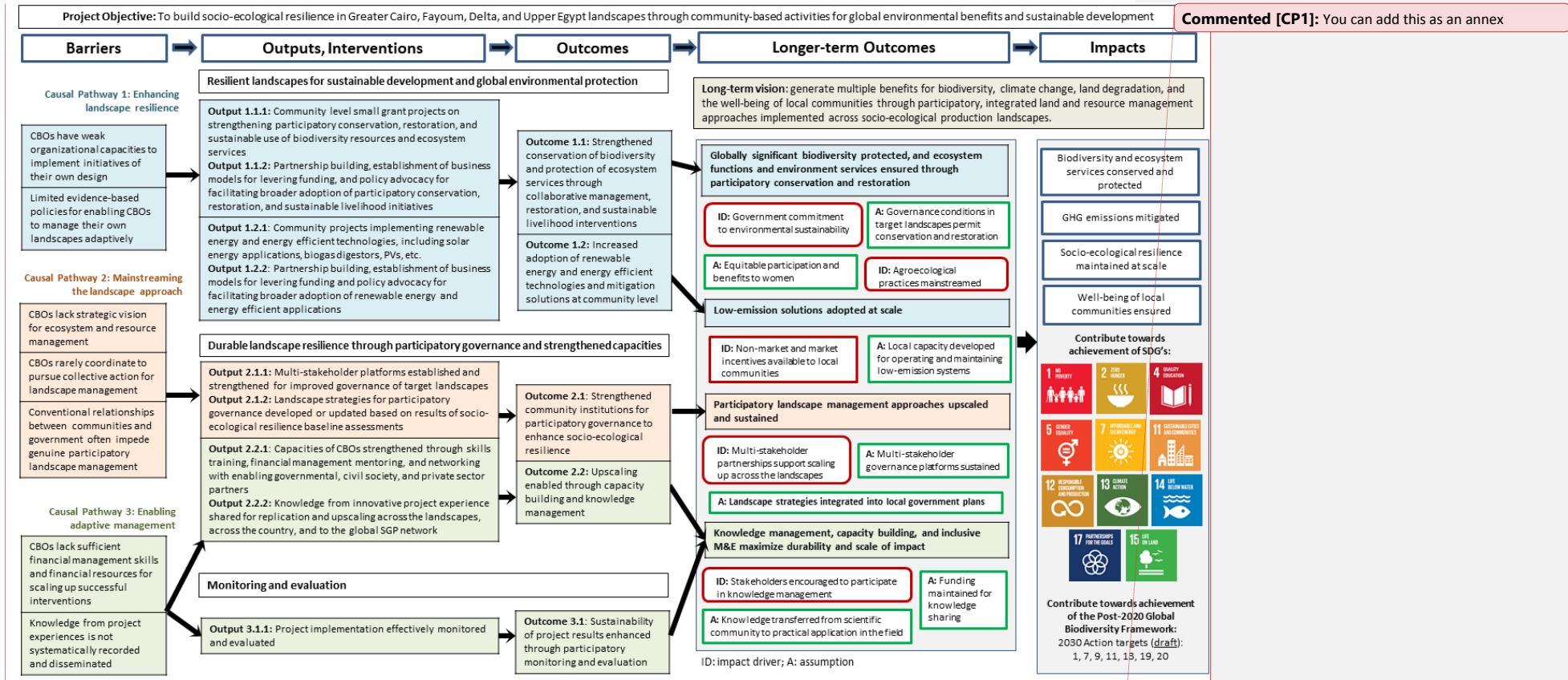


Figure 3: Project theory of change

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3.1.2 Results Framework

The expected project results with respect to the GEF Core Indicators are outlined below in **Table 5**. The types of interventions envisaged under OP7 were based on stakeholder consultations made during the project preparation phase, results achieved in OP6, and the professional judgement of the PPG team of consultants. The figures were indicative and based on a bottom-up approach of the SGP.

Table 5: Description of end-of-project targets for GEF Core Indicators

GEF Core Indicators	Proposed end-of-project targets and descriptions
Core Indicator 3: Area of land restored (hectares)	End-of-project target: 10,000 ha The total estimated area of land restored is broken down by 3,000 ha of degraded agricultural lands restored (Sub-Indicator 3.1) and 7,000 ha of wetlands restored (Sub-Indicator 3.4). Restoration-rehabilitation projects are expected in each of the four landscapes, including interventions on combatting soil salinization, enhancing soil and water conservation, improving soil fertility, restoring degraded agricultural land, combatting desertification, and restoring coastal wetlands.
Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)	End-of-project target: 20,000 ha The total estimated area of landscapes under improved practices in OP7 is 20,000 ha, broken down by 19,700 ha of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (Sub-Indicator 4.1) and 300 ha landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (Sub-Indicator 4.3). Projects envisaged under the biodiversity focal area include participatory monitoring and management of critical ecosystems, community-supported ecotourism associated with protected areas, and improved agroecological practices benefitting biodiversity (e.g., beekeeping ⁶ and expanded application of organic fertilizers).
Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of CO ₂ e)	End-of-project target: 20,700 tCO₂e (lifetime direct); 1,200 tCO₂e (lifetime indirect) Based on experiences during earlier SGP operational phases and potential in the project landscapes identified during PPG consultations, an estimated 20,700 tons of CO ₂ e (lifetime direct) and 1,200 tons of CO ₂ e (lifetime indirect) are estimated to be avoided through community RE and EE interventions (Sub-Indicator 6.2: Emissions avoided).
Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment	End-of-project target: 10,000 (of whom 5,000 are female and 5,000 are male) The end target is based on experience during earlier operational phases; the project's gender mainstreaming target for the proportion of direct female beneficiaries is 50%.

In terms of the logical framework design, the objectives, outcomes, and components are clear, practical, and achievable. The midterm and end-of-project targets are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and tend to be feasible within their time frame. The results chain is coherent and clear. Indicators were well-designed and reflect both the reality of the projects and communities. However, the MTR Consultant has the following recommendations with regards to the targets of some indicators as follows:

- Indicator 5 end of project target states “3 participatory management partnerships agreed between local communities and protected area administrations” which is not accurate and it

⁶ Improved beekeeping practices does not entail harvesting honey from or otherwise disturbing wild bee colonies.

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is recommended that the target should be “3 participatory memorandum of understanding signed between local communities and protected area administrations”.

- Indicator 8a of producing compost is expected to be met and even the target exceeded as there is high interest at the governmental as well as community level to reuse the agriculture residues and produce not only compost but also animal feed/fodder. However, it is unlikely that the targets of indicator 8b will be met as there is lower interest among the rural communities to implement biogas digestors through the SGP OP7. The Ministry of Environment has established a Bioenergy Association which manages these kinds of projects.
- Indicator 9 should be expanded to include use of solar PV not only in agriculture pumping but also for electricity generation as this is a national and regional requirement whether for generation of electricity in remote areas (such as the Protectorates) that are not connected to the electricity grid and also in some areas that suffer from inconsistency in the electricity supply or high cost of electricity and are interested in installing small scale PV stations.

3.2 Progress towards Results

3.2.1 Progress towards Outcomes Analysis

Progress Towards Outcomes is rated as Satisfactory

By the time the MTR mission was carried out in March 2024 the first round of small grants had been awarded, covering interventions in three target landscapes and including the three focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change. Sixteen small scale projects from the Greater Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt landscapes were approved during the first phase of the project. Grants for the first call were awarded in November and December 2023 and the first payment was received by the CSOs in January and February 2024. There were no project execution on the ground by the time of the midterm review. However, the estimation of the midterm status of indicators are based on calculations of potential achievement of targets from the implementation of the first phase of projects.

The approved proposals of the first phase did not include any strategic projects nor any project from the West Delta landscape. However, it is expected that this will be overcome in the second phase of the project after approving projects from the second call for proposals that was launched in February 2024 and extended until March.

A rating of **satisfactory** is applied for progress made towards achieving the project objective through midterm, as summarized below in **Table 6**.

The Rating Matrix used for the results and the objectives is included in Annex 4 and included below.

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

Indicator Assessment KeyGreen= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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Table 6: Rating Matrix

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline 2022	Midterm status April 2024	End-of-Project target April 2026	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Objective: To build socio-ecological resilience in Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Delta, and Upper Egypt landscapes through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development	Mandatory Indicator (GEF-7 Core Indicator 3): Area of land restored (hectares)	As reported in the 2020 PIR, five (5) projects awarded under OP6 in the land degradation focal area	10,347 ha of land restored are targeted based on the first phase of approved projects	10,000 ha	S	The Midterm status estimations shows that potentially the end of project targets will be exceeded once the projects of phase 1 are implemented. It is worth noting that the projects of the first phase did not include the West Delta Landscape. However, this is excepted to be resolved in phase 2 of the project.
	Mandatory Indicator (GEF-7 Core Indicator 4): Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (hectares)	As reported in the 2020 PIR, 28 projects were awarded under OP6 for interventions focused on sustainable natural resource management, representing an approximate cumulative area of 35,000 ha	13,656 ha of landscapes are currently under improved strategies based on the first phase of approved projects	20,000 ha	S	The project is progressing toward the end of project target once implementation of the projects of the first phase is achieved and the projects from the second call are expected to reach the end of project targets.
	Mandatory Indicator (GEF-7 Core Indicator 6): Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (million metric tons of CO2e)	36,600 tCO2e (lifetime direct) GHG emissions mitigated estimated for the CCM projects awarded under OP6	16,816 tCO2e (direct lifetime) greenhouse gas emissions are being mitigated based on the first phase of approved projects	20,700 tCO2e (direct lifetime) 1,200 tCO2e (indirect lifetime)	S	Once the projects of the first phase will be implemented then the estimated GHGs targets for the midterm will be met. It is also expected that the projects from two project phases will reach the end of project targets for both direct and indirect emissions
	Mandatory Indicator (GEF-7 Core Indicator	Based on experiences during earlier	20,770 (11,030 men + 9740 women)	10,000 (of whom 5,000 are female)	HS	The number of beneficiaries from the first

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	11): #direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as a co-benefit of GEF investment (individual people)	operational phases, approx. 300 direct beneficiaries have benefitted per project awarded	beneficiaries based on the first phase of approved projects			phase of the approved projects are much higher than the end of project target and so it is expected that the end of project beneficiaries will exceed the targets. The MTR consultant witness the female contribution to the projects as well as the potential female beneficiaries targeted from the first phase of projects. About 5 projects proposals submitted, so far, aim at women empowerment and contribute to the equal access and control of natural resources and at least 5 more will be accepted.
Component 1: Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection Outcome 1.1: Strengthened conservation of biodiversity and protection of ecosystem services through participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood interventions	Indicator 5: Participatory management of critical ecosystems, as indicated by the number of partnerships between CBOs and protected area administrations strengthened and/or newly established	The SGP in Egypt has funded several projects focused on strengthening collaboration between local communities and protected areas.	3 projects have already been approved and signed cooperation letters with the PAs management in Fayoum and Upper Egypt landscapes	3 participatory management partnerships agreed between local communities and protected area administrations	HS	The end of project target is met as three projects have been approved that aim to implement activities in two protected areas namely Qaroun Protected Area (PA) in Fayoum Landscape and Dababeya in Upper Egypt Landscape. The CSOs have prepared their proposals in coordination with PA administration and cooperation agreements are planned to be signed. In Qaroun Protectorate, the youth of the local community will be involved in the construction and operation of the project.

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<p>Output 1.1.1: Community level small grant projects on strengthening participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity resources and ecosystem services</p> <p>Output 1.1.2: Partnership building, establishment of business models for leveraging funding and policy advocacy for facilitating broader adoption of participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood initiatives</p>						<p>Also the women of the local nearby communities will be able to sell their crafts and local products in these eco-café. The CSO intends to establish a Company for Environmental Services associated with the Protectorate to help run the project of the bikes after the grant finishes.</p> <p>The projects that will be implemented in the two Protectorates; Qaroun in Fayoum and Dababeya in Luxor will result in increasing the number of visitors to the Protectorate and hence raise its financial capacity which will give it a chance to financially self funding. Collaboration with the local community and also the local universities will enhance stakeholders engagement and collaboration.</p>
	<p>Indicator 6: Strengthened agroecological systems, as indicated by the number of households (gender disaggregated) gaining livelihood co-benefits from improved agroecological practices</p>	<p>Many of the livelihood benefits generated on SGP projects during earlier phases have involved the agricultural sector</p>	<p>More than 500 households in 8 approved projects are expected to gain livelihood co-benefits from improved agroecological practices</p>	<p>500 households (50% female HH members) gaining livelihood co-benefits from improved agroecological practices</p>	S	<p>The end of project target will potentially be met and it is expected that by 2026 it will be even exceeded considerably after execution of the projects of the second phase. Eight projects will contribute to improving agroecological practices, that can benefit households in two landscapes, Upper Egypt,</p>

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	Indicator 7: Strengthening gender quality and women's empowerment in control of natural resources , as indicated by the number of projects that are contributing to equal access to and control of natural resources by women and men	The gender action plan developed under OP6 provided a strategic framework for strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment	6 projects are expected to contribute to strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment	8 projects	S	and Fayoum. The projects that are accepted so far aim at women empowerment and contribute to the equal access and control of natural resources.
Outcome 1.2: Increased adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and mitigation solutions at community level Output 1.2.1: Community projects implementing renewable energy and energy efficient technologies, including solar energy applications, biogas digestors, PVs, etc. Output 1.2.2: Partnership building, establishment of business models for leveraging funding and policy advocacy for facilitating broader adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient applications	Indicator 8: Livelihood cobenefits and strengthened resilience through low carbon agricultural practices , as indicated by (a) the amount of compost produced that displaces chemical fertilizer use and improves soil fertility (tons), and (b) the number of households benefitting from biogas cooking energy and digestate-sourced fertilizer (number of households, gender disaggregated)	Biogas projects have been implemented under OP6 and earlier SGP phases and improving management of agricultural waste is included among the priority actions in the landscape strategies	885 tons of organic compost, 50,000 liter of liquid organic fertilizers and 1,020 tons of animal fodder are planned to be produced based on the first phase of approved projects. No biogas projects have been approved so far	(a) 5,000 tons (b) 80 households (50% female HH members)	MS	Five projects have been accepted in the first phase targeting the safe management of more than 6000 tons of agricultural wastes, instead of burning them, to produce 885 tons of organic compost - 50,000 liter of liquid organic fertilizers - 1,020 tons of animal fodder. There were no biogas digester projects selected to date of the MTR. This indicator could get a higher rating if the target on biogas is removed or lowered.
	Indicator 9: Strengthened resilience and increased energy security , as indicated by the number of solar PV agricultural pumping systems replacing diesel-	One of the projects approved under OP6 was on solar PV for agricultural pumping, and this technology is promoted in the national Low Emission Development Strategy.	2 projects on PVs in irrigation + 5 projects on PVs on buildings are planned to be installed based on the first phase of approved projects.	3 projects implemented	HS	Two Projects will be implemented from the first phase aiming to use solar energy in irrigation serving more than 150 ha. Those solar PVs are expected to replace the diesel-powered units and reduce the green gas emissions. Also

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	powered units					<p>five projects will implement solar energy to provide electricity to projects, 2 of them are off the grid, mainly the two Protectorates; Qaroun and Dababeya. Therefore this end of project targets for this indicator are expected to be exceeded considerably.</p> <p>Other energy efficiency projects include those of replacement of incandescent lamps with LED lamps and also creating workshops that would maintain and put damaged LED lamps in service again.</p>
<p>Component 2: Durable landscape resilience through participatory governance and strengthened capacities for upscaling.</p> <p>Outcome 2.1: Strengthened community institutions for participatory governance to enhance socio-ecological resilience.</p> <p>Output 2.1.1: Multi-stakeholder platforms established and strengthened for improved governance of target landscapes</p>	<p>Indicator 10: Participatory landscape management, as indicated by the number of landscape strategies developed or strengthened through participatory consultation and based on the socio-ecological resilience landscape baseline assessments endorsed by multi-stakeholder landscape platforms</p>	<p>Landscape strategies developed for Upper Egypt, Fayoum, Delta (East) and Greater Cairo landscapes under OP6</p>	<p>4 landscape strategies are developed</p>	<p>4 landscape strategies developed or strengthened endorsed by multi-stakeholder landscape platforms</p>	<p>HS</p>	<p>This target has been already achieved as four landscape strategies has been formulated, and 4 multi-stakeholder consultations were held in Fayoum, Luxor (covering Luxor & Qena governorates in the Upper Egypt Landscape), Alexandria (covering Alexandria & Beheira governorates in the West Delta Landscape), and Cairo (covering Cairo and Giza governorates in the Greater Cairo Landscape).</p> <p>The Strategies were validated with the community and local authorities in a final multi-stakeholder consultation</p>

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<p>Output 2.1.2: Landscape strategies for participatory governance developed or updated based on results of socio-ecological resilience baseline assessments</p>						<p>held in Cairo on the 20th of March 2023 attended by UNDP CO, GEF OFF, NSC members, and representatives from the 4 landscapes to present the landscape strategies and discuss the identified problems and proposed interventions with 90 participants in total (32 women & 58 men). Feedback was provided by the participants and a final version of the landscape strategies was developed by the end of March 2023 after responding to all comments and integrating the final feedback received from landscapes representatives.</p> <p>The final 4 landscape strategies were then endorsed in the following NSC meeting, and by UNDP CO and RTA approving April 2023 prior to translating them to Arabic.</p>
	<p>Indicator 11: Empowering women in natural resource governance, as indicated by the number of projects that improve the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance</p>	<p>Multi-stakeholder landscape governance platforms initiated under OP6, with the aim of equitable participation by women</p>	<p>6 of the approved projects include measures aimed at improving participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance</p>	<p>8 projects implemented that improve participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance</p>	S	<p>Building on the experiences gained in OP6, 4 multi-stakeholder local platforms have been established in the 4 targeted landscapes in OP7 and they are expected to be fully formulated and functioning once approved projects start functioning. The program has invited</p>

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						<p>relevant authorities and strategic partners in the 7 governorates (4 landscapes) to join those platforms. Those platforms gather representatives of local authorities concerned with agriculture, water resources and irrigation, youth, social solidarity, National Council for Women, local media representatives, CSOs, academia, and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Regional Branch Office). Their TOR include discussing ongoing projects, share lessons learned, exchange knowledge and experience, follow up and monitor progress the implementation of landscape strategies and provide necessary assistance to SGP grantees to overcome any obstacles and challenges facing the implementation of their projects.</p> <p>Moreover, 6 of the approved projects include measures aimed at improving participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance which means that the project is on track to meet the end of project target.</p>
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	<p>Indicator 12: Strengthening socioeconomic benefits for women, as indicated by the number of projects that target socioeconomic benefits and services for women</p>	<p>The landscape approach strategy, first implemented under OP6, is based on enhancing socio-ecological resilience, which includes strengthening socioeconomic benefits and services for women</p>	<p>7 of the approved projects address strengthening socioeconomic benefits and services for women</p>	<p>10 projects completed that strengthening socioeconomic benefits and services for women</p>	S	<p>Seven of the project approved in the first phase address strengthening socioeconomic benefits and services for women which means that the project is on track to meet the end of project target.</p>
	<p>Indicator 13: Landscape priority actions mainstreamed into local planning instruments, as indicated by the uptake priority actions outlined in the landscape strategies into local development plans</p>	<p>Local government units have leading roles on the multi-stakeholder landscape platforms established under OP6</p>	<p>The first phase of projects did not include any strategic projects approved, however 3 projects were received during the second phase, 2-3 projects are expected to be approved and will contribute to this indicator concerning several expected issues such as climate adaptation with regards to smart agriculture and beekeeping</p>	<p>4 local development plans contain at least one priority action from the landscape strategies</p>	MS	<p>Grantees are expected to initiate dialogue with the Local Platforms and local government units to mainstream some of the activities in their projects, which are already priorities of the landscape strategies into the local development plans. Planned strategic projects are expected to meet this indicator.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.2: Upscaling enabled through capacity building and knowledge management.</p> <p>Output 2.2.1: Capacities of CBOs strengthened through skills training, financial management mentoring, and networking with enabling governmental, civil</p>	<p>Indicator 14: Knowledge shared, as indicated by the number of project and portfolio experiences and lessons systematised and codified into case studies produced and disseminated, and cumulative number of views of the case studies from the SGP website</p>	<p>Knowledge management is one of the hallmarks of SGP, with each approved project required to develop a case study to document best practices and lessons.</p>	<p>A Knowledge management project has been approved to train grantees on preparing case studies and more than 15 case studies are expected to be disseminated.</p>	<p>15 case studies disseminated, with 500 cumulative views of the case studies on the SGP website</p>	S	<p>The SGP Team has updated the Knowledge Management Strategy and prepared a draft Communication Strategy under the supervision of the UNDP Consultant. The program has received a stand-alone KM project proposal submitted by a reputable CSO called “The Society of Writers on Environment and Development” which was approved by NSC and it is expected to contribute to</p>

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<p>society, and private sector partners.</p> <p>Output 2.2.2: Knowledge from innovative project experience shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network</p>						<p>the preparation and implementation of the KM and communication Strategies. It will also provide training to the other CSOs in documenting and presenting their project outcomes, lessons learned and success stories. Workshops will take place in the 4 landscapes to start with the 15 CSOs of the first phase of the OP7.</p> <p>“The Society of Writers on Environment and Development” will also work on the webpage of the SGP to be upgraded for better access of information per Governorate and per subject. It will include brochures, videos, interviews etc. Moreover, monthly brochures will be published in English and Arabic languages. The SGP Egypt webpage is planned to link to the global SGP project network.</p>
	<p>Indicator 15: Mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment, number of women-led projects supported</p>	<p>Gender mainstreaming is a work in progress in Egypt</p>	<p>9 projects so far are led by women (exceeded target)</p>	<p>8 of the implemented projects are led by women</p>	HS	<p>This indicator is already met as 9 of the projects approved in the first phase are led by women</p>
	<p>Indicator 16: Upscaling initiated, as</p>	<p>Upscaling is enhanced under the socio-</p>	<p>No strategic projects have been approved so</p>	<p>2 cases of scaling up or replicating,</p>	MU	<p>This indicator is not on target as during the first</p>

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	indicated by the number of instances of scaling up or replicating best project practices and/or the number of policy advances approved by local or central government entities	ecological resilience landscape approach, with engagement of multiple stakeholders and collective action to achieve impact at scale	far	and/or number of policy advances approved		phase there were no strategic projects approved. However, communication with the NC and PA with regards to strategic projects, assured that this will be addressed by two strategy projects to be approved in the second phase of the project due to extensive capacity building provided by the NHI to the CSO during the first call for proposals.
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3.2.2 Remaining Barriers to Achieving the Project Objective

Some of the barriers that need to be overcome in the second half of the project to achieve project objectives and outcomes include:

Landscape priority actions mainstreamed into local planning instruments has not been initiated yet, as indicated by the uptake priority actions outlined in the landscape strategies into local development plans. It is planned to have 4 local development plans containing at least one priority action from the landscape strategies. The first phase of projects did not include any strategic projects approved, however 3 projects were received during the second phase, 2-3 projects are expected to be approved and will contribute to this indicator concerning several expected issues such as climate adaptation with regards to smart agriculture and beekeeping

Limited progress with respect to the strategic projects. The funds allocated for the strategic projects were intended for scaling up or replicating best project practices and/or the number of policy advances to be approved by local or central government entities. The plan is to have 2 cases of scaling up or replicating, and/or number of policy advances approved.

Currency devaluation and inflation may impact approved projects progress. Egypt economy faced some inflation associated with currency devaluation due to a sudden change in the exchange rate of the Egyptian pound against all foreign currency. This has led to an unexpected rise in the prices of equipment and commodities including PV stations, waste shredders and compactors. This may impact the procurement progress of that equipment. The SGP management should study these changes and may consider making a quicker second payment to compensate for this issue.

PV stations connecting to the grid through dual meters may face a delay from Electricity Distribution Companies and this requires close follow-up from the SGP management team to coordinate efforts with the Electricity Holding Company in Egypt to avoid this delay.

Delay in some targets due to review time of proposals submitted during the second call. This could be solved by shortening the time for review and approval of proposals from 2nd call to start new projects by mid-2024.

Lack of projects in the West Delta Landscape. However, it is expected that more projects will be approved in this landscape from the second call.

3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management is rated as Satisfactory

3.3.1 Management Arrangements

The project is being implemented under an agency implementation modality. UNOPS provides country program implementation services, is responsible for SGP's financial management and provides quarterly financial reports to UNDP. The Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE), the national host institution (NHI) has supported the SGP in its consecutive phases from OP2 in 2003 until OP7. The AOYE is one of the first CSOs that have been working in Egypt in the field of environmental sustainability and the inclusion of the civil society in this field. It understands the challenges and CSOs in Egypt are facing and has been involved in their capacity building for years. AOYE has also been the CSO responsible for organization of the main environmental events and initiatives and encouraging the contributions of the national CSOs as well as collaboration with international organizations. There is also good rapport between the NHI and UNDP CO as well as government stakeholders and partners due to the long-standing history of operation in Egypt.

The project is benefitting from an experienced project team, including the Country Program Manager, the Program Assistant, the NHI, the UNDP country staff, the RTA and the UNOPS staff.

The OP7 NSC composition is representative as it is composed of voluntary members from the GEF Operational Focal Point, concerned ministries, CSO sector, private sector, UNDP Country Office. The technical sub-committees supporting the NSC are examples of good practice in stakeholder engagement and inclusivity.

The UNDP Country office in Cairo has provided extensive support to the project, including strategic guidance, administrative issues, and financial management. The UNDP Country Office is actively participating in the GEF-SGP National Steering Committee.

Technical advisory has been delivered by the RTA based in New York. The RTA provides feedback to the project implementation review (PIR) reports and delivers support to the project team as needed, sharing lessons learned and experiences across the network of countries where the GEF-SGP is operating. There is high level interest at the Ministry of Environment level and generally on the Government of Egypt level in ensuring successful implementation of the SGP OP7.

Risk management is on track with no foreseen high or significant risks. The Risk Registry is updated regularly, and there is a low risk reflected in the PIMS+ dashboard due to low delivery, because the change on systems from ATLAS to Quantum, which is not reflecting the current delivery. Regarding Quantum, based on discussions with UNDP there are no alerts.

Some of the identified risks were operational, including the low level of technical and management capacity of some CBOs to implement grant projects, the inexperience of CBOs in coordinating with different levels of government or other stakeholders (e.g., in the West Delta landscape), and potential implementation considerations associated with security threats. These risks were mitigated through capacity building and qualified guidance delivered by the NSC, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), the SGP Country Programme Management Unit (CPMU), the UNDP, and are expected to be further

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mitigated through the multi-stakeholder landscape platforms.

As for the social and environmental risks, seven of the identified eight social and environmental project risks described through the SESP have been assessed as Moderate and one was rated as Low. To meet the SES requirements, the following safeguard plans have been prepared: (i) Stakeholder Engagement Plan, (ii) Gender Analysis and Action Plan, (iii) Climate and Disaster Screening; and COVID-19 Analysis and Action Framework (although this plan is no longer required due to the end of the pandemic).

However, there is room for improvement with respect to risk management. The following risks should be considered as they were not accounted for in the Project Document:

1. Some grant projects can only be implemented during a certain time in the year due to the seasonal nature of the plantation of the sugarcane and generation of the agricultural waste or residues such as those of the sugarcane, banana and palm trees.
2. Risk of applying new innovative farming and irrigation methods for sugarcane in Upper Egypt
3. Health risk associated with using animal based compost (such as that produced from horse manure)

3.3.2 Work Planning

GEF endorsed the project in December 2019, the government of Egypt signed the project document in April 2022 (the official start date of the project). The National Steering committee formed August 2022 and held 6 meetings since its formulation. The Inception workshop was held September 2022. The UNFCCC COP27 was held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt in November 2022 and although it was a good opportunity for the SGP Egypt to show case its achievements and interact with other SGPs from different parts of the world, the event caused some delay in the project progress in recruiting the National Consultant.

The National Consultant was recruited January 2023 and four multi-stakeholder consultations in the 4 landscapes were held January-February 2023. One national multi-stakeholder consultation was held March 2023 to present the 4 landscape strategies and the four Landscape Strategies were approved April 2023.

The first call for proposals was in May 2023 and was extended to July 2023. The SGP received 70 project proposals (65 small-scale projects & 5 strategic projects) from the 4 landscapes and the NSC reviewed summary of project proposals prepared by SGP. Two technical sub-committees formed (climate change and biodiversity) to give recommendations to the NSC on project proposals and 16 small-scale projects were approved by NSC from the Greater Cairo, Fayoum and Upper Egypt landscapes. Grants for the first call were awarded on November-December 2023 & first payment received Jan-Feb 2024.

It is worth noting that there was no gap between OP6 and OP7 due to the active work of the UNDP national coordinator. However, since the SGP have been upgraded, it faced since OP6 the extra load of preparation of individual project documents and this is expected to be alleviated in OP8.

3.3.3 Finance and co-finance

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GEF financing expenditure to date is about 33% of the total expected at project closure as only USD 690,850.87 have been paid mainly including the first payment of the approved grants, out of the total of the USD 2,096,119.

As for the materialized cofinancing by project midterm, it is reported at USD 3,623,690, which is 67% of the total expected by project closure as shown in **Table 7**. Details are provided in **Annex 8**.

Table 7: Progress in Financing and Co-financing

Project Financing:	at CEO endorsement (USD)	at Midterm Review (USD)
[1] GEF financing (incl. PPG):	2,096,119	690,850.87
[2] GEF Agency (UNDP), grant (investment mobilized)	420,000	332,658
[3] Donor Agency (Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme EIECP), grant (investment mobilized)	3,477,000	2,631,578
[4] Civil Society Organizations (grantees), grant (investment mobilized)	500,000	165,907
[5] Civil Society Organizations (grantees), in-kind (recurrent expenditures)	750,000	348,647
[6] Civil Society Organization (Bioenergy for Sustainable Rural Development Association), grant (investment mobilized)	250,000	134,900
[7] Civil Society Organization (Arab Office for Youth and Environment), in-kind (recurrent expenditures)	40,000	10,000
Total cofinancing [2 + 3+ 4+5+6+7]:	5,437,000	3,623,690
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	7,533,119	4,314,540.87

Currency Fluctuations and Inflation:

Some of the project costs are in Egyptian pounds (EGP) and, therefore, currency fluctuations and inflation are important factors.

The Central Bank of Egypt floated the EGP on March 6, 2024 in an attempt to stabilize the economy. This resulted in a steep devaluation of the EGP against the USD where the USD/EGP rate is up by about 55% in 2024 (see **Figure 4**).

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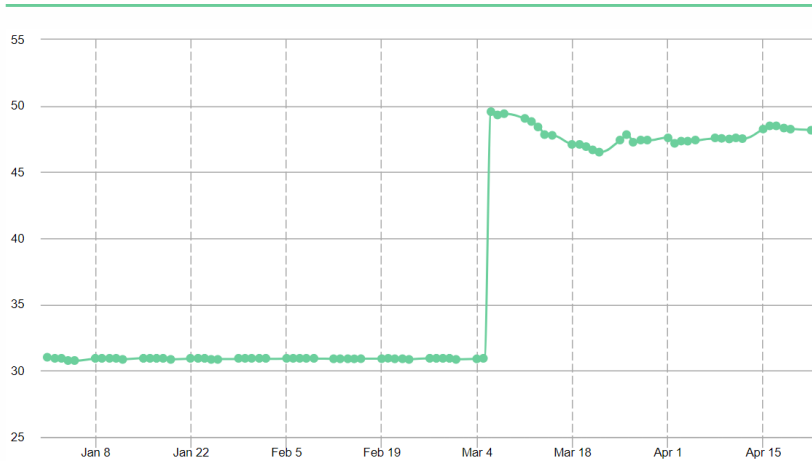


Figure 4: USD/EGP Exchange History in 2024

Source: <https://www.exchange-rates.org/exchange-rate-history/usd-egp-2024>

As for inflation, Egypt has been facing a rise in the inflation rates reaching its highest in September 2023 and then fluctuating again to reach a current inflation of 33.3% (March 2024) as per Figure 5.

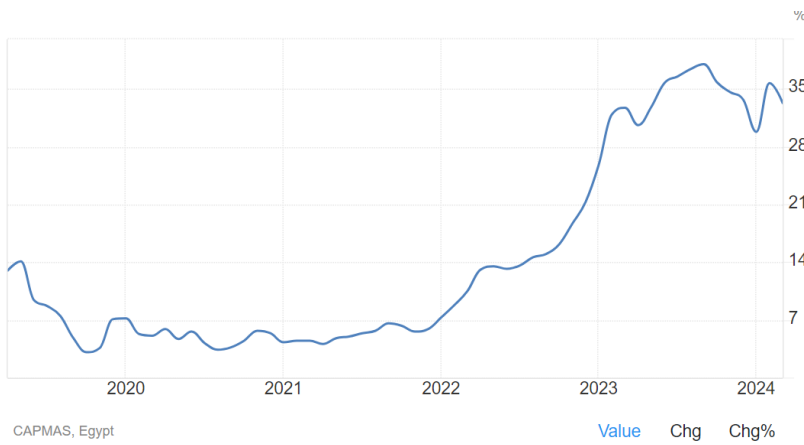


Figure 5: Inflation Rate in Egypt

Source: <https://tradingeconomics.com/egypt/inflation-cpi>

The grant agreements to local CSOs are made in USD, and payments are made in EGP at the UN exchange rate at the time of payment, as outlined in the Section 4.2 under Article IV (Payments) of the grant agreements:

“All amounts in this Article IV are expressed in US dollars but shall be paid to the LOCAL CSO in

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local currency, calculated by reference to the UN rate of exchange as at the month and year of the payment.”

Financial Audits:

There have not been any financial audits made yet of the project.

3.3.4 Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

Project-level monitoring and evaluation is undertaken in compliance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP and UNDP Evaluation Policy. The UNDP Country Office is responsible for ensuring full compliance with all UNDP project monitoring, quality assurance, risk management, and evaluation requirements.

The project monitoring and evaluation plan and budget are outlined below in **Table** . This M&E plan and budget provides a breakdown of costs for M&E activities to be led by the CPMU during project implementation. These costs are included under Component 3, which is dedicated for project M&E. The cost of the M&E activities account to 4.7% of the total GEF grant.

Table 8: Monitoring and evaluation plan and budget

GEF M&E requirements	Indicative costs (US\$)	Status
Inception Workshop	16,440	Accomplished
Inception Report	None	Accomplished
M&E of GEF core indicators and project results framework	12,070	Annually and at mid-point and closure.
GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)	None	Annually typically between June-August
Monitoring of gender action plan, SESP, stakeholder engagement plan	30,920	On-going
Supervision missions	None	Annually
Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)	19,080	March-April 2024
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)	19,080	28February 2026
TOTAL indicative COST	97,590	

Tracking tools and GEF core indicators:

SGP uses GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Worksheet to track the progress of the following GEF indicators:

- Core Indicator 3: Area of land and ecosystems under restoration
- Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices
- Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse gas emission mitigated
- Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

This table has been used to include the baseline and the indicators have been last tracked in February 2024.

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3.3.5 Stakeholder engagement

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been operating in Egypt for more than 25 years to strengthen the capacities of local communities to deliver mutually beneficial conservation and socioeconomic outcomes. Over the past two decades, SGP has developed strong multi-stakeholder partnerships with local governments, national agencies and ministries, CSOs, the private sector and others. SGP interventions have been implemented in alignment with government priorities and programmes and have supported Egypt in meeting international commitments. Also, the landscape approach requires engagement by multiple stakeholders, with cross-sectoral representation from government, civil society, private sector, and academia-research.

SGP-OP7 prioritizes participatory and inclusive stakeholder engagement, aiming to integrate various concerns and interests, ensure local community benefits, particularly marginalized groups like women and youth, enhance project adaptability and sustainability, and reduce potential negative impacts. Key stakeholders involved in consultations encompass several Line Ministries, including those of Environment, Agriculture, and Energy among others. Local government units in the target landscapes as well as their respective units, are pivotal to the multi-stakeholder landscape platforms and are integral to project design and execution. National agencies such as the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) and the Waste Management Regulatory Authority (WMRA) play significant roles, as do academic institutions like the National Research Center. International organizations like UNHABITAT, private sector entities, and CSOs are all part of the stakeholder mix, with GEF Full Size Projects like the Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation and partners like the Bio-Energy Association for Sustainable Development also providing co-financing support.

SGP Egypt has provided technical assistance to community components of selected GEF full-sized projects to increase the efficiency of uptake by community stakeholders of project-promoted technologies and practices. Members of the NSC endorse collaborative arrangements and partnerships to maximize the efficiency of the GEF SGP investment, as well, with SGP-sponsored technologies, and ensure that experience and lessons learned are disseminated and absorbed by government programmes and institutions. Some of the key related initiatives where partnerships will be fostered are listed below:

- *UNDP-GEF Project: Grid Connected Small Scale PV Systems (Egypt PV)* that is implemented with the Industrial Modernisation Centre (IMC). The project is promoting different applications for small scale photovoltaic systems. It can support development of a business model for farmers and Water Users Associations to expand the application of PV water pumping in rural Egypt.
- *GCF-UNDP funded project: Enhancing Climate Change Adaptation in North Coast of Egypt Project (ECCADP)* that is implemented by the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation aiming to develop an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan for the North Coast of Egypt. The construction work is associated with community development activities including small scale income generation and job creation initiatives for local fishermen and farmers communities.
- *UNDP GEF Project: Mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the tourism development and operations in threatened ecosystems in Egypt.* This project is designed to mainstream biodiversity into the Egyptian tourism sector. It comes at a critical time in Egypt's recent history with the political changes that are currently underway to make government institutions more accountable and to develop the economy, both of which are resulting in considerable changes in the way that both tourism and biodiversity resources may be managed in the future.

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- *UNDP GEF Medical and E-waste Management Project*: aims to “Protect human health and the environment from unintentional releases of POPs originating from incineration and open burning of health care- and E-waste”. The SGP has promoted the low-emissions dimension of improved waste management practices.
- The objective of the UNEP-IUCN-GEF Project: *Effective Management of Wadi El Rayan and Qarun Protected Areas* is to improve the management effectiveness of the Wadi El Rayan and Lake Qarun protected areas through community involvement and capacity building. This project is directly complementary to the OP7 project and synergies will be explored during the further development of the Fayoum landscape strategy.
- The GEF-EBRD programme in Egypt is providing loans for energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy investments. Potential synergies with the OP7 project include knowledge sharing, upscaling, and possible cofinancing of CCM interventions.
- There are also potential synergies with the *Clean Technology Entrepreneurship and Market Creation project* (IFC-MSMEDA), particularly with respect to boosting farmer’s access to finance for solar irrigation technologies.

SGP Egypt conducted 3 CSO–government dialogues in July and August 2022 targeting the different landscapes. Those dialogues discussed climate change issues and challenges and suggested solutions that were elaborated afterwards to concept notes and projects proposals that are ready for funding. Those dialogues gathered stakeholders from all landscapes as well as representatives of concerned ministries; Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Solidarity, in addition to local authorities for agriculture, irrigation and water resources, youth and the National Council for Women. They resulted in issuing a joint statement by CSOs that was presented at COP27. During COP27, 12 side events were organized by SGP grantees in Blue & Green Zones, (attended by 110 women & 190 men), where they presented best practices and the outcomes of their SGP funded projects. SGP Team was also invited as speakers at several events organized by UNDP Global & UNDP CO, in addition to the SGP Exhibition area in the Green Zone.

The key project stakeholders who were involved in all project consultations and dialogues include the following:

- Line Ministries: relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources, Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth & Ministry of Local Development.
- Local governments and Local government units (LGUs): Governorates in targeted landscapes (Greater Cairo: Cairo & Giza, West Delta: Alexandria & Beheira, Fayoum, Upper Egypt: Qena & Luxor), District Councils, City Councils, local authorities.
- National agencies: Regional Branches of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), National Council for Women, Waste Management Regulatory Authority (WMRA), New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA), Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy (MoERE), General Authority for Fisheries Resources Development (GAFRD). etc.
- Academic institutions: Universities Fayoum and Alexandria in targeted landscapes, National Research Center, Desert Research Center, Agricultural Research Center, Climate Change Information Centre & Renewable Energy (CCICRE), etc. Potentially more universities will be engaged by submitting new project proposals and some other related project activities that can contribute in a positive way to project implementation activities.
- GEF Full Size Projects: GEF FSPs implemented by Ministry of Environment, and other ministries

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etc. in addition to the Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Phase III (EIECP III), which is one of the co-financing partners of the project. This co-financing will materialize once the grantees are selected.

- International Organizations: active international organizations in Egypt such as UNHABITAT, UNIDO, etc. They are invited to join the multi-stakeholder's platform and consultations spaces.
- Private sector enterprises, and Banks: such as the Agricultural Credit and Development Bank (ACDB). The SGP has also started exploring possible linkages with private sector corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives for wider resource mobilization for grantee partners and for upscaling or replicating best practices.
- CSOs: are the primary stakeholders located in Fayoum, Delta, Upper Egypt and Greater Cairo, who will receive grants to produce benefits to local sustainable development and the global environment.
- Bio-Energy Association for Sustainable Development (BSRDA): The BSRDA is one of the co-financing partners on the project.
- During the reporting period, and as mentioned previously, since the beginning of OP7, SGP was keen to engage targeted stakeholders, starting with the external session in the inception workshop, going through the COP27 involvement, the landscape strategies preparation, CSOs consultations, national dialogues, and information sessions.
- UNFCCC COP27 Preparations and Participation:
- Within the national initiative launched by the Arab Office for Youth and Environment (NHI) entitled "Baladna (our country) Hosts COP27". SGP has mobilized and engaged ministries, local authorities, CSOs, universities, and research centers.
- SGP Egypt conducted 3 CSO-government dialogues in July and August 2022 targeting the different landscapes. Those dialogues gathered stakeholders from all landscapes as well as representatives of concerned ministries, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Solidarity, in addition to local authorities for agriculture, irrigation and water resources, youth and the National Council for Women.
- SGP – MAVA Foundation Partnership:
During the months of September and October 2022, two national policy dialogues were organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment / Nature Conservation Sector and relevant stakeholders; CSOs, line ministries, national agencies and media.
- UNDP Egypt Accelerator Lab
SGP Egypt has been cooperating with the UNDP Egypt Accelerator Lab in conducting an important study Qualitative entitled "Rural Resilience in Egypt: Exploring finance as a tool". The program has linked the research team to SGP grantees and partners in three landscapes: Greater Cairo, Upper Egypt and Fayoum landscapes.

Moreover, multi-stakeholder landscape platforms are being established as an integral part of the project strategy, representing the interests and concerns of the local communities and mainstreaming landscape priorities into local development planning frameworks.

The MTR consultant sensed the strong engagement of the different stakeholders in the project areas during the visits and interviews held with the CSOs as there were attendees from the different governmental and non-governmental entities as well as representatives from the beneficiaries attending those meetings and participating in the discussions and providing recommendations for implementation of the projects.

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3.3.6 Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

The OP7 project included principles of inclusion and participation by promoting the engagement and capacity of local organizations and community groups. The project plan is to work towards equality, in particular gender equality, by implementing interventions that will benefit women including the most vulnerable and marginalized. The project is structured to meet local community needs for a more resilient landscape in the face of negative climate change impacts. Representation on the Steering Committee and in consultation groups will ensure inclusion of women, youth, and disabled people.

Gender has been considered throughout this project's design and will be so during implementation. A Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan have been completed during the PPG phase. The UNDP gender marker for the project is **GEN 2**, which indicates that project outputs have gender equality as a significant objective. The project design prioritizes work with women's groups, as well as girls' groups and set measurable indicators related to gender equality and women's empowerment. The results framework includes (a) special measures/outputs and (b) indicators to promote gender equality and women empowerment. A Gender-Safeguards Consultant has been hired to support development of landscape strategies, provide guidance in the preparation of proposals for community grants and deliver monitoring and evaluation during implementation of community projects and achievement of the gender mainstreaming targets outlined in the Gender Action Plan. Gender responsive activities were proposed for each project output and Gender Mainstreaming Indicators are incorporated in the project monitoring and evaluation plans.

During the preparation of the Project Document, a Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) was developed and identified risks and plans associated with the following social and environmental principles:

- Human Principles
- Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions
- Cultural Heritage
- Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency

Observations of the MTR consultant with regards to the gender inclusion are:

- The NSC is Chaired by a woman who is also specialized in gender issues, socio-economic as well as land degradation.
- The composition of the OP7 NSC includes four females and six males.
- Out of the approved projects of Phase 1 of OP7, women led organization are six out of the sixteen.
- Women led projects are seven out of sixteen approved projects.
- Participation in consultations and information sessions so far included 424 females and 728 males.
- MTR consultations with CSOs had significant women representation.
- Expected OP7 target beneficiaries are 5000 females and 5000 males to be confirmed at project termination.
- Beneficiaries of agroecological projects are expected to include youth and women.
- Projects in Protectorates are not expected to have direct women beneficiaries but should benefit youth (girls and boys).
- Some project intends to include disabled youth in their project such as that of maintenance of

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LED bulbs.

The MTR consultant verifies that OP7 project design and implementation is “gender responsive” as it addresses the differential needs of men, women or marginalized populations and focuses on the equitable distribution of benefits and resources (according to the UNDP Gender Results Effectiveness Scale).

3.3.7 Reporting

There has been one project implementation review (PIR) report produced to date, for the period covering July 2022 to June 2023. During this reporting period, OP6 Project was financially closed and OP7 2023 budget revision and action plan were finalized with the support of UNOPS and approved by the RTA. Also, NHI has submitted due financial reports as per its OP7 signed agreement with UNOPS.

The project management team uses the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Worksheet to keep track of project progress as related to the achieving GEF Indicators.

4. Communications & Knowledge Management

With respect to internal communication, the SGP in Egypt has developed effective procedures for interacting with UNDP, UNOPS and NHI. The rapport between the project and the UNDP CO is open and constructive, and there is good communication with the project teams managing other GEF-financed projects. Communication between the SGP team and the CSOs has also been strong throughout the project phases and there is a long standing history of successful collaboration.

The Communication Strategy that is being developed has stressed the importance and centrality of the role that media and communication can play in spreading environmental awareness and environmental education is increasing day by day and increase the communication lines and capabilities between the CSO partners and the beneficiaries. Moreover, “The Society of Writers on Environment and Development” is expected to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the KM and communication Strategies. It will also provide training to the other CSOs in documenting and presenting their project outcomes, lessons learned and success stories. Workshops will take place in the 4 landscapes to start with the 15 CSOs of the first phase of the OP7. It will also work on the webpage of the SGP to be upgraded for better access of information per Governorate and per subject. It will include brochures, videos, interviews etc. Moreover, monthly brochures will be published in English and Arabic languages. The SGP Egypt webpage is planned to link to the global SGP project network.

Knowledge management is one of the hallmarks of SGP, with each approved project required to develop a case study to document best practices and lessons. OP7 prepared a standalone Knowledge Management (KM) and capacity building project which will augment the updating and implementation of these plans. The program has received a stand-alone KM project proposal submitted by a reputable CSO called “The Society of Writers on Environment and Development” which was approved by NSC and it is expected to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the KM and communication Strategies. One of the strategic priorities for SGP is the generation and dissemination of the knowledge produced by its projects allowing for other communities and donors

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to replicate and scale up good practices.

A draft Knowledge Management Strategy is formulated and a draft Communication Strategy is being formulated and will be finalized as projects implementation takes place.

5. Sustainability

Overall:

Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely

The first grants were awarded in March 2024, about 2 years after the official start date of the project in April 202. Implementing the small grants for the projects of the first phase should not be an issue within the remaining timeframe, however, the time for reviewing and accepting proposal from the second call should be shorter than that of the first call so as to allow for enough time for implementation of the projects of the second phase. However, once the proposals from the second call are selected, it is expected that the project will sail smoothly and on track and the grantees will receive clearances and start immediately on their projects as of the case of that of the first call. Also, the multi stakeholder local platform established at the four landscapes are expected to support the projects and ensure their sustainability.

There is a high level of interest among local CSOs for participating in the SGP OP7, as evidenced in the fact that 70 CSOs submitted proposals in the first round. And, after 25 years of operating in Egypt, the SGP has developed efficient procedures for administering small grants.

There are other factors that diminish the prospects of sustainability. In March 2024, the price of all exported equipment has almost doubled due to the sudden change in the foreign exchange rate and the devaluation of the Egyptian currency. This affected the feasibility of some projects due to change in price of equipment from the time in which the proposals have been submitted and the time of payment of the first installment of the grants which were disbursed with the low currency exchange rate (before the devaluation which happened in March 2024). Examples of these equipment are the shredders of the agriculture residues and the PV stations.

Also although the first phase of projects did not include any strategic projects approved, 3 projects were received during the second phase, 2-3 projects are expected to be approved and will contribute to this indicator concerning several expected issues such as climate adaptation with regards to smart agriculture and beekeeping

Still the risks are considered moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review.

The following sections include considerations across the four sustainability risk dimensions, including financial, institutional and governance, socioeconomic, and environmental.

5.1 Financial risks to sustainability

Financial Risks:

Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely

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The co-financing provided from the CSOs side is a healthy sign of believing in the projects' feasibility, enhancing the ownership of the project which will contribute to the sustainability of the projects. Also changing the mindset of the CSOs to run the projects with some considerations on return on investment is also a positive factor. Some examples of these measures include using incentives to encourage beneficiaries' participation through providing payment to farmers against their agricultural residues, sharing the produced compost or fodder with the farmers at low cost and in case of recycling the electronic waste, encouraging collection through exchanging waste with some home supplies. Moreover, beneficiaries contribution to the project cost such as the asking the workshop owner in Warak, Giza to pay for 25% of the PV station cost will also enhance ownership and sustainability of these projects. On the other hand, subsidized utilities in Egypt including electricity and water that is received by the Youth Centers will pose a risk of poor maintenance and operation of the PV stations, LED lights or water conservation equipment which is a risk that should be considered. Also, the quality of the compost and animal fodder produced from the management of the animal manure and agricultural residues will affect its market price as demand which is also a risk to be considered as it can affect the projects feasibility.

The SGP should work on speeding up the process of evaluating the second batch of projects received from the second call also to include strategic projects to ensure reimbursement of the remaining grants in due time and giving the CSOs enough time to implement their projects and achieve project results and outcomes. It is also worth mentioning that some projects are related to seasonal activities such as planting and harvesting of sugarcane and banana.

The prospect of sustaining project results is therefore rated as moderately likely.

5.2 Socio-economic to sustainability

Socioeconomic Risks:

Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely

One of the key strengths of the SGP is the focus on the well-being of the local communities. And the program has delivered benefits to local people in Egypt for over 25 years. Following the landscape approach in OP7, the developed landscape strategies provide general guidance to stakeholders for strengthening the social-ecological resilience of the communities in the target landscapes. Some landscapes are large such that of Greater Cairo and it is difficult to ascertain how social benefits achieved by the project will be extended throughout the expansive landscapes. While in other landscapes such as Fayoum or Upper Egypt, the socio-economic benefits can be more sensed especially when a number of CSOs are working in the same type of project such the case of having 2 projects in the Qaroun Protectorate and about four projects managing agricultural waste and residues. The same applies to building partnerships across the target landscapes, advocate for integration of priority actions into local development plans and facilitate a sustainable multi-stakeholder governance structure as it is easier to apply in rural landscapes of Fayoum and Upper Egypt than that of the Greater Cairo landscape.

It is worth noting that some of the agroecological projects such as those encouraging waste valorization and combating agricultural waste burning represents a change of culture and historical practices and the mind set of farmers which will require support from the different entities in discouraging mal practices (e.g. the Regional RBOs of the Ministry of Environment fining waste burning) while at the same time supporting the good practices through cooperation with the local

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authorities in providing equipment and market for the produced products. There is also the risk of resistance from the informal sector working in waste collection which could impact the projects that intends to collect and recycle electronic waste and textile waste.

However, the multi-stakeholder governance platforms that have been established in the four landscapes are expected to foster enabling partnerships among civil society organizations, national and local government entities, private sector enterprises, and academic-research institutions.

The factors outlined above render the likelihood that project results are sustained as moderately likely, with respect to socioeconomic risks.

5.3 Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

Institutional Framework and Governance Risks:

Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely

Strengthening governance structures through developing multi-stakeholder platforms, groups and partnerships in the target landscapes is an integral part of the project strategy. Facilitating participatory planning and monitoring and evaluation of the landscape strategies enhances sustainability. Sustainability is enhanced through strengthening and expanding stakeholder involvement and aligning the landscape strategies with local government plans and strategies, and linking up with community initiatives facilitated by the management administrations of the protected areas within and near the landscapes. Institutional support is also expected as the projects are in line with the national and local needs in the landscapes as they target energy security through using PV solar energy in some areas and combating environmental problems arising from agriculture waste burning during the harvest season.

Institutional framework and governance risks remain relevant, but the project is poised to address these and a rating of moderately likely is applied for this sustainability dimension.

5.4 Environmental risks to sustainability

Environmental Risks:

Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately likely

There are a few common environmental threats among the four target landscapes, as outlined in the landscape strategies. For example, water pollution caused by poor management of solid and agricultural waste; pollution resulting from excessive use of agricultural chemicals; unsustainable use of ecosystem goods and services due to a lack of awareness; and limited awareness regarding climate change issues. The underlying objective of implementing the landscape approach of the project is to strengthen the social, economic and ecological resilience of the local communities in the target landscapes. Introducing and applying these concepts enhances the likelihood that project results will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.

Whilst implementing a landscape level approach is an effective strategy for achieving meaningful reductions in threats, the landscapes identified on the project are expansive, extending across more than one governorate in most cases. It is unrealistic to think that the small grants awarded on the project will have significant direct impact; however, if the landscape strategies reflect more of a

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demonstration role for the project, then it might be clearer for stakeholders to understand what is required to upscale and replicate the interventions throughout the broader landscapes. A clear example of that are the projects that will work in the management of agricultural waste or residues in Upper Egypt to produce compost or animal fodder.

A moderately likely rating has been applied for the environmental sustainability dimension at midterm.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

The seventh operational phase (OP7) is the second time when Egypt is participating in the SGP Upgraded Country Programme (UCP), which has entailed development and approval of a full-sized GEF project. Partnering with other projects, including GEF-financed ones, is a clear strength of the project and the selection of the landscapes and promotion of some of the interventions are based on the results from other projects, such as grid connected small scale PV systems, biogas renewable energy, energy efficient LED light bulbs and effective management of Protected areas.

The project is benefitting from an experienced project team, including the Country Program Manager, the Program Assistant, the NHI, the UNDP country staff, RTA and the UNOPS staff. The NSC was reviewed and adjusted to the specific scope of the full-size project as it addressed representation of the beneficiaries in the target landscapes and increased participation of CSO representatives and other development partners. The OP7 NSC composition is representative as it is composed of voluntary members from the GEF Operational Focal Point, concerned ministries, CSO sector, private sector, UNDP Country Office. The technical sub-committees supporting the NSC are examples of good practice in stakeholder engagement and inclusivity.

The Arab Office for Youth and Environment, the national host institution (NHI) has supported the SGP in its consecutive phases from OP2 in 2003 until OP7. Being an CSO, it understands the challenges that CSOs in Egypt are facing and speaks their language which facilitates coordination. There is also good rapport between the NHI and UNDP CO as well as government stakeholders and partners. Cooperation between Country Project Management and the Ministry of Social Solidarity decreased time of approvals of the CSOs from several months to few days. There is high level interest at the Ministry of Environment level in ensuring successful implementation of the SGP OP7. Moreover, Egypt SGP was actively engaged in the UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, November 2022

Multi-stakeholder governance platforms were established in project locations in the four landscapes and four Landscape Strategies were approved April 2023. In OP7, the following plans were prepared; Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Analysis and Action Plan, Climate and Disaster Screening and COVID-19 Analysis and Action Framework. Also, a knowledge Management plan is drafted as well as a Communication Plan. One of the CSOs executing a small-scale project in Phase 1, "The Society of Writers on Environment and Development", is expected to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the Knowledge Management and Communication Strategies as part of its scope of work.

Some delay was faced between the first call of proposals and the acceptance of the projects mainly due to lack of capacities of the CSOs in submitting clear proposals that are directly related to GEF

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plans and indicators and the need for the support of the NSC and its sub-committees in providing advise to the CSOs and CSOs to strengthen and clarify their projects. Also, the first call did not result in any strategic projects nor any project from the West Delta landscape. It is therefore recommended to speed up the evaluation of projects proposals received from the second call to ensure that the second round of projects are initiated by mid 2024 to allow enough time for projects implementation and monitoring before OP7 closure date.

One of the main challenges of the project design is the fact that the identified landscapes are geographically expansive, extending across more than one governorate in some cases, e.g., in the Upper Egypt and Delta regions, and encompassing complex administrative jurisdictions, such as in Greater Cairo. However, establishing multi-stakeholder governance platforms in each of the four landscapes is expected to aid the SGP OP7 in reaching its targets through facilitating governmental procedures and ensuring cooperation at the different administrative levels.

Project administrative procedures have been developed through experiences gained through the previous operational phases. For instance, UNOPS has delegated some financial management tasks to the UNDP country office, e.g., payment to the local CSOs by checks, due to the under-developed banking systems among some of the target landscapes.

An estimated USD 3,623,690 of cofinancing has materialized through midterm, which is about 67% of the expected amount by project closure. GEF financing expenditure to date is about 33% of the total expected at project closure. Financial delivery is expected to increase significantly as the first awarded grants are booked and the second call for proposals is completed.

6.2 Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Measure/Outcome	Responsibility
1.	Speed up the process of proposals evaluation and approval. Evaluation and approval of projects from the first call of proposals took approximately five months which delayed the start of projects. It is recommended to shorten the time for review and approval of proposals from the 2nd call to start new projects by mid-2024.	Project Achievement	PA, NC, NSC
2	Provide more guidance to the CSOs and develop their capacities in Strategic Projects. The MTR consultant sensed that lack of strategic projects funded during the first call was due to the misconception of the CSOs of the meaning and objectives of strategic projects. However, this was strengthened by the SGP Team before the second call of proposals. It is therefore recommended that for OP8, a consultant or one of the CSOs is assigned to raise the capacities of CSOs in the targeted landscapes with regards to Strategic Projects.	Outcome 4	PA, NC, NSC
3	Adjust the wording of Indicator 5: Participatory management of critical ecosystems end of project target is stating "3 participatory management partnerships agreed between local communities and protected area administrations" and the MTR consultant proposes it is change to "3 memorandum of understanding between the local CSOs and the protected area administrations" as this will be more acceptable to the Ministry of Environment.	Outcome 1.1	PA, NC, NSC

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4	<p>Review Indicator 8: Livelihood cobenefits and strengthened resilience through low carbon agricultural practices, (b) the number of households benefitting from biogas cooking energy and digestate-sourced fertilizer (number of households, gender disaggregated)</p> <p>Consultations with the beneficiaries and CSOs has shown that there is a decreased interest in implementation of biogas units through the SGP especially after the establishment of the Bioenergy Foundation by the Ministry of Environment which is handling these types of projects. On the other hand, there is increased interest in composting project especially as related to agricultural residues. It is therefore recommended by the MTR consultant to adjust this indicator and omit the target of the biogas units and increase the target of the aerobic composting.</p>	Outcome 1.2	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
5	<p>Expand the Target of Indicator 9: Strengthened resilience and increased energy security as it indicated “the number of solar PV agricultural pumping systems replacing diesel-powered units”. The MTR consultant proposes to revise the target to be “the number of solar PV for electricity generation on-grid and off-grid to satisfy community needs for decreasing the dependency on the electricity national grid or on diesel fuel for power generation in areas not served by the electricity grid”</p>	Outcome 1.2	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
6	<p>Close monitoring and evaluation of the first call projects.</p> <p>Close monitoring for the first call projects is required to ensure timely intervention from the SGP to ensure risks mentioned in the MTR do not hinder project progress. These include resistance from the informal waste collectors to electronics waste initiative, cooperation of the Electricity Holding Company to approve PV stations and dual meters, financial obstacles due to the rise in the costs of equipment, fuel and labor from the date of project proposal and cultural and historical farmers practices that could hinder the collection and management of agricultural residues.</p> <p>The MTR Consultant recommends that continuous support is to be provided by the SGP Team and NSC through regular follow up meetings, monthly reports, and field visits.</p>	Project Progress	PA, NC, NSC, UNDP
7	<p>Consideration expansion or replacement of OP7 landscapes based on national needs.</p> <p>According to the consultations carried out by the MTR consultant, it is proposed to consider linking SGP to other GEF full size projects or UNDP projects working in Egypt that are not located in the four landscapes of SGP OP7.</p> <p>It is recommended by the MTR Consultant to consult the Ministry of Environment on the landscapes of action for OP8 and if there is a need to reconsider the OP7 landscapes for the purpose of having better collaboration with other GEF or UNDP projects</p>	Project Strategy	NC, UNDP

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7. Annexes

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Annex 1: MTR ToR

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
(Individual Contractor Agreement)**

Title: Project Management Support – Advisor
Project: MSP OP7 Egypt
Duty station: Home Based (with travel to Egypt)
Section/Unit: SGP Egypt, GMS, SDC, NYPO
Contract/Level: ICS-11
Supervisor: Kirk Bayabos, SDC Cluster Manager, P-5

1. General Background

UNOPS supports partners to build a better future by providing services that increase the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of peace building, humanitarian and development projects. Mandated as a central resource of the United Nations, UNOPS provides sustainable project management, procurement and infrastructure services to a wide range of governments, donors and United Nations organizations.

New York Portfolio Office (NYPO) supports the United Nations Secretariat, as well as other New York-based United Nations organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners in the delivery of UNOPS mandate in project management, infrastructure management, and procurement management.

Sustainable Development Cluster (SDC) supports diverse partners with their peacebuilding, humanitarian and development operations. It was formed by combining the following portfolios: Grants Management Services (GMS), UN Technology Support Services (UNTSS), Development and Special Initiatives Portfolio (DSIP) It provides Services to partners' programmes that are designed, structured, and managed with a global perspective and primarily serving partners that are headquartered in New York. The SDC has a footprint of approximately 125 countries.

UNOPS has signed an agreement with the UNDO CO of Egypt to implement the project activities for the Small Grants Programme.

The seventh Operational Phase (OP7) of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Egypt was designed to build upon the long-standing achievements of SGP in the country, specifically involving strengthening civil society organizations and improving socioeconomic conditions for local communities through implementation of participatory conservation, restoration, and climate change mitigation interventions. Expanding upon the integrated approaches initiated during the sixth Operational Phase in the target landscapes of Greater Cairo, Fayoum, and Upper Egypt, the OP7 project also includes the West Delta landscape, an important region of the country including the second largest city of Alexandria, within the Nile Delta and extending along the Mediterranean coast.

The target landscapes cover expansive and complex rural and urban geographies across desert, agricultural, and coastal ecosystems. Globally significant biodiversity in these regions faces a variety of threats influenced by a range of drivers, including poor agricultural practices, irrational utilization of scarce water resources, inefficient incentive framework, poorly coordinated development of infrastructure, weak and conflicting governance conditions. These factors, many of which have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, have led to biodiversity loss, degradation of fragile ecosystems, and restricted

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opportunities for local communities to sustain nature-based livelihoods. Many of the local communities in the target regions also lack knowledge and access to clean energy solutions. The project strategy addresses the threats and barriers in the target regions to generate multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, and the well-being of local communities through participatory, integrated land and resource management approaches implemented across socio-ecological production landscapes.

Reaching an estimated 10,000 direct beneficiaries, 50% of whom are women, the project will facilitate community-driven interventions that generate global environmental benefits, including bringing an estimated 20,000 ha under improved management practices to benefit biodiversity, restoring 10,000 ha of degraded ecosystems, and increasing adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient solutions at the community level, resulting in the mitigation of more than 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions. The durability of the results achieved will be ensured through implementation of integrated landscape approaches, supported by multi-stakeholder governance platforms that foster enabling partnerships among civil society organizations, national and local government entities, private sector enterprises, and academic-research institutions.

The total project budget administered by UNDP is USD 2,096,119. The total co-financing planned for the project is USD 5,437,000. The lifetime of the project is 4 years and half to be completed in April, 2026. The project is implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The incumbent of this position will be a personnel of UNOPS under its full responsibility.

2. Purpose and Scope of Assignment

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

The MTR is essential in the project lifetime to determine early success/failure of the project to give recommendations for interventions to the implementing partner to keep the project on track -if needed. This MTR fits within the UNDP Egypt evaluation plan. The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach, making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The Project Management Support – Advisor will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the Project Management Support – Advisor considers useful for this evidence-based review. The Project Management Support – Advisor will review the baseline GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

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The Project Management Support – Advisor is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach⁷ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), the Nature, Climate and Energy (NCE) Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Ministry of Environment);
- United Nations Development Programme, Egypt Country Office and Regional Hub;
- Local government (governorates);
- Ministry of Social Solidarity;
- National Steering Committee;
- CSOs;
- Direct Beneficiaries

Executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the Project Management Support – Advisor is expected to conduct field missions to *the target landscapes* of Greater Cairo, Fayoum, and Upper Egypt including the project sites that will be determined after selection of the evaluator.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the Project Management Support – Advisor and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The Project Management Support – Advisor must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the Project Management Support – Advisor.

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

For a Detailed Scope of the MTR, please refer to Annex A of these ToRs.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The Project Management Support – Advisor will include a section in the MTR report for evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the Project Management Support – Advisor is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific,

⁷ For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

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

The Project Management Support – Advisor should make no more than 10 recommendations total.

Ratings

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

MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for (Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt)

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

3. Monitoring and Progress Controls

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	MTR Inception Report	Project Management Support – Advisor clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission	Project Management Support – Advisor submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	Project Management Support – Advisor presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit

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3	Draft MTR Report	Full draft report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
4	Final Report*	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

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

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Country Office.

UNOPS, on behalf of the Commissioning Unit will contract the consultant and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within Egypt for the Project Management Support – Advisor and will provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email). The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Project Management Support – Advisor to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

4. Duration of Work

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 19 working days over a time period of 9 weeks, and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	COMPLETION DATE
Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report (MTR Inception Report due no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission)	4 days	29 February 2024
MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits	5 days	21 March 2024
Presentation of initial findings- last day of the MTR mission	1 day	28 March 2024
Preparing draft report (due within 3 weeks of the MTR mission)	7 days	18 April 2024
Finalization of MTR report/ Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report (due within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on the draft)	2 days	30 April 2024

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

6. Payment Schedule

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- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%⁸:

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

7. Travel

- Travel will be required to *Egypt* during the TE mission;
- The BSAFE course must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;
- The Project Management Support – Advisor is responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when traveling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.
- The Project Management Support – Advisor is required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under: <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>

8. Qualifications and Experience

An evaluator will conduct the MTR. The evaluator cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

a. Education

Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in the areas of Environmental Sciences, Social Studies, Engineering, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Climate Change, or other closely related fields. A Bachelor's degree in combination with two additional years' experience is acceptable.

⁸ The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the Project Management Support – Advisor as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the Project Management Support – Advisor, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters. See the UNDP Individual Contract Policy for further details:
https://poppp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default

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b. Work Experience

- Minimum of seven (7) years of experience in relevant technical areas;
- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies is desirable;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios is desirable;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to climate change mitigation/adaptation, land degradation, international waters, chemicals and waste and biodiversity is desirable;
- Knowledge of and experience with UNDP and/or GEF projects is required;
- Experience working in Egypt-MENA region will be considered an asset;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and climate change mitigation/adaptation, land degradation, international waters, chemicals and waste and biodiversity is required;
- Experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis is required;
- Experience with the GEF Small Grants Programme is an advantage;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within the United Nations System will be considered an asset.

d. Language

- Fluency in written and spoken English is required.
- Knowledge of Arabic will be considered an advantage.






e. Key Competencies

	Develops and implements sustainable business strategies, thinks long term and externally in order to positively shape the organization. Anticipates and perceives the impact and implications of future decisions and activities on other parts of the organization.
	Treats all individuals with respect; responds sensitively to differences and encourages others to do the same. Upholds organizational and ethical norms. Maintains high standards of trustworthiness. Role model for diversity and inclusion.
	Acts as a positive role model contributing to the team spirit. Collaborates and supports the development of others. For people managers only: Acts as positive leadership role model, motivates, directs and inspires others to succeed, utilising appropriate leadership styles

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 <p>Partnering</p>	Demonstrates understanding of the impact of own role on all partners and always puts the end beneficiary first. Builds and maintains strong external relationships and is a competent partner for others (if relevant to the role).
 <p>Results Orientation</p>	Efficiently establishes an appropriate course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a goal. Actions lead to total task accomplishment through concern for quality in all areas. Sees opportunities and takes the initiative to act on them. Understands that responsible use of resources maximizes our impact on our beneficiaries.
 <p>Agility</p>	Open to change and flexible in a fast paced environment. Effectively adapts own approach to suit changing circumstances or requirements. Reflects on experiences and modifies own behaviour. Performance is consistent, even under pressure. Always pursues continuous improvements.
 <p>Solution Focused</p>	Evaluates data and courses of action to reach logical, pragmatic decisions. Takes an unbiased, rational approach with calculated risks. Applies innovation and creativity to problem-solving.
 <p>Effective communication</p>	Expresses ideas or facts in a clear, concise and open manner. Communication indicates a consideration for the feelings and needs of others. Actively listens and proactively shares knowledge. Handles conflict effectively, by overcoming differences of opinion and finding common ground.

Contract holder (Name/Title):	
Signature	Date

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

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
i. PROJECT STRATEGY To what extent is the project strategy relevant to national priorities and country ownership and ownership? Is it the best way to get the desired results?			
Design			
Does the quality of the project's assumptions correspond to the problem?	The project's assumptions are relevant to the problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Project Partners and Key Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. National Steering Committee Interviews
Did the quality of the assumptions and the context affect the level of achievement of the project?	The level of project achievement was not affected by the quality of the assumptions and the context impacted the project's achievement.		
Were lessons learned from other relevant projects adequately incorporated into the project design?	Experiences and lessons learned from other relevant projects were considered in the design of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Steering Committee Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. Interviews with National steering committee and key partners
Was the project concept aligned with the national sector's development priorities and plans for the country?	The extent to which the project supports the National Development Strategy's objective of sustainable environmental management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents on the country's National Sustainable Development Strategy. Project Team Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. Interviews with National steering committee and counterpart partners.
Was the perspective of those who would be affected by project-related decisions, those who could influence project outcomes, and those who could provide input or other resources during the project design processes taken into account during the project design processes?	Level of involvement of government officials and other partners in the project design process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Key partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. Interviews with National Steering Committee and counterpart partners.
Were relevant gender issues raised in the project document?	The project considers relevant issues and budgets on gender issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. Interviews with National Steering Committee and counterpart partners.
Results Framework/Logical Framework			
To what extent do the project's indicators meet the "SMART" criteria?	Midterm and end-of-term goals meet the following Criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. UNDP Experts
Are the objectives and results of	The objectives and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis.

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the project or its components clear, practical and feasible to achieve during the time stipulated for its implementation?	results of the component(s) are clear, practical and feasible to achieve in the time defined for the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Team Project Partners and Key Stakeholders Project consulting reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with the project team. UNDP Experts
Has it generated beneficial development effects or could it catalyse them in the future so that they should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis?	<p>The developmental effects are beneficial and can be catalyzed.</p> <p>These effects are included in the results framework and are monitored annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. Interviews with the National Steering Committee and partners
Do you include gender-disaggregated and other indicators that capture development benefits?	SMART 'development' indicators include gender-disaggregated indicators and others that capture development benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Documents Project Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Project team interviews. UNDP M&E and Gender Experts, UNDP RR.
Has there been effective follow-up to the broader development and gender aspects of the project?	Development and gender aspects are effectively monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team UNDP M&E and Gender Experts, UNDP RR.
ii. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING RESULTS What is the degree of compliance with the desired results and objectives so far?			
Analysis of progress in achieving results (Logical framework)	<p>Project Objective: To build socio-ecological resilience in Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Delta, and Upper Egypt landscapes through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development</p> <p>Analysis of 4 mandatory indicators (GEF-7 Core Indicators 3,4,6,11)</p> <p>Component 1: Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection</p> <p>Analysis of 5 indicators (5-9)</p> <p>Component 2: Durable landscape resilience through participatory governance and strengthened capacities for upscaling</p> <p>Analysis of 7 indicators (10-16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project monitoring tools Results Achievement Progress Matrix Quarterly & Annual Progress Reports Project Team National policies and strategies Key project partners and stakeholders. Projects benefited by SGP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Project team interviews. National Steering Committee Interviews Interviews with staff from partner organizations. Group interviews with people from beneficiary groups benefiting from the project, with special attention to gender issues.
How are the results achieved beneficial in terms of income generation, gender equality and	The results so far have generated beneficial development effects in terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents. Project Team Project Partners and Key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Project team interviews.

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women's empowerment?	of income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment	Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with implementing partners and entities involved.
iii. PROJECT EXECUTION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively and adapted to changing conditions so far? To what extent do the project's monitoring and evaluation, reporting and communication systems contribute to its execution?			
Management mechanisms			
<p>Have changes been made and are they effective?</p> <p>Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and carried out in a timely manner?</p>	<p>Changes generated from the project's interventions.</p> <p>Definition and execution of responsibilities and hierarchical lines.</p> <p>Execution of decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Results Achievement Progress Matrix • Project Team • Committee and implementing partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress data and documents. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with implementing partners and entities involved.
<p>What is the quality of the implementing agency/implementing partner(s) of execution?</p>	<p>Implementation by the executing agency of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Team • Key project partners and stakeholders. • Project consulting reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with implementing partners and entities involved.
<p>Does the implementing agency/implementing partner and/or UNDP, UNOPS, NHI and other partners have the capacity to provide benefits or engage women?</p>	<p>Level of involvement of women at all levels of project implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Results Achievement Progress Matrix • Project team and implementing partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Project team interviews. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with implementing partners and entities involved.
<p>What is the gender balance of the project staff? What measures have been taken to ensure gender balance among project staff?</p>	<p>Number of women and men working on the project.</p> <p>Measures and practices (policies, guidelines) to ensure gender balance in staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents (PRODOC, contracts or spreadsheets, reports). • Project team and implementing partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with implementing partners and entities involved.
<p>What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What measures have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?</p>	<p>Number of women and men on the Board of Directors.</p> <p>Measures and practices (policies, guidelines) to ensure gender balance in the personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents containing information about the members of the Board of Directors (including meeting reports, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with project team • Interviews with UNDP and UNOPS staff
Work planning			
<p>Are there delays in the start-up and implementation of the project, identify their causes? If they exist, have they already</p>	<p>Execution of activities according to the Multi-Year Work Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Documents (Multi-Year Work Plan). • Project monitoring tools • Matrix of progress in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress data and documents. • Field Observation • Team Interviews

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been resolved?	Corrective measures for the execution of activities with delay.	achieving results: Project team and implementing partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Steering Committee Interviews Interviews with implementing partners Interviews with SGP Projects
Are work planning processes results-based? If not, can you suggest ways to reorient work planning to focus on results?	Implementation of activities within the project's Results Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents (emphasis on Multi-Year Work Plan and Results Framework) and follow-up reports). Matrix of progress in the achievement of results. Project team and implementing partners. Project Board Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. National Steering Committee Interviews Interviews with implementing partners Interviews with SGP Projects
Is the results framework/logical framework of the project used as a management tool? Have there been any changes since the beginning of the project?	Implementation of activities within the project's Results Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents (emphasis on Multi-Year Work Plan and Results Framework) and follow-up reports). Matrix of progress in the achievement of results. Project team and implementing partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis. Interviews with the project team. National Steering Committee Interviews Interviews with implementing partners
Financing and co-financing			
How has the financial management of the project been? How has the profitability of the interventions been?	Budget execution according to interventions. Number of activities carried out. Results achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents (emphasis on Multi-Year Work Plan and Results Framework) and follow-up reports). Financial Execution Reports. Project team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. Interviews with Project Manager
Have there been any changes in funding allocations as a result of budget revisions? Have these revisions been appropriate and relevant?	Budget execution of the Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Execution Reports. Project team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. Project Team Interviews Interview UNOPS, UNDP
Does the project have adequate financial controls, including appropriate reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed budget decisions and facilitate a timely and timely flow of funds? adequate deadlines?	Controls and instruments for budget implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Execution Reports. Project team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. Project Team Interviews Interview UNOPS, UNDP

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<p>Is co-financing used strategically to help project objectives? Does the Project Team meet regularly with all partners in co-financing in order to align financial priorities and annual work plans?</p>	<p>Budget execution of the Project. Technical and financial coordination meetings of Project Executors and Co-Executors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Execution Reports. • Reports and reports of coordination meetings. • Project team and co-executors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. • Analysis of reports or coordination reports. • Project Team Interviews • Interview with UNOPS, UNDP • Interviews with co-financer.
<p>Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems</p>			
<p>Do the tracking tools currently in use provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned with or incorporated into national systems? Do they use the information existent? Are they efficient? Are they profitable?</p>	<p>Project monitoring tools contain pertinent information, involve partners and are aligned with national systems. They use necessary information and are efficient and cost-effective, participatory, and inclusive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Tracking Tools. • Related national systems. • Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress reports and project documents. • Analysis of the monitoring system used.
<p>Are additional tools required? How can they be made more participatory and inclusive?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with the PPD team, the project team and the UNDP monitoring and follow-up officer.
<p>Are sufficient resources allocated for monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being used effectively?</p>	<p>Allocation of resources for monitoring and evaluation according to requirements and their use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Tracking Tools. • Budgets and budget execution. • Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress and financial reports. • Analysis of the monitoring system used. • Interviews with the project team and with UNDP monitoring and follow-up.
<p>Were relevant gender issues mainstreamed into the monitoring systems?</p>	<p>Follow-up systems are aligned with the monitoring of gender issues and account for their implementation in that regard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Tracking Tools. • Project Team • UNDP Specialists (Gender and M&E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-based analysis contained in the Guide to Conducting Mid-Term Reviews of GEF-funded and UNDP-supported projects for further guidance. • Specialist gender and S&E interviews, SGP team.
<p>Stakeholder engagement</p>			
<p>Has the project developed and forged the right partnerships, both with direct stakeholders and with other tangential actors?</p>	<p>(Established) partnerships are appropriate, both with direct stakeholders and with other tangential actors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project Team • Key partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with partners, co-financer and key stakeholders.

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Do local and national governments support the project's objectives? Do they continue to play an active role in project decision-making that contributes to efficient and effective project implementation?	National and local governments support the project and play an active role in decision-making, influencing its efficiency and effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project Team • Project Staff. • Partners and key stakeholders in national and local governments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders.
To what extent has public involvement and awareness contributed to the progress made towards achieving the project's objectives?	Involvement and public awareness of the progress made towards achieving the objectives of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project Team • Project Staff. • Partners and key stakeholders in national and local governments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with the steering committee.
How does the project involve youth, women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural or religious constraints on women's participation in the project. What can the project do to improve its gender benefits?	Involvement and effect on women, youth (boys and girls) in a differentiated way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents (emphasis on Multi-Year Work Plan and Results Framework) and follow-up reports). • Matrix of progress in the achievement of results. • Project team and implementing partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress data and documents. • Observation in the field (areas of direct implementation of the project). • Interviews with the project team. • Interview and focus groups with SGP projects • Interview with consultants/experts on gender issues.
Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)			
Are revisions needed to the risks identified in the project's most recent SESP and the ratings of those risks?	Risks identified in the most recent project SESP and the ratings of those risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Documents • SESP • Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. • SESP analysis. • Interviews with the project team.
What and how have the revisions been made since the Executive Director's approval/approval (if applicable) for: The risk categorization of the project's general safeguards. The types of risks identified (in the SESP). Individual risk ratings (in the SESP)?	<p>Review and approval of the risk categorization of the project's general safeguards.</p> <p>Review and approval of the types of risks identified (in the SESP).</p> <p>Review and approval of individual risk ratings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Documents • SESP • Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of progress reports and financial documents. • SESP analysis. • Interviews with the project team.
Information			
What have been the mechanisms used by the project management to report changes in adaptive management and communicate them to the Project Board?	Mechanisms for communicating changes in adaptive management and communicating them to the Project Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Documents • Documents and internal and external communication strategy of the Project. • Project team (with emphasis on direction). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Project team interviews. • Interviews with key stakeholders (steering committee)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Board of Directors. • Reports of meetings and communication reports to the JD. 	and implementing partners) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff. UNDP S&E and UNOPS Officer.
To what extent do the Project Team and its partners carry out and comply with all GEF reporting requirements?	Compliance with GEF reporting requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEF Guidelines Documents. • Project documents and reports. • Project team. • GEF Representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project coordinator and team. • Interviews with GEF representatives and key stakeholders. • Interviews with UNDP staff • UNDP M&E and UNOPS Officer.
How have lessons from the adaptive management process been documented and shared with key partners and how have they been internalized by key partners?	Documentation and dissemination of lessons derived from the adaptive management process with key partners and their internalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruments for documenting information and constructing knowledge (lessons learned). • Internal and external communication documents, processes and tools. • Project team. • Key Partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with National Steering Committee and implementing partners.
Communication and knowledge management			
Has a communication Strategy been developed? Is there regular and effective communication? Are there important stakeholders who are left out of communication channels? Are there feedback mechanisms in place when communication is received? Does communication help	Regular and effective communication Stakeholders in communication. Communication feedback mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Strategy • Internal and external communication documents, processes and tools. • Project documents. • Project team. • Key partners (stakeholders). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with the steering committee.
with stakeholders to have a greater awareness of the project's results and activities, and a greater commitment to the long-term sustainability of the project's results?	Communication with stakeholders contributes to greater awareness of project results and activities, and a greater commitment to the long-term sustainability of results thereof.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP M&E Officer, and UNOPS
Have adequate external communication channels been established – or are they being established – to express project	Adequate external communication channels to express the progress of the project and the desired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external communication documents, processes and tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team (emphasis

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progress and desired public impact (e.g., is there a web presence?)? Did the project carry out adequate communication and public awareness campaigns?).	public impact. Communication and public awareness campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project team. Key partners (stakeholders).	on the communicator). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with implementing partners and National Steering Committee.
What have been (in a listed form) the knowledge activities/products developed (based on the knowledge management approach approved in the CEO Endorsement/Approval)?	Activities/knowledge products developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external communication documents, processes and tools. • Project documents. • Project team. Key partners (stakeholders).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders.
iv. SUSTAINABILITY			
Are the risks identified in the Project Document, the Annual Project Review/PIR, and the QUANTUM Risk Register the most important? Are the risk assessments applied adequate and up-to-date? If not, why?	Risks identified in the Project Document, the Annual Project Review/IRP and the QUANTUM Risk Register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents (PRODOC, Annual Review, PIR, Registration Management). • Project monitoring tools • Project Team • Project staff. Key project partners and stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis (PRODOC, Annual Review, PIR, Registration Management). • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with National Steering Committee and implementing partners. • Interviews with SGP projects.
What is the likelihood that the availability of financial resources will be reduced or ceased after the end of the GEF assistance	Financial Risk Factors to the Sustainability of Project Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with National Steering Committee and implementing partners. • Interviews with SGP projects.
Are there any social or political risks that could jeopardize the sustainability of the project's results? What is the risk that the level of ownership and involvement of stakeholders (including governments and other stakeholders) is insufficient to sustain the results/benefits of the project? Are the various key stakeholders aware that it is in their interest to keep the benefits	Socio-economic risk factors for the sustainability of the project's results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Project Team • Project staff. • Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with National Steering Committee

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<p>of the project flowing? Do the public and/or stakeholders have a sufficient level of awareness to support the long-term goals of the project? Does the Project Team document lessons learned on an ongoing basis? Are they shared/transferred to the right actors who are in a position to apply and potentially replicate them? and/or expand them in the future?</p>			<p>and implementing partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with SGP projects. • UNDP, UNOPS Interviews
<p>Do the legal frameworks, policies, structures and governance processes present risks that could jeopardize the continuity of the project's benefits? In assessing this parameter, it is also necessary to take into account whether the systems/mechanisms required for accountability, transparency and know-how.</p>	<p>Institutional Risk Factors to the Sustainability of Project Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Project Team • Project staff. • Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with Steering Committee and implementing partners. • Interviews with SGP projects. • UNDP, UNOPS Interviews
<p>Are there any environmental risks that could jeopardise the continuity of the project's results?</p>	<p>Environmental Risk Factors to the Sustainability of Project Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents. • Project monitoring tools • Project Team • Project staff. • Key project partners and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis. • Interviews with the project team. • Interviews with key stakeholders. • Interviews with National Steering Committee and implementing partners. • Interviews with SGP projects. • UNDP, UNOPS Interviews

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

Interviews with CSOs

- How did they get to know about the SGP and request for applications?
 - Did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?
 - Were the proposals accepted from the first round of review?
 - How were local community needs identified and incorporated in the project design?
 - What assistance did they get from the NCS and the technical committees?
 - Have their proposal writing skills been improved?
 - Is the CSO women lead?
 - What is percentage of women in CSO management?
 - Were they involved in SGP OP6?
 - When did they receive approval? First Payment?
 - What have they achieved so far? Any problems faced?
 - Any challenges/risks faced that are hindering their progress in implementation?
 - Support received from local government and other stakeholders or partners (agriculture directorates, Protectorate management, etc.)
 - Recommendations for further support. For whom and in what form?
 - Is cofinancing carried out according to their commitment?
 - Is there any collaboration with other CSOs for this project?
 - How would they financially & technically sustain their activities after the end of the OP7 support provided to them?
 - How are they involving women, youth (girls & boys), disabled?
 - Number of women and men working on the project.
 - Level of involvement of women at all levels of project implementation.
 - Impact of project on landscape & national environmental problems
 - How are the project impacts monitored?
 - How are the results achieved beneficial in terms of income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment?
-

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Annex 4: Ratings Scales

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

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as "good practice".
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

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Annex 5: MTR mission itinerary

Date	Time	Description
Sunday 17 th March	9:00 -10:00	Meeting with Project Assistant and NHI Administrative and Financial Manager at Arab Office for Youth and Environment Office
	10:00 - 14:00	Meeting/Interviews with Greater Cairo Landscape CSOs at the Arab Office for Youth and Environment Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sawa Alaa El Gana - Beit Ala AlSakhr Association for Development - Coptic Association for Social Care - Nahdet El Mansouria for Development - Montada El Hewar - The Society of Writers on Environment and Development
Monday 18 th March	9:00– 10:00	Meeting at the Ministry of Social Solidarity - Agouza
	16:00-17:00	Online Interview with the UNDP RTA
	17:30 – 18:00	Online Interview with the UNOPS Project Manager
Tuesday 19 th March	16:30-17:30	Online Interview with UNDP Country Office Programme Officer
Wednesday 20 th March	8:00-9:30	Travel from Cairo to Fayoum
	10:00-12:00	Meetings/Interviews at Fayoum Governorate Club with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qaroun Protectorate Manager, EEAA - Environmental Protection Association - Bader for Sustainable Development Association
	12:00 – 13:30	Meeting/Interview with Afak Association in the CSO Headquarters, Fayoum
	14:00 – 15:30	Travel back from Fayoum to Cairo
Sunday 24 th March	6:00 – 7:00	Flight from Cairo to Luxor
	7:00 – 9:00	Check in at Hotel and travel to Qena Governorate
	9:00 – 16:00	Meetings/Interviews with the following CSOs in their headquarters in Qena Governorate villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Al-Shorouk Association for Rural Women Development in Awsat Qamola , Nagada village - Association of Community Development in Nagada - Karama Association for Comprehensive Development, Ashraf village
	20:00 – 21:00	Meeting with Nour El Islam Association in Hotel in Luxor City
Monday 25 th March	9:00 – 14:00	Meetings/Interviews with the following CSOs in their headquarters in Luxor Governorate villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abu Bakr Association for Community Development, Al-Toud - Future pioneers Association for Economic development, Armant - Together Association for Development, Esna
	22:00 – 23: 00	Flight back from Luxor to Cairo
Tuesday 26 th March	9:00 – 10:00	Online Interview with GEF Unit Director
	16:00 – 17:00	Online Interview with representatives of the National Steering Committee
Wednesday 27 th March	16:30 – 17:30	Online Interview with UNDP former RTA
Monday 1st April	19:00 – 20:00	Online Interview with Country Project Manager (PA)
Tuesday 2nd April	16:30 – 17:30	Online Interview with UNDP UCP Global Coordinator

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Annex 6: List of persons interviewed

Stakeholder	Name	Date	Location
Project Assistant (PA)	Ms. Ghada Ahmadein	Sunday 17 th March	NHI office
NHI Admin and Financial Manager	Mr. Wahid Abdel Mohsen	Sunday 17 th March	NHI office
Sawa Alaa El Gana	Saeda Mahmoud Mohamed Abdallah Mohamed Medhat Abdel Hameed, Manager of PV project	Sunday 17 th March	NHI Office
Beit Ala ALSakhr Association for Development	Samah Tawadros Bekheit, Executive Manager Shenouda Ibrahim, Projects Manager	Sunday 17 th March	NHI Office
Coptic Association for Social Care	Hanan Makram Shenouda, Consultant Ramy Nebil Shehata, Project Manager	Sunday 17 th March	NHI Office
Nahdet El Mansouria for Development	Enas Mahmoud Tawfik, CEO Aza El Mofti, Secretary Mohamed Badr Hussein, Accountant	Sunday 17 th March	NHI Office
Montada El Hewar	Sameh Abu El Soud , Manager of CSO	Sunday 17 th March	NHI Office
Ministry of Social Solidarity	Ms. Hend Abdel Mageed	Monday 18 th March	Ministry of Social Solidarity Agouza Office
UNDP RTA	Mr. Carlos Montenegro Pinto	Monday 18 th March	Online
UNOPS	Ms. Rosanna Du Luca	Monday 18 th March	Online
UNDP Country Office Programme Officer	Dr. Mohamed Bayoumi	Tuesday 19 th March	Online
Qaroun Protectorate-EEAA	Osama El Naggar Protectorate Manager	Wednesday 20 th March	Fayoum Governorate Club
Environmental Protection Association	Ehab Mahmoud Ibrahim	Wednesday 20 th March	Fayoum Governorate Club
Bader for Sustainable Development	Mohamed Ismail Mohamed	Wednesday 20 th March	Fayoum Governorate Club
Afak Association	• Ashraf Mokhtar Amin, Deputy CEO of CSO	Wednesday 20 th March	CSO Headquarters Etsa, Fayoum

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mohamed Ali, CSO CEO• Dr. Amro Heiba, Assistant Ministry of Environment• Hossam, Fayoum CSO• Hussein Mostafa, Fayoum Governorate• Ahmed Abdel El Razak, Agriculture Directorate• Sally Nasr Sedik, Fayoum Governorate & National Woman Council		
Al-Shorouk Association for Rural Women Development in Awsat Qamola	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Om Kalthoum Sawaby, Chairperson• Rahma Mahmoud, CSO member• Asaad Mohamed, EEAA RBO in Qena• Representatives of Farmer, Agriculture Department, Sports and Youth, EMU	Sunday 24 th March	Nagada village- Qena
Community Development in Nagada	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mohamed Mahmoud Ismail, Chairman• Hassaneya Mousa, Project Manager• Aya Gamal. Waste Project Manager• Omar Eryan Ali Mohamed, Agriculture Directorate• Adel Nader, Agriculture Directorate	Sunday 24 th March	Nagada village- Qena
Karama Association for Comprehensive Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ahmed Hussein Mohamed, CSO CEO• Ahmed Mohamed Mostafa, CSO Treasurer and representative of Ministry of Irrigation in Qena• Marwa Abdel Rahim, Project Accountant• Asmaa Rabie Abdel Satar, Project Coordinator• Hanaa Abdo Mohamed, Awareness Coordinator• Dalia Ibrahim Abdel Ghani, National Women Council• Mahmoud Abdel Radi, Ministry of Agriculture	Sunday 24 th March	Ashraf village- Qena
Nour El Islam Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Samir Hegazy, Executive Director	Sunday 24 th March	Luxor City

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nourhan Sobhy Hasan, Accountant • Abdel Aty Ali Ahmed, Project Manager • Osama, Local Council • Tarek, EEAA RBO 		
Abu Bakr Association for Community Development in Al-Toud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ibrahim Ahmed Hamed, Chairman • Eraqy Ali AbdelHakim, Education • Mohamed AbdelGhany, Dababeya Protectorate • Mahmoud Abdel Aziz Hasan, Luxor Governorate • Hala Abdo Mrazy, CSO Board Member • Marwa Mahmoud Ibrahim, CSO Accountant • Hesham Mohamed Abdalla, Project Manager 	Monday 25 th March	El Toud Luxor
Future pioneers Association for Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aymen El Saed, CSO CEO • Mariam Mohamed Abdo Ibrahim, CSO member, • Zeinab Imam Hanafi, CSO member • Ibrahim Mohamed Omar, Local Council • Abdel Nasser Hasanein, Armant Agriculture Admin • Youssef Abdel Ati, Armant Sugar Company • Ahmed Moussa Meki. Agriculture Cooperation • Ibrahim Mohamed Moussa, Irrigation Directorate 	Monday 25 th March	Armant Luxor
Together Association for Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hussein Mostafa Ibrahim, Chaiman • Omaima ElSayed El Shahaat, Project Manager • Fatma Abdel Halim Mahmoud, Project Supervisor • Mohamed Abd eldayem Abdelsatar, Water Directorate • Mansour Lotfy Hasan, Land Reform 	Monday 25 th March	Esna- Luxor

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mohamed Fahmy Ahmed, Farmer• Ahmed El Araby, Agriculture Directorate• Ibrahim Sabry Mohamed, Agriculture Research Center		
GEF Unit Director	Ms. Hoda El Shawatfi	Tuesday 26th March	Online
National Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Hala Yousry, NSC Chair• Dr. Ashraf Adeeb, Ministry of Social Solidarity• Dr. Mostafa El Hakim, Al Ramis Society• Dr. Salah El Hagggar, Egypt GBC• Ambassador Yasser El Abd, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by Amr Sultan	Tuesday 26th March	Online
UNDP former RTA	Mr. Hugo Remaury	Wednesday 27 th March	Online
Country Project Manager (PA)	Dr. Emad Adly	Monday 1 st April	Online
UNDP UCP Global Coordinator	Ms. Diana Salvamini	Tuesday 2 nd April	Online

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Some MTR Mission Photos



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Annex 7: List of documents reviewed

- Draft Communication Strategy, SGP, 2024 (Arabic Report)
 - Knowledge Management Strategy, SGP Egypt OP7, 2024 (Arabi Report)
 - Draft Knowledge Management Strategy, SGP Egypt OP7, 2024 (Arabi Report)
 - GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Worksheet
 - Landscape Strategy for Building Social, Economic and Ecological Resilience, Landscape Fayoum, SGP- Egypt, April 2023
 - Landscape Strategy for Building Social, Economic and Ecological Resilience, Landscape Greater Cairo, SGP- Egypt, April 2023
 - Landscape Strategy for Building Social, Economic and Ecological Resilience, Landscape Upper Egypt (Luxor, Qena Governorates) , SGP- Egypt, April 2023
 - Landscape Strategy for Building Social, Economic and Ecological Resilience, Landscape West Delta (Alexandria and Behaira Governorates, SGP- Egypt, April 2023
 - CSOs proposals
 - National Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
 - GEF-7 Project Identification Form (PIF), 2017
 - Project Document, Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt, January 2022
 - Project Implementation Report (PIR), Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Egypt, 2023
 - Seventh Operational Phase (2022-2026) Inception Report, SGP Egypt. September 2022
-

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Annex 8: Co-financing table

Note	Sources of Cofinancing ¹	Name of Cofinancer	Type of Cofinancing ²	Amount Confirmed at CEO Endorsement USD	Actual Amount Contributed at Stage of Midterm Review USD	Expected Amount by Project Closure ³ USD	Actual % of Expected Amount USD
1	GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	420,000	332,658	420,000	79%
2	Donor Agency	Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme EIECP ⁴	Grant	3,477,000	2,631,578	3,477,000	76%
3	Civil Society Organizations	Grantee Organization	Grant	500,000	165,907	500,000	33%
4	Civil Society Organizations	Grantee Organization	In kind	750,000	348,647	750,000	46%
5	Civil Society Organization	Bioenergy for Sustainable Rural Development Association- BSRDA ⁵	Grant	250,000	134,900	250,000	54%
6	Civil Society Organization	Arab Office for Youth and Environment ⁶	In Kind	40,000	10,000	40,000	25%
	Total			5,437,000	3,623,690	5,437,000	67%
Notes:							
1	Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Partner Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Other						
2	Type of Co-financing may include: Grant, Soft Loan, Hard Loan, Guarantee, In-Kind, Other						
3	Expected amount by project closure includes actual materialized by midterm and expected cofinancing during the second half of the project.						
4	The UNDP/Egyptian-Italian Cooperative Programme Phase III is focused on further developing Egypt's PA system, mainly on strengthening financial. EIECP III is also supporting the management needs of the Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), such as information gathering/generation management and analysis. The EIECP has delivered extensive support to the civil society sector, including in collaboration with the SGP.						
5	The BSRDA operates nationally and receives international funding to finance bioenergy projects and provide technical assistance and capacity building.						
6	In-kind contributions to the rental-maintenance costs, utilities, and share in miscellaneous expenses associated with the AOYE premises and facilities utilized by the SGP team.						
7	Materialized cofinancing from the grantee organizations is from the 16 interventions approved in the first call for proposals						

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Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: Dalia Nakhla

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

Signed at *Cairo, March 2024*

Signature: *Dalia Nakhla*

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Annex 10: Signed MTR final report clearance form

