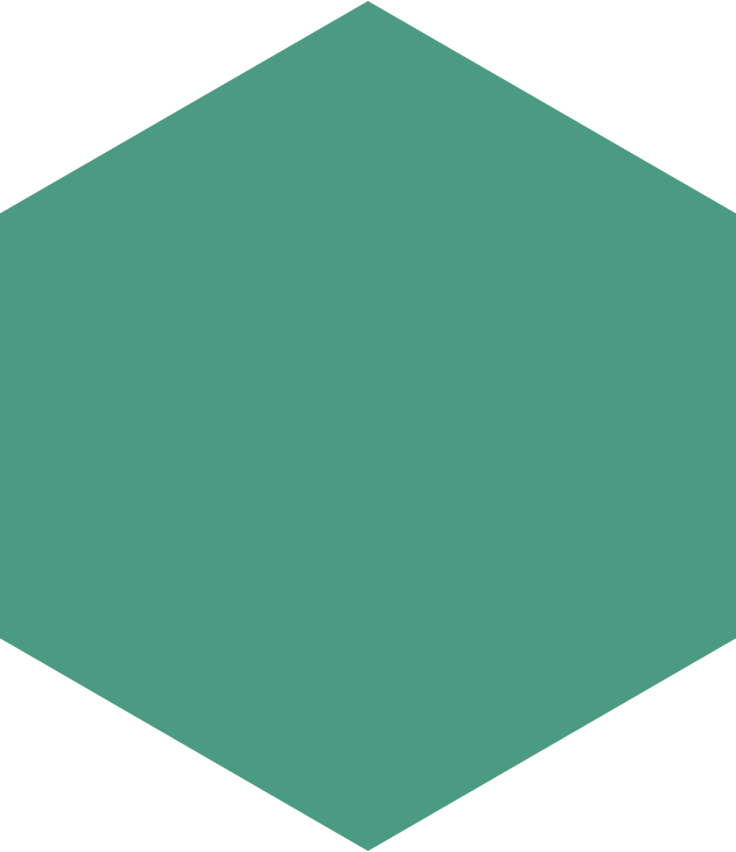
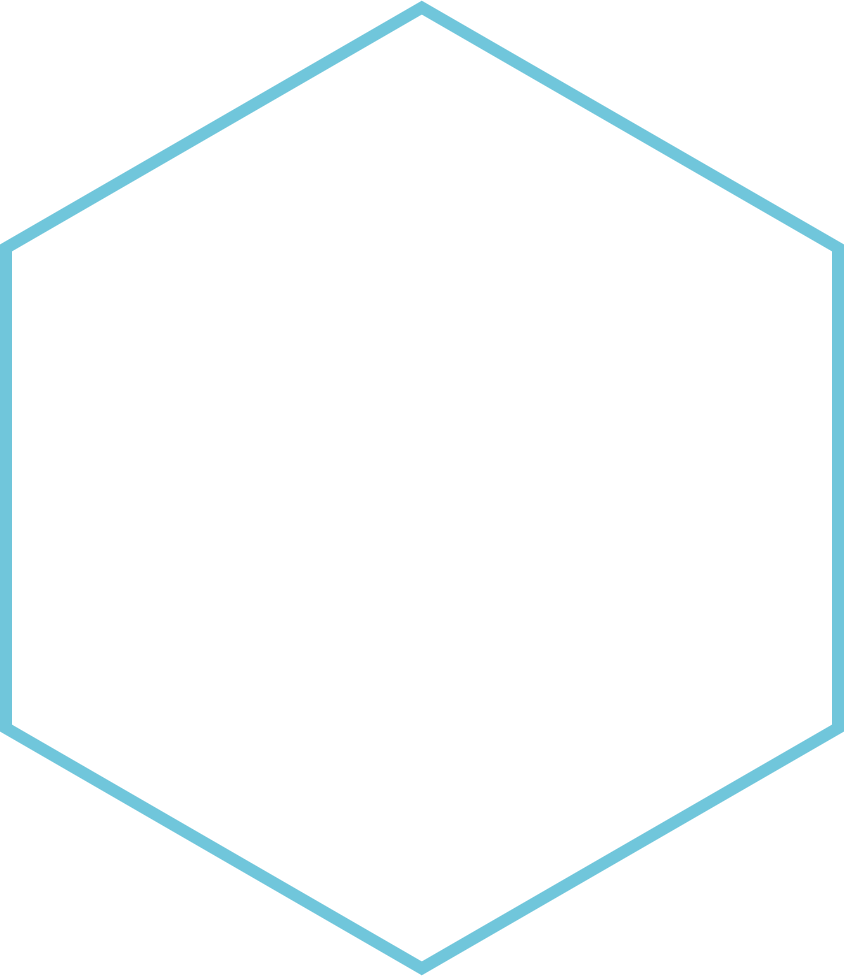
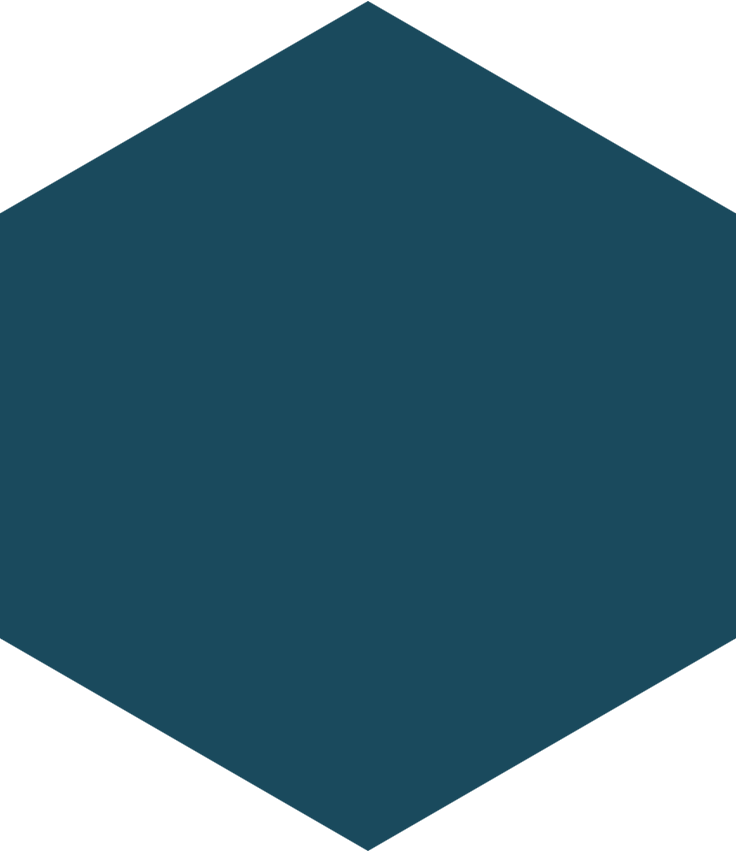
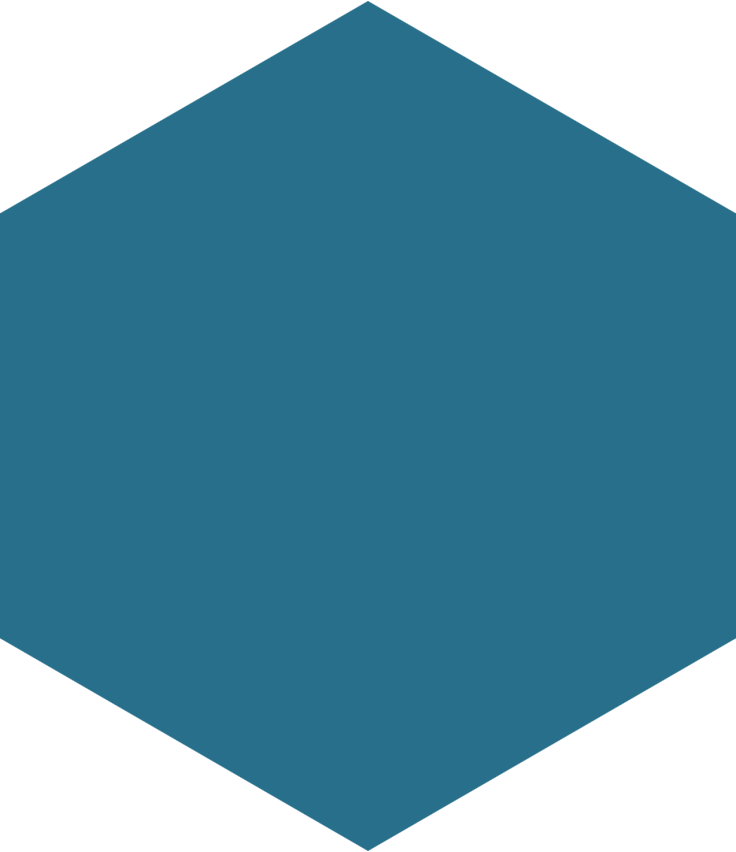
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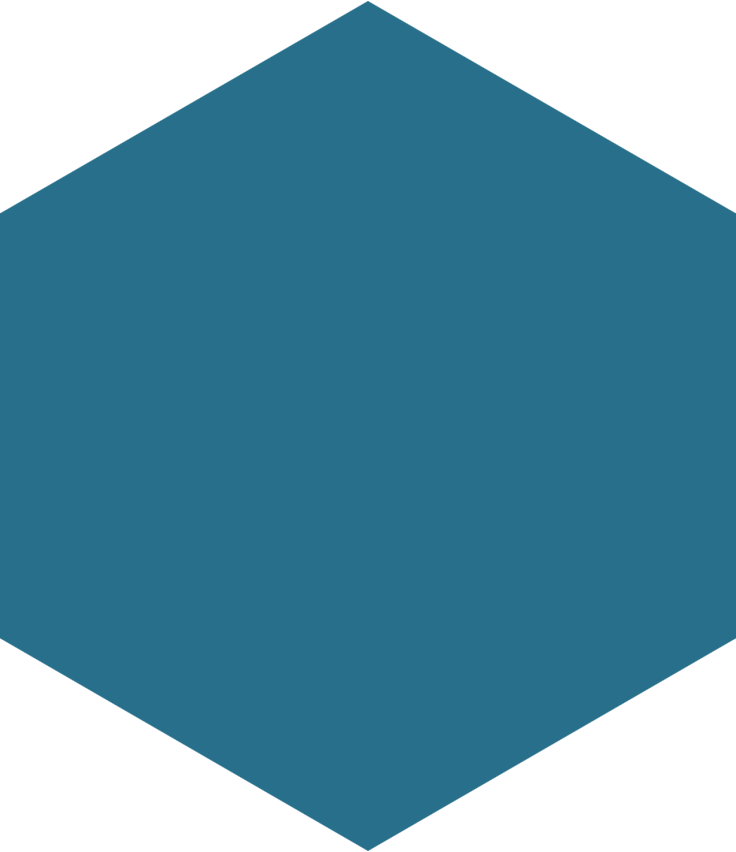
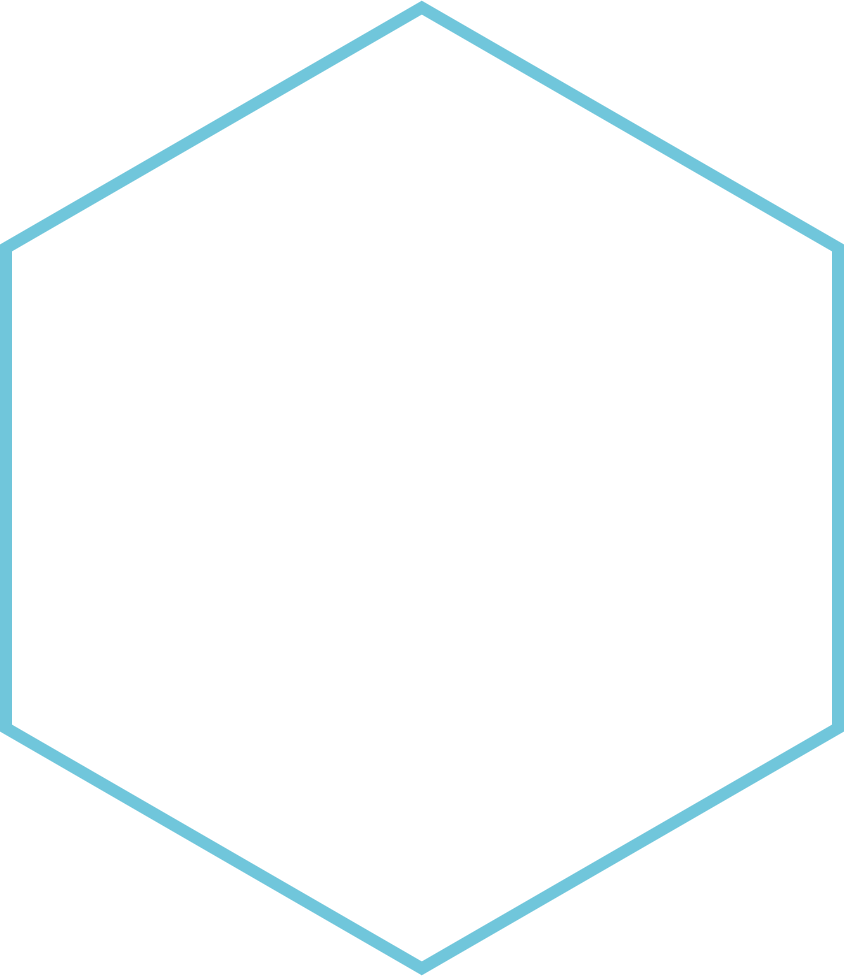
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| **Mid-term Review of UNDP/GEF ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630).**  ***Final Report*** |
| **International Consultant: Mohammad Alatoom**  **National Consultant: Yilikal Addisu**  April-July 2024 |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Project title:** Mid-term Review of UNDP/GEF ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630). | **UNDP PIMS ID number:** 5630  **GEF ID number**: 9303 | | **Evaluation timeframe:** April-May 2024 | GEF focal area: Climate Change Adaptation | | **GEF executing agency:** UNDP.  **Implementing partner**: Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority | Project start date: Feb 15, 2021 (UNDP). End date: Feb 15, 2027. | | **LDCF funding:** $5.8 mil UNDP: $0.2 mil  **Country**: Ethiopia | The Project Objective is to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems. | |
|  |





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The Evaluators would like to express gratitude to all of the project teams, partners and stakeholders who participated in the evaluation. In particular to the project management unit and UNDP Country Office for facilitating the evaluation activities, sharing information and data as well as the facilitating access to stakeholders for interviews.

**Disclaimer**

This report is the work of independent consultants, and doesn’t necessarily represent the views, policy, or intentions of the GEF agency (i.e UNDP), Government and project partners. The opinions and recommendations in the evaluation will be those of the Evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the position of UNDP, Government or any of the Programme stakeholders.

# Table of Contents

[**Disclaimer** 1](#_Toc173078710)

[Table of Contents 2](#_Toc173078711)

[1.1 List of tables 4](#_Toc173078712)

[1.2 List of Figures 4](#_Toc173078713)

[1.3 Acronyms and Abbreviations 5](#_Toc173078714)

[1.4 Project information table 7](#_Toc173078715)

[**2** **Executive summary** 8](#_Toc173078716)

[2.1 Project Description 8](#_Toc173078717)

[2.2 Evaluation scope & methods 8](#_Toc173078718)

[2.3 Progress Summary and main conclusions 9](#_Toc173078719)

[2.4 MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table 11](#_Toc173078720)

[2.5 Recommendations summary table 14](#_Toc173078721)

[**1.** **Introduction** 16](#_Toc173078722)

[1.1 Purpose & scope 16](#_Toc173078723)

[1.2 MTR Approach 17](#_Toc173078724)

[1.3 Methods 18](#_Toc173078725)

[Data collection methods 18](#_Toc173078726)

[Data analysis methods 19](#_Toc173078727)

[1.4 Ethical Considerations 20](#_Toc173078728)

[1.5 Limitations 20](#_Toc173078729)

[1.6 Structure of the Report 20](#_Toc173078730)

[**2.** **Project Description** 21](#_Toc173078731)

[2.1 Development context 21](#_Toc173078732)

[2.2 Problems that Project Seeks to Address 22](#_Toc173078733)

[2.3 Project Description and Strategy 23](#_Toc173078734)

[2.4 Project timeframe, funding and location 25](#_Toc173078735)

[2.5 Theory of change 25](#_Toc173078736)

[2.6 Main stakeholders 28](#_Toc173078737)

[**3.** **Findings** 29](#_Toc173078738)

[3.1 Project Strategy 29](#_Toc173078739)

[Project Design 29](#_Toc173078740)

[The Project Results Framework 32](#_Toc173078741)

[Relevance 34](#_Toc173078742)

[3.2 Progress Towards Results 38](#_Toc173078743)

[Progress towards outcomes analysis 38](#_Toc173078744)

[Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective 59](#_Toc173078745)

[3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management 61](#_Toc173078746)

[Management Arrangements 61](#_Toc173078747)

[Work planning 62](#_Toc173078748)

[Finance and co-finance 63](#_Toc173078749)

[Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems 65](#_Toc173078750)

[Stakeholder engagement 67](#_Toc173078751)

[Reporting 68](#_Toc173078752)

[Communications 69](#_Toc173078753)

[3.4 Sustainability 69](#_Toc173078754)

[Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability 69](#_Toc173078755)

[Financial risks to sustainability 70](#_Toc173078756)

[Socio-economic risks to sustainability 71](#_Toc173078757)

[Environmental risks to sustainability 72](#_Toc173078758)

[**4.** **Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons** 74](#_Toc173078759)

[4.1 Main Findings & conclusions 74](#_Toc173078760)

[4.2 Recommendations and Lessons Learned 80](#_Toc173078761)

[**3** **Annexes** 84](#_Toc173078762)

[3.1 Annex 1: MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes) 84](#_Toc173078763)

[3.2 Annex 2: List of documents reviewed. 84](#_Toc173078764)

[3.3 Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix 85](#_Toc173078765)

[3.4 Annex 4: Interview questions 92](#_Toc173078766)

[3.5 Annex 5 MTR Mission itinerary and agenda 94](#_Toc173078767)

[3.6 Annex 6: MTR Rating scales 95](#_Toc173078768)

[3.7 Annex 7: list of persons consulted 97](#_Toc173078769)

[3.8 Annex 8: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form 99](#_Toc173078770)

[3.9 Annex 9: Signed MTR Report Clearance form 100](#_Toc173078771)

[3.10 Annex 10: Co-Financing for The Project by Name and By Type 100](#_Toc173078772)

[3.11 Annex 11: Core Indicators (in a separate file) 100](#_Toc173078773)

[3.12 Annex 12: MTR Audit Trail (in a separate file) 100](#_Toc173078774)

## List of tables

[Table 1: Recommendations table 14](#_Toc173078775)

[Table 2: Key stakeholders of the project 28](#_Toc173078776)

[Table 3: Assessment of the PRF indicators 32](#_Toc173078777)

[Table 4: Delivery on MTR target broken by Woreda 40](#_Toc173078778)

[Table 5: Delivery on training targets broken down by Woreda 47](#_Toc173078779)

[Table 6: CCA Lowlands project expenditures overview 64](#_Toc173078780)

[Table 7: Aggregate summary data of achieved co-financing at the MTR stage 65](#_Toc173078781)

[Table 8: Evaluation Matrix 85](#_Toc173078782)

[Table 9: MTR Rating Scales & Evaluation Ratings Table 95](#_Toc173078783)

## List of Figures

[Figure 1: Project theory of change diagram. 26](#_Toc173078784)

[Figure 2: CCA lowlands project organizational structure. 30](#_Toc173078785)

[Figure 3: A picture of a beneficiary house 41](#_Toc173078786)

[Figure 4: Poultry in Harewo 41](#_Toc173078787)

[Figure 5: CCA Lowlands training modules 46](#_Toc173078788)

[Figure 6: Pictures of AWS installation and training 51](#_Toc173078789)

[Figure 7: Gully protection in Harew (Left) and Area Closure in Babile (Right) 55](#_Toc173078790)

[Figure 8: Nursery and Demonstration Site in Ale 55](#_Toc173078791)

[Figure 9: Borehole drilled in Harewo (with good yield) 56](#_Toc173078792)

[Figure 10: Goats (Ale) Modern Bee keeping and Biogas (Babile) 56](#_Toc173078793)

[Figure 11: Bakery in Harewo 58](#_Toc173078794)

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AWS | Automatic Weather Stations | NAP | National Adaptation Plan |
| CBE | Community Based Enterprise | NAPA | National Adaptation Programme of Action |
| CBO | Community-based Organisation | NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| CCA | Climate change adaptation | NDC | Nationally Determined Contribution |
| CIRDA | Climate Information for Resilient Development in Africa | NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| CO | Country Office | NIM | National Implementation Modality |
| CRGE | Climate Resilient Green Economy | NMA | National Meteorology Agency |
| CSA | Climate-smart agriculture | NPSDRM | National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Management |
| DA | Development Agent | NPSC | National Project Steering Committee |
| DCD | Deputy Country Director | OFP | Operational Focal Point |
| DFID | Department for International Development | ORDA | Organisation for the Rehabilitation and Development of Amhara |
| DRR | Deputy Resident Representative | PAC | Project Appraisal Committee |
| EFCCC | Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission | PFAA | Project Finance and Administrative Associate |
| EIAR | Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research | PIF | Project Identification Form |
| EMI | Ethiopian Meteorological Institute | PIR | Project Implementation Report |
| EEPA | Ethiopian Environment Protection Authority | PM | Project Manager |
| EPACC | Ethiopia’s Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change | PMC | Project Management Cost |
| ERC | Evaluation Resource Centre | PMU | Project Management Unit |
| ESIA | Environmental and Social Impact Assessment | PPG | Project Preparation Grant |
| ESMP | Environmental and Social Management Plan | PRODOC | Project Document |
| ESSP | Ethiopia Strategy Support Program | QA | Quality Assurance |
| EWS | Early Warning System | RA | Regional Administration |
| EWSP | Ethiopian Water Sector Policy | ROAR | Results Orientated Annual Report |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organisation | RR | Resident Representative |
| FNC | First National Communication | RTA | Regional Technical Adviser |
| FSP | Full Sized Project | SBAA | Standard Basic Assistance Agreement |
| GES | Green Economy Strategy | SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| GCF | Green Climate Fund | SDPRP | Ethiopia’s Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product | SESA | Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility | SESP | Social and Environmental Screening Procedure |
| GIS | Geographic Information Systems | SLM | Sustainable Land Management |
| GEFSEC | Global Environment Facility Secretariat | SLMP | Sustainable Land Management Programme |
| GoE | Government of Ethiopia | SNC | Second National Communication |
| GM | Global Mechanism | SNNPR | Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region |
| GTP | Growth and Transformation Plan | SSTrC | South-South and Triangular Cooperation |
| HABP | Household Asset Building Programme | STAP | GEF Scientific Technical Advisory Panel |
| HACT | Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer | SWC | Soil and Water Conservation |
| IEO | Independent Evaluation Office | TBWP | Total Budget and Workplan |
| IFPRI | International Food Policy Research Institute | TE | Terminal Evaluation |
| INDC | Intended Nationally Determined Contribution | ToC | Theory of Change |
| IP | Implementing Partner | TOR | Terms of Reference |
| KM | Knowledge Management | TOT | Training of Trainers |
| LDC | Least Developed Country | TRAC | Thematic Resources Assigned from the Core |
| LDCF | Least Developed Country Fund | UN | United Nations |
| LOA | Standard Letter of Agreement | UNCCD | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation | UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal | UNDP-GEF | UNDP Global Environmental Finance |
| MEA | Multi-lateral Environmental Agreement | UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| MoANR | Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources | UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |
| MoEF | Ministry of Environment and Forest | UNSDCF | United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework |
| MoFEC | Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation | USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| MoH | Ministry of Health | WFP | World Food Programme |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding | WPO | Woreda Project Officer |
| MoWIE | Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity | WSC | Woreda Steering Committee |
| MSP | Medium Sized Project |  |  |
| MTR | Mid-Term Review |  |  |

## Project information table

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project Title | Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630). | | | |
| UNDP Project ID (PIMS #): | 5630 | PIF Approval Date: | | Feb 15, 2018 |
| GEF Project ID (PMIS #): | 9303 | CEO Endorsement Date: | | Sep 25, 2020 |
| ATLAS Business Unit, Award # Project. ID: | 00116829 | Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (date project began): | | Feb 15, 2021 |
| Country(ies): | Ethiopia | Date project manager hired: | | July 2021 |
| Region: | Africa | Inception Workshop date: | | Aug 25, 2021 |
| Focal Area: | Climate Change Adaptation | Midterm Review completion date: | | June 2024 |
| GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective: | Climate Change Adaptation (LDCF) | Planned closing date: | | Feb 15, 2027 |
| Trust Fund [indicate GEF TF, LDCF, SCCF, NPIF]: | LDCF | If revised, proposed op. closing date: | |  |
| Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner: | Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority | | | |
| Other execution partners: | NA | | | |
| Project Financing | at CEO endorsement (US$) in million | | at MTR (US$) | |
| [1] GEF financing: | 5.836 | | 4,075,639 | |
| [2] UNDP contribution: | 0.2 | | 90,500 | |
| [3] Government: | 10.25 | | 6,691,000 | |
| [4] Other partners: |  | | 00 | |
| [5] Total co-financing [2 + 3+ 4]: | 10.45 | | 6,777,000 | |
| PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5] | 16.286 | | 10,852,639 | |

# Executive summary

## Project Description

The project seeks to remove the barriers that have hindered land users and government stakeholders from building their resilience and adaptive capacity, particularly those vulnerable communities represented by women and youths in the targeted lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia. To this effect, a range of capacity development interventions tailored to the needs of the targeted land users and government stakeholders are implemented as outlined in the following project outcomes, outputs and activities below.

**Project Objective is to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems**. The project plans to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems by delivering the following three integrated outcomes:

Outcome 1: Technical Capacity for planning diversified climate change adaptation practices strengthened. This outcome is meant to deliver strengthened capacity of farmers, agro-pastoralists and pastoralists on planning, monitoring and evaluating diverse climate change adaptation approaches.

Outcome 2: Climate adaptive management adopted by local communities through accessible climate information and decision-making tools. This outcome is meant to deliver the adoption of climate adaptive management practices by local communities using climate information and appropriate decision-making tools.

Outcome 3: Climate change adaptation practices implemented by communities in lowland ecosystems. This outcome is meant to strengthen land users capacity for the implementation of climate change adaptation practices for building resilience and diversification of their livelihoods options.

The ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630) is being implemented by the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority following UNDP’s National Implementation Modality (NIM). The project started on the 25th of August 2021 and is in its third year of implementation. With a total allocated budget of US$ 6,036,073.00, and spanning over a period of six years starting in August 2021, the project plans to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems.

## Evaluation scope & methods

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project assessed the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and drew lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and assessed 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 reviewed the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability. The purpose of the MTR was to provide an in-depth assessment of the results against the three outcomes of the project and performance in terms of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, inclusiveness, participation, accountability, and transparency.

The methodology of the MTR encompassed a comprehensive desk review of project documentation, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, focus group discussions with project beneficiaries and field visits to significant project sites to collect firsthand evidence. This mixed-method approach allowed for data triangulation, increasing accuracy and informing the reliability of the evaluation results. Throughout the process, purposive sampling aimed to capture a diverse range of stakeholder perspectives, ensuring gender responsiveness and inclusivity in data collection and analysis. Analytical techniques included descriptive analysis, content analysis, thematic analysis, and quantitative analysis, all aimed at identifying common trends, themes, and quantifiable project impacts.

## Progress Summary and main conclusions

The MTR of the CCA Lowlands Project found the design to be generally sound, addressing climate change impacts on lowland communities with a focus on women and youth. The project successfully integrates natural solutions and technology to adapt to climate change, enhancing both 'natural' and 'social' assets. However, the Theory of Change lacks clear pathways, and budget underestimations were noted. The Project Results Framework (PRF) indicators mostly meet SMART criteria, though some indicators lack clarity, leading to potential double-counting of beneficiaries.

The project has benefitted 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females)[[1]](#footnote-2) across 10 Woredas, providing skill development training, climate information, advisory services, and livelihood support. Beneficiaries reported significant economic improvements, better living standards, and increased adaptive capacity to climate risks. Despite conflicts preventing interventions in two Woredas, the project achieved 101% of its MTR target, enhancing community resilience and promoting economic growth.

Under component 1: Understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation measures at the community level has significantly improved due to the CCA Lowlands Project. The project has successfully increased the technical capacities of farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists, with 1,512 beneficiaries (793 men and 719 women) receiving training and enhancing knowledge and skills on climate-smart solutions and adaptation practices, exceeding the target by 125%. The training modules, delivered efficiently by universities, covered various essential topics such as climate-smart technology, climate and weather information for planning, emergency response, fall armyworm monitoring, flood management, adaptive soil and water conservation, and diversified livelihoods. Additionally, local authorities' capacity was built by training 78 higher experts (70 men and 8 women) to mentor extension service providers and local communities. Comprehensive climate adaptation plans for ten Woredas have been developed and implemented, although plans for two Woredas are still pending, mainly because a security challenges in Northern Ethiopia, which have resulted in inaccessibility. community climate adaptation action plans were prepared at project site level for 6 Woredas.

Under outcome 2, the project enhanced local communities' access to climate forecasts and advisory services to support climate adaptive management. Nine AWS were procured, with six installed and operational, providing reliable, real-time climate and weather information. Five technical staff from the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) were trained to install, operate, and maintain these stations. Additionally, 450 community members (200 men and 250 women) received plastic rain gauges and training from EMI to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming. Seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were disseminated to 60,893[[2]](#footnote-3) community members via Telegram and other channels. However, digitized decision support tools and proactive climate adaptive management plans are still needed to further enhance the effectiveness of climate and weather information dissemination.

Under outcome 3, the CCA Lowlands Project has significantly enhanced the capacity of land users in ten Woredas by introducing various climate-adaptive technologies and supporting diversified livelihood options. Key achievements include promoting climate-resilient livelihoods such as supplementary irrigation, small ruminant rearing, modern beekeeping, water harvesting, drought-resistant crops, and poultry farming, tailored to the needs of local communities, particularly vulnerable groups. The project provided technical support to 60,893 individuals (20,477 men and 20,381 women) to implement these practices. Additionally, it rehabilitated and restored 1192 hectares of degraded communal land, improved land productivity through bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques, and established soil and water conservation structures on 1,192 hectares of land. The project also planted 599,556 multipurpose trees and grasses, drilled five boreholes, completed three river diversions, and developed one stream to support adaptation efforts.

The MTR identified barriers such as political unrest, security issues, COVID-19 impacts, market inflation, and understaffed PMU. Despite these challenges, the project met its MTR co-financing target, reflecting strong local ownership. The M&E framework was found adequate, and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) has provided effective strategic guidance.

Stakeholder engagement has been pivotal, with active participation from federal and sub-national levels, universities, and local communities. Effective communication with stakeholders and beneficiaries has been maintained, although external communication could be improved to attract additional support.

The project faces potential budget deficits and financial challenges, as it has spent 70% of its cash funding halfway through its timeline, with significant not started at all two woredas and high admin cost due to the geographical distribution of the project sites, necessitating immediate action from UNDP and EPA to reassess financial needs, mobilize additional resources, and possibly revise project targets to align with the available budget and mobilized resources. The project met its MTR co-financing target. Co-financing has primarily come from federal agencies such as the EPA and EMI, along with significant contributions from woreda-level administrations.

The project's sustainability is anchored in strong community and organizational ownership, capacity-building initiatives, and effective community consultations. However, challenges remain, including the future operation and funding of the climate-adaptive action plans and uncertainties about post-project coordination and lacking clear funding pathways beyond the project.

## MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
| Project Strategy | N/A | The MTR Team found the CCA Lowlands Project design to be generally sound, as it was based on a thorough understanding of how climate change impacts lowland communities and their ability to achieve livelihood resilience and sustainable job opportunities, with a focus on women and youth. The project integrates natural solutions and appropriate technology to adapt to climate change, aiming to strengthen both 'natural' and 'social' assets. However, the Theory of Change lacks clear pathways showing immediate and behavioural changes linked to assumptions and global environmental benefits. Additionally, the project design underestimated the budget for drilling water wells.  The majority of the indicators defined in the PRF of the CCA Lowlands Project meet the “SMART” criteria to some extent, although some indicators lack clarity. Furthermore, people-count indicators #1, 2, 5, and 7 (see Table 3) are repetitive, creating a significant risk of double-counting beneficiaries. These flaws in indicator design have reduced the PRF's utility and caused confusion about reporting and effectively monitoring project progress. On the positive side, the descriptions of the project objective and outcomes are concise and clear, with defined numeric targets and time frames for SMART indicators. Additionally, the project design includes MTR and TE targets to aid in the planning process, though it does not define annual targets. |
| Progress Towards Results | Objective Achievement Rating: Satisfactory (S) | The CCA lowlands project is assessed to be on track in achieving its objective by achieving 101% of the MTR target for the number of beneficiaries (60,893) out of 60,000), and in terms of enhancing the community adaptive capacity to climate change, enhanced food security, improved communal economic growth and subsequently enhancing social status of the beneficiaries, through a combination of capacity, knowledge as well as introduction of climate-resilient livelihood options. |
| Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: Satisfactory (S) | The project exceeded its targets by achieving 125% of the TE target for trainees with improved understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation measures at the community level has significantly improved.  Training modules have been developed and implemented covering various topics, including climate-smart technology, climate and weather information for planning, and diversified livelihoods. Universities played a key role in delivering these trainings efficiently.  Six community climate change adaptation action plans for six Woredas have been developed, and six others are pending. A comprehensive plan for ten Woredas has been developed and implemented with project support.  Success stories and best practices are shared through a Telegram group, facilitating knowledge exchange among project staff and stakeholders. Additionally, an experience-sharing visit was conducted to showcase climate change adaptation best practices, forest management, watershed management, and climate-smart agriculture. |
| Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: Satisfactory (S) | Both outcome targets are on track to be achieved.  The project has enhanced local communities' access to climate forecasts and advisory services to support climate adaptive management. Nine AWS were procured, with six installed and operational, providing reliable, real-time climate and weather information. Five technical staff from the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) received training in installation, operation, and maintenance of these stations. 450 community members (200 men and 250 women) were provided with plastic rain gauges to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming, with training from EMI on installation and use.  In collaboration with EMI, nine seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were prepared and disseminated to 40,60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) via a Telegram group. The Woreda task team also distributed decadal, monthly, and seasonal forecasts through various community channels.  Digitized decision support tools to further disseminate climate forecasts, enhancing the reach and effectiveness of climate and weather information to be translated into actions on the ground. However, activities like capacity building on effective dissemination of downscaled forecasts, climate information and advisory services and access to information using telegram services, woreda level early warning task team and development agents were the major adaptive management used for the dissemination of climate forecasts enhance the reach and effectiveness of climate and weather information to be translated into actions at the ground |
| Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: Satisfactory (S) | The MTR target of land restoration has been exceeded by far, and TE target achieved. As for the outcome targets related to number of beneficiaries, this has not been fully achieved despite substantive progress.  The project has significantly increased the capacity of land users in ten Woredas by providing various climate-adaptive technologies and supporting diversified livelihood options. Key achievements include climate-Resilient Livelihoods such as supplementary irrigation, small ruminant rearing, modern beekeeping, water harvesting, drought-resistant crops, and poultry farming. These activities were tailored to the interests and needs of the local communities, especially vulnerable groups. 60,893 individuals benefited, of which 31,665 (52%) received technical support to implement climate-resilient practices.  The project rehabilitated, reforested, and restored 1192 hectares of degraded communal land. Improved land productivity through bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques. Soil and Water Conservation Structures by establishing terraces, trenches, eyebrows, and gabions over 500 hectares of communal land and 692 hectares of farmland. The project planted 599,556 multi-purpose tree and grass species. Drilled five boreholes, completed three river diversions, and developed one stream to support adaptation efforts. |
| Project Implementation & Adaptive Management | Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | UNDP Ethiopia has provided supervision and monitoring for the CCA Lowlands project, including financial monitoring and training on Results-Based Management, although there have been delays in budget transfers due to the new ERC system. The Ethiopian EPA, as the executing agency, has effectively managed and monitored project outcomes, leveraging existing structures to enhance ownership and implementation. Initial delays in recruiting the PMU did not prevent the project from meeting MTR targets satisfactorily. The PMU has maintained a lean and competent team, with UNDP's training significantly improving project management.  The project met its MTR co-financing target, with significant contributions from federal and woreda-level administrations, though documentation of co-financing contributions could improve.  The M&E framework, while adequate, needs alignment with new GEF core indicators.  The PSC has provided effective strategic guidance since 2021. Comprehensive stakeholder engagement, including local authorities, universities, and community members, has been pivotal.  Active community participation has prioritized urgent climate actions and facilitated the implementation of climate-smart agricultural technologies.  Effective reporting and adaptive management have addressed challenges, but external communication to the public and potential partners remains limited, suggesting a need to share success stories more broadly to attract additional support and resources. |
| Sustainability | Institutional framework and governance: Moderately Likely (ML).  Financial: Moderately Unlikely (MU).  Socio-economic: Likely (L)  Environmental: Likely (L). | The project's sustainability is anchored in strong community and organizational ownership, particularly among Ethiopian government institutions like the EPA and EMI. Key factors include successful capacity-building initiatives, enhanced government knowledge on climate change, and effective community consultations. However, challenges such as future operation and funding of the climate-adaptive action plans, uncertainties about post-project coordination, and incomplete solar maintenance training remain. Despite these issues, no significant legal or policy barriers threaten the project's long-term benefits, indicating a solid foundation for sustainability.  While there is genuine interest from stakeholders and communities in scaling CCA solutions, the pathways and financial instruments necessary for this scaling are not yet established.  The CCA Lowlands project effectively addressed the risks of marginalizing vulnerable ethnic groups and other at-risk populations by implementing a "community wealth ranking system" and sensitizing staff through SESP training. The project also empowered communities with land use planning and climate change adaptation skills, fostering stronger rights claims. Extensive community consultations ensured the integration of local needs and enhanced ownership of land users. While the project faced challenges, such as selecting nursery sites and promoting women's leadership in conservative areas, it successfully engaged women and supported 28,545 female beneficiaries. Additionally, the project implemented safety measures to mitigate risks near water infrastructure, although ongoing safety awareness is necessary. Despite the lack of a formal grievance mechanism, the project made significant strides in inclusivity, empowerment, and safety.  The CCA Lowlands project effectively addressed ecological and community risks through strategic reforestation using indigenous species and promoting sustainable land regeneration practices. Training local communities on the benefits of indigenous species, such as bamboo, which significantly contributes to Ethiopia's economy, was a key component. The project also acknowledged potential risks from small-scale water projects, like increased groundwater usage, and emphasized the need for site-specific management plans and community awareness programs. Comprehensive geo-hydrological assessments and EIAs were conducted to ensure the sustainability of water structures and irrigation systems. |

## Recommendations summary table

The following are a mix of recommendations for corrective actions and forward-looking recommendations: more details on the recommendations available in section 4.2.

Table 1: Recommendations table

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | TE Recommendation | Entity Responsible | Timeframe |
| 1 | 1. Shift the project focus from being fully dedicated to the operation into a more strategic approach by addressing the future sustainability issues and opening the horizon for replication. This can be done practically by:    1. Developing a sustainability plan (an exit strategy)    2. Develop replication Atlas for CCA solutions in Ethiopia’s lowlands    3. Identify areas where private sector could have a greater role in supporting the CCA solutions    4. Develop resource mobilisation plan based on innovative financing for CCA. | EPA/PMU and UNDP | 2024 |
| 2 | 1. Urgently assess the financial resources needed to maintain the PMU and meet the project targets, and initiate a resource mobilisation process. | UNDP and PMU | ASAP |
| 3 | 1. Review the implementation strategy for water projects at the Woreda level in light of the budget constraints with aim of diversifying the water solutions for the community. | PSC | 2024 |
| 4 | 1. Incorporate a decision-making tool into the planned mobile application. | PMU | Aug 2024- Dec 2024 |
| 5 | 1. Expedite the development of the local climate adaptive action plans and discuss funding opportunities in collaboration with the local authorities and communities. | PMU | 2024 March 25 |
| 6 | 1. Establish and operate an ongoing monitoring process of the SESP and gender action plan. | UNDP/PMU | ASAP |
| 7 | 1. Define appropriate Grievance Mechanism and make it feasible for the local communities by including it in the project communication materials and awareness activities. | UNDP | ASAP |
| 8 | 1. Develop and disseminate success stories using different communication material (videos, articles, etc) | PMU/ UNDP comm team | ASAP |
| 9 | 1. Build the capacities at the Woreda-level on M&E and results-based management through targeted training. | PMU | Aug-Dec 2024 |
| 10 | 1. Implement a training programme targeting youth to educate them on maintaining the solar systems | PMU | Aug-Dec 2024 |
| 11 | 1. Review project indicators as proposed in table 3 in this document. | UNDP CO and RTA | 2024 |
| 12 | 1. Undertake project audit for the past years (2021,2022 and 2023) and plan future annual audits. | UNDP CO | 2024 |

# Introduction

## Purpose & scope

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) assessed the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and drew lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and assessed 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 reviewed the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability. The purpose of the MTR was to provide an in-depth assessment of the results against the three outcomes of the project and performance in terms of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, inclusiveness, participation, accountability, and transparency.

The MTR process is meant to open up essential learning space both for the UNDP and the implementing partner. This in turn will create an opportunity for possible re-alignment and refinement of some project actions to better embrace the ever-changing dynamics in community needs. Hence, the MTR extracted lessons, mainly to support effective implementation of the project, looking forward. As a result of MTR and its recommendations, Key action areas have been developed to ensure that the project implementer strategically re/aligns itself to meet project expectations over the second half of project implementation period.

The MTR has been implemented in line with the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects.[[3]](#footnote-4)*

The MTR provides evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful and comply with the UNDP/GEF Evaluation Guidelines. The MTR was undertaken in line with UNEG principles concerning independence, credibility, utility, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, participation, competencies and capacities. The evaluation process has been independent of UNDP and project partners. The opinions and recommendations in the evaluation are those of the Evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the position of any stakeholders.

The MTR was carried out between April-May 2024 with a mix of face-to-face engagement in Ethiopia and online engagement where needed.

Mixed methods[[4]](#footnote-5) were used for the MTR to generate mix of qualitative and quantitative data. The use of mixed methods has the advantage of supporting data triangulation across multiple sources, which creates the potential for increased data accuracy and credibility to inform the reliability of the evaluation results. Methods are explained in more detail below.

## MTR Approach

The primary phases of the MTR Implementation included the development and presentation of the MTR Inception Report, MTR mission for primary data collection, presentation of initial MTR findings to key stakeholders and reporting.

***MTR inception phase***

The purpose of the inception report was to define the overall approach and set out the conceptual framework to be applied in the evaluation. The inception report included the understanding of the evaluation objectives, evaluation questions and possible evidence to be generated, defined the methodology, and provides information on data sources and collection, sampling, and key indicators.

This phase included a review of project documentation, review of evaluation questions, and the establishment of criteria for assessing project outcomes. Stakeholder analysis have also been conducted to identify all parties relevant to the evaluation. The inception report has been crucial for ensuring that all parties have a clear understanding of the evaluation scope, methods, and expected deliverables.

***MTR mission for collecting primary data***

The objective of this phase was to gather first-hand data from project sites, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. The MTR evaluation team conducted a field visit to key project sites including 4 woredas to observe work done on the ground and engage directly with the project beneficiaries.

The data collected during this mission forms the backbone of the evaluation, providing essential insights into the project's implementation and effectiveness.

***Presentation of initial MTR findings***

This phase aimed to share preliminary findings with stakeholders to validate the information and gather additional feedback. A Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings was conducted at the end of the MTR mission to present preliminary findings, assessments, conclusions and emerging recommendations.

Feedback from stakeholders during this phase was used to refine and finalize the evaluation report, ensuring it accurately reflects the project’s outcomes and the perspectives of those involved.

***Drafting evaluation report***

The final phase involved compiling this comprehensive evaluation report which includes detailed findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report integrates all data and analyses from the evaluation process and is crafted to provide clear evidence-based conclusions about the project's effectiveness and impact. The final report is essential for accountability and learning. It is used to inform future projects, improve ongoing strategies, and fulfill reporting obligations to donors or other key entities.

## Methods

### Data collection methods

To strengthen the robustness of the evaluation evidence, a mix method was used to generate qualitative and quantitative data to best describe project results based on the results framework as outlined in the project document. The evaluation used methods of document review and interviews for data collection to obtain answer all of the evaluation questions outlined in the TOR. The evaluation had three levels of data collection and validation of information:

* A desk review of project documentation where both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected.
* Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders for qualitative data collection (Annex 7 list of 43 persons interviewed).
* Field visit to key project sites and focus group discussion with beneficiaries.

An evaluation matrix was developed as a base for gathering of qualitative inputs for analysis. The evaluation matrix defined the objective for gathering non-biased, valid, reliable, precise, and useful data with integrity to answer the evaluation questions.

**Desk review*:*** The initial stage involved the review of project documentation and associated documents. An information package was provided by the PROJECT management team to the MTR team. The evaluators reviewed all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including annual reports, progress reports, project files, previous evaluations, national strategic and policy documents, and any other materials that the evaluators considers useful for an evidence-based evaluation assessment. See annex 2 for list of documents reviewed.

The key output of the desktop review was to collect data and information as potential evidence that underpin evaluation and also help the evaluators to familiarize with the work context in details. Annex 2 includes full list of documents were reviewed.

**Semi-structured interviews*:*** Engaging stakeholders has been critical for the success of the evaluation. The project involved multi-stakeholders and teams in different capacities and the MTR engaged with various stakeholders to cover different perspectives taking into account the principle of gender responsiveness. The MTR team has taken into account the geographical coverage, representative diversity, gender balance etc. and inclusivity of key stakeholders and beneficiaries in designing the interview schedule and locations that were visited. Engaging stakeholders was done mainly based on face-to-face interviews in Ethiopia, and where face-to-face engagement was not possible, an online engagement has been organised.

The main purpose of the engagement was to collect evidence that support MTR process and findings and gain sufficient understanding of their perspectives on the program successes and challenges. All interviews were undertaken in full confidentiality.

**Field visit:** The MTR evaluation team conducted a field visit to key project sites including 4 Woredas. During the field visits, direct engagement with the beneficiaries took place using focus group discussions method to better understand their experiences in interacting with the project activities and impacts have these activities had on them.

**Sampling:** Purposive sampling was used to achieve the level of rigor that is required for a robust evaluation. The evaluation responded to the existing diversity across the project stakeholder groups. In essence, the purposive approach to sampling was used to identify the key informants who are best suited to provide detailed responses to the evaluation questions, to accurately reflect given elements of the work experience. This also allowed for additional data generation at any stage of the evaluation, to facilitate results reliability and completeness.

**Gender responsiveness** has been integrated throughout the evaluation process including gender balance during the engagement with stakeholders by ensuring both genders are engaged, and assessing the gender integration in the project design and delivery, and ensuring that data collection and analysis are gender sensitive. The evaluation used gender-disaggregated data of personnel engaged by the project to identify barriers and differentiate roles that may be more suited to each gender. The evaluation also checked whether all “people count” indicators are gender segregated and if the project had reported women ratio in related indicators.

### Data analysis methods

Data analysis was based on observed facts, evidence, and available data. Findings are specific, concise, and supported by quantitative and/or qualitative information that is reliable, valid and generalizable.

Information was analysed and consulted with project team or commissioning unit., and then an evaluation report draft was developed. All analysis must be based on observed facts, evidence and data. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by quantitative and/or qualitative information that is reliable, valid and generalizable. The broad range of data provides strong opportunities for triangulation. This process is essential to ensure a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the data sets, which was generated by the evaluation.

The data analysis method involved:

**Descriptive analysis:** A descriptive analysis of the PROJECT was used to understand and describe its main components, including related activities; partnerships; modalities of delivery; etc. Descriptive analysis preceded more interpretative approaches during the evaluation.

**Content analysis:** A content analysis of relevant documents and the literature was conducted to identify common trends and themes, and patterns for each of the key evaluation issues (as the main units of analysis). Content analysis was used to flag diverging views and opposite trends and determine whether there was need for additional data generation.

**Thematic analysis:** Responses collected from semi-structured interviews and field visit observations were analyzed through thematic analysis, this is a method of analyzing qualitative data. The evaluators has closely examined the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly from interviews and other sources.

**Quantitative analysis:** A simplified analysis was conducted on all quantitative measures (for example number of beneficiaries) by reviewing and validating project datasets on quantitative indicators. The generated statistics were used to develop emergent findings and inform the triangulation process.

**Triangulation:** In this evaluation, triangulation involved validation of data through cross verification from at least two sources, and evaluation findings and conclusions were synthesized based on triangulated evidence from the desktop review and interviews. This process was essential to ensure a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the data sets, which have been generated by the evaluation.

**Evaluation criteria and ratings:** The different scales for rating various criteria are shown in the table below in accordance with GEF-financed, UNDP Implemented Mid-Term Evaluation Guidelines. See Annex 6 for Evaluation criteria and ratings.

## Ethical Considerations

The MTR consultants were held to the highest ethical standards and were required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’[[5]](#footnote-6). The evaluators ensured to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluators also ensured security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process has been solely used for the evaluation and not be used for other purposes without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

## Limitations

The main limitations faced during the evaluation were related to the security situation in some regions going through political conflicts and instabilities, these regions were not accessible for the evaluation team, instead, virtual engagements were conducted to interact with as many stakeholders and beneficiaries as possible in these regions. Also, the geographical distribution of the project activities and stakeholders over across Ethiopia made it logistically challenging to reach some local areas, this led to having the field mission longer than what was initially anticipated.

## Structure of the Report

The MTR report follows the format suggested by the UNDP-GEF MTR guidelines, with a description of the methodology, a description of the project and findings organized around: Project Strategy, Progress towards results, Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, and Sustainability. Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learnt complete the report. Consistently with requirements, certain aspects of the Project are rated, according to the rating scale of the Guidelines. Co-financing information is presented in the chapter under financial management.

# Project Description

## Development context

Ethiopia has the second largest population of 126 million (2023)[[6]](#footnote-7) in Africa, making it the second most populous nation in the continent, after Nigeria. Ethiopia’s economy has grown rapidly primarily as a result of increased agricultural production. Agriculture remains a critical part of Ethiopia’s economy, accounting for 40 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), 80 percent of exports, and an estimated 75 percent of the country's workforce[[7]](#footnote-8). The economy is dominated by smallholder farmers, agro-pastoralists and pastoralists, (here referred to as “Land users”) that rely on rainfall and traditional farming practices. Current practices of cultivating crops and overgrazing of livestock[[8]](#footnote-9) contribute towards large-scale land degradation. Deforestation is taking place at a rate of 92.0 kha per year between 2015 and 2020 in Ethiopia[[9]](#footnote-10).

The country is one of the most vulnerable and the least ready to overcome the impacts of climate shocks. From past records, the mean annual temperature has increased by a magnitude of 0.2 °C to 0.28 °C per decade in the past six decades. The projections for the future clearly show that temperature will rise with in a range of 0.5°C to 2°C by the 2050s relative to the current state. In general, the rise of temperature and recurrent drought and flood across the country could create a favorable environment for secondary hazards. In Ethiopia the impact of climate change and extremes is more visible in the agriculture, water, forest, health, biodiversity, tourism, and infrastructure resources[[10]](#footnote-11).

The rain in the lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia has often started later than expected over the last decade and has been mostly inadequate and unreliable. In many places water scarcity has increased. The unavailability of water imposes higher demands on women’s and girls’ time which would have otherwise been spent on other productive and human development activities. According to the views of land users, in 2018 alone, women and girls walked an average of 6kms a day to collect water. This is significant considering that the twelve woredas being targeted by this project consist of an estimated population of 600,000 people (or 120,000 households) and, according to the records of the concerned woreda administration offices, women represent about 49% of this population.

The land users rely on rain-fed agriculture and their crop production system has been buffeted by acute shocks related to climate. This has made it more difficult for them to grow crops or raise animals in the same way they have been doing. They stated that rain has been erratic, and when it comes it is too much and destroys their crops. They are now questioning the suitability of agriculture as an occupation in view of changing climatic conditions. The lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia is also home to significant livestock population which is characterized by low productivity, poor nutrition, low veterinary care and uncontrolled overgrazing. The grazing land has lower quality of pasture due to intensive grazing. The quality of the grazing land is progressively declining due to shorter rainy seasons, frequent droughts and overgrazing, causing cattle to graze before grasses have produced seeds, creating more shortages in subsequent seasons.

Changes in temperature coupled with frequency of extreme weather events have been damaging crops and reducing yields. Heat stress has entailed disease outbreaks, reduced milk production and resulted in extra expenditure or loss of income. In particular, prolonged dry seasons and droughts have become more frequent and severe. These risks are made worse by an upsurge in pests and diseases, especially the increasing threat of Fall Armyworm. Changes in pest and disease patterns have also threatened crop production and animal husbandry. The ranges and distribution of pests and diseases are likely to increase; causing new problems for crops and animals previously unexposed to these pests and diseases[[11]](#footnote-12). These challenges are further aggravated by climate change and the absence of resilient alternative sustainable income generating activities.

## Problems that Project Seeks to Address

Land users in the Ethiopian lowland ecosystems view climate change as a threat that has resulted in food insecurity and dependence on food aid. However, they also express having limited awareness of the long-term risks that climate change poses, and do not know how to respond to these risks and / or of the options available to adapt to them. Indeed, due to lack of reliable information as well as limited knowledge of, and access to a wide range of adaptation options they are forced to follow unsustainable livelihood systems as they use short term coping mechanisms. Generating, interpreting, packaging and disseminating credible and timely weather and climate forecasts is a challenge in Ethiopia. Lack of access to timely and credible weather and climate forecasts has left land users with no option except to rely on traditional methods of weather forecasting, which has proved ineffective given the context of a changing climate. Discussion with land users and government stakeholders revealed that the challenge of meeting poverty reduction and food security goals has been mainly associated with incapability to plan better so as to minimize climate related losses and damages.

The land users in the target project areas are resource-poor and their low income means they are unable to make investment and take on risk. In particular, the pastoralists in the Somali and Afar regions have seen their daily livelihood challenges being the constant need to cope with challenges like livestock feed, food, water shortages and migration from internal displacement among others. Moreover, because the main resources in the lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia are controlled by men, women rarely participate in decision-making and their contributions in building resilience and adaptive capacity are seldom recognized. In addition, the decrease in food in times of drought has affected human health especially among children under five years, pregnant women and old people, and reduced human disease resistance and productivity.

Land users are taking actions to cope with climate change and related hazards. However, their current coping strategies such as charcoal and firewood selling are not effective in serving their long-term adaptation needs. These coping strategies are based on short-term considerations, and survival needs, leading to mal-adaptation.

Due to the limited support tailored to the needs of land users to maintain their livelihoods while adjusting to climate change, land users across the Ethiopian lowland ecosystems are at risk due to climate-change threats. They face several barriers to effectively managing these risks.

**Barrier #1: Lowland communities lack knowledge on risks of climate change; and the benefits of climate smart solutions and adaptation practices.** The causes and implications of current and future climate change are not well understood within lowland communities. Therefore, the land users in these communities are not ready to adopt climate resilient farming and animal husbandry practices because their knowledge of the risk of climate change as well as how to minimize risks and take advantage of these opportunities[[12]](#footnote-13) are limited. The current coping strategies of land users are not also effective in serving their long-term adaptation needs.

**Barrier #2: Limited access to climate forecasts, decision-making tools and climate advisory services for Lowland communities.** Ethiopia’s Lowland communities do not have access to up-to-date, downscaled climate information, and the appropriate tools and advisory services at their disposal, and are not connected to the climate information, products and advisory services. Technological and capability constraints have hindered the provision of weather and climate forecasts, including guidance and value-added advisory services to land users. In addition, information on how to adopt alternative and innovative farming, pastoral and agro-pastoral practices based on these climate forecasts is not available. This is a result of insufficient availability of climate forecast information, particularly at the local level and inadequate capacity of agricultural extension officers to guide farmers and other land users based on climate forecasts. Consequently, lowland farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists can only undertake limited proactive measures in response to climate change.

**Barrier #3: Inability of land users to invest in climate smart technologies and solutions required to diversify and sustain their livelihoods in the face of climate change.** The land users in the project area are resource-poor and unable to invest in the available climate smart technologies, opportunities and solutions for the diversification of their livelihood system.

## Project Description and Strategy

The project seeks to remove the barriers that have hindered land users and government stakeholders from building their resilience and adaptive capacity, particularly those vulnerable communities represented by women and youths in the targeted lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia. To this effect, a range of capacity development interventions tailored to the needs of the targeted land users and government stakeholders are implemented as outlined in the following project outcomes, outputs and activities below.

**Project Objective is to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems**. The project plans to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems by delivering the following three integrated outcomes:

**Outcome 1: Technical Capacity for planning diversified climate change adaptation practices strengthened.**

This outcome is meant to deliver strengthened capacity of farmers, agro-pastoralists and pastoralists on planning, monitoring and evaluating diverse climate change adaptation approaches.

The outputs under Outcome 1 include:

* 1. Training modules and platform for enhancing the knowledge and capability of government officials, DAs and local-communities in twelve woredas on the formulation and implementation of adaptation measures are established and sustained.
  2. Strengthened capacity of Development Agents (DAs)[[13]](#footnote-14) and government officials to support the implementation of climate change adaptation practices at the woreda and regional levels.
  3. Community action plans for adaptive crop production and animal husbandry developed using a participatory approach in twelve Woredas.
  4. Project benefits and climate change adaptation practices are documented and disseminated to local community members in twelve woredas through learning, using innovative and locally adapted means.

**Outcome 2: Climate adaptive management adopted by local communities through accessible climate information and decision-making tools.**

This outcome is meant to deliver the adoption of climate adaptive management practices by local communities using climate information and appropriate decision-making tools.

The outputs under Outcome 2 include:

* 1. Nine Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) installed and linked to the national meteorological network and protocols for use and maintenance established in each woreda.
  2. Appropriate weather and climate monitoring and forecast technologies acquired by representatives of the beneficiary communities and maintained through a functional and durable partnership.
  3. Climate-risk assessment and decision-making tools developed and used in collaboration with local communities in twelve woredas.
  4. Climate-risk assessment and decision-making tools are pilot tested and periodically improved using the results thereof in each of the twelve woredas.

**Outcome 3: Climate change adaptation practices implemented by communities in lowland ecosystems.**

This outcome is meant to strengthen land users capacity for the implementation of climate change adaptation practices for building resilience and diversification of their livelihoods options.

The outputs under Outcome 3 include:

* 1. Sites identified, through community planning processes, as critically degraded are rehabilitated in the twelve woredas anchored on functional water storage infrastructure designed, constructed and utilized to enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of local communities in the twelve Woredas.
  2. Alternative livelihood opportunities created, expanded and made more responsive to climate change through the implementation of community-led climate adaptive initiatives in the twelve woredas.
  3. Farm/pastureland rehabilitated through physical and biological soil and water conservation measures in degraded areas in each woreda for and by the vulnerable lowland farmer, pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities.
  4. Community-based enterprises established and operationalized in each woreda to develop and strengthen climate resilient local business.
  5. Woreda-level M&E and follow-up strategy developed and adopted by woreda development facilitators and extension agents.

## Project timeframe, funding and location

The ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630) is implemented by the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority. The project started on the 25th of August 2021 and is in its third year of implementation. With a total allocated budget of US$ 6,036,073.00, and spanning over a period of six years starting in August 2021, the project plans to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems.

The project is being implemented by Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority in partnership with the 12 Woreda Administration and Environment Protection Authority of East Belesa, Sahale Seyemt, Dewe, Awash Fentale, Babile, Zuway Dugda, Weyra Dijo, Ale special Woreda, Harewo and Degahabur. Noting that the project has been unable to work in 2 Woredas due to security reasons.

## Theory of change

The project is designed to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems. In so doing, the project seeks to target 60,000 (52% women and 48% men) beneficiaries in twelve Woredas across six regional states of the country. The project intends to strengthen the ability of land users to adapt to the discernible impacts of climate change through i) disseminating credible weather information and advisory services using locally suitable communication channels to inform the preparation and implementation of actions meant for building resilience and adaptive capacity at a watershed level; ii) reaching a wider audience of land users and government stakeholders across the lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia through a Training-of-Trainers (TOT) approach, iii) conducting a “learning by doing” training to promote clarity and commitment of land users and iv) providing needs responsive support to diversify livelihood options in a way that leads to tangible and replicable changes.

The full and effective implementation of this project is set to deliver the following benefits to vulnerable communities in twelve Woredas across the six regions: i) increased understanding of key adaptation issues, including community-based adaptation techniques as a basis for incorporating climate smart technologies and good practices through a practical learning-by-doing approach; ii) enhanced capability to respond to ongoing and emerging threats through the development of climate adaptive action plans by utilizing early warning, downscaled weather information and climate change knowledge products; and iii) enhanced capacity of land users to create, improve and sustain diversified livelihood options at the same time as rehabilitating degraded watersheds.

Figure 1: Project theory of change diagram.

A diagram of a company

Description automatically generated

## Main stakeholders

During the implementation of the Lowland Ecosystems climate adaptation project, the project management team engages with wide spectrum of stakeholders. There are two levels at which participation/engagement occurs in this regard (i) within the implementing group; and (ii) the broader constituent group. The implementing group incorporates organizations responsible and accountable for the project and those responsible for activities that influence the project, for example, institutions that have a role in the management of lowland ecosystems.

Table 2: Key stakeholders of the project

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type of stakeholders | Roles and Responsibilities |
| Government at the federal level: | Supporting, facilitating, coordinating and ensuring:   * vertical and horizontal coordination during planning, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation * collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders at all governance levels * implementation and review of project activities * full participation of women in the project activities**.** * compliance with reporting procedures |
| * Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority |
| * Ministry of Agriculture (MoA |
| * Ethiopia Meteorology Institute(EMI) |
| * Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) |
| * Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC) |
| Government at the sub-national level: | * Promote understanding of the project’s outcomes and ownership of the project; * Manage relationships with PMU and steering committee of the Project * Provide technical assistance to land users**.** * Supervise and provide all technical and logistics support |
| * Ethiopia Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) |
| * Regional ANRs |
| * Regional water, irrigation and Energy Bureaus |
| * Woreda Administrations |
| * Woreda EFCCC like bureaus |
| Vulnerable groups: | * Work towards the achievement the project’s outcomes; * Engage in planning, implementing and monitoring as well as in the evaluation of the interventions; * Maximize synergies with other on-going projects. |
| * Farmers, agro-pastoralists and pastoralists |
| * Women and girls |
| * Youth |

# Findings

## Project Strategy

### Project Design

The MTR Team found the design of the CCA Lowlands Project to be generally sound. The project was built on a solid understanding of how climate change impacts on lowland communities and their ability to achieve livelihood resilience and create sustainable job opportunities, with a particular focus on women and youth who are most affected by climate change in these areas. In response, the project integrates natural solutions (biodiversity and ecosystem services) with appropriate technology to adapt to climate change, aiming to strengthen, protect, and build both 'natural' and 'social' assets, including the interaction between them.

The CCA lowland project design was underpinned by key principles related to promoting multi-sectoral approaches, operating at multiple geographical scales, minimizing trade-offs and maximizing synergies with development and conservation goals to avoid unintended negative social and environmental impacts, incorporating best available science and local knowledge, promoting resilient ecosystems and nature- based solutions to provide benefits to people especially to the most vulnerable, and being participatory, transparent, accountable, and culturally appropriate, while actively embracing equity and gender issues. The defined Theory of Change (ToC) section includes only results chain of outputs and outcomes, but it doesn’t include clear pathways of change showing immediate changes and behavioral changes in a way linked with the assumptions and global environmental benefits.

On the other hand, the project design has underestimated budget for capital intensive activities, particularly in relation to drilling water wells. Only $229,083 have been allocated for drilling 24 wells, whereas actual experience shows the cost per well is around $80,000. This was further complicated by significant inflation. This resulted in setting up the project to a relatively unachievable target of 24 wells within available resources.

Furthermore, the project design has limited information available at the output level. While it is understandable that not defining specific activities allows the PMU flexibility to design activities in the most appropriate way for the circumstances on the ground, but it was expected to at least provide output-level guidance material to direct project implementation and assist the PMU.

**Alignment with NAPA:** The core design of the project adds value to several initiatives developed through the NAPA by consolidating them, allowing for shared lessons, processes, and more. This project design is guided by Ethiopia's NAPA, especially in the selection of cost-effective measures. Ethiopia's NAPA has identified key climate hazards, identified the most vulnerable sectors, and proposed a list of measures to address these climate risks. The CCA Lowlands Project aligns with NAPA's priorities to implement necessary actions that have already been recognized as cost-effective.

**Problem addressed by the CCA lowlands project**: The project design has successfully identified the key barriers that stand in the way of advancing towards the project objective of building sustainable and climate-resilient economic growth among vulnerable communities, targeting lowland areas in Ethiopia, including: i) Lowland communities lack knowledge on risks of climate change; and the benefits of climate smart solutions and adaptation practices; ii) Limited access to climate forecasts, decision-making tools and climate advisory services for Lowland communities; and iii) Inability of land users to invest in climate smart technologies and solutions required to diversify and sustain their livelihoods in the face of climate change. The design clearly outlines, through its Theory of Change, how the proposed project activities will address these barriers and enhance communities' adaptive capacities. It emphasizes capacity building to ensure that CCA measures can be implemented by local communities independently, while also sustaining ecosystem services.

**Lessons learned from other projects:** The project document references several relevant projects identified during the PPG phase, along with their alignment strategy, aiming to build on and complement these initiatives. A key focus is the "CCA Growth: Implementing Climate Resilient and Green Economy Plans in Highland Areas in Ethiopia" project, another CCA initiative funded by the LDCF, which informed the design and development of the CCA Lowlands Project. For example, the provision of local weather forecasts to land users has been built upon and continues from the CCA Highlands Project.

**Management arrangements and decision making:** The CCA lowlands project design allows for inclusive, participatory, collaborative and bottom-up approach to decision making processes. In addition to the Steering Committee (PSC) at the national level that performs the role of the project board, a Woreda Steering Committee has been designed at the local as a key engagement gateway with the communities and local authorities and to consult with relevant CBOs, farmer, pastoralist, women and youth group. Both committees have further strengthened technical committees (TCs) in making any technical decisions related to the Project.

The project has been designed to be implemented following UNDP’s National Implementation Modality (NIM), according to the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between UNDP and the Government of Ethiopia, and the Country Programme. The Implementing Partner for this project is the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), formerly known as Environment Forest and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC), and is responsible and accountable for managing this project, including the monitoring of project interventions, achieving project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP resources.

Project implementation is overseen by the PSC who is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. The PSC also provides overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints, address project issues as raised by the project manager, and provides guidance on new project risks, and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks. The Woreda Steering Committee (WSC) creates an environment conducive for farmers, women, unemployed youth and other vulnerable groups to set and achieve targets, and ensures effectiveness of project activities in converting the project sites into a climate resilient landscape.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is hosted by EPA and responsible for running the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Implementing Partner and within the constraints laid down by the NSC.

Figure 2: CCA lowlands project organizational structure.

**Implementing Partner:**

**Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission**

**Project Board/National Project Steering Committee**

**Development Partners**

***UNDP RR***

**Project Executive**

***Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission***

**Beneficiary Representatives**

***MoANR, MoLF, NMA, Regional and Zonal EFCCC, DRMC, EBI, EEFRI, EAI, APADB, OPDC***

**Project Assurance**

***UNDP***

Country Office Programme Specialist

Regional Technical Advisor

Principal Technical Advisor

**Project Management Unit:**

**National Project Manager, Project Technical Specialist, Woreda Project Assistant, Finance Assistants**

**Project Organisation Structure**

**Responsible Party – Service Provider to be determined and contracted as necessary**

**Responsible Party – Service Provider to be determined and contracted as necessary**

**Responsible Party – Service Provider to be determined and contracted as necessary**

**Gender responsiveness of project design**: The project design acknowledged the fact that women in the lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia are disproportionately vulnerable and suffer the most from the effects of climate change, particularly in light of the existing gender differences in property rights, access to information and cultural, social and economic roles, the effects of climate change will affect men and women differently. In response, the project design includes special programming intervention efforts focused on designing activities in which rural women are meant to be engaged. Gender analysis and action plan development took place at the PPG stage and Annex G of the project document presents the gender action plan to incorporate gender considerations in the implementation procedures for the project The gender action plan provided specific actions and recommendations to be integrated into the project design and implementation with clear management arrangements specifically suggested for this purpose. Also, project indicators have been designed in such way that capture data disaggregation by gender to better understand the project impacts on women.

**UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP):** SESP has been delivered during the PPG stage. The SESP of the project provides a clear definition of how the project incorporates overarching principles to enhance Social and Environmental Sustainability. It outlines the integration of a human-rights based approach and gender equality through awareness campaigns, empowering women to participate to ensure equality of opportunity and contributing to more stable job opportunities for the communities. The SESP defined 9 social and environmental risks (7 moderate and 2 low) which have been assessed in terms of likelihood and impact and supported with management measures aiming to monitor and mitigate the identified risks.

**Planned stakeholders participation**: The prodoc identified stakeholders including partners at all levels including at the national level, sub-national level regional and local communities. The project document outlines a summary list of stakeholders and maps out their contributions and relevant to the project activities/outputs in generic terms. A more detailed and updated stakeholder involvement plan was envisaged to be developed in the inception phase of the project, but this didn’t actually happen.

### The Project Results Framework

This section provides a critical assessment of the Project Results Framework (PRF) in terms of clarity, feasibility and logical sequence of the project outcomes/outputs and their links to the project objective. It also examines the specific indicators and their target values in terms of the SMART criteria.

The majority of the indicators defined in the PRF of the CCA lowlands Project meets the “SMART” criteria to a certain degree, with some indicators lacked for clarity. More importantly, the people-count indicators #c1, 2, 5 &7 (see table 3) have been repetitive with a huge opportunity for double-counting beneficiaries. These flaws in the indicators design have affected the utility of the PRF and caused confusion as to what to report and when to effectively monitor Project progress. On the positive side, descriptions of the Project objective and outcomes are concise and easily understandable with clear numeric targets and time frames for SMART indicators, the project design defined MTR and TE targets to help the project planning process (but no annual targets were defined).

Table 3: Assessment of the PRF indicators

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project result | Old Indicator | New indicator | Remarks |
| Project Objective: To promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems | 1. Number of direct project beneficiaries - dis-aggregated by gender. | No change. | A standard GEF core indicator that meets the SMART criteria.  No change to the indicator itself, however, the target should be accumulation of indicators #2, 5 &7.  However, the definition of ‘***direct beneficiaries***, according to the GEF guidelines include those who are benefiting from access to information, trainings, awareness, livelihood support, ect so there is repetition and a room for double counting with indicators #2, 5 &7. |
| Outcome1 Technical Capacity for planning diversified climate change adaptation practices strengthened | 1. Number of participants trained on key adaptation issues, including community-based adaptation techniques | No change. To be labelled as sub-indicator 1.1 to avoid double counting.  1.1: Number of participants trained on key adaptation issues, including community-based adaptation techniques | A big room for double counting with objective-level indicator #1. |
|  | 1. Number of Climate adaptive action plans developed taking into consideration climate smart approaches and future scenario. | Number of Woreda Climate adaptive action plans developed and endorsed taking into consideration climate smart approaches and future scenario. | The indicator is an output-based, and it doesn’t specify what kind of action plan is expected at what level (i.e at Woreda level, regional level, etc). |
| Outcome 2: Climate adaptive management adopted by local communities through accessible climate information and decision-making tools | 1. Number of AWS operational in each of the 9 uncovered Woredas | No change. | No major concerns. It should be understood though that the term ‘operational’ means fully functioning in generating and disseminating data/information.  Add a note on the definition of ‘operational’ in this case being “fully functioning in generating and disseminating data/information” |
|  | 1. Number of people with access to weather forecasts and advisory services at project sites – disaggregated by gender | 1.2: Number of people with access to weather forecasts through the mobile app – disaggregated by gender | * This indicator cannot be accurately measured because people could access information via radio messages, community gatherings or any other means that cannot be practically tracked and monitored. * Also, it opens the door for double counting with objective level indicator #1.   To be labelled as sub-indicator 1.2 to avoid double counting. |
| Outcome 3  Climate change adaptation practices implemented by communities in lowland ecosystems. | 1. Ha of degraded land rehabilitated, forested or restored | No change | A standard GEF core indicator that meets the SMART criteria. |
|  | 1. Population benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options:   Number of people  % of female  % of the target population | 1.3: Population benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options:  Number of people  % of female  % of the target population | Repetition of the objective level indicator #1. This opens the room for double counting.  No change. Just to be labelled as sub-indicator 1.3 to avoid double counting. |
| Outcome 4  Knowledge Management and M&E | 1. % increase in number of beneficiaries aware of climate risks and knowledge of response measures (established based on surveys) | % increase in number of engaged beneficiaries who self-report their improved awareness of climate risks and knowledge of response measures (established based on surveys) | There is no clear definition as to what makes a certain beneficiary considered as ‘aware’. Gathering survey data on the level of awareness means it is **self-reported** awareness on **improving** awareness.  There is no evidence to suggest that the baseline is zero.  The project has not been collecting survey data to date. |

The overall CCA lowlands Project design and Project results framework were Moderately Satisfactory exhibiting clear linkages amongst activities, outputs, and outcomes, with a few shortcomings in indicators and budget estimations.

### Relevance

**Relevance to the needs of the beneficiaries**

Based on the MTR team's direct engagement with the beneficiaries, it is evident that the CCA Lowlands Project is highly relevant to the needs of the target beneficiaries, specifically, the lowland communities. The main land users have received support to maintain their livelihoods while adapting to climate change, and they have affirmed that this support was highly necessary and is positively impacting their daily lives. The beneficiaries have expressed a desire for continued support in the same manner, addressing the same needs. This has been consistent with the views of the local authorities at the woreda level as well, they have also confirmed the high relevance of the support provided, particularly regarding livelihood assistance, weather stations, rehabilitation of degraded lands, water supply options for domestic use and irrigation practice, capacity building, and awareness initiatives.

**Ethiopia’s Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030)**

This project is aligned with Ethiopia’s Ten-Year Development Plan 2021-2030[[14]](#footnote-15). The plan recognises environment and climate change as a major focus area ensuring sustainable development by developing, enriching, maintaining and protecting the country’s natural environment, forests, wildlife and other biodiversity resources, and also through ensuring sustainable utilization as well as maintenance of healthy ecosystem interactions. Also, the plan specifically aims to raise the incomes and livelihoods of farmers and pastoralists and end poverty by making agriculture more productive and competitive; to play a major role in the structural transformation of the economy, especially to satisfy the food and nutritional needs of the nation by modernizing agriculture; to supply raw material inputs for the industrial sector; to provide adequate quantities of exportable agricultural products that have added value; to create sufficient job opportunities in rural areas; and to reduce the impact of climate change on the sector, to which the CCA lowlands project directly contributes.

**The Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE)**

This project is aligned with Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy strategy[[15]](#footnote-16) (CRGE). The strategy reflects Ethiopia's commitment to sustainable development by aligning economic growth with environmental conservation and climate resilience. The CRGE strategy aims to fostering economic development and growth, ensuring abatement and avoidance of future emissions (i.e., transition to a green economy) and improving resilience to climate change. The strategy is built on four pillars, including; agriculture, forestry, renewable Energy and modern technologies. The strategy details actions like capacity building, financial sourcing, and leveraging international cooperation to support the green economy initiatives.

**The National Adaptation Plan 2019**

The CCA lowlands project is also aligned with the Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan 2019[[16]](#footnote-17) (NAP), the NAP is a strategic effort to integrate climate change adaptation into the country's long-term development strategies, enhancing resilience to climate impacts. This plan builds on existing frameworks such as the CRGE strategy and the GTP II. The NAP focuses on reducing vulnerability to climate change by enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience, strengthened governance structures and mobilizing financial resources and building capacities to implement the adaptation strategies effectively. The plan identifies agriculture and water among the most vulnerable sectors in Ethiopia and sets specific adaptation measures for these areas, to which the CCA lowlands contributes directly.

**The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Ethiopia**

This CCA lowlands project is aligned with the climate change adaptation component of Ethiopia's updated Nationally Determined Contributions (2020-2030) published in 2021 [[17]](#footnote-18) (NDC) focuses on a range of strategic actions and interventions aimed at enhancing resilience across multiple sectors. Recognizing the country's vulnerability to climate change impacts like drought and floods, the CCA project contributes directly to the adaptation efforts focusing on climate-smart agriculture, drought-resistant crops and livestock. Also, in line with the NDC, the CCA lowlands project adopts gender-responsive approach, ensuring that vulnerable groups and communities benefit equitably from adaptation efforts.

**The Environmental Policy of Ethiopia**

This project is aligned with the Environmental Policy of Ethiopia[[18]](#footnote-19). The policy has a significant emphasis on climate change adaptation, alongside sustainable management of natural resources, building a climate-resilient green economy by integrating climate adaptation into national and regional development plans and raising awareness about climate change and enhancing the knowledge and skills of executive bodies and communities involved in climate adaptation, to which, the CCA lowlands project has a direct contribution.

**Ethiopia’s Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change**

This project is aligned with Ethiopia’s Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change[[19]](#footnote-20) (EPACC). The EPACC calls for the mainstreaming of climate change into decision-making at a national level and emphasizes planning and implementation monitoring. It identifies 20 climate change risks and relevant adaptation practices, mainly in the following areas: health risks (human and animal); agriculture production decline; land degradation; water shortages; biodiversity; waste; displacement; distributive justice. The EPACC also identifies institutions responsible for mitigating these risks.

**Sustainable Development Goals**

This project is aligned with the SDG 8 – Promote sustained inclusive and sustainable economic growth, by supporting communities in Ethiopia in developing their livelihoods to thrive and generate more income; SDG 12 – Achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by supporting more food production livelihood for the communities in the lowlands; SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by strengthening lowlands communities resilience to climate change through more robust climate information, awareness and capacity building; SDG 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems by restoring degraded lands in lowlands for the benefit of the communities and nature.

**United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Country Programme Document 2020-2025**

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework[[20]](#footnote-21) (UNSDCF) represents the United Nations cooperation framework with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the period 2020-2025. It replaces the previous United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Ethiopia (2016-2020). This project is aligned with in the UNSDCF Programme Document for Ethiopia 2020- 2025, in particular Outcome 4: All people in Ethiopia live in a society resilient to environmental risks and adapted to climate change. Outcome 4 focuses on enhancing societal resilience to environmental risks and adapting to climate change, through capacity building and implementing national policies aimed at achieving green economy. The CCA lowlands project directly contributes to report on number of UNSDF’s indicators including 4.1.1. Number of climate change interventions monitoring information systems developed and operationalized.

**UNDP Country Programme Document for Ethiopia**

This project is aligned with in the UNDP Country Programme Document for Ethiopia 2020- 2025[[21]](#footnote-22), in particular Output 3.4: Action on climate change adaptation and mitigation scaled-up, funded and implemented across sectors. The CCA lowlands project is a key intervention for UNDP to achieve this output by supporting the lowlands communities in Ethiopia to be more resilient to climate change.

## Progress Towards Results

### Progress towards outcomes analysis

Overall, the project has been progressing in satisfactory manner towards its objectives and outcomes, with 6 out of 9 targets are either achieved, on track or outperformed, and 1 target is lagging behind (# of people benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options). The CCA lowlands project is assessed to be on track in achieving its objective by achieving 101% of the MTR target for the number of beneficiaries (60,893 out of 60,000) despite being unable to intervene in two Woredas (Saharite Samri and Weyra Luake) due to conflicts. The project strengthened the adaptive capacity of the targeted communities to climate change through a combination of capacity, knowledge as well as introduction of climate-resilient livelihood options, this led to enhancing food security, improving communal economic growth and subsequently enhancing social status of the beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries reported significant improvements in economic status, leading to better living standards in terms of food supply, housing, and healthcare. There is ample evidence that key impacts achieved including, increased economic growth and adaptive capacity, engagement in diversified agropastoral activities and animal husbandry, improved awareness of climate risks and responsive measures, and active community involvement through knowledge-sharing visits.

Under outcome 1, understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation measures at the community level has significantly improved. Training has increased the technical capacities of farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists, with 1,512 beneficiaries (793 men and 719 women) receiving training on climate-smart solutions and adaptation practices. The project exceeded its targets by achieving 125% of the TE target for trainees. Local authorities' capacity was also built, with 78 higher experts (70 men and 8 women) trained as trainers to mentor extension service providers and local communities. Six community climate change adaptation action plans have been developed, and six are pending, a comprehensive plan for ten Woredas has been developed and implemented with project support.

Under outcome 2, the project has enhanced local communities' access to climate forecasts and advisory services to support climate adaptive management. Nine AWS were procured, with six installed and operational, providing reliable, real-time climate and weather information. Five technical staff from the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) received training in installation, operation, and maintenance of these stations. 450 community members (200 men and 250 women) were provided with plastic rain gauges to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming, with training from EMI on installation and use. In collaboration with EMI, nine seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were prepared and disseminated to 60,893 individuals[[22]](#footnote-23) (29,408 males and 31,485 females) via a Telegram group. The Woreda task team also distributed decadal, monthly, and seasonal forecasts through various community channels.

Digitized decision support tools and proactive climate adaptive management plan have not yet developed to further disseminate climate forecasts, enhancing the reach and effectiveness of climate and weather information to be translated into actions on the ground.

Under outcome 3, the project has significantly increased the capacity of land users in ten Woredas by providing various climate-adaptive technologies and supporting diversified livelihood options. Key achievements include climate-Resilient Livelihoods such as supplementary irrigation, small ruminant rearing, modern beekeeping, water harvesting, drought-resistant crops, and poultry farming. These activities were tailored to the interests and needs of the local communities, especially vulnerable groups. 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) received technical support to implement climate-resilient practices.

The project rehabilitated, reforested, and restored 1192 hectares of degraded communal land. Improved land productivity through bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques. Soil and Water Conservation Structures by establishing terraces, trenches, eyebrows, and gabions over 500 hectares of communal land and 692 hectares of farmland. The project planted 599,556 multi-purpose tree and grass species. Drilled five boreholes, completed three river diversions, and developed one stream to support adaptation efforts.

Progress towards results is provided on below tables against the MTR targets in the CCA lowlands project PRF. Ratings and comments are provided in the following paragraphs. For these Tables, the “achievement rating” is color-coded according to the following colour coding scheme:

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

**Project Objective: To promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems**

The project aims to enhance climate adaptation and promote sustainable economic growth in Ethiopia's lowland ecosystems. The project targets approximately 60,000 beneficiaries (52% women and 48% men) across twelve Woredas in six regions as follows:

* Afar region: Dewe and Awash-Fentale.
* Amhara region: East Belesa and Sahleseyemt.
* Oromia region: Zeway dugda and Babile.
* Somali region: Degahabur and Harawo.
* Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR): Halaba and Alle.
* Tigray region: Sahrti Samre and Were Leke.

**Progress:** A total of 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) beneficiaries across 10 Woredas have benefited from project interventions including skill development trainings, downscaled climate information, agro-meteorological advisory services and direct support to their livelihoods benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options with a focus on empowering women and youths (see below table for breakdown by woreda level). Beyond the numbers, and based on the MTR engagement with the beneficiaries, it is evident that the provided support has contributed to achieving the objectives in terms of economic growth and adaptive capacity. The beneficiaries have begun engaging in diversified agropastoral activities and animal husbandry, including beekeeping, poultry, small ruminants, and livestock fattening. The beneficiaries also gained awareness of climate risks and acquired knowledge on responsive measures. They participated in knowledge-sharing visits that promoted active community involvement and collaboration. The project was unable to intervene in two woredas (Saharite Samri and Weyra Luake) due to ongoing conflicts in these areas and subsequent security issues.

The beneficiaries have experienced significant improvements in their economic status after receiving hands-on support for adapting to climate change, leading to better living standards in terms of food supply, housing, healthcare and others. The beneficiaries have shared stories with the MTR team about the positive changes in their lives due to the project's support. For example, one female beneficiary was able to build a decent house for her family due to the improved economic status from her enhanced agricultural business (see below the picture of the house referred to in this example). Another male beneficiary reported an improved food supply for his family as a result of enhanced livestock, he said “*Now we are able to eat eggs almost everyday*”. These real-life examples at the grassroots level demonstrate how CCA activities are contributing to economic growth and, more importantly, strengthening community capacities to cope with climate change impacts.

In brief, the CCA lowlands project is assessed to be on track in achieving its objective by achieving 101% of the MTR target for the number of beneficiaries (60,893 out of 60,000), and in terms of enhancing the community adaptive capacity to climate change, enhanced food security, improved communal economic growth and subsequently enhancing social status of the beneficiaries, through a combination of capacity, knowledge as well as introduction of climate-resilient livelihood options.

Table 4: Delivery on MTR target broken by Woreda

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/n** | **Name of Woreda** | **No. of beneficiaries MTR target** | | | **Total No. of beneficiaries engaged to date** | | | **% Delivery of the MTR target** | | |
| Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| **1.** | East Belesa | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 2,228 | 2,034 | 4,262 | 92.8 | 78.2 | 85.2 |
| **2.** | Sahale Seyemt | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 3,189 | 3,335 | 6,524 | 132.9 | 128.3 | 130.5 |
| **3.** | Dewe | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 3,234 | 3,187 | 6,421 | 134.8 | 122.6 | 128.4 |
| **4.** | Awash Fentale | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 3,451 | 4,772 | 8,223 | 143.8 | 183.5 | 164.5 |
| **5.** | Babile | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 2,703 | 2,743 | 5,446 | 112.6 | 105.5 | 108.9 |
| **6.** | Zuway Dugda | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 4,391 | 4,698 | 9,089 | 183.0 | 180.7 | 181.8 |
| **7.** | Alle | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 2,551 | 2,775 | 5,326 | 106.3 | 106.7 | 106.5 |
| **8.** | Weyra Dijo | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 1,984 | 2,081 | 4,065 | 82.7 | 80.0 | 81.3 |
| **9.** | Harewo | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 2,811 | 2,930 | 5,741 | 117.1 | 112.7 | 114.8 |
| **10.** | Degahabur | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | 2,866 | 2,930 | 5,796 | 119.4 | 112.7 | 115.9 |
| **11.** | Saharite Samri | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | - | - | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **12.** | Weyra Luake | 2,400 | 2,600 | 5,000 | - | - | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Total sum** | | 28,800 | 31,200 | 60,000 | 29,408 | 31,485 | 60,893 | **102.1** | **100.9** | **101.5** |

Figure 3: A picture of a beneficiary house in Babile

A building in a field

Description automatically generated

Figure 4: Poultry in Harewo



The indicator under the project’s objective is primarily measuring the number of projects’ direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender. Progress towards MTR has been achieved (refer to table below).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Strategy** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | | | | **MTR assessment** | **MTR rating** |
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Mid-term Target** | **End-of-Project Target** |
| **OBJECTIVE: To promote climate change adaptation and sustainable economic growth among communities in Ethiopia’s lowland ecosystems.** | Number of direct project beneficiaries  (dis-aggregated by gender). | 0 | 60,000 in the project zone, of which at least 52% are female | 120,000 in the project zone, with at least 52% female | 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) This is almost 101% of the MTR target.  The beneficiaries enhanced their understanding of climate risks and learned about responsive measures. They were also engaged in knowledge-sharing visits that fostered community involvement and collaboration. Additionally, they were exposed to climate-smart agricultural technologies and a variety of income-generating and climate-resilient livelihood options, with special attention to empowering women and youths. These efforts should continue to reach the end of project target of 120,000 beneficiaries with at least 52% female. |  |

**Component 1: Capacity development for climate risk information and adaptation**

**Outcome 1: Technical Capacity for planning diversified climate change adaptation practices strengthened.**

Knowledge gaps about climate risks and inadequate coping strategies are predominant due to insufficient training and expertise among government staff and local extension officers at Woreda-level, hence, the project is meant to address the lack of understanding of current and future climate change implication among Ethiopian lowland communities, which is hindering their ability to implement resilient farming and animal husbandry practices.

At the community level, there has been significant improvement in the level of understanding of the climate change impacts and adaptation measures. The technical capacities of farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists have increased in planning, monitoring, and evaluating various climate change adaptation approaches by being exposed to six developed training modules designed to strengthen their adaptive capacity. Additionally, the technical knowledge of lowland communities regarding climate change risks, the benefits of climate-smart solutions, and adaptation practices has increased through training delivered to 1,512 beneficiaries (793 men and 719 women), including farmers, Woreda extension service providers, and kebele development agents in the project Woredas. Success stories and best practices have been documented to scale these practices throughout the intervention Woredas.

The project not only outperformed its MTR target, but even exceeded its TE target, by achieving 125% of the TE target for the number of trainees with a total of 1,512 beneficiary farmers (793 men and 719 women) and 449 Woreda extension service providers and kebele DAs (275 men and 174 women) across 10 project Woredas received training on various topics (see table 6 for details). Several factors contributed to this early achievement, most notably the upfront necessity of training and capacity building as prerequisites for delivering follow-up support (i.e., livelihood support) to ensure that beneficiaries were equipped with the knowledge to apply adaptation measures. Additionally, the project's successful engagement of universities to deliver these trainings proved to be an efficient and effective approach to accommodating large numbers of beneficiaries.

The trainings included Climate Smart Technology and Good Practices for Community Adaptation, Climate & Weather Information for Planning and Agricultural Advisory Support, Responding to Climate Emergency at Community Level, Early Discovery and Monitoring of Fall Armyworm and Emergency Flood, Adaptive Soil & Water Conservation Techniques, and Climate Smart Technologies for Adaptive Capacities and Diversified Livelihoods.

The CCA lowlands project also invested in building the capacity of local authorities, particularly the development agents who have a critical role in direct communication with the beneficiaries. And to ensure the sustainability of the capacity building efforts, a Training of Trainers (TOT) was provided to 78 higher experts (70 men and 8 women) from the region, Woreda, and kebele development agents, who, in turn, train and continuously mentor extension service providers and local communities.

The project delivered a comprehensive climate adaptive action plan document for 10 Woredas[[23]](#footnote-24). The action plan, climate change adaptation interventions in crop production, livestock, and natural resource management have been effectively implemented with technical and financial support from the project. The project downscaled the overarching plan for 6 community adaptation plans covering 6 woredas. The purpose of the Woreda Climate Adaptive Community Action Plans is to enhance the resilience of the local community at the Woreda level to climate change impacts. These plans outline strategies and actions designed to mitigate climate risks, improve adaptive capacities, and sustain community livelihoods through participatory approaches. These action plans reflect a collaborative effort involving community members, local authorities, and development partners, aimed at fostering sustainable development in the face of climate variability and change. However, the future implementation of these plans remains an area of concern in absence of clear line of funding. The project has been sharing success stories of beneficiary farmers through an established Telegram group comprising all Woreda project staff, technical committee members, Woreda project steering committee, regional experts and officials, as well as federal IPs, facilitates the sharing of climate adaptation technologies through pictures and ideas. Further, efforts were made to share knowledge and experiences, with one experience sharing visit conducted across the project Woredas focusing on climate change adaptation best practices, forest management, watershed management, and the implementation of Climate Smart agriculture.

The indicators under Outcome 1 are presented below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project result** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | | | | **MTR assessment** | **MTR rating** |
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Mid-term Target** | **End-of-Project Target** |
| **Outcome 1: Technical Capacity for planning diversified climate change adaptation practices strengthened.** | Number of participants trained on key adaptation issues, including community-based adaptation techniques. | 0 | At least 600 beneficiaries educated in topics related to climate change adaptation.  At least 50% of the beneficiaries are female. | At least 1200 beneficiaries educated in topics related to climate change adaptation  At least 50% of the beneficiaries are female. | The project not only outperformed its MTR target, but even exceeded its TE target, by achieving 125% of the TE target for the number of trainees with a total of 1,512 beneficiary farmers (793 men and 719 women) and 449 Woreda extension service providers and kebele DAs (275 men and 174 women) across 10 project Woredas received training on various topics (see table 6 for details). Several factors contributed to this early achievement, most notably the upfront necessity of training and capacity building as prerequisites for delivering follow-up support (i.e., livelihood support) to ensure that beneficiaries were equipped with the knowledge to apply adaptation measures. Additionally, the project's successful engagement of universities to deliver these trainings proved to be an efficient and effective approach to accommodating large numbers of beneficiaries. |  |
| Number of Climate adaptive action plans developed taking into consideration climate smart approaches and future scenario. | 0 action plans | 6 relevant climate smart action plans at identified sites in each woreda. | 12 relevant climate smart action plans at identified sites in each woreda. | 6 community CC adaptation action plans developed.  The project delivered a comprehensive climate adaptive action plan document for 10 Woredas, which was then downscaled for 6 communities at the Woreda level. |  |

**Outputs: 1.1.** Training modules and platform for enhancing the knowledge and capability of government officials, DAs and local communities in twelve Woreda’s on the formulation and implementation of adaptation measures are established and sustained.

Based on the capacity gaps identified during the PPG phase, six training modules were developed on the following topics: “Climate Smart Technology and Good Practices for Community Adaptation,” “Climate Adaptive Community-Based Action Plan Development,” “Responding to Climate Emergency at Community Level,” “Adaptive Soil and Water Conservation Techniques,” “Climate and Weather Information for Planning and Agricultural Advisory Support,” and “Climate Smart Technologies for Adaptive Capacities and Diversified Livelihoods.” These modules were essential for the effective implementation of the project's capacity-building interventions. Additionally, five regional partnerships were established with local universities near the targeted Woredas to deliver the training to the targeted beneficiaries. Engaging university has been a cost-effective approach that allowed for a maximum outreach in this training programme.

Using these training modules and partnerships, TOT (Training of Trainers) sessions were delivered to 78 regional and Woreda-level experts and development agents (70 men and 8 women). These trainees provided mentorship to local governments, experts, and community members to help them formulate and implement climate adaptation measures. The training materials were also made available through online platforms, such as the EPA websites, to reach a broader audience beyond the project areas.

Furthermore, community members and extension agents participated in live demonstrations and experience-sharing visits. These activities included community climate change adaptation practices, forest management, watershed management, and the implementation of climate-smart agriculture technologies. Participants visited best-performing beneficiaries and agricultural demonstration sites. Additionally, a comprehensive climate change vulnerability assessment of the project Woredas was conducted by a service provider recruited by the project.

Figure 5: CCA Lowlands training modules



**Figure 5: showing: team of experts from local universities delivering TOT**



**Output 1.2**: Strengthened capacity of development agents (DAs) and government officials to support the implementation of climate change adaptation practices at the Woreda and regional levels

The Development Agents (DAs) have been central to the capacity building activities to enable them pass the skill and knowledge onto the beneficiaries during and after the project implementation, this is important sustainability element of the capacity building strategy to ensure that knowledge and skills are preserved and transferable beyond the project boundaries.

Using these training modules and partnerships, TOT (Training of Trainers) sessions were delivered to 78 regional and Woreda-level experts and development agents (70 men and 8 women). These trainees provided mentorship to local governments, experts, and community members to help them formulate and implement climate adaptation measures. The training materials were also made available through online platforms, such as the EPA websites, to reach a broader audience beyond the project areas.

Table 5: Delivery on training targets broken down by Woreda

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S/n | Name of Woreda | No. of beneficiaries TE target | | | Total No. of beneficiaries trained to date | | | % Delivery of the MTR target | | |
| Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| 1. | East Belesa | 48 | 52 | 100 | 148 | 151 | 299 | 308% | 290% | 299% |
| 2. | Sahale Seyemt | 48 | 52 | 100 | 49 | 51 | 100 | 102% | 98% | 100% |
| 3. | Dewe | 48 | 52 | 100 | 45 | 38 | 83 | 94% | 73% | 83% |
| 4. | Awash Fentale | 48 | 52 | 100 | 55 | 81 | 136 | 115% | 156% | 136% |
| 5. | Babile | 48 | 52 | 100 | 81 | 137 | 218 | 169% | 263% | 218% |
| 6. | Zuway Dugda | 48 | 52 | 100 | 62 | 60 | 122 | 129% | 115% | 122% |
| 7. | Alle | 48 | 52 | 100 | 93 | 61 | 154 | 194% | 117% | 154% |
| 8. | Weyra Dijo | 48 | 52 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 9. | Harewo | 48 | 52 | 100 | 130 | 70 | 200 | 271% | 135% | 200% |
| 10. | Degahabur | 48 | 52 | 100 | 130 | 70 | 200 | 271% | 135% | 200% |
| 11. | Saharite Samri | 48 | 52 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 12. | Wetra Luake | 48 | 52 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Total sum | | 576 | 624 | 1200 | 793 | 719 | 1512 | 138% | 115% | 126% |

At the beneficiary’s level, 1,512 beneficiary farmers (793 males and 719 females) and 449 Woreda extension service providers and kebele DAs (275 males and 174 females) across 10 project Woredas, this represents 126% of the TE target for trainings.

The trainings were conducted for targeted beneficiaries selected from Dewe and Awash Fentale woredas of Afar regional state, Degahabur and Harewo of Somali regional state, East Belessa and Sahale Seyemt Woredas of Amhara Regional state, Ziway Dugda and Babile of Oromia Regional State and Ale special woreda and Weyira Dijo of SNNP Regional state.

**Output 1.3:** Community action plans for adaptive crop production and animal husbandry developed using a participatory approach in twelve Woreda’s

The community action plans in six Woreda’s have been developed, and six are not yet developed. The project delivered a comprehensive climate adaptive action plan document for 10 Woredas[[24]](#footnote-25) by a recruited consultant with community participation. Based on this action plan, climate change adaptation interventions in crop production, livestock, and natural resource management have been effectively implemented with technical and financial support from the project. The climate adaptive interventions were selected based on the community's needs and the specific climate change impacts in the project target areas. The PMU is now in the process of downscaling the plan into the woreda level.

**Output 1.4:** Project benefits and climate change adaptation practices are documented and disseminated to local community members in twelve Woreda’s through learning, using innovative and locally adapted means.

Success stories of beneficiary farmers involved in water harvesting, shallow well drilling using Sudanese technologies, small-scale irrigation practices, apiculture, small ruminant rearing, and participatory watershed management have been documented and disseminated to local community members in targeted Woredas. Additionally, an established Telegram group comprising all Woreda project staff, technical committee members, Woreda project steering committee, regional experts and officials, as well as federal IPs, facilitates the sharing of climate adaptation technologies through pictures and ideas. Annual review meetings have also been conducted to review project progress, share experiences between Woredas on implemented technologies, and discuss community and stakeholder participation and achieved results.

Further, efforts were made to share knowledge and experiences, with one experience sharing visit conducted across the project Woredas focusing on climate change adaptation best practices, forest management, watershed management, and the implementation of Climate Smart agriculture. This session involved 264 beneficiaries (139 males and 125 females) demonstrating exemplary practices on the ground. Specific knowledge and experience sharing visits included:

* **Afar Regional State**: Dewe and Awash Fentale Woredas with 13 beneficiary farmers (7 males and 6 females) and 24 beneficiaries (11 males and 13 females).
* **Amhara Regional State**: East-Belesa and Sahale Seyemt Woredas with 10 beneficiary farmers (7 males and 3 females) and 45 beneficiaries (20 males and 25 females).
* **Oromia Regional State**: Babile and Zuway-Dugda Woredas with 20 beneficiary farmers (10 males and 10 females) and 30 beneficiaries (14 males and 16 females) participants respectively.
* **SNNP Regional State**: Alle Special and Weyira-Dijo Woredas with 42 beneficiary farmers (36 males and 6 females) and 80 beneficiaries (34 males and 46 females).

**Outcome 2: Climate adaptive management adopted by local communities through accessible climate information and decision-making tools.**

Local communities face challenges in accessing and utilizing climate information due to technological limitations and inadequate capacity of agricultural extension officers to guide farmers and other land users based on climate forecasts. Consequently, lowland farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists can only undertake limited proactive measures in response to climate change. In response, outcome 2 is meant to deliver the adoption of climate adaptive management practices by Ethiopia’s lowlands communities using climate information and appropriate decision-making tools.

**Progress**:

Climate forecasts and advisory services have been made accessible to local communities to enhance the adoption of climate adaptive management. This was achieved by procuring nine and installing (six out of nine) Automatic Weather Stations (AWS), of which six are currently operational, generating, interpreting, and disseminating reliable and real-time climate and weather information. Five technical staffs from Ethiopian Meteorological Institute have received a factory level training that focused on the installation, operation and maintenance of the technologies.

In terms of dissemination and access to information, and in collaboration with the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) and nearby branch offices, nine seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were prepared and disseminated to a total of 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females). This dissemination was carried out through a Telegram group, enabling easy access to the necessary information for agricultural activities. The reported number assumes that all beneficiaries who have been engaged in different activities have access to climate information. The Woreda task team received decadal, monthly, and seasonal forecasts and distributed the information through various channels, including regular community development days, market days, and Woreda and kebele-level community meetings. This initiative benefited the community by alerting them to weather and climate changes in the area, allowing them to manage agricultural activities based on the provided information and advisory services.

The project supported 450 lowland community members (200 men and 250 women) with plastic rain gauges to enable them to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming. The Ethiopian National Meteorological Institute (EMI) provided training on the installation and use of low-cost plastic rain gauges.

There are no digitized decision support tools have been developed to allow the effective use of climate forecasts provided by the AWS and the downscale of the weather and advisory information to farmers, pastoralist and agro-pastoralist in the project area. So far, such information has been communicated via telegram groups and through the training workshops. In the future, local weather forecasts will be made available to the land users through mobile phones in each woreda with an application specialized to communicate climate forecasts provided by the AWS, the downscale of the weather and advisory information to farmers.

Moreover, the Africa Armyworm monitoring and early warning mechanism has been strengthened through capacity development training for 75 community members (including six women). This has helped limit potential damage to crops and pastures, thereby improving food security and livelihoods in the targeted communities.

The indicators under Outcome 2 as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project result** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | | | | **MTR assessment** | **MTR rating** |
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Mid-term Target** | **End-of-Project Target** |
| **Outcome 2: Climate adaptive management adopted by local communities through accessible climate information and decision-making tools** | Number of AWS operational in each of the 9 uncovered Woredas. | 3 AWS are currently installed at some targeted woredas. | 7 operational AWS in the 12 woredas. | 12 operational AWS (one in each of the 12 woredas). | 6 operational AWS.  All 9 new AWSs have been procured, of which 6 installed and operational and the 3 are pending security situation. |  |
| Number of people with access to weather forecasts and advisory services at project sites – disaggregated by gender. | 0 | 600 beneficiaries of which at least 52% are female. | 1,200 of which at least 52% are female. | The indicator cannot be measured precisely because people could access information via radio messages, community gatherings or any other means that cannot be practically tracked and monitored.  However, the project reported that 9 seasonal down scaled weather forecasts prepared and disseminated to a total of 60,893[[25]](#footnote-26) individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females)) community members through a telegram group or platform that helped them to easily access to the required information and perform their agricultural activities. Moreover, 1345 woreda level experts, development agents and few beneficiaries used mobile phones to access to climate information through telegram app for the dissemination of the information even if the procurement of 1,200 mobile phone is delayed. |  |

**Output 2.1:** Nine Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) installed and linked to the national meteorological network and protocols for use and maintenance established in each woreda.

The procurement of nine new Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) was completed through UNDP. Of which, six AWSs have been installed in Weyra Dijo Woreda of Central Ethiopia, Dewe and Awash Fentale Woredas of Afar, Harewo of Somali, and Babile Woreda of Oromia, the remaining 3 AWSs will be installed as soon as security situation allows. Additionally, a specialized training was provided to five experts from the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI), located near the project-targeted Woredas, on AWS installation, maintenance, and data acquisition and interpretation. These AWSs are connected to the national meteorological network portal for continuous climate and weather data generation.

Furthermore, EMI conducted assessments on the existing AWSs, which are now functional, enabling climate data generation, interpretation, and dissemination across project areas, including Ale Woreda. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between EMI and the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority to facilitate the generation, interpretation, and dissemination of real-time downscaled climate information and forecasts to the project-targeted Woredas. An AWS maintenance manual was also prepared and shared with relevant stakeholders and experts at all levels.

Figure 6: Pictures of AWS installation and training

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

**Output 2.2**: Appropriate weather and climate monitoring and forecast technologies acquired by representatives of the beneficiary communities and maintained through a functional and durable partnership.

The project supported 450 lowland community members (200 men and 250 women) with plastic rain gauges to enable them to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming. The Ethiopian National Meteorological Institute (EMI) provided training on the installation and use of low-cost plastic rain gauges. Additionally, three seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were prepared and disseminated according to an MoU between EMI and the Ethiopian EPA. This agreement facilitated the generation and dissemination of real-time downscaled climate information to the project-targeted Woredas through an agro-meteorological task force established in each project Woreda.

In collaboration with EMI and its branch offices near the project Woredas, nine decadal, three monthly, and one seasonal forecasts, along with downscaled agro-meteorology advisory services, were conducted. The weather forecasts were disseminated to community members via a Telegram group or platform, allowing easy access to the necessary information to carry out their agricultural activities. The Woreda task team received decadal, monthly, and seasonal forecasts and shared the information through various mechanisms, including regular community development days, market days, and Woreda and kebele-level community meetings. This system benefited the community by alerting them to weather and climate changes, enabling them to manage their agricultural activities effectively based on the provided information and advisory services.

**Output 2.3:** Climate-risk assessment and decision-making tools developed and used in collaboration with local communities in twelve woredas.

**Output 2.4:** Climate-risk assessment and decision-making tools are pilot tested and periodically improved using the results thereof in each of the twelve woredas.

There are no digitized decision support tools have been developed to allow the effective use of climate forecasts provided by the AWS and the downscale of the weather and advisory information to farmers, pastoralist and agro-pastoralist in the project area. So far, such information have been communicated via telegram groups and through the training workshops that have been organized for Woreda extension officers and development agents over the last three years. These workshops focused on developing climate risk assessment and decision-making tools in collaboration with local communities in the project Woredas. By addressing major climate risks in the lowland ecosystem of Ethiopia, including rainfall variability, the communities were trained to use low-cost plastic rain gauges. This training enabled the lowlanders to monitor rainfall patterns and soil moisture content, allowing them to make informed decisions about when to start farming and which types of seeds to select that are more adaptive to their specific area's rainfall and soil moisture conditions.

Also, local weather forecasts will be made available to the land users through mobile phones in each woreda with an application specialized to communicate climate forecasts provided by the AWS, the downscale of the weather and advisory information to farmers.

**Output 2.5**: Proactive climate adaptive management plan prepared anchored on functional water storage infrastructure to enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of local communities in the twelve Woredas. Management plans will be careened against the SESP during plan preparation processes to exclude high risk activities.

Proactive climate adaptive management plan has not been delivered. The plan aims to describe who will be doing what and when to deal with the prioritized climate challenge risks and provide inputs that will be implemented by local communities in lowland ecosystem through investment in climate smart technologies, opportunities and solutions.

**Component 2: Adaptation practices adopted at scale in lowland ecosystem**

**Outcome 3: Climate change adaptation practices implemented by communities in lowland ecosystems**

This outcome is meant to strengthen land users’ capacity for the implementation of climate change adaptation practices to build resilience and diversification of their livelihood options, and support land users to create, improve and sustain diversified livelihood options through rehabilitating degraded watersheds in a way that would lead to tangible and replicable changes. This will be achieved through the provision of needs-based technical support for soil and water conservation activities (soil bund, afforestation, check dam, hill-side terracing, etc.) and construction, operation and utilization of water storage structures for the diversification of livelihood options. As a result of this, land users will be able to do supplementary irrigation and engage in creating alternative climate resilient income generating opportunities.

**Progress**:

The capacity of land users has increased through the provision of various climate-adaptive technologies that help them implement climate change adaptation practices, build resilience, and diversify their livelihood options. These land users have been supported to create improved and sustained diversified livelihood options. They have been supported to practice supplementary irrigation and engaged in alternative climate-resilient income-generating activities by diverting rivers and drilling boreholes.

Climate-resilient alternative livelihood activities and climate-smart agricultural technologies were implemented across ten project Woredas, significantly increasing the adaptive capacity of local communities. Key activities included providing small ruminants for rearing and fattening, modern beehives with bee colonies, water harvesting technologies, drought-resistant crop seeds, and poultry farming. These initiatives were based on the interests, needs, and participation of beneficiaries, particularly vulnerable groups.

A total of 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females)received technical support for implementing climate-resilient livelihoods.

The project has rehabilitated, reforested, and restored 1192 hectares of degraded communal land across 10 Woredas. Key interventions include improving land productivity through bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques, enhancing climate change adaptation practices; establishing various structures, including terraces, trenches, eyebrows, and gabions, over 500 hectares of communal land and 692 hectares of farmland, planting 599,556 multi-purpose tree and grass species, promoting diversified, climate-resilient livelihoods; and drilling five boreholes, completing three river diversions, and developed one stream, further supporting community adaptation efforts. The established nursery sites are playing a major role in the rehabilitation of degraded lands by delivering seedlings of indigenous trees and are serving as demonstration sites for the beneficiary farmers.

The indicators under Outcome 2 are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Result** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | | | | **MTR assessment** | **MTR rating** |
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Mid-term Target** | **End-of-Project Target** |
| **Outcome 3: Climate change adaptation practices implemented by communities in lowland ecosystems** | Ha of degraded land rehabilitated, forested or restored. | 0 ha | Approx. 50ha per each woreda of degraded land rehabilitated. | Approx. 100ha per each woreda of degraded land rehabilitated, i.e. min. of 1,200ha in total by project end, as a result of various activities under outputs 3.1, 2.2, 3.2, 3.3 | The MTR target has been outperformed in 10 Woredas out of 12. The TE target has also been met already.  A total of 1,192 hectares of degraded communal land across the 10 project Woredas have undergone through rehabilitation, reforestation, and restoration interventions |  |
| Population benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options:  a) Number of people  b) % of female  c) % of the target population | a) 0  b) 0  c) 0 | 60,000 people with 52% female | a) 120,000 people  b) 52% female  c) 10% of the target population | A total of 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) received technical support for implementing climate-resilient livelihoods.  The final TE target may not be achieved due to limited budget and ambitious nature of the target itself. |  |

**Output 3.1**: Critically degraded sites identified and rehabilitated in the twelve Woreda’s through project activities anchored on functional water storage infrastructure designed

A total of 1192 hectares of degraded communal land across the 10 project Woredas have undergone through rehabilitation, reforestation, and restoration interventions. Active community engagement was involved in site selection, soil and water conservation techniques, species selection, and overall management of the rehabilitation processes, in collaboration with technical support from the Woreda agricultural and environmental protection offices. Land productivity has improved through agro-ecological interventions such as bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques.

Flow and groundwater assessments for boreholes, as well as the design of reservoirs and water points, are underway in five regional states, coordinated by the regional EPA and a team of experts from MoWE. Additionally, the establishment and strengthening of water users' associations (end users) have been conducted across the project Woredas.

Figure 7: Gully protection in Harew (Left) and Area Closure in Babile (Right)



Figure 8: Nursery and Demonstration Site in Ale



**Output 3.2**: Alternative livelihood opportunities created, expanded and made more responsive to climate change through the implementation of community-led climate adaptive initiatives in the twelve woredas. Livelihood options will be screened using the SESP to assess risks. High risk options will not be supported by the project.

A total of 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) received technical support for implementing climate-resilient livelihoods. Specifically,

* 8,769 chickens were provided to 1,597 beneficiaries (478 men and 1,119 women), 6,497 sheep and goats to 3,017 beneficiaries (1,109 men and 1,908 women) for fattening practices, and 1,203 modern beehives to 1,018 farmers (471 men and 547 women) across the ten project Woredas.
* Beneficiaries also received support in implementing biogas technology for indoor energy needs, solar lighting, and fuel-efficient stoves for cooking, which reduced tree cutting for firewood and charcoal production. A total of 354 solar light packages were provided to 354 beneficiaries (179 men and 175 women), 625 fuel-efficient cooking stoves to 625 women, and 8 biogas plants to 8 female beneficiaries. Additionally, beneficiary farmers were supported to operate small businesses, including bakeries, milk processing, barberry shop, block-kit production, and the distribution of fuel-efficient stoves.
* Drilling and water diversion activities enabled beneficiaries to access water for drinking and small-scale irrigation. Solar water pump technologies supported homestead farming, allowing the growth of various cash crops, including vegetables and fruits, which improved livelihoods. Consequently, 182 beneficiaries (93 men and 89 women) benefited from excavating 182 hand-dug wells (average depth of 15 meters) for domestic use and irrigation, and 14 shallow wells were drilled and equipped with electric pumps for small-scale irrigation and domestic use.
* In the dry season, 160 hectares of land were covered with improved variety wheat seeds using solar pump irrigation technologies, yielding 5,620 quintals of wheat. Beneficiaries also received agricultural inputs, such as water harvesting technologies and drought-resistant crops and vegetable seeds. Specifically, 284 quintals of high-quality wheat and teff seeds were provided to 1,405 farmers (766 men and 639 women), 21.5 quintals of high-quality mung bean seeds to 876 farmers (452 men and 424 women), and 4 quintals of high-quality fruit and vegetable seeds to 1,505 farmers (713 men and 792 women) across the project Woredas.
* Over 9 newly established and or strengthened nursery sites, job opportunities created for a total of 374 (148 M 226 F) beneficiaries.

Figure 9: Borehole drilled in Harewo (with good yield)



Figure 10: Goats (Ale) Modern Bee keeping and Biogas (Babile)



**Output 3.3**: Farm/ pasture land rehabilitated through physical and biological soil and water conservation measures in degraded areas in each Woreda for and by the vulnerable lowland farming, pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities

Soil and water conservation structures, such as terraces, trenches, eyebrows, and gabions, were constructed on 500 hectares of communal land and 692 hectares of farmland. Additionally, a total of 599,556 seedlings, including different types of tree species, grass seedlings, and animal forage seedlings, were prepared and planted across all 10 project Woredas benefiting local communities by adopting diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options. As a result, the areas covered with these physical and biophysical interventions are showing progress in rehabilitation, reforestation, and restoration. Communities have begun using the cut-and-carry system to feed their livestock. This includes the drilling of five boreholes, three river diversions, and one stream development activity.

**Output 3.4:** Community-based enterprises established and operationalized in each Woreda to develop and strengthen climate resilient local business and value chains

The project delivered Market & Value Chain Assessment For Rural on Farm/off Farm IGA[[26]](#footnote-27) to determine rural on-farm and off-farm options, as well as to conduct market and value chain assessments for agricultural and non-agricultural products produced by the targeted beneficiary farmers. The assessment aimed to undertake quick assessment of the existing rural on/off farm income generating interventions in each Woreda and select that can be taken up by this project; assess the potential of the Woreda for rural on/off farm income generating interventions and recommend new rural on/off farm income generating interventions/ options; and carry out a market and value chain assessment of rural on/off farm income generating interventions/options.

Beneficiaries have received direct investments aimed at enhancing innovations. Farmers in the project area were supported to strengthen operations in various innovative ventures, including bakery, honey production, barberry, block-kit production, and the production and distribution of fuel-efficient stoves. Consequently, a total of 66 beneficiaries (20 men and 46 women) were provided with different materials, equipment, workspace, and technical skills to successfully operate their businesses.

Figure 11: Bakery in Harewo

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**Output 3.5**: Woreda-level M&E and follow-up strategy developed and adopted by woreda development facilitators and extension agents.

Although no Woreda-level M&E strategy has been developed, a participatory M&E system has been implemented by organizing "Kebele Monitoring and Evaluation Committees" consisting of community representatives and kebele Development Agents in the project-targeted regions. Additionally, the Woreda Steering Committee and Woreda Technical Committee conduct joint monitoring and evaluation of project implementation progress. This approach aims to improve the implementation of interventions during the project and to inform the replication and upscaling of project activities.

**Outcome 4: Knowledge Management and M&E**

A total of 193,274 farmers (93,148 men and 100,126 women) across the 10 target Woredas participated in awareness creation activities aimed at enhancing their knowledge of climate change, its impacts, and possible solutions. The major communication channels used to reach beneficiaries included local FM radio, campaigns, and national and regional events focused on soil and water conservation, green legacy initiatives, meetings, and workshops.

Public awareness programs were also conducted through knowledge and experience-sharing visits and training workshops. These programs primarily focused on the communities’ vulnerability to climate change, their adaptive capacity to current and future climate impacts, and the proposed and prioritized coping mechanisms for implementation.

The indicator under Outcome 4 as follows

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Result** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | | | | **MTR assessment** | **MTR rating** |
| **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Mid-term Target** | **End-of-Project Target** |
| **Outcome 4: Knowledge Management and M&E** | % increase in number of beneficiaries aware of climate risks and knowledge of response measures (established based on surveys) | 0 level of awareness for beneficiaries | 50% beneficiary’s awareness level reaches, with 52% female | a) 100% beneficiary’s awareness reached  b) 52% female | No data available to measure this indicator and no percentage data was collected through a survey as anticipated.  Nonetheless, the project reported. A total of 193,274 farmers (93,148 men and 100,126 women) across the 10 target Woredas participated in awareness activities, |  |

### Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

The CCA Lowlands project has made substantial progress in addressing the barriers identified during the project design. Notably, it has strengthened the knowledge and capacities of lowland communities to understand climate change risks and the benefits of climate-smart solutions and adaptation practices (barrier #1). This progress is attributed to extensive community engagement through awareness workshops, training sessions, and demonstrations of successful climate-smart practices. However, it is important to recognize that awareness-raising is an ongoing process. Therefore, leveraging the project's established foundation to replicate and upscale awareness activities remains essential.

Significant progress has also been made in enhancing access to climate forecasts (barrier #2). More Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) have been installed and operationalized, and climate forecasts and information are actively shared with community members through radio, Telegram groups, and direct engagement events. However, it is crucial to set up decision-making tools that enable communities to transition from merely receiving information to taking appropriate adaptation measures for their farming processes. The future-planned mobile application could serve as a basic decision-making tool for farmers, provided it clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of local partners. And this also requires signing MoU on how to disseminate climate information to lowlanders through Ethiopian telecommunication to set a sustainable basis for operation.

The project has also made significant strides in enabling land users to invest in climate-smart technologies and solutions necessary to diversify and sustain their livelihoods in the face of climate change (barrier #3). This barrier has been addressed by implementing land restoration activities and adopting climate-resilient livelihoods tailored to the interests and needs of local communities, especially vulnerable groups. However, it is important to outline strategies for demonstrating and replicating these efforts in other lowland communities. This includes defining how projects will be made visible to communities not yet engaged, identifying funding opportunities, and assessing implementation capacities.

At the project operation front, the MTR has found the following barriers that could influence the proper achievement of the project objectives have been identified throughout the detailed analysis of the documentation and missions carried out in the country:

* **Political unrest and security** **situation**: Some parts of Ethiopia have been recently going through political conflicts and instability which has a major impact on the project delivery being unable to access the woredas where conflicts are ongoing, this meant delays in some areas and zero delivery in others. Specifically, the project was totally unable to reach two Woredas namely Saharite Samri and Wetra Luake, and as a result, no activities have been implemented in these two woredas of Tigray Region. This risk is beyond the project control, and as staff safety is a priority, all UN Security advices need to be respected. However, there might be signs of de-escalation emerging in the future and the project needs to keep this situation monitored and act accordingly.
* **Accessibility and remoteness of project’s woredas**: The project is being implemented in 12 woredas across 6 different regions in the country, and these areas are geographically dispersed across the country. The remoteness of these woredas meant that accessibility has been challenging for the project team and also mean that the travel cost is exceptionally expensive and budget-consuming. The project also suffered from the lack of vehicles in some areas to facilitate the team movements.
* **COVID**: COVID-related restrictions on movements and travel came at a time when the project needed to interact with stakeholder particularly at the local level, these restrictions have led into some delays in field activities. The project management unit interacted virtually with local stakeholders until restrictions were eased. Also, worth noting that authorities have shifted their focus on addressing COVID impacts, to which the livelihood support by the CCA Lowlands project has become more relevant to the needs than ever before.
* **Market inflation and prices**: Ethiopia has experienced unprecedent market inflation recently, and to put things into perspective, the consumer price inflation in Ethiopia averaged 15.3% in the ten years to 2022, above the Sub-Saharan Africa regional average of 9.4% reaching 33.9% in 2022[[27]](#footnote-28). This has had an impact on the project financial capacities to procure goods and services, and cost of implementing activities have become much more than what was anticipated at the design stage. This is a contributing factor to the budget deficit that the project is now experiencing.
* **The PMU has been understaffed**: For the most part of the project, the PMU has been struggling with being understaffed and no enough human resources to implement all activities particularly at the local level. To adapt to this, the PMU has successfully partnered with local authorities and was able to mobilise human resources from the local authorities to lead project implementation on the ground, and this was counted as part of the partner co-financing strategy.
* **Lengthy procurement process**: The project entails purchasing sophisticated equipment such as the AWS, Solar Pumps for the boreholes and procurement systems have been characterised by being slow and limiting the momentum of the project delivery. In some cases, UNDP supported procurement services as in the case of AWS.
* **Delays in transferring budget**: UNDP transfers budget on quarterly basis to EPA, however, the budget for the first quarter of the financial year has often been delayed, until End of March/Early April of the calendar year. This has been a limiting factor for driving real progress in the first quarter of each year. UNDP team attributed these delays to complications with the new ERC system that UNDP use and so called ‘Quantum’.
* **Staff turnover and availability for the project**: The project implementation relies a lot on the local authorities’ staff to deliver activities on the ground, and the personnel of these authorities have been exposed to high level of turnover after being trained by the project, which also required to repeat some training in some cases. This is compounded with the staff limited availabilities for project implementation as an additional piece of work over and above their normal duties in their organisations.

## Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

### Management Arrangements

The project has been implemented following UNDP’s NIM execution modality. UNDP is the GEF Implementing Agency for the project and as such remains the ultimate responsible party towards the GEF Secretariat and Council with regard to the use of GEF financial resources – and of any cash co-financing passing through UNDP accounts. The Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between UNDP and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE), and the Country Programme was applied as the basis of the agreement.

As described in section 3.1, the project design defines clearly the roles and responsibilities and outline the governance framework for the project including the Project Steering Committee (PSC) at the national level that plays the role of the project board for decision-making and providing overall guidance, and supported with Woreda Steering Committee (WSC) in each Woreda to guide the implementation locally and serve as gateway for direct engagement with the communities. The NPSC has convened three times since the project started with the first time in August 2021, in 2022 and third in May 2023.

**Quality of UNDP implementation/oversight:** UNDP Ethiopia has been responsible for the overall supervision and monitoring of the project and has been providing project assurance through the country office and the UNDP-GEF and through active participation in the project board. UNDP has provided direct project services to lead the MTR in addition to procurement services related to the purchase of the Automatic Weather Stations.

UNDP CO has been supporting the project with monitoring the financial transactions by the project in terms of delivery, meeting targets and expenditure. UNDP didn’t undertake any audits as planned and only 3 spot check were done during the project implementation. UNDP conducted field monitoring visit and engaged with the benefactrices on ground, facilitated and supported the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), and MTR. However, the PMU and EPA noted that there has been delays in transferring the budget for the first quarter of the financial year which affected delivery in the first quarter of each year. UNDP team attributed these delays to complications with the new ERC system that UNDP uses and so called ‘Quantum’.

UNDP has been providing trainings for the PMU team on Results Based Management and Social and Environmental Screening Process, which the PMU has found to be very useful for improving project management practices.

**Quality of Implementing Partner Execution**: The Ethiopian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the executing agency, and is responsible and accountable for managing this project, including the monitoring of project interventions, achieving project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP resources. The Project Management Unit (PMU) is hosted by EPA and responsible for running the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Implementing Partner and within the constraints laid down by the NPSC.

A key factor contributing to ownership has been the robust integration of the PMU within the EPA, fostering a strong sense of ownership within EPA. The ownership of the Project has been very strong from the start. EPA has assigned focal points from EPA staff to support the project delivery and mobilised its regional and local offices to support the project delivery on the ground. The PMU, being embedded in the EPA, has been able to use the existing government structures to reach out to as many local authorities as possible, and activated strong partnerships with Woredas.

The full implementation of the NIM modality in the CCA Lowlands project meant that the project is totally implemented by EPA including following the EPA’s procurement and recruitment procedures, which seems to be quite effective despite some delays.

The PMU established also Technical Committees with a mix of representatives from federal ministries and local authorities including technical professionals who have been supporting the project activities, and undertaking the water assessment studies to define the best water resource that can be used to serve a certain community. These committees have been effective and efficient in delivering those studies without the need of procuring expensive consultants.

### Work planning

The project document was signed on Feb 15, 2021, but the project witnessed delays in recruitment of project management unit, resulting in slight delay in implementation of project activities. The project manager recruited in July 2021 followed by technical specialist and finance/admin officer recruited in August 2021, with the inception workshop took place on 25 August, 2021. There has been also delays in recruiting the rest of the team, in fact, until now some positions in the PMU are vacant.

However, the PMU has expedited the pace of the implementation properly and mostly made up the time lost at the beginning, this is evident by the satisfactory delivery on the project MTR targets overall. Also, such progress needs to be looked at in the light of the challenges outlined in section 3.2 above (Security, COVID, late transaction of the funds, etc).

The MTR emphasize that the project secured competent technical staff, maintaining lean core teams and outsourcing services for additional expertise when needed. This structure effectively addressed personnel needs related to project activities appropriately.

The MTR team doesn’t foresee the need for project extension and expect that the project can be operationally closed as planned (i.e. by Feb 15, 2027), this assessment is based on progress in achieving targets, the financial delivery status and budget available for project administration and activities. However, the project extension needs to be assessed by NPSC 1 year ahead of the closure date based on the needs and budget availabilities.

The PMU has praised the RBM training provided by UNDP and found it to be useful, and accordingly, the Project work-planning processes applied effectively the Project’s Results Framework/ log-frame as a management tool and was kept up to date with data from the ground. However, as discussed in section 3.1, the way the indicators are presented in the project design has been confusing for the PMU and partners with an opportunity for double counting beneficiaries. The MTR team has discussed this matter at length with the PMU during the country mission and reached into common understanding of how these indicators should be presented and reported on. Hence, the suggestions presented in table 3 of this report to enhance indicators clarity and measurability. Further, there is a need to strengthen local M&E capacities at the woreda level to ensure credibility and accuracy of data.

### Finance and co-finance

The Project had a total planned project cost of USD $16,286,073. Planned GEF/LDCF financing is USD 5,836,073 and planned co-financing of USD $ 10,450,000, of which $200,000 cash contribution from UNDP and the rest $10,250,000 is Government in-kind contributions.

So far, the project spent $4,166,139 of its GEF and UNDP resources, and that is 70% of its cash funding at a mid-point of the project and considering that work not started at all yet in 2 Woredas, so the adequacy of financial resources for the coming years could be an area of concern.

As a result, the project will likely go through budget deficit for funding the PMU as well as activities. For instance, it is obvious based on the expenditures that the target for 24 water projects (construction & supervision of two water storage structures at each of the 12 Woreda’s) can not be achieved within available resources. This requires immediate action from both UNDP and EPA to: 1) assess the financial needs of the project accurately and establish common grounds on the amount of funding needed to maintain the PMU and meet the targets, 2) start mobilizing financial resources to make up the deficit exploring donors interest and domestic resources, and 3) re-assess the project targets for capital intensive activities (such as water wells) and seek the NPSC approval on review targets in line with the available budget and mobilised resources.

The project experiences relatively high admin cost because of the geographical distribution of the project across the country which means that PMU staff personnel needed in each local area to drive project activities and also high transportation cost among regionally dispersed woredas.

In terms of the project financial management and controls, UNDP didn’t undertake any audits so far as stipulated in the project document. Audits are essential to ensure that appropriate and a thorough national and regional process for reporting and planning financial management is in place. However, only one spot-check was conducted covering the period January – June 2022, and the following observations were made:

* From Birr 67,073,667.50 FACE amount reported on 04/07/2022 only Birr 53,049,285.17 is supported with financial documents and Birr 14,024,382.33 is not settled and collected from PMU, project Woredas and Regional States.
* Voucher No 0000105 dated 07/06/2022 Birr 71,056.72 paid for MOENCO for vehicle maintenance is from Activity of "Undertake TOT Workshop for Regional Experts & Development Agents", which is not implemented as per AWP.
* HACT, PIM and Financial Management training was not given to project Woreda Finance heads, programme coordinators and Finance Officers at the start of the project which resulted currently in delaying of settlement of advances and less quality of financial documents submitted from Woredas

Cost-effectiveness criteria were applied in the choice of adaptation measures and modalities during the PPG process. In principle, using a “learning by doing” approach clarified certain agricultural practices for project beneficiaries, allowing them to participate in live demonstrations and understand the methods in practice. This strategy enabled incremental investment into practices and technologies they comprehended through hands-on experience.

Table 6: CCA Lowlands project expenditures overview

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Budget (from ProDoc)** | **Years** | | | | **Total Disbursed** | **Total remaining** | **Financial Delivery %** |
| **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
| Outcome 1: | 450,000 | 112,472.15 | 89,214.34 | 78,098.01 | 16,673.96 | 296,458.46 | 153,541.54 | 66% |
| Outcome 2: | 681,782 | 9,059.68 | 213,909.62 | 237,159.81 | 9,342.08 | 469,471.19 | 212,310.81 | 69% |
| Outcome 3: | 4,426,383 | 74,036.09 | 2,318,662.69 | 837,459.61 | 5,000.00 | 3,235,158.39 | 1,191,224.61 | 73% |
| Outcome 4: | 419,408 | 30,198.60 | 45,105.05 | 65,677.04 | 24,070.59 | 165,051.28 | 254,356.72 | 39% |
| **Total (Actual)** | **5,977,573** | **225,766.52** | **2,666,891.70** | **1,218,394.47** | **55,086.63** | **4,166,139.32** | **1,811,433.68** | **70%** |

**Co-finance**

The project co-financing has largely come from federal agencies engaged in the project including EPA and Federal Ethiopian Metrological Institute (EMI), as well as woreda level contributions. The EPA contributions included mainly office space, technical experts and senior management participation. The largest co-financing has been coming from Woreda level which also include office arrangements and staff participation, and more importantly contributions to the actual cost of activities especially those that are capital intensive such as watershed management projects, the cost of land provided for nursery sites, and biogas projects. The co-financing amounts have been estimated based on these activities and tracked accordingly. Co-financing data shows around 80% of the secured co-financing was specifically contributed to the implementation of watershed management activities, which are, by nature, resource-intensive.

The MTR team has found that the co-financing numbers are realistic based on the work observed on the ground and strong sense of ownership demonstrated particularly at the local (woreda) level, for example, the field officer who accompanied the MTR team in the field visit in Jijiga is essentially a government staff who has been allocated for the CCA Lowlands project, other observed examples were related to transportation organised by the local EPA offices for the project and MTR teams.

The MTR team found out that the finance and co-financing arrangement of the project has been working well and all the Woredas allocated finances have been used efficiently and effectively. The process of documenting cofinancing involved exchange of official letter with co-financing agency to confirm their contributions estimated based on input to certain activities.

Table 7: Aggregate summary data of achieved co-financing at the MTR stage

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sources of Co-financing | Name of Co-financer | Type of Co-financing | Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement | Actual Co-financing Amount at MTR (US$) | Actual % of expected amount |
| GEF Agency | UNDP | Grant (cash) | 200,000 | 90.500 | 45% |
| Recipient Country Government | Government of Ethiopia | In-kind | 10,250,000 | 6,691,000 | 65% |
| Total | | | **10,450,000** | **6,777,000** | **65.8%** |

### Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

**M&E design**

The M&E Framework was described in detail in Section 7 of the Project Document. It comprises standard M&E items for UNDP-GEF project such as the Inception Workshop (IW), meetings of the project board/Project Steering Committee, annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), audit, Mid-Term Review (MTR), Terminal Evaluation (TE), UNDP / GEF Tracking Tools and the final report.

There is no detailed Monitoring Plan that defines data collection process for the defined indicators in the PRF including data collection methods, frequency, means of verification, assumptions and responsibility for data collection, and Annex C covers on the evaluation plan (primarily MTR and TE), instead the Annex B of the prodoc presents ‘GEF Tracking Tool at baseline’, this tracking tool is not consistent with the new GEF core indicators template that GEF project follows since GEF 6. The MTR is using in this report the new GEF core indicator templates instead. Also, some inconsistencies have been noted between the target values defined in the Annex B in comparison to the target value defined in section 5 (Project Results Framework), for instance the target for indicator #8 (% increase in number of beneficiaries aware of climate risks and knowledge of response measures (established based on surveys)) in the PRF is 50% for MTR and 100% for TE, whereas the target for the same indicator is set to be 300,000 (no percentage) in Annex B.

The M&E makes no mention of the exit strategy, although it is not a standard UNDP-GEF requirement, it is however, greatly needed to demonstrate continuity between projects ending and the post project period, especially to formally confirm post project arrangements with GoE to continue delivering on the CCA solutions.

Nonetheless, the overall design of M&E framework meets the standard M&E template for projects of this size and complexity. Overall, the MTR team found the M&E design adequate for monitoring the project results and tracking the progress toward achieving the objectives. The M&E design is backed with adequate resources (a total of US$ 195,000 including USD$ 95,000 allocated for monitoring and $ 100,000 for evaluations) and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. It also includes $14,000 co-finance for monitoring of indicators in project results framework and environmental and social risks.

**M&E implementation**

The project board/steering committee was activated in 2021, it met for the first time in August 2021, and since then, it has been regularly held once per year. In total, the board met 3 times since the launch of the project and has been providing strategic guidance on oversight based on the progress made. The project PSC meetings address critical operational aspects such as financial sustainability, measuring project impacts, and enhancing stakeholder engagement. The PSC has been making decisions related to the annual work plan and budget approvals.

Indicator #8 (% increase in number of beneficiaries aware of climate risks and knowledge of response measures) was supposed to be monitored via surveys to measure the % of awareness, but the reported data represented number of people engaged in awareness activities. Apart from that, other indicators, including GEF core indicators, have been monitored properly including collecting gender disaggregated data for all beneficiaries-count related indicators.

Inception workshop conducted on August 25, 2021, and report organized and communicated with relevant stakeholders and key stakeholders familiarized with the detailed project strategy. The workshop involved presentations on objectives of the workshop, GEF and UNDP policy and regulations, M&E, project risks and challenges, project implementation modalities, logical framework, pilot project sites, key stakeholders, roles and responsibilities of NPSC, project organizational structure, project budget and its source of fund were discussed and reflected. Decisions such as meeting the proposed targets of the project, conducting baseline and vulnerability assessments, updating activities that outlined in the project document, and downward revision of the 2021 annual work plan (AWP) were the major areas agreed up on.

The PMU has also been monitoring the implementation of activities on the ground, in some cases jointly with UNDP, EPA and Regional line bureaus of EPA.

The MTR team has had access to all the reports presented to date. The format in which the data and information are presented indicates convenient documentation of progress and related data.

Ther existing reporting systems in place don’t cover two important elements of the project 1) the status of the risks identified in the SESP, and 2) the status of the actions identified in the gender action plan. Although these were planned appropriately, but the status of risks and actions identified have not been tracked and reported.

### Stakeholder engagement

As established in the Project Document, a broad framework for stakeholder analysis was carried out during the design stage. The main partnership arrangements with relevant stakeholders to be involved was also established including the perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process were amply supported to be included in design process. The Project Documents contains evidence that captures the broad levels of participation that took place at design, including the focus group discussion (FGD) held during the PPG phase, and list of stakeholders consulted during the PPG phase in Annex K of the project document.

Stakeholders’ engagement has been critical in the CCA Lowlands project given that the project has been working across wide spectrum of agencies and regions. From design onward the project has had a healthy inclusion of some stakeholders and beneficiaries.

At the federal level, beyond the EPA's role as an executing agency, the Ministry of Water & Irrigation (MoWI) and the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) have been significantly involved. MoWI contributed by assessing surface and groundwater potential, selecting borehole sites, identifying water points for livestock, and designing reservoirs, with the help of senior experts. The EMI played a crucial part in implementing the project, particularly in activities related to the second outcome. The institute identified suitable bidders for supplying AWSs, selected installation sites, and conducted the installations. Additionally, they provided training on the use of low-cost plastic rain gauges to Woreda extension agents, project staff, and kebele development agents, aiding in data collection for farming. The institute, along with its regional branches, also delivered real-time downscaled climate information and agro-meteorological advisory services based on data from the newly installed and existing AWS.

At the sub-national level, several key stakeholders have participated in implementing the project interventions. The most influential stakeholders include the Woreda Administration (WoA), Woreda Environmental Protection Office (WoEPO), Woreda Agriculture Office (WoA), Woreda Finance Office (WoF), Water & Energy Office (WoE), and the Women, Youth, and Children Affairs Office (WYCO).

The Woreda Administration led the Woreda Project Steering Committee (WPSC), endorsed agenda items for the WPSC, provided close supervision, ensured active engagement of Woreda stakeholders in the project activities, and evaluated implementation progress through field visits to targeted kebeles. The Woreda Environmental Protection Office (WoEPO) collaborated with the Project Management Unit (PMU) at the Woreda level to implement planned activities, communicated with the Woreda Administrator to organize WPSC meetings, and convened Woreda Technical Committee meetings for relevant decisions and technical guidance.

Active participation of lowland community members allowed the assessment and prioritization of the most urgent climate adaptive actions, focusing on their potential positive impacts on economic development, social capital, and environmental management.

The project extended its partnership strategy with the local universities that are near the project-targeted Woreda, these universities conducted training of trainers (TOT) sessions for regional and Woreda level extension service providers. Additionally, they offered mentoring support to Woreda project staff, Woreda development agents, and community members to aid in the implementation of climate-smart agricultural technologies.

### Reporting

The project submitted 2 PIRs to date, the first one was in 2022, and second in 2023. For some indicators, the PIRs had presented appropriate level of details on what has been achieved and the scope of key deliverables and their impacts, other parts of the PIRs were generally fairly detailed to monitor the performance of the project, with gender disaggregated data available for beneficiaries-count indicators.

An inception report was developed after the inception workshop was conducted. The inception report confirmed the validity of the project document and made no major changes to the project activities, outputs, outcomes, and targets.

At the local level, a Kebele monitoring and evaluation committee has been established at the Kebele level comprising kebele community leaders, elders, women representatives, and youth male and female representatives. The committee's main responsibility is to select beneficiary farmers with the assistance of the Woreda technical committee, particularly focusing on vulnerable farmers, very poor farmers, landless youths, and widows to ensure project inclusiveness. The committee also ensures that the project benefits fairly reach the target beneficiary farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists as per the plan. The social, environmental and safeguard social risks and related management plans were monitored at the woreda level by Kebele committees, especially for implementing activities that involve construction including water harvesting, river diversion, earthen pond construction etc.

Data flows from this committee through the Woreda-level steering committee to the central PMU. However, there is a need to strengthen local M&E capacities at the woreda level to ensure credibility and accuracy of data.

The existing reporting systems in place don’t cover two important elements of the project 1) the status of the risks identified in the SESP, and 2) the status of the actions identified in the gender action plan. Although these were planned appropriately, but the status of risks and actions identified have not been tracked and reported.

**Adaptive management**: GEF evaluations assess adaptive management in terms of the ability to direct the project design and implementation to adapt to changing political, regulatory, environmental, and other conditions outside of the control of the project implementing teams. The adaptive approach involves exploring alternative ways to navigate the projects towards meeting the planned objectives using one or more of these alternatives.

The PMU has been agile to the extent possible in dealing with the emerging challenges, for example:

* In attempt to deal with the limited budget available for drilling deep water wells/boreholes, the PMU has been exploring other cost-effective options for securing water resources for the communities including using shallow wells, surface water resources instead and divert water from dams/rivers as one alternative, another alternative intervention is to maintain existing water wells.
* Creating and activating the local technical committees has been instrumental in driving project activities involving relevant stakeholders and bringing experiences from different parts (agriculture, water, etc) to conduct the water assessment in each Woreda.
* The approach for training a relatively large number of beneficiaries has been quite innovative, by investing in developing the training modules at first, partnering with the universities to deliver trainings, and follow the ToT approach for building these capacities more sustainably.
* In absence of effective direct communication channels with the communities, the project has made good use of the Telegram app as a way to engage with the communities directly and pass on information about the best practices, weather data information and advisory services.
* During the time of COVID, the project had to engage virtually with stakeholders due to the restrictions on movement.

### Communications

**Internal project communication with stakeholders**: The MTR team found that the PMU has been regularly communicating with stakeholders. Stakeholders engaged in the MTR process seemed to be well-informed about the project details including activities, delivery approaches and outcomes. PSC, WCS and technical committees have been the main effective regular communication channels, in addition to the ongoing engagement with project stakeholders. The MTR team believes that successful partnership strategy that was followed by the PMU has been a strength point that helped facilitating the project delivery.

The primary communication channels used to reach the beneficiaries included local FM radio, campaigns, and events focused on soil and water conservation, green legacy initiatives, as well as meetings and workshops. Success stories and best practices are shared through a Telegram group, facilitating knowledge exchange among project staff and stakeholders. Additionally, an experience-sharing visit was conducted to showcase climate change adaptation best practices, forest management, watershed management, and climate-smart agriculture.

Disseminating credible climate information and agrometeorological advisory services through locally suitable communication channels (such as the Telegram app or local FM radios) helped reduce time and costs associated with pilot testing.

**External project communication**: There has been limited communication done by the project directed to the general public and potential partners beyond the project boundaries. Communicating the project success stories that have been achieved by the project with the public, donors and development agencies could yield a significant support to the project objective by demonstrating CCA solutions that have actually worked.

## Sustainability

Sustainability of the project is judged by the commitment of the project benefits to continue and replicate beyond the project completion date. The evaluation identifies key risks to sustainability and explains how these risks may affect continuation of the project benefits after the project closes. The assessment covers institutional/governance risks, financial, socio-political, and environmental risks.

### Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

The sustainability of the project lies in its strong ownership within the community and hosting organizations with the government of Ethiopia. The MTR team assessed multiple elements that are considered contributing factors for the institutional sustainability, including:

* The strong sense of ownership among Government institutions engaged in this project is a significant sustainability factor, this is true in case of EPA, EMI and local authorities. For instance, the installed AWSs have been handed over to the EMI and are now going through its network of AWSs including its maintenance programme. Also, the EPA has shown genuine interest to replicate the project successes into other Woredas using international and domestic financial resources.
* The project invested heavily in capacity building activities, and gained skills and knowledge are going to be important legacy left behind. Particularly, the ToT approach invested in Development Agents shapes a transferable knowledge to the beneficiaries beyond the project lifetime.
* The project's capacity development approach enhanced government officials' knowledge of climate change concepts and their understanding of related risks and opportunities.
* Effective community consultations during the PPG and implementation stages allowed to integrate their needs into the project design and implementation and therefore the participation and ownership of land users is strengthened.

On the other hand, the following are considered as limiting factors for the institutional sustainability

* The delays in developing local Climate adaptive action plans taking into consideration climate smart approaches and future scenario represents a concern over the ownership of these plans and their applications particularly when funding of those plans has not been thoroughly discussed nor agreed.
* The project established effective coordination platforms, including WSC and technical committees. However, once the project concludes, it is uncertain how coordination among these organizations will continue, particularly regarding the capacity for ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) at the local level, given the lack of clear arrangements in place.
* Maintaining the installed solar systems is critically important for their sustainability, and the project design envisaged that youth from target area will be trained on solar maintenance but this is not done yet.

Despite delays in a few activities, the MTR sees no legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that significantly pose risks and may jeopardize continuity of the project’s benefits. Based on the combination of factors mentioned above, the MTR rate the institutional sustainability as **Moderately Likely (ML).**

### Financial risks to sustainability

Assessing the financial sustainability of the CCA Lowlands project outcomes requires investigating the existing pathways and financing strategies for scaling up, deep and out.

* Scaling up involves adopting and financing the successful CCA solution demonstrated by the project by the national and sub-national governments. During MTR team engagement with the EPA, the senior management reaffirmed the intention to uptake these solutions and scale them, and similar feedback was received from the regional EPA offices, however, despite the positive intentions, there are no clear pathways for practically implementing the scale up including no financing and resource mobilisation strategy in place, which limits the likelihood of this pathway actually happening.
* Scaling out involves replicating the successful CCA solution into the Woredas in the lowlands ecosystem. And similarly, stakeholders appreciate the potential for replication, but nothing clearly defined as to how it is done and who is financing it, particularly with the limited demonstration for other woredas happening beyond the boundaries of the project.
* Scaling deep involves replication CCA solutions by the community, this is based on the provided information, improved capacity and success and return on investment experienced by the community will motivate them to replicate and expand on those solutions, but the financing remains a barrier in this way, especially in light of the limited role that the private sector has been having so far, and therefore private financing is still primitive and unlikely to happen.

In brief, despite the genuine interest from stakeholders and communities for scaling, however, the pathway for doing so has not been defined, and the financial instruments for scaling the CCA solutions are not developed. Based on this, the MTR rating of the financial sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely (MU).**

### Socio-economic risks to sustainability

Ethiopia is ethnically diverse, comprising over 80 different ethnic groups. The project identified the risk of marginalizing small ethnic groups, including internally displaced peoples (IDPs), the landless, people with disabilities, people with HIV/AIDS, and youth. In response, the project developed CCA Lowlands project implementation guidelines that define a "community wealth ranking system" as a criterion for selecting communities to participate in project activities, ensuring the poorest communities are engaged. Additionally, project staff have been sensitized and trained to identify and engage with these vulnerable groups, ensuring they are consulted and meaningfully represented in user groups and committees formed during the project, this was done through SESP training delivered by UNDP with participation of PMU and local teams.

The project identified number of socio-economic risks for sustainability including the risk of limited capacity of the rights-holders to claim their rights. The project response strategy for this risk was fundamentally based on empowering communities and community-based Groups and associations with knowledge and capacities related to land use planning and climate change adaptation techniques, this in turn will strengthen local communities to claim their rights to land and natural resources.

Also, the effective community consultations started from the PPG stage all through the implementation stages allowed to integrate their needs into the project design and implementation and therefore the participation and ownership of land users is strengthened. Beneficiaries and other potentially affected people also have access to information about the project. Communities participated in the project design and implementation and were able to raise their needs through focal points and local communities, however, there is no formal project grievance mechanism in place for managing complaints.

Selecting a site for establishing a nursery has gone through several changes, the first site selected was opposed by the local community because the site was used for other purposes including using water resources of its surroundings. Therefore, the PMU intervened and convened consultations with the communities to select the most appropriate site for the nursery without affecting other activities.

Women's engagement in leading change and land-use practices, as encouraged by the project, may be constrained by organizational behaviours that are generally deemed unacceptable, inappropriate, or undesired for women in the deeply conservative societies across the project areas. However, the project's consultative and participatory approach has helped mitigate this risk including by explaining to communities the importance of women's participation and leadership in land-use practices. During a focus group discussion, beneficiaries questioned the MTR team about the focus on women's participation. The team responded by explaining the balanced approach for involving both men and women in leading land-use practices. The MTR found that the project has successfully engaged and empowered women, though it acknowledges that such cultural changes take time.

The project support involved prioritizing grants for female-led households or households engaged in activities emphasizing female leadership and encouraging their active participation with authorities. Women's organizations were also involved in project implementation and capacity development at all levels. Over the past three years of project implementation, a total of 31,485 female beneficiaries were selected and supported with various climate-smart livelihood technologies and technical assistance.

Regarding the potential community and occupational health and safety risks during the construction and operation of small-scale infrastructure and water retention components of the project, the project incorporated engineering design support for the water projects to ensure community safety. However, the MTR team observed children near water wells and ponds, exposing them to the risk of drowning. There is a need for increased awareness of health and safety risks among communities living near these water sources. This will help ensure that they understand the dangers and know how to manage them effectively.

Risks and potential impacts on the safety of affected communities during the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of activities have been identified through the water project EIAs, and project contractors have been made aware of safety issues to be taken into account, including, for example, setting up a fence around the area of constriction to minimize safety risks for the communities.

The socio-economic sustainability is rated **Likely (L).**

### Environmental risks to sustainability

The project recognized a risk to local habitats and ecosystems from plantation and reforestation efforts. To address this, the project promoted the regeneration of degraded land through reforestation using indigenous, multi-use plant and tree species. Training for local communities included education on the benefits of using indigenous species instead of exotics in watershed restoration programs. For instance, the Climate Adaptation Action Plan promoted the plantation of bamboo, as Ethiopia hosts one of the largest bamboo resources in Africa. In total, about 750, 000 households in Ethiopia derive sustenance benefits and income from bamboo harvesting and production; and the economic returns are valued at ETB 239 million[[28]](#footnote-29).

The small-scale water projects (such as water wells, water storage, and solar water pumping) have the potential to trigger excessive water flow regimes. In case of solar-powered irrigation, it often leads to increased groundwater usage due to the absence of pumping costs. While this can enhance water security and livelihoods in areas with favourable hydrogeology, it may pose risks in regions already heavily dependent on groundwater. Currently, there are no site-specific management plans or installed meters to monitor these operations. Besides monitoring water quantities, the project needs to implement a focused awareness program targeting nearby communities about water extraction and usage.

A geo-hydrological assessment and an EIAs has been carried out for each site involving water holding structures and irrigation to determine the ideal location for mini storage, reservoirs and PV-pumps and measures to ensure social and environmental sustainability.

The core objective of the project is to enhance communities' resilience to climate change, including extreme climate events, through capacity building, awareness, and improved access to adaptation technologies aimed at sustaining their livelihoods. Additionally, the project aims to update and enhance site-specific climate information, forecasting, and projections. Institutional capacity development and training programs were focused on changing behaviours and increasing climate change preparedness among Woreda government staff, including development agents and community members.

The environmental sustainability is rated **Moderately Likely (ML).**

# Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

## Main Findings & conclusions

**Project design**

1. The MTR Team found the CCA Lowlands Project design to be generally sound, and it was based on a thorough understanding of how climate change impacts lowland communities and their ability to achieve livelihood resilience and sustainable job opportunities, with a focus on women and youth. The project integrates natural solutions and appropriate technology to adapt to climate change, aiming to strengthen both 'natural' and 'social' assets. However, the Theory of Change lacks clear pathways showing immediate and behavioural changes linked to assumptions and global environmental benefits. The project design also underestimated the budget for drilling water wells.
2. The majority of the indicators defined in the PRF of the CCA Lowlands Project meet the “SMART” criteria to some extent, although some indicators lack clarity. Also, people-count indicators # 1, 2, 5, and 7 (see Table 3) are repetitive, creating a significant risk of double-counting beneficiaries. These flaws in indicator design have reduced the PRF's utility and caused confusion about reporting and effectively monitoring project progress. On the positive side, the descriptions of the project objective and outcomes are concise and clear, with defined numeric targets and time frames for SMART indicators. Additionally, the project design includes MTR and TE targets to aid in the planning process, though it does not define annual targets.

**Progress to outcomes:**

1. The project has benefitted 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) across 10 Woredas through interventions such as skill development training, downscaled climate information, agro-meteorological advisory services, and livelihood support focusing on diversified, climate-resilient options, particularly empowering women and youths.
2. Beneficiaries reported significant improvements in economic status, leading to better living standards in terms of food supply, housing, and healthcare. There is ample evidence that key impacts achieved including, increased economic growth and adaptive capacity, engagement in diversified agropastoral activities and animal husbandry, improved awareness of climate risks and responsive measures, and active community involvement through knowledge-sharing visits.
3. Despite being unable to intervene in two Woredas (Saharite Samri and Weyra Luake) due to conflicts, the project is on track, achieving 101% of its MTR target (60,893 out of 60,000 beneficiaries). The CCA lowlands project is effectively enhancing community adaptive capacity to climate change, improving food security, and promoting communal economic growth and social status.
4. Under outcome 1, understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation measures at the community level has significantly improved. Training has increased the technical capacities of farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists, with 1,512 beneficiaries (793 men and 719 women) receiving training on climate-smart solutions and adaptation practices. The project exceeded its targets by achieving 125% of the TE target for trainees.
5. Training modules covered various topics, including climate-smart technology, climate and weather information for planning, emergency response, fall armyworm monitoring, flood management, adaptive soil and water conservation, and diversified livelihoods. Universities played a key role in delivering these trainings efficiently.
6. Local authorities' capacity was also built, with 78 higher experts (70 men and 8 women) trained as trainers to mentor extension service providers and local communities. While community climate change adaptation action plans for six Woredas have been developed, a comprehensive plan for ten Woredas has been developed and implemented with project support.
7. Success stories and best practices are shared through a Telegram group, facilitating knowledge exchange among project staff and stakeholders. Additionally, an experience-sharing visit was conducted to showcase climate change adaptation best practices, forest management, watershed management, and climate-smart agriculture.
8. Under outcome 2, the project has enhanced local communities' access to climate forecasts and advisory services to support climate adaptive management. Nine AWS were procured, with six installed and operational, providing reliable, real-time climate and weather information. Five technical staff from the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI) received training in installation, operation, and maintenance of these stations. 450 community members (200 men and 250 women) were provided with plastic rain gauges to monitor soil moisture and practice timely pasture farming, with training from EMI on installation and use.
9. In collaboration with EMI, nine seasonal downscaled weather forecasts were prepared and disseminated to 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) via a Telegram group. The Woreda task team also distributed decadal, monthly, and seasonal forecasts through various community channels.
10. Digitized decision support tools and proactive climate adaptive management plan have not yet developed to further disseminate climate forecasts, enhancing the reach and effectiveness of climate and weather information to be translated into actions on the ground.
11. Under outcome 3, the project has significantly increased the capacity of land users in ten Woredas by providing various climate-adaptive technologies and supporting diversified livelihood options. Key achievements include climate-Resilient Livelihoods such as supplementary irrigation, small ruminant rearing, modern beekeeping, water harvesting, drought-resistant crops, and poultry farming. These activities were tailored to the interests and needs of the local communities, especially vulnerable groups. 60,893 individuals (29,408 males and 31,485 females) received technical support to implement climate-resilient practices.
12. The project rehabilitated, reforested, and restored 1192 hectares of degraded communal land. Improved land productivity through bunds, alley cropping, and terracing techniques. Soil and Water Conservation Structures by establishing terraces, trenches, eyebrows, and gabions over 500 hectares of communal land and 692 hectares of farmland. The project planted 599,556 multi-purpose tree and grass species. Drilled five boreholes, completed three river diversions, and developed one stream to support adaptation efforts.
13. The MTR identified several barriers affecting the project's achievement of objectives including: political unrest and security situation particularly in Saharite Samri and Wetra Luake; accessibility and remoteness of geographically dispersed project sites; COVID-19 impact on the field activities; Market Inflation led increasing costs beyond initial budget estimations and contributing to a budget deficit; understaffed PMU with insufficient human resources; lengthy Procurement Processes; budget transfer delays; and staff turnover and limited availability to participate in the project activities.
14. UNDP Ethiopia has played its role in the overall supervision and monitoring of the CCA Lowlands project, providing project assurance through its country office and the UNDP-GEF, through active participation in the project board and providing procurement services, including purchasing AWS. Additionally, UNDP has supported financial monitoring, and spot checks, and facilitated PIRs and the MTR but no audits done as planned. UNDP has also provided valuable training to the PMU team on Results-Based Management and the Social and Environmental Screening Process, which has significantly improved project management practices. Despite these efforts, the PMU and EPA have reported delays in the budget transfers for the first quarter of each financial year, attributed to complications with UNDP's new ERC system, 'Quantum.'
15. The Ethiopian EPA serves as the executing agency for the climate change adaptation project, overseeing the management, monitoring, and achievement of project outcomes while ensuring effective use of UNDP resources. The Project Management Unit (PMU), integrated within the EPA, handles day-to-day operations, leveraging existing government structures to enhance project ownership and facilitate local implementation. The strong integration of the PMU within the EPA has fostered a robust sense of ownership, with EPA staff and regional offices actively supporting project delivery.
16. The project document was signed on February 15, 2021, but delays in recruiting the Project Management Unit (PMU) resulted in a slight delay in the commencement of project activities. The project manager was recruited by June 2021, and the inception workshop took place on August 25, 2021. Despite these initial setbacks and ongoing challenges such as security issues, COVID-19 restrictions, and delayed fund transfers, the PMU has managed to expedite implementation and meet the Mid-Term Review (MTR) targets satisfactorily. However, some positions within the PMU remain vacant, which has necessitated outsourcing additional expertise when needed.
17. The MTR highlighted the project's success in securing competent technical staff and maintaining a lean core team. The PMU has effectively utilized Results-Based Management (RBM) training provided by UNDP, which has enhanced the project’s work-planning processes and kept the Project’s Results Framework up to date. The MTR team found no need for a project extension beyond the planned closure date of February 15, 2027, based on current progress, financial status, and budget availability. However, it recommended reassessing this a year prior to closure. There is also a need to strengthen local M&E capacities at the woreda level to ensure credibility and accuracy of data.

**Finance**

1. The project faces potential budget deficits and financial challenges, as it has spent 70% of its cash funding halfway through its timeline, with significant not started at all two woredas and high admin cost due to the geographical distribution of the project sites, necessitating immediate action from UNDP and EPA to reassess financial needs, mobilize additional resources, and possibly revise project targets to align with the available budget and mobilized resources.
2. The project met its MTR co-financing target. Co-financing has primarily come from federal agencies such as the EPA and EMI, along with significant contributions from woreda-level administrations. EPA's contributions included office space, technical experts, and senior management participation, while the largest co-financing came from woredas, covering office arrangements, staff participation, and costs of capital-intensive activities like watershed management projects, nursery sites, and biogas projects. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) team found the co-financing figures to be realistic, reflecting strong local ownership, particularly at the woreda level. However, there is room for improvement in documenting co-financing contributions.
3. The M&E framework includes standard items for UNDP-GEF projects. Annex B of the project document includes the ‘GEF Tracking Tool at baseline,’ which is inconsistent with the new GEF core indicators. The MTR team found the M&E design adequate for monitoring results and tracking progress. The design is supported by adequate resources, including $195,000 for monitoring and evaluations and an additional $14,000 co-finance for monitoring indicators in the project results framework and environmental and social risks
4. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been active since 2021, meeting annually to provide strategic guidance, address financial sustainability, measure project impacts, and enhance stakeholder engagement. An inception workshop was conducted on August 25, 2021, followed by organized reporting and stakeholder communication. The PMU, in collaboration with UNDP, EPA, and regional EPA bureaus, has been actively monitoring project activities. The MTR team has reviewed all reports to date, finding the documentation of progress and related data to be well-presented and convenient for tracking the project’s advancement.
5. The Project Document for the CCA Lowlands project established a comprehensive stakeholder analysis framework during its design stage. This framework identified key stakeholders, including those affected by project decisions, those who could influence outcomes, and those who could contribute valuable information or resources. Evidence of broad participation during the design phase is documented, including focus group discussions and consultations with various stakeholders listed in Annex K of the project document.
6. Stakeholder engagement has been pivotal throughout the project's implementation, given its extensive reach across multiple agencies and regions. Beyond the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the executing agency, significant federal-level involvement has come from the Ministry of Water & Irrigation (MoWI) and the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI). At the sub-national level, key stakeholders include the Woreda Administration, Environmental Protection Office, Agriculture Office, Finance Office, Water & Energy Office, and the Women, Youth, and Children Affairs Office.
7. Active community participation has been crucial for assessing and prioritizing urgent climate adaptive actions, focusing on their potential positive impacts on economic development, social capital, and environmental management. The project has also extended its partnership strategy to local universities near the targeted woredas, which conducted Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions for regional and woreda-level extension service providers. These universities have provided ongoing mentoring support to project staff and community members, aiding in the implementation of climate-smart agricultural technologies.
8. The project has been delivering reporting effectively including PIRs, inception report and other reports with generally comprehensive data to monitor project performance, including gender-disaggregated beneficiary data. There is a recognized need to strengthen local M&E capacities to ensure accurate data capturing and transfer to the national level for effective monitoring and timely correction of any inconsistencies.
9. Adaptive management, crucial for navigating challenges outside the control of the project team, has been a strong suit of the PMU. For instance, faced with budget constraints for water wells, the PMU explored cost-effective alternatives like using surface water and maintaining existing wells. The activation of local technical committees has also been key, leveraging diverse expertise to conduct water assessments.
10. The MTR found that the Project Management Unit (PMU) has maintained regular and effective communication with stakeholders, keeping them well-informed about project activities, delivery approaches, and outcomes. The Project Steering Committee (PSC), Woreda Steering Committees (WSC), and technical committees have been the main channels for ongoing engagement, with the PMU's partnership strategy being a significant facilitator of project delivery. Communication with beneficiaries has utilized local FM radio, campaigns, and events focused on soil and water conservation and green legacy initiatives, as well as meetings and workshops. Success stories and best practices are shared via a Telegram group, fostering knowledge exchange among project staff and stakeholders.
11. However, external communication to the general public and potential partners beyond the project boundaries has been limited. Sharing the project's success stories with the public, donors, and development agencies could significantly support the project objectives by demonstrating effective climate change adaptation (CCA) solutions, thereby attracting additional support and resources.

**Sustainability**

1. The project's sustainability is anchored in strong community and organizational ownership, particularly among Ethiopian government institutions like the EPA and EMI. Key factors include successful capacity-building initiatives, enhanced government knowledge on climate change, and effective community consultations. However, challenges such as the future operation and funding of the climate-adaptive action plans, uncertainties about post-project coordination, and incomplete solar maintenance training remain. Despite these issues, no significant legal or policy barriers threaten the project's long-term benefits, indicating a solid foundation for sustainability.
2. While there is genuine interest from stakeholders and communities in scaling CCA solutions, the pathways and financial instruments necessary for this scaling are not yet established.
3. The CCA Lowlands project effectively addressed the risks of marginalizing vulnerable ethnic groups and other at-risk populations by implementing a "community wealth ranking system" and sensitizing staff through SESP training. The project also empowered communities with land use planning and climate change adaptation skills, fostering stronger rights claims. Extensive community consultations ensured the integration of local needs and enhanced ownership of land users. While the project faced challenges, such as selecting nursery sites and promoting women's leadership in conservative areas, it successfully engaged women and supported 31,48 5female beneficiaries. Additionally, the project implemented safety measures to mitigate risks near water infrastructure, although ongoing safety awareness is necessary. Despite the lack of a formal grievance mechanism, the project made significant strides in inclusivity, empowerment, and safety.
4. The CCA Lowlands project effectively addressed ecological and community risks through strategic reforestation using indigenous species and promoting sustainable land regeneration practices. Training local communities on the benefits of indigenous species, such as bamboo, which significantly contributes to Ethiopia's economy, was a key component. The project also acknowledged potential risks from small-scale water projects, like increased groundwater usage, and emphasized the need for site-specific management plans and community awareness programs. Comprehensive geo-hydrological assessments and EIAs were conducted to ensure the sustainability of water structures and irrigation systems.

## Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Below recommendations are focused on corrective actions in the second half of the project and forward-looking recommendations/lesson learned focussed on future programming:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | TE Recommendation | Entity Responsible | Timeframe |
| 1 | 1. Shift the project focus from being fully dedicated to the operation into a more strategic approach by addressing the future sustainability issues and opening the horizon for replication. This can be done practically by:    1. Developing a sustainability plan (an exit strategy), elaborating on the provisions that would be necessary for the sustainability of the project supported systems. This should be seen not only a document to be developed, but also a way to work with partners in defining what is next after the project and how we can build on what has been achieved and what would be the funding opportunities to be sought.    2. Develop replication Atlas for CCA solutions in Ethiopia’s lowlands highlighting areas and situations where replication of CCA solutions have been demonstrated to be successful interventions and stimulate replication and encourage local, regional and national dialogue.    3. Identify areas where private sector could have a greater role in supporting the CCA solutions through linking these solutions. The private sector plays a pivotal role at every stage of the value chain for climate change adaptation solutions. From research and development to manufacturing, distribution, and implementation, private companies contribute essential resources, expertise, and innovation. By leveraging their strengths and collaborating with other stakeholders, the private sector can significantly enhance the effectiveness and reach of climate adaptation measures. This integrated approach ensures that adaptation solutions are not only developed and deployed efficiently but also sustained and improved over time.    4. Develop resource mobilisation plan based on innovative financing for CCA. Innovative financing mechanisms are critical for mobilizing the necessary resources to fund climate change adaptation. Insurance-linked securities, impact investing, public-private partnerships, microfinance, and crowdfunding are among the diverse strategies that can be employed. By leveraging these mechanisms, the future projects can attract a wide range of investors and stakeholders to support adaptation projects that enhance resilience and ensure sustainable development in the face of climate change | EPA/PMU and UNDP | 2023 |
| 2 | 1. Urgently assess the financial resources needed to maintain the PMU and meet the project targets, and initiate a resource mobilisation process, this should include engaging with diverse funding sources (bilateral donors, multilateral donors, public funding, UNDP TRAC, private sector, etc) seeking their financial support to fund project activities. This also requires communicating the project success stories with the public, donors and development agencies could yield a significant support to the project objective by demonstrating CCA solutions that have actually worked. | UNDP and PMU | ASAP |
| 3 | 1. Review the implementation strategy for water projects at the Woreda level in light of the budget constraints with aim of diversifying the water solutions for the community rather than fully solely depending on resource-intensive activities such as digging water wells, other options could be transferring surface water, shallow wells, etc. This inevitably requires seeking the PSC approval to approve the strategy and accordingly update the target for the number of water projects (Construction & supervision of two water storage structures at each of the 12 Woreda’s). | PSC | 2024 |
| 4 | 1. Incorporate a decision-making tool into the planned mobile application, the tool should enable communities to transition from merely receiving information to taking appropriate adaptation measures for their farming processes. | PMU | Aug 2024- Dec 2024 |
| 5 | 1. Expedite the development of the local climate adaptive action plans in collaboration with the local authorities and communities. The development process should emphasize on the ownership and funding arrangements for those plans to ensure transitioning from planning into implementation. | PMU | July 2024 -March 2025 |
| 6 | 1. Establish and operate an ongoing monitoring process of the SESP and gender action plan. The existing reporting systems in place don’t cover two important elements of the project 1) the status of the risks identified in the SESP, and 2) the status of the actions identified in the gender action plan. Although these were planned appropriately, but the status of risks and actions identified have not been tracked and reported. | UNDP/PMU | ASAP |
| 7 | 1. Define appropriate Grievance Mechanism and make it feasible for the local communities by including it in the project communication materials and awareness activities. | UNDP | ASAP |
| 8 | 1. Develop and disseminate success stories using different communication material (videos, articles, etc) aiming at demonstrating the work done on the ground targeted for other communities, decisions makers and funding agencies to promote replications. | PMU/ communication officer at UNDP | ASAP |
| 9 | 1. Build the capacities at the Woreda-level on M&E and results based management through targeted training aiming at capturing project outcomes and impacts including defining the roles and responsibilities and more importantly outlining the data flow and validation process to ensure credibility and accuracy. | PMU | Aug-Dec 2024 |
| 10 | 1. Implement a training programme targeting youth to educate them on maintaining the solar systems in their local areas including establishing links with professional services providers when needed. | PMU | Aug-Dec 2024 |
| 11 | 1. Review project indicators as proposed in table 3 in this document. | UNDP CO and RTA | 2024 |
| 12 | 1. Undertake project audit for the past years (2021,2022 and 2023) and plan future annual audits. | UNDP CO | 2024 |

**Lessons learned.**

* **The impact of climate change is multifaceted, necessitating a holistic and integrated adaptation strategy** to address the interconnectedness of water, energy, and food systems. An integrated approach is essential to tackle the complex challenges posed by climate change effectively. Adopting the water-energy-food (WEF) nexus approach involves stakeholders from various sectors collaborating to identify common goals, share knowledge, and develop joint solutions. This collaborative effort is crucial for mitigating the impacts of climate change and achieving long-term sustainability.
* **Women’s involvement in climate change adaptation is not only beneficial but essential for the resilience and sustainability of communities**. Their unique perspectives and knowledge can significantly contribute to effective climate adaptation strategies. Therefore, it is imperative to promote gender equality and empower women to actively participate in all aspects of climate change adaptation.
* **The establishment of strategic partnerships is crucial for the success of complex projects**. The CCA Lowlands project has provided a good example of setting up and maintaining partnerships at all levels (national, sub-national and community-level). By enhancing expertise, sharing resources, mitigating risks, enhancing credibility, and facilitating knowledge transfer, strategic partnerships provide a robust framework for tackling the multifaceted challenges inherent in complex projects. Therefore, fostering and maintaining strategic partnerships should be a priority for organizations engaged in such endeavours.
* **The role of the private sector in Climate Change Adaptation should not be undermined**. The private sector plays a pivotal role in climate change adaptation by investing in sustainable practices, developing adaptive technologies, offering risk management services, fostering collaborations, and integrating climate resilience into CSR strategies. By leveraging their resources and expertise, communities can drive significant progress in building resilience. As climate change continues to pose substantial risks, the active involvement of the private sector in adaptation efforts is essential for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.
* **A competent PMU is essential for the success of complex projects.** Through effective planning, resource management, risk management, quality assurance, communication, and monitoring, the PMU ensures that projects are delivered on time, within budget, and to the desired quality standards. The CCA Lowlands PMU has been providing strong leadership and strategic direction, and represents an example of a competent PMU makes a significant difference in achieving project success and meeting stakeholder expectations.
* **Effective communication channels must be customized to fit the local contexts and needs of farmers.** This involves understanding the specific climatic challenges faced by farmers in different regions, as well as their preferred communication methods. For instance, in remote areas with limited internet access, traditional methods such as community meetings and printed materials may be more effective. In contrast, in areas with widespread mobile phone usage, digital tools such as mobile apps and SMS services can provide real-time updates and interactive support. Tailored communication channels are vital for guiding farmers' decision-making in the face of climate change. By providing timely and relevant information on both a seasonal and long-term basis, these channels can help farmers make informed decisions, improve productivity, and build resilience to climate impacts. Customized communication strategies that consider local contexts and actively engage farmers are key to the success of climate adaptation efforts in agriculture.

# Annexes

## Annex 1: MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

## Annex 2: List of documents reviewed.

List of documents that have been reviewed includes, but not limited to:

1. Project Identification Form (PIF)
2. Final UNDP-GEF Project Document with all annexes
3. CEO Endorsement Request
4. UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)
5. Inception Workshop Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)
7. Minutes of Project Steering Committee Meetings
8. Annual Work Plans
9. Woreda vulnerability assessment reports
10. CCA Lowlands implementation guidelines
11. Long-term monitoring & evaluation framework and scale up strategy for the climate change adaptation in the lowland ecosystem project (LDCF), Ethiopia.
12. Market & value chain assessment for rural on farm/off farm IGA for The Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem Project (Ldcf), Ethiopia.
13. Training Modules for Climate Change Adaptation
14. Climate adaptive community action plan, 2023.
15. GEF Tracking Tools (from CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages)
16. GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators (from PIF, CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages); for GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects only
17. Financial data, including actual expenditures by project outcome, including management costs, and including documentation of any significant budget revisions.
18. Co-financing data with expected and actual contributions broken down by type of co-financing, source, and whether the contribution is considered as investment mobilized or recurring expenditures.
19. Audit reports.
20. Electronic copies of project outputs (booklets, manuals, technical reports, articles, etc.)
21. Sample of project communications materials
22. Summary list of formal meetings, workshops, etc. held, with date, location, topic, and number of participants.
23. Minutes of meetings and workshop reports covering key meetings by the project

## Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation matrix is important to identifying the key evaluation questions and how they will be answered through the selected methods. The evaluation matrix is a tool that evaluators create as a map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection and analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated.

Table 8: Evaluation Matrix

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluative Criteria Questions | Indicators/evidence | Sources | Methodology |
| * + - 1. Project strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results? | | | |
| * Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design? * Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)? | * Level of alignment of project’s activities with relevant stakeholders’ plans * Stakeholders’ perceptions on the relevance of project’s activities to their needs * Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of beneficiaries and stakeholders in project design and implementation | * project documentations * national policies or strategies, websites * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| * Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document. * Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes? * Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines. * Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women’s groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document? | * Degree of completeness and inclusivity of the ToC * Stakeholders feedback on the TOC * Appropriateness of the Theory of change in terms of alignment with the strategic objectives and logframe * Degree of coherence of the project design in terms of theory of change, components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources, etc. * Level of coherence between programme design and project implementation approach * Identification of the problem and its causes in the project being addressed? * Assessment of gender integration into the project design | * project documentations * national policies or strategies, websites * Project stakeholders’ feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| * Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary. * Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame? * Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis. * Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits. | * SMARTness testing of indicators (Suitability assessment of the defined indicators/measures to demonstrate impacts) * Indicators inclusion of gender aspects | * project documentations * national policies or strategies, websites * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far? | | | |
| * Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; populate the Progress Towards Results Matrix, as described in the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for the project objective and each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “not on target to be achieved” (red). * Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool/Core Indicators at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review. * Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project. * By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits. | * Analysis of progress towards logframe indicators * Analysis of the GEF Core Indicators * Mandatory indicator: Number of direct project beneficiaries - dis-aggregated by gender. * Number of participants trained on key adaptation issues, including community-based adaptation techniques * Number of Climate adaptive action plans developed taking into consideration climate smart approaches and future scenario. * Number of AWS operational in each of the 9 uncovered Woredas * Number of people with access to weather forecasts and advisory services at project sites – disaggregated by gender * Ha of degraded land rehabilitated, forested or restored * Population benefiting from the adoption of diversified, climate-resilient livelihood options: * Number of people * % of female * % of the target population * % increase in number of beneficiaries aware of climate risks and knowledge of response measures (established based on surveys) | * project documentations (PIRs) * Progress reports * Project deliverables * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project’s implementation? To what extent has progress been made in the implementation of social and environmental management measures? Have there been changes to the overall project risk rating and/or the identified types of risks as outlined at the CEO Endorsement stage? | | | |
| * Management Arrangements * Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement. * Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement. * Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement. * Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how? * What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff? * What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board? | * Stakeholders’ perspective on project management effectiveness * Suitability of project management structure including gender balance * Adequacy and timeliness of UNDP support services * Inclusion of gender into project operations | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Work Planning   * Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved. * Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results? * Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start. | * Timeliness of activities delivery * Alignment of defined plans with the logframe * Coherence of project planning process | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Finance and co-finance   * Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. * Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions. * Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds? * Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans? Please make sure that evidentiary documents of the actual co-financing that was realized are available, including report on the results of co-financed activities that were carried out by the co-financers or project partners. | * Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations * Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures * Planned vs. actual funds leveraged * Co-financing data and evidence | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems   * Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive? Make sure that evidentiary documents about the reported results of the co-financed and subsumed baseline activities as well as of the incremental activities are available for the review. * Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively? * Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. * Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?) | * Existence, quality and use of M&E, feedback and dissemination mechanism to share findings, lessons learned and recommendation * Review of progress reports and financial reports * Data disaggregation by gender * Alignment of M&E to the GEF, UNDP and national needs | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Stakeholder Engagement   * Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders? * Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation? * Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives? * How does the project engage 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 enhance its gender benefits? | * Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained * Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized * Coherence of the established partnerships | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)   * Validate the risks identified in the project’s most current SESP, and those risks’ ratings; are any revisions needed? * Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to: * The project’s overall safeguards risk categorization. * The identified types of risks (in the SESP). * The individual risk ratings (in the SESP) . * Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project’s social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. | * Assessment of SESP * Compliance with SESP requirements * SESP update and monitoring | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| * Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board. * Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners. | * Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach when needed to improve project efficiency * Lesson learned documentation | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Communications & Knowledge Management   * Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results? * Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?) * For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project’s progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits. * List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval). | * Assessment of the communication plan * Communication coverage * Communication material produced so far * Number and nature of knowledge products produced so far |  |  |
| Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results? | | | |
| Financial risks to sustainability:   * What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and | * Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant activities globally and at the country level * Evidence of commitments from government or other stakeholder to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end * Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Socio-economic risks to sustainability:   * Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?   Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:   * Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place. | * Evidence/Quality of sustainability strategy * Evidence/Quality of steps taken to address sustainability * Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts * Elements in place in those different management functions, at appropriate levels (globally nd at country level) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors * Exit strategy in place and actively operationalisation * level of capacities at the country level to continue climate financing management * Efforts to support the development of relevant policies at the country level * Evidences of commitment by the targeted countries to pursue the supported activities | * project documentations * risk/issue register * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |
| Environmental risks to sustainability:   * Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? | * Outcome of the EIAs for project on the ground | * project documentations * Project stakeholders feedback | * Desk review * Stakeholders’ interviews |

## Annex 4: Interview questions

Thanks for taking the time to speak with us today. The UNDP is conducting a Mid-term Review of UNDP/GEF ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630).

The MTR aims to assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved, and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

As part of the evaluation, we are talking to stakeholders to hear a range of perspectives on the work done so far and future priorities. We’ve booked in one hour for this interview, but it may not take the full hour.

Participation in this consultation is voluntary and confidential. You can decline to participate or end the interview at any time. No comments will be attributed to any individual in discussions or reports, unless we request your express permission.

Do you have any questions before we start?

**Interview questions**

|  |
| --- |
| *It should be noted that below interview questions are presented as a guide to be used in the interviews, however, each individual interview is unique, and questions will be tailored to the interviewees’ roles and perspectives. In addition, follow up questions will be asked based on the responses to obtain full story from each response.* |

**Questions**

**Introductory question**

Could you please introduce yourself and explain your involvement and the role of your organization/agency in the CCA lowlands project?

**Effectiveness**

1. In your opinion, what has been the greatest achievement in the CCA lowlands project to date? And why?
2. What were the challenges in delivering CCA lowlands project? How could we overcome these challenges?
3. What factors have contributed to achieving intended CCA lowlands outputs and outcomes?
4. What worked so well and what didn’t work so well? and why?

**Impacts**

1. What sort of impacts did the CCA lowlands project deliver to its stakeholders?
2. What trends do you foresee in the CCA measures in Ethiopia?

**Relevance**

1. In your opinion, to what degree the CCA lowlands project activities are aligned to the needs of the participating stakeholders?
2. In your opinion, to what degree the CCA lowlands project activities are aligned with the strategic plans and strategies of the participating stakeholders?

**Efficiency**

1. In your opinion, has the CCA lowlands project been delivered on time and on budget? Has there been anything underachieved or overachieved within agreed framework of the CCA lowlands project, and what are the reasons/explanation for it?
2. In what ways has the CCA lowlands project been adaptive to emerging issues and opportunities? Examples?

**Sustainability**

1. Do you foresee any social, financial or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of the CCA lowlands project outputs and outcomes?
2. What would happen to the CCA lowlands project output and benefits when the GEF funding finishes?
3. Going forward, how do you see the capacity of participating stakeholders to pursue delivering on CCA lowlands related outcomes?
4. What lessons have been learnt for the CCA lowlands project in achieving outcomes?

**Closing**

* In what ways gender has been mainstreamed in the project? Do you have any gender-related concerns?
* Anything else you would like to add that we haven’t covered?

Thank you for your kind participation!

## Annex 5 MTR Mission itinerary and agenda

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Day/date | Location | Stakeholders |
| Tuesday 14th May | Addis Ababa | EMI |
|  | Addis Ababa | MoF |
| Wednesday 15th May | Addis Ababa | PMU |
|  |  | Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) |
| Thursday 16th May | Babile | Filed visit – meeting with local authorities, FGD with male and female beneficiaries |
| Thursday 16th May | Jigjiga | PMU detailed review of results framework |
| Friday 17th May | Jigjiga | KII with Somali region officials |
| Friday 17th May |  | Travel back to Addis |
| Friday 17th May | Addis Ababa | UNDP interview and initial debrief |
| Friday 17th May | Babile | Field Observation, KII with SC and TC |
| Monday 20th May | Harewo | Travel, Field Observation, FGD with Male and Female Beneficiaries, KII with SC and TC |
| Tuesday 21st May | Jigjiga | Meeting with Regional officials |
| Wednesday 22nd May | Jigjiga-Addis Ababa | Travel |
| Sunday 26th May | Addis Ababa- Arbamich | Travel |
| Monday 27th May | Arbaminch-Ale | Field Observation, KII with SC and TC, FGD with male and female beneficiaries |
| Tuesday 28th May | Arbaminch-Addis Ababa | Travel |
| Wednesday 29th May | Adama/Zeway Dugda | KII with SC and TC, FGD with male and female beneficiaries |
|  |  |  |
| Friday 31th May | Addis Ababa-Bahir Dar | Travel |
| Monday 3rd June | Bahir Dar | KII with Amhara Region EPA and Focal Person of the project |
| Tuesday 4th June | Bahir Dar-Addis Ababa | Travel |

## Annex 6: MTR Rating scales

**Evaluation criteria and ratings:** The standard evaluation criteria according to UNDP/GEF evaluation policy are Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. The different scales for rating various criteria are shown in the tables below.

Table 9: MTR Rating Scales & Evaluation Ratings Table

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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 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 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 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 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 components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of none of 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 |

## Annex 7: list of persons consulted

Stakeholders and beneficiaries engaged:

Babile Woreda (Experts and Officials) – SC & TC

1. Teyib Kelil Woreda Political Office Officer/Acting Woreda Administrator
2. Chala Teha Agriculture Office Head
3. Ebrahim Oumer Job Creation Office Head
4. Ahmed Abdi Woreda Administration Office Woreda Spokes Person
5. Yalew Shawl Woreda Administration Office Woreda Level Supervisor
6. Asredin Yisak Environment Protection Office Head
7. Moa Zeleye Water Office Head
8. Mohamod Abdi Woreda LL CCA Office Project Finance Officer
9. Habtamu Tesfaye Woreda LL CCA Office Project Site Coordinator

Harewo Woreda (Experts and Officials) – SC & TC

1. Mohamud Sheh Abdulkadir Woreda Administration Office Woreda Administrator
2. Abdulselam Musa Agriculture Office Head
3. Abudulkadir Muhudi Water Office Head
4. Ahmed Usman Woreda Political Office Officer
5. Mohamod Ebrahim Woreda LL CCA Office Project Site Coordinator
6. Adosh Ebrahim Woreda LL CCA Office Project Finance Officer

Ale Zone (Experts and Officials) – SC & TC

1. Eyasu Etisa Woreda Administration Office Vice Woreda administrator and Agriculture Head
2. Shelemech Seio Women and Children Office Head
3. Behilu Kusiya Disaster Risk Management Office Head
4. Solomon Zerihun Woreda Finance Office Head
5. Bedasa Belachew Water and Mines Office Head
6. Nigatu Mengesha Forest and Environment Protection Office Head
7. Tatek Lema Woreda LL CCA Office Project Site Coordinator

Zeway Dugda Woreda (Experts and Officials) – SC & TC

1. Ge Wako Woreda Environment Protection Head
2. Gemal Bedaso Woreda Water Office Head
3. Wado Burka Woreda Finance Head
4. Sultan Ahmed Woreda Agriculture Office Expert
5. Roba Gemechu Water and Energy Officer
6. Gemal Beshir Environment Office Forest Team Leader Expert
7. Aman Hussien Woreda LL CCA Office Project Site Coordinator

National and Regional Level stakeholders

1. Asaminew Teshome (PhD) Ethiopia Meteorological Institute Deputy Director
2. Habtamu Shewalemma Ministry of Finance Director
3. Tamiru Belay MoWE Water Development Director
4. Mudii Salle Somali Region EPCC Head
5. Abdukadir Mohamed Somali Region EPRLA Vice
6. Abdu Hussien Somali Region EPCC Vice
7. Awoke Yitay Amhara Region Environment and Climate Change Directorate Director
8. Astedadrew Etsub Environment and Climate Change Directorate Expert

UNDP and PMU

1. Wubua Mekonnen UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (OIC); and Team Leader – Climate Resilience & Environmental Sustianbaility Unit
2. Berhanu Alemu UNDP M & E Specialist
3. Teketel Daniel UNDP DRM Programme Specialist
4. Meyeye Cahmbwera UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Specialist
5. Desalegn Mulugeta PMU Project Manager
6. Abdi Kaba PMU Program Specialist

## Annex 8: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

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

**Evaluators/Consultants:**

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

**Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_Mohammad Alatoom \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Signed at \_\_\_\_April 2024\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Place) on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Mohammad Alatoom \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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## Annex 9: Signed MTR Report Clearance form

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| --- |
| **Terminal Evaluation Report for Terminal Evaluation of Mid-term Review of UNDP/GEF ‘Climate Change Adaptation in the Lowland Ecosystem of Ethiopia’ Project (PIMS 5630). Reviewed and Cleared By:**  **Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)**  Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)**  Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

## Annex 10: Co-Financing for The Project by Name and By Type

## Annex 11: Core Indicators (in a separate file)

## Annex 12: MTR Audit Trail (in a separate file)

1. Up to March 2024. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The reported number assumes that all beneficiaries who have been engaged in different activities have access to climate information [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Available [here](https://erc.undp.org/pdf/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Mixed methods involve desk review and semi-structured interviews for data collection, and also descriptive analysis, content analysis, thematic analysis and simple quantitative data analysis in excel for quantitative indicators for data analysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, 2020, available [here](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The World Bank. 2023. Data: Ethiopia. Available [here](https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview#:~:text=With%20about%20126.5%20million%20people,gross%20national%20income%20of%20%241%2C020.). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) – data available [here](https://www.usaid.gov/ethiopia/agriculture-and-food-security#:~:text=Agriculture%20remains%20a%20critical%20part,percent%20of%20the%20country's%20workforce.). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. which include *inter alia*: i) deforestation for wood fuel; ii) cropping in marginal areas such as steep slopes; and iii) overgrazing [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). 2015. “Deforestation in Ethiopia”. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Ethiopia Third National Communication Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2022. Available [here](https://unfccc.int/documents/624790). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Updated NDC-Ethiopia available [here](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Ethiopia%27s%20updated%20NDC%20JULY%202021%20Submission_.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. For example, enhancing rainwater harvesting techniques to take advantage of increased rainfall. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. At Kebele level, “development agents” are responsible for technical advisory services to farmers. At a Woreda-level, “extension officers” oversee the activities of and provide guidance to development agents. The term “extension agents” is used to refer to both levels throughout this document, as their roles often overlap. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Ethiopia’s Ten-Year Development Plan 2021-2030 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. The Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE). Available online at: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.mofed.gov.et/media/filer\_public/9e/23/9e23b2bc-0f3f-4035-ac8a-f0009b5b704a/crge\_strategy.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Ethiopia’s National adaptation Plan, 2019. Available online at: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/NAP-ETH%20FINAL%20VERSION%20%20Mar%202019.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Ethiopia. Available online at: file:///C:/Users/haymo/Downloads/Ethiopia's%20updated%20NDC%20JULY%202021%20Submission\_.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
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