

UNDP Management Response

Project #00092255 Strengthening Capacities of Rural Aqueduct Associations' (ASADAS) to address climate change risks in water stressed communities of Northern Costa Rica

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Overall comments: Most of the Management Response activities point AYA as responsible unit since, as “depository” of the Project results, must be in charge for the follow up of actions. However, several of the recommended actions could be carried out by other entities, according to their nature and specialty. In this sense, AYA is responsible for promoting workspaces with partners and allies to address those issues that transcend its capacities and mandate. UNDP may support on these tasks. Climate Change Directorate (DCC) is also involved because its participation on the Project Steering Committee and their mandate to promote the National Adaptation Policy and its instruments.

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1: Support the strengthening and sustainability (as a sustainable business model) of Federations, Leagues and Unions (FLU) of ASADAS, Unions, as well as and the integration of ASADAS.

Management Response: Agree. AYA established the integration or merging of ASADAS as a mechanism to reduce the number of ASADAS and consolidate several ASADAS into larger units, with higher operational and sustainable capacities. Some elements need to be improved in the strategy including sustainability variables (social, financial, environmental, legal). Further, consultation, negotiation and early management of conflicts mechanisms need to be applied to reduce resistance and handle disagreements. The Project supported both associativity and integration of ASADAS and promoted the empowerment of FLUs so that they are placed to drive development efforts, by providing essential services for the growth and modernization of the ASADAS.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
1. AYA develops a roadmap to implement the Strategy to strengthen the mechanisms of associativity and integration as a strategy for the growth and sustainability of the ASADAS, with active participation of the FLUs. This includes actions of progressive evolution towards greater independence and autonomy of the ASADAS.	2021-2022	AYA, Supported by Platform of Allies for Community Water Management (PACWM), Associativity Promoting Group (APG)	Ongoing	
2. Alignment of this strategy with AYA’s regional actions to assume, merge or integrate ASADAS as a mechanism to reduce their number and build larger units and better operational capacities. At the same time, this strategy should be reinforced with mechanisms for consultation, negotiation and advance conflict management to reduce resistance and handle disagreements.	2021-2022		Ongoing	

3. Implement an advocacy campaign to enhance the replication of successful experiences, such as the case of the Development Services Unit (USEDES) of the Communal Water League (LCA), as a model for the strengthening and sustainability of ASADAS.	2021-2022		Ongoing	
4. Establish concrete agreements to take advantage of the spaces and opportunities generated with financial entities through the Project, such as the integral community bank (BIC) of Banco Popular, in the search for better financing options and credit support for adaptation and sustainable development activities (Ecosystem-based adaptation measures, protection of water resource, social entrepreneurship, etc.).	2021-2022		Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2: Access to financing for ASADAS through the Water Resource Protection Tariff (TPRH) or banking entities				
Management Response: Agree. Review the credit instruments available to the ASADAS, as well as the debt approval mechanisms applied by the AYA so that ASADAS have a wider spectrum of and better financing alternatives.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
AYA and ARESEP to develop Standard Operations Procedures to guide interested ASADAS on how to apply the TPRH in their area of purview. ASADAS need to present a request to ARESEP to be able to apply these tariffs, thereby standard procedures are needed to stimulate more ASADAS to apply them.	2021		Ongoing	
1. Review and adjust AYA's criteria and approval mechanisms so the ASADAS may have more agile access to credit financing and other monetary resources.	2021-2022	AYA Supported by ARESEP	Ongoing	
2. Establish concrete agreements to take advantage of the opportunities generated with financial entities through the Project, such as the integral community bank (BIC) of Banco Popular, in the search for better financing options and credit support for adaptation and sustainable development activities (Ecosystem-based adaptation measures, protection of water resource, social entrepreneurship, etc.).	2021-2022			Ongoing

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Information and dissemination campaign to guarantee availability and access to the tools created by the project.				
Management Response: Agree. The Project has developed many tools and knowledge products related to aqueducts management, water resources protection and adaptation to climate change, useful not only for ASADAS but for a wider public and its use, and exploitation must be guaranteed.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. Execute at least three Webinars a year for dissemination of tools and knowledge products for ASADAS and other public.	First round programmed: 11, 16, 17 y 18 de June 2021	UNDP's PMU** AYA	Ongoing	
2. Appoint a review committee to periodically update the tools and knowledge products which require it.	2021	AYA	Ongoing	
3. Create a repository to make the tools and all the knowledge material of the Project available.	June 2021	UNDP's PMU	Ongoing	
4. Transfer of all resources and materials in digital format to AYA.	June 2021	UNDP's PMU	Ongoing	
5. Make the tools available on the AYA website	June 2021	AYA	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4: Ensure that ASADAS investments have a gender focus and an integrated adaptation approach (ecosystem-based adaptation, community-based adaptation and local disaster risk management).				
Management Response: Agree. With the support of the Project, the AYA Institutional Gender Policy and its Strategic Plan were developed, as well as the agenda for accelerating gender equality and empowering women in community water management in which actions, mechanisms and concrete steps are clearly defined to address the gender perspective, both at the AYA and ASADAS levels. For its part the integrated adaptation approach (Infrastructure-based adaptation, Ecosystem -based adaptation, Community-based adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction) is based on the National Climate Change Policy.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. AYA Gender Task force implements the Institutional Gender Policy of the AYA at the regional office of communal aqueducts and ASADAS levels.	2022-2023	AYA (Gender Direction and ASADAS division) Supported by UNDP gender unit	Ongoing	
2. AYA Gender task force implements the agenda to accelerate gender equality and empower women in community water management approved in 2020-2021.			Ongoing	
3. Develop a programmatic framework for AYA which is fully aligned with the National Climate Change Policy	2021-2022	AYA Supported by Direction on Climate Change	Ongoing	

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5: Review of the legal framework governing ASADAS.				
Management Response: Agree. The regulations governing the subsidiary provision of aqueduct services by ASADAS need to be adapted to the current context and its new challenges, moving towards a more progressive frameworks that allow the functional and business development of ASADAS in their capacity as public service providers, encompassing community water management as a whole.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Establishment of a multidisciplinary and intersectoral commission to prepare a proposal for restructuring and updating the regulatory frameworks that govern, not only ASADAS but also community water management as a model of democratic participation that needs to be optimized according to current challenges.	2021-2022	AYA - Supported by UNDP, PACWM and APG	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6: Change in the ASADAS regulation to encourage the participation of women and youth.				
Management Response: Agree. The Project and the UNDP gender unit actively supported the revision process that introduced revisions to the ASADAS Regulation, approved in 2019, but substantial modifications are still required to achieve equity and inclusion.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
A taskforce restructure and update the ASADAS' regulatory frameworks, address barriers and guarantee equal access for women and youth to the different participation and decision-making bodies, such ASADAS executive boards.	2021-2022	AYA Supported by UNDP gender unit, PACWM and APG	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7: Institutionalization of the vision climate change adaptation				
Management Response: Agree. The Project developed tools and mechanisms that support adaptation and disaster risk management capacities, in response to extreme weather events which impact aqueducts and communities. To guarantee the implementation of such tools and mechanisms is essential to a proper prevention approach in ASADAS. But furthermore, it is required that AYA, ARESEP, Directorate of Water, SENARA, INDER adopt a conceptual and programmatic adaptation vision, in order to have a climate-smart vision on the management of water resources.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. A task force conducts an interinstitutional programmatic review to include climate change adaptation in the conceptual vision and action plans of the AYA, ARESEP, Directorate of Water, SENARA, INDER including the promotion of nature-based solutions, risk management and resilience.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by DCC-UNDP	Ongoing	

2. Task force established to support the use of the Comprehensive Risk Management tool in ASADAS (GIRA) so ASADAS they incorporate risk variables, including climate in their planning exercises.	2021	AYA Supported by UNDP	Ongoing	
3. Institutionalize the procedures to support ASADAS affected by climate-induced and other natural disasters, and the reciprocal assistance mechanisms between ASADAS to have the capacity to prepare and respond to circumstances of extreme events.	2021	AYA Supported by National Emergency Commission - UNDP	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8: Planning based on hydrogeological information and improvement in the availability and access to hydrometeorological data at the local level				
Management Response: Agree. Promote studies and modeling to improve and increase the hydrogeological information of the country's aquifers and increase of hydrometeorological data to allow a better understanding of current availability of water and to future impacts of climate change on the future availability of water in Costa Rica, as well as supporting ASADAS to conduct the required hydrogeological studies to identify their catchment areas which need to be protected /conserved. .				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. Promote hydrogeological studies with a watershed approach to increase (quantity and quality) the country's hydrogeological information, primarily in areas with water stress.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by UNDP, Water Directorate and SENARA	Ongoing	
2. Promote the use and facilitate access to existing hydrogeological and hydrometeorological information, adapted for analysis, planning and decision-making purposes at the local level, particularly in the ASADAS.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by DCC-Water Directorate	Ongoing	
3. Review mechanisms and requirements of the hydrogeological studies that ASADAS may require to guide their planning, to make it more accessible considering their limited resources.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by ARESEP	Ongoing	

4. Promote alliances, agreements and other collaboration mechanisms to obtain the participation and contributions of academia and research institutions to produce scientific-technical information and climate data to support local decision-making processes.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by UNDP, PACWM and APG	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 9: Active involvement of the private sector in the management of water resources.				
Management Response: Agree. Implementation of measures to guarantee responsible and committed involvement in the maintenance and protection of aquifers by all sectors that use water.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. To encourage ASADAS to know and promote methodologies such as the Sustainable Aquifer Use Plans (PAS-SENARA) to generate greater involvement and responsibilities in the tasks of protecting water resources, by all sectors that use water in the local level.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by UNDP	Ongoing	
2. Link with initiatives such as Finance for Biodiversity (BioFin-UNDP) and Performance-based Payments (GEF7) in the promotion of financial initiatives for the protection of water sources and the management of Protected Wildlife Areas under a land-use development approach.	2022-2025	AYA Supported by UNDP	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 10: To boost <i>government cost-sharing</i> modality				
Management Response: Agree. AYA and UNDP have a long history of productive collaboration, built on a portfolio of projects which are funded by multilateral or bilateral donor funds. The modality of execution of public funds (government cost-sharing) is already applied by several UN agencies, including UNDP, and AYA itself is already developing projects using this modality, with good results.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Task force established to develop a UNDP-AYA cooperation roadmap, to makes possible the extension of impacts and results of this project and explore new opportunities and modalities of collaboration.	2021	UNDP-AYA	Ongoing	

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 11: Allocate resources for the strengthening of the Regional Offices of Communal Aqueducts (ORAC).				
Management Response: Agree. The ORACs have a decisive role in supporting the ASADAS in the regions, but they require stronger organizational capacities and economic resources.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Substantive review of the structure, tasks and resources available to ORACs for a better performance, as local support and monitoring units of the communal aqueducts.	2021-2025	AYA	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 12: Improve, in the design of proposals, the relationship of objectives-products-indicators.				
Management Response: Partially agree. There is always room to improve the vertical funds' (GEF, GCF, AF) project formulation process, to facilitate management and have more clarity in the expected results.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Expand the range of review and technical filters of projects in their state of gestation to improve its formulation.	2021-2025	UNDP	Ongoing	
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 13: Continuity of project actions through other financing mechanisms. Along the same lines, there are opportunities to strengthen the network of partners at the local and national level that allow continuity to the efforts of this type of projects, promoting their replicability and scaling up.				
Management Response: Agree. Request the existing Platform of Allies for Community Water Management a strategy for harnessing, monitoring of use, expansion and permanent improvement of the topics addressed and the results obtained by the project.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Support the functioning of the Platform of Allies for Community Water Management to apply the best practices, tools and lessons derived from this Project as well as promote other initiatives aimed at replicating and scaling these experiences.	2021-2025	Supported by UNDP, PACWM and APG	Ongoing	

* The implementation status is tracked in the ERC.

** PMU= Project Management Unit (UNDP team)