**Management response to the Terminal Evaluation of *Adaptive Management and Learning for the Commodities IAP***

Project Title: **Adaptive Management and Learning for the Commodities IAP**

Project PIMS #: 5665

GEF Project ID (PMIS) #: 9179

Terminal Evaluation Completion Date: 31 March 2022

Date of Issue of Management Response: TBC

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**Context, background and findings**

1. The Adaptive Management and Learning for the Commodities IAP (A&L) project objective is to effectively leverage demand, transactions and support to production to ensure a successful implementation of the aims of the Good Growth Partnership (GGP). To this end, the A&L project has supported the overall coordination, coherence and consistency, as well as communications and partnership building of GGP child projects, whilst fostering substantial knowledge management at the global level to advance the supply chain approach for beef, soy, and oil palm.
2. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) team assessed progress towards results as *satisfactory* for all the A&L components, project implementation and adaptive management as *highly satisfactory*, and sustainability as *likely*. In the executive summary, the quality of implemented activities, “whether for coordination, communication, learning and reporting” is described as “excellent in general (…), in spite of the great challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic”. The evaluators add with confidence that “the project fulfilled its role as a coordinator and connector by producing systems, knowledge tools and evidence repositories needed to guide the palm oil, beef and soy sectors towards a more sustainable future”.
3. Like the Mid-Term Review (MTR), the evaluators found the design of the project and its role in support of the GGP to be more problematic (the project is defined as architecturally “solid”, but “short (…) and significantly underbudgeted”), and addressed most of their recommendations to the GEF, for the design of future impact programs. Other recommendations are addressed to the UNDP Green Commodities Community (GCC) and Evidensia (ISEAL Alliance and WWF) with suggestions to catalyse further impact.
4. The A&L Project Team finds **most** of the recommendations to be valid and relevant - as detailed below - and will endeavour to implement them in 2022 and beyond.

**Recommendations and management response**

**A. Project strategy and design**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation A1.** For future Impact Programmes (IPs), follow the structure of FOLUR, with integrated country projects, rather than the one of GGP, where countries were addressed separately in each supply chain related child project. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Agree with the recommendation | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking[[1]](#footnote-2)** | |
| **Comments** | **Status[[2]](#footnote-3)** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation A2.** For future IPs, the following structural adjustments are also recommended:   * For projects with a coordinating function such as A&L, allocate resources for a full-time PMU – as only 30% effort is insufficient. * Include one or two common components on M&E and/or Knowledge Management in all child projects, including resources for child project staff (a dedicated staff person with M&E or analytical expertise in each country would be ideal) to support monitoring, evaluation and learning at programme (IP) level in addition to the needs of the individual child project. That responsibility should be reflected also in the TORs for the position of MEL or Project Manager of the child project. * Overall, build the central coordination structure, M&E and KM components first and integrate these into the design of the child projects. Have adequate budget at the Program-level or embedded in each child project to facilitate the integration of components in each country. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Agree with the recommendation | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation A3.** Future IP development should take into account the time and resources needed for trust-building, sensitizing populations to different ideas (including through increased participation throughout project implementation), and enough time for knowledge from child projects to be gleaned from demonstrations, and adequately capitalized (including through communications). For this reason, IPs such as GGP should last 6 years minimum.  Levels of trust and participation should be monitored and tested. If the participation of key actors cannot be secured, then a shift in Management arrangements might be necessary, including through more engagement of the national focal points to share and lessen the risks for all. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Agree with the recommendation | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation A4.** For a pilot program, a combination of, process, structure, status and impact indicators is important for Pilot initiatives to generate a diverse suite of quantitative and qualitative data to better inform lessons learned and orient future initiatives. This will enable different types of Means of Verification (MOVs) and improve triangulation. For example, learning on gender is based on the number of documents, not on the value placed on the material by the user, or the use of knowledge to change practices is measured by a survey of users with a binary response, rather than a qualitative indicator of the benefits generated from the practice. A blend of quantitative and qualitative indicators could have greatly informed future programs. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Partially agree with the recommendation, as the project actually did use qualitative methods (surveys with open fields and interviews) to gather richer data on the adoption of practices shared through the GCC. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation A5.** Establish the common monitoring and evaluation system for Programme application prior to the design of individual child projects. Consider a common monitoring and evaluation platform to foster integration. In the event of separate implementing agencies, always present quarterly and PIR results in a synthesized document. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Partially agree with the recommendation, as the A&L project did invest in developing and maintaining a Programme-level logical framework with key performance indicators (KPIs) covering relevant PIR results of all the child projects Implementing Agencies. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

**B. Assumptions and risks**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation B1.**  Clearly distinguish between risks and assumptions. Many assumptions were actually pre-conditions. Future projects should place more importance on the analysis of assumptions. Assumptions should be phenomenon outside of management control i.e., independent and necessary for results to be obtained. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Agree with the recommendation. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| * 1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation B2.**  Adjust the risk rating upward from “Low” or Probability 2 to “significant” or Probability 3-4. The adjusted rating includes the addition of the pandemic to environmental risks, and increase in risk of natural disasters to child projects as experienced in Chaco, Paraguay (drought) and Indonesia (flooding) that limit participation in M&E, KM, etc. In addition to adding higher probabilities to existing risks. See the Revised Risk Rating table in Annex 3. (Addressed to UNDP). |
| **Management response:** Reject recommendation, as unactionable at this stage. |

**C. Progress towards objectives**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation C1.**  A Partnership that is defined as two points of contact is too limited. Three or more is recommended to better reflect the integrated approach. Under the present criterion, you could have two commercial entities qualify as a partnership, leaving out the producer. The partnership criterion should be expanded to better represent the supply chain and integration of production, demand and transaction. (Addressed to UNDP). |
| **Management response:** Reject recommendation, as unactionable at this stage. |

**D. Outcome 2.2**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation D1.**  Evidensia: Recommend producing stylized model synthesis to be sent to key government ministers and private sector companies to invite them to visit Evidensia and explore its content. This could increase the base of qualified users to the platform. Consider a welcome video message explaining the parts and a video “report” on the different syntheses. Video content is more likely to be seen and acted upon. (Addressed to ISEAL Alliance and WWF). | | | | |
| **Management response: ISEAL accepts this recommendation and is working on creating short ‘how to use Evidensia’ videos for key target audiences such as government officials and private companies. We are also re-fashioning a section of the Evidensia platform to cater to the needs of these groups specifically. A video report on key synthesis is not currently being considered but we could think through this for when we do our next research synthesis.** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 3.1. Refashion Evidencis website to highlight sections for key user groups | August 2022 | Vidya Rangan, ISEAL |  |  |
| 3.2 Create short videos introducing Evidensia and what it offers to key audience groups | August 2022 | Vidya Rangan, ISEAL |  |  |

**E. Outcome 3.1**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation E1.**  Seek a method to widely disseminate the knowledge management tools, products and webinars for the continued benefit of the interested sectors. This could be done through offering access to the GCC and its knowledge products on multiple platforms such as certification roundtables, business associations, even selected chambers of commerce, etc. (Addressed to the UNDP Green Commodities Community). |
| **Management response:** Agree with the recommendation. This will be done under the Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program, where GGP tools and knowledge products will be used and socialized to all FOLUR countries and their stakeholders, not limited to the private sector. No further action needed. |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation E2.**  Make all effort to expand the base of users to reduce the cost/beneficiary and the transaction costs. (Addressed to the UNDP Green Commodities Community). |
| **Management response:** Reject recommendation. As explained to the evaluators, the project decided to prioritize quality over quantity of engagement. Nevertheless, the UNDP GCC is expected to grow to 300 members by 2025, under FOLUR. |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation E3.**  Highly encourage GEF projects in the commodities spaces to budget attendance at the Good Growth Conference. (Addressed to the GEF and UNDP). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Partially agree with the recommendation, which, although unactionable at this stage by UNDP, will be passed to the GEF to inform current and future programming. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time Frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 4.1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation E4.**  For future IPs, use communications strategically by developing a programme-level communications plan to embrace all child projects and the global audience. Bring Integration into communications. (Addressed to the GEF). | | | | |
| **Management response:** Agree with recommendation. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 5.1. Pass recommendation to the GEF. | April 2022 | GGP Global Project Manager |  |  |

**F. Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES)**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation F1.**  Consider a Policy working group with actual politicians from the participating nations to better engage national decision-makers in the policy space. Elicit more talks and interventions in the GCC for that audience. (Addressed to the UNDP Green Commodities Community). |
| **Management response:** Partially agree with recommendation. The first part of the recommendation is not actionable since the A&L project is closed. Under FOLUR, the UNDP GCC has already committed to engage more with policy makers. |

**F. Sustainability**

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| **Terminal Evaluation recommendation G1.**  Calculate how many dollars in benefits have been generated for farmers from a $1.00 U.S. invested in GGP training. Current training in the Production Project is yielding 2 to 3X returns immediately. Use this amount as a fundraising tool to support financial sustainability. |
| **Management response:** Reject recommendation, as not relevant for the objectives of the A&L project. |

1. If the MTR is uploaded to the ERC, the status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre Database (ERC) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Status of implementation: Completed, Partially Completed, Pending [↑](#footnote-ref-3)