Mid-Term Review of FAO-GEF Project GCP/PAK/091/GFF

GEF ID - 9516

"Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan" The Restoration Initiative Child project

Final Report

MTR conducted in June 2021

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Exchange rate applied 1 USD = PKR 175

Note: All maps in this report are solely to show the geographical location of the project sites.

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The MTR team comprised of two independent consultants, one international consultant, Mr. Warren Olding, acting as lead consultant and one national consultant, Ms. Rehana Khan, who conducted the field visits to three of the four districts of the child project in Pakistan. This included carrying out interviews with staff from the Forestry Department supporting the project's implementation, local community members and a selection of individuals from the private and non-government sectors.

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MTR team

- *Warren Olding (International consultant and team leader)*

- *Rehana Khan (national consultant)*

FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, MTR support

- *Ms Genevieve Braun*

- *Ms Ydidiya Abera*

FAO-PK Budget Holder

- *Ms Rebekah Bell.*

Acronyms and abbreviations

All abbreviations are explained in full for the first time in this report and the acronym used thereafter.

AFR-100	Africa Forest Restoration 100
ANR	Assisted natural regeneration
BD	Biodiversity
BH	Budget holder
BTTAP	Billion Tree Tsunami Afforestation Project (in KP Province)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CPF	Country Programming Framework
CFPCC	Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committee
CSO	Civil society organization
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DFWF	Department for Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries
DEX	Direct execution (FAO)
EBA	Endemic bird areas
Ex-Act	Ex-ante carbon balance tool
EO	Expected outcome
FAOPK	Food and Agriculture Organization Office in Pakistan
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Region)
FLO	Funding liaison officer (FAO)
FLR	Forest landscape restoration
EES	Environmental and social safeguards
EO	Expected outcome
FLRM	Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism
FSMP	Forest sector management plan
FRA	Forest resource assessment
GB	Gilgit – Baltistan Province
GEB	Global environmental benefits

GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GCU	GEF Coordination Unit (Rome)
GPFLR	Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration
Ha	Hectare
IES	Incentives for ecosystem services
iNGOs	International non-governmental organisations
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KP	Khyber – Pakhtunkhwa Province
LTO	Lead technical officer
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MCC	Ministry of Climate Change
MRV	Monitoring, reporting and verification
MTR	Mid-term review
NBCSAP	National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan
NDC	Nationally Declared Contributions
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
PAC	Program Advisory Committee (for TRI)
PD	Project document
PES	Payment for ecosystem services
PFD	Project framework document (global project of the TRI)
PMU	Project Management Unit
PIR	Project Implementation Report (for GEF)
PPR	Project Progress Report (for FAO)
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ROAM	Restoration Opportunity Assessment Method
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise

SMEDA	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority
SLM	Sustainable land management
SO	Strategic Objective
TBTTP	Ten billion Tree Tsunami Programme
tCO2eq	Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of reference
TRI	The Restoration Initiative
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VDP	Village Development Committee
WMC	Watershed management committee

0. Executive summary

0.1 Introduction

1. The mid-term review (MTR) of project GCP/PAK/091/GFF, "*Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Forests*", (Pakistan), hereafter referred to as "the child project" of The Restoration Initiative (TRI), is to assess how far the project is achieving its planned outputs, outcomes and objectives and to provide valuable recommendations, based on evidence and findings, in accordance with the Guide for planning and conducting mid-term reviews of FAO–GEF projects and programmes. The evaluation criteria applied are: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, factors affecting project performance, cross-cutting priorities (including social inclusion and environmental and social standards) and gender equality. In addition, the ToR include a specific assessment of the linkages established between the child project and the global child project that is responsible for overseeing, supporting and monitoring all eleven projects under being implemented in ten countries, plus an assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the child project's implementation. The scope of the MTR, which started on 28 May 2021, covers the implementation of the project's four main components in all four intervention areas (districts), between the project's entry of duty (EoD) on 25 April 2018 to the end of the MTR's field mission on 30 June 2021. The MTR comprised an independent team of a international consultant (lead consultant) and a national consultant. The work methodology focused on a combination of a desk review of project documents, remote interviews conducted mainly the of a wide sample of direct stakeholders and semi-structured, field interviews and site visits. To guide the interview process, the MTR team produced a theory of change (ToC) and a detailed evaluation matrix (EM) in which indicators and judgement criteria were identified to guide the MTR's main questions and sub questions established in ToR. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national consultant conducted all field visits, consisting of three districts in two provinces.

0.2 Main findings

Relevance - *Question 1: Are the project outcomes congruent with current country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework, the TRI global project objectives and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (local communities, men and women and indigenous peoples if relevant?*

2. **Satisfactory:** The project's objectives align fully with the Federal Government's Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTTP), which was launched in 2019. Furthermore, it builds on the successful afforestation initiatives conducted at the provincial level, in particular in one of the two provinces selected by the project, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province, which restored over 350 000 ha under the Billion Tree Afforestation Project (BTAP) to 2018. Furthermore, the provincial governments involved in the child project

have devolved powers to implement the TBTTP at the provincial and district levels, which in the case of KP includes the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on the Afghan border. Similarly, the project's objectives and main outcomes (results) fully comply with GEF and FAO priorities 1, 2 and 3 dedicated to zero hunger (healthy, safe and nutritious food for all), climate smart resilient agriculture and sustainable ecosystems (including forests), and Inclusive and efficient agriculture and food system management respectively. However, there is consensus among stakeholders that Outcome 1 (National and provincial forest landscape restoration (FLR) policies and legal frameworks are strengthened and implemented with efforts aiming at maximizing the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by the Chilgoza forest ecosystems), is not a priority until the three participating provinces of KP, Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) have achieved results on the ground (Outcomes 2 and 3) from which lessons and good practices can be identified and used to support FLR policy and legal reforms. As a result, Outcomes 2 to 3 fully comply with the current priorities of the provincial governments concerned to improve the livelihoods of rural communities through the conservation and sustainable use of Chilgoza forest ecosystems. This is particularly evident concerning the promotion of Assisted Natural Regeneration sites (ANR) and agroforestry to promote sustainable forest management (SFM) and recognition that the development of value chains (in particular for Chilgoza pine nuts) is crucial to improving household income of the local Chilgoza forest communities participating in the project. Outcome 2 also emphasises the importance of improving incomes from non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and access to new technologies, such as toolkits to improve harvesting of pine cones and small grants to promote NTFPs, although it provides limited information on how access to credit, post-harvest services, packaging, distribution and so forth is to be maintained over the long-term. Finally, Outcome 4, remains highly relevant, but the development of a monitoring and evaluation system based on tracking quantitative data in the Results Matrix (RM) in the Prodoc (Output 4.1), was found to have shortcomings, given the RM was produced in 2016, does not adequately address the development objective and includes no qualitative indicators or risk assessment developments that the MTR considers are important to equip stakeholders in Pakistan and at the global level of TRI with the "new knowledge" that Outcome 4 foresees to guide learning, planning and future policy reforms on the application and expansion of the SFM/FLR/NTFP process.

Effectiveness - *Question 2: To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives and what broader results (if any) has the project had at regional and global level to date?*

3. **Satisfactory:** There is evidence to indicate the project is in the process of achieving outcomes 2 and 3, although more time and some adjustments to key activities under components 1 and 4 are required before the project can meet its environmental and development objectives. Areas of significant progress under outcomes 2 and 3 include the creation of 14 Chilgoza Forestry Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs)

against eight originally planned, the formulation of four SFM plans that will cover around 78 000 ha against 30 000 ha planned in all four districts and almost 64 per cent of FLR activities have been completed, in particular the establishment of 48 ANR sites using quantitative and qualitative data collected and mapped using Collect Earth Open Foris software and supported by ground truthing. However, progress in meeting the development objective is less evident. For example, the it is too early to determine whether the introduction of agroforestry has increased income, and the promotion of other NTFPs has been delayed, because the procurement of services to manage the small grants' facility has not been completed to date. The main exception, is the establishment of four mobile Chilgoza pine nut processing facilities, where the MTR's own data collection indicates pine nut farmers in Diamer District (Gilgit-Baltistan Province) have increased processing rates from 36,000 in to over 44,000 kg since 2020 and that net profits from processed pine nuts (graded) have increased, ranging from PKR 250 to 300/kg for processed premium grade nuts (USD 1.5 to USD 1.89/kg), to PKR 490 to 600/kg (USD 3.00 to USD 3.80/kg) for roasted pine nuts. Meanwhile, progress in meeting Outcome 1 is complicated by the fact reforms to the institutional, legal and regulatory framework to apply FLR and PES (Outputs 1.2 and 1.3) are unlikely to be prioritised by the government until at least 2022, and the studies and workshops realised so far on PES have not included a review of alternative funding mechanisms that are a more viable option under the present policy and legal framework. Finally, the focus of the M&E system (Output 4.1) on output monitoring linked to the RM and nine core indicators managed by the global child project of TRI, was found to have improved learning on TRI's operational achievements, but far less on learning lessons and identifying good practices that are needed to steer the project's main activities towards the establishment of sustainable rural development and resilient forest communities. This situation is also the product of the project's communications and knowledge management activities (Outputs 4.2-4.4), where despite the promotion of innovative webinars and e-learning on FLR and the launch of The Restoration Factory in May 2021, their main function is to report on outputs that are linked to 9 core indicators managed by the global child project.

Efficiency - *Question 3: To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?*

4. **Moderately satisfactory:** The project has achieved an estimated physical progress of 50 per cent of planned outputs to 30 June 2022, while financial progress (including expenditure commitments) stands at 43 per cent to the same date. Although this equates to a lower level of efficiency than planned in the Prodoc at month 38 of the 48 assigned to the project, the MTR recognises the conversion of project resources into outputs has suffered from over 18 months of delays to its operations. These delays relate to external factors outside the control of project management; namely the formal establishment of the project steering committee (PSC) over twelve months later than planned on 06 May 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic, which since March 2020 has contributed to delaying many activities by more than six months to date. However, since the establishment of the PSC in May 2019, the project's efficiency has improved. This has been aided by several

factors, in particular the decision to include senior members of the provincial Forestry and Wildlife Departments (FWD) in the PSC, which has ensured decisions taken by the PSC are implemented at the provincial and district levels. Other factors include, direct execution (DEX) of the project by FAO, the nomination of a highly qualified project manager (PM) from Pakistan who has in-depth work experience with the FWD and the recruitment of local consultants (including two women enterprise development facilitators) to support the implementation of the project's main activities in the field. In addition, the signing of Letters of Agreement (LoA) with the FWD is proving to be a highly cost-effective way of developing dialogue and cooperation between the FWD and the local communities that are located in highly remote mountainous districts between 2 000 and 3 400 metres above sea-level.

5. Nonetheless, achieving project efficiency remains challenging. First, the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic means operations are not likely to return to some sort of normality until the vaccination programme has covered a large percentage of the population in the provinces concerned. Second, the very large intervention area coupled with the remoteness of the project sites will continue to stretch the project's limited resources as it tries to make up for lost time. Third, the FWD is still heavily reliant on acquiring tree saplings and fruit trees from nurseries outside the provinces concerned to support the FLR process. This is more expensive than producing these plants in local nurseries run by the CFPCCs to produce fully adapted local varieties. In addition, this means the local communities are missing out on an important capacity building exercise that can also generate an income by selling the saplings to FWD to implement the project and the TBTTP, although it is understood the small grants scheme will support the development of local tree nurseries through which households can sell their plants (local varieties and fruit trees) to the project, the TBTTP and the general public.

6. In addition, although the project has been built on lessons learned from previous GEF- and non-GEF funded projects, the MTR found very little evidence to indicate formal partnerships or synergies with other relevant projects have been established at the provincial/national levels, or with other TRI national child projects. One important exception is the synergy being developed with the TBTTP thanks to the LoAs with FWD and the employment of IUCN to provide training on ROAM to support the mapping, prioritisation and application of the ANR sites. As a result, the project has room to enhance its efficiency through synergies that facilitate the sharing of costs in areas of mutual interest, such as shared trainings, demonstrations, communications, publications, etc. with other donor-funded projects (including GEF-funded projects). Moreover, the development of synergies and partnerships at the TRI level has not been aided by the fact all the national child projects are at different levels of execution and five of them are implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union for the Conservation for Nature (IUCN).

Sustainability - *Question 4: What is the likelihood that the project results can be sustained after the end of the project*?

7. **Moderately satisfactory**. The prospects of sustaining outcome 1 are unlikely, because outputs 1.2 and 1.3 should be reviewed and a new outcome defined that focuses on the financial sustainability of the SFM/FLR process in general and the CFPCCs in particular. Moreover, the MTR team believes the financial sustainability of the CFPCCs through a combination of internal and external sources is a prerequisite to their official recognition as the main mechanism to sustain the restoration process of Chilgoza forest ecosystems over the long-term. The sustainability of the SFM/FLR activities under Outcomes 2 and 3 is high over the short to medium-term thanks to the continued operation of the TBTTP, which will provide public funding to support national reforestation and restoration targets linked to pledges under the Bonn Challenge 2030. Nonetheless, more needs to be done to develop inclusive value chains for NTFPs in order for income from Chilgoza forest goods and services to grow and act as an incentive to conserve and sustainably use these forests.

8. Finally, the development of new knowledge on SFM/FLR/NTFPs (Outcome 4) remains highly dependent on project resources and limited by a monitoring and evaluation system (M&E) that is mainly focused on tracking project outputs that are linked to nine core indicators managed by the global child project. As a result, monitoring of project outputs is not linked to provincial and federal government indicators that are of interest to FWD/MoCC, such as project contributions to provincial and national targets, goals and pledges on restoration and reforestation, on reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, or on reducing poverty, among others. In addition, the absence of qualitative monitoring (through case studies, knowledge attitude and practice surveys, focus group meetings, etc.) risk management, has reduced the opportunities to developing knowledge on "why" the project is achieving/under achieving; "what" is working well/requires improvement and "how" it could be consolidated, replicated and/or improved to induce the transformational change needed to sustain and upscale forest ecosystem restoration at all levels. Likewise, inadequate monitoring of risks means there is inadequate integration of risk management in the SFM/FLR/NTFP process, which the MTR team considers is crucial to building resilient rural communities and ecosystems in countries such as Pakistan, which are highly vulnerable according to the Global Climate Risk Index. Indeed, field visits identified a combination of drought and pests were prominent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province in 2020 and that this had a negative effect on livelihoods. This situation is also exacerbated by the project's current communication strategy, which has not been designed to capture lessons and good practices from the M&E system to advocate the case for transformational change to save and restore forest ecosystems over the long-term both within Pakistan and at the TRI levels.

Factors affecting performance - *Question 5: What are the main factors affecting the project from reaching its results?*

9. **Moderately satisfactory**: One of the main factors affecting performance concerns the project's design. Although the project has a clear and coherent vertical intervention logic linked to the project's environmental objective in the Results Matrix (RM) of the Prodoc, it does not establish a clear link between conservation and the sustainable use of the products and services produced by the Chilgoza forest ecosystem, which is key to achieving the project's development objective. In addition, the RM does not show the link between development and application of inclusive value chains for NTFPs (supported by a business plan and marketing strategy) to improve household incomes and the role this plays as an incentive to strengthen local community commitment to protecting and conserving their forests. Meanwhile, the horizontal logic of the RM is satisfactory in that it includes measurable indicators, supported by baselines and realistic targets on FLR outputs. However, project targets are not designed to show project contributions to national targets, goals and pledges and because there is a lack of qualitative indicators in the RM, the M&E system is geared to reporting on operational progress and achievements in relation to quantitative targets. Taking into account the RM was produced over five years ago in 2016 and has not been updated, the RM and M&E system is not an efficient mechanism for stakeholders to gain the new knowledge they need (Outcome 4) to push the agenda on SFM/FLR/NTFPs at the provincial and national levels, especially with regards to the implementation of the TBTTP and its commitment to the Bonn Challenge 2030. This situation also means the global child project's monitoring and communications are primarily project focused, rather than developing TRI as the strategy that advocates and delivers the long-term adaptive sustainability of forest ecosystems and the local communities that depend on them. Taking into account the RM was produced in 2016, the matrix and the corresponding M&E system of the project is in need of updating if it is to achieve Outcome 4 and provide valuable information to the global child project to support it update its monitoring and communication strategy.

10. This latter point is further justified, because the RM does not include any assessment of risks. Although, the PIR and the MTR found risks associated with project execution, FAO oversight, currency exchange rates, fiduciary risks and finance shortfalls (of GEF funding) continue to be low, the MTR found other risks are increasing from low to medium. In particular, co-finance levels are low (10 per cent of planned expenditure to date), security risks (especially for female consultants) and new risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic (social and economic) and have not been adequately tracked in the M&E system to support learning on risk management and how to build resilient forest communities. Similarly, the monitoring of nine core indicators by the global child project does not integrate risk assessments, even though the application of CEOF software and ROAM includes risk mapping to support the prioritization of ANR sites. Indeed, the MTR found the global and national project are not monitoring and capturing some important "hidden gems" from its restoration activities, in particular the important role rotational grazing plays on restoring soil biodiversity (which captures significant carbon at the same time) and the role of soil stabilization on enhancing water quality. Indeed, these

developments are directly linked to national and global priorities linked to the Bonn Challenge, Aichi Targets, and SDGs (especially 13 and 15), NDCs/Paris Agreement, etc. and by not picking them up reduces the visibility of TRI and opportunities for learning.

11. Finally, the development of formalized partnerships and synergies was found to low at both the national level and global TRI level. On the one hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented the national project from exploring formal synergies with other projects and the global child project from organizing international and regional events to facilitate collaboration between national child projects. On the other, the GEF national focal point or the FAO Office in Pakistan have been proactive in establishing a mechanism to facilitate GEF-funded projects and REDD+ readiness initiatives (especially those managed by FAO, UNEP and UNDP) identify potential partnerships and stakeholder engagement plans designed to share costs and optimize learning in the interests of consolidating, sustaining and replicating the FLR/SFM process within the wider context of sustainable rural development policies, strategies and plans at all levels (global, sub-regional, national and sub-national).

Cross-cutting priorities *Question 6: To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?*

12. **Satisfactory** The project design complies with the environmental and social standards' checklist, which has been annexed to the Prodoc and which has confirmed a mitigation plan to reduce environmental and/or social impact was not required. However, there is no monitoring of the ESS standards to support reporting on the ESS in the PIRs. As a result, important monitoring on the ecological health of Chilgoza forest ecosystems has been overlooked, as has the monitoring of biodiversity restoration/loss that the MTR team considers is essential to sustain these ecosystems over the long-term.

Gender Question 7: *To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?*

13. **Moderately satisfactory**: Data collected from reports and triangulated in the field indicate the project has conducted a needs assessment and confidence building exercises to engage women in the project's SFM/FLR activities and, more specifically, as the main recipients of the small grants scheme, which is scheduled to start in August 2021. However, the results of the project's gender strategy so far do not indicate the project is succeeding in women and other vulnerable groups taking on decision-making roles in the CFPCCs, or benefiting directly from the SFM/FLR activities, which are mainly reliant on the male head of the household to decide how far the female members of his family benefit from these activities. This is particularly the case concerning the distribution of project-funded tree saplings, equipment, pine nut harvesting toolkits, trainings, etc., where the MTR's field data confirms men have been the main recipients, whereas women are the main recipients of fuel-efficient stoves and gas fires. The MTR recognizes that the project is operating in highly challenging remote areas where traditional views and values of

women are hard to change, especially in the Pashtun tribal areas which span between South Waziristan and neighbouring Afghanistan. However, the project's gender strategy is not exploring innovative approaches, such as the application of targeted win-win situations, that will ultimately facilitate the empowerment of both men and women in the SFM/FLR process, which is key to enhancing their resilience. Similarly, the strategy is not seeking the agreement of the end beneficiaries (men and women) on the application of a agreed percentage, or quota, of project activities that will be directed at women, youths and other vulnerable groups. As a result, the project has not been successful in establishing a fully inclusive approach, supported by female as well as male trainers to promote the "training of trainers" principle. This situation also means there is little scope for other child projects under TRI to capture lessons and good practices on the project's gender strategy to support their own gender strategies at the national and sub-national levels.

Additional question – links to the global child project. Question 8: *What did the global child project bring to the national child project?*

14. One of the main achievements of the global child project so far has been to provide the project access with access to new cost-effective tools and methods to support the application of FLR. In particular, it has provided access to the application of the CEOF software which represents a highly cost-efficient means to gaining access to quality crowd-sourced satellite imagery and geographical data to support accurate mapping and selection of ANR sites. However, stakeholders have communicated that the areas where they would like more support from the global child project are: i) improved monitoring to capture lesson, good practices and success stories on FLR; ii) application of country-specific support, based on in-demand requests; iii) improved communications and capture of lessons, good practices, success stories; iv) establishment of an interactive platform between national child projects; and more support to developing entrepreneurs.

Additional question – on COVID-19. Question 9: *COVID-19 impacts*

15. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been significant on the project, although the impact has been less dramatic at the local level, where forest restoration activities have continued with fewer delays. This has been aided by the application of FAO's Standard Operational Procedures concerning, among others, controls on social distancing. The pandemic has also increased the demand for Chilgoza pine nuts. However, the role of pine nuts, medicinal plants, forest honey and other NTFPs in enhancing local nutrition to strengthen the immune system against the COVD-19 virus has not been studied and promoted. Similarly, the general absence of synergies, has also affected linkages with some of FAO's key partners in humanitarian responses to disasters, such as Sphere, which has held a series of webinars on controlling the virus.

Knowledge activities/products

16. The project has mainly focused on the production of newsletters in English and Urdu, images of Chilgoza forest ecosystems, summaries of project's activities for the global and regional newsletters managed by TRI's global child project, media coverage of the project's main events and the production of two success stories on FLR for the TRI community. It is understood, one of these (on CFPCCs) will be presented at the next World Forestry Congress to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, between 02-06 May 2022. Little evidence was identified to confirm knowledge products and educational materials are supported by a communication strategy designed to stimulate advocacy on bringing about the transformational change needed to make SFM/FLR processes more effective and sustainable, as well as increase the visibility of TRI. However, through the involvement of senior provincial officials from FWD in the PSC, and the PM's contacts in the MoCC, the project has been able to raise awareness on SFM/FLR and there is evidence of take up of project methods and tools ranging from the abovementioned the application of CEOF software and ROAM to map ANR sites. Similarly, the creation of the CFPCCs has raised awareness on the application of more effective pine cone harvesting techniques using modern equipment and how to manage livestock grazing in the project intervention sites. The general lack of qualitative monitoring and risk management has, nonetheless, restricted the scope for learning at both the grassroots and provincial levels through which gaps/good practices could be identified to orient follow-up activities and monitoring.

Stakeholder participation

17. The project has been highly successful in engaging the participation of local communities. In particular, over 17 500 households are recorded as direct/indirect participants in the SFM/FLR activities against the target of 50 000 households. This has been achieved, thanks to a combination of strong engagement of senior officials from the FWD who are also implementing the TBTTP and the creation of the CFPCCs through which there is a growing awareness and commitment to conserve the goods and services of the Chilgoza forest ecosystem to safeguard their livelihoods dependent on NTFPs. However, there are no indications to indicate the project is achieving the 40 per cent participation rate of women stakeholders proposed in the Prodoc, and participation of other stakeholders, such as educational establishments and research institutes, the private sector and civil society organisations was found to be low.

Progress towards achieving the project's development objective

18. The MTR rates the chances of the project achieving its development objective (project objective) in the remaining time to April 2022, as **moderately likely**. This is based on the fact there has been a delay of almost one year in receiving the first disbursement of GEF funds and the limitations on travel, holding group meetings and demonstrations due to the pandemic. The remoteness of the project sites from one another also makes it difficult for project management to conduct regular sites visits to follow-up on progress, achievements, lessons learnt and so forth.

Overall risk rating

19. The MTR has assigned an overall risk rating of '**medium'** to the project. This is justified by the fact the FLR process, in particular the ANR sites are highly susceptible to the effects of climate variability and change, especially as Pakistan is ranked as one of the top ten most vulnerable countries in the world according to the Global Climate Risk Index.

0.3 Conclusions

20. **Conclusion 1 (Relevance) on question 1:** *Are the project outcomes congruent with current country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries?*

21. The project's outcomes are highly relevant to the Government of Pakistan's current policy to restore 6.2 per cent of the country's total land area to forests. Moreover, outcomes 2 and 3 are fully supportive of the country's commitment to implementing the TBTTP, which is seen as crucial to achieving this target within the context of its international targets and goals, which include pledges to restore 350 million hectares of degraded and deforested forests under the Bonn Challenge 2030. Furthermore, outcome 4 is designed to stimulate learning on SFM/FLR practices that can be replicated and scaled-up both within Pakistan under the TBTTP and in other TRI countries where such practices are applicable. Similarly, the project's outcomes also fully comply with GEF6 priorities BD-4 (Programme 9), CCM-2 (Programme 7) and SFM3 (Programme 7) and FAO Strategic Objective 2 (Outcome 2.1). In the latest CPF (2018-2022), the project is fully congruent with Priority Area 2 (Output 2.4.1), which is specifically dedicated to supporting the restoration and improvement of forest ecosystems. At the local level, the project's design has been built on the results of needs assessments conducted with local communities and stakeholders in the Chilgoza forest ecosystems prioritized by FWD for restoration. In addition, it draws on good practices from previous FAO-managed projects that developed successful co-management of water catchments. This facilitated agreement on the four Chilgoza forest sites to be conserved, restored and managed and that the CFPCCs would assume a central role in achieving this.

22. **Conclusion 2 (Effectiveness) on question 2:** *To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?*

23. The project is making an important contribution to restoring Chilgoza forest ecosystems at all four intervention sites. This has been aided by its alignment with the needs and priorities of the Federal government's TBTTP, which started implementation around the same time as the child project in 2019. In particular, the project's support to the development of the CFPCCs represents a significant step forward in bringing local stakeholders and forest communities together for the first time to establish an effective and efficient co-management approach to the SFM/FLR process in Chilgoza forest ecosystems. In addition, the application of methods such as ROAM and the production of maps using cost-effective CEOF open-source software has established a highly effective

participatory approach to selecting ANR sites that can be replicated by MoCC/FWD at relatively low cost in the TBTTP. Local ownership of the ANR sites is also enhanced by the fact the CFPCCs will ultimately validate the restoration process has achieved its environmental objective of safeguarding forest products and services and delivering GEBs.

24. However, achievement of the project's development objective is highly unlikely by 2022. In particular, the small grant scheme is not yet running due to need to conduct the needs assessment and conduct confidence-building exercises with the local communities to ensure women benefit from a large percentage of the grants and engage in inclusive value chains for NTFPs. As a result, the project is not promoting the economic development that the MTR team believes is necessary to retain a strong commitment among the local communities and their CFPCCs to consolidate the conservation, restoration and management of the Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

25. **Conclusion 3 (Efficiency) on question 3:** *To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?*

26. The project's capacity to convert its resources into outputs and outcomes is at least 18 months behind schedule, caused primarily by a delay of over 12 months in the constitution of the PSC to May 2019, and over six months of delays in implementation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic between March 2020 and June 2021. Nonetheless, project implementation has improved considerably since the PSC was formed in May 2019, which is demonstrated by the fact physical and financial progress rates have progressed to 50 and 43 per cent respectively to end June 2021. This also indicates the PSC is proving to be an efficient mechanism to oversee the project's execution, which is primarily due to three factors. First, the PSC has incorporated the provincial secretaries of the FWD and their Chief Conservators as members, which has been instrumental in ensuring the PSC decisions are implemented at the local level through the application of the CFPCCs to support co-management of the SFM/FLR process. Second, the signing of LoAs have proved to be a cost-effective measure to engage the FWD and local communities in these co-management approaches, even though the LoAs have in some cases taken time to conclude. Third, the nomination of a highly qualified PM who has work experience with the BTTAP and the design of the TBBTP has helped promote trust and a positive working relationship with the MoCC and FWD in the provinces, as well as ensuring key activities linked to the SFM/FLR process, such as the planning, mapping and application of the ANR sites, are taken up in the TBTTP. This has also been aided by the employment of four full-time local foresters who act as project coordinators in the four participating districts. However, there is not a corresponding match of expertise to guide, support and monitor business development of the NTFPs and there is a general absence of effective monitoring, especially of qualitative monitoring, which has restricted the project from optimising its efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, the PSC has not addressed the reasons why co-finance levels are far lower than planned (10%).

27. **Conclusion 4 (Sustainability) on question 4:** *What is the likelihood that the project results can be sustained after the end of the project?*

28. The prospects of sustaining the project's outcomes are mixed. Triangulated evidence indicates outcomes 2 and 3 can be sustained, because the project's SFM/FLR activities can be maintained through the CFPCCs and support from the TBTTP, which is likely to continue to 2030. However, the lack of adequate risk management, agreement on a suitable funding mechanism for the CFPCCs and slow development of value chains in NTFPs are key factors that will affect the SFM/FLR process if they remain unresolved. The prospects of sustaining outcome 1 is dependent on the feedback and analysis of the SFM/FLR process, which is still in its infancy, and political willingness of the FWD to introduce a suitable funding mechanism for the CFPCCs, because PES has no policy and legal framework in place to apply it. Finally, the sustainability of outcome 4 is unlikely unless there is, first, greater alignment of the M&E indicators to national targets linked to the country's international pledges, goals and commitments and, second, the application of qualitative monitoring to stimulate learning on transformational change, resilience, poverty reduction and facilitates informed dialogue and advocacy for change, or where change should be up-scaled and out-scaled at the national/TRI levels.

29. **Conclusion 5 (factors affecting performance) on question 5:** *What are the main factors affecting the project from reaching its results?*

30. The main factors affecting the project's effectiveness are linked to gaps in the project's design. First, outputs 1.2, 1.3/2.6 require a review by the PSC to support the realignment of outcome 1 to national and provincial priorities concerning the role and funding of the CFPCCs, which are considered crucial to sustaining outcomes 2 and 3. Second, the current gap of qualified staff (or service providers) in business development planning and marketing of NTFPs is likely to affect how far improved livelihoods can be sustained under outcome 2. Third, output 4.1. is not focused on embedding the M&E system within the FWD, nor is it applying quantitative, qualitative and risk monitoring designed to stimulate reflection, dialogue and informed decision-making on delivering the transformational change needed to reach the government's pledges, targets and goals linked to its international commitments. Moreover, despite the evidence the CFPCCs are facilitating dialogue with the FWD and local stakeholders on good practices relating to the SFM/FLR process, there is no interactive platform in place to ensure this dialogue reaches the wider provincial development planning process, or supports the creation of synergies with other relevant projects to support the achievement of project outcomes. For example, the project is promoting rotational grazing techniques, which are known to produce significant economic and environmental benefits that include the regeneration of soils, water systems and biodiversity, as well as establishing healthier livestock. However, there appears to be little, or no research and dialogue on this to date.

31. **Conclusion 6 (Cross-cutting priorities) on question 6:** *To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?*

32. The application of the ESS in the Prodoc confirms the checklist has been applied, but there is adequate guidance in the project design to ensure the M&E system tracks key environmental and social standards in coordination with its partners (MoCC/FWD, UNEP, IUCN and WWF) who already have a high level of capacity in this field. Given the national child projects have been introduced to new tools to support the monitoring of biodiversity (such as Species Threat Abatement and Recovery promoted by IUCN), the MTR found there is a case for piloting ecological health assessments to support reporting updates on the ESS checklist (especially under section on biodiversity, ecosystems and habitats) as this would support communication on TRI's role in delivery GEBs in general and, more specifically, contributions saving flora and fauna linked to Chilgoza forest ecosystems on IUCN's Red List. As such, there are limited opportunities to stimulate learning on how far the project is contributing to, for example, its contribution to saving the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), the Balochistan bear (*Ursus thibetanus gedrosianus*), which are high profile animals of particular interest to the global community and offer significant potential to economic sectors such as eco-tourism and mass media.

33. **Conclusion 7 (gender) on question 7:** *To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?*

34. The project's gender strategy has gaps, in particular the application of viable methods that fully engage vulnerable groups in the project's activities and share in its benefits. In spite of the application of a needs assessment for women concerning the application of the small grants scheme, the project does not appear to be tracking any key indicators from these assessments. Instead, it is primarily concerned with monitoring sex-disaggregated participation rates in main activities in the field, which the MTR team has found are not suitable to determine how far women and other vulnerable groups are actually applying and benefiting from these activities. Indeed, the MTR team's own data collected in the field, indicates female members of the local community have very little access to women trainers and are highly under-represented in the 14 CFPCCs established to date. As a result, the scope for learning among women appears to be low, signifying change in the rural dynamic is generally not happening, with the possible exception of Chitral District, which is less remote and offers more services for women.

35. **Conclusion 8 (links to the global child project) on question 8:** *What did the global child project bring to the national child project?*

36. The main benefit the global child project brings to project 091 is access to training of FLR tools and methods, including FAO/international good practices associated with the

application of SFM/FLR. This has been instrumental in stimulating change within the MoCC/FWD, which has been demonstrated already by the uptake and testing ROAM/CEOF GIS-software to identify and prioritise ANR sites under the TBTTP. However, although a communication team for FAO, UNEP and IUCN exists for TRI, there is no effective communication strategy in place to support the expansion of TRI within the wider context of the UN Restoration Decade. In general communication relies too heavily on *ad hoc* working groups and monitoring that support and inform on operational progress, rather than one that is instrumental in bringing about the transformational change needed at the local, national and international level to halt the relentless breakdown of forest and other ecosystems. In the absence of international events and exchanges the TRI global child project has switched to developing "remote" communication services, such as webinars and e-learning on FLR, launched the Restoration Factory Programme (managed by UNEP to promote restoration projects) in May 2021, among others. However, the MTR found there is high demand for three main developments at the project and TRI levels. First, as already mentioned above, more effective monitoring to assess not only effectiveness, but of equal importance, transformational change (at all levels); namely evidence that "old ways and approaches" to rural development are being replaced by "new ways and actions" that support sustainable rural development and resilience. These include monitoring of context alignment, systemic change, the speed and scale of the restoration initiative at the sub-national and national levels and the adaptive sustainability of FLR. Second, the communication services of FAO/UNEP/IUCN establish an interactive platform to centralise, capture and facilitate access to lessons, good practices, success stories and transformational changes taking place at both the environmental level relating to SFM/FLR and at the socio-economic and cultural level relating to the processing and development of NTFPs, inclusive value chains, joint ventures with the private sector, gender-specific strategies that produce win-win situations, and empowerment of vulnerable groups. Third, the establishment of a remote help-desk through which national child projects can log on-demand requests for information, contacts, technical guidance (including a request facility for on-line and/or in-country follow-up support targeting gaps and needs of the child project, ways of accessing additional internal/external funding, facilitate synergies between projects (including remote networking), among others.

37. **Conclusion 9 (COVID-19 impacts) on question 9:** *What kind of support from TRI Global support partners and FAO, if any, would be most helpful in addressing Covid-19 impacts and challenges for the national project?*

38. The distribution of FAO's Standard Operational Procedures has proved to be one of the most significant areas where the TRI global project has helped project 019 establish low-risk environments that have allowed SFM/FLR activities on the ground to proceed. However, one area that the MTR team found has been completely overlooked, is the importance of nutrition to strengthen the immune system and, thus, reduce the risks of infection. In particular, the MTR identified the production of forest honey, medicinal plants

and pine nuts as all good examples of local forest products that are available and which enhance the immune system.

0.4 Recommendations

80. **Recommendation 1 – (linked to conclusions 4 and 5) – effectiveness and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA): in the interests of achieving the project's objectives it is recommended the project's duration is extended. Taking into account the comments in the debriefing of the MTR 02 "5 August 2021, that an extension of the project will require an injection of new funds to fund staff and operations, it is recommended an 18-month extension is agreed (to 24 October 2023). This is justified on the basis of the following reasons. First, the project has already experienced delays of over 18 months in its implementation and it is highly likely the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to affect project's implementation into 2022. Second, the project's small grant programme to support income generating activities will need at least two years of technical and marketing support and follow-up to establish themselves. Third, there is a need to review, agree and adopt a new Outcome 1 based on a revision of outputs 1.2 and 1.3 and introduce a new M&E system to support learning on transformational change and tracking of indicators that are aligned to national and international targets, pledges and goals. Moreover, these changes are considered crucial to supporting the achievement of Outcomes 2 and 3.**

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:</u>

a) **The redefinition of Outcome 1: It is recommended this should start by reaching consensus on the main roles of forest protection and conservation committees (FPCCs). For example: *to maximize the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by forest ecosystems and ensure they are used sustainably to generate national and global environmental benefits.* It is important to include this latter point, because the growing threats of the climate emergency are likely to impact on Pakistan's economy and population heavily.**
b) **Review and realign outputs 1.2 and 1.3 in accordance with FWD's current priorities concerning the legal recognition and funding of FPCCs in general to support and sustain all forest ecosystems subject to restoration by the TBBTP. Although this should start in the three provinces participating in the project, expansion of FPCCs into other provinces of Pakistan (including coastal mangrove sites), should not be excluded. To assist the realignment of these outputs, the project should conduct a study over the next three months engaging senior members of the FWD, nominated by MoCC in coordination with the Prime Minister's Office. This study should identify, among others:**
    - **Lessons learnt and good practices adopted by the CFPCCs;**

- **A diversified funding package for the FPCCs, including a mix of internal and external income generating sources, that is feasible, easy to operate and verify and which can be agreed under the existing legal framework;**
- **An action plan to seek government approval of the proposed financial package and its application in the three participating provinces, but with a view to mainstreaming FPCCs in forestry policy over the medium-term;**
- **The guidelines for training of FPCCs, including their financial accountability, their roles in managing the SFM/FLR processes, governance responsibilities (combining national rules and regulations and local good practices such as Nigahbans (forest guards) and Naghas (local fines) and monitoring responsibilities (including ecological health, forest biodiversity, carbon storage, governance-related incidents, seasonal production rates of NTFPs);**
- **Donors who can continue support the implementation of the above-mentioned action plan, in particular under REDD+ readiness to support capacity development in MRV and exploration of carbon trading income generation over the medium to long-term (2030-2050);**
- **The final agreed wording of expected Outcome 1 plus all human and financial resources needed to achieve this outcome.**

81. **Recommendation 2 – (linked to conclusions 4 and 5) – effectiveness and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA): Output 4.1 is reviewed and redefined to support the achievement of Outcome 4: before updating the M&E systems it is strongly recommended that the project hires a consultant (if possible, through the global child project's budget), to carry out a participatory review of the Results Matrix in the Prodoc, given this has not been updated since it was elaborated in 2016. The main aim of this review is to provide guidance and support on establishing an effective M&E system that can be replicated for other national child projects where and when required.**

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation</u>:

- **Improve the vertical logic to show the linkages between the environmental and development objectives, in particular how increased income and food security and nutrition derived from the goods and services of Chilgoza forest ecosystems act as an incentive for the CFPCCs to consolidate themselves as the main guardians of their conservation and sustainable use and that this model can be replicated under the TBTTP;**
- **Improve the horizontal logic through a review of the indicators, baselines and targets on SFM/FLR/NTFPs to move away from a "stand-alone" initiative, to one that is an "agent of change" designed to support stakeholders learn and engage in policy dialogue on how to make forest ecosystem restoration sustainable over the long-term. It is recommended indicators, baselines and targets focus on:**

- **Adjustments in accordance with current needs and priorities of main stakeholders and end beneficiaries to ensure they are realistic and achievable;**
- **Selected end targets are linked to relevant sub-national and national pledges, targets and goals relating to the Bonn Challenge 2030 (forestry policy statements and agreements), to the Aichi Targets (prescribed in the NBSAP and latest national environmental policies and plans), to Pakistan's commitments to storing carbon/reducing GHGs (relevant targets in the NDCs under the Paris Agreement and SDG 13) and to reducing biodiversity loss (prescribed in the NBSAP, latest Wildlife policies and linked to reporting on the Red List managed by IUCN);**
- **Qualitative indicators are included to stimulate learning on why project activities on SFM/FLR/NTFPs are being achieved/unachieved as planned and dialogue on how, where and when they need to be upscaled/outscaled and/or improved/changed to meet planned outcomes and objectives. These indicators should focus on participatory learning through, for example, knowledge-attitude-practices surveys, case studies on success stories, forest-based workshops, among others;**
- **A risk assessment is applied at three levels (outputs, outcomes and objectives) in order to encourage the integration of risk management in project planning, implementation and monitoring, to emphasise the management of risk is a central theme in establishing resilient forests and forest communities.**

- **Proceed with the review and updating of the project's M&E system following agreement on the new RM. The main aim behind this revision should be to create an M&E system that supports learning, integrates risk management and promotes strategic thinking on TRI as a mechanism to bring about the change needed to achieve and sustain sub-national, national and global pledges, targets and goals and, at the same time build resilience to the effects of climate change. It is s<u>uggested this could be achieved by:</u>**
  - **Linking output and outcome indicators to qualitative indictors to clarify what are the key parameters for learning on how to apply, sustain and upscale SFM/FLR/NTFPs;**
  - **Linking each output and outcome indicators to the risks identified and identify the mitigation measures that need to be monitored to determine how far stakeholders and end beneficiaries are prepared, and able, to respond to risks such as pests, prolonged droughts, fires, over-grazing, lack of law enforcement, lack of engagement of the whole community (men, women, youths, elders, etc.) and so forth;**
  - **Updating of existing indicators so that the M&E system tracks and reports on project contributions to national indicators and targets/pledges/goals concerning Pakistan's international commitments to the Bonn Challenge 2030, Aichi Targets (5, 7 and 14), UNFCCC/Paris Agreement. project can**

increase its visibility by showing, among others, the project's percentage contribution to: (i) the total land area of Chilgoza forest ecosystems restored each year in the three participating provinces by all government programmes (including the TBTTP), and at the national level by year to 2030; (ii) the total forest area restored (all forest types) by all government programmes (including the TBTTP) each year in the three participating provinces, and at the national level by year to 2030; (iii) the number of hectares of Chilgoza forest ecosystems under sustainable management by CFPCCs (showing the total number of CFPCCs established and sex-disaggregated data on the members of the CFPCC);

- **Agree on the qualitative indicators that will be tracked by the M&E system to learn lessons and identify good practices that can be used to stimulate learning and promoter informed dialogue on addressing implementation gaps and on advocating the transformational change needed at all levels to establish an effective and sustainable SFM/FLR process. It is suggested a mix of environmental and social indicators, baselines and targets are identified (with the support of FAO/global child project). For example:**
  - **Ecological health indicators to monitor the condition, functions and resilience of the Chilgoza forests, which should be applied throughout the forest restoration process in Pakistan in general and in the three participating provinces in particular. These indicators should be agreed at the TRI level (including UNEP and IUCN) and tools identified, such as CEOF, to support the monitoring of spatial data in the project,[1] and which can be replicated to support other national child projects learn and report on the quality of their interventions in relation to relevant national policies, strategies and plans;**
  - **Species Threat Abatement and Recovery indicators to support learning on changes in the number and type of threatened species on IUCN's Red List in Chilgoza forest ecosystem. Taking into account the global child project of TRI has introduced this tool at the third TRI event in 2019, it is recommended a strategy is put in place to support training and application of STAR monitoring in all TRI national child projects;**
  - **Economic surveys and case studies to assess and measure changes in income generation resulting from the small-grants scheme and how far increased income is reducing poverty among and improving access to public and private services for men and women in the targeted communities;**
  - **KAP surveys to identify why conservation and sustainable use of Chilgoza forest ecosystems is happening as planned, or why it is not. It is important these surveys fully engage both men and women's participation (includes young women and other vulnerable groups). This should be aided by the**

[1] For example, see Scotland's Environment, Ecosystem Health Indicators, 2019.

introduction of tables (similar to Table 5) designed to track not only participation rates, but how far women and other vulnerable groups of all ages feel their specific needs are being identified and addressed, and how far they are participating in decision-making and income generating activities.

- **The PSC agrees on a provisional road map for SFM/FLR/NTFPs activities to 2030 in which the project's exit strategy is clearly defined to ensure a seamless closure process in 2024 if the extension is granted for 24 months. To this end, it is recommended to:**
  - **Identify and seek agreement from the PSC/MoCC on a suitable research institution in Pakistan that can take over the ownership of the M&E system to enhance the opportunities of continuing and promoting strategic thinking and dialogue on SFM/FLR/NTFPs beyond the project, preferably to 2030;**
  - **Establish a link to the global child project to ensure there is a centralised information system in place on TRI monitoring (one-stop-shop), through which there is easy access to knowledge on SFM/FLR/NTFPs and the ability to identify where the global project can add most value (webinars, e-learning, provision of follow-up technical services, etc.).**
- **The PSC, FWD, FAO/GEF agree on adopting an adequate budget to both implement this recommendation and share the results, lessons and good practices identified to develop an effective communication strategy at the provincial, national and TRI global levels.**

82. **Recommendation 3 (linked to conclusions 3, 4 and 5): effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA: following the improvement of the M&E system it is highly recommended that the centralised information system proposed above on TRI monitoring is used to develop an effective communication strategy to raise awareness on TRI and its role in achieving "adaptive sustainability" that clarifies the restoration of forest landscapes is not only dedicated to restoring the ecosystem, but building sustainable development and resilience of the communities that depend upon them.**

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation</u>:

- **The communication strategy should adopt two main goals: (i) informing on progress and achievements that highlight lessons learnt and good practices associated with this progress and achievements; (ii) stimulating the policy dialogue needed to bring about the transformational changes required to achieve "adaptive sustainability" and, thus, halt the drivers of forest degradation and deforestation in Pakistan's Chilgoza pine (and other) forests;**
- **Taking into account the growing threats associated with climate change, the pandemic and biodiversity loss, the communication strategy should dedicate particular attention to lessons and good practices on effective risk management.**

For example, the establishment of local tree and non-tree nurseries (preferably at the household, or CFPCC level) that produce and sell local varieties produced from seeds collected by the local communities and FWD staff, that include fire-resistant varieties that can be used to establish fire breaks, stabilise soils, capture carbon, etc., so that ANR sites are also conceived to manage high-risk areas;

- **Development of an interactive platform at the national and TRI global levels that supports networking in addition to access to the abovementioned creation of a centralised information system on the results, risks, lessons, good practices and success stories on SFM/FLR/NTFPs. One of the main aims of this networking should be to support and stimulate lobbying and advocacy for change at the strategic level (policies, strategies and plans), legal level (legal and regulatory framework), economic level (access to information, training, resources) and community level (restoration techniques, management governance, monitoring etc.);**
- **Tailor the communication strategy to the needs and interests of different audiences. For example, at the international level advocacy for change needs to target the agendas of, for example, the Conference of the Parties (COPs) for CBD and other relevant COPs (such as for UNFCCC). At the national level messages need to focus on the needs of the GEF national Focal Point, the Minister of MoCC and the Prime Minister/President's Office (promotion of the TBTTP). Finally at the sub-national level lobbying for change should focus on promoting the adoption of good practices, addressing lessons learned and securing funding where decision-making is most influential at provincial/departmental level, while at the district/local community level the field mission found lobbying for change is more effective when it is done through educational institutions, youth forums, trade unions, local elders, local media (print and digital) and other relevant stakeholders who are accepted mediums to highlight and promote the ownership of good practices linked to the conservation and restoration of forests**

83. **Recommendation 4 (linked to conclusion 7) - sustainability and cross-cutting objectives – for PSC, PM, BH/FAOPK (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and CTA): The project should develop a more effective gender strategy, to ensure participation rates of women are linked to meeting their specific needs and aspirations that have been identified in needs assessments already conducted, or which are still required. In the light of the new government's commitment to ending discriminatory laws and the fact Pakistan is ranked 143 out of 144 countries in the gender equality index,[2] it is recommended the gender strategy focuses on culturally acceptable methods of engaging men and women (and other vulnerable groups) in activities**

[2] World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap report, 2017, which also states only 22 per cent of the workforce are women compared to 46 per cent globally.

on SFM/FLR/NTFPs that deliver mutual benefits and/or win-win situations for both men and females based on the concept "where there is a will, there is a way".

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation</u>:

- The recruitment of a female forester who is culturally aware and sensitive to the challenges of working with Western Pakistan's forest communities. In the interest of gaining access to these communities. The recruitment of a female forester is preferred to a gender specialist, because the aim should be to demonstrate a female professional can deliver major benefits to the male community, while at the same time gradually promote a mix of female and male trainers and animators to engage both sexes in the SFM/FLR/NTFP process**.**
- **Ensure the review of the RM and M&E system proposed in recommendation 2 above, targets women's participation in decision-making roles, in particular in the CFPCCs. This should be developed by seeking out both men and women who have a voice in their community and who are prepared to work together to manage discrimination and promote win-win situations that empower and benefit men and women alike in the FLR/SFM/NTFP activities;**
- **Tailor the trainings to women's needs by applying demonstrations that require the participation of men and women to show how the sharing of workloads can double the benefits of SFM/FLR/NTFP activities (including gender sensitive harvesting of pine cones). The small grants programme should promote economic activities that engage all members of the household in the production, processing and sale of NTFPs, rather than targeting an individual entrepreneur (male or female). One particular activity that is recommended is the development of the "under-forest economy" during the early stages of the restoration process. For example, poultry and duck raring, inter-cropping with mountain rice varieties and/or medicinal herbs should be promoted as household activities to ensure women's workload is not disproportionally increased in relation to males;**
- **Identify female heads of households (widows, wives of migrant workers) and illiterate or semi-illiterate women who need specific support to participate in the SFM/FLR/NTFP activities.**
- **Train CFPCC members to monitor these developments to promote dialogue and awareness within the community that the engagement of women, youths, other vulnerable groups provide lessons on how household poverty can be reduced and economic and social resilience strengthened.**
- **Ensure there is an adequate budget to both implement this recommendation (including the training requirements of men and women selected to develop localized gender-specific activities) and share results, lessons and good practices identified at the TRI global level.**

84. **Recommendation 5 (linked to conclusion 5 and 8) – Efficiency and effectiveness –**

for PM, FAO (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and FAO-PK): increase the number of formal synergies between FAO and its main partners in TRI (GEF, UNEP, IUCN and UNDP/REDD+), as well as with other pertinent donors and government departments. It is recommended greater effort is applied by FAO to explore where synergies could be of mutual interest and benefit.

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation</u>:

- **FAOPK establishes an internal coordination mechanism to explore where GEF-funded projects managed by FAO, UNEP, IUCN and UNDP could establish synergies to support each other and share costs. This is particularly important concerning their support in the abovementioned proposals to apply Ecological health assessments (UNEP/IUCN), application of STAR and monitoring of the Red List (IUCN/WWF), development of MRV to produce carbon inventories and identify potential carbon trading opportunities in the medium to long-term (UNDP/UNREDD+) and so forth.**
- **FAOPK explores synergies to support the development of small businesses, in particular establishing a partnership (or at least information exchange) with SMEDA and other government agencies supporting rural education and employment. In addition, it is recommended coordination and complementarity is established with highly qualified international agencies in developing inclusive value chains (IFAD, GiZ);**
- **FAOPK and the PM explore the identification of opportunities to establish joint ventures with civil society organisations to support the application of the above synergies in the field.**
- **FAOPK and the global child project explore areas where the latter could provide specific inputs to facilitate the agreement of synergies with TRI's main implementing partners (UNEP, IUCN).**

85. **Recommendation 6 (linked to conclusion 8) – Effectiveness and sustainability – for FAO and GEF Secretariat (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and FAO-PK): The current reporting format of the PIRs is heavy and not designed to inspire learning. It is recommended the PIR format is updated taking on board the above recommendations.**

<u>Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation</u>:

- **Request a summary of main lessons learnt and good practices that explain the project's level of progress and achievements in line with recommendation 2;**
- **The section on gender should directly refer to the latest guidelines on gender equality by FAO/GEF and request an explanation on the positive developments of the gender strategy being applied and where there are**

shortcomings. Shortcomings should be explained to show the project has identified the causes and how they are to be addressed to engage women and other vulnerable groups more effectively in both decision-making roles and in the sharing of the benefits of SFM/FLR/NTFPs.

- **Given the project is part of a global programme on TRI, there should be a specific section in the PIR dedicated to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the support and services provided by the global child project and suggestions on how this could be improved;**
- **Expenditure tables on GEF funding should include a breakdown of expenditure in accordance with the Prodoc, or in a format agreed by the PSC during the inception phase.**

86. **Recommendation 7 (linked to conclusion 3) – PM, PSC and FAOPK (BH): an extraordinary meeting of the PSC should be held to agree and endorse the above recommendations and identify a plan of action to implement them. In addition, the PSC should address how the low level of co-finance can be resolved to ensure the implementation of the recommendations also benefits from the support of the provincial and national stakeholders.**

0.5 Table B - GEF ratings

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating[3]	Summary comments[4]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS	Pakistan has a land area of 796,095 Km^2 (79.61 m. ha) and the project will support the restoration of 34 000 ha. This is equivalent to 0.0004% of total land area. It also supports the Bonn Challenge of restoring 350 million ha by 2030 and restoration will contribute directly to storing 2.7 m. tCO2eq
A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project is aligned with GEF6 BD-4-Prog9 and CCM-2-Prog7 and SFM3-Prog7; FAO's SO-2-Outcome 2.1 and the latest FAOPK-CPF 2018-2022 Priority Area 2 (Output 2.4).
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	The project is fully aligned with current national and provincial policies to restore forest cover under the framework of the Federal Government's Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, in which KP has its own Billion Tree Tsunami Project. In addition, the project supports the Federal Government's iNDC commitments which are rooted in the Pakistan 2025 One Nation One Vision; iNDCs 2016 and recognition of the ecological services of Chilgoza forests is growing. Project also supports NBCSAP 2011-2030 including reporting on relevant Aichi Targets (5, 7, 14, 15). Also supports achievement of SDG 15 (Targets 15.1 and 15.5).
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	MS	The Project has been designed to fit with UN-REDD Readiness Project to promote SFM on the ground (Prodoc section 3.2) and learn from GEF-funded projects implemented by UNDP on SFM (W. Himalayas), market and mountain project and mountain area conservation project. However, there is no mention of coordination or synergies with these, or other FAO/UNEP projects in PK.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	S	The project has made good progress since 2019 and is delivering its planned outputs under components 2 and 3 with the support of the FD, but more needs to be done to enhance mapping and modelling to identify the economic value and carbon storage capacity of the forests under SFM and restored under the FLR/ANR process. Local governance also needs strengthening to reduce the threats of illegal logging, grazing and firewood extraction and improve access to pine cone harvesting
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	S	The project has shown it is delivering most effectively on outputs where the FD is actively involved in SFM/FLR activities with the CFPCCs under components 2 and 3.

[3] See rating scheme at the end of the document.

[4] Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.

B1.2 Progress towards outcomes[5] and project objectives	MS	The project is unlikely to meet its immediate outcomes in the ToC by April 2022 due to delays at start-up and work restrictions due to the pandemic. The field visits and interviews confirm the local communities have enhanced their forest management capacity through the creation of the CFPCCs.
- Outcome 1	MS	The project has placed less emphasis on achieving this outcome so far, on the grounds SFM/FLR needs to be implemented first. ROAM methodology has been successfully applied, but mainstreaming of FLR is not a priority and PES does not seem to be the most appropriate financial instrument to support CFPCCs sustain SFM/FLR as there is no legal and regulatory framework in place for PES. Alternative more viable funding solutions are needed (some have been partially identified in the study on Valuation of Ecosystem Services). No study has been done the potential for carbon trading based on effective monitoring reporting and verification partly due to a lack of adequate coordination with UNDP on the implementation of the REDD Readiness initiatives.
- Outcome 2	S	Highly satisfactory progress observed in SFM planning (projected to cover 142% more forest area than originally planned); 48 ANR sites covering 2,153 ha established based on ROAM and highly popular CEOF software. Over 17,500 households reported to be engaged in FLR to 30 June 2021. Establishment of value chain for NTFPs not started yet, but four pine nut processing units have led to an increase in pine nut processing at all four sites. Diamer District (GB) processing of pine nuts increased from 36,000 kg (2019-20) to 44,000 kg (2020-21). Small-grants scheme to promote alternative livelihoods still in procurement phase to select service providers.
- Outcome 3	S	14 CFPCCs created against 8 planned. Internal capacity building of the district forestry departments to manage selected SFM/FLR activities has been aided by trainings in ROAM, CEOF, harvesting toolkits, fuel-efficient stoves, LoAs to implement selected SFM/FLR activities in coordination with TBTTP. Gaps identified in promoting value chains and NTFPs on basis of market analysis and quality control.
• Outcome 4	MS	M&E system is mainly operating to collect quantitative data, which can be channelled to the global child project responsible for tracking 9 core indicators identified at inception phase of TRI. M&E system is not aligned to track national indicators linked to Bonn Challenge, Aichi Targets in the NBSAP, SDGs, or carbon inventories (linked to REDD+ readiness MRV). Lack of qualitative monitoring has reduced the scope for qualitative analysis/products/research on key issues that support advocacy for transformation change that will sustain and expand SFM/FLR, develop funding mechanisms for CFPCCs, etc. Monitoring of gender equality needs strengthening.

[5] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	Achievement of environmental objective is likely, but will need more time and some outputs under components 1 and 4 to be modified. Achievement of development objective is less likely unless there is a better linkage between producers of NTFPs and markets (to establish shorter and more inclusive value chains).
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	UA	Not rated in MTRs
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[6]	MS	Overall, the project has a physical advance of around 50%, while total expenditure and committed expenditure stands at 43.1 %. indicating moderately satisfactory conversion of project resources into outputs. The project's implementation mechanism based on a PSC took almost 13 months to finalise. However, since May 2019, the PSC is demonstrating to be a cost-effective means to executing the project, thanks to inclusion of all four of FWD's provincial secretaries and chief conservators in PSC who are able to apply project activities to the TBTTP. However, due to the pandemic and application of the LoAs with provincial secretaries of FWD, co-finance is low in all four provinces (10% of planned budget). The LoAs with the FWD have helped to keep project costs down. The lack of synergies with other projects means the project has not applied cost-saving in areas such as the sharing of trainers and training materials.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	Sustainability of outcomes 2 and 3 are likely thanks to the TBTTP, which has enhanced the relevance of the child project since 2019. However, sustainability of income generating activities is unclear. Sustainability of outcome 1 is only likely after the government has assessed the success of the SFM/FLR process over several years. Outcome 4 is moderately unlikely to be sustained unless the M&E system is revised to include qualitative monitoring and aligned to relevant national indicators. Risk management also needs to be developed so that risks are monitored and mitigation measures updated annually. Also, TRI/FAO have under-estimated new external risks emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular on the national/local economy that will affect livelihoods and income generating activities from NTFPs. Likewise, the growing effects of climate change (anthropic/abiotic threats) on the Chilgoza forest ecosystems have not addressed through mitigation plans integrated into SFM/FLR planning and monitoring.
D1.1. Financial risks	ML	Financial risks have been upgraded from low in the PIR to "low-medium" by the MTR team. There are inadequate mitigation measures in place to counter the effect of the pandemic on the Pakistani economy, which has already had a major impact on promoting ecotourism in the Chilgoza forests and to counter the effects of climate change (especially rise in pests and prolonged

[6] Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

		droughts). In addition, there is no funding mechanism in place to support the CFPCCs consolidate and expand the SFM/FLR process.
D1.2. Socio-political risks	L	Socio-political risks are low, due to the Federal and provincial governments commitments to implement the TBTTP.
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	L	Institutional and governance risks are low, but require monitoring given: a) there is a lack of inter-sectoral coordination at the provincial level (especially engagement of institutions such as the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority) to support the development of inclusive value chains and NTFPs; b) no funding mechanism in place for the CFPCCs which are crucial to supporting the application of effective governance over SFM/FLR areas.
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	Environmental risks are low. However, the lack of qualitative monitoring in areas such as the application of tools such as STAR, or EHI means decision-makers at all levels are not aware of the impact of SFM/FLR on forest health and biodiversity/habitat recovery.
D2. Catalysis and replication	L	Replication of ROAM/CEOF-GIS software is already evident to identify ANR sites for TBTTP. CFPCCs are also catalysing a new mechanism for FWD to promote co-management of SFM/FLR at the local level. Pine nut processing facilities have increased number of farmers wanting to process pine nuts. However, it is too early to say if the development of alternative livelihoods and NTFPs are replicable, but lack of clearly identified markets reduces the scope for replication.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[7]	MU	The project has some design issues that need to be reviewed and a solution agreed upon because output 1.2 is not a priority for the new government and PES (outputs 1.3/2.6) does not have legal framework to support its implementation. Output 4.1 is not designed to promote learning based on qualitative data and analysis to support a robust communication strategy linked to advocacy to stimulate change as foreseen in the ToC (Appendix 9).
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	Quality of trainings and capacity building support has been satisfactory, especially where end products have had to be produced/delivered afterwards (creation of CFPCCs, ANR sites, SFM plans, plants, toolkits, fuel efficient stoves/gas fires). Training linked to income generating activities has been limited, but development of business plans based on marketing studies were not evident to date. In addition, all training has a general lack of adequate follow-up to identify gaps/challenges/good practices.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, CTA, etc.)	MS	The quality of FAO support has been satisfactory, but no visits or events including TRI events have taken place since November 2019 due to the pandemic. More should be done to establish a mechanism to facilitate synergies at the national level with other

[7] This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at project launch.

		relevant projects (especially GEF-FAO, UNEP, UNDP and IUCN projects) and at the TRI level.
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	S	The PSC members took over 12 months to be finalised. However, since May 2019 it has provided a satisfactory level of support because the provincial secretaries of all four participating provinces/regions are members and have the authority to implement their decisions locally. PM needs to have better knowledge products to advocate change, especially to secure agreements on funding of CFPCCs.
E3. Quality of project execution	S	MoCC is fulfilling its role as executing partner in a satisfactory manner by attending the PSC meetings and capturing good practices that are being tested for replication in the TBTTP.
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MS	Project implementation through DEX has ensured a highly qualified PM is in place, who confirmed 80% of his time is dedicated to project duties. Full-time project coordinators are employed in all four participating districts and aided by two female enterprise development facilitators. The latter cover very large and remote intervention areas, but have limited access to the local communities because of their sez, especially in South Waziristan. The involvement of the provincial secretaries of the FWD in the three participating provinces has facilitated the implementation of decision-making in the districts concerned, which has been enhanced by engaging the FWD in LoAs to implement project activities on SFM/FLR. However, the PM has a high workload, which is not aided by the lack of a full-time assistant to cover all day-to-day tasks and logistics and a monitoring system that mainly focuses on operational progress.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S	The MTR team did not receive an audit report on the project, but found no evidence to indicate there are difficulties, or errors in accounting. Co-financing levels are low. There is no evidence this has had a major effect on project implementation. However, it needs to be reviewed by the PSC to ensure activities not implemented so far, especially the small-grants scheme, start as soon as possible and gaps such as follow-up exercises, monitoring and synergies with the SMEDA.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MS	Internal project partnerships have worked well, such as employment of IUCN to conduct ROAM, local stakeholder and community engagement through the creation of the CFPCCs and engagement of the FWD in selected SFM/FLR activities through LoAs. Partnerships with external potential partners ranging from GEF and other donor funded projects, in particular linked to UNREDD+ readiness projects, have not been developed. This has not been aided by the lack of a suitable donor coordination mechanism/interactive platform in place
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	MS	The project is producing standard knowledge products, and diffusing them via the internet, or press releases. However, an effective communications strategy is not in place, supported by qualitative learning.

E7. Overall quality of M&E	MS	The quality of the M&E system established is satisfactory from the point of view of tracking outputs linked to TRI's nine core indicators, but has no qualitative indicators or risk monitoring to support analysis on transformational change, uptake of good practices, improvements in governance, gender equality, resilience.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The M&E system has been designed to inform on the project's delivery of outputs in relation to planned outputs and report on the nine core indicators managed by the TRI global project. As a result, the main purpose of the M&E design is monitor quantitative achievements, rather than how far these achievements have induced change (such as in the policy, legal, regulatory and/or institutional framework, or on the ground in terms of sustainable management of the Chilgoza forest ecosystem.
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MS	The monitoring and evaluation plan is not aligned to national forestry monitoring indicators and targets, which means the FWD is not developing a strong sense of ownership of the M&E system, which is crucial to its continuation after the project.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	A combination of gaps in the M&E system to support qualitative learning and analysis, and an ineffective communication strategy are the main factors that are limiting the project from inducing change to optimise its effectiveness and secure the sustainability of its main outputs and outcomes.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The project's gender strategy includes gender needs assessments, but monitoring focuses only on participation rates of women and men. The MTR's data reveals women participation rates are lower than planned (10% against 40% planned) and differ from the data provided by the project, which is generally higher than the MTR's data. The MTR's data also found women are not being targeted to be the recipients of at least 30 per cent of the project's training and deliverables on the grounds the project targets households. This obscures how far women are being empowered and taking part in decision-making roles. There is little evidence the project is breaking down traditional values on women in most of the project sites.
F2. Human rights issues	S	The MTR found the emphasis given to adopting co-management approaches that incorporate viable local governance practices such as Nagahs and Nigahbans respects ethnic minority rights to participation and decision-making processes.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS	There is a high level of compliance with the ESS standards during the project design phase. However, the ESS has not been updated, or key elements integrated into the M&E system.
Overall project rating	**S**	

Ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U) Highly unsatisfactory (HU) Unable to assess (UA). Additional ratings for Section E: Likely (L), Moderately likely (ML), Moderately unlikely (MU), Unlikely (U)

1. Introduction

1.1. *Purpose and scope of the MTR*

1 The terms of reference (ToR) of the mid-term review (MTR) of project GCP/PAK/091/GFF: Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests – The Restoration Initiative (GEF 9516), hereafter referred to as project 091, specify the main purpose of the MTR is to:

- Provide information to the Government and non-government partners, communities and resource partners in the country as well as FAO management, FAO's GCU, the National GEF Focal Point, and other TRI national and global child projects;
- Provide recommendations on improving the project's implementation and delivery, to enable decision-makers to take the necessary corrective measures before the end of the project;
- Draw lessons and make recommendations that will be useful for FAO's future engagement in the country, for the TRI implementing and executing agencies and the other partners involved in this initiative. Besides this, the MTR will also enrich FAO's synthesis of findings and guidance for its future support, and will provide lessons to the TRI global and national child projects;
- Advise on how to improve the impact and relevance of FAO's GEF programme in the country, and of the TRI activities in the country. The MTR will also identify the strategic direction and priority areas for future interventions in line with the National Strategy.

2 The **scope of the MTR** covers the start of the project's implementation on 25 April 2018 to 30 June 2021. The geographical scope of the MTR covers all four intervention sites supported by field visits (national consultant only) to two sites in Balochistan Province (Suleiman Mountain range) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (Shishi-valley/Chitral).[8] A wide sample of direct stakeholders were identified and selected via a stakeholder analysis conducted in accordance with GEF procedures to help triangulate the MTR team's main findings and substantiate its conclusions and recommendations. A list of stakeholders interviewed can be found in Appendix 3.

1.2 *Objective of the MTR*

3 The **objective of the MTR** is to assess progress made towards achievement of the project's results, identify challenges faced and provide recommendations on how to make it more relevant to the needs of the country. To achieve this objective the MTR is required to address the following evaluation criteria and main questions summarised in Box 1.

[8] Interviews with a selection of stakeholders from the FATA region (South-Waziristan District) were conducted from Peshawar for security reasons and interviews with representatives from Giigit-Baltistan Province (Diamer District) were done remotely due to the remoteness of the project site.

Box 1: Main questions for the MTR

1. Relevance	Are the project outcomes congruent with country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework, the TRI global child project objectives and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (local communities, men and women, and indigenous peoples, if relevant)?
2. Effectiveness	To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?
3. Efficiency	To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?
4. Sustainability	What is the likelihood that project results can be sustained beyond the project?
5. Factors affecting progress (questions relate to one of the above criteria)	*(Project design)* Is the project design suited to delivering the expected outcomes? Is the project's causal logic coherent and clear? *(Project execution and management)* To what extent did the executing agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities in managing and administering the project? *(Achievements and challenges)* To what extent has the project progressed in achieving the expected outcomes in each of its components? (Assessed under Effectiveness) *(Financial management and co-financing)* What have been the financial-management challenges of the project? *(Project oversight, implementation role)* To what extent has FAO delivered oversight and supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative and operational) during project identification, formulation, approval, start-up and execution? *(Partnerships and stakeholder engagement)* To what extent have stakeholders, such as government agencies, civil society, indigenous populations, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and the private sector, been involved in project formulation and implementation? *(Communication and knowledge management)* How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders and a general audience? *(M&E design)* Is the project's M&E system practical and sufficient? *(M&E implementation)* Does the M&E system operate per the M&E plan?
6. Cross-cutting priorities	*(ESS)* To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project? To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?
7. Gender	*(Gender and minority groups, including indigenous peoples, disadvantaged, vulnerable and people with disabilities)* To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?
8. Links to the child project	What did the global child project bring to the national child project? Synergies between child projects? What did the child project bring to the global child project?
9. Questions on COVID-19 impacts	In what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the work of the national child project (delays, cancellation, etc.)?

Source: Terms of Reference for the MTR.

1.3 Intended users

4 The primary users of the present MTR report are:

- FAO Representative in Pakistan, who is the current Budget Holder of project 091;
- The GEF Secretariat and the FAO's GEF Coordination Unit (GCU),
- The Government of Pakistan (GoP), in particular the members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) who represent the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) as the Executing Agency, and the Provincial Secretaries of the Forestry Department, who are guiding and supporting the project's implementation in the four intervention sites;
- The Project Management team responsible for the implementation of Project 091, especially the FAO appointed Project Manager (PM);
- The Lead Technical Officer (LTO), the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) and other FAO technical staff at Headquarters in Rome and in the Regional and Sub-regional Offices including technical divisions and the PTF;
- The funding liaison officer (FLO);
- Other implementing agencies of the TRI (UNEP and IUCN), plus the project teams who are managing the implementation of the global child project and national child projects in nine other participating countries.

5 Other users of the MTR report will include, among others:

- Local stakeholders that are participating in the project's implementation in Pakistan, such as the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Balochistan Rural Support Programme and the Mountain Society for Research and Development in Chitral;
- Other UN agencies, resource partners and implementing partners, such as the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), which is supporting pine nut processing under the Economic Transformation Initiative in Gilgit-Baltistan.

1.4 Methodology

6 The MTR comprises two independent consultants; one international (acting as team leader) and one national. The international consultant, Mr. Warren Olding, has over 20 years work experience in project identification, design, management and external monitoring and evaluation linked to sustainable rural development, natural resources management, biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change (includes FAO/GEF-funded projects). The national consultant, Ms Rehana Khan, is a development practitioner more than 13 years of work experience in managing multi-disciplinary complex projects with national and multinational organizations which include IC Pakistan, UNDP and FMC, where she has led technical teams in areas such as the development of inclusive value chains for NTFPs, livelihood improvement and community development

with a strong gender focus to support women's empowerment. The MTR team conducted their review between 28 May 2021 and 30 September 2021.

7 The work methodology for MTR adheres to the United Nation's Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (2016) and follows the FAO-GEF Guidelines for MTRs together with FAO's corporate policies on gender and other cross-cutting issues. Four sources of information have been used to support the triangulation of main findings in this report, which are summarised as follows:

- A review of key documents and reports of the project and TRI levels, in particular Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), TRI program reports and data collected by the TRI's global child project, such as from its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system (MEL) on nine core indicators;
- Semi-structured interviews with a wide sample of main stakeholders at the FAO, national and sub-national levels, conducted remotely by the international and or national consultant using internet applications such as Zoom/Teams, or in person on an individual or group basis (national consultant only). As far as possible, questions addressed to stakeholders were tailored to their specific expertise, work experience and tasks in the project and an effort was made to ensure women and other vulnerable groups were included in the interview process.
- Direct observations at the project sites (national consultant only);
- An online questionnaire, designed mainly to support context analysis to aid the assessment of project relevance, factors affecting performance and specific questions relating to links with the global child project and the COVID-19 pandemic (evaluation criteria 1, 5, 8 and 9 in Box 1). This also allowed the MTR team to concentrate their interviews on project results and achievements, efficiency, sustainability and cross-cutting objectives (evaluation criteria 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 in Box 1).

8 The MTR team have applied three main phases to their external review process. An **inception phase** in which the MTR prepared and submitted an Inception Report (IR) in which four key elements were included. First, the presentation of the Theory of Change (ToC) for project 091, (see section 3 below and Appendix 9), based on a participatory approach with the PM, LTO and CTA. Second, a stakeholder analysis, designed to rank stakeholders for interview in terms of "priority", "desirable", or "complementary" and set dates for these interviews in order to save time in the field phase (see Appendix 3). Third, elaboration of an evaluation matrix (see Appendix 4), to support the triangulation of the MTR's findings, identify lessons and good practices that could be developed in the recommendations and aid the production of GEF Ratings Table (see Appendix 8). an **evaluation matrix** (EM) was elaborated and approved in the Inception Report by the FAOPK and GCU. To aid analysis during the interviews, the evaluation matrix provided a set of indicative indicators and judgement criteria (as well as sources of information to be

consulted) to guide the interviews and analyse responses. Fourth a document review (see Appendix 5). The IR was cleared by GCU after modifications on 11 June 2021.

9 A second phase, the **field phase**, concentrated on realizing all interviews planned with priority and desirable stakeholders in the child project, and selected staff from the global child project responsible for MEL, completing the e-questionnaire process and the national consultant carrying out a field mission between 09 and 25 June 2021. Due to the pandemic, only the national consultant travelled to the field, where interviews in person were conducted with local stakeholders and end beneficiaries from three sites (Sherani District in Balochistan), South Waziristan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), and Chitral District (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). In addition, selected interviews took place with stakeholders from Chilas District (Gilgit-Baltistan) from Peshawar City for security reasons. All remote interviews and the e-questionnaire were completed by 06 July 2021.

10 The third phase, **synthesis phase**, started by preparing and submission of field notes to the TL, analysis of the e-questionnaire responses and review of remote interview responses recorded in the evaluation matrix (as a working document) to support the triangulation of findings in the present MTR report and support the production of conclusion and recommendations.

1.5 Limitations

11 The main limitation to the MTR has been the continuation of the pandemic, which has restricted the TL to homebased analysis and reporting. In addition, the remoteness and distance between the intervention sites, coupled with security concerns at the FATA site, meant it was only possible for the national consultant to visit two project sites. To mitigate security concerns in South Waziristan, stakeholders were invited to meetings in Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan), prior to the national consultant's return to Islamabad. However, this meant extending the field mission to three weeks in total. Furthermore, it was agreed by all stakeholders that the MTR should be carried out in a flexible manner to accommodate for the problems associated with the pandemic and that all deadlines for deliverables in the ToR should remain indicative.

2 Project background and context

2.1 *Description of The Restoration Initiative*

12 The Restoration Initiative (TRI) is a global initiative that supports targeted countries achieve their pledges under the framework of the Bonn Challenge. The project framework document (PFD) states that the **overall goal** of TRI is, '*to contribute to the restoration and maintenance of critical landscapes that provide global environmental benefits and enhanced resilient economic development and livelihoods, in support of the Bonn Challenge*.' Its **global environmental objective** is: '*Biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through restoration of critical landscapes in TRI countries and complementary sustainable land management (SLM).'* Meanwhile, the **global development objective** is: '*Poverty reduction, strengthened food security, and human well-being and livelihoods enhanced in TRI countries through restoration of critical landscapes and complementary SLM.'*

13 Currently, TRI supports eleven national "child" projects in ten targeted countries in Asia and Africa. Meanwhile, a global "child" project provides coordination and technical support and tracks indicators, lessons and good practices on FLR that can be disseminated to TRI partners and the wider restoration community to promote learning and stimulate networking and partnerships. The implementation of five child projects is entrusted to FAO (child projects in Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Pakistan and Sao Tomé and Principe) and the remainder to UNEP and IUCN. TRI involves a coalition of partners and agencies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) operating at the global and national level across the abovementioned continents. IUCN is the lead GEF agency of TRI.

14 The PFD identified **four main barriers** to forest regeneration and restoration in the 10 participating countries and which the TRI addresses are:

- **Policy Development and Integration –** supporting work to enhance the enabling in-country policy environment for FLR.
- **Implementation of Restoration Programs and Complementary Initiatives** – delivering support for implementation of restoration programs on identified priority landscapes, as well as support for complementary land management initiatives.
- **Institutions, Finance and Upscaling** – focusing on strengthening the capacity, reach, and effectiveness essential to the successful implementation of restoration and sustainable land management initiatives, and increasing the flow of sustainable finance, both public and private, into restoration and sustainable land management.
- **Knowledge, Partnerships, Monitoring and Assessment** – providing support for knowledge generation and exchange, monitoring and assessment of progress in achieving objectives and stimulating synergies to enhance learning and scaling up of FLR.

15 A total of 11 national "child" projects have been designed in accordance with their specific needs, contexts and challenges. All 11 projects are supported by a global project that is designed to facilitate learning, financing and partnership through the provision of coordination and technical support activities, overseeing monitoring and evaluation across all projects and capturing and disseminating lessons learned and good practices on FLR, SFM, PES, development of NTFPs, etc. One of the main aims of the global project is to stimulate synergies between child projects through, for example, South-South learning and the provision of tools and resources that facilitate partnerships, reduce costs, etc. in the interests of achieving planned outcomes and meeting of objectives. TRI also aims at filtering results, lessons learned and good practices to the wider international community engaged in FLR, SFM, PES, etc. to advance dialogue and action geared to advancing global environmental benefits (GEBs) and sustainable rural development.

2.2 Project description -child project in Pakistan

16 The child project, "*Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan*" responds to the government's commitment in 2015 to conserve and sustainably use its Chilgoza pine forests, which are of strategic ecological and socio-economic importance. This commitment forms part of a wider goal to increase forest cover from around 2.2 per cent (1.69 m. ha) in 2010 to 6 per cent of total land area by 2020 in the interests of addressing three major issues. First, the goods and services of Pakistan's existing forest resources are insufficient to meet the needs of its fast-growing population. Second, the growing effects of climate change are increasing the vulnerability of its agriculture and forest sectors. Indeed, the German Global Climate Risk Index (GCRI) ranked Pakistan as the seventh most affected country from such effects in 2016. Third, inadequate mobilization of climate finance for the forestry sector from GEF, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

17 A summary of the project is provided in Box 2, followed by maps showing the project's main intervention areas in Pakistan.

Box 2. Basic information on Project 091

GEF / FAO Project No.: 4662 / GCP/CPR/052/GFF (No. 613305)

GEF 5 focal area(s): GEF6 BD-4-Prog9 and CCM-2-Prog7 and SFM3-Prog7;

FAO Strategic Objectives (2019): FAO's SO-2-Outcome 2.1

CPF 2018-2022: Priority Area 2 Output 2.4.1 (key forestry and rangeland ecosystems improved and restored).

Total budget: USD 27 978 440

Total co-funding allocation: USD 24.0 million (USD 6.0 million from Balochistan, Khber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan and FATA Provinces).

GEF allocation / disbursed to 30 June 2021: USD 3 978 440 / USD 863,851 (21.7%);

Date of CEO endorsement: 25 April 2018.

Entry of duty (start date): 25 April 2018 (man operations started 07/05/2019 after first PSC).

Implementation end date: 24 April 2022.

Executing agency: Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC).

Implementation modality: Direct execution (DEX) by FAO

Country and geographic locations: Pakistan – operating in Sherani District (Suleiman Mountain range) in Balochistan Province; South-Waziristan District in FATA; Chitral District (Shishi-valley) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province; Diamer District in Gilgit-Baltistan Province.

TRI environmental objective: Biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through restoration of critical landscapes in TRI countries and complementary sustainable land management (SLM)

TRI development objective: Poverty reduction, strengthened food security, and human well-being and livelihoods enhanced in TRI countries through restoration of critical landscapes and complementary SLM

Child project's environmental objective in PK: To contribute to the restoration, protection and sustainable management of Chilgoza Pine forests to provide global environment benefits as well as enhanced resilience and livelihoods of local stakeholders in Pakistan.

Child project's development objective: Local livelihoods improved through the increased productivity and enhanced services and functions of the Chilgoza ecosystem in Pakistan.

Expected outcomes of child project: Outcome 1: National and provincial FLR policies and legal frameworks are strengthened and implemented with efforts aiming at maximizing the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by the Chilgoza forest ecosystems; Outcome 2: Forest and Landscape Restoration and Sustainable Forest Management options, increasing livelihood based on goods and services provided by Chilgoza ecosystems, are demonstrated at district level in the four targeted provinces/regions; Outcome 3: Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) operational, with strengthened capacities of provincial, district and local stakeholders to implement participatory Sustainable Forest Management; Outcome 4: Stakeholders equipped with new knowledge related to forest and landscape restoration of Chilgoza forest ecosystems with strengthened private and public engagement through sharing of best practices, lessons and exchanges with other TRI projects.

Main beneficiaries: Ministry of Climate Change, Provincial government, especially the Forestry Department, civil society organisations and 20 targeted village communities dependent on Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

Key technical partners: International Union for the Conservation of Nature; United Nations Environment Programme

Figure 1: Map of project sites in Sherani, South Waziristan, Chitral and Diamer Districts

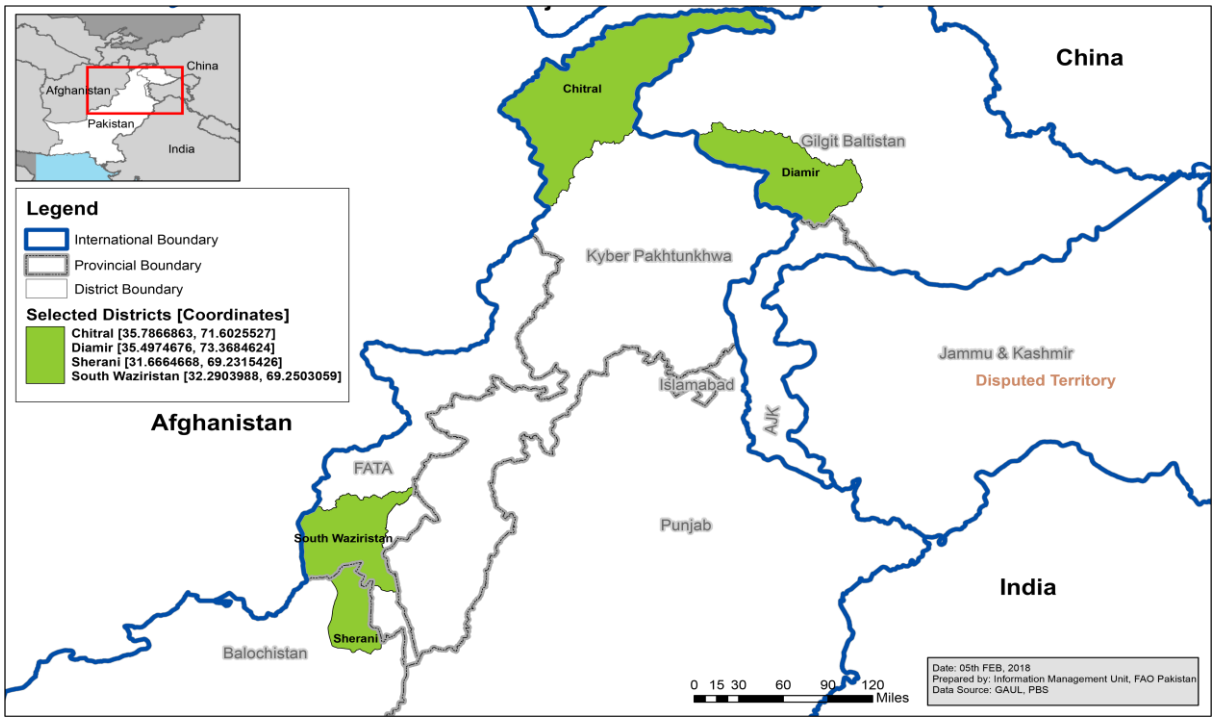


Figure 2: Map of the project site in Sherani District, Balochistan Province

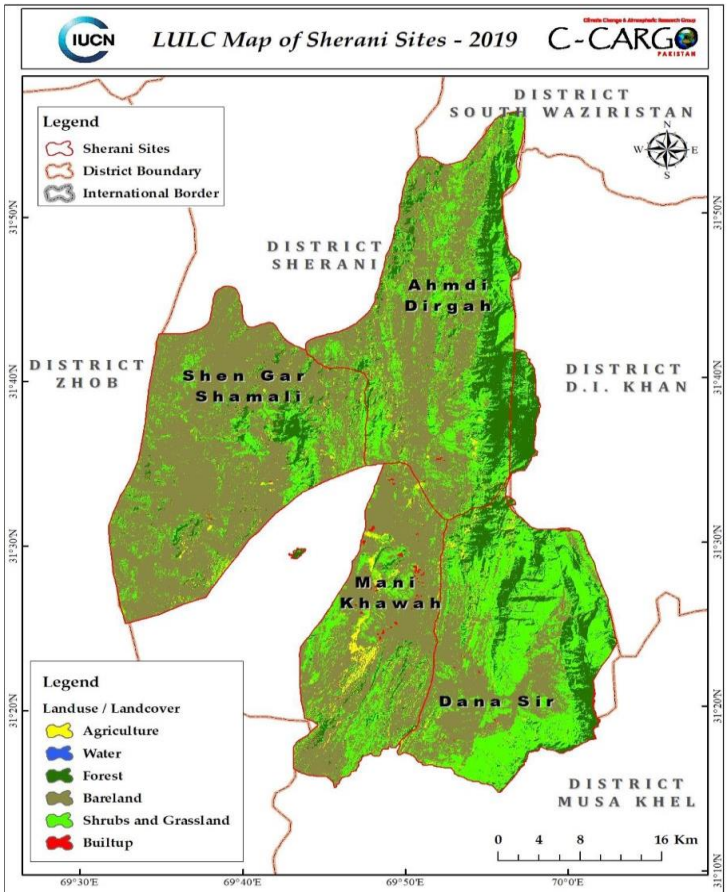


Figure 3: Map of the project site in South Waziristan District, FATA Region

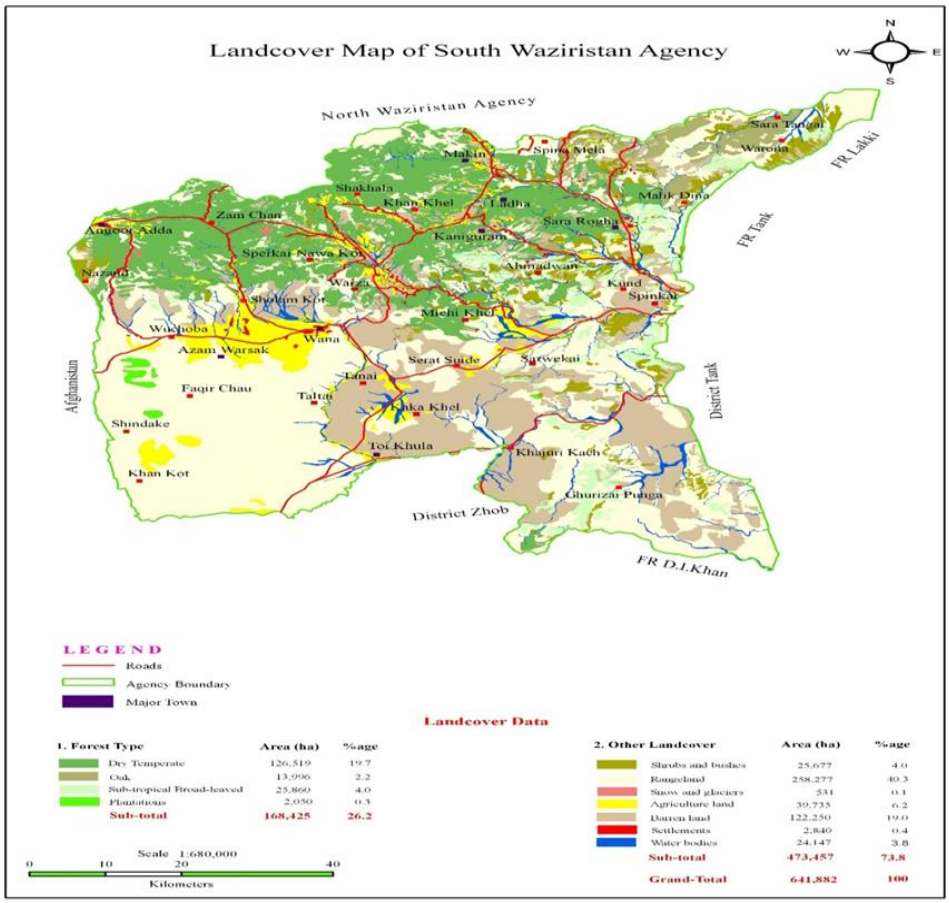


Figure 4: Map of the project site in Chitral District, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province

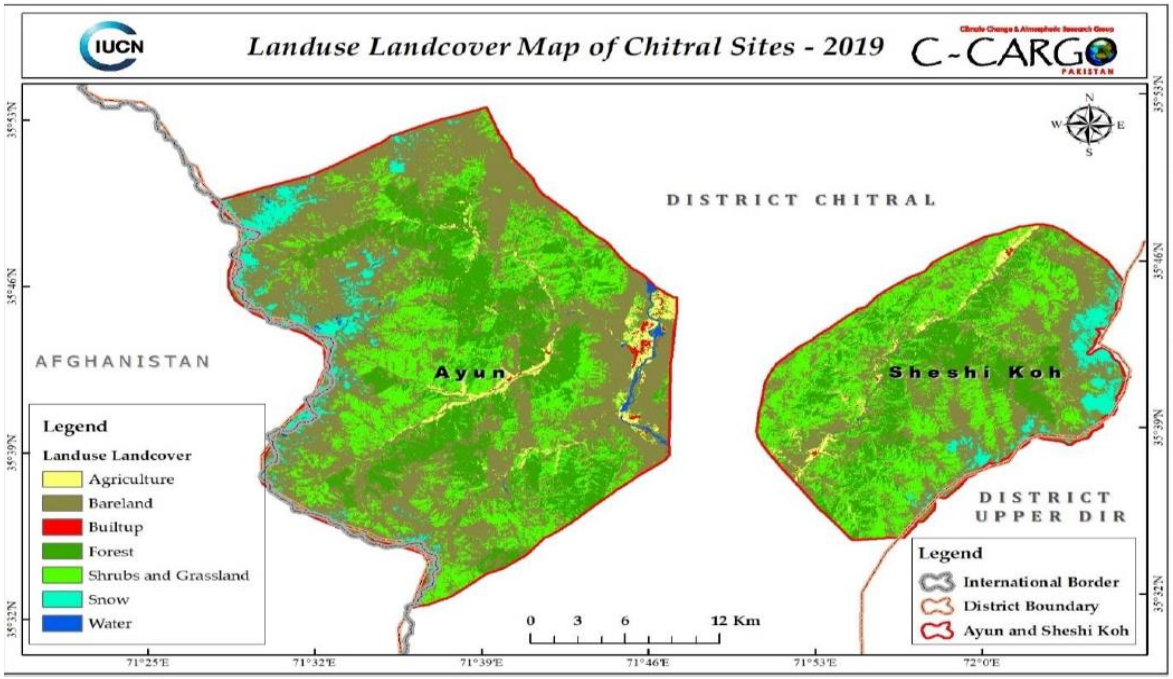
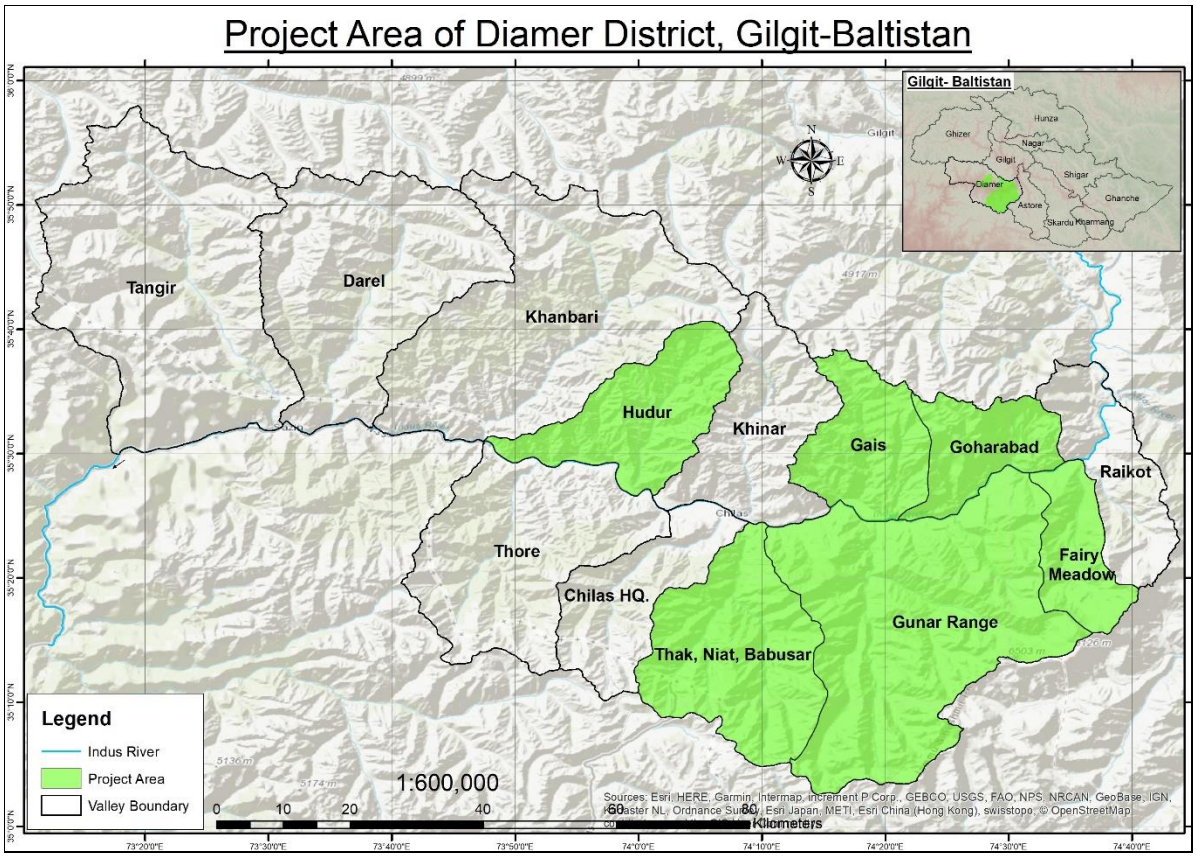


Figure 5: Map of the project site in Diamer District, Gilgit-Baltistan Province



Source of Figures 1-5: PMO

3 Theory of change

18 The TRI global coordination unit (overseen by the LTO) produced a theory of change (ToC) covering all child projects in TRI's project framework document. The ToC outlines (from the bottom of the page) the main barriers to effective FLR implementation and then, moving upwards, defines the achievement of outputs and two main achievements (immediate outcomes) expected from these outputs; namely improvements to the enabling environment for FLR and innovative FLR practices implemented at the landscape level. These outcomes are based on three main assumptions. First, governments remain committed to improving cross-sector cooperation, information exchange and inclusive approaches to FLR/SFM. Second, the right market conditions are in place to ensure economic activities are profitable and sustainable (bankable projects). Third, tools and best practices on FLR are adapted to local needs and contexts. Three longer-term achievements (final outcomes), based on the assumption that FLR is mainstreamed into national strategies to meet national and global goals and targets, foresee:

- The improvement of national/sub-national policy and regulatory frameworks that enable the implementation and scaling up of SLM, emission reductions and an increase in carbon stocks in the forestry sector);
- Integrated landscape management practices and restoration plans implemented and monitored by public, private or civil society organisations (integrating the needs of men and women);
- FLR attains a critical mass of support from public, private and non-state actors in relation to alternative practices and which leads to an increase in investment in FLR over the long-term.

19 The expected impact of these immediate and final outcomes over the long-term correlate with the achievement of TRI's environmental and development objectives (described in the section 2.1). Overall, the MTR team found the ToC provides a satisfactory presentation of the barriers, results chain and key assumptions needed to meet TRI's environmental and development objectives. However, the MTR identified two areas where further details would strengthen the ToC. First, the ToC focuses heavily on project outcomes in terms of capacity development and raised awareness on FLR/SFM, improving the enabling environment for FLR and the implementation of innovative FLR practices. The MTR found no information is provided on how far these developments translate into the achievement of key targets concerning, among others, the minimum amount of forest landscape to be restored under FLR/SFM through the child projects, the minimum estimated tCO2eq to be attained through such restoration, number of endangered species conserved and sustainably used, or the minimum number of households (preferably with sex aggregated percentage targets) who confirm improvements in their livelihoods and well-being in

order to determine the TRI's contribution to reducing poverty, enhancing resilience and facilitating greater access for women to FLR services.

20 Second, the ToC would benefit from labelling the causal linkages in terms of inputs, outputs, immediate and final outcomes and impact and include key risks in addition to the assumptions that have been provided. For example, each child project is required to assess risks (section 3.3 in the PD for the Chilgoza forests project) and project approval requires the application of the Environmental and Social Checklist (ESS). Furthermore, it is clear that in most cases the national child projects of TRI face similar risks to forests in Pakistan; namely fast population growth coupled with a dramatic rise in their vulnerability due to the growing effects of climate change (see also section 1 above).

21 Taking into account the above observations, the MTR team believes the ToC for the TRI can be updated without major changes. However, given the PD for the child project in Pakistan does not have its own ToC, the MTR team conducted a participatory exercise with the LTO, CTA and PM to produce the ToC for the Chilgoza Forests Project (see Appendix 9a). The ToC has been used to guide the MTR's analysis, conclusions and recommendations in the present report.

4 Key findings and MTR questions

4.1 Relevance

MTR question 1 – *Are the project outcomes congruent with current country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries?*

Finding 1. The project's strategic relevance is highly satisfactory. It builds on lessons and initiatives such as the Billion Tree Afforestation Project in KP Province and is closely aligned with current national and provincial forestry policies, strategies, plans and programmes. As a result, outcomes 2 and 3 of the child project are congruent with the current priority of the federal and provincial governments to implement the flagship TBTTP. This has been aided by the fact both the child project and the TBTTP were launched simultaneously in 2019, which has provided the FWD with a unique opportunity to use the child project as an important source of support to build capacity in areas where it has limited experience and which are a priority for local communities dependent on Chilgoza forest ecosystems. In particular, this concerns the development of CFPCCs through which FWD, local stakeholders and communities are encouraged to co-manage SFM/FLR in communal forested landscapes, where restoration is urgently needed. However, achieving Outcome 1 is no longer considered a priority by the government until lessons have been learnt from the project and the TBTTP to support informed decision-making on mainstreaming SFM/FLR into the policy, institutional, legal and regulatory framework. Meanwhile, although Outcome 4 remains highly relevant to supporting stakeholders at the sub-national, national and global levels of TRI, develop the "new knowledge" foreseen on SFM/FLR/NTFPs the M&E system (Output 4.1) relies heavily on monitoring of quantitative data provided in the project's results matrix, which is not linked to national indicators or includes any qualitative indicators to support analysis on the strengths and weaknesses of the SFM/FLR/NTFP process and promote transformational change at all levels. For this reason, the project's communications (outputs 4.2-4.4) are mainly tailored to providing information on output data linked to meeting SFM/FLR/NTFP targets that can be tracked by TRI's global child project to report on nine core indicators, rather than a communication strategy that advocates change based on lessons learnt, good practices and success stories.

Finding 2: The project's design is fully compliant with GEF6 priorities BD-4 (Programme 9), CCM-2 (Programme 7) and SFM3 (Programme 7) and FAO Strategic Objective 2 (Outcome 2.1). This has been consolidated through the latest CPF (2018-2022), which explicitly mentions support to the restoration and improvement of forest ecosystems. However, this compliance is not backed up by a corresponding requirement to establish a coordination mechanism between relevant donor-funded projects supporting the

forestry sector and the development of small enterprises linked to NTFPs, in particular GEF-funded projects and UN-REDD+ readiness initiatives managed by FAO/UNEP/UNDP.

4.1.1 Strategic relevance of the project's objectives and expected outcomes (components 1-4)

22 The project's objectives continue to be highly relevant for the federal and provincial governments concerned, in particular the country's current goal to increase the land area under forest cover to 6.2 per cent by 2030. There is also a growing recognition in government of the importance to address the drivers of forest degradation and deforestation, which is primarily due to illegal logging, over-grazing, firewood extraction and the conversion of forest lands into agriculture to accommodate the demands of a growing population.[9] Indeed, deforestation rates remain high and estimated to be around 27 000 ha/year[10] which is contributing to increasing the vulnerability of the country's population to the effects of soil degradation and erosion, biodiversity loss and climate variability and change. Indeed, deforestation and forest degradation are recognised as contributory factors that explain why Pakistan has been ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to weather and climatic events according to the Global Climate Risk Index.

23 The project's strategic relevance has also been enhanced by its strong alignment with the government current policies, strategies and plans that already allow for the application of SFM/FLR practices Pakistan's unique forests.[11] These include, among others:

- The National Environment Policy (2005), which provides a national framework for addressing the environmental issues such as deforestation and biodiversity loss;
- The National Sustainable Development Strategy (2012) which promotes vibrant and equitable economic growth without overexploitation of natural resources and based on the fair distribution of development dividends to all;[12]
- The National Climate Change Policy (2014-2030) and Climate Change Act (2017) aim at ensuring climate change is mainstreamed in the economically and socially vulnerable sectors of the economy and to steer Pakistan towards climate resilient development[13];

[9] World Bank: annual population growth in Pakistan was 2 per cent in 2020.

[10] FAO, 2009. Deforestation is mainly occurring in private and community-owned forests:

[11] These include chilgoza pine (found only in Pakistan and Afghanistan), juniper, deodar and oak forests.

[12] FAO, National Sustainable Development Strategy, Pakistan's pathway to a sustainable and resilient future.

[13] MoCC: National Climate Change Policy, September 2012

- Pakistan's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (iNDC) 2016, which is aligned with the abovementioned policies and strategies to support the achievement of goals and targets in the Paris Agreement (2015) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNCCC). The INDCs state greenhouse gas (GHG) emission estimates total 405 million tons CO2 equivalent (tCO2eq) and the government target is to lower it to 1 630 tCO2eq;
- The 12th Five-Year Development Plan (2019-2023), which includes as one of its priority areas addressing the challenges of climate change, supported by cleaner and greener economic growth;
- The National Forest Policy (2019), which has as one of its central goals, the protection and sustainable management of national forests and their ecosystems, establishing forest monitoring mechanism, tackling deforestation to build the resilience of local communities to climate change and increasing its protected areas from 13 to 15 per cent by 2023;
- The launch of the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTTP) in 2019 under the framework of the National Forest Policy and the country's commitment to the Bonn Challenge to reverse deforestation and degradation of forest ecosystems by 2030. At the same time, TBTTP aims at establishing sustainable livelihoods, in particular through the promotion of NTFPs, that create jobs for over 85 000 daily wagers. So far, one billion trees have been planted to June 2021.[14] The TBTTP builds on the above-mentioned Billion Tree Tsunami Afforestation Project (BTTAP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (KP), which successfully reforested 350 000 ha by 2018 through a combination of afforestation and natural regeneration;[15]
- The National Biodiversity Strategy Conservation and Action Plan 2015-2030 (NBSAP), which includes a specific strategy and actions to protect and conserve the country's forest ecosystems. Moreover, the three strategies in the NBSAP align with the child project's main outcomes (creating an enabling institutional environment; protecting and restoring ecosystem services and improving the knowledge, science and technological base on forest biodiversity, its values and functions);[16]
- The introduction of new provincial policies, plans, ordinances and prohibition orders, which includes the Chilgoza Management Plan in Sherani District (Balochistan), supported by WWF and the Chilgoza Forest Management plan in Chitral District, produced by the Wildlife Department.

24 The launch of the Federal government's flagship programme, TBTTP, in 2019 is particularly relevant to project 091. Indeed, the MoCC/FWD view the child project as highly supportive

[14] UNEP, 02 June 2021.

[15] World Economic Forum, 02 July 2018

[16] IUCN: Pakistan's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2030)

in implementing this programme, especially as the TBTTP incorporates SFM/FLR good practices applied during the preceding BTTAP in KP province (under component 2). These include the application of assisted natural regeneration (ANR), the creation of local tree nurseries and exploring income generation through activities such as controlled trophy hunting of selected forest animals to help sustain the SFM/FLR process. In addition, the project design has incorporated lessons learned and good practices from previous and on-going projects implemented by FAO. This includes the Integrated and collaborative watershed management project (2007-2013), where the creation of successful watershed management committees (included KP province) has inspired the establishment of the Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) under component 3 of project 091. Indeed, the CFPCCs are seen as an important way of bringing the FWD and local communities closer together to establish effective sustainable Chilgoza forest management partnerships.

25 The project also enjoys a high level of pertinence among the Chilgoza forest communities targeted by the project. Triangulation of the MTR team's finding in Balochistan and KP provinces, confirm the vast majority of interviewees and local stakeholders (includes FWD district staff) felt Outcomes 2 and 3 of project 091 have incorporated the results of the needs assessments conducted during the project's design phase. Moreover, the selection of the four intervention sites of the child project was highly appreciated, because they correspond to communally-own forest lands where local governance practices can be applied to the SFM/FLR activities. Indeed, this has helped develop a strong sense of ownership of the project, especially where local dependency on forest goods and services was found to be greatest to sustain livelihoods and general well-being. This has also been reinforced by the rise in prices for the Chilgoza pine nuts in recent years, especially since the start of the pandemic, which has increased awareness on the importance of conserving, restoring and managing the Chilgoza forests.

26 Nevertheless, the relevance of Outcome 1 is not a priority under the new government at present, because there is a strong belief among government stakeholders that the abovementioned policy and legal framework is adequately accommodative to SFM/FLR practices and that lessons have been learned from the SFM/FLR/NTFP activities before policies and legal frameworks are reviewed and reformed. In addition, the MTR found that this decision will also aid the FWD review how the SFM/FLR process is to be integrated into the wider provincial and district development plans, through which inter-sectoral policies, strategies and plans will need to be coordinated in order to achieve, among others, sustainable approaches to landscape management (output 1.2), and the development of the rural economy focusing on the sustainable development of NTFPs (outputs 2.4 and 2.5) and the development of education and training facilities (output 4.2). Indeed, on this latter point, the MTR mission identified the tribal communities in Sheen Gar (Balochistan) have a high level of illiteracy and water scarcity, which are issues outside

the scope of project 091 and which will require a more integrated approach to promoting SFM/FLR/NTFP.

27 Finally, the relevance of equipping stakeholders with new knowledge on SFM/FLR/NTFPs was found to be high, but the achievement of this outcome (Outcome 4) was found to be compromised by the use of the Results Matrix (RM) in the Prodoc, which has formed the basis for developing the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system (Output 4.1). The RM, which was produced in 2016 during the project design phase, was found to have gaps that have not been reviewed and addressed to date. For example, the RM does not provide a clear and coherent causal logic on how the project is to achieve its development objective, focuses only on quantitative indicators to measure targets set for outputs/outcomes and completely omits the assessment of risks that may affect the achievement of these targets and the establishment of resilient forest communities. This situation has been reinforced by the decision of TRI at the global child project level to monitor nine core indicators (for more on this see section 4.5.7). As such, there are no qualitative indicators to support learning on how, where and why the project is/is not achieving its outputs and outcomes to promote dialogue and advocacy on gaps and/or what needs to be done to bring about change to meet objectives. For example, there is no mention of indicators to measure the transformational change required at the MoCC/FWD and local community levels to uphold their new commitments to managing and funding the restoration process. Also, there are no indicators to determine whether the restoration of Chilgoza forest landscapes leads to an improvement in forest biodiversity (flora and fauna). Indeed, the MTR team found important indicators (linked to GEF priorities) are not being monitored. These include, the application of an ecological health index (EHI) to encourage learning and awareness on the importance of restoring forest biodiversity, rather than restoring tree biodiversity, and which through the promotion of activities such as rotational grazing can lead to major global environmental benefits. Indeed, there is no evidence of monitoring of such activities as a significant means to restoring soil biodiversity, which is crucial to sustaining forest biodiversity and enhancing resilience to climate change.

4.1.2. Alignment with GEF strategic priorities

28 The child project provides a highly satisfactory analysis of how it will support the delivery of global environment benefits (GEB) under GEF6. The Prodoc provides clear and concise information (section 1.5.2) on how the project's four main outcomes are linked to supporting the delivery of the following GEB under three focal areas of GEF6:

- Biological diversity (BD) Focal Area 4/Programme 9: *Strengthened Forest conservation and management reduces pressure to degrade or convert critical habitats*. To achieve this GEB;

- Climate Change Mitigation (CCM) Focal Area 2/Programme 4: *Stabilizing and reducing GHG emissions through conserving and enhancing forest carbon stocks through reduced forest degradation and assisted forest regeneration*
- Sustainable forest management (SFM) Focal Area 3/Programme 7: *Restored Forest ecosystems reverse the loss of ecosystem services within degraded forest landscapes.*

29 Moreover, in all three cases, the Prodoc provides information on how information relating to the project's achievements and lessons in meeting these GEB will be shared at the global level through project outcome 4, which will be facilitated through TRI's global child project. As a result, project 091 has established GEB indicators that both the government of Pakistan and GEF can use to support reporting and information exchange on TRI's contribution to meeting national and international goals and targets relating to biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, reduced GHG emissions and poverty reduction.

30 Triangulation of the above findings through a combination of interviews and the e-questionnaire provides clear evidence that the project's alignment with the above-mentioned focal areas has actually increased and are even more relevant to the current federal government since the launch of the TBTTP in 2019. Furthermore, interviews with the provincial secretaries of the FD who enjoy a high level of autonomy in setting policy on the implementation of the TBTTP, stated there is a high level of willingness and interest to implement the project as an important contribution to meeting TBTTP targets and objectives, which they consider are closely aligned with the three above-mentioned GEB.

4.1.3. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, FAO's Strategic Objectives and Country Programming Frameworks 2013-2017 and 2018-2022.

31 The Prodoc does not specifically align itself with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). However, the MTR team found it fully responds directly to SDG-15: *Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*, and in particular Target 15.1: *By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements;* and Target 15.5: *Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.* In addition, the project is supportive of SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, in particular targets relating to the strengthening of resilience and adaptive capacity of local communities to climate-related hazards and SDG 1 on reducing poverty, in particular Target 1.5 on building resilience of the poor and vulnerable to exposure to climate-related events.

32 The project's alignment with FAO's five Strategic Objectives (SO) under the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is clearly stated in the Prodoc (section 1.5.2). The project's main alignment is with SO-2: *Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable,* with specific reference given to supporting the achievement of Outcome 2.1: *Countries adopt practices to increase productivity sustainably while addressing climate change and environmental degradation in agriculture, forestry and fisheries*. In addition, the MTR found the project is also supportive of SO-5, which is dedicated to increasing resilience of food and agricultural systems.[17] Likewise, the Prodoc provides a highly satisfactory analysis of its alignment with the Country Planning Framework (CPF) for 2013-2017, in particular referring to the project's contribution to CPF2, which focuses on supporting Pakistan implement sustainable agriculture in support of its growth strategy.

33 Analysis of the most recent CPF for the period 2018-2023, confirms the project remains highly consistent with the CPF's new Priority Area 2: *Climate-smart resilient agriculture and sustainable ecosystems including forests, fisheries, livestock, rangeland and water management*. This has been triangulated through the interviews and e-questionnaire, where respondents confirmed the project's coherence with the CPF has been more closely linked through specific mention of the urgent need to address declining forested areas through more effective policy and monitoring mechanisms as well the need for the introduction of sustainable ecosystem restoration practices (which are linked to Outcomes 1 and 2 in the Prodoc).In addition, the MTR team identified the project's economic activities dedicated to developing NTFPs such as pine nuts (under Outcome 2), are aligned with the CPF's Priority Area 3, which stresses the importance of developing inclusive value chains.[18]

4.1.4 Complementarity with existing interventions being implemented by UN agencies, or funded by international donors and non-government organisations

34 The Prodoc has paid significant attention to incorporating lessons learned from previous projects funded by the government and international donors supporting one or more of the following themes: a) initiatives addressing SFM; b) initiatives in biodiversity conservation; c) initiatives in climate change mitigation and REDD+ Readiness; d) initiatives working with PES (Section 1.2.2). In addition, it has supported efforts to identify the barriers to sustainable management of Chilgoza forests through analysis of these lessons. Furthermore, the Prodoc has identified the linkages between project 091 and TRI, in particular the global child project (Annex 8 in the Prodoc). These linkages mainly focus on knowledge sharing, exchanges, developing knowledge products, the

[17] FAO website.

[18] FAO, CPF 2018-2022 (Priority Area 2 and 3, p.7-8).

aggregation of monitoring data to support the tracking of core indicators and support services from the global child project.

35 However, although these linkages are highly praised by the vast majority of the persons interviewed, the MTR found a major weakness concerns developing complementarity with key programmes and international initiatives outside of the TRI community (10 countries, plus the global child project). This is considered to be a major shortcoming in supporting the monitoring of key targets of project 091. For example, project 091 has been designed to align with Pakistan's UN-REDD Readiness Project (Prodoc, section 3.2), but there is no information on how this is to be achieved. As a result, it is not clearly defined how the project will work with REDD+ on ensuring the monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) activities will be developed to measure the project's target of reducing GHG emissions to the tune of 2.78 million tCO2eq through the SFM/FLR activities, or the consequential (indirect) lifetime GHG emissions avoided (7.95 m. tCO2eq) over the 20 years specified (Annex 7 of the Prodoc). Indeed, without REDD+ project stakeholders such as the FD are highly unlikely to develop the capacity to measure the carbon stock inventories established through the forest restoration process, or estimate the reduction in GHGs at the four project sites to 2030 and beyond.

36 This shortcoming has been triangulated through the interviews and e-questionnaire, where respondents agree more needs to be done to address this issue at three levels. First, at the DFWF level, there is general agreement on the need for more funding and capacity development to develop MRV, supported by more access to GIS technologies, before effective informed decision-making can be developed on meeting GHG emission reduction targets and developing carbon inventories in line with commitments under the Bonn Challenge and TBTTP. Nonetheless, the government at the federal and sub-national levels have made it clear that they want to see results on the ground first concerning SFM/FLR activities, as the main priority is to support the implementation of the TBTTP. In addition, restrictions on travel and meetings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic were also cited as another reason why synergies with REDD+ Readiness initiatives have not been fully explored to date.

37 Second, at the FAO/GEF/UNREDD level, the MTR team identified limited intra-institutional coordination of the project portfolio managed by FAOPK, where there is no mechanism in place to ensure synergies are developed between projects that are implementing activities of mutual interest, in particular other GEF-funded projects where the sharing of trainers, training materials, knowledge products, communication and networking could all be explored and developed. Likewise, almost no evidence was identified to indicate a similar mechanism is in place at the inter-institutional level between the three main institutions responsible for implementing REDD+ in Pakistan; namely a secretariat responsible for implementing joint decisions agreed between the

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNEP and FAO on implementing REDD+. For example, no coordination was evident concerning the following projects:

- UNDP: Sustainable Forest Management to Secure Multiple Benefits in Pakistan's High Conservation Areas (January 2016 to December 2021), executed by MoCC, and which includes activities in three provinces, one of which, KP Province corresponds with project 091;
- UNDP: Small Grants Programme in Pakistan, Phase VI (2016-2021); [19]
- UNEP: The Protected Area Initiative, which is supporting the expansion of protected areas to 15 per cent of Pakistan's land area by 2023 (includes Balochistan, KP and GB provinces) and aims to safeguard biodiversity as part of efforts to build resilience, advance carbon storage and maintain ecosystems services such water security and local food sources.[20]

38 Third, the lack of coordination with other key donors who have been engaged in, or are currently supporting forestry projects in Pakistan, in particular those funded by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and bilateral aid agencies. For example, areas identified where coordination and collaboration is of mutual interest include, among others:

- A Policy Note (2018) to identify ways to support the country's afforestation efforts;[21]
- REDD preparation Project (2021), which will have a budget of USD 7.8 m to strengthen capacity on monitoring deforestation and manage forest and land use change related to GHG emissions;[22]
- GiZ: Conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in KP (2012-2016), which facilitated GiZ's decision to support the Billion Tree Afforestation Programme BTAP) in KP between 2017 and 2021.
- UNDP: Sustainable Forest Management project, 2016-2021.

4.2 Effectiveness

MTR question 2 – *To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?*

[19] UNDP projects identified from the GEF Secretariat website, June 2021.

[20] UNEP, Pakistan ramps up protected areas. 28 May 2021

[21] World Bank website, Forests for Green Pakistan – Policy Note, 01 June 2018.

[22] World Bank projects database for Pakistan

***Finding 3**:* The project is making satisfactory progress on delivering key outputs under Outcomes 2 and 3, which conforms with the priorities of the provincial FWDs to achieve provincial targets in the forestry sector, which also support the achievement of provincial and federal government pledges, targets and goals to, among others, the Bonn Challenge 2030. Significant achievements to 30 June 2021 include, the creation of 14 CFPCCs against 8 planned, elaboration of four SFM plans covering 78 000 ha against the target of 48 000 ha and successful mapping, selection and implementation of 48 ANR sites covering 652.9 ha, equivalent to 81.6% of the planned target and which are being implemented with the support of the CFPCCs through which 20 forest communities, compared to ten planned, have been engaged in project activities at the grass-roots level (involving 10 500 households). Moreover, the ROAM methodology, supported by the application of the CEOF open-source software, is being tested for adoption by MoCC/FWD to support the identification of ANR sites under the TBTTP. Progress has been far less evident in delivering economic-related outputs (under Outcomes 2 and 3), because the small grants scheme has not started and the installation of mobile pine nut processing facilities in all four project sites are not being monitored effectively by the project to indicate how far pine nut processing rates and household income is increasing, although the MTR's own analysis in Chilas (Diamer District, GB), indicates pine nut processing and roasting rates have increased since 2020 and that this is producing a rise in household income from the pine nuts. However, the MTR found the project has not initiated any inclusive value chains for pine nuts so far to exploit the high prices paid for roasted pine nuts in major centres such as Lahore, relying instead on *ad hoc* arrangements with local traders.

Finding 4: Progress and achievements of planned outputs under outcomes 1 and 4 have progressed slower than planned and a review of some outputs, in particular 1.2, 1.3 and 4.1, is required to ensure they are more aligned to the current needs and priorities of the government and the local communities targeted in the four districts concerned. In the case of outputs 1.2 and 1.3 the findings under the previous section on relevance indicate they are not a priority until more feedback is received on the child project and the TBTTP. Furthermore, the promotion of PES to support FLR in general and the CFPCCs in particular, is not realistic when there is no institutional, legal and regulatory framework in place to apply. Moreover, the studies conducted so far indicate alternative funding options that play a similar role to PES offer a more viable and sustainable solution. Similarly, the M&E system (output 4.1) is enhancing learning on operational progress and meeting of output targets that support the global child project monitor and report on nine core indicators of TRI, but has two main weaknesses. First, the M&E data is not being used to show how far project 091 is contributing to national pledges, targets and goals of MoCC/FWD, or which are of interest to the CFPCCs, such as project contributions to meeting the provincial pledges under the Bonn Challenge 2030. Second, the lack of monitoring of qualitative indicators means there is limited scope to learn lessons and good practices linked to SFM/FLR/NTFP activities (Output 4.3) to develop an effective communication strategy designed to highlight gaps and advocate the changes needed to consolidate and sustain these activities to 2030 and beyond.

4.2.1 Achievement of project outputs and progress towards outcome 1 - National and provincial FLR policies and legal frameworks are strengthened and implemented with efforts aiming at maximizing the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by the Chilgoza forest ecosystems

39 The results matrix in Appendix 6 provides an up-date on progress to 30 June 2021. The MTR's main findings of its desk analysis, remote interviews and field mission under component 1 to date are summarised as follows:

40 *Output 1.1:* the application of the restoration opportunity assessment methodology (ROAM), under a LoA with IUCN has been successfully applied at all four project sites. A total of 44 staff from FWD were trained on the application of GIS mapping using Collect Earth Open Foris (CEOF) open-source software promoted by FAO, together with ground truthing involving project stakeholders, to identify and prioritise the ANR sites. This has facilitated the enclosure and establishment of a total of 44 ANR sites covering 2,153 ha of the 3 600 ha planned (see Table 1 below). Members of the FWD and CFPCCs interviewed confirmed they liked the participatory process the ROAM methodology has stimulated and there is evidence that the FWD is trialling the application of ROAM using CEOF software in the TBTTP, although challenges remain on applying adequate quality assurance to ensure data collection, management, analysis and use is reliable to guide informed decision-making both at the FWD and CFPCC levels;

41 *Output 1.2:* A gap analysis on the current policy, legal and regulatory framework for the forestry sector was conducted in 2020. It found there are no major barriers in the framework that prevent the FWD from adopting integrated landscape approaches such as FLR to support the conservation and management of Chilgoza and other forests. Indeed, there is a widely held view among FWD staff that reforms to this framework are not a federal, or provincial, government priority until the project has learnt lessons from the SFM/FLR activities planned under component 2. For this reason, the elaboration of a policy note has not been planned to date and is unlikely before 2022;

42 *Output 1.3:* training on ecosystem services valuation, incentives and payments for ecosystem services (PES) was provided to 36 FWD staff (included four female staff) by an international consultant on PES in November 2019. Particularly notable from the Back-to-Office Report (BTOR) was the training workshop's demonstration of how the ROAM methodology can be used to support the prioritisation of ecosystem services and restoration activities.[23] Furthermore, the same consultant provided training on the scoping

[23] Triangulation of the PES consultant's Back to Office Report, 23 November 2019,

of two potential PES schemes in Chitral District with the aim of showing how the income from PES schemes can sustain FLR activities (see also output 2.6 below). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the economic valuation study on Chilgoza forest eco-services was not realised until 2021. The results of the study did not identify any bankable pilot projects based on PES. More details on the study can be found under output 2.7 below.

43 In summary, the MTR found outputs 1.2 and 1.3 are not priorities for the project stakeholders and, for this reason, **the achievement of Outcome 1 is highly unlikely by April 2022**. Moreover, a large number of interviewees from both the remote interviews and field visits question the inclusion of Outcome 1 as it is presented in the Prodoc, because FLR can be applied without the need for urgent reforms to the existing policy, institutional, legal and regulatory framework on forestry. Indeed, the most pressing need at the moment is to identify and approve alternatives to PES that are applicable under this framework to support FLR and contribute to the funding of the CPFCCs so that they are not reliant only of self-funding sources. In addition, there is a need for effective cross-sector coordination at the provincial and district levels to ensure the drivers of forest degradation are addressed and acted upon at these levels. As a result, there is a need to update the results matrix in which **outputs 1.2 and 1.3 need to be reviewed and redefined in line with the priorities of the FWD and local communities within the context of the provincial and district development plans**. **This also signifies Outcome 1 should be redefined and agreed by the PSC** in the interests of meeting the project's objectives.

4.2.2. Achievement of project outputs and progress towards outcome 2 – Forest landscape restoration and sustainable forest management options, increasing livelihood based on goods and services provided by Chilgoza ecosystems, are demonstrated at district level in the four targeted provinces/regions

44 The main findings of the MTR team under this component to 30 June 2021 are summarised as follows:

45 *Output 2.1*: Reference to Table 1 confirms the development of SFM plans is on track to surpass planned targets. One SFM plan covering 26 000 ha of Chilgoza Forest in Sherani District, Balochistan Province, has been elaborated. This was achieved under the guidance of WWF to ensure multifunctional management approaches were incorporated into restoration, biodiversity conservation and sustainable production activities, such as agroforestry and the development of NTFPs to improve livelihoods. Overall, stakeholders in Sherani District are happy with the SFM plan and expect it to be endorsed by the FWD shortly. Similar plans are still being finalised at the other three sites through LoAs with the FWD for KP (covering Chitral and South Waziristan Districts) and GB (Diamer District) to stimulate ownership of the SFM planning process. Indicative figures collected on the total

forest projected for SFM planning at all three sites amounts to 56 000 ha (see Table 1). If endorsed by FWD and CFPCCs, the project will have secured a total of 78 000 ha under SFM, which is 48 000 ha more than the Prodoc (equivalent to 162% of the planned target).

Table 1 – Summary of SFM/FLR/ANR progress under Outcome 2 (30 June 2021)

Project sites District/Province	Plan SFM (ha) to 27/04/2022	Actual SFM (ha) to 30/06/2021*	Plan FLR/ANR (ha) to 27/04/2022	Actual FLR (ha) to 30/06/2021	Actual ANR (ha) to 30/06/2021
Sherani/ Balochistan	-	26,000	1,100	215.28	630
Chitral/ Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa	-	15,000	1,100	238.98	480
Diamer/ Gilgit-Baltistan	-	12,000	1,100	116.15	510
South Waziristan/ FATA	-	25,000	1,100	82.86	533
TOTAL	**30,000**	**78,000**	**4,400**	**653.27**	**2,153**
Estimated tCO2eq	**1,928,168**	**n/a**	**854,252**	**n/a**	**n/a**

Source: PM *Indicative areas (ha), except the SFM plan for Sherani District; n/a: not available

46 *Outputs 2.2 and 2.3:* A total of four assessments have been conducted on good practices of ecological restoration of Chilgoza ecosystems. These have been reviewed and best practices for community participation in SFM and FLR have been identified targeting a total of 20 forest communities against ten originally planned in the Prodoc. Although none of the SFM plans have started implementation, local community stakeholders interviewed said they are committed to applying good practices to establish sustainable agroforestry, such as mixed cropping of fruit trees, fodder crops and fast-growing tree species for firewood, the creation of enclosures, introduction of rotational grazing, the installation of fuel-efficient stoves and the application of improved tools to harvest Chilgoza pine cones. Indeed, where the latter have been piloted, local stakeholders confirmed they have become far more aware of the need to only extract mature cones, as opposed to traditional practices of removing cone branches, in order to safeguard stable levels of cone/pine nut production on an annual basis. However, the MTR found that innovative approaches such as rotational grazing are not linked to targeted research (Output 4.4) through which important knowledge could be generated on, among others, the role of such practices on restoring soil biodiversity and improving livestock health.

47 Table 1 confirms that 2 153 ha of ANR have been implemented at all four project sites (see examples in figures 1 and 2). This has been achieved through the establishment of a

total 48 ANR sites and involving the participation of over 17 500 households.[24] According to the interviews with the FWD and beneficiary communities, this achievement has been aided by LoAs with the FWD to coordinate the implementation of the project's ANR sites under the umbrella of the TBTTP. One of the most significant findings is that the ownership of the ANR sites has been strengthened through the ROAM methodology which relies on participatory ground truthing exercises to support the selection of priority ANR sites. This has been strengthened further through the application of the CFPCCs, which rely heavily on local practices and customs to control and protect the ANR sites. Interviews in the field found the following customary practices to be particularly effective in protecting the ANR sites at the community level:

- The appointment of Nigahbans (community forest guards) in the tribal communities in Chitral District, who are permitted to issue fines and penalties to local community members who commit infractions within the ANR sites;
- The application of Nagha by tribal leaders in South Waziristan. Nagha is a disciplinary system managed by the village council (Jirga), when local rules governing the Chilgoza forests and ANR sites are broken.
  The practice of Zhgaray, which is a local by-law controlling the amount of dead wood extraction permitted at different times of the year for fuel and which prohibits tree felling for commercial purposes.

Figures 6 & 7: Assisted natural regeneration of Chilgoza forests in Sherani District

Source: Rehana Khan, MTR team

48 *Outputs 2.4 and 2.5:* The project has made slow progress in establishing sustainable and biodiversity friendly production, harvesting and management plans for NTFPs other than pine nuts. For example, the baseline survey and market study to identify viable value chains in NTFPs such as medicinal plants, mushrooms, honey, walnut, mulberry, ecotourism, handicrafts and other non-farm economic activities, has only recently taken

[24] MTR Field mission identified 13 ANR sites in Sherani District (Balochistan), 12 ANR sites in South Waziristan (FATA), 12 in Chitral District (KP) and 11 in Diamer District (GB).

place and the launch of the small grants initiative to support up to 400 micro enterprise developments covering fodder, bee-keeping, home-based tree nurseries and other NTFPs is still in the procurement phase.

49 However, the project has funded the procurement and installation of four mobile pine nut processing and roasting facilities at all four project sites, with the aim of increasing household incomes through the local processing of pine nuts as one of the main incentives to strengthen local community commitments to conserving, restoring and managing the Chilgoza pine forest ecosystem. Images from one of the processing units in Sherani District can be found in Figures 8 and 9 below. This has been supported by the distribution of 300 cone harvesting tools to enable the cutting of mature cones only, thus reducing the indiscriminate cutting of branches hosting immature cones. In addition, 24 pine cone crushers have been supplied to extract pine nuts locally to reduce transport costs, and a seasonal study on the productive capacity of Chilgoza pine cones is on-going to determine pine nut production levels and demonstrate the economic advantages of correct pruning and harvesting of pine cones.

Figures 8 & 9: Pine nut processing plant in Sherani District, Balochistan Province

Source: Rehana Khan, MTR team

50 Monitoring of the effects of the processing units the on processing of pine nuts and changes in income is not evident in the M&E system and project reporting. However, the MTR's own analysis indicates they are improving livelihoods of beneficiaries. For example, interviews with local traders in Diamer District (GB) District confirmed processing of pine nuts has increased from 36 000 kg to 44 000 kg since 2020, of which 550 kg was also roasted. Moreover, the ability to process pine nuts (premium grade) has increased net profits to between PKR 250-300/kg (USD 1.5 to USD 1.89/kg), while net profits from roasted pine nuts ranges between PKR 490-600/kg (USD 3.00 to USD 3.80/kg). Meanwhile, there is little evidence of the development of inclusive value chains in Chilgoza pine nuts with end buyers in major markets such as Lahore, (Output 2.2). Instead, interviews indicate the sale of processed pine nuts relies mainly on *ad hoc* agreements with local traders. As a result, there is a high risk the local communities will remain dependent on traders, rather

develop inclusive value chains through which they can optimise their incomes from processed pine nuts, especially roasted nuts that fetch the highest prices.

51 The field interviews and document analysis also identified a number of issues that are likely to have a detrimental effect on local incomes in the event they are not adequately addressed and solutions found, agreed upon and applied. The main areas of concern identified by the MTR team are summarised as follows:

- A lack of household nurseries (including water tanks) to produce local varieties that are fully adapted to each project site (given each valley has its own natural and micro-climatic characteristics);
- Inadequate training on pest control/management. For example, interviewees in Balochistan stated problems of insect borers and, in 2020, locust swarms which caused major losses to cone production and tree saplings in some ANR sites;
- Trampling over reforested areas by livestock and people during the cone harvesting season due to poor signage and dedicated paths;
- Over harvesting of immature cones;
- Lack of local pine nut processing facilities has resulted in a high dependency on the sale of cones to local traders and middlemen who pay low prices;
- Traditional pine nut processing units cause high levels of wastage, in particular poor extraction and breakage of pine nuts during the cone crushing process.
- A lack of grading of pine nuts to meet the needs of export, national and local markets;
- The absence of brand names linked to denomination of origin to optimise the added value when processing pine nuts;
- The need to engage women and youths more actively in SFM, FLR and pine nut processing and sales (see figures 5 and 6).

Figures 10 & 11: Youth participation in the FLR process in Sherani District

Source: PM

52 *Output 2.6:* The economic valuation study on Chilgoza forest eco-services in the Birir, Bomburet and Shishi Koh of Lower Chitral (KP) concluded PES should not be piloted unless the following conditions are addressed and/or applied, among others:

- Local communities are fully sensitised, motivated and organised to manage the Chilgoza forest ecosystem;
- Local tree nurseries are established with local varieties of trees that generate an income, can be used for fodder, or which have medicinal properties such as Chilgoza, Juniper (juniperus excelsa) Oak, (quercus ilex), Deodar (cedrus deodara), Blue pine (pinus wallichiana), Wild almond (prunus fasciculata) and Russian olive (elaeagnus angustifolia);
- A market is identified and/or created for the sale of household nursery plants;
- The FWD provides a formal commitment to fund extension services and allocate resources from its current revenue streams to support PES schemes. This is particularly challenging due to the highly centralised nature of the FWD and competition for resources from other initiatives promoting SFM/FLR, in particular the Billion Tree Afforestation Programme in KP.
- New revenue streams are established to support SFM/FLR. The most feasible options identified are:
  - A conservation tax collected from vehicles that extract firewood, which could raise around PKR 40 000 (USD 250) per annum;
  - A conservation levy on tourists who visit the scenic beauty at Kalash valley, which could raise an estimated yearly income of around PKR 2.7 million (USD 17 000), of which at least 20 per cent should be channelled to sustaining the project's SFM and FLR sites;
  - Charging a tariff of PKR 10 (USD 0.6) on each bag of pine cones and walnut kernels traders take out of Chitral District for commercial purposes. It is estimated such a tariff would generate an income of approximately PKR 650 000 (USD 4 075) per annum.

53 At present no PES schemes have been formally identified, selected and approved, although the MTR team understands the project is still targeting at least one bankable PES scheme to be piloted in the second half of 2021. Nonetheless, this calls into question whether project 091 will have sufficient time to supervise its design, adoption and implementation. Moreover, several interviewees raised concerns that there has not been much progress on removing the barriers to implementing effective PES schemes that were identified in the Prodoc back in 2016 (p. 24-25). For example, because there is no legal and regulatory framework in place to support its implementation there is consensus that income generating initiatives to support SFM/FLR should be identified in accordance with existing laws and regulations. Indeed, all of the taxes and levies proposed in the economic valuation study mentioned above are, in effect, alternative proposals to PES that are applicable under the current policy and legal framework.

54 *Output 2.7:* Enhanced carbon sequestration in targeted Chilgoza forest ecosystems cannot be calculated at the ANR sites until they have been fully established, which means no data on carbon capture is likely before the project ends in April 2021. However, a total area of 652.9 ha (81.6%) of the 800 ha of agroforestry targeted in the Prodoc has been achieved to 30 June 2021. Agroforestry practices have mainly centred on the inclusion of fruit trees, fast-growing trees and fodder trees and crops. However, there were complaints that the supply of fruit trees is not demand-driven, given there appears to have been a preference to produce higher value fruit trees, such as walnuts, pear and cherry, rather than the apple and peach trees provided. Similarly, some interviewees stated more needs to be done to protect local varieties of tree crops, such as wild almond, as well as support the development of the under-forest economy through the introduction of chickens, ruminant animals and bee-keeping.

55 In summary, the MTR found **there is a lot of support among the project's stakeholders and end beneficiaries to achieve Outcome 2** and that this has been aided by through LoAs, which has facilitated significant advances in delivering expected outputs that also support the implementation of the TBTTP. Overall, the MTR team's findings indicate **the project is on track to achieving Outcome 2, but more time is needed to address gaps**, in particular the need for revenue streams to continue and upscale the FLR process and the development of inclusive value chains (promoting certified NTFPs from Chilgoza forests) through which a percentage of the profits could also be channelled back to community funds to support the conservation, restoration and good governance of SFM/FLR/NTFP activities. Other gaps, include supporting the diversification of the rural economy, local retail of forest management equipment, such as the toolkits which are not available for purchase in the provinces concerned and joint ventures with UNDP to promote the effective application of MRV under the REDD+ Readiness initiative (2021) to facilitate the measurement of carbon sequestration targets established in the Prodoc and which support the application of Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

4.2.3 Achievement of project outputs and progress towards project outcome 3 - Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) operational, with strengthened capacities of provincial, district and local stakeholders to implement participatory sustainable forest management

88. The main findings of the MTR team on the activities realised so far under component 3, are summarised as follows:

89. *Output 3.1:* A total of fourteen Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) have been established at the sub-district level at all four project sites (4 in Sherani District, 3 in South Waziristan, 4 in Chitral District, and 3 in Diamer District), against eight originally planned in the RM. Field visits to Sherani and Chitral Districts confirmed

the CFPCCs have produced some positive immediate outcomes. First, they have helped establish an important communication channel between the local community, local authorities and project staff, which has facilitated dialogue and decision-making on the planning and implementation of key activities, in particular concerning the above-mentioned mapping, prioritisation, installation and management of the ANR sites (outputs 1.1 and 2.3). The improvement in communications between project stakeholders and end beneficiaries has contributed to two important developments. First, at the community level the CFPCCs appear to be catalysing awareness raising on the linkages between protecting, conserving and restoring the Chilgoza forest ecosystems and improving livelihoods and well-being.[25] Second, at the institutional level the CFPCCs appear to be enhancing trust within the local community on working with the FWD and local stakeholders participating in the committees (such as district agricultural and enterprise development staff).

90. However, a large number of the members of the CFPCCs who were interviewed, confirmed there is a need for more organisational training, before the CFPCC are in a position to support the replication of such committees in neighbouring areas as foreseen in the Prodoc. Areas where interviewees stated a need for more training include, among others: planning and mapping, monitoring the effectiveness of the SFM/FLR process, understanding and developing inclusive value chains, fund raising and coordination with other projects and initiatives. This latter point appears to be highly pertinent in provinces such as KP, where the BTAP has support from donors such as GiZ, but which is not associated with the work of the CFPCC in Sherani District.[26]

91. *Output 3.2*: Capacity building has focused mainly at the provincial level of the FWD, where the Chief Conservator of forests and his staff have received capacity building through eight cross-sectoral workshops covering three main themes. First, workshops on the application of the ROAM methodology to support the identification of the ANR sites (Output 1.1), which were contracted out to IUCN. Second, on the formulation of SFM plans, in particular the one for Sherani District, which was prepared with the support of WWF. Third, on the feasibility study concerning the development of NTFPs (focusing on the processing of pine nuts). According to the interviews realised, the quality of the training provided on the ROAM methodology and on SFM planning appears to have been highly satisfactory, because it had a clear purpose; namely the production of maps to identify priority ANR sites and production of the SFM plans. In both cases, participants appear to have found the learning-by-doing approach to be an effective approach to capacity building. Nonetheless, the LoA did not include adequate technical follow-up by IUCN

[25] This is particularly important for the tribal communities in South Waziristan and Chitral given their long and historic attachment to their communal lands.

[26] Based on findings in the report by Shabir Hussain: Valuation of ecosystems of Birr, Bomburet and Shishi Koh valleys, Chitral. 2021, section 6, p. 41.

following the ROAM trainings. Moreover, the FWD has not been supported with the procurement of GIS technologies and equipment where the Chief Conservators are unable to perform effective MRV of key activities such as changes in forest cover, consolidation of the ANR sites, assessing the quality of forest biodiversity and determining carbon inventories and GHG emissions reduction. This indicates the LoA and contracting of IUCN overlooked the importance of post training follow-up activities to identify gaps in both capacity building and technology, although the adoption of CEOF software by the FWD is likely to remove the problem of GIS software licence lock-ins that currently make it too costly to expand its use at the local level.

92. In addition to the above capacity building, the global child project has provided training on the monitoring of the nine core indicators selected by the TRI community to inform the GEF Secretariat on TRI's progress in meeting its targets as well as training through other means. These include three TRI conferences involving all participating countries, funding of exchanges, carrying out of regional workshops on topics such as PES and promoted webinars, e-learning and, in May 2020, launched The Restoration Factory to promote FLR globally. However, the MTR found only limited evidence to indicate the MoCC, or the FWD in the provinces are tracking the nine core indicators and instead rely on the PM to collect the data. The main reasons for this appear to be insufficient coordination between the global child project, project 091 and MoCC on aligning the core indicators to the needs of the GoPK and shortcomings at the global and national levels on controlling data collection, management, analysis and use. This partly explains why the MTR was unable to retrieve any aggregated data from the global child project on these indicators and why data provided in the core indicators on project 091 did not match the data collected in the field, or from the PM. More on this can be found in section 4.5.7.

93. *Output 3.3:* Capacity development on SFM practices was found to be highly satisfactory among the local stakeholders interviewed at the district level. According to the latest figures from the PM a total of seven of the ten capacity building trainings planned have been conducted. Trainings that had end products to deliver, were found to have been the most effective in delivering changes of attitude and greater commitments to supporting the FLR process. For example, local stakeholders reported their satisfaction in participating in the selection of the ANR sites following the ROAM exercises conducted in the field, where the majority of 360 men and 31 women participants were subsequently engaged in the afforestation activities. This has been aided by on-going training activities provided by the FWD concerning the development of local tree nurseries and training on tree planting techniques linked to the agroforestry and ANR activities. Likewise, local stakeholders and end beneficiaries participating in the application of the Chilgoza toolkits (162 men and 3 women) confirmed they were both applying and promoting the importance of applying new cone harvesting practices and tree care in their communities. Furthermore, changes in local attitudes appear to be most evident in Chitral District, where there is a growing need to recover lost income from poor harvesting and in Sherani District

where interviewees confirmed youths have been included in the training. However, training activities that did not have end products, in particular on PES, appear to have had less impact to date on stimulating institutional transformation, or changes of attitude on the funding of SFM/FLR activities promoted by the project.

94. In summary, the main activities under component 3 are generally progressing in a satisfactory manner, especially taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restricted group activities and trainings for several months in 2020-2021. Overall, physical progress of planned outputs, including trainings, is estimated to be around 58 per cent, which provides a good indication that **the project is on track to achieving Outcome 3, but more time is required to secure the transformational changes needed before local stakeholders and the FWD are in a position to adopt and promote the CFPCCs as the main agents of conservation, restoration and management of the Chilgoza forest ecosystem under the TBTTP**.

4.2.4 Achievement of project outputs and progress towards project outcome 4 - Stakeholders equipped with new knowledge related to forest and landscape restoration of Chilgoza forest ecosystems with strengthened private and public engagement through sharing of best practices, lessons and exchanges with both the other TRI national and the global projects

95. The main findings identified under component 4 are:

96. *Output 4.1:* Progress in establishing an effective M&E framework to support the development of "new knowledge" on SFM/FLR/NTFPs has been mixed. The first of the two main activities under this output, concerns the establishment of a participatory GIS-based M&E system. Overall, the MTR found the FWD has successfully developed the capacity needed to identify baseline data on the project sites through the application of Collect Earth Open Foris (CEOF) software. Indeed, this approach has been well received at all levels of government, because the CEOF is an open-source data collection software tool that allows access to the latest crowdsourced satellite imagery available together with the GIS tools needed to identify ANR sites and track FLR data without the abovementioned problems of lock-ins associated with licensed GIS software. Moreover, the participation of the CFPCCs in identifying the ANR sites has ensured they will act as validators of both the quantity and quality of the restoration process (through guided ground-truthing exercises). This approach has been instrumental in encouraging the MoCC to pilot the CEOF to support the identification of baseline data to support monitoring of the TBTTP.

97. However, the MTR team understands the main shortcoming is what the baseline data should be based upon. For example, the CEOF provides access to past and present satellite imagery, which should facilitate a "then and now situation" of the Chilgoza forests, which once corroborated by the CFPCCs, senior members of the community and tribal elders,

could be used to develop the long-term vision and mission of the restoration process, rather than the current objective of meeting child project and TBTTP tree targets that are exclusively linked to priority sites. A second shortcoming, concerns the reliability of the forest data collected, validated and managed at the local level to support the application of the GIS-based M&E system established in the participating Districts. In particular, the MTR team found more effective quality control may be needed to ensure the M&E system becomes an effective tool to guide informed decision-making on SFM/FLR processes at all levels (including the CFPCC level).

98. The other main activity under output 4.1 has been the development of the project's internal M&E system to support reporting on project operations and track nine core indicators on TRI, which are managed by the global child project. Although the M&E plan has been prepared, which includes gathering data from the above GIS-based M&E system to support the tracking of some of the core indicators (in particular core indicators 2 and 3) the purpose of this M&E system is primarily to facilitate data flow to the TRI's monitoring, evaluation and learning system (MEL), through which the global child project can promote knowledge exchange, exchanges, workshops for the benefit of the TRI community. However, as previously stated, the M&E system is only tracking quantitative targets established in the RM and supporting the global child project report on nine core indicators. As a result, it is not possible for the MTR team assess the project's contribution to achieving these targets in relation to the partner country's own pledges, targets and goals relating to forest restoration in relation to the Bonn Challenge pledges, halting biodiversity and habitat loss, carbon storage/reduction of GHG emissions, or poverty reduction. This is surprising given the project was identified to support national pledges to the Bonn Challenge and on delivering GEBs, taking into account the selection of the project sites was also designed to support the conservation of some of the last remaining habitats of highly endangered species such as the Snow Leopard (Chitral District) and Balochistan Black Bear (Sherani District). More information on the shortcomings of the M&E system are assessed in section 4.5.7.

99. *Outputs 4.2 and 4.4:* the MTR found most of the activities linked to communication, awareness raising and knowledge management at the local, provincial, national and TRI levels have centred on publications and the promotion of three TRI global events, regional workshops, webinars, an e-learning course on FLR and the launch of The Restoration Factory in May 2021. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all publications and communications have been disseminated through the project's website (hosted on FAO's platform) or through internet technologies to facilitate remote learning. For example, a total of seven press releases have been disseminated online to date, covering themes such as success stories and lessons from the child projects. As a result, the publications are mainly consumed by development practitioners within the TRI community, especially as only some of them are available in Urdu. The communications produced so far provide informative information on the project's main activities and

contributions to capacity building, but there is scant information on project results to inform the reader about the project and/or TRI's contributions to bringing about transformational change that the MTR team considers is crucial to meeting national and international targets and goals on forests. For example, the decision of the MoCC to test the application of the CEOF to support monitoring of the TBTTP, is a strong indication of the transformational change needed to achieve the impact described in the ToC proposed in Appendix 9. Similarly, the toolkits and fuel-efficient stoves have been covered by provincial television channels and newspapers to inform the public on the need to apply more effective harvesting of pine cones and to use less firewood. However, there is little, or no information on how far TRI is influencing the take-up the CEOF software in other countries, or whether the purchase of toolkits and stoves is high or low to help determine whether the local communities are spending more on these technologies in the interests of SFM, or whether price dictates preferences to continue using traditional tools and methods. Likewise, it is not clear whether project activities such as the toolkits and stoves are filtering into the education and political systems as another means to facilitating transformational change at both the household and policy levels (including subsidies and/or incentives to encourage such change).

100. At the local level, the MTR team did not identify the application of innovative communication products to promote awareness on SFM/FLR/NTFPs among the local communities. For example, there appears to have been no employment of civil society organisations, theatre actors or dancing groups such as the "Attan" to provide adapted shows incorporating SFM/FLR activities. Similarly, it appears local farmers and youths have not been employed to participate in flora, or fauna counts to determine whether there is a critical mass of flora and fauna to support natural seed distribution within the Chilgoza forest ecosystem. It is also unclear whether data is being collected on the effectiveness of forest governance, such as the number of illegal resource-use incidents recorded in the four sites (relating to illegal logging, grazing, firewood extraction, fires, etc.), or through locally administered Knowledge, Attitude and Practice surveys (KAP) to stimulate community dialogue and effective communication on SFM/FLR.

101. *Output 4.3:* In addition to the knowledge products produced under outputs 4.2 and 4.4, the TRI's global child project has supported South-South exchanges of stakeholders from the national child projects to participate in knowledge sharing events on lessons learnt on TRI. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic only three events have taken place to date. The first was the TRI inception workshop, held in Kenya (February 2019), the second was a regional workshop on PES in Beijing (September 2019) and the third, was a global event on TRI held in FAO's headquarters in Rome (October 2019). These events have contributed to establishing networking of the TRI community of nations, aided by the formal establishment of the global information sharing platform in 2019 and informal networking through social media applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook, which has facilitated rapid communications between colleagues on TRI-related topics. In addition, the TRI's

Annual Review for 2019 provides the TRI community and the general public with information on the child projects operating in each country, as well as providing case studies and highlighting success stories.

102. In summary, the MTR found the project is **equipping stakeholders with new knowledge on methods, tools and co-management approaches (CFPCCs) to apply SFM/FLR and on processing of pine nuts, but the project's M&E system and communication strategy are not geared to identifying lessons learned and good practices following their application to support policy dialogue, advocate change and establish inclusive value chains**. Under these circumstances, more time and adjustments to the M&E system and communication strategy are required to bring about the transformational change needed to consolidate and expand SFM/FLR/NTFPs based on the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of the goods and services provided by Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

4.2.5 Achievement of objectives

103. The project has a total of four objectives (environmental and development objectives at the TRI and project level), which is confusing and the monitoring of TRI objectives is beyond the scope of the child projects. In general terms the MTR found sufficient evidence to confirm the project is contributing to the achievement of TRI's environmental objective, although it is unable to determine how far it is delivering biodiversity conservation because the project is not monitoring biological diversity in the Chilgoza forests. In addition, there is insufficient information available on how far the SFM/FLR process has been adapted to combat the effects of climate change. For example, the MTR found the majority of Chilgoza seedlings are being produced in other provinces and delivered to the FWD in accordance with the LoAs. As a result, the seedlings are unlikely to have been produced from locally sourced seeds, which means they may not be the most resilient varieties for the ANR sites. Similarly, there is little information on the collection of seeds of other rare tree and non-tree species in the Chilgoza forests to enhance their resilience to droughts, fires, pests, etc. Indeed, the monitoring system does not disaggregate the number of trees being produced by species or clarify if non-tree species are being promoted in the ANR sites and strategic areas to protect water resources and soils.

104. Also significant is, the MTR's inability to report on the project's contribution to the restoration of critical landscapes as a percentage of provincial and national restoration targets, some of which are directly linked to international commitments which, as already mentioned in this report, are linked to pledges to the Bonn Challenge 2030. Finally, the SFM/FLR/NTFP activities were found to be making a positive contribution to reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods among the targeted communities (TRI development objective), although there is insufficient data available on the direct and

indirect number of men and women who have improved their economic income and well-being from these activities.

105. Turning to the child project's specific environmental and development objectives in Pakistan, the MTR found **the project is developing the capacity of the project's main stakeholders and beneficiary communities to restore, protect and sustainably manage the Chilgoza forest ecosystems selected and that this capacity has started to deliver benefits in terms of improving the livelihoods of the local communities who depend on their goods and services.** However, to fully meet these objectives more time is required, adjustments are needed to the abovementioned outputs and Outcome 1 and follow-up activities are required to attend to gaps, guide decision-making, promote policy dialogue and improve reporting on lessons and good practices that will be instrumental in achieving the outcomes and impact foreseen in the ToC (Appendix 9).

4.3 Efficiency

MTR question 3 – *To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively?*

Finding 5*:* Overall physical progress stands at around 50 per cent, while financial progress stands at just 21.7 per cent of GEF funds to 30 June 2021, but rises to 43.1 per cent when factoring in pending expenditure commitments. Meanwhile, co-finance contributions in cash and in-kind is low (9.6%). As a result, the project's capacity to convert its resources into expected outputs and outcomes has been slower than planned, taking into account 79 per cent of the project's four-year duration has been realised to date. However, project efficiency is moderately satisfactory, because it is delivering important outputs under components 2 and 3 in spite of major implementation challenges. These include over 12 months delay in setting up the PSC, over six months of delayed operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to cover a very large intervention area, which places major demands on the limited financial and technical resources available. However, this situation has to some extent been mitigated by delegating project activities to FWD via Letters of Agreement (LoA), which has also facilitated dialogue and the development of trust with local stakeholders and end beneficiaries concerning the establishment of CFPCCs to co-manage SFM/FLR activities. Nevertheless, the cost-effectiveness of the studies and trainings on PES was less evident, given no bankable pilot project has been identified to date and shortcomings in the M&E system have restricted the efficiency of the learning process, which currently relies too much on *ad hoc* arrangements.

Finding 6*:* The project's execution has improved significantly since the PSC was finally established in May 2019. This has been aided by the decision to include the FWD's Provincial Secretaries and Chief Conservators from each participating province in the PSC. In particular these officials have the authority to execute PSC decisions in the respective project sites and engage in policy dialogue. Similarly, the decision to implement the project through DEX, has also proved to be cost-effective, thanks to the employment of a highly qualified project manager who has in-depth work experience with the MoCC/FWD and the nomination of full-time project coordinators to support project implementation in each of the project sites. The global child project has also contributed to project efficiency by funding conferences and online events promoting latest methods and tools on FLR, such as the open source Collect Earth Open Foris software, which has supported the identification and mapping of ANR sites at low cost compared to licensed software.

4.3.1 Timeliness of activities

106. The project's capacity to convert its resources into outputs has been slower than planned and this has resulted in physical progress under all components to be less than expected at this point in time when almost 38 of the 48 months (79%) of the project's duration

have been completed. According to progress reports, interviews and field analysis, overall **physical progress against planned outputs is estimated to be around 50 per cent to 30 June 2021**. This situation is primarily due to delays in operations, rather than technical, or financial issues. First, delays in the formation of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) by over 12 months between the start date and May 2019, caused the late approval of the first work plan and budget. As a result, the first disbursement of GEF funds (excluding an advance in September 2018) did not arrive until late May 2019. Second, the procurement of equipment for the pine nut processing plants and the entity to manage the small grants scheme have taken longer than planned. This has not been aided by the need to apply FAO's lengthy tendering procedures. Third, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused delays of at least six months in operations, in particular affecting staff mobility and causing the postponement of meetings and training events, among others.

107. The calculation of estimated overall physical progress is based on two areas of analysis. First, a review of the PM's latest estimates of project implementation status, which have been incorporated into the results matrix provided in Appendix 6, in advance of the next PIR to be finalised shortly (01 July 2020 to 30 June 2021). Second, by cross-checking of these estimates against feedback collected in the field and through the remote interviews. The MTR's breakdown of physical progress by component to 30 June 2021 is summarised as follows:

- **Component 1: 35 per cent** of planned outputs completed, the same as the estimate provided by the PM. This is based on the fact all respondents have confirmed outputs 1.2 and 1.3 have progressed slower than planned, because they are not a priority until planned activities on the ground have been completed first and lessons have been learned;
- **Component 2: 50 per cent** of planned activities have been completed, which tallies with 50 per cent estimated by the PM. Reference to Table 1 above shows satisfactory progress in achieving key outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. For example, 77 per cent (26 000 ha) of the targeted area in the Prodoc has a SFM plan incorporating good practices and a further three SFM plans are under formulation that will cover a land area well beyond the target planned (30 000 ha). Meanwhile, 64 per cent of the restoration activities have been completed. However, as none of the SFM plans have been approved and in operation and 36 per cent of the ANR sites still need to be restored, the project is around 57 per cent of the way to achieving its end targets. However, when factoring in the other outputs under component 2 have to complete a lot of activities to reach their targets, which in the case of outputs 2.6 (bankable PES pilot schemes) and 2.7 (carbon monitoring) cannot be completed until other outputs are closer to completion, overall physical progress for component 2 is estimated to be no more than 50 per cent completed;
- **Component 3: 65 per cent** of planned outputs completed, compared to 75 per cent estimated by the PM. The project has made highly satisfactory progress in

creating a far larger number of CFPCCs than planned (175 per cent), which are covering more than 17 500 households from 20 village communities against 50 000 households from ten villages. Capacity building of provincial FWD staff is 80 per cent completed in all four provinces/regions and 70 per cent of planned trainings at the local level have been completed. However, given the MTR team has identified the need for follow-up activities to identify gaps in the training programmes, the MTR estimates overall physical progress is actually around two thirds completed;

- **Component 4: 50 per cent** of planned outputs have been completed, compared to 65 per cent estimated by the PM. The project has installed all four monitoring systems in each of the four participating provinces/regions, 70 per cent of the communication products have been produced and disseminated and 75 per cent of the TRI events planned have taken place. In addition, 30 per cent of the researched-based knowledge products have been completed on PES, a survey on pine nut production and on ANR. Nonetheless, the MTR found the M&E systems need strengthening and knowledge products should be targeting different audiences, based on a communication strategy, that has stronger results focus on national and international goals and targets through which transformational change is stimulated at all levels. As a result, the project has completed just over half of its planned outputs so far.

108. Another factor that has not aided project implementation, concerns the lack of permanent staff to run the project management office. In particular, the PM has no administrative assistant to manage secretarial duties, such as organising meetings, events, trainings, logistics, recruitment of consultants and so forth. This has increased the work transactions of the PM considerably, which the MTR witnessed first-hand during the planning of its remote interviews, field mission and requests for data and information. Although this does not appear to have caused any major delays, it does reduce the time the PM has to focus on achieving results. Also significant is the CTA and LTO are based in China and Italy respectively. Due to the pandemic neither have been able to conduct visits to Pakistan since 2020. However, to mitigate this situation both maintain regular contact via video conferencing with each other and with the PM each month in order to provide guidance and respond to on-demand requests for support. For example, they have responded to the need for support to procure the services needed to operate the small-grants scheme and facilitated the PM to present a paper on the CFPCCs in the World Forestry Congress to be held in Korea in 2022. In addition, they have supported the application of The Restoration Factory in Pakistan in June 2021, which is in the process of supporting volunteers identify bankable restoration projects in Pakistan. Nonetheless, the fact the CTA and LTO do not reside in the country, means there is less scope conduct regular field visits and oversee the promotion of synergies at the global, national and sub-national levels, which are needed to enhance efficiency and stimulate dialogue on transformational change.

4.3.2 Cost-effectiveness of the project

109. The **project is achieving a satisfactory level of cost-effectiveness**. An assessment of overall physical progress in relation to financial progress (see Table 2 below), shows it has cost USD 863,003 (21.7%) of GEF funds to achieve a physical advance of 44 per cent. This suggests cost-effectiveness in meeting outputs and outcomes is highly satisfactory. However, if committed expenditure that has not yet been paid is factored in, total GEF expenditure rises to USD 1,714,565 (43.1%), which still confirms satisfactory cost-effectiveness, even if physical progress does not change.

110. This a significant achievement for a project that has such as large intervention area covering three provinces and one federally administered territorial area (FATA region) with project sites located in remote highly mountainous districts where access is difficult and which frequently stretches project management resources that are limited to one part-time coordinator in each province/region. A number of contributory factors help explain why the project is achieving satisfactory levels of cost-efficiency. These are summarised as follows:

- The project implementation mechanism has provided a highly satisfactory level of support and guidance to the PM by involving the MoCC in the PSC (includes the GEF Focal Point for Pakistan) together with the Provincial/Regional Secretaries of FWD and their Chief Conservators, who enjoy considerable decision-making powers thanks to the highly autonomous nature of the provincial governments in Pakistan;
- The incorporation of senior staff from MoCC and FWD in the PSC has facilitated the project's alignment with the TBTTP activities, which has avoided overlaps or unnecessary duplication of activities.
- The application of LoAs has enabled the project to achieve value for money by delegating SFM/FLR responsibilities to the FWD, which has also facilitated synergies with the TBTTP;
- The creation of the CFPCCs has ensured there is a cost-effective "local validation system" in place for the SFM/FLR activities, which also enhances the ownership of these activities in the interests of securing their upkeep and maintenance;
- The application of open-source software has proved to be a highly cost-effective and cost-efficient method to reduce the costs associated with the mapping and GIS activities needed to identify, monitor;
- The project manager is able to delegate the project operations in the field to four permanently employed project coordinators in each project site, supported by two women enterprise development facilitators (in Sherani and South Waziristan).
- The PM has recourse to FAO-funded staff at no cost to the project. For example, the CTA and BH are funded by FAO's own resources;

- The global child project provides opportunities to exchange information, share knowledge products and provide funding for exchanges, research and so forth that is not accessible through the project.

111. Nevertheless, the MTR identified three areas where cost-effectiveness has been compromised. First, the above-mentioned delays of over 12 months before starting up project activities caused a significant increase in transaction costs that could not deliver any results, barring preparatory activities. Second, the PM team and PSC members are exclusively linked to the forestry sector (MoCC/FWD), even though there are important activities dedicated to developing economic activities linked to micro and small enterprise development. Due to the absence of synergies with government (and non-government) institutions that are specialised in small enterprise development, there is inadequate access to information and/or support concerning market data, studies, research, on-going trainings, visits to trade fairs and so forth. Moreover, this situation leaves a high risk of duplication of public and/or private resources that are supporting the development of NTFPs where there is already a high level of interest in the commercial sector (such as the demand for processed pine nuts). Third, the absence of synergies with other projects managed by FAO, or funded by other donors such as the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) in Pakistan and South Asia, has reduced the opportunities to gain valuable information, lessons, good practices concerning the development of value chains and development of added-value products. In addition, very few cases of technical and/or funding collaboration was identified between FAO-managed projects and project 091 concerning the development of agri-business, eco-tourism and other income generating initiatives. One exception concerns the construction of a cold storage facility for fruits and vegetables in South Waziristan (managed by FAO under the Technical Adviser project - THAzA), which has agreed to allow Chilgoza pine nut farmers use their storage facility.

112. At the global child project level, it was also evident that it provides far less support to facilitating access to information, expertise, or data to guide and support the promotion of sustainable NTFPs than on FLR. Moreover, where the project has received support from the global child project, such as support to the PM to conduct research and analysis on pine nut processing and marketing in the Mediterranean, the PM was unable to obtain a visa. Furthermore, because an alternative specialist was not recruited to conduct this research, valuable information on the Mediterranean pine nut processing and marketing remains inconclusive.

113. Finally, the MTR did not identify an official network of FWD focal points in each province/region through which information sharing and data exchange is established. Taking into account the distances to be travelled between each project site, the MTR found not enough is being done to facilitate cross-fertilisation through cost-effective means such as telephone apps to capture and stimulate impromptu communication on

lessons learned, good practices, identification and mitigation of risks, coordinated activities, etc. Similarly, such networks have not been established with civil society organisations, research and educational establishments, or the private sector to support flora and fauna species counts and infractions, or stimulate co-management agreements for specific habitats/species that would to show the TRI's contribution to saving habitats and endangered species on the Red List.

4.3.3 GEF funding and co-finance

114. Reference to Table 2 shows total expenditure of GEF funding at 30 June 2021 stood at USD 863 003, which is equivalent to **21.7 per cent of the GEF grant**. However, if pending expenditure is included, total expenditure would amount to USD 1 714 565 (43.1%). This low expenditure is mainly due to the same reasons explaining the slow physical progress of the project; namely delays of at least 18 months in project implementation, government and FAO restrictions on implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and bureaucratic processed linked to procurement and contracting.

115. However, taking into account an estimated 17 500 households have directly benefitted from the SFM/FLR activities, the project has spent on average USD 49.3 of GEF funds on each household, or USD 97.9 including expenditure which has not yet been paid. This is considered to be a satisfactory level of cost-effectiveness achieved to date, especially taking into account the remoteness of each project site and the setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, cost-effectiveness is projected to improve if the project achieves its targets of 50,000 households directly engaged in SFM/FLR activities by the end of the project.

Table 2. Summary of GEF expenditure in USD (to 30 June 2021)

Component	2018-22 Plan	2018-2019 Actual	2019-2020 Actual	2020-2021 Actual	Total Expenditure	Total Committed
Component 1	**754,388**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
Component 2	**2,100,827**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
Component 3	**404,388**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
Component 4	**529,387**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
Proj. management	**189,450**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
TOTAL	**3,978,440**	**188,747**	**547,977**	**126,279**	**863,003**	**851,562**

Source: PMO showing global expenditure by year from 28/05/2018 to 30/06/2021. First year 28/05/2018 to 30/06/2019; second year 01/07/2019 to 30/06/2020 and third year 01/07/2020 to 30/06/2021. N/a: PM confirmed GEF expenditure is not recorded by component.

116. Nonetheless, it is unlikely the project will require significant additional funding from the remaining balance of USD 2 263 875, (56.9%) before the project ends in less than ten months' time. On the one hand the PM, FWD and CFPCCs have limited absorption capacity and, on the other, it will be more challenging to carry out project activities in the field during the winter months when weather conditions are harsh above 3 000 m where the majority of the Chilgoza forests are located. Under these circumstances the project will almost certainly need more time to achieve its planned outputs and outcomes and should have an adequate balance of funds to support a time extension.

117. Table 2 provides details of grants and in-kind expenditure from the FWD in each participating province. In the case of South Waziristan District in the FATA Region the grants and in-kind contributions are covered by KP province. Total expenditure of grants and in-kind contributions amounted to USD 2 196 361 to 30 June 2021, which is equivalent to almost **9.6 per cent of planned government co-finance**. This is an unsatisfactory level of co-finance, which is partially explained by the fact the project did not have any major operations in the first year and government staff were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in the current financial year.

Table 3. Summary of co-finance expenditure in USD (to 30 June 2021)

Provincial Gov. (FWD)	2018-22 Plan	2018-2019 Actual	2019-2020 Actual	2020-2021 Actual	Total Expenditure
Balochistan Grant	4,743,383	0	60,340	68,840	**129,180**
Balochistan In-kind	948,677	183,000	8,500	50,000	**214,500**
Gilgit B. Grant	4,743,383	0	92,550	50,333	**142,883**
Gilgit-B In-kind	948,677	0	7,000	43,333	**50,333**
Khyber-P* Grant	4,743,383	-	-	-	**-**
Khyber-P* In-kind	948,677	-	-	-	**-**
S. Waz/KP* Grant	4,743,383	0	1,438,199	80,000	**1,518,199**
S. Waz/KP* In-kind	948,677	0	74,266	40,000	**114,266**
TOTAL	**22,768,240**	**183,000**	**1,680,855**	**332,506**	**2,196,361**

Source: PIRs and PM; * All grants and in-kind payments rounded up for both Chitral and SW Districts as they are paid by Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province

118. The MTR did not find any evidence to indicate the provincial governments have successfully leveraged/mobilised any additional cash/grant/in-kind funding from government sources, the private sector, or from other donor-funded programmes and projects to support the SFM/FLR activities, although there is close coordination with the TBTTP.

4.4 Sustainability

MTR question 4 – *What is the likelihood that the project results can be sustained after the end of the project?*

Finding 7*:* The prospects of sustaining outcome 1 are low, because the strengthening of the current policy and legal framework is linked to feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the SFM/FLR activities and their validation by the CFPCCs. Moreover, there appears to be little interest to introduce reforms to implement PES, when there are fund raising alternatives that can be mobilized without such reforms. The identification and agreement of these alternatives is considered crucial to sustaining the SFM/FLR process in general and ensure the CFPCCs generate sufficient income from both internal and external sources in particular. Indeed, resolving this issue is an important prerequisite to the CFPCCs becoming an officially recognized mechanism to manage the restoration of Chilgoza forest ecosystems over the long-term.

Finding 8: The prospects of sustaining the SFM/FLR activities linked to project outcomes 2 and 3 have been significantly enhanced by the government's TBTTP, which is highly likely to receive government funding until 2030 in order to achieve national and international pledges, goals and targets relating to forest conservation, restoration and management and the reduction of GHGs. However, the sustainability of the economic activities linked to the development of alternative livelihoods and promotion of NTFPs, is unclear, because the majority of these activities have not started. However, the MTR team found from the pine nut processing plants installed there are gaps that have not been addressed by the project to date. These include the lack of market assessments to select the NTFPs that have a competitive advantage, and a lack of inter-sectoral coordination with provincial departments responsible for micro/small enterprise development.

Finding 9*:* There is inadequate integration of risk management in project planning and implementation. This is not aided by the lack of monitoring of risks (including new risks associated with the pandemic, climate change) in the M&E system at the national and global levels of TRI. This, together with the absence of qualitative monitoring, means there is limited scope to for learning to inform and guide the sustainability of the project's main activities, especially the ones dedicated to small enterprise development.

4.4.1 Socio-political, financial, institutional and governance, and environmental risks to sustainability

119. The risks identified in the Prodoc are reassessed in the annual PIRs. According to the latest PIR (June 2020) the LTO classified the project's overall risk rating as "low", indicating no change from the design phase. This is based on an assessment of the risks identified in the Prodoc under section 3.3. However, these **risks are not grouped in accordance**

with the MTR reporting format required by FAO[27] **and they are not mentioned in the RM.** In addition, several of the risks relate to operational issues that should have been addressed in the design phase to support the justification for the project. These include, Risks 2, 3, 4 and 6 relating to technical capacity of the FWD, PES, commitment of the beneficiaries to shift from timber to NTFPs and difficulties for international consultants to visit project sites. This situation has made it difficult for the MTR team to conduct its risk assessment on socio-political, financial, institutional and governance, and environmental risks, because there is no baseline information available to determine whether the risk ranking has changed and whether risks and/or new mitigation measures need to be taken into account. Under these circumstances, the MTR team has proceeded to assess the abovementioned risk categories at 30 June 2021, with recourse to the Risk Table in PIR-2 where relevant. This risk assessment is summarised as follows:

a) **Socio-political risks remain "low".** This ranking is justified on the grounds the national and provincial governments are stable and there is an institutional, policy, legal and regulatory framework in place that is supportive of SFM/FLR practices. Moreover, the MoCC and FWD in the provinces/regions are highly supportive of the project's SFM/FLR activities given they can be realised as part of the TBTTP. However, inter-sectoral coordination has been low, especially with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), which could provide support and guidance to the small enterprise activities foreseen in the project relating to the development of alternative livelihoods and NTFPs;
b) **Institutional risks remain "low"**. The MoCC was established in 2018 to bring under one roof forestry and the environment, which has made it easier for the project to implement its main activities. This is aided by the nomination of the National Focal point for GEF in the MoCC to chair the project's PSC. At the sub-national level, the current institutional framework is also highly supportive of the project's implementation, because the FWD has been largely devolved to work under Provincial Secretaries who enjoy autonomy in setting provincial policies, strategies and plans for forestry. Currently provincial forestry policies are centred on supporting the implementation of the Federal Government's TBTTP flagship programme. Indeed, the timely launch of the TBTTP in 2019 has raised the importance of the project, given it can operate under the framework of the TBTTP and, thus, directly contribute to developing forest restoration capacity within the FWD. Nonetheless, the project is only working with MoCC/FWD, even though some activities aim at to support the development of household, micro and small businesses dedicated to the sale of NTFPs, in particular Chilgoza pine nuts, which would benefit from the inclusion of the SMEDA, which is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Industries and Production;

[27] Annex 11 – FAO–GEF project mid-term review report outline, p.13.

c) **Financial risks are upgraded to "low-medium"**. This risk is upgraded from low in the PIR-2, because the country's macro-economic stability has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a severe contraction in economic activity (in particular sectors such as tourism and eco-tourism), as well as growth in rural and urban poverty. If this continues in to 2022, public finances are likely to be stretched and slow down structural reforms.[28] At the FWD level, the level of co-finance has been low due to this situation. However, this has been cushioned by the application of LoAs and the implementation of the TBTTP, which will support the implementation of the project's main activities, given it is a flagship programme of the Federal government. Nevertheless, the lack of a formal funding mechanism for the CFPCCs represents a major risk to the consolidation, sustainability and replication of the SFM/FLR practices, as well as establishing effective governance (including monitoring, reporting and verification of carbon stocks) of the Chilgoza forests ecosystem;

d) **Currency exchange rate risks remain "low"**. The US Dollar shows no signs of a major depreciation against the Pakistani Rupee, nor vice versa;

e) **Fiduciary risks remain "low".** GEF funds are disbursed to, and managed by FAOPK. The signing of LoA ensures FAO staff can conduct audits, spot checks and field inspections at any time;

f) **Climate change-related risks are upgraded to "medium"**. The SFM/FLR activities are designed to strengthen the resilience of local communities who are dependent on the goods and services provided by Chilgoza forest ecosystems. In addition, the forest restoration activities support climate mitigation of MoCC by aiming to reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon stocks by 2,782,420 tCO2eq (direct) and 7,724,809 tCO2eq (consequential/indirect). Moreover, the LTO has applied a risk rating of "medium" for Risk 5 (Natural disasters, extreme weather fluctuations such as drought, floods, landslides) in the Risk Table for PIR-2 to 30 June 2020. However, specific risk measures have not been provided to mitigate this risk, even though anthropic/abiotic risks on the Chilgoza forest ecosystems were identified (especially pests). Furthermore, the CFPCCs have not been trained to identify risks and develop risk mitigation plans with the local community to raise their awareness on the importance on risk prevention as well as preparedness and response;

g) **Health-related risks are included as new risks and ranked "medium".** This is considered a new risk in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the rise in cases of the highly contagious DELTA+ variant, which originated in the South Asia region. This risk has not been integrated into the Risk Table in PIR-2. However, the indications are a new wave of infections is likely in the second half of 2021 and this may have a negative effect on the planned return to holding group meetings, conferences, field missions, participating in the TRI's global events, etc.

[28] World Bank, 2021.

h) **Security risks are upgraded to "medium"**. Risk 1 in the Risk Table of PIR-2 ranks accessibility to remote project sites as "medium", because the internal security at some sites, especially in South Waziristan cannot be guaranteed. Moreover, strong-held traditions prevail in tribal communities in district such as South Waziristan, which make it highly difficult for female consultants and support staff to travel to these areas without prior permission from community leaders and elders. This is despite the fact FAO have implemented several projects in FATA and other tribal regions in Pakistan;

i) **Environmental risks remain "low"**. The project has a strong focus on supporting the restoration of the Chilgoza forest ecosystems. In particular it addresses the need to engage the local community in activities that are designed to protect conserve, restore and manage forest ecosystems based on the sustainable use of their goods and services. More details can be found in section 4.6.1.

120. The above risk assessment has also revealed that the project does not apply risk management as an integral part of its work plans and implementation of activities in the field to enhance the prospects of sustaining these activities and positive outcomes. Instead, the risk assessment in the PIR is primarily an administrative reporting duty, rather than an opportunity to fully integrate risk mitigation measures in operations. In addition, **the project does not have a clear exit strategy** in which the risks associated with project closure, transfer of responsibilities and sustaining project outcomes are of major importance to the FWD and beneficiary communities, especially the CFPCCs and livelihood schemes that receive grants, but whose future funding sources are still unknown. Moreover, the project has not identified any formal partnerships established with the private sector to support the development of inclusive value chains in NTFPs, or to shorten the supply chains where NTFPs will rely on inputs (especially for the agroforestry activities).

121. Finally, the MTR observed the project has the intention to promote eco-tourism services, but is unclear how these services will be developed without linking up with key institutions responsible for this sector. These include the corresponding Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and non-governmental institutions that can provide support and guidance in specialised areas such as controlled hunting, birdwatching and photography, or on support services such as food and transport services.

4.4.2 Evidence of replication or catalysis of project results

122. The project places importance on establishing a replicable SFM/FLR framework for Chilgoza forest ecosystems. Indeed, this is explicitly mentioned in output 1.1. Although this framework is not officially in place at the present time, there are specific elements of the SFM/FLR process that FWD and the CFPCCs are showing positive signs of officially

adopting and replicating project-inspired activities under the TBTTP. These are summarised as follows:

- Testing of the CEOF has been applied by MoCC to support the development of GIS mapping to support the adoption of ROAM;
- Participatory mapping of ANR sites is reported to have been applied to identify ANR sites under the TBTTP in the four participating districts as well as other districts of all three participating provinces/regions where the TBTTP is operating. For example, the field mission in Chitral District confirmed the project's approach to identifying and establishing ANR sites has been applied at numerous sites under the TBTTP in the District, where on average 40 ha of degraded areas where soils are already barren and highly vulnerable to erosion have been prioritised for ANR. A similar finding was identified in Sherani District where the MTR has found the ANR approach is being applied throughout the province of Balochistan where the TBTTP is supporting FLR;
- The creation of more CFPCCs is reported to be being discussed at the district level to support the implementation of the TBTTP where the project is operating. For example, CFPCC members are participating in Chitral's District Coordination Committee (DCC) meetings in 2021. This has facilitated discussion on their activities and interventions in a highly collaborative manner and included exploratory talks on expanding the CFPCCs as a means to replicating good practices and success stories from the SFM/FLR activities promoted by the project;
- SFM/FLR community-based techniques such as the establishment of enclosures, rotational grazing and intercropping with fodder grasses and fast-growing trees were found to be highly popular among the end beneficiaries interviewed, who reported cases of follow-on farmers interested to replicate these activities;
- The installation of four Chilgoza pine nut processing facilities has encouraged a growing number of farmers to process their Chilgoza pine cones locally so that they can be sold as either roasted/unroasted nuts to local and national traders. For example, a trader interviewed from Diamer District (GB) who is responsible for the management of the pine cone processing facility installed in this district, confirmed pine nut processing increased from 36 000 kg to 44 000 kg. in the 2020-2021 season of which 550 kg was roasted for the first time thanks to the increase in local farmers using the processing facility.

123. However, the MTR identified little or no evidence of replication of the toolkits promoted to support more effective harvesting of Chilgoza pine cones. This is mainly explained by the unavailability of these toolkits for sale locally, coupled with data to show farmers the production benefits of using the toolkits. This is mainly down to the fact the Chilgoza pine nut study is on-going. Similarly, the replication of economic development in NTFPs (excluding pine nuts) is not evident, because these activities have not commenced.

124. Meanwhile, the MTR team did not identify sufficient evidence to confirm the project's knowledge products and communications have been instrumental in leveraging new resources to support their replication both within the project sites/provinces, or nationally. Indeed, neither project 091, or the global child project are tracking indicators on resource mobilisation. As a result, it has not been possible to review the initial impact of project 091 in this regard in Pakistan, and which the MTR team believes would also be of significant interest to other child projects in the TRI community.

125. Finally, due to inadequate levels of coordination and synergies with other FAO-managed projects, especially linked to forestry and micro/small enterprise development, there has been limited learning on activities that save costs, enhance effectiveness and strengthen sustainability, which is also considered to of major interest to other child projects. Indeed, exposure to FAO's wealth of knowledge and experience in these areas does not appear to have been captured by the global child project to support projects such as project 091. One exception, appears to be the LTO's involvement in the launch of the publication, "*Mapping Together: A Guide to Monitoring Forest and Landscape Restoration Using Collect Earth Mapathons*" in March 2021, which the MTR understands will be promoted in TRI projects to support the validation process on the restoration of Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

4.5 Factors affecting performance

MTR question 5 – *What are the main factors affecting the project from reaching its results?*

Finding 10*:* The design of the project's RM was found to have some shortcomings in its vertical logic to show the achievement of the project's environmental objective is dependent on the achievement of its development objective to stimulate and sustain the SFM/FLR process. In addition, because the project was designed in 2016, Outcome 1 is no longer considered a priority until lessons have been learnt from the project and the TBTTP. As a result, outputs 1.2 and 1.3/2.6 are in need of updating in order to refocus Outcome 1 on current priorities and needs of FWD; namely the funding and formal adoption of the CFPCCs to co-manage the SFM/FLR process not only at the project sites, but potentially at other SFM/FLR sites established under the TBTTP. In addition, inadequate attention has been given to integrating risk management to support the development of more resilient forest ecosystems and communities and the design of outputs 2.4 and 2.5 would benefit from the inclusion of marketing strategies to support the development of inclusive value chains for selected NTFPs that have a competitive advantage.

Finding 11: The M&E system's main function as a reporting tool on the project's outputs and their contribution to the nine core indicators managed by the global child project has demonstrated insufficient learning is taking place at the project and TRI community levels

to meet Outcome 4. Moreover, because the M&E system is not adequately capturing important lessons and good practices from the SFM/FLR/NTFP activities, it is very difficult to promote informed dialogue to justify the updating of activities, outputs, outcomes and/or indicators in the RM to achieve project and TRI objectives. As a result, both the M&E system and communications (linked to outputs 4.1. and 4.2) are not effective tools to promote the transformational changes that are needed to halt the drivers of deforestation and poverty, that will ultimately determine how far project outcomes and impact coincide with the ToC (see Appendix 9).

Finding 12*:* The project is in the process of building important synergies with the TBTTP, but overall, there this is little evidence synergies, or partnerships have been established with other relevant government departments or donor-funded projects (including GEF-funded projects managed by FAO, UNEP and UNDP in Pakistan, or linked to the REDD+ initiative. As such, the project has not exploited opportunities to share costs in areas of mutual interest, such as training linked to agroforestry, development of tree nurseries, small enterprise development, among others. This situation is not aided by the lack of a suitable donor coordination mechanism to promote synergies between projects and relevant government programmes. However, there is scope to build synergies, given some small interactions have taken place, such as providing pine nut producers with access to fruit and vegetable storage facilities constructed by another GEF-funded project.

4.5.1 Project design and readiness

126. The MTR found the project is linked to too many objectives at the TRI and national child project level. This is confusing and makes it difficult to establish the vertical intervention logic for project 091. For example, project 091's objectives do not explicitly mention they are contributing to the global objectives of TRI. In addition, project 091 has a development objective that has largely been captured in the project's environmental objective (see Box 2). However, the RM focuses only on the vertical causal link between the project's environmental objective and its expected outcomes and activities/outputs proposed, while the project's development objective sits at the top of the RM without a clear causal link to the environmental objective. The MTR team found the achievement of the development objective (based on the sustainable use of Chilgoza forest ecosystem services) is a prerequisite to achieving the environmental objective. Moreover, the inclusion of separate environmental and development objectives, which is common practice in the design of GEF-funded projects, also poses a dilemma for the project's main stakeholders, because GEF funding to TRI is primarily designed to support the conservation of GEBs and to enhance resilience to climate change. In order to avoid this dilemma, the project design would have benefited from one objective focusing on the establishment of local stakeholders and target communities as the guardians of GEBs and their sustainable use to support sustainable and resilient rural development.

127. The presentation of the horizontal intervention logic in the RM is moderately satisfactory because the indicators are measurable against baseline data and targets. However, the RM does not include qualitative indicators, or indicators to monitor external risks, which means the scope for learning to stimulate dialogue on the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is limited. As a result, key issues, such as the need to update/change project activities, outputs, outcomes and/or indicators in the RM to achieve objectives, are not subject to discussion and review. This has been demonstrated, for example, through the project's continued commitment to achieving Outputs 1.2 and 1.3/2.6 to achieve Outcome 1, when they are no longer priorities of the government and alternative and more pragmatic approaches are applicable to support the SFM/FLR process. In another example, the development of value chains for NTFPs and the promotion of alternative livelihoods (Outputs 2.4 and 2.5) are not adequately linked to marketing studies through which partnerships with the private sector are needed to support the achievement of Outcome 2 (see also section 4.2.4).

4.5.2 Quality of project execution and management arrangements (including assessment of risks)

128. The approval of the first work plan and budget took place in May 2019, following the official approval of the PSC members. As a result, the project experienced a delay of almost 13 months before operations officially started. According to interviews, the main reason for this delay concerned differences within MoCC over the composition of the PSC members and bureaucracy. However, delays of this nature appear to be a common feature of GEF-funded projects, because the project's start date is linked to the signature date of the Prodoc, rather than when the first workplan and budget have been approved, which is a standard requirement before the first disbursement GEF funding can be made. However, as stated in section 4.4.1, since May 2019, the quality of the PSC's support and guidance appears to have been highly satisfactory and appears to have been the main factor behind the achievements reported under section 4.2, in particular sub sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 (Outcomes 2 and 3). The inclusion of the FWD's Provincial Secretaries and their Chief Conservators in the PSC, together with the application of LoAs and the appointment of a highly qualified and experienced PM, were found to be key factors behind the relatively swift implementation of PSC decisions in the project sites. At the same time these factors have facilitated alignment and synergies with the TBTTP, in particular on the application of ANR sites under the TBTTP.

129. However, two caveats have been identified that are likely to affect project performance. The first concerns the lack of an appropriate representative from SMEDA (Ministry of Industries and Production) in the PSC. This situation means there is limited expertise and guidance available to support the development and commercialisation of NTFPs. The second relates to the high dependency on one full-time project coordinator in each of the four participating districts and two women enterprise staff who have limited access to the

project sites in Sherani and South Waziristan. The MTR found the capacity of the district coordinators to manage project implementation with local stakeholders varies, and some interviewees stated they need more technical support and training on SFM/FLR activities. Moreover, the MTR team found that in all cases the project coordinators have been selected for their work experience on forestry restoration and management. This means they have limited capacity to support the achievement of the project's development objective. As a result, it is not clear how far they will be able to identify gaps and conduct adequate follow-up when the small grants scheme is launched to develop alternative livelihoods and NTFPs. To help mitigate this situation, the project is procuring the services of a small grants lending institution to manage the grants and promote alternative livelihoods and NFTPs. However, this approach calls into question the prospects of sustaining the small grants scheme after the project has terminated.

130. Another element which the MTR found is highly likely to affect the quality of the project's execution, concerns the abovementioned lack of integration of risk management in the project's planning and management. Taking into account the MTR team's own assessment on risk (see sub section 4.4.1) there is little doubt the targeted beneficiary communities (especially the most vulnerable groups) are likely to be affected by the growing risks associated with the effects of climate variability and change the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, this latter development is estimated by project's main stakeholders to have affected the project's implementation by a further six months since March 2021. As a result, the need for an extension to the project's duration should also contemplate effective risk management to avert further delays in the project's implementation and achievement of results.

4.5.3 Project oversight by FAO as the GEF Agency and national partners

131. Project oversight provided by the BH, LTO, CTA, FLO, GCU and other FAO staff was found to be satisfactory. In 2019 this was facilitated by the ability to conduct backstopping missions and the holding of global and regional events and workshops and exchanges. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic visits to Pakistan have not been possible to date. This has left the PM highly dependent on remote meetings for technical guidance and concerning coordination within TRI, especially with the global child project. However, because the project is applying DEX, the LTO and CTA have been able to maintain regular contact with the PM, which would have been more challenging had the project applied the operational partners implementation modality (OPIM). For example, interviews confirm maintaining contact with homebased government staff during the pandemic has been challenging, due to a number of factors ranging from poor internet connections to different work agendas and priorities.

132. In terms of the quality of the technical support provided by the LTO, the MTR found this to be highly satisfactory for two reasons. First, the LTO is responsible for conducting

oversight of the global child project. This means the same person is able to retain a satisfactory level of coordination between TRI and project 091 concerning the planning and implementation of global events, development of knowledge products, identification of exchanges and so forth. Second, the LTO is engaged in other FAO initiatives linked to FLR, which facilitates knowledge exchange on lessons and good practices between these initiatives, as well as the potential to facilitate networking between development practitioners. However, the location of the LTO in FAO-Rome has reduced the time available for communication with the PM and CTA based in Pakistan and China respectively, as well as the ability to carry out regular site visits to address key elements of interest to TRI, such as the promotion and funding of the CFPCCs and the development of NTFPs that have a competitive advantage and clearly defined markets and partners.

4.5.4 Financial management and co-financing

133. The MTR did not identify any major issues where the financial management of GEF funds has affected performance. For example, no major delays in receiving GEF disbursements, or major funding shortfalls in relation to the allocated budget were identified. However, the MTR team were unable to receive a breakdown of GEF funding by component as prescribed in the Prodoc (section 3.4). In addition, payments from FAOPK to service providers such as FWD under the LoAs have been made in a timely manner, although there are complaints by the FWD that the conclusion of the LoAs is slow due to bureaucratic procedures having to be met at both the provincial government and FAO levels.

134. However, the level of co-finance provided to project 091 by FWD's provincial department offices has been low. Table 3 and Appendix 7 confirm the FWDs have provided only around ten per cent of the planned cash and in-kind payments agreed in the Prodoc. This situation has affected project performance, especially in areas such as forestry extension services to follow-up on the SFM/FLR activities, although this has been palliated to some extent by three main developments. First, the FWD has been able to fund project activities such as the establishment of the ANR sites under the TBTTP. Second, the implementation of the SFM/FLR activities on the ground have enjoyed the support of the CFPCCs, which has helped reduce the FWD's logistical and operational costs. For example, costs associated with the mobilisation of the afforestation campaigns, establishing enclosures, site inspections and so forth have been reduced thanks to the CFPCCs. Third, the LoAs with the FWD have, de facto, covered some of the costs normally associated with in-kind contributions.

135. Nonetheless, the low level of co-finance provided so far is likely to have implications on the sustainability of SFM/FLR/NTFP initiatives, as well as covering some of the funding gaps experienced by the CFPCCs until a permanent funding solution has been found, agreed and implemented, all of which are likely to happen after the project's

implementation has ended. Moreover, this risk has not been identified in the Risk Table of the PIR and there are, therefore, no mitigation measures in place to address this risk. This is a concern, because it remains unclear how extension and follow-up services will be funded by FWD in the project sites beyond 2022, as well as in other areas that are part of the scaling-up of FLR, as foreseen in the Prodoc (Section 2.2). In addition, funding will be needed to agree and implement alternative solutions to PES to cover the conservation, restoration and management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems over the long-term.

4.5.5 Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement

136. The Prodoc includes a section on developing coordination with other national and donor-funded initiatives to facilitate learning and exchange of good practices. However, many of these initiatives have ended, or been upscaled such as the BTTAP to the TBTTP. Meanwhile, evidence of building formal synergies with other projects operating in Pakistan and within TRI has already been reported above to be low. This situation has not been aided by the COVID-19 pandemic, or the lack of adequate coordination mechanisms in place to facilitate the formal development of synergies with other relevant projects managed by FAO/UNEO/IUCN, or with other organisations and donors. As a result, the MTR found this shortcoming has affected project efficiency and the sharing of knowledge, which would facilitate the adoption of good practices and addressing lessons learnt.

137. Meanwhile, stakeholder engagement at the provincial and district levels appears to be highly satisfactory, thanks to the establishment of an inclusive PSC that includes senior representatives from the FWD in all three provinces/regions participating in the project and the creation of the CFPCCs, which are managing the implementation of the project's main activities on SFM/FLR at the project sites.

4.5.6 Communication, visibility, knowledge management and knowledge products

138. The project's internal communication between the PM and his field coordinators operating in the four participating districts, was found to be satisfactory. Equally, communication with local stakeholders and beneficiary communities is satisfactory, thanks to the needs analysis conducted during the design phase and which was subsequently reviewed by the project management teams during the preliminary field meetings held to present the project's main activities and expected outcomes. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted the capacity of the PM, staff in FAOPK office and the CTA and LTO to conduct field visits to the project sites since March 2020. This has affected the level of personal guidance and advice that can be given to the provincial coordinators in the field on the project's implementation and monitoring, which appears to be a contributory factor behind the slower than expected implementation of some of the SFM/FLR activities, which in the case of GB and KP have been associated with the slow conclusion of the LoAs.

139. In terms of the project's knowledge management and products the MTR found they are neither affecting the project's performance, nor enhancing it to reach its objectives. The MTR team was informed a communications strategy is in place, and communication staff from FAO, UNEP and IUCN have been assigned to support its implementation. However, the communication strategy centres primarily on the production of knowledge products that are designed to inform on project implementation and achievements. These include, among others, images of Chilgoza forest ecosystems, summaries of project's activities for the global and regional newsletters managed by TRI's global child project, media coverage of the project's main events and the production of two success stories on FLR for the TRI community and which will be presented at the World Forestry Congress in Seoul, Republic of Korea, between 02-06 May 2022. In addition, the TRI global child project supports webinars and launched an e-learning course on FLR as well as supported a new initiative to promote voluntary and bankable FLR projects, known as 'The Restoration Factory', since May 2021.

140. However, because the project's communication strategy has not been designed to learn lessons and promote good practices on SFM/FLR/NTFPs, the project (and TRI) is unable to substantiate the argument that it is economically, socially and environmentally beneficial to invest in SFM/FLR. Consequently, it is unable to target such information for different audiences to provoke dialogue and encourage decision-makers in the public and private sectors to take up and/or expand SFM and FLR activities, or promote investment in the development of NTFPs. This situation means the project has far less scope to establish the enabling environment than was originally foreseen in the Prodoc. For example, no communication strategy has been identified so far to promote the future development of ETS (also known as cap and trade), even though it is projected to sequester over 1.98 million tCO2eq through its SFM/FLR initiatives. Moreover, this is surprising when taking into account the price of a one-metric-ton carbon dioxide emission permit within the EU's Emissions Trading System (ETS) has more than doubled from its pre-pandemic levels and would, therefore, provide a viable revenue source to help provide some of the external funding required to operate the CFPCCs, while at the same time encourage the protection of the FLR sites.[29] In another example, communication activities designed to link into educational outreach initiatives, or report on the conservation of biodiversity through phone apps, social media, university networks, etc. have not been reviewed for potential adoption to date.

141. Finally, at the corporate level, the communication of project progress and results are mainly designed to support annual reporting on the CPF 2018-2022 and FAO's Strategic Objectives, while the PIRs inform the GEF Secretariat and FAO-R on project 091's implementation and support the tracking of nine core indicators managed by the TRI's

[29] Energy and Capital: How to profit from the Bull Market in Carbon Credits, 22 July 2021.

global child project. However, the MTR found little evidence to indicate the knowledge and information generated in each of these reports is analysed in a coordinated manner to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of the FAO programme in Pakistan to ensure it fully complements the TRI and vice versa. Moreover, these documents are only produced in English, which means they are far less likely to engage local stakeholders in their analysis and use.

4.5.7 Monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including M&E design, implementation and budget

142. TRI partners have selected nine core indicators to be monitored by the global M&E system in response to calls within FAO to improve the analytical functionality of monitoring so that it supports qualitative assessment and produces feedback to enhance performance and effectiveness.[30] For example, the M&E plan focuses on establishing data collection tools to track these nine mandatory indicators in accordance with FAO's MEL guidelines. The nine indicators, which are managed under separate Excel files and listed in the 2019 Annual Review of TRI (p.9), are:

- New or improved policy framework
- Number of hectares under restoration / Area of land restored
- Number of hectares establishing improved practices / Number of hectares under improved practices
- Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (not provided in an Excel sheet);
- Number of direct beneficiaries (sex disaggregated)
- Number of cross-sectoral government-led coordination mechanisms
- Value of resources flowing into restoration in TRI
- Number of bankable projects developed
- Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated.

143. Following analysis of these core indicators, the MTR found some of the Excel files do not appear to have been tested and in some cases were found to have a confusing numbering system applied. Currently there is very little data available to identify any trends on the number of hectares that have been restored, because this cannot be validated at the present time, even in Pakistan, where project 091 is reported to be the most advanced in terms of its implementation in TRI.

144. The indicators tracked by project 091's internal monitoring system (based on the Results Matrix of the Prodoc), were found to be coherent with the majority of the core indicators. Furthermore, these indicators are measurable against baselines and targets, which under Outcomes 2 and 3 were found to be realistic and achievable, taking into account the progress and achievements reported under sub sections 4.2.2-4.2.3 above. However, under Outcome 1, targets linked to Outputs 1.2 and 1.3/2.6 are no longer realistic, while

[30] Evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework, 2019.

under Outcome 4, the main focuses is to monitor the number of communications, events, trainings and knowledge products produced and disseminated. According to the data received by the MTR, it is evident the project has only in the last few months been in a position to collect, process and feed relevant project data to the global child project's M&E system. However, collection of data for core indicators 6 and 7 appears to be more challenging, because this data is currently not tracked by project 091.

145. Nonetheless, because the project's M&E system is focused on supporting TRI-level monitoring, it is not possible for the MTR to assess how far the project's achievements are contributing to the provincial and federal government's pledges, targets and goals, which it considers are of interest to the partner country (FWD/MoCC). Indeed, this has negative implications on the ownership of the M&E system following project closure. For example, all project team members have received training and guidance on applying KOBO toolbox software, to collect and store data, but FWD staff do not have access to this software. In another example, each core indicator is tracked in a separate Excel file, in which there is no information on the purpose of collecting data on the indicator, or a space to provide comments on progress/shortcomings. This means for indicators such as core indicator 2, it is not possible to track the project's forest restoration activities in relation to the Bonn Challenge pledges made by each of the four participating provinces, or the country as a whole. Similarly, indicator 3 is not linked to Pakistan's commitments on meeting Aichi Target 7 (sustainable management of forestry and conservation of biodiversity), as prescribed in its NBSAP. This situation limits learning and decision-making on research and studies as foreseen in Output 4.3; namely impact studies and their circulation through events linked to, among others, the Bonn Challenge.

146. The lack of alignment of the M&E system to the needs of the Government of Pakistan, also means FAOPK and GEF are not in a position to use it as a tool to promote policy dialogue on achieving forestry-related goals and targets, which in Pakistan is centred on the expansion of forest cover to 6.2 per cent of the country's total land area. In summary, the MTR considers **the current M&E system represents a missed opportunity to stimulate full alignment and ownership of the project** at all levels, which included the end beneficiaries who will participate in the validation of restored Chilgoza forests. Furthermore, the M&E system is not collecting qualitative data to collect lessons on the validation process using, for example, methods such Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) surveys so that the monitoring is not only capturing data, but views and opinions of the end beneficiaries and local stakeholders on the project's achievements and performance.

4.6 Cross-cutting priorities

MTR question 6: *To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?*

Finding 13*:* The project design complies with the environmental and social standards' checklist in the Prodoc. However, the M&E system is not monitoring these standards. In particular there is no tracking of ESS-2 (biodiversity, ecosystems and natural habitats), which would facilitate monitoring synergies with, among others the Directorate of Biodiversity (MoCC), IUCN and WWF to enhance the quality and ownership of the learning and reporting process, as well as facilitate the project's contribution to, among others, the government's commitments to the Bonn Challenge, relevant Aichi Targets and SDGs.

MTR question 7: *To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?*

Finding 14*:* The Prodoc falls short on establishing a clear and coherent gender strategy that addresses the specific needs and priorities of women and other vulnerable groups (including youths). Although gender needs assessments are conducted and two female consultants have been recruited to support women-to-women training on developing alternative livelihoods and NTFPs, the MTR team's findings indicate that the vast majority of project-funded inputs, toolkits, processing equipment and trainings are going to male recipients, while women are sparsely represented in decision-making roles and only figure as main beneficiaries of fuel-efficient stoves and gas fires that may actually reinforce their role in the home.

4.6.1 Environmental and social standards

147. The ESS in the Prodoc classifies this project as a low risk to the environment and social impact, meaning an environmental and social plan (ESM) was not required during the design phase. In PIR-2 the risk rating applied by the LTO remains, "low". A rapid assessment of these rankings found the project's approach and activities remain fully compliant with the entries in the ESS checklist; namely the project complies with all the entries under sections I and II and, supports measures that build resilience to climate change (ESS1-8), avoids negative practices on the biodiversity, including agricultural biodiversity and planted forests (ESS2 and ESS 3, all entries). Moreover, the MTR classifies the project as, "significant" for the Rio Marker for biodiversity and climate change. Nevertheless, as previously stated, the M&E system is not applying specific indicators linked to measuring these classifications using tools such as STAR and EHI, to track project contributions to achieving relevant goals and targets at the national and international level (Aichi Targets, SDGs, NDCs).

4.6.2 Gender and social inclusion focus

148. The Environmental and Social Screening Checklist (ESS) in the Prodoc confirmed the project design has taken into account gender equality, although it is not explicitly integrated into the project's objectives. This includes the needs, priorities and constraints of both women and men and equitable access to, and control over, productive resources and services. In section 2.3.2 the Prodoc provides guidance on how this is to be achieved, stressing that the recognition and compensation of women's work is crucial to establishing men and women from the beneficiary communities as equal stakeholders in the project's main activities. To achieve this, it is recommended a gender mainstreaming strategy is developed in the inception phase in line with FAO's Gender Policy (2011). Among the areas explicitly mentioned where women should enjoy equal participation in decision-making are the development of the CFPCCs and in the marketing of NTFPs (in particular Chilgoza pine nuts) through the establishment of inclusive value chains.

Table 4. Summary of women's participation in SFM/FLR activities to June 2021

Component	Number of participants	Male	Female	% of female participation
1 – Strengthening policy framework	-	-	-	-
2 – SFM/FLR/value chain development	8,037	6,304	1,733	21.6%
3 – Strengthening of local institutions	406	375	31	7.6%
4 – Knowledge/partnerships/M&E	-	-	-	-
Total/Average	**8,443**	**6,679**	**1,764**	**20.9**

Source: PMO

149. The MTR found the project has made some inroads on promoting gender equality in its main activities engaging local communities under components 2 and 3. This has been aided by the realisation of gender needs assessments and recruitment of two female consultants to support women-to-women training to develop alternative livelihoods and to process and commercialise NTFPs. According to data collected from the project, a total of 8 443 households have participated directly in the project's SFM/FLR activities under components 2 and 3 to 30 June 2021, of which 21 per cent are women (see Table 3). Moreover, these participants are reported to have engaged over 17,500 households in restoration activities (see Appendix 6, output 2.5). However, the mainstreaming of a gender strategy has not taken place, such as sensitising campaigns of males on the benefits of incorporating women into decision-making roles in the CFPCCs, or in the development of inclusive value chains that involves both men and women.

150. This situation is demonstrated by the MTR team's analysis of women's participation in the project's SFM/FLR activities in Sherani District (see Table 4). For example, the number of women recipients of plants, fuel efficient stoves, toolkits and processing equipment was just 8.4 per cent of total recipients. Moreover, the only product where they received a proportionally acceptable level of distribution in relation to men was the fuel-efficient stoves (FES) and gas fires (39%). Similarly, women's participation in capacity building exercises amounted to 16.4 per cent of all participants, of which the majority centred on the operation and maintenance of the FES and gas fires and attending community meetings, which it can be argued, has not liberated women from the home. Indeed, only 31 women (2.2%) received capacity building in empowerment exercises such as the development of the ANR sites and improved harvesting of Chilgoza pine cones.

Table 5. Women's participation in SFM/FLR activities in Sherani District (30 June 2021)

Activity	Year	Male	Female	Total
A. No. of recipients				
Forest & fruit tree plant distribution	2020-2021	2,782	193	2975
Chilgoza Harvesting Tool Kits	2019-2020	68	7	75
ANR	2021	13	0	13
Fuel efficient stoves and gas fires	2021	183	117	300
Chilgoza processing unit equipment	2020-21	421	0	421
Sub Total A		**3,467**	**317**	**3,784**
B. No. of recipients who received training				
ROAM, Collect Earth, Planning/LOA	2019-2021	15	1	16
ROAM Exercise Zhob	2020	55	0	55
Toolkits Training Event/Distribution	2019	147	0	147
Toolkits Training Event/Distribution	2020	190	30	220
Plantation Techniques Training	2021	155	0	155
Operating of FE stove and gas fires	2021	235	84	319
Community capacity building	2018-2021	300	110	410
ANR Training	2021	45	0	45
Sub Total B		**1,142**	**225**	**1,367**
TOTAL PARTICIPATION		**4,609**	**317**	**5,151**

Source: MTR team

151. To substantiate these findings, the MTR team conducted similar analysis with local stakeholders in South Waziristan, where the traditional values held by males from the tribal communities are known to be particularly resolute. Unfortunately, a similar trend was identified. There is a low level of women's participation in empowering activities designed to take them out of the home. For example, a total of 118 females (7.9%) out of a total 1 500 participants were registered as direct beneficiaries of the abovementioned products and activities, of which 80 (67.8%) were recipients of fuel-efficient stoves. In fact, only two women received training in ANR-related activities or application of the toolkits.

152. The MTR team found that one of the main problems facing the PM is that its current gender strategy is not addressing the inherent barriers that prevent women from engaging more proactively in the project's activities. For example, because very few women have communal land rights, there are strong-held beliefs among the male community that they have priority in carrying out the harvesting of Chilgoza pine cones and that women should only be allowed to collect any leftovers after the harvesting has been completed. As a result, the current distribution of the vast majority of toolkits to men, on the basis he is the head of the household, does not appear to be enhancing the empowerment of women in the development of this NTFP. This is further obscured by the fact the monitoring of this activity is mainly focused on how many toolkits have been distributed and how far the toolkits are safeguarding pine nut production levels. Similarly, the CFPCCs and operation of traditional governance practices, such as Nigahbans (community forest guards), are viewed as male occupations. This ensures younger males gain access and participate in decision-making processes, and thus gain the exposure and learning they will need to become the next generation of decision-makers and law enforcers. As a result, the governance aspects linked to conserving, restoring and managing the Chilgoza forest ecosystems are reported to be improving, but this has largely excluded the active participation of local women in this process.

153. The tracking of these developments is not aided by the fact the M&E system currently only monitors sex disaggregated data on participation rates in project activities, which is subsequently reported in the PIRs (Section 7). The absence of qualitative monitoring, such as gender sensitive KAP surveys, also means it is not possible to stimulate learning and dialogue on how to break down the above-mentioned barriers to women's empowerment that are socially and culturally acceptable, such as through win-win situations for men and women that could be replicated and shared within TRI. Furthermore, the delayed launch of the small-grants scheme, is likely to fall into the same system of monitoring and reporting unless greater attention is given to recruiting a small-grants institution that has in-depth experience in promoting gender sensitive grants that seek-out to deliver benefits to women and men at the same time.

154. In summary these findings indicate **the project's approach to empowering women is in need of improvements and, therefore, only moderately satisfactory**. A more effective gender strategy is required to seek out mutually acceptable approaches that are dependent on men and women working together to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits that can be shared.

4.7 Linkages with the global child project and COVID-19 impacts

MTR question 8 – *What did the global child project bring to the national child project?*

Finding 15*:* The global TRI events have facilitated the reunion of national child projects and the third event in FAO-R provided a valuable introduction in innovative new tools and methods to apply FLR. However, the global child project has been unable to carry out international workshops, trainings, exchanges since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. This has limited its capacity to provide important follow-up activities at both the global and national level following the third global event held in October 2019. Two specific areas where follow-up is urgently required concern the establishment of focal points in the executing agency to coordinate the testing and mainstreaming of SFM/FLR tools and methods of interest to the government and a review of the core indicators and M&E system in general to enhance their ownership and usefulness at the national level.

Finding 16*:* The five areas where stakeholders in the project 091 would most like support from the global child project are: a) improved monitoring at the national and global levels to capture lesson learnt, good practices and success stories on FLR; b) country-specific policy and strategy support is targeted by the global child project; c) communications to main stakeholders and local beneficiary communities need to be improved to capture the above-mentioned lessons, good practices, success stories; d) establishment of an interactive platform to support the development of synergies on FLR and information exchange; e) improve support to entrepreneurs.

Finding 17: The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the implementation of project 091, although less so at the field level, where outdoor activities such as establishing the CFPCCs, SFM plans, FLR/ANR and trainings on the toolkits have progressed without major interruptions. However, the main concern is the negative impact the pandemic is having on the Pakistani economy, which has major implications for the promotion of alternative livelihoods and inclusive value chains for NTFPs, both of which have been severely delayed and both of which are highly likely to struggle in the event the local and national economy remains under stress.

Finding 18: FAO's Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) for prevention and control of COVID-19 have made a positive contribution to sensitizing the CFPCCs and their local communities on the importance of establishing low-risk environments. This has also

contributed to the abovementioned progress in applying FLR in the four participating districts. However, there has been no promotion of the international webinars provided by FAO's partner for disaster response, Sphere, which has developed standards to fight COVID-19 and case studies of how these standards have been applied at the local level in regions such as South Asia.

155. In accordance with the ToR of the MTR, this section represents an addition to the normal structure of MTRs required in the FAO's Guidelines for MTRs. The following sub-sections address key questions on these topics that have not already been analysed in the previous sections. Due to time factors, the MTR used the e-questionnaire as the main means to collect data and information on these topics and then cross-checked responses through the interviewing process.

4.7.1 What did the global child project bring to the national child project?

156. Staff from project 091 have participated in three TRI events managed by the global child project in 2019, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic no international TRI events have taken place since November 2019. The first event consisted of a five-day inception workshop in Kenya in February 2019. According to interviews with PM staff this event was highly valuable in bringing the TRI community together for the first time to understand the national child project's role in supporting each other in achieving their respective pledges under the Bonn Challenge. In addition, the event facilitated inter-child project dialogue on the role of the global child project. The event produced several important achievements. First, the selection of the nine above-mentioned core indicators to be managed by the global child project to inform on the TRI's progress at the global (or programme) level. To support this initiative, it was agreed the global child project would carry out country visits to support the mainstreaming of the core indicators in their internal M&E systems. However, this support has not been conducted in Pakistan (or other TRI countries) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, agreement on areas of mutual interest, such as community-based forest co-management initiatives and development of NTFPs, that could be shared to promote learning and explore South-South cooperation opportunities. Again, country visits to follow-up on this have been severely curtailed by the pandemic. Third, agreements on the type of knowledge products to be produced to support learning and stimulate ideas on where exchanges and South-South cooperation could be enhanced. The MTR understands this facilitated the PM's exchange to research Mediterranean pine nut production and marketing, but delays in obtaining visas, prevented research taking place in Italy, the main producer of Mediterranean pine nuts in the EU.

157. The second event was a regional workshop on PES for the TRI projects in Asia (Pakistan, Myanmar and China), conducted in Beijing in September 2019. The event centred on

providing examples of PES that could be applied to FLR in their respective countries. However, although the MTR found the event provided a valuable exchange of information on their respective views on PES, it was not adequately tailored to developing PES within the current policy and legal context of each country. For example, as already mentioned in section 4.2.1 (output 1.3) the application of the same principles of PES applied in the United States is not applicable under Pakistan's policy and legal framework.

158. The third event was a TRI global event held in Rome in October 2019 to provide training on tools and methods on FLR. These included, the application of ROAM, an introduction to the CEOF and FAO's Ex-Act tool to calculate carbon sequestration/emissions, as well as presentations of other highly relevant tools, such as the Species Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) applied by IUCN. This event appears to have been highly valuable to the participants, although the MTR found the lack of follow-up in Pakistan due to the pandemic has restricted the opportunities to guide and monitor the application of some of these tools. However**, two tools (ROAM supported by the application of CEOF software) were found to be highly valued by the FWD/MoCC in Pakistan** and are likely to be replicated by FWD to support the application of ANR sites in the government's TBTTP flagship programme.

159. However, a part from STAR, tools such as the ecological health index (EHI) have not been promoted to monitor biological diversity in the restoration process. The MTR considers this is a gap that should be filled to improve communication on the role and benefits flora and fauna have in nature-based solutions to natural reforestation/restoration. For example, different types of forest fauna are crucial to natural seed distribution, pollenisation, soil biodiversity restoration, pest/disease control and so forth. Similarly, different types of flora support carbon sequestration, can be used as fire breaks, provide fodder alternatives, retain soil quality, etc. Moreover, the M&E system at the project and global levels should be tracking this information to support learning on forest biodiversity (as opposed to tree biodiversity) and ensure there is adequate follow-up to cover gaps in the application and use of such tools. In this way TRI would be able to report on contributions to the conservation and restoration of forest biodiversity and restoration in relation to relevant Aichi Targets (in particular 5 and 14) and SDG 15 (especially on mountain biodiversity and restoring degraded forests).

160. In addition, TRI's global project has not dedicated adequate attention to methods and tools to promote the under-forest economy (especially in the early stages of restoration). This situation is also reflected by its absence in the 9 core indictors selected, which have omitted socio-economic indicators linked to poverty reduction. Taking into account the project has a development objective, the MTR concludes a specific indicator should be included to measure the economic and social benefits for men and women derived from NTFPs promoted by the project. Furthermore, the global child project has only provided limited support to two entrepreneurs in Pakistan to date. There is also a need for a help-

desk facility, or technical pool of experts in different NTFPs, to provide on-demand guidance, support and webinars in areas where the MTR has identified gaps. These include, among others:

- Post-harvesting techniques (in particular correct grading and storage of NTFPs);
- Quality controls to ensure food processing meets international food safety standards to facilitate exports;
- The development of short supply chains to ensure input costs do not heavily compromise on profits;
- The production of certified products with denomination of origin, where feasible and competitive advantage;
- The development of effective marketing strategies, based on marketing studies, to establish inclusive value chains that ensure the producers become the main beneficiaries of the NTFPs rather than middlemen;
- The development of youth male and female entrepreneurs to show how they can become important income earners for households;
- Capturing innovative initiatives and local solutions to environmentally-friendly packaging (such as using potato starch plastic bags) and management of waste from the production and processing of NTFPs;
- Identifying voluntary ETS restored sites (applying EX-ACT) that capture sufficient carbon and where CFPCCs can guarantee good governance (including MRV) to sustain justify such agreements. On this, exchanges should be contemplated where such ETS schemes are already in place, preferably in TRI countries such as P.R. of China, where Fujian Province has voluntary ETS operating at the provincial level.

161. Finally, in response to the question, *what could be the 5 most useful activities for the national child project to be implemented by the global child project?* the MTR identified the following activities from the respondents to its questionnaire and interviews in the field mission:

- Improved monitoring at the national and global levels to capture lesson learnt, good practices and success stories on FLR that can be shared for thematic discussion and consultation in the TRI community and, where justified, at the international level also;
- Linked to monitoring of core indicator 1, it is suggested country-specific policy and strategy support is targeted by the global child project;
- Communication to main stakeholders and local beneficiary communities need to be improved to capture the above-mentioned lessons, good practices, success stories and so forth;

- Establishment of an interactive platform for the child projects to support the development of synergies on FLR and information exchange on project exit strategies;
- Improve support to entrepreneurs.

4.7.2 Synergies between child projects

162. The current planning, funding, monitoring, reporting and communication applied by TRI at the national and global child project levels was not found to be designed to stimulating formal synergies. Although, the Prodoc does emphasise such synergies should be established, there is no mention of the mechanism to be established between the child projects to facilitate this. As a result, the global child project has not been proactive in supporting synergies at either the national-to-global/global-to-national, or national-to-national level. The delays in starting TRI, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic have not aided this situation.

163. Nevertheless, the main purpose of the global child project appears to be more one of "provider" of support, training and monitoring on the tools and methods to apply SFM/FLR, rather than one of "facilitator" of SFM/FLR processes based on the specific policy, legal and regulatory framework of each TRI country, the main challenges and barriers they face in conserving, restoring and managing their degraded and deforested forests and the capacity and resources available. In other words, these issues have been addressed in the Prodoc at the national level, but they have not been captured at the global level in the interests of applying more country-specific support approaches to SFM/FLR/NFTPs. In this way, the promotion of tools, methods and human resources could be focused where they can add most value to the SFM/FLR/NTFP process and communications and exchanges focus more on how far these country-specific approaches are contributing to national requirements and targets.

4.7.3 What did the child project bring to the global child project?

164. The child project has provided contributions to TRI publications, in particular for the Annual Review for 2019, in which the PM provided a summary of the project's main components, targets, a summary of main activities realised and updates on trainings and achievements to end of 2019. In addition, the project has produced two success stories that have been submitted to the global child project for sharing within the TRI community. These documents have provided other national child projects with access to information on:

- Success story 1: Empowering local communities to protect forestry resources and reverse deforestation and forest degradation in high value Chilgoza forests in Kalash valley, Pakistan;

- Success story 2: Community participation and women empowerment in the protected forests of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

4.7.4 Questions on COVID-19 impact

165. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the implementation of project 091. As previously mentioned, the estimated delays amount to at least six months of planned operations. However, when factoring in the cancellation of global training events and exchanges, the actual delay in implementation of project 091 is probably closer to nine months. Taking into account the project also experienced a major delay in starting its main operations by almost 13 months in May 2019, an extension to the project's duration is urgently required, as it is highly unlikely it can meet its outputs and outcomes by April 2022.

166. Indications are the pandemic has had less impact on the forest restoration activities, but has severely affected the trainings and promotion of NTFPs and development of alternative livelihoods activities, all of which have not started, with the exception of support to pine nut processing. In addition, interviews and e-questionnaire responses indicate the pandemic has drastically reduced quality assurance, especially at the district level, in the form of follow-up visits and inspections to determine whether the FLR/SFM process is improving access to forest goods and services.

167. This is particularly important taking into account the pandemic has had a negative impact on the Pakistani economy (see subsection 4.4.1, Risk C). It is highly likely the impact of the pandemic will reduce the government's capacity to maintain its support levels and adequate quality assurance in the project sites from 2022, especially because the FWD still has almost 9 billion trees to plant under the TBTTP in new FLR sites. Nevertheless, one of the positive developments that has arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic, is that the demand for forest products, such as Chilgoza pine nuts, forest honey and medicinal plants, has increased. For example, a trader interviewed from GB, confirmed prices have increased by more than ten per cent in Lahore and for export (mainly to China) since 2020. In addition, the MTR team's own research indicates pine nuts and forest honey have high anti-oxidant qualities, which are important to strengthen the immune system and, thus, resilience to the COVID-19 virus. However, no communications on how forest products could be used to strengthen resilience in relation to health and nutrition was identified.

168. Finally, in terms of the support from FAO/TRI global child project in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MTR team found the promotion of FAO's Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) have been particularly helpful in preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19 virus in its main activities, especially in the three participating provinces/regions. For example, the application of the SOP has been an important factor in sensitising stakeholders and local communities on the importance of

establishing low-risk environments to enable the continuation of SFM/FLR activities on-the-ground. Nonetheless, there was no evidence of FAO, or the TRI global child project promoting participation in international webinars provided by specialised partners in management of humanitarian disasters. For example, FAO's partner Sphere has developed standards to fight COVID-19 and provided case studies on how these standards have been applied at the local level in South Asia, entitled, "Leaving no one behind".

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

169. The conclusions of the MTR team are presented below in accordance with the evaluation criteria and main questions established in the ToR (see Appendix 1). In all cases the conclusions are based on the abovementioned findings and observations. As far as possible, the conclusions highlight key achievements (strengths/opportunities) before addressing any shortcomings or gaps identified (weaknesses/risks). Insights into viable and realistic solutions or actions needed to address these shortcomings and gaps are also provided to support linkages to the recommendations in section 5.2. All recommendations are linked to the conclusions and clarify the stakeholders to whom they are directed. Every attempt has been to concentrate the recommendations on improving project effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

170. The conclusions and recommendations have taken full account of the delays of more than 18 months in the project's implementation and the resulting fact that it is highly unlikely the project can deliver the majority of its planned outputs and expected outcomes by 24 April 2022, when the project is scheduled to end. This is particularly the case where either project outputs and outcomes are less relevant now than when they were designed, or where the activities planned have not started. In addition, the conclusions and recommendations have taken into account the problems associated with inadequate monitoring, which it feels has reduced the opportunities to steer learning towards greater assessment of where transformational change is happening and where it is still needed to sustain and replicate the SFM/FLR/NTFP process to 2030 and beyond.

171. In terms of the MTR team's **overall risk rating for project 091, the MTR has increased it from "low" (PIR 2020), to "low-medium" because new risks have emerged from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan and the project sites experienced the effects of climate variability and change in 2020-2021, especially in the form of major pest outbreaks.** Nevertheless, it is still likely the project can reach its main outcomes and objectives, if the recommendations in this report are addressed/acted upon and an extension to the project's duration is applied to recover the delays in implementing the project's main activities.

Conclusion 1 (Relevance) on question 1: *Are the project outcomes congruent with current country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries?*

The project's outcomes are highly relevant to the Government of Pakistan's current policy to restore 6.2 per cent of the country's total land area to forests. Moreover, outcomes 2

and 3 are fully supportive of the country's commitment to implementing the TBTTP, which is seen as crucial to achieving this target within the context of its international targets and goals, which include pledges to restore 350 million hectares of degraded and deforested forests under the Bonn Challenge 2030. Furthermore, outcome 4 is designed to stimulate learning on SFM/FLR practices that can be replicated and scaled-up both within Pakistan under the TBTTP and in other TRI countries where such practices are applicable. Similarly, the project's outcomes fully comply with GEF6 priorities BD-4 (Programme 9), CCM-2 (Programme 7) and SFM3 (Programme 7) and FAO Strategic Objective 2 (Outcome 2.1). In the latest CPF (2018-2022), the project is fully congruent with Priority Area 2 (Output 2.4.1), which is specifically dedicated to supporting the restoration and improvement of forest ecosystems. At the local level, the project's design has been built on the results of needs assessments conducted with local communities and stakeholders in the Chilgoza forest ecosystems prioritized by FWD for restoration. In addition, it draws on good practices from previous FAO-managed projects that developed successful co-management of water catchments. This facilitated agreement on the four Chilgoza forest sites to be conserved, restored and managed and that the CFPCCs would assume a central role in achieving this.

Conclusion 2 (Effectiveness) on question 2: *To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?*

The project is making an important contribution to restoring Chilgoza forest ecosystems at all four intervention sites. This has been aided by the fact the project fully aligns with the needs and priorities of the Federal government's TBTTP, which started implementation around the same time as the child project in 2019. In particular, the project's support to the development of the CFPCCs represents a significant step forward in bringing the local stakeholders and forest communities together for the first time to establish an effective and efficient co-management approach to the SFM/FLR process in Chilgoza forest ecosystems. In addition, the application of methods such as ROAM and the production of maps using cost-effective CEOF open-source software has established a highly effective participatory approach to selecting ANR sites that can be replicated by MoCC/FWD at relatively low cost in the TBTTP, while securing a high sense of ownership of these sites among the local communities and their CFPCC, especially as they will ultimately validate the restoration process has achieved its environmental objective of safeguarding forest products and services and delivering GEBs. However, achievement of the project's development objective is still a long way off. On the one hand, the delayed start of the grant scheme has prevented the development of alternative livelihoods, which is of particular importance to reducing poverty among vulnerable groups such as women and youths. On the other, delays in developing inclusive value chains for NTFPs has prevented the establishment of micro/small enterprises that are needed to deliver the economic benefits that will justify the continued engagement of local communities in the conservation, restoration and management of the Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

Conclusion 3 (Efficiency) on question 3: *To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?*

The project's capacity to convert its resources into outputs and outcomes is at least 18 months behind schedule, caused primarily by a twelve-month delay in the constitution of the PSC in May 2019, and operational delays of at least six months caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. As a result, physical and financial progress rates of 50 and 43 per cent respectively are low and the fact there are just ten months remaining until project closure, means an extension to the project's duration is urgently required if it is to deliver the majority of planned outputs to a satisfactory level. The PSC has proved to be an efficient mechanism to oversee the project's execution since its inception in May 2019. This has been aided by the incorporation of the Provincial Secretaries of the FWD, together with their Chief Conservators, in the PSC since they are able to implement PSC decisions in their respective provinces/project sites. The creation of the CFPCCs has also been instrumental in bringing local stakeholders (including FWD) and Chilgoza forest communities together to build trust and agree on highly efficient co-management approaches concerning the application of the SFM/FLR process, given significant aspects of local governance in these sites is handled by the CFPCCs. The signing of LoAs has also proved to be a cost-effective measure to engage the FWD in the co-management of the SFGM/FLR activities, while at the same time building institutional capacity and memory within FWD. The nomination of a highly qualified PM who has work experience with the BTTAP and design of the TBBTP has contributed to these achievements and the establishment of a positive working relationship with the MoCC and FWD in the provinces. Meanwhile, the decision to employ full-time project coordinators in each of the project sites has ensured the PM has been able to guide and supervise project implementation in the field, which has been very cost-effective during the pandemic. Nonetheless, the lack of expertise to support the PM oversee the establishment of alternative livelihoods and business development of NTFPs is likely to affect the project's efficiency on establishing inclusive value chains, especially as there is no qualitative monitoring to support learning on how the project could improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Conclusion 4 (Sustainability) on question 4: *What is the likelihood that the project results can be sustained after the end of the project?*

The prospects of sustaining the project's outcomes are mixed. The MTR found sufficient evidence to indicate Outcomes 2 and 3 are likely to be sustained, because the project's SFM/FLR activities can be maintained through the CFPCCs and support from the TBTTP, which is likely to continue to 2030. However, the lack of adequate risk management, agreement on a suitable funding mechanism for the CFPCCs and slow development of alternative livelihoods and inclusive value chains for selected NTFPs that have a competitive advantage are key factors that are likely to affect the sustainability of the SFM/FLR process if they are not addressed and resolved. The prospects of sustaining

Outcome 1 are dependent on the feedback and analysis of the SFM/FLR process, which is still in its infancy, and the political willingness of the FWD to agree on a suitable funding mechanism for the CFPCCs, based on a combination of internal and external revenue. sources. This is particularly important, because MTR team found the potential to develop PES is severely hindered by the lack of a policy and legal framework to apply it. Finally, the sustainability of Outcome 4 is unlikely because the M&E system and communication strategy mainly focuses on tracking and reporting on operations and outputs that are designed to report on nine core indicators managed by TRI's the global child project. As a result, there is limited room for learning on the qualitative aspects of the project, to assess not only how far the project is contributing to national pledges, targets and goals, but also delivering the transformational changes needed at all levels to sustain and upscale the restoration process as a response to the global climate and ecological emergency that is unfolding. In addition, the M&E system does not monitor risks to support dialogue and agreement of risk mitigation measures, that the MTR team believe is crucial to developing resilient forest ecosystems and forest communities. Finally, inadequate attention has been given to the monitoring of economic development indicators, which the MTR considers is important to learn lessons on poverty reduction/improving livelihoods, given this will ultimately determine how far local communities will be committed to the conservation and sustainable use of the goods and services provided by the Chilgoza forest ecosystems.

Conclusion 5 (factors affecting performance) on question 5: *What are the main factors affecting the project from reaching its results?*

The main area affecting the project's effectiveness concerns some shortcomings in the project's design. First, outputs 1.2, 1.3/2.6 and Outcome 1 should be modified to meet current national and provincial priorities, in particular concerning the role and funding of the CFPCCs, taking into account the CFPCCS will play a central role in sustaining Outcomes 2 and 3. Second, there is a lack of qualified staff (or service providers) in business development planning and marketing of NTFPs. This is likely to affect how far livelihoods are improved to meet Outcome 2 and sustain it over the medium to long-term. Third, output 4.1. is not applying an M&E system that explicitly demonstrates the added value of the project vis-à-vis contributions to FWD's own pledges, targets and goals at the provincial and federal levels, or in terms of developing learning and advocacy to facilitate informed decision-making and promote the transformation change needed halt and/or reverse the drivers of forest degradation. This situation has also impeded the establishment of an interactive platform through which the FWD, CFPCCs, local stakeholders and other interested parties gain access to good practices and lessons learned in the SFM/FLR/NTFP process, or seek out and establish synergies with other relevant projects to support the achievement of objectives.

Conclusion 6 (Cross-cutting priorities) on question 6: *To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?*

The application of the ESS in the Prodoc confirms the checklist has been applied, although this is not monitored by the M&E system in coordination with main partners such as UNEP and IUCN who already have a high level of capacity on specific monitoring on the ecological health of forest ecosystems to support learning on positive/negative changes on forest biodiversity and habitat loss/restoration and which could support assessment of Chilgoza forest flora and fauna in IUCN's Red List. In the absence of this learning there is also less opportunities for TRI communications to demonstrate where it adds-value to conservation and resilience, which would enhance significantly its visibility at the provincial, national and international level, especially in relation to conservation of high profile animals such as the snow leopard, through which the projects would also have greater leverage to mobilise funds and alliances with civil society to support the development of sustainable and resilient forests and communities.

Conclusion 7 (gender) on question 7: *To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?*

The project's gender strategy is not sufficiently robust enough to deliver empowerment and change for women and other vulnerable groups. Despite applying needs assessments, sex-disaggregated monitoring and employment of two women trainers to promote alternative livelihoods for women, the MTR team's own data from the field visits and interviews indicates participation is not a good indicator to assess the empowerment of vulnerable groups, because project-funded inputs, toolkits, equipment and so forth is delivered through the heads of households (predominantly men). Indeed, women are only the main recipients of fuel-efficient stoves and gas fires, which actually may be reinforcing women's role in the home. Similarly, the vast majority of local community members participating in the 14 CFPCCs established with support from the project are males. As a result, the M&E system is not generating adequate data and learning to identify the gaps in its gender strategy and dialogue on identifying mutually acceptable responses that benefit men and women at the same time to bring about change in the rural dynamic; namely women's engagement in decision-making roles in their rural communities. This is important, because until these dynamic changes emerge, the opportunities for female project/FWD staff to access the majority of the sites will remain highly restricted and, thus, dependent on male staff.

Conclusion 8 (links to the global child project) on question 8: *What did the global child project bring to the national child project?*

The global child project provides important access to FAO/international good practices associated with the application of SFM/FLR and, since 2021 new services such as e-learning courses on FLR via the internet and promotion of voluntary FLR activities through the Restoration Factory (managed by UNEP). In Pakistan, the MoCC/FWD is already in the

process of testing the potential adoption of some of these good practices (ROAM and CEOF GIS-software) to support the implementation of the TBTTP. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented international events and exchanges taking place since 2020. Nonetheless, there is high demand for three developments. First, more effective monitoring, as already mentioned above. Second, the creation of an interactive platform to capture the results of more effective monitoring (especially through qualitative indicators) in the interests of improving learning, information exchange and knowledge management on the application of SFM/FLR/NTFPs, identification of good practices, lessons learnt and success stories, funding of co-management approaches, the development of NTFPs, women/youth-specific initiatives, among others. Third, the establishment of a remote help-desk through which national child projects can log on-demand requests information, contacts, technical guidance and/or online training on SFM/FLR/NTFPs, request in-country follow-up activities targeting gaps and needs of the child project, or facilitate remote synergies between projects until conventional synergies can return.

Conclusion 9 (COVID-19 impacts) on question 9: *What kind of support from TRI Global support partners and FAO, if any, would be most helpful in addressing Covid-19 impacts and challenges for the national project?*

The distribution of FAO's Standard Operational Procedures has proved to be one of the most significant areas where the TRI global project has helped project 091 establish low-risk environments that have allowed SFM/FLR activities on the ground to proceed. However, one area that the MTR team found is overlooked, is the importance of nutrition to strengthen the immune system and, thus, reduce the severity of infection and number of hospitalizations. In particular, the MTR identified the production of forest honey, medicinal plants and pine nuts as all good examples of local forest products that are available and which are known to enhance the immune system.

5.2. Recommendations

172. The following recommendations are linked to one or more of the above conclusions and are designed primarily to support project 091 and TRI's global child project enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the gender and communication strategies:

173. **Recommendation 1 – (linked to conclusions 4 and 5) – effectiveness and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA):** in the interests of achieving the project's objectives it is recommended the project's duration is extended. Taking into account the comments in the debriefing of the MTR 02 "5 August 2021, that an extension of the project will require an injection of new funds to fund staff and operations, it is recommended an 18-month extension is agreed (to 24 October 2023).

This is justified on the basis of the following reasons. First, the project has already experienced delays of over 18 months in its implementation and it is highly likely the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to affect project's implementation into 2022. Second, the project's small grant programme to support income generating activities will need at least two years of technical and marketing support and follow-up to establish themselves. Third, there is a need to review, agree and adopt a new Outcome 1 based on a revision of outputs 1.2 and 1.3 and introduce a new M&E system to support learning on transformational change and tracking of indicators that are aligned to national and international targets, pledges and goals. Moreover, these changes are considered crucial to supporting the achievement of Outcomes 2 and 3.

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

c) The redefinition of Outcome 1: It is recommended this should start by reaching consensus on the main roles of forest protection and conservation committees (FPCCs). For example: *to maximize the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by forest ecosystems and ensure they are used sustainably to generate national and global environmental benefits*. It is important to include this latter point, because the growing threats of the climate emergency are likely to impact on Pakistan's economy and population heavily.
d) Review and realign outputs 1.2 and 1.3 in accordance with FWD's current priorities concerning the legal recognition and funding of FPCCs in general to support and sustain all forest ecosystems subject to restoration by the TBBTP. Although this should start in the three provinces participating in the project, expansion of FPCCs into other provinces of Pakistan (including coastal mangrove sites), should not be excluded. To assist the realignment of these outputs, the project should conduct a study over the next three months engaging senior members of the FWD, nominated by MoCC in coordination with the Prime Minister's Office. This study should identify, among others:
    - Lessons learnt and good practices adopted by the CFPCCs;
    - A diversified funding package for the FPCCs, including a mix of internal and external income generating sources, that is feasible, easy to operate and verify and which can be agreed under the existing legal framework;
    - An action plan to seek government approval of the proposed financial package and its application in the three participating provinces, but with a view to mainstreaming FPCCs in forestry policy over the medium-term;
    - The guidelines for training of FPCCs, including their financial accountability, their roles in managing the SFM/FLR processes, governance responsibilities (combining national rules and regulations and local good practices such as Nigahbans (forest guards) and Naghas (local fines) and monitoring responsibilities (including ecological health, forest biodiversity, carbon storage, governance-related incidents, seasonal production rates of NTFPs);

- Donors who can continue support the implementation of the above-mentioned action plan, in particular under REDD+ readiness to support capacity development in MRV and exploration of carbon trading income generation over the medium to long-term (2030-2050);
- The final agreed wording of expected Outcome 1 plus all human and financial resources needed to achieve this outcome.

174. **Recommendation 2 – (linked to conclusions 4 and 5) – effectiveness and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA):** Output 4.1 is reviewed and redefined to support the achievement of Outcome 4: before updating the M&E systems it is strongly recommended that the project hires a consultant (if possible, through the global child project's budget), to carry out a participatory review of the Results Matrix in the Prodoc, given this has not been updated since it was elaborated in 2016. The main aim of this review is to provide guidance and support on establishing an effective M&E system that can be replicated for other national child projects where and when required.

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

- Improve the vertical logic to show the linkages between the environmental and development objectives, in particular how increased income and food security and nutrition derived from the goods and services of Chilgoza forest ecosystems act as an incentive for the CFPCCs to consolidate themselves as the main guardians of their conservation and sustainable use and that this model can be replicated under the TBTTP;
- Improve the horizontal logic through a review of the indicators, baselines and targets on SFM/FLR/NTFPs to move away from a "stand-alone" initiative, to one that is an "agent of change" designed to support stakeholders learn and engage in policy dialogue on how to make forest ecosystem restoration sustainable over the long-term. It is recommended indicators, baselines and targets focus on:
  - Adjustments in accordance with current needs and priorities of main stakeholders and end beneficiaries to ensure they are realistic and achievable;
  - Selected end targets are linked to relevant sub-national and national pledges, targets and goals relating to the Bonn Challenge 2030 (forestry policy statements and agreements), to the Aichi Targets (prescribed in the NBSAP and latest national environmental policies and plans), to Pakistan's commitments to storing carbon/reducing GHGs (relevant targets in the NDCs under the Paris Agreement and SDG 13) and to reducing biodiversity loss (prescribed in the NBSAP, latest Wildlife policies and linked to reporting on the Red List managed by IUCN);
  - Qualitative indicators are included to stimulate learning on why project activities on SFM/FLR/NTFPs are being achieved/unachieved as planned and dialogue on how, where and when they need to be upscaled/outscaled and/or improved/changed to meet planned outcomes and objectives. These indicators

should focus on participatory learning through, for example, knowledge-attitude-practices surveys, case studies on success stories, forest-based workshops, among others;

- A risk assessment is applied at three levels (outputs, outcomes and objectives) in order to encourage the integration of risk management in project planning, implementation and monitoring, to emphasise the management of risk is a central theme in establishing resilient forests and forest communities.

- Proceed with the review and updating of the project's M&E system following agreement on the new RM. The main aim behind this revision should be to create an M&E system that supports learning, integrates risk management and promotes strategic thinking on TRI as a mechanism to bring about the change needed to achieve and sustain sub-national, national and global pledges, targets and goals and, at the same time build resilience to the effects of climate change. It is suggested this could be achieved by:
  - Linking output and outcome indicators to qualitative indictors to clarify what are the key parameters for learning on how to apply, sustain and upscale SFM/FLR/NTFPs;
  - Linking each output and outcome indicators to the risks identified and identify the mitigation measures that need to be monitored to determine how far stakeholders and end beneficiaries are prepared, and able, to respond to risks such as pests, prolonged droughts, fires, over-grazing, lack of law enforcement, lack of engagement of the whole community (men, women, youths, elders, etc.) and so forth;
  - Updating of existing indicators so that the M&E system tracks and reports on project contributions to national indicators and targets/pledges/goals concerning Pakistan's international commitments to the Bonn Challenge 2030, Aichi Targets (5, 7 and 14), UNFCCC/Paris Agreement. project can increase its visibility by showing, among others, the project's percentage contribution to: (i) the total land area of Chilgoza forest ecosystems restored each year in the three participating provinces by all government programmes (including the TBTTP), and at the national level by year to 2030; (ii) the total forest area restored (all forest types) by all government programmes (including the TBTTP) each year in the three participating provinces, and at the national level by year to 2030; (iii) the number of hectares of Chilgoza forest ecosystems under sustainable management by CFPCCs (showing the total number of CFPCCs established and sex-disaggregated data on the members of the CFPCC);
- Agree on the qualitative indicators that will be tracked by the M&E system to learn lessons and identify good practices that can be used to stimulate learning and promoter informed dialogue on addressing implementation gaps and on advocating the transformational change needed at all levels to establish an effective and sustainable SFM/FLR process. It is suggested a mix of environmental and social

indicators, baselines and targets are identified (with the support of FAO/global child project). For example:

- Ecological health indicators to monitor the condition, functions and resilience of the Chilgoza forests, which should be applied throughout the forest restoration process in Pakistan in general and in the three participating provinces in particular. These indicators should be agreed at the TRI level (including UNEP and IUCN) and tools identified, such as CEOF, to support the monitoring of spatial data in the project,[31] and which can be replicated to support other national child projects learn and report on the quality of their interventions in relation to relevant national policies, strategies and plans;
- Species Threat Abatement and Recovery indicators to support learning on changes in the number and type of threatened species on IUCN's Red List in Chilgoza forest ecosystem. Taking into account the global child project of TRI has introduced this tool at the third TRI event in 2019, it is recommended a strategy is put in place to support training and application of STAR monitoring in all TRI national child projects;
- Economic surveys and case studies to assess and measure changes in income generation resulting from the small-grants scheme and how far increased income is reducing poverty among and improving access to public and private services for men and women in the targeted communities;
- KAP surveys to identify why conservation and sustainable use of Chilgoza forest ecosystems is happening as planned, or why it is not. It is important these surveys fully engage both men and women's participation (includes young women and other vulnerable groups). This should be aided by the introduction of tables (similar to Table 5) designed to track not only participation rates, but how far women and other vulnerable groups of all ages feel their specific needs are being identified and addressed, and how far they are participating in decision-making and income generating activities.

- The PSC agrees on a provisional road map for SFM/FLR/NTFPs activities to 2030 in which the project's exit strategy is clearly defined to ensure a seamless closure process in 2024 if the extension is granted for 24 months. To this end, it is recommended to:
  - Identify and seek agreement from the PSC/MoCC on a suitable research institution in Pakistan that can take over the ownership of the M&E system to enhance the opportunities of continuing and promoting strategic thinking and dialogue on SFM/FLR/NTFPs beyond the project, preferably to 2030;
  - Establish a link to the global child project to ensure there is a centralised information system in place on TRI monitoring (one-stop-shop), through which there is easy access to knowledge on SFM/FLR/NTFPs and the ability to identify where the global project can add most value (webinars, e-learning, provision of follow-up technical services, etc.).

[31] For example, see Scotland's Environment, Ecosystem Health Indicators, 2019.

- The PSC, FWD, FAO/GEF agree on adopting an adequate budget to both implement this recommendation and share the results, lessons and good practices identified to develop an effective communication strategy at the provincial, national and TRI global levels.

175. **Recommendation 3 (linked to conclusions 3, 4 and 5): effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability – for PSC, BH/FAOPK, PM, FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP/CTA:** following the improvement of the M&E system it is highly recommended that the centralised information system proposed above on TRI monitoring is used to develop an effective communication strategy to raise awareness on TRI and its role in achieving "adaptive sustainability" that clarifies the restoration of forest landscapes is not only dedicated to restoring the ecosystem, but building sustainable development and resilience of the communities that depend upon them.

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

- The communication strategy should adopt two main goals: (i) informing on progress and achievements that highlight lessons learnt and good practices associated with this progress and achievements; (ii) stimulating the policy dialogue needed to bring about the transformational changes required to achieve "adaptive sustainability" and, thus, halt the drivers of forest degradation and deforestation in Pakistan's Chilgoza pine (and other) forests;
- Taking into account the growing threats associated with climate change, the pandemic and biodiversity loss, the communication strategy should dedicate particular attention to lessons and good practices on effective risk management. For example, the establishment of local tree and non-tree nurseries (preferably at the household, or CFPCC level) that produce and sell local varieties produced from seeds collected by the local communities and FWD staff, that include fire-resistant varieties that can be used to establish fire breaks, stabilise soils, capture carbon, etc., so that ANR sites are also conceived to manage high-risk areas;
- Development of an interactive platform at the national and TRI global levels that supports networking in addition to access to the abovementioned creation of a centralised information system on the results, risks, lessons, good practices and success stories on SFM/FLR/NTFPs. One of the main aims of this networking should be to support and stimulate lobbying and advocacy for change at the strategic level (policies, strategies and plans), legal level (legal and regulatory framework), economic level (access to information, training, resources) and community level (restoration techniques, management governance, monitoring etc.);
- Tailor the communication strategy to the needs and interests of different audiences. For example, at the international level advocacy for change needs to target the agendas of, for example, the Conference of the Parties (COPs) for CBD and other relevant COPs (such as for UNFCCC). At the national level messages need to focus on the needs of the GEF national Focal Point, the Minister of MoCC and the Prime

Minister/President's Office (promotion of the TBTTP). Finally at the sub-national level lobbying for change should focus on promoting the adoption of good practices, addressing lessons learned and securing funding where decision-making is most influential at provincial/departmental level, while at the district/local community level the field mission found lobbying for change is more effective when it is done through educational institutions, youth forums, trade unions, local elders, local media (print and digital) and other relevant stakeholders who are accepted mediums to highlight and promote the ownership of good practices linked to the conservation and restoration of forests.

176. **Recommendation 4 (linked to conclusion 7) - sustainability and cross-cutting objectives – for PSC, PM, BH/FAOPK (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and CTA):** The project should develop a more effective gender strategy, to ensure participation rates of women are linked to meeting their specific needs and aspirations that have been identified in needs assessments already conducted, or which are still required. In the light of the new government's commitment to ending discriminatory laws and the fact Pakistan is ranked 143 out of 144 countries in the gender equality index,[32] it is recommended the gender strategy focuses on culturally acceptable methods of engaging men and women (and other vulnerable groups) in activities on SFM/FLR/NTFPs that deliver mutual benefits and/or win-win situations for both men and females based on the concept "where there is a will, there is a way".

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

- The recruitment of a female forester who is culturally aware and sensitive to the challenges of working with Western Pakistan's forest communities. In the interest of gaining access to these communities. The recruitment of a female forester is preferred to a gender specialist, because the aim should be to demonstrate a female professional can deliver major benefits to the male community, while at the same time gradually promote a mix of female and male trainers and animators to engage both sexes in the SFM/FLR/NTFP process.
- Ensure the review of the RM and M&E system proposed in recommendation 2 above, targets women's participation in decision-making roles, in particular in the CFPCCs. This should be developed by seeking out both men and women who have a voice in their community and who are prepared to work together to manage discrimination and promote win-win situations that empower and benefit men and women alike in the FLR/SFM/NTFP activities;
- Tailor the trainings to women's needs by applying demonstrations that require the participation of men and women to show how the sharing of workloads can double the benefits of SFM/FLR/NTFP activities (including gender sensitive harvesting of

[32] World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap report, 2017, which also states only 22 per cent of the workforce are women compared to 46 per cent globally.

pine cones). The small grants programme should promote economic activities that engage all members of the household in the production, processing and sale of NTFPs, rather than targeting an individual entrepreneur (male or female). One particular activity that is recommended is the development of the "under-forest economy" during the early stages of the restoration process. For example, poultry and duck raring, inter-cropping with mountain rice varieties and/or medicinal herbs should be promoted as household activities to ensure women's workload is not disproportionally increased in relation to males;

- Identify female heads of households (widows, wives of migrant workers) and illiterate or semi-illiterate women who need specific support to participate in the SFM/FLR/NTFP activities.
- Train CFPCC members to monitor these developments to promote dialogue and awareness within the community that the engagement of women, youths, other vulnerable groups provide lessons on how household poverty can be reduced and economic and social resilience strengthened.
- Ensure there is an adequate budget to both implement this recommendation (including the training requirements of men and women selected to develop localized gender-specific activities) and share results, lessons and good practices identified at the TRI global level.

177. **Recommendation 5 (linked to conclusion 5 and 8) – Efficiency and effectiveness – for PM, FAO (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and FAO-PK)**: increase the number of formal synergies between FAO and its main partners in TRI (GEF, UNEP, IUCN and UNDP/REDD+), as well as with other pertinent donors and government departments. It is recommended greater effort is applied by FAO to explore where synergies could be of mutual interest and benefit.

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

- FAOPK establishes an internal coordination mechanism to explore where GEF-funded projects managed by FAO, UNEP, IUCN and UNDP could establish synergies to support each other and share costs. This is particularly important concerning their support in the abovementioned proposals to apply Ecological health assessments (UNEP/IUCN), application of STAR and monitoring of the Red List (IUCN/WWF), development of MRV to produce carbon inventories and identify potential carbon trading opportunities in the medium to long-term (UNDP/UNREDD+) and so forth.
- FAOPK explores synergies to support the development of small businesses, in particular establishing a partnership (or at least information exchange) with SMEDA and other government agencies supporting rural education and employment. In addition, it is recommended coordination and complementarity is established with highly qualified international agencies in developing inclusive

value chains (IFAD, GiZ);

- FAOPK and the PM explore the identification of opportunities to establish joint ventures with civil society organisations to support the application of the above synergies in the field.
- FAOPK and the global child project explore areas where the latter could provide specific inputs to facilitate the agreement of synergies with TRI's main implementing partners (UNEP, IUCN).

178. **Recommendation 6 (linked to conclusion 8) – Effectiveness and sustainability – for FAO and GEF Secretariat (FAO-R, FAO-GCU, FAO-RAP and FAO-PK):** The current reporting format of the PIRs is heavy and not designed to inspire learning. It is recommended the PIR format is updated taking on board the above recommendations.

Suggestions on how to apply this recommendation:

- Request a summary of main lessons learnt and good practices that explain the project's level of progress and achievements in line with recommendation 2;
- The section on gender should directly refer to the latest guidelines on gender equality by FAO/GEF and request an explanation on the positive developments of the gender strategy being applied and where there are shortcomings. Shortcomings should be explained to show the project has identified the causes and how they are to be addressed to engage women and other vulnerable groups more effectively in both decision-making roles and in the sharing of the benefits of SFM/FLR/NTFPs.
- Given the project is part of a global programme on TRI, there should be a specific section in the PIR dedicated to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the support and services provided by the global child project and suggestions on how this could be improved;
- Expenditure tables on GEF funding should include a breakdown of expenditure in accordance with the Prodoc, or in a format agreed by the PSC during the inception phase.

179. **Recommendation 7 (linked to conclusion 3) – PM, PSC and FAOPK (BH):** an extraordinary meeting of the PSC should be held to agree and endorse the above recommendations and identify a plan of action to implement them. In addition, the PSC should address how the low level of co-finance can be resolved to ensure the implementation of the recommendations also benefits from the support of the provincial and national stakeholders

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6. Lessons learned

80. **Lesson learned 1 – on the CFPCCs:** the CFPCCs are demonstrating they are an effective way to bring local stakeholders and community together to agree on effective co-management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems. This is considered good practice, because they offer a unique opportunity to build trust, ownership and dialogue on recognising and valuing the importance of conserving and sustainably using their goods and services, as well as ensuring local knowledge and community governance practices are integrated into the co-management response. The lesson learnt is that the reform of the policy and legal framework on forestry is not needed to integrate SFM/FLR, but is needed to legalise "Forest Protection and Conservation Committees" (FPCCs) for all forests (including mangroves) in Pakistan to support the sustainability of the TBTTP, which includes clarity on the generation of internal and external income from both public and private sources to operate, train and maintain them over the long-term.

81. **Lesson 2 – on resilience:** the promotion of SFM/FLR practices assumes the distribution of tree plants in the four participating districts builds more resilient communities and forests. However, this is not entirely true, because it is the restoration of native biodiversity (flora and fauna) that enhances the resilience of the Chilgoza forest ecosystems and, therefore the resilience of the communities that depend on them.

82. **Lesson 3 – on nutrition (linked to resilience):** the promotion of SFM/FLR practices encompasses food security and the promotion of cash crops, especially pine nuts, but has omitted their role in enhancing nutrition. Taking into account nutrition forms an integral part of resilience, it is good practice to explicitly associate the restoration of forest landscapes and its biodiversity with the restoration of nutrition.

83. **Lesson 4 – on gender monitoring:** reporting in the PIRs on the number of women who have participated in project activities and trainings does not constitute good practice. Participation rates risk causing a false sense of security that the project is achieving progress on gender equality, when in fact their access to information, further training, tools, funding and so forth may not have changed. A gender strategy that targets vulnerable groups (women, youths, disabled, etc.) to engage in decision-making, governance practices, income generation, monitoring, and analysis of results is good practice for a gender strategy.

84. **Lesson 5 - on national and global child project monitoring:** the application of project monitoring systems, that do not track qualitative indicators and risks and which are not aligned to relevant national/international indicators and targets, pledges and goals, is likely to jeopardise their ownership and use by executing agencies during and after project implementation. This is not good practice to develop institutional memory and policy dialogue.

85. **Lesson 6 - on communication at the local level:**

Communications based mainly on written literature, press-releases and website-based information and training is not considered good practice to induce change at the local level in remote districts and sub-districts. The lesson learnt is that communication strategies should target different audiences and that at the local level they are most successful when they involve local educational institutions, youth forums, trade unions, local elders, local media (print and digital), local artistic and dance societies, among others, to promote the ownership of conservation and restoration of Chilgoza forests.

7. Appendices

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Appendix 1. Terms of reference for the MTR

Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Review of FSP Project Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan

The Restoration Initiative

Child project: Pakistan GCP /PAK/091/GFF

GEFID 9516

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATIONOF THE UNITED NATIONS

Representation in Pakistan

March 2021

Table of Contents

Introduction

The purpose of the Mid-term Review (MTR) is to assess progress made towards achievement of the project's results, identify challenges faced and provide inputs to better orient the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)'s project in Pakistan GCP/PAK/091/GFF making it more relevant to the needs of the country.

The project GCP/PAK/091/GFF « Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan" is part of the Restoration Initiative with the objective of improved local livelihoods through increased productivity and enhanced services and functions of the chilgoza forests of Pakistan. The project is operative in Sherani district of Balcohistan, South-Waziristan Agency of FATA, Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkwa and Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan. The project will bring around 30,000 hectares areas of chilgoza forests under sustainable forest management through active participation of the local communities. This will also include 3600 hectares under Assisted Natural Regeneration and 800 hectares under agroforestry and farm forestry. The project, in addition to the local benefits, will also contribute to the global environmental benefits by mitigating estimated Greenhouse Gas emissions amount of 2,782,420 tCO_2eq (direct) and 7,724,809 tCO_2eq (consequential/indirect) in the considered biome and timeframe.

This MTR seeks to draw lessons and make recommendations that would be useful for the remaining implementing period. It would also inform any future FAO/MOCC collaboration within the same field of activities. In addition to advising on how to improve the impact and relevance of the project, the MTR will also identify the strategic direction and priority areas for future interventions in line with FAO's comparative advantage.

The MTR is to cover the project since its inception on 25th April 2018 until 31st of December 2020 and will use the project Results framework and M&E framework as the main evaluation framework.

1 Project/programme background and context

1.1 Description and objectives of the TRI program

The Restoration Initiative (TRI) Program has been developed to make a significant contribution to restoring ecosystem functioning and improving livelihoods through the restoration of priority degraded and deforested landscapes. TRI supports targeted countries in achieving their pledges to the Bonn Challenge, and to respond to their sustainable development and conservation needs and targets.

TRI involves a large coalition of partners and GEF agencies, operating across two continents, and with national "child" projects[33] each tailored to the particular needs, contexts and challenges of the countries in which they are implemented. The Program indeed consists of 11 national child projects in 10 Asian and African countries, further complemented and

33 Using the language of the GEF, projects that comprise a GEF program are here referred to as "child projects."

supported by a *Global Learning, Financing, and Partnerships* child project providing programmatic coordination and technical support, and supporting capture and dissemination of learning on *forest landscape restoration* (FLR) to TRI partners and the wider restoration community. The *Global Child project* is also providing monitoring support across the entire TRI project portfolio. Through the GEF programmatic approach, TRI aims at capturing synergies among constituent child projects (e.g., through South-South learning) and provide a wider array of tools and resources to child projects, while leveraging key partnerships to yield cost savings and realize greater impact than possible under a fragmented, project-by-project approach.

TRI is supported by three GEF implementing agencies: IUCN, which serves as the lead GEF agency for the program, together with FAO and UNEP. In country, the project is executed by TRI Executing Partners - principally Government agencies and in some cases non-governmental organizations. Other institutional elements and key stakeholders include i) an external, TRI Program Advisory Committee (PAC) comprised of TRI country representatives and relevant external experts and partners; ii) private sector partners involved in TRI country project work; and iii) external restoration partners and initiatives, particularly the Bonn Challenge, AFR 100, GPFLR, FLRM and others.

As stated in the *TRI Programme Framework Document* (PFD), the **overall goal** of TRI is "to contribute to the restoration and maintenance of critical landscapes that provide global environmental benefits and enhanced resilient economic development and livelihoods, in support of the Bonn Challenge". This program goal is further disaggregated in an environmental and development objective:

> **Global Environmental Objective:** Biodiversity conservation, protection of climate and other ecosystem services through restoration of critical landscapes in TRI countries and complementary sustainable land management (SLM). Table 1 below summarizes the anticipated environmental benefits in each country.
> **Global Development Objective:** Poverty reduction, strengthened food security, and human well-being and livelihoods enhanced in TRI countries through restoration of critical landscapes and complementary SLM.

The TRI PFD defines the component structure and anticipated outcomes of national child projects. This flexible framework has been designed to address four principal barriers to restoration described in the TRI Theory of Change (Annex 2). Using this framework, national child projects have been designed and tailored to meet the needs of TRI countries.

Component 1: Policy Development and Integration – supporting work to enhance the enabling in-country policy environment for FLR.

Component 2: Implementation of Restoration Programs and Complementary Initiatives – delivering support for implementation of restoration programs on identified priority landscapes, as well as support for complementary land management initiatives.

Component 3: Institutions, Finance and Upscaling – focusing on strengthening the capacity, reach, and effectiveness essential to the successful implementation of restoration

and sustainable land management initiatives, and increasing the flow of sustainable finance, both public and private, into restoration and sustainable land management.

Component 4: Knowledge, Partnerships, Monitoring and Assessment – providing support for knowledge generation and exchange, monitoring and assessment of progress in achieving Program; activities that will create synergies, enhance learning and underpin and scale up the success of TRI.

A guidance note illustrating the TRI monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework has been developed for use by TRI partners. It provides both a conceptual basis for monitoring and evaluating the progress and performance of TRI, as well as a set of common processes, tools, and key learning questions to facilitate harmonized tracking and reporting of results and capture of relevant and useful information during implementation of TRI. Among these, a set of **9 core indicators** have been agreed with the GEF to track the progress of child projects and the Program in realizing the program objectives and outcomes shown above.

1.2 Description of the child project, project objectives and components

Region:	**Asia-Pacific**
Country:	**Pakistan**
Project Title:	**Reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilgoza Pine Forests in Pakistan**
FAO Project Symbol:	**GCP/PAK/091/GFF**
GEF ID:	**9516**
GEF Focal Area(s):	**Biodiversity f-4 Program 9** **Climate Change Mitigation CCM-2 Program 4** **Sustainable Forest Management**
Project Executing Partners:	**Ministry of Climate Change**
Project Duration:	**48 months**
GEF CEO Endorsement Date:	**25 April 2018**
Project Implementation Start Date/EOD:	**25 April 2018**
Proposed Project Implementation End Date/NTE:	**24 April 2022**
Revised project implementation end date (if applicable):	**N/A**
Actual Implementation End Date:	**N/A**
GEF Grant Amount (USD):	**3,978,440 USD**
Total Co-financing amount as included in GEF CEO Endorsement Request/ProDoc:	**24,000,000 USD**
Total GEF grant disbursement as of June 30, 2020 (USD m):	**738,088**
Total estimated co-financing materialized as of December 2020	**Tbd**

1.2.1 Context in Pakistan

Chilgoza forests are occurring in the dry temperate zone of Pakistan. These forests grow between 2000 to 3350 meters above sea level in the Hindu-Kush Himalayan region of Pakistan. The chilgoza forests either occur in pure patches or mixed with other coniferous tree species like deodar, and blue pine. These forests hold tremendous importance from both ecological and economical perspective. Though the accurate value of this ecosystem is yet to be assessed, but this has high significance for its non-timber forest products including chilgoza nuts, medical plants, mushrooms, honey and biodiversity with positive contribution to the local livelihoods. However, these forests are under tremendous pressure due to the increased demand beyond their capacity. The main threats to the chilgoza ecosystem include unsustainable harvest, overgrazing, conversion to agriculture land natural disaster and climate change.

1.2.2 Pakistan child project objectives

The proposed project is a part of the "The Restoration Initiative "with the objective of improved local livelihoods through increased productivity and enhanced services and functions of the chilgoza forests of Pakistan. The project is operative in Sherani district of Balcohistan, South-Waziristan Agency of FATA, Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkwa and Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan.

> The **component 1** of the project is related to strengthen regulatory and policy environment for integrated and sustainable management of chilgoza forest ecosystem.
> The **component 2** is related to the implementation of chilgoza forest landscape conservation, restoration and value chain development at community level.
> The **component 3** will be addressing matter related to strengthening local institutions for integrated and sustainable management of chilgoza forest ecosystem.
> The **component 4** is covering knowledge, partnership, monitoring and assessment of chilgoza forest ecosystem.

The project will bring around 30,000 hectares areas of chilgoza forests under sustainable forest management through active participation of the local communities. This will also include 3600 hectares under Assisted Natural Regeneration and 800 hectares under agroforestry and farm forestry.

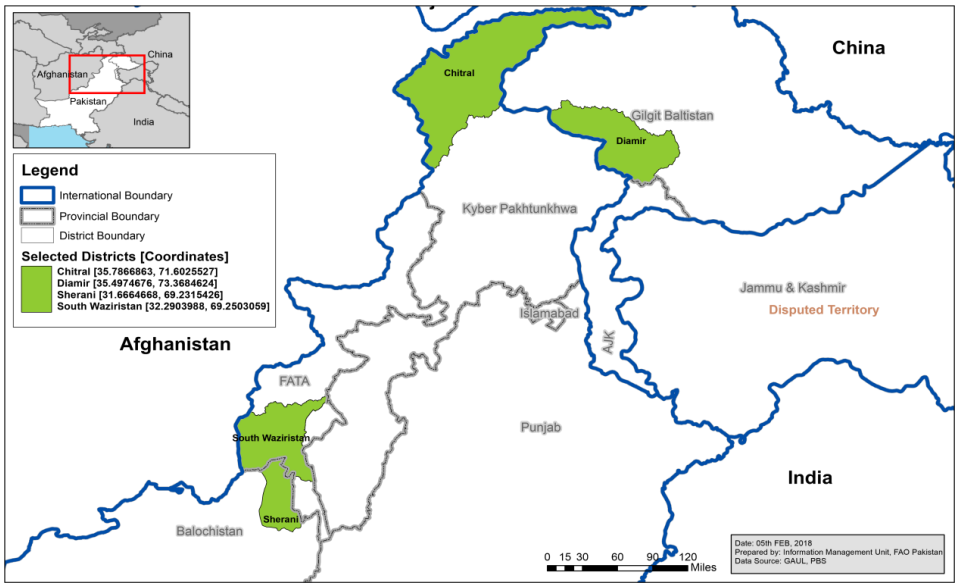
The project, in addition to the local benefits, will also contribute to the global environmental benefits by mitigating estimated Greenhouse Gas emissions amount of 2,782,420 tCO_2eq (direct) and 7,724,809 tCO_2eq (consequential/indirect) in the considered biome and timeframe.

1.2.3 Target districts

The project activities cover four key dry temperate Chilgoza forest sites in Balochistan (Suleiman mountain range), Khbyer Pakhtunkhwa (Shishi-valley of Chitral), South-

Waziristan (Suleiman mountain range) and Giigit-Baltistan (Diamer district). A map below shows the four project districts.

Selected districts of Pakistan for "Chilgoza GEF Project"



The Chilgoza forests are situated in the dry temperate areas of Pakistan and are mostly on the rugged mountains. Depending upon the site location, the accessibility in some area is an issue. These forests are either in pure stands, or as a mixed stand with other coniferous species. The ownership also varies across the four selected project sites. In Balcohistan, FATA, and GB the sites are private forests/community forests with the management responsibility rest with the respective forest departments. At these sites, management plans do not exist, and the focus is on generating financial resources as well as fulfilling community needs for timber, fuel wood, and fodder. In Chitral, the forests are protected forests with the provincial government ownership, while the local people have user rights and privileges for utilizing the various products and services.

1.2.4 Alignment and Strategic Fit

At the national level the project should be in line with the Country Programming Framework 2012-2017: priority area no 2: support to Pakistan new growth strategy through sustainable agricultural economic growth, and to the output: 2.2.2. Enhanced capacity of key value chain actors, for increased value addition in targeted agricultural growth areas along the commodity chains through promotion of public-private partnerships, new and improved post –harvest management technologies and practices (benefiting in particular small holders, women and youth).

The project should be in line with GEF-5 Programming Strategy on adaptation to climate change, in particular to the Focal areas biodiversity f-4 Program 9: Managing the Human-

Biodiversity Interface, Climate Change Mitigation CCM-2 Program 4: Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stock in forest and other land use, and support climate smart agriculture, and Sustainable Forest Management SFM-3 Program 7.

The project should mainly contribute to the results of FAO's Strategic Objectives 2 related to Making agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable and to the outcome 2.1 Countries adopted practices to increase productivity sustainably while addressing climate change and environmental degradation in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

1.3 Project stakeholders and their role

Table. Stakeholder analysis matrix

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
1. Active stakeholders with direct responsibility for the project, e.g. FAO, executing partners				
FAO FLRM team	(1) Administrate funds from the GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO; (2) Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers and the rules and procedures of FAO; (3) Provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned; (4) Conduct at least one supervision mission per year; and (5) Report to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, on project progress and provide financial reports to the GEF Trustee. As requested by the national operational partners, FAO provides direct support services, including procurement and contracting services, fully embedded in the PMC of the project.	The GEF agency responsible for monitoring and providing technical backstopping during project implementation		All stages of the process

[34] Include the names of relevant individuals, if known, and be as specific as possible

[35] 1 = essential; 2 = desirable; 3 = if time and resources allow

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Lead Technical Officer	Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers and the rules and procedures of FAO The LTO is responsible and accountable for providing or obtaining technical clearance of technical inputs and services procured by the Organization. Report to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, on project progress and provide financial reports to the GEF Trustee. As requested by the national operational partners, FAO provides direct support services, including procurement and contracting services, fully embedded in the PMC of the project.	LTO is part of the GEF agency responsible for monitoring and providing technical backstopping during project implementation and has a central role in the project. Member of the PSC	1	All stages of the process
Chief Technical Advisor	Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers and the rules and procedures of FAO. Ensure the sound implementation of project activities jointly with the NPC, and ensure best international technical and management practices are integrated into project activities	CTA is part of the GEF agency responsible for monitoring and providing technical backstopping during project implementation	1	All stages of the process
Funding liaison officer (FLO)	The FAO-GEF Coordination Unit acts as FLO and review the PPRs and financial reports, and review and approve budget revisions.	Part of the implementing agency	2	Interviews

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Provincial/Regional Forest Departments	Provincial and Regional Forest departments guide day to day project management and ensure inter-agency coordination for SFM at the provincial level. The development and implementation of forestry management plans (and other developmental planning) is their responsibility, and they lead this work alongside other departments to promote integrated provincial policy, planning, and budget processes.	At the decentralized level, the Provincial and Regional Forest departments are the main executing partners which guide day to day project management, and ensure inter-agency coordination at the provincial level.	2	At all stages of the MTR consultations; being implementing partners, the interviews with those departments need to be done individually. They need to be involved in the stakeholder briefings/workshops when the final report is ready.
The Project Management Unit	The PMU is headed by a national Project Coordinator and the support staff. The PMU in collaboration with MOCC and FAO has overall management and administrative responsibility for coordination with the Provincial Management Committees, and the provincial Implementation Units. The PMU assists the provincial forest departments and project management and implementation unit in managing operational activities, preparation of work plan, budget, reporting to the donor and MOCC on quarterly and annual basis. The Project Coordinator is responsible for the recruitment of staff, consultants for the project and supervising their work, and financial management to ensure that the project produces the results indicated in the project document.	The PMU has overall management and administrative responsibility for coordination with the Provincial Management Committees, and the provincial Implementation Units.	1	Meetings and interviews
Provincial Management Committees	The Provincial Management Committees at Provincial level have the mandate to coordinate engagement of relevant provincial stakeholders. These committees are headed by the Secretary Forests with members	The committee supports project implementation, oversees annual work plan and budget, and	2	Meetings and interviews

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
	from the Forest Department (Chief Conservator of Forests), Chief Conservator of Wildlife, Representatives from Planning and Development and Finance Departments, and the National Project Coordinator. The committee supports project implementation, oversees annual work plan and budget, and undertakes progress review. The committee ensures the project consistency and synergies with other ongoing developmental projects and initiatives in the provinces.	undertakes progress review.		
Project Implementation Units	In each of the target districts, Project Implementation Units are established in the districts Forest Offices. The designated district level project focal points have the overall responsibility of the project implementation. The members of the unit comprise the concerned DFO, DFO Wildlife, the representative of the Forest Conservation and Protection Committees, and local NGO. The implementation unit is responsible for day to day operation of the project. The district level project focal points directly reports to the National Project Coordinator. The Implementation Units are established at Zhob, Wana, Chitral and Chilas respectively for the Provinces of Balcohistan, South-waziristan FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan respectively.	They have the overall responsibility of the project implementation	2	Meetings and interviews
2. Active stakeholders with authority to make decisions on the project, e.g. members of the PSC				

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Ministry of Climate Change, Office of the Inspector General	The Ministry of Climate Change oversees inter-provincial coordination of forestry-related matters. It is also responsible for UN REDD and, in consultation with the provincial forest departments, prepares policy, strategy and action plan for sustainable forest management. The fulfillment of international obligations on various treaties related to the environment is also one of the main responsibilities of this Ministry. The Project Steering Committee is constituted under the Ministry of Climate Change, with membership from the participating provincial/regional forest departments. The Ministry also supports institutional coordination contributing to inter-sectoral planning and actions reducing pressures from competing for land uses in the wider landscape and lead institutional reforms for SFM planning, collaborative management and related measures advancing land tenure, Chilgoza ecosystem resource accountability, etc. Where possible, the Ministry mainstreams and operationalizes project models and knowledge within national and provincial policy and planning.	The Ministry of Climate Change (MOCC) is the institutional anchor of the project.	1	At all stages through meetings and correspondences: being our main counterpart, the exchange of correspondences and consultative meetings need to be continuous. Furthermore, being the first beneficiary of this evaluation, they need to be involved individually before and after each phase of the evaluation to collect their expectations and validation when the final report is ready.
Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Climate Change	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.	Member of the PSC	2	Meetings and interviews

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Secretary of Forests, Government of Balochisan, Forestry and Wildlife Department	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.	Member of the PSC	2	Meetings and interviews
Secretary of Forests, Gilgit – Baltistan, Forestry, Wildlife and Environment Department	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.	Member of the PSC	2	Meetings and interviews
Secretary of Forests Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forestry, Environment and Wildlife Department	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.	Member of the PSC	2	Meetings and interviews
Representatives of local communities/villages	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.	Member of the provincial and district committees	2	Meetings and interviews
Representatives of international/local NGOs, civil society groups, including women's interest groups	The PSC is the main decision-making body and responsible for oversight. The PSC directs the Project Coordinator/ PMU, and is responsible for the approval of all work plans, budgets (and budget adjustments), approval of	Member of the provincial and district committees	2	Meetings and interviews

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
	outputs (technical, press, etc.), adherence to Project Results Framework, etc.			
3. Secondary stakeholders (only indirectly or temporarily affected)				
4. Stakeholders at grassroots level who benefit directly or indirectly from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)				
Village heads, leaders, district officials; protected area management	They are capacitated to promote SFM and motivate household participation. They are helping to ensure that project and government training extension are aligned in implementation, and more generally facilitate collaboration and planning at the local level for conservation, carbon storage, and SFM outputs.	Benefits from the project	1	Interviews
Local smallholder communities living in or around the Chilgoza forests	Local subsistence farmers are the main stakeholders of the project. As key target beneficiaries, local farmers/herders, their communities, and interest groups actively participate in Chilgoza conservation and restoration, as well as related livelihood, awareness, and community-based activities. At this level, Chilgoza Forests Protection and Conservation Committees are organized representing the various segments of the community. These committees have a major role at the field level implementation of the project besides enforcing local rules and regulations for the protection and proper management of the Chilgoza forest landscape.	Direct beneficiaries from the project	2	Interviews
Private sector	Private sector partners are mobilized in the project to implement SFM, establish and promote sustainable harvest regimens support NTFP processing and marketing with farmer cluster groups, etc. They are also important partners in the establishment of PES schemes	Benefits from the project	2	interviews

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate)[34]	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3)[35]	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
	and other long-term sustainable financing schemes.			
5. Stakeholders at grassroots level who do not benefit from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)				
6. Other interest groups that are not participating directly in the intervention, e.g. development agencies working in the area, civil-society organizations				
International NGOs, donors.	They provide this project important baseline, finance, coordination, and technical support.	Part of the consultative workshops to develop the project	3	interviews
Local NGOs and civil society	Local civil society organizations have been and will continue to inform project formulation and help to facilitate the involvement of communities in this project. They have access to the area, and contribute in the smooth implementation of the project.	Members of the FPCC	2	Interviews

1.4 Theory of change

A TRI Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System for the TRI Program with effective linkages to all 12 child projects, based on the TRI Theory of Change has been developed by the TRI Global Coordination Unit (GCU), housed within the Global Child project.

The analysis of the TOC will help to identify the strategies and approaches the project needs to ensure the delivery of its stated objectives and long-term goals, and it will allow the project's design logic to be tested.

The theory of change is included in Annex 2.

1.5 Implementation progress and main challenges to date

Project implementation started under all four outcomes, and was going as planned with major activities planned. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all field activities were put on hold in March 2020, as Pakistan went into national lockdown.

Under Outcome 1, the project in collaboration with IUCN conducted a Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) training for 44 (36 men and 8 women) professionals from all the four provinces from November 23-28, 2019 in Chitral. After the training a full survey had been initiated for all four project districts, where the restoration opportunity assessment have been identified.

Under outcome 2: 48 Assisted Natural Regeneration sites covering 2420 ha in 14 core areas were identified and selected based on the drivers of degradation in Chilgoza forest such as excessive grazing, cutting of trees and erosion. Sites were identified in the core areas/ sub valleys after several meetings with the communities and signing formal Terms of Partnerships (TOPs) with the relevant communities and discussion with FPCCs and endorsed by provincial Forest and Wildlife Departments. In total, 14,547 of fruit and 340,750 of forest plants were distributed in all four project areas, benefitting 2249 farmers (1801 men and 448 women), and bringing 332 ha land under restoration. For district Diamer – LoA was signed with the GB Forest Department and initial consultation meetings has been carried out with the stakeholders. The project conducted a workshop on 'Payment for Ecosystem Services' at the Pakistan Forest Institute, where the Forest Department senior level staff (Secretaries and Chief Conservators) along with other key stakeholder from throughout the country participated. In addition to conducting Capacity Development Workshop on PES, FAO HQ Expert went on a mission with the objective to scope the feasibility of PES in three communities in the Chitral district. As follow up action, FAO is exploring the potential financial resources to support the upstream communities to protect and conserve their forests. A consultant was hired to look for the feasibility of various PES options in the pilot site of Chitral district.

Under outcome 3, 14 FPCCs were established in project core areas. Terms of partnerships signed and all the communities motivated to participate in forest conservation, ANR sites protection, Agroforestry planting activities and sustainable collection and trade of the chilgoza nut and other NTFPs. In total the CFPCC were provided with 150 (150 more already procured and to be distributed in July) sets of chilgoza harvesting tools kits and one processing unit in order to promote sustainable and safe collection of chilgoza pine nut. During the reporting period:

> 83 (71 men and 12 women) officials from provincial (Balochistan, KP and Gilgit Baltistan) Forest and Wildlife departments, Pakistan Forest Institute, WWF, Forest Management Centre received training and participated in capacity development workshops in Collect Earth, ROAM and PES;
> 300 (282 men and1 8 women) farmers from 4 project districts (Sherani, South Waziristan, Chitral and Diamer) received training in use of quality chilgoza harvesting toolkits for sustainable and safe chilgoza cone collection. Chilgoza harvesting toolkits were used on rotational basis amongst the members of their respective CFPCCs during chilgoza harvest season.

Under outcome 4, Collect Earth Open Foris training and data collection exercise were conducted for 13 (13 men) participants from provincial Forest Departments, Pakistan Forest Institute, IUCN and FAO. Internally, M&E system has been established to facilitate data flow; M&E plan has been prepared; beneficiary data collection tools have been used during the reporting period to capture the required data for mandatory indicator reporting. National Chilgoza project team participated in M&E related trainings, webinars organized in Pakistan and abroad during the TRI annual meetings. Five communication products developed and disseminated online and during project events. Events such as toolkits plant distribution were covered by provincial media channels. One pager related to the project background and activities developed and disseminated in all the events conducted.

The major challenges the project has experienced are:

- FAO Pakistan offices moved to working-from-home modalities on March 17, 2020, as of March 24, 2020 Pakistan has been on lockdown down due to COVID-19, slowing down implementation of project activities,
- Fragile security situation in one of the project target areas (South Waziristan),
- Chilgoza pine trees grow in high altitude, remote areas of Pakistan. Project areas and beneficiary communities are isolated and challenging to reach,
- Delays in obtaining necessary administrative clearances from provincial governments (NOC for South-Wazristan).

2 MTR purpose and scope

As TRI is approaching the mid-point of project implementation, an independent review of each child project's progress and effectiveness in achieving expected project objectives and outputs must be conducted by a team of external evaluators. The findings and recommendations of each child project MTR can help identify any needed course corrections in the project's approach and activities. IUCN as the lead GEF Agency for TRI program will be responsible for generating a consolidated, program-wide report to be submitted to GEF.

The **purpose** of the MTR is to inform the FAO GEF Coordination Unit, and the LTO coordinating the TRI projects in FAO, the three implementing agencies (IUCN, UNEP, and FAO members of the PSC at global level), executing partners, the PAC, and other stakeholders (including PSC members and the GEF OFP) about each child project's progress and effectiveness in achieving expected project objectives and outputs – as well as about the progress of the TRI program as a whole, in terms of effectiveness of the programmatic approach in generating synergies and amplifying impact. Clearly this will be done bearing in mind the possible delays that may have affected implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MTR will draw specific findings and conclusions and formulate recommendations to help identify any needed course corrections in TRI approach and activities; it will bring valuable external reflections to help strengthen the program, and to validate and complement the M&L system of the project through an adaptive management modality. The MTR may also identify specific good practices and lessons to be learned for the formulation and execution of other similar projects.

The main purpose of the MTR is to:

- provide information to the Government and non-government partners, communities and resource partners in the country as well as FAO management, FAO GEF CU, the National GEF Focal Point, and other TRI national and global child projects;
- provide inputs to better orient FAO's programme in Pakistan, making it more relevant to the needs of the country and improve the project's implementation and delivery. Eventually, also enable the decision-makers to take the necessary corrective measures before the end of the project;
- draw lessons and make recommendations that will be useful for FAO's future engagement in the country, for the TRI implementing and executing agencies and the other partners involved in this initiative. Besides providing lessons specifically on FAO's work in Pakistan, the MTR will also enrich FAO's synthesis of findings and

guidance for its future support, and will provide lessons to the TRI global and national child projects;

- advise on how to improve the impact and relevance of FAO's GEF programme in the country, and of the TRI activities in the country. The MTR will also identify the strategic direction and priority areas for future interventions in line with the National Strategy.

The primary intended users of the project MTR are: (1) to which most of the lessons and recommendations will be addressed, are the FAO Representative/BH, Project Manager and Project's staff, and the Government of Pakistan, mainly the Ministry of Climate change; (2) other important users of the evaluation are the Regional and Sub-regional Offices including technical divisions and the PTF (including the funding liaison officer (FLO) and the lead technical officer (LTO) and other FAO technical staff at headquarters), PSC members, the GEF, the other implementing agencies of the TRI (UNEP and IUCN), and other stakeholders that will benefit and build on lessons learnt and good practices; (3) further users of the evaluation will be FAO's partners, including UN agencies, resource partners and implementing partners.

The MTR will focus on the participation of national partners, in particular the Government, to ensure the appropriation of the evaluation results by the relevant national institutions and promote their use at the national level.

3 MTR objectives and key questions

3.1 MTR objectives

The MTR should organize findings and provide recommendations around the topics of: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency, sustainability, factors affecting performance, and cross-cutting dimension. The MTR objectives describe precisely what it should achieve and what it should examine in relation to the GEF evaluation criteria. Table below gives details on the assessment topics.

Table: Evaluation criteria

Relevance – the extent to which the intervention's design and intended results are consistent with local, national, sub-regional and regional environmental and development priorities and policies and to GEF and FAO strategic priorities and objectives; its complementarity with existing interventions and relevance to project stakeholders and beneficiaries; its suitability to the context of the intervention over time.
Effectiveness – the degree to which the intervention has achieved or expects to achieve results (project outputs, outcomes, objectives and impacts, including Global Environmental Benefits) taking into account key factors influencing the results, including an assessment of whether sufficient capacity has been built to ensure the delivery of results by the end of project and beyond and the likelihood of mid- and longer-term impacts.
Efficiency – the cost-effectiveness of the project and timeliness of activities; the extent to which the intervention has achieved value for resources by converting inputs (funds, personnel, expertise, equipment, etc.) into results in the timeliest and least costly way compared with alternatives.

Sustainability – the (likely) continuation of positive effects from the intervention after it has ended and the potential for scale-up and/or replication; any financial, socio-political, institutional and governance, or environmental risks to sustainability of project results and benefits; any evidence of replication or catalysis of project results.

Factors affecting performance – the main factors to be considered are:

project design and readiness for implementation (e.g. sufficient partner capacity to begin operations, changes in context between formulation and operational start);
project execution, including project management (execution modality as well as the involvement of counterparts and different stakeholders);
project implementation, including supervision by FAO (BH, LTO and FLO), backstopping, and general PTF input;
financial management and mobilization of expected co-financing;
project partnerships and stakeholder involvement (including the degree of ownership of project results by stakeholders), political support from government, institutional support from operating partners (such as regional branches of agricultural extension services or forestry authorities);
communication, public awareness and knowledge management; and
application of an M&E system, including M&E design, implementation and budget.

Cross-cutting dimensions – considerations such as indigenous-peoples and minority-group concerns and human rights; the environmental and social safeguards applied to a project require, among other things, a review of the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) risk classification and risk-mitigation provisions identified at the project's formulation stage.[36]

Gender - emphasis on the monitoring and reporting on gender aspects of a project. how the project contributes to gender equality and women empowerment, assess the progress against sex-disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators.

3.2 MTR questions

The following evaluation questions should be considered. Further questions should be developed by the evaluation team in cooperation with the Implementing Agency and Executing Partner during the inception phase to tailor it to the particular needs and context of Pakistan child project.

1. Relevance (rating required)	Are the project outcomes congruent with country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework, the TRI global child project objectives and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (local communities, men and women, and indigenous peoples, if relevant)? Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its formulation, such as the adoption of new national policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of the project's objectives and goals? If so, are there any changes that need to be made to the project to make it more relevant?

[36] FAO applies an online screening system during the project design phase. This is mandatory, even if the project was approved before FAO adopted the GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF, 2011) in February 2015, as FAO had already applied the Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines in 2011 (FAO, 2012a) to screen and rate the risks of every FAO project. Consequently, the MTR team should review and confirm the ESS assessments and risk status at mid-term and any changes suggested, if needed. The most recent GEF guidance can be found in GEF (2019b). A GEF project should not cause any harm to the environment or to any stakeholder and, where applicable, will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate any adverse effects.

	How appropriate and relevant is the project approach and intervention logic in terms of its objectives and anticipated outcomes, and within the country context? To what extent is the project fit-for-purpose to promote: • The development and uptake of FLR-related policy solutions in the country; • The successful implementation of on-the-ground FLR actions in the country; and • The expansion of public and private investments in FLR and sustainable land management. To what extent was the project able to adapt to the country needs and situation as well as to the changing context?
2. Effectiveness of project results (rating required)	*(Delivery of results)* To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives? What broader results (if any) has the project had at regional and global level to date? Were there any unintended consequences? How effective has been TRI so far in engaging with key decision makers and public/private investors and other key stakeholders in country to mainstream FLR in policy and decision making? What are the early markers of changes among decision/policy makers, private sector and other relevant partners that demonstrate TRI is on its way to deliver on its intended ouctomes? What are the enabling/constraining factors influencing the achievement and non-achievements of the outcomes? In particular, • What enabling factors underlie successful development and uptake of FLR-related policy solutions in TRI countries, and conversely, what barriers hinder successful development and uptake? • What enabling factors underlie successful implementation of on-the-ground FLR actions in TRI countries, and conversely, what barriers hinder successful implementation? • What enabling factors are leading to expanded investments in FLR in TRI countries, and conversely, what barriers are limiting investment? (*Targets*) To what extent has the project delivered on achieving the set targets? How were the targets developed and set? To what extent the set targets are relevant to the project? To what extent the targets need to be readapted in line with the project progress to date? *(Likelihood of impact)* Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives? What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project? To what extent can the progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project? *(For programme assessments) (Coherence)* How coherent is the programme with its indicators and expected/achieved results? What is the added value of bringing the different interventions together under one programme (compared with the same level of investment made through comparable alternatives)? How coherent is this national child project with the other national child projects of the TRI? How coherent is this national child project with the global child project? To what extent is the project coherent with country priorities and needs and in supporting Bonn Challenge pledges? How coherent and complementary are the project activities vis-à-vis other policies and initiatives undertaken by country Governments, Implementing Agencies and other restoration partners?

3. Efficiency (rating required)	To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively? To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation? To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. and avoided duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?
4. Sustainability (rating required)	*(Sustainability)* What is the likelihood that the project results will be useful or persist after the end of the project? What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and its benefits (consider financial, socioeconomic, institutional and governance, and environmental aspects)? What efforts are being made to ensure sustainability of TRI results in the long term? *(Replication and catalysis)* What project results, lessons or experiences have been replicated (in different geographic areas) or scaled up (in the same geographic area, but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources)? What results, lessons or experiences are likely to be replicated or scaled up in the near future?
5. Factors affecting progress (ratings required)	*(Project design)* Is the project design suited to delivering the expected outcomes? Is the project's causal logic coherent and clear? To what extent are the project's objectives and components clear, practical and feasible within the timeframe allowed? To what extent was gender integrated into the project's objectives and results framework? Were other actors – civil society, indigenous peoples or private sector – involved in project design or implementation and what was the effect on project results? *(Project execution and management)* To what extent did the executing agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities in managing and administering the project? What have been the main challenges in terms of project management and administration? How well have risks been identified and managed? What changes are needed to improve delivery in the latter half of the project? *(Achievements and challenges)* To what extent has the project progressed in achieving the expected outcomes in each of its components? What are the early markers of changes among decision/policy makers, private sector and other relevant partners that demonstrate the project is on its way to deliver on its intended outcomes? What are the enabling/constraining factors influencing the achievement and non-achievements of the outcomes? What are the early markers of the project being on track to achieve its environmental and development objectives? Are there any unintended consequences as a result of the actions of the project program and its partners? *(Financial management and co-financing)* What have been the financial-management challenges of the project? To what extent has pledged co-financing been delivered? Has any additional leveraged co-financing been provided since implementation? How has any shortfall in co-financing or unexpected additional funding affected project results? *(Project oversight, implementation role)* To what extent has FAO delivered oversight and supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative and operational) during project identification, formulation, approval, start-up and execution? *(Partnerships and stakeholder engagement)* To what extent have stakeholders, such as government agencies, civil society, indigenous populations, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and the private sector, been involved in

	project formulation and implementation? What has been the effect of their involvement or non-involvement on project results? How do the various stakeholder groups see their own engagement with the project? What are the mechanisms of their involvement and how could these be improved? What are the strengths and challenges of the project's partnerships? Has the stakeholder engagement plan been adhered to and documented? Have all stakeholders been made aware of the ESS plan and the grievance complaint mechanism? *(Communication and knowledge management)* How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders and a general audience? How can this be improved? How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results and lessons learned and experiences? To what extent are communication products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results? *(M&E design)* Is the project's M&E system practical and sufficient? How has stakeholder engagement and gender assessment been integrated into the M&E system? How could this be improved? To what extent are the Monitoring, Review and Learning (MEL) strategy and relate tools adequate and effective? *(M&E implementation)* Does the M&E system operate per the M&E plan? Has information been gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies? How effectively has TRI been able to report against the 9 core indicators required by GEF? To what extent has information generated by the M&E system during project implementation been used to adapt and improve project planning and execution, achieve outcomes and ensure sustainability? Are there gender-disaggregated targets and indicators? How can the M&E system be improved?
6. Cross-cutting priorities	*(ESS)* To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project? Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures the ESS Mitigation Plan (if one exists) has been adhered to?
7. Gender	*(Gender and minority groups, including indigenous peoples, disadvantaged, vulnerable and people with disabilities)* To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project? Has the project been designed and implemented in a manner that ensures gender-equitable participation and benefits? Was a gender analysis done?

3.3 Questions on the link to the global child project

The MTR will assess progress and achievements to date in all components of the Pakistan child project, but also in the linkage with the Global child project. The MTR will look at how the programmatic approach that distinguishes TRI delivery has been successful in promoting linkages and synergies between TRI child projects and in amplifying the magnitude of results achieved so far. The questions will be divided into 3 categories: (1) Links from the global child to the national child, (2) synergies between national child projects and (3) link from the national child to the global child.

The following evaluation questions should be considered and further questions should be developed by the evaluation team in cooperation with the Implementing Agency and Executing Partner during the inception phase to tailor it to the particular needs and context of Pakistan child project.

What did the global child project bring to the national child project?

- In which activities from the global project Pakistan team has participated in (events, training, exchange visits, etc.)? How these activities have been used at national level? To be detailed at all level of project stakeholders (provincial, local, beneficiaries, etc.) and for each type of activities (methods, tools, training, communication, etc.)
- What are the tools brought by the global child project that have been used at national, provincial and local level?
- How have these activities been used and useful for the national child project? How were these activities perceived at different stakeholders' levels (national, provincial, beneficiaries, etc.)? To what extent the project stakeholders (national, provincial, local) have taken ownership of the activities implemented by the global project? to be detailed for each type of activities methods, tools, communication, etc.
- What is the expected impact of the tools and resources brought by the Global child project at national level?
- To what extent is the Global Child project providing the necessary coordination and technical support?
- To what extent the M&E activities at global level have been used by the national project? Are these activities relevant to the national project? Are the 9 core indicators developed by the global child project relevant for the national project and are they effective in capturing the project impacts? Are the biophysical indicators relevant and effective? Are the socio-economic indicators relevant and effective? To what extent the national, provincial, local stakeholders have taken ownership of the M&E activities? How can the M&E activities and the biophysical, and socio-economic indicators be improved to capture the most relevant impacts at national, provincial, local levels? What types of indicators could be more effective in capturing the projects impacts?
- What could be done differently (other activities, other methods, etc.) to ensure full ownership of the programmatic approach by all stakeholders and to ensure full relevance and usefulness of the programmatic activities?
- For the remainder of the project, what could be the 5 most useful activities for the national child project to be implemented by the global child project? (to be asked to all project stakeholders, beneficiaries included)

Synergies between child projects?

- To what extend the global child project activities were efficient in capturing synergies among child projects? Did the child project, through the global project activities, had any synergies and exchanges with other child project? What type of exchanges? How have these exchanges been useful at all stakeholders' level? What are the expected impacts of these exchanges at national, provincial and local levels?
- To what extend the global child project has contributed to costs savings through leveraging key partnerships across child projects?

What did the child project bring to the global child project?

- How did the child project contribute to the global project (communication activities, etc.)? How have these activities been perceived at national level? What did these activities bring to the national project?

3.4 Questions on COVID-19 impacts

- In what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the work of the national child project (delays, cancellation, etc.)?
- What impacts did the COVID-19 pandemic had at different country levels? (national, provincial, local)
- The COVID-19 pandemic had impact on global economies, did this impact the national child project activities? if so, to what extent? (eg: pine nut market)
- Given impacts from COVID-19, at this point in time, will all project activities be successfully completed by the current project end date, or will there be a need for adjustments (in time frame and/or targets)?
- What are the adaptive measures that the national child project has taken (e.g, budget reallocations, timeline adjustment, etc.), and anticipate taking going forward, to address COVID-19 impacts?
- Given the underlying links between human pressure on nature and natural systems and exposure to health risks including COVID-19, and the potential contribution that restoration can make to reducing these risks, are there ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as an opportunity for the project and for national restoration efforts more broadly? If so, please explain.
- What kind of support from TRI Global support partners and FAO, if any, would be most helpful in addressing COVID-19 impacts and challenges for the national project?

4 MTR Methodology

The MTR will adhere to the UNEG Norms & Standards and ethical guidelines (UNEG, 2016), and be in line with the FAO–GEF MTR Guide and annexes detailing methodological guidelines and practices.

The evaluation will adopt a consultative approach, seeking and sharing opinions with stakeholders at different stages throughout the MTR process. Different sources will be used to verify information, and evidences will be validated through triangulation. Information and insights will be derived mainly from three key sources: (1) review of existing documents – both at project and program levels, including Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), TRI program reports, information and data collected through TRI MEL system and other relevant knowledge products developed by TRI so far (including those available on TRI website).; (2) key informants interviews; and (3) direct observations at activity sites, when and if possible. Additional information needed could be collected through a combination of methodologies including (but not limited to) group discussions, on line surveys and other data collection tools. In evaluating the capacity development and gender mainstreaming, the MTR uses the frameworks and definitions adopted in FAO's corporate policy and strategies.

Project's context analyses will be undertaken during the preparatory phase. A two-weeks in-country mission will be conducted in May 2021 if the COVID-19 crisis regulatory measures

will allow it, otherwise the consultations and meetings will be done by the national consultant closely with the International Consultant (or the recruited team) through virtual meetings and consultations, as necessary. Physical/virtual interviews will be conducted also with FAO headquarters and the Regional Office for Asia Pacific.

As part of the MTR inception phase, the evaluation team will be expected to develop an **inception report** that will include a ***methodological note*** based on the suggested MTR questions above and suggesting additional questions or modifications to tailor the MTR to the project needs. Final decisions about the specific design and methodology for the MTR will emerge from consultations between the project team, the MTR consultants and key stakeholders on what is appropriate and feasible in order to meet the MTR's purpose and objectives and answer the MTR's questions. The Theory of change developed by the Global child project will be taken into consideration in the inception report.

Based on the desk review, **two sets of analyses** will be undertaken prior to the main mission: **context analysis** to help answer the questions under strategic positioning, and **impact analysis** to help answer the questions under project contribution. An **evaluation matrix** will be prepared, identifying indicators, sources of information, methods and tools, and a set of criteria to rate the strength of the evidence collected to answer each evaluation question and sub-question accordingly. The evaluation matrix and the various data collection tools will be finalized prior the main evaluation phase.

The link between evaluation questions, data collection, analysis, findings and conclusions must be clearly made and set out in a transparent manner in the presentation of the evaluation findings. Conclusion and recommendations should be underpinned by a strong set of evidences. The evaluation team should ensure that the sample of project stakeholders consulted equitably represent the various possible perspectives, including in terms of gender balance.

The MTR will take place between May 2021 and August 2021.

5 MTR Roles and responsibilities

The **FAO Representation in Pakistan** and **the FAO Representative** (Budget Holder of the project) are responsible for managing the MTR process and leading the team through the designated Mid-Term Review Manager (**RM**).

With the assistance of the **project's LTO and the FAO GEF CU, FLO and MTR focal point**, and guidance from the main MTR Guide, the **RM** is responsible for the drafting and finalizing the terms of reference and providing input to the background and context section. The terms of reference are based on a document review, discussions with the Project task force (PTF) and Skype meeting with the Lead technical officer (**LTO)** to get a good understanding of the project.

The BH/RM is also responsible for identifying and recruiting the MTR team members, in consultation with the FAO GEF CU and the LTO.

In collaboration with the FAO GEF CU, the BH/RM is also responsible of briefing the MTR team on the MTR methodology and process and lead the organization of MTR missions.

The BH/RM and the FAO GEF CU's MTR focal point review the draft and final MTR reports to assure their quality in terms of presentation, compliance with the terms of reference, timely delivery, quality, clarity and soundness of evidence and analysis supporting the conclusions and recommendations.

The BH is also responsible for leading and coordinating the preparation of the FAO Management Response and the associated follow-up report, supported by the LTO and other members of the PTF.

The **FAO GEF CU** will appoint a focal point to provide technical backstopping throughout the MTR process, including guidance and punctual support to the BH/RM and MTR team on technical issues related to the GEF and the MTR. This includes support in identifying potential MTR team members[37] reviewing candidate qualifications and participating in the selection of consultants, as well as briefing the MTR team on the MTR process, relevant methodology and tools. The FAO GEF CU also follows up with the BH to ensure the timely preparation of the Management Response.

PTF members, including the BH, are required to participate in meetings with the MTR team, make all necessary information and documentation available and comment on the terms of reference and MTR report. However, their level of involvement will depend on team members' individual roles and level of participation in the project.

The **National Project Director** (NPD) facilitates the participation of government partners in the MTR process and supports the PMU in ensuring good communication across government. The **Project Steering Committee** (PSC) facilitates government and other partner and stakeholder participation in the MTR process.

The **MTR team** is responsible for developing and applying the MTR methodology, producing a brief MTR inception report, conducting the MTR and producing the MTR report. All team members will participate in briefing and debriefing meetings, discussions and field visits (if possible). They will contribute written inputs to the draft and final versions of the MTR report, which may not reflect the views of the government or of FAO. The MTR team leader will guide and coordinate the MTR team members in their specific tasks and lead the preparation of the draft and final reports. The team leader will consolidate team inputs with his/her own and will have overall responsibility for delivering the MTR report. The MTR team will agree with the FAO GEF CU MTR focal point on the outline of the report early in the MTR process, based on the template provided in Annex 12 of the MTR Guide. The MTR team is free to expand the scope, criteria, questions and issues listed above, and develop its own MTR tools and framework, within the timeframe and resources available and based on discussions with the BH/RM and PTF. Although an MTR report is not subject to technical

[37] The BH/RM should be responsible for the administrative procedures associated with the recruitment of the MTR consultants.

clearance by FAO, the BH/RM and FAO GEF CU do provide quality assurance checks of all MTR reports.

The relevant **GEF Operational Focal Point** (OFP) must be involved in any GEF project or programme evaluation process, in accordance with the GEF Evaluation Policy (2019). The BH should inform the OFP of the MTR process and the MTR team is encouraged to consult with him/her during the review process. The team should also keep the OFP informed of progress and send him/her a copy of the draft and final MTR reports.

More detailed guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the key individuals and groups involved in the MTR can be found in Annexes 2 and 3 of the MTR Guide.

6 MTR team composition and profile

The **lead international MTR consultant** should have the following minimum technical requirements:

- an advanced university degree in forest management, agriculture, natural-resource management, social and economic development, or evaluation;
- ten years of relevant experience in supporting, designing, planning and/or conducting development evaluations; with demonstrated quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis skills, with proven record of conducting formative, process and impact evaluation;
- experience in Mid Term Review of GEF project and in particular of GEF programmatic approach;
- experience in governance, forest landscape restoration, private sector investment, policy dialogue, gender, or a combination of thereof, applied to policy instrument and practice.
- knowledge of FAO and GEF work/procedures, or other UN agencies, would be an asset
- excellent communication skills (written and oral) in English.

The lead international MTR consultant will have the possibility to be involved in other MTR of FAO-led national child projects (Sao Tome e Principe, Kenya, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo) to ensure harmonization and coherence throughout the process.

The **national consultant** should have the following experience:

- a university degree in forest management, agriculture, social and economic development, evaluation;
- five years of experience in a relevant technical area and a good understanding of the national and/or local context, as appropriate;
- ideally, experience in supporting, designing, planning and/or conducting development evaluations; and
- experience with designing and conducting MTR of GEF project would be an asset;
- knowledge of FAO and GEF work/procedures, or other UN agencies, would be an asset as would appropriate language skills;
- excellent communication skills (both written and oral) in English.

Both consultants are expected to demonstrate the following competencies:

- results focus,
- teamwork,
- building effective relationships,
- knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.

An effort should be made to achieve gender and balance in the team makeup.

The MTR consultants should be independent of any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing or advising on any aspect of the project being evaluated in the MTR and should not have been involved in any aspect of the project previously.

7 MTR products (deliverables)

The MTR inception report. The MTR team should prepare an inception report before beginning data collection. This should detail the MTR team's understanding of what is being assessed and why, and their understanding of the project and its aims (set out in a theory of change). It serves as a map and reference for planning and conducting an MTR and as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the MTR design and methodology in discussions with stakeholders. The inception report details the GEF evaluation criteria, the questions the MTR seeks to answer (in the form of an MTR matrix), the data sources and data collection methods, analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source and data collection method, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with lead responsibility for each task or product. The inception report will take into consideration the Theory of Change developed by the Global child management unit.

The draft MTR report. The project team, BH/RM, FAO GEF CU and key stakeholders in the MTR should review the draft MTR report to ensure its accuracy and quality in two review rounds: (a) a first review, taking around 10 working days, by the project team and FAO (BH, LTO, FLO and FAO GEF CU MTR focal point), then a second review, also taking around 10 working days, by the government counterpart(s), key external partners and stakeholders.

The final MTR report. This should include an executive summary and be written in English. It is important that the executive summary is presented in both the official national language (if different from English) and in English. Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report, if deemed important, to complement the main report. Translations into other official UN languages, if required, will be FAO's responsibility. The executive summary should include the following paragraphs in order to update the GEF Portal: (1) information on progress, challenges and outcomes on stakeholder engagement; (2) information on progress on gender-responsive measures; and (3) information on knowledge activities and products. The template for the MTR report can be found in Annex 11 and guidance on writing the report in Annex 12 of the MTR Guide.

A two-page summary of key findings, lessons, recommendations and messages from the MTR report will be produced by the MTR team, in consultation with the RM and PMU, that can be disseminated to the wider public for general information on the project's results and performance to date. This can be posted as a briefing paper on the project's website but more creative and innovative multimedia approaches, such as video, photos, sound recordings, social media, short stories (for suitable cases or country studies), infographics or even comic or cartoon format, may be more effective depending on the circumstances.

A powerpoint presentation. For a webinar targeted to key stakeholders in which the key finding and recommendations from the MTR will be presented.

Participation in knowledge-sharing events, such as stakeholder debriefings, as needed.

9 MTR timeframe

Suggested MTR timeline

Task	Duration (recommended)	Tentative date	Responsibility
Terms of reference preparation	2 months before the MTR field mission	January 2021	BH/RM, LTO, FLO and FAO GEF CU MTR focal point
Terms of reference finalization	1 month before the MTR field mission	15/03/2021	BH/RM
Team identification	1 month before the MTR field mission	15/03/2021	BH/RM, LTO, FLO and FAO GEF CU MTR focal point
Team recruitment	3 weeks before the MTR field mission	30/03/2021	BH with input from the FAO GEF CU for international and national consultants
Travel arrangements and organization of the agenda and travel itinerary in country for the field mission	3 weeks before the MTR field mission[38]	7/05/2021	BH/RM, project team and MTR team
Reading background documentation	2–3 weeks before the MTR field mission	01/05/2021	MTR team in preparation for the MTR
Briefing of MTR team	2 weeks before the MTR field mission	03/05/2021	BH/RM, supported by PTF and FAO GEF CU as necessary
MTR inception report	1 week before the MTR field mission	12/05/2021	MTR team
Quality assurance and clearance of the MTR inception report	3 days before the MTR field mission	17/05/2021	BH/RM and the FAO GEF CU MTR focal point
MTR missions – confirmation of interviews, meetings and visits	1 week for the MTR field mission	21/05/2021 to 28/05/2021	MTR team with the support of the PMU
Production of first draft report for circulation	No more than 3 weeks after the field mission	15/06/2021	MTR team
Circulation and review of first draft MTR report	5–10 working days for review	20/06/2021	BH/RM, PMU, FAO GEF CU MTR focal point, LTO for comments and quality control (organized by BH/RM)
Production of second draft MTR report	1 week for the inclusion of feedback (recommended; could	27/06/2021	MTR team

[38] Note that FAO rules require all travel authorisation to be approved at least 15 days before travel. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the field mission might be replaced by virtual meetings and consultations.

	be less if consultants are available)		
Circulation of second draft MTR report	5–10 working days for review	05/07/2021	BH/RM and key external stakeholders (organized by BH/RM)
Production of final MTR report	1 week for the inclusion of final feedback (recommended; could be less if consultants are available)	12/07/2021	MTR team
Management Response	1 month after the final report is issued	12/08/2021	BH
Follow-up reporting in FAO PPR or GEF PIR	Maximum 6 months after the MR is issued	December 2021	BH
Stakeholder webinar to present results	1 month after management response	Beginning September 2021	Evaluation team/ Implementing Agency and Executing Partner

10 Budget

The available budget for this review is USD 30 000. The evaluators shall be paid by GCP/PAK/091/GFF upon completion of the following milestones:

86. 20% upon signing of the contract;
87. 40% after presentation of the draft report;
88. 40% after the approval of the final report.

11 Submission and applications

International consultants will be selected from an organizational roster of FAO or will be a known individual considered most suitable to undertake the assignment by the hiring unit. *T*he national consultants will be selected in accordance with the FAO representation in Pakistan.

Consultants will send:

89. Personal CV indicating all relevant past experiences and main competencies,
90. A brief description (max 2 pages) of why the consultant is the most suitable for the assignment, including a short description of the plan and methods envisaged to meet the mid-term review objectives.
91. A detailed budget.

Annex

1. List of documents to be made available to MTR team
2. Consultant job descriptions for FAO-GEF MTR team leaders and members
3. TRI TOC
4. TRI results framework
5. TRI core indicators
6. MTR report outline
7. TRI Harmonized Tracking Tool

Annex 1

The below list of important documents and web pages (in Box below) the MTR team can consult at the outset, before finalizing the MTR's design and inception report will be available on the link to be provided.

Documents to be provided to the MTR team ("project information package")

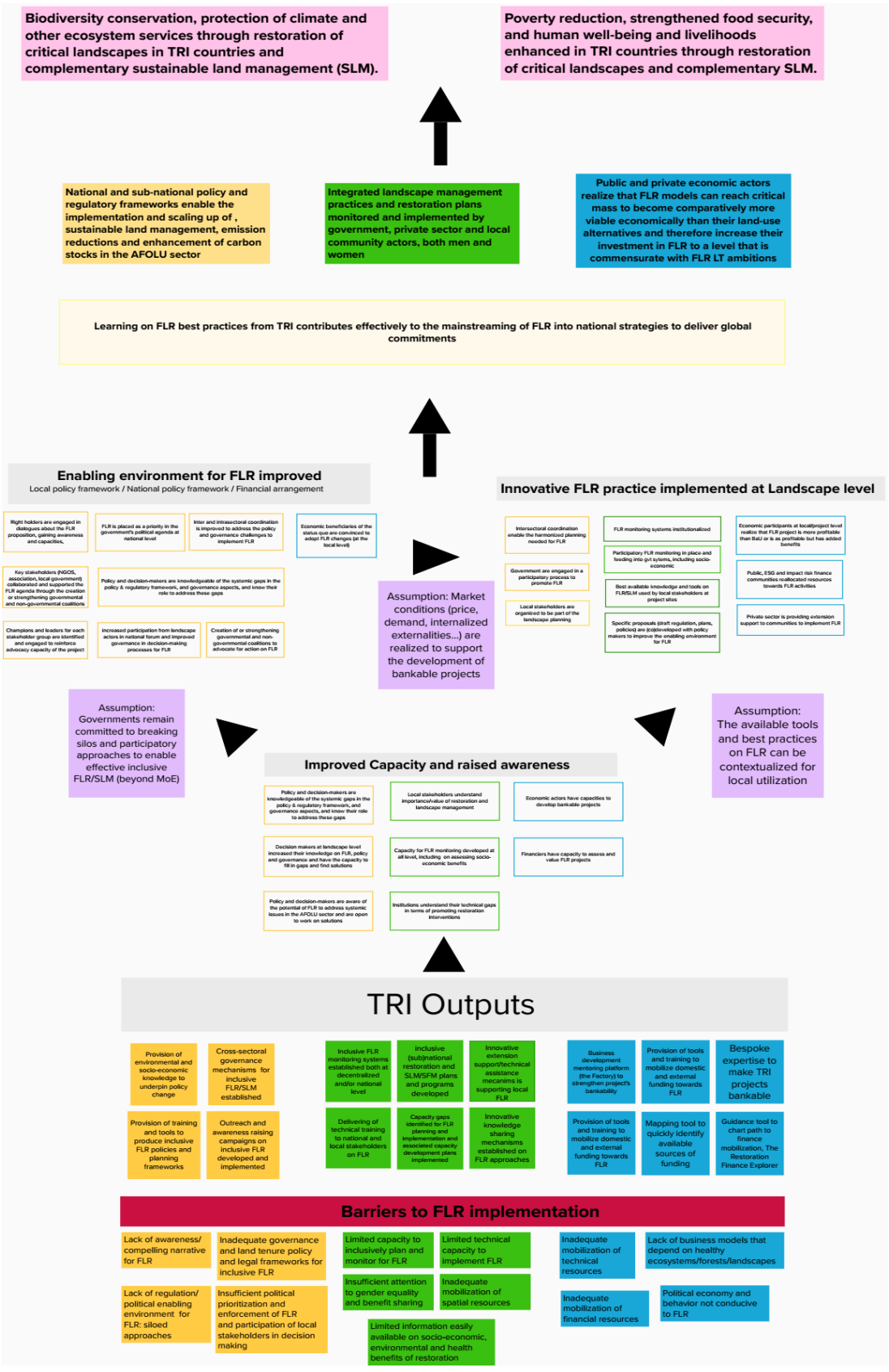
- *Project results framework* – will be included in the link to be provided at the start of the MTR.
- *FAO–GEF project MTR report outline, including the GEF rating table* – available in Annex 11 in the MTR Guide (to be provided also in the link)
- GEF PIF with technical clearance
- Comments from the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and GEF Council members on project design, plus FAO responses
- FAO concept note and FAO Project Review Committee report
- Request for GEF CEO endorsement
- FAO–GEF project preparation grant document
- GEF-approved project document and any updated approved document following the inception workshop, with latest budgets showing budget revisions
- Project inception report
- Six-monthly FAO PPRs
- Annual workplans and budgets (including budget revisions)
- All annual GEF PIR reports
- All other monitoring reports prepared by the project
- Documentation detailing any changes to the project framework or components, such as changes to originally designed outcomes and outputs
- List of stakeholders
- List of project sites and site location maps (for planning mission itineraries and fieldwork)
- Execution agreements under OPIM and letters of agreement
- Relevant technical, backstopping and project-supervision mission reports, including back-to-the-office reports by relevant project and FAO staff, including any reports on technical support provided by FAO headquarters or regional office staff
- Minutes of the meetings of the PSC, FAO PTF and other relevant groups

- Any ESS analysis and mitigation plans produced during the project design period and online records on FPMIS
- Any awareness-raising and communications materials produced by the project, such as brochures, leaflets, presentations for meetings, project web address, etc.
- FAO policy documents in relation to topics such as FAO Strategic Objectives and gender
- Finalized GEF focal-area tracking tools at CEO endorsement, as well as updated tracking tools at mid-term for GEF-5 projects (and for GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects with Biodiversity Focal Area (BD) Objective 2 and management of protected areas) and/or review of contribution to GEF-7 core indicators (retrofitted) for GEF-6 projects, and GEF-7 core indicators for GEF-7-approved projects, as defined in the Core Indicators Worksheet (GEF, 2019a)
- Financial management information, including an up-to-date co-financing table, a summary report on the project's financial management and expenditures to date, a summary of any financial revisions made to the project and their purpose, and copies of any completed audits for comment (as appropriate)
- The GEF Gender Policy (GEF, 2017), GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF, 2018a), GEF Guidance on Gender Equality (GEF, 2018b) and the GEF Guide to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programmes (GEF, 2018c)

The following documents should also be made available to the MTR team on request or as required:

- FAO Country Programme Framework documents, the FAO Guide to the Project Cycle (FAO, 2012b), FAO Environment and Social Management Guidelines (FAO, 2015), FAO Policy on Gender Equity, the Guide to Mainstreaming Gender in FAO's Project Cycle (FAO, 2017a) and the Free, Prior and Informed Consent Manual (FAO, 2016)

Annex 2 Theory of Change (TRI and project 091 levels)



Appendix 2. MTR work schedule, including field missions and reporting

Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, all field missions have been suspended until further notice.

Task	When/duration (recommended)	Responsibility
Terms of reference preparation	February, 2021	BH/RM, LTO, FLO and GCU MTR focal point
Terms of reference finalization	March, 2021	BH/RM
Team identification	February, 2021	BH/RM, LTO, FLO and GCU MTR focal point
Team recruitment	May, 2021	BH with input from the GCU for international and national consultants
Briefing of MTR team	28 May, 2021	BH/RM, supported by PTF and GCU as necessary
Reading background documentation	02 May to 07 June, 2021	MTR team in preparation for the MTR
MTR inception report	08 June, 2021	MTR team
Quality assurance and clearance of the MTR inception report	14 June, 2021	BH/GCU
Remote interviews	08 June to 30 June 2021	MTR team with the support of the PMU
Field visits	09 June to 23 June 2021	National consultant of MTR team
Submission of all field notes	06 July 2021	National consultant of MTR team
Production and submission of first draft of MTR report	06 to 26 July 2021	MTR team
Circulation and review of first draft MTR report	30 July, 2020	BH/GCU

Debriefing of main findings in draft report	24 August 2021	All main FAO stakeholders (tbc)
Production and submission of second draft MTR report	24 August to 01 September	MTR team
Circulation of second draft MTR report	Early September, 2020	BH/GCU
Final group debriefing of main stakeholders of project 091	September, 2021	BH/GCU/LTO/PM/CTA/FLO National stakeholders
Finalisation and submission of final draft report	September, 2021	MTR team
Management Response	30 September 2021	BH
Next steps for MTRs of other child projects under TRI (Sao Tomé and Principe and Kenya)	September/October 2021	LTO

Appendix 3. Table 6 - List of stakeholders prioritised for interview (following participatory stakeholder analysis)

Key stakeholders	Role in the project	Reason for their inclusion/ exclusion from the MTR	Priority for MTR 1 = essential 2 = desirable 3 = complementary	How and when should they be involved in the MTR* (Desk &/or Field Phase)
1. Active stakeholders with direct responsibility for the project, e.g. FAO, executing partners				
FAO				
FAOPK	Project Manager (PM), FAOPK Dr. Faizul Bari	PM supports the BH in the supervision of financial management, project progress, procurement and contracting processes, and in the provision of technical guidance to the project, in close consultation with the LTO. PM is also FAO's GEF Focal Point in PK.	1	**Remote interview No. 2.** Desk phase (teams) Kick-off meeting with FAOPK and FAOR key staff Date: 9 June 2021 Time: 14:00 (Pakistan); 10:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
FAOR	Project Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Mathilde Iweins	In close coordination with national PM, LTO, national/provincial experts, the CTA provides overall technical support for project implementation (annual work plan formulation, progress reporting, compiling guidelines, field implementation, M&E, etc.	1	**Remote interview No. 4.** Desk phase (teams); Rehena Khan to join from Zhob, Balochistan Province Date: 10 June 2021 Time: 09.00 (Rome); 08:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion Second part Date : 11 June 2021 Time : 13:00 (Rome); 12:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
FAO-R	Lead Technical Officer (LTO), FAO Mr. Christophe Besacier	Member of the PAC. LTO provides technical advice and backstopping to the project, and monitor and certify the technical quality of each Operational Partner's activities.	1	**Remote interview No. 6.** Desk phase (teams) Date: 10 June 2021 Time: 15.00 (Rome); 14:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
FAO-R	Funding Liaison Officer (FLO), GEF Coordination Unit, FAO Ms. Paola Palestini	FLO reviews and approves project progress reports, implementation reviews and financial reports, including budget revisions. FLO also participates in the mid-term reviews, final evaluations, and the development of corrective actions in the project implementation strategy.	1	**Remote interview No. 7.** Desk phase (teams) Date: 11 June 2021 Time: 09.00 (Rome); 08:00. (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion

FAOR, IUCN and FAOPK	Carolina Gallo; Florian Reinhart IUCN Ms. Jana Ceremniha	M&E manager, responsible for monitoring of 9 core indicators for TRI at global and Pakistan levels; IUCN representative responsible for supporting global monitoring (child projects managed by IUCN under TRI)	1	**Remote interview No. 8** Desk Phase (Teams) Date: 17 June 2021 Time: 12:00 (Rome); 11:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
FAOPK	Budget Holder (BH), FAO Ms. Rebekah Bell	Former member of the PAC. The former BH was responsible for oversight and supervision on the use of funds by the executing partner and achievement of project results.	1	**Remote interview No. 9**. Desk phase (teams) Date: 21 June 2021 Time: 17.00 (Pakistan); 13:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
FAOR	Former BH of project, FAO Ms. Dowlatchahi, Mina (PSS) <Mina.Dowlatchahi@fao.org>	Former member of the PAC in PK. Formerly responsible for oversight and supervision on the use of funds by the executing partner and achievement of project results. Has visited the project sites on several occasions.	1	**Remote interview No. 10** Desk phase (Teams) Date: 25 June 2021 Time: 11:00 (Rome); 10:00 (UK) Cliquez ici pour rejoindre la réunion
Project management coordination team in FAOPK (Islamabad)				
FAOPK	Deputy Representive FAO Programme in PK Mr. Farrukh Toirov	Project management team and international advisers from FAOR support the BH in the supervision of financial management, project progress, procurement and contracting processes, and in the provision of technical guidance to the project, in close consultation with the LTO	1	**Remote interview No. 5.** Desk phase (Zoom); Rehena Khan to join from Zhob, Balochistan Date: 10 June 2021 Time: 14.00 (Pakistan); 10:00 (UK) https://fao.zoom.us/j/96163992964 Meeting ID: 961 6399 2964 Passcode: 61838699 Note: Farrukh Toiriv, Aamer Irshad and Maria Usman unable to attend due sickness leave
FAOPK	Assistant Rep. of the FAO Programme in PK Mr. Aamer Irshad			
FAOPK	Assistant Administration of FAO Programme in PK Ms. Maria Usman			
FAOPK	NRM Adviser/Child Project Manager Dr. Faizul Bari			
FAOPK	Head of Operations Ms. Cinar Yavuz			
FAOPK	Operations Officer Adnan Mirza			
FAOPK	Dennis Garrity Thomas Hofer Makiko Yashiro,	Webinar on celebrating FLR - Success stories and lessons from Pakistan for the Asia-Pacific region. Speakers:	2	Webinar Date: 11th June, 2021 at 14:00-1600 (PK)

	Christophe Besacier Dr. Faizul Bari	DG: Forest and landscape restoration and its relevance to Asia Pacific region TH: Regional strategy and action plan for forest and landscape restoration MY: Regional Coordinator, UNEP - United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) - Actions at global and regional level CB: FLRM and its regional actions including in Pakistan FB: Lessons learned on FLR		
Project management staff and stakeholders in Sherani, Balochisan				
Forestry Department	Secretary Forest and Wildlife, Government of Balochistan Mr. Mohammad Siddique Mandokhel	Member of the PSC from Balochistan Province, Chairman, Provincial Project Management Committee and Signatory of Letter of Agreement with Chilgoza Project. Also, Administrative head of the Forestry Dept.	1	Field phase – field interviews (Rehana) Date: 11 June 2021 Time: 11:30 am (PK)
FD	Acting Chief Conservator, Project Director of the Ten billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTTP) in Balochistan Province Mr. Syed Ali Imran	Acting Chief Conservator oversees child project work on ANR and its replication in the TBTTP and coordinates provision of forest and fruit tree saplings to the child project		Field phase Date: 11 June 2021 Time 11:30 am Place: Quetta
FD	Deputy Chief of Party FAO Balochistan Mr. Ahmed Essa	Head of FAO field team in Balochistan Province.		
FD/FAO rep.	Provincial Coordinator Mr. Mohammad Yahya Musakhel	Leader of project personal in Sherani District. Facilitates meetings within the Forestry Dept.		
FD/FAO rep.	Women's Enterprise Development Facilitator Ms. Fahmeeda Khan	Supports and facilitates women's access to enterprise development in the project in Sherani.		
Project management staff and other stakeholders in Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
FD	Divisional Forest Officer Chitral, KP Forest Department Mr. Farhat Ali	Member of PSC; participates and supports child project activities in Chitral District and facilitates/oversees child project interventions in field.	1	Field Phase: field interviews (Rehana) Date: 18 June 2021 Time 11:00 am Place: Chitral

FD	Divisional Forest Officer KP Forest Department Mr. Shakuat Faiz	Responsible for supporting the implementation of child project activities in Chitral District		Field Phase (Rehana): Date: 18 June 2021 Time 12:00 pm Place: Chitral
FD	International project coordinator Mr. Waleed Mahdi	Coordinates TBTTP and other forestry programmes with the child project in Chitral		
FD/FAO rep.	Provincial Coordinator Mr. Ajaz Ahmed	FAO Field staff member		
Project management staff and other stakeholders in and South-Waziristan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
FD	Secretary KP Forest, Environment and Wildlife Department Mr. Islam Zeb Khan	Member PSC at Provincial level	1	Field interviews (Rehana) Date: 22 June 2021 Time: 11:00 am Place: Peshawar (This will be a group meeting with Chief Conservator Forest and Conservator of Forest Merged Areas)
FD	Divisional Forest Officer South Waziristan Mr. Muhammad Saleem Marwat	Involve in field level initiatives of FAO	1	Field Phase: Dates: 14-16 June 2021 Time: 12:30 pm. Place: DJ Khan
FD	Chief Conservator of Forest Central Southern Forest Region Mr. Ali Gohar Khan	Coordinates with the child project at Provincial level on FLR/ANR		
FD	Conservator of Forests Merged Areas Mr. Farhatullah Khan	Coordinates with the child project at Provincial level in areas such as protecting ANR sites		
FD/FAO rep.	Provincial Coordinator Mr. Shabir Muhammad	FAO Provincial field staff		
FD/FAO rep.	Women enterprise development facilitator Ms. Hina Waheed	FAO Provincial field staff		

Project management staff and other stakeholders in Diamer, Gilgit-Baltistan				
FD	Secretary Forest, Wildlife and Environment Mr. Sumair Ahmmad	Member of PSC from GB	1	Field Phase – remote interview (on Rehana's return to Islamabad): Date: 29 June 2021 (tbc) Time: 11:30 (tbc). Place: Islamabad
FD	Chief Conservator of Forests in Gilgit Baltistan Mr. Zakir Hussain	Provides support and advice on the project's coordination with the TBTTP and other forestry programmes in GB and responsible for replicating child project initiatives such as forest enclosure management for ANR		**Interview No. 12.** Remote interview by Zoom Date: 30 June 2021 Time: 12:30 (PK); 8:30 (UK)
FD	International project coordinator Mr. Waleed Mahdi	Coordinates internationally funded forestry projects in GB		Field Phase – remote interview (on Rehana's return to Islamabad): Date: 29 June 2021 (tbc) Time: 12:30 (tbc). Place: Islamabad
FD/FAO rep.	Provincial Coordinator Mr. Masood Ali	Responsible for coordinating child project with line departments to support cross-sector coordination, meetings with line departments, FPCC members, etc.		
2. Active stakeholders with authority to make decisions on the project, e.g. members of the PSC (national level)				
MoCC	Secretary MoCC Ms. Nahid Sha Durani	Key members of the PSC from MoCC. Ms Nahid Sha Durani is the GEF Focal Point in PK	1	**Remote interview No. 1.** Inception meeting summarising main aspects of MTR's ToR Date: 09 June 2021 Time: 10.30 (Pakistan); 06:30 (UK)
MoCC	National Project Director Raja Omer			
3. Stakeholders at grassroots level who benefit directly or indirectly from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)**				
Balochistan Province - Suleiman Mountain Range	Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committee Torghar Mr. Haidar Ali	Head CFPPCC Torghar , Established FAO Chilgoza project, notified by Secretary forest Meeting will be on 13-6-21 in field	1	Field phase - **interviews conducted by Rehana Khan** Place: Zhob; Stakeholders: FAO local team; Date: 09 June 2021
	Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committee Koh-e-Suleiman Mr. Haji Yar Mohammad	Head CFPPCC Koh-e-Suleiman, established FAO Chilgoza project Koh-e-Suleiman (Meeting will be on 13-6-21 in field		Place: Zhob; Stakeholders: Forestry Dept; Date: 09 June 2021

	Balochistan Women Business Association Ms. Sana Durrani	Member, Provincial Project Management Committee Meeting will be in Quetta at her office.		Place: Zhob; Stakeholders: Meeting with private sector on development of inclusive value chains in pine nuts; Date: 10 June 2021 Place: Quetta; Stakeholders: Forestry Dept. Date: 11 June 2021 Place: Zhob; Stakeholders: Meeting with members of CFPCC; Date: 12 June 2021 Place: Zhob; Stakeholders: Additional meetings with private sector on development of inclusive value chains for NTFPs; Date: 13 June 2021
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province - **South-Waziristan District**	CFPCC Zindawar Mr. Ibrahim Khan Mr. Molvi Said Akbar CFPCC Ghurlama Mr. Mulana Gul Noor Mr. Abdul Ameen CFPCC Wakhdalay Mr. Molvi Rasool Jan Chilgoza Dealers Mr. Khon Azam Mr. Zahidullah	Key government staff, members of civil society organisations and private sector (local companies, traders, etc.) working with the child project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province the South-Waziristan Province (Suleiman Mountain range)	1	Field phase - **interviews conducted by Rehana Khan**: Place: DJ Khan & Tank; Stakeholders: Forestry Dept.; Date: 14 June 2021 Place: DJ Khan; Stakeholders: End beneficiaries and private sector stakeholders; Date: 15 June 2021 Place: Peshawar; Stakeholders: Chilgoza value Chain members Date: 16 June 202

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province – Chitral District	Chilghoza Forest Protection & Conservation Committee Bumburate Mr. Majid Qurishi CFPCC Birir Mr. Unat Bage Chilghoza Forest Protection & Conservation Committee Birir Mr. Shams u Rabbai CFPCC Bumburate Mr. Muhammad Ayub Chilghoza dealer in Chitral Mr. Niyaz CEO-Chitral Wild Honey Mr. Irshad Rabbani CFPCC Kalash Valley Bumburate Ms. Sayed Gul Kalash	Key government staff, members of civil society organisations and private sector (local companies, traders, etc.) working on the child project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (Shishi-valley of Chitral). These include:	1	Field phase - **interviews conducted by Rehana Khan**: Place: Chitral; Stakeholders: FAO local team; Date: 17 June 2021 Place: Chitral; Stakeholders: Forestry Dept.; Date: 18 June 2021 Place: Kalash Valley Birir; Stakeholders: CFPCC members; Date: 19 June 2021 Place: Kalash Valley Birir; Stakeholders: local community pine nut collectors (men and women) Date: 20 June 2021 Place: Peshawar; Stakeholders: Forestry (Secretary for Environment, Chief Conservation Officer, Conservation of Merged Areas Officer); Date: 22 June 2021
Giigit-Baltistan Autonomous Territory - Diamer district	Mr. Yaqoob Mr. Shah Gul Mr Aziz Mr Neyat Babosar Mr. Muhammad Ghani	Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committee members from: Gonar Farm, Gais, Gohar Abad and Thak. Chilghoza dealer	1	Field phase - **remote interviews conducted by Rehana Khan** (from home due to remoteness of site and security situation) Place: Islamabad (homebased); Stakeholders: Forestry staff, CFPCC members, other key stakeholders Dates: 28 or 29 June 2021 (tbc)
4. Secondary stakeholders (only indirectly or temporarily affected)				
				None identified

5. Stakeholders at grassroots level who do not benefit from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)				
				None identified
6. Other interest groups that are not participating directly in the intervention, e.g. UN/other agencies working in the area, civil-society organizations				
Balochistan	Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) Mr. Mohammad Sherani	BRSP is operating in the district and supporting the livelihood of forest stakeholders.	2	Interview during field mission of Rehana Khan in Balochistan Date: 09-13 June Time: 12.00 (Pakistan)
KP	WWF, Head of WWF Peshawar Mr. Kamran Hussain	WWF is working in Consortium with MoCC and are also involve in Forestry initiatives in KP	2	Interview during field mission of Rehana Khan in Peshawar Date: 23 June 2021 Time: 14.00 (Pakistan)
Chitral	Mountain Society for Research & Development Chitral (MSRD) Chitral Ms. Afshan World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan Mr. Iftikhar Hussain	In-depth knowledge on mountainous forest regions and their conservation	2	Interview during field mission of Rehana Khan in Peshawar Date: 24 June 2021 Time: 11.00 (Pakistan); 07:00 (UK)
IFAD GB	Pine nut processor and trader from Chitral District Mr. Syed Azeem	Has in-depth knowledge on Chilgoza pine nut processing and commercialization of pine nuts in Lahore.	2	**Remote interview No. 11.** After field missions (Zoom) Date: 30 June 2021 Time: 11.00 (Pakistan); 07:00 (UK)

* Interviews grouped as follows: 1) with FAOC staff, then 2) Project Management Unit, then 3) provincial staff, then 4) grassroots CSOs and local communities at county level (national consultant will be delegated do these and then to report back to the international consultant), then 5) research centres/universities, indirect stakeholders, etc.

** Stakeholder groups 3 and 4 listed in the FAO MTR reporting guidelines have been interchanged to reflect the three main groups of direct beneficiaries, followed by indirect beneficiaries in groups 4-6.

	Confirmed/completed		Cancelled due to logistical constraints

Appendix 4. MTR evaluation matrix (questions and sub-questions for selected stakeholders)

UNEG/GEF	Questions and sub questions	Indicators and judgement criteria	Sources of information/Brief summary of methods
1. RELEVANCE			
1.1 Alignment & ownership at national level	**Question 1:** Project design (national level) - Are project outcomes still congruent with country priorities linked to forestry, planning and sector development and/or have new/reformed policies, plans, programmes affected TRI/Chilgoza forests project's relevance?	1.1.1 Level of project alignment to relevant national, sector and cross-cutting policies and plans **Judgement criteria:** (a) The Prodoc conforms with government (central/ provincial) priorities and policies on integrating FLR/SFM/PES/NFTPs into forestry and relevant sector and planning policies, laws and regulations? (b) government (central/ provincial) continues to show willingness to provide resources to support policy/strategy/plan reform to promote FLR/SFM/PES/NTFPs?	1) Prodoc 2) National Development/Forestry Plans 3) National sector policies, strategies and plans (forestry, agriculture, land use/environment, etc.) 4) National statistics on forestry, carbon sinks, biodiversity, NTFPs. 7) TRI - Theory of change 8) Interviews with provincial government stakeholders, education and research institutions, project staff, FAO/GEF 9) Interviews/questionnaire
1.2 Alignment and ownership at sub-national level	**Question 2**: Project design (sub-national level) - does the project continue to respond to local needs of forestry department at the provincial/district levels and local communities dependent on Chilgoza forests in the project intervention areas and have any reforms/new local policies and plans affected project relevance?	1.2.1 Level of alignment with sub national policy framework, regulations, guidelines and needs of local communities. **Judgement criteria:** (a) Prodoc based on adequate levels of participatory stakeholder analysis? (b) Prodoc tailored to a needs analysis of end beneficiaries - covering biodiversity conservation, food security, nutrition, improved livelihood etc.; c) Prodoc included a market study on development of NTFPs (including level of access, distribution, etc?	1) Prodoc 2) Forestry management plans covering Chilgoza forests, local development plans; 3) NBCSAP for Pakistan 4) Interviews/questionnaire with relevant stakeholders, civil society, end beneficiaries, relevant education and research institutions, iNGOs, etc.

1.3 Alignment with GEF/FAO priorities	**Question 3:** Does the project remain fully aligned to GEF and FAO priorities?	Level of alignment with FAO OE2 and CPF P1 **Judgement criteria:** 1.3.1) Level of alignment with GEF6 Focal Areas BD-4-P9, CCM-2-P4 and SFM-3-P7; 1.3.2) Level of alignment with FAO's Strategic Objective 2 (SO2): Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable; 1.3.3) Level of alignment with FAOPK's CPF priorities CPF-2-2.2.2: support to Pakistan's growth strategy - sustainable agriculture and economic growth - enhanced of value chain actors based on public-private partnerships, new/improved harvest management. 1.3.4) Alignment with GEF/FAO priorities on Gender, human rights and FPIC of ethnic minorities/indigenous peoples 1.3.5) Internal monitoring includes tracking of indicators relating to BD-4-P9, CCM-2-P4, SFM-3-P7 and CPF-2-2.2.2	1) Prodoc 2) Strategic documents of GEF6 and FAO (Our Priorities - Strategic Objectives, CPF; 3) PIR/PPRs 4) Interviews/questionnaire
1.4 Alignment with wider international goals and targets	**Question 4**: project remains committed to contributing to meeting SDGs, Aichi Targets, NDCs and implementing REDD+ (including mitigation targets under the NDCs)?	Level of alignment and progress in supporting the attainment of relevant SDGs and Aichi Targets, contributing to GEBs/mitigation targets under the NDCs, and implementing REDD+ in the four target provinces of the project in Pakistan **Judgement criteria:** 1.4.1) Level of alignment with relevant targets under SDGs 1 (poverty), 13 (climate change) and 15 (life on land); 1.4.2) Level of alignment with Aichi Targets 5 (loss of forest habitats at least halved, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced), 14 (ecosystems restored taking into account needs of women) and 15 (ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks enhanced); 1.4.3 Level of alignment with specific targets in the NDCs linked to mitigation in the forestry sector 1.4.4. Level of alignment with REDD+ (including linkages with UNDP, FAO and UNEP officials responsible for the implementation of REDD+ (and other TRI countries)	1) Prodoc; 2) GEF-6 Programming Directions 3) Interviews/questionnaire

1.5 Coherence of intervention logic	**Question 5**: are objectives and planned outcomes still relevant to secure the uptake of FLR/SFM	How far does the intervention logic fully align with the current needs of the government (national/sub-national)? **Judgement criteria:** 1.5.1) Does FLR/SFM currently form an integral part of forestry and relevant sector policies, strategies and plans? 1.5.2) Are FLR/SFM tools and practices adopted and applied in forestry landscape planning/management & challenges therein? 1.5.3) Are new funding mechanisms such as PES, promotion of public and private partnerships, to support FLR/SFM in Chilgoza forest ecosystems and in other forest ecosystems in the country?	1) Prodoc 2) ToC 3) Government forestry policies, strategies and plans; land use planning documents; 4) PIRs/PPRs 5) Interviews/questionnaire
2. EFFECTIVENESS			

2.1 Component 1 - Strengthened regulatory and policy environment for integrated and sustainable management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems	**Question 6:** To what extent has the project delivered planned outputs/targets to meet outcome 1 - *National and provincial FLR policies and legal frameworks are strengthened and implemented maximizing the provision of the multiple goods and services* 1.1) **A replicable FLR/SFM framework for Chilgoza forest ecosystems** in the four districts; 1.2) **Policies and legal reforms promoting FLR/SFM of Chilgoza Pine ecosystems** 1.3) Policy and regulatory frameworks facilitate and promote the **application of innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms identified** (PES, local forest funds, trophy hunting)	Progress (and lessons learned) in achieving outcome 1: **Judgement criteria:** Level of progress in engaging with decision-makers and public/private investors at national/sub-national levels on: 1.1) establishing and mainstreaming the FLR/SFM framework incorporating: a) **participatory inventory and mapping** approaches on the functioning of Chilgoza forest ecosystems; b) identification of the **economic value of the goods and ecological services** of Chilgoza forests in the four project sites (applying ROAM and other tools); and c) identification of **NTFPs and eco-services** that optimise biodiversity+habitat conservation and mitigate drivers of forest degradation (illegal logging, uncontrolled grazing etc.). 1.2 - 1.3) Number of forestry policies, laws, regulations, plans and guidelines analysed and officially reformed with the following evidence: a) full integration of FLR/SFM; b) the promotion of viable and sustainable NTFPs; and c) promotion of viable and sustainable funding mechanisms that support long-term FLR/SFM in line with REDD+ Readiness initiatives in the four provinces of the project	1) Theory of change 2) Progress reports (PIR/PPR) 3) GAP analysis and other relevant project assessments 4) SFM-related policies and plans at national and provincial levels 5) Local SFM management plans at pilot county/forest farm level); 6) Interviews with national and provincial/district Forestry staff working with the project

2.2 Component 2 - Implementation of Chilgoza Forest landscapes conservation, restoration and value chain development options at community level unity	**Question 7:** To what extent has the project delivered planned outputs/targets to meet outcome 2 - *Forest and Landscape Restoration and Sustainable Forest Management options, increasing livelihood based on goods and services provided by Chilgoza ecosystems, are demonstrated at district level in the four targeted provinces/regions?* In particular in relation to: 2.1) Establishing and applying **Chilgoza Forest multifunctional management plans**; **2.2) Good practices integrated in SFM plans and guidelines** for Chilgoza pine forests in all 4 provinces supporting >10 coms. 2.3) **Implementation of good practices such as ANR** in Chilgoza forest ecosystems 2.4) **NTFPs identified, selected and produced** through inclusive approaches in 10 target com. 2.5 **Alternative livelihoods** identified and established that support NRM through a small grants fund 2.6 **PES demonstration projects** identified and in operation 2.7 **Carbon sequestration is increased** through FLR and SFM of Chilgoza forest ecosystems	Progress and lessons learned in achieving outcome 2: **Judgement criteria:** Level of progress in establishing: 2.2.1) **multifunctional FLR/SFM plans based on participatory mapping and cross-sector coordination** (incl. priority areas for ANR), biodiversity+habitat conservation and sustainable production of NTFPs in each of the four target provinces) 2.2.2) Level of progress in developing guidelines on good practices linked to (i) capturing local knowledge, laws, informal community user rights, NRM practices etc. of 10 forest communities; (ii) good practices linked to cone collection, farming/agro-forestry, etc. (iii) reducing firewood use (stoves, effective pruning, etc.); (iv) developing inclusive pine nut value chains and for other NTFPs 2.2.3) level of progress in id. and establishing ANR at each project site whereby 10 target communities establish CFPCCs that enforce zero grazing, protect natural resources, etc., (Prodoc target = 4 x 3,600 ha) 2.2.4) Number of NTFPs in production; number of local community members involved; number of households registering improved FS/nutrition and incomes (sex disaggregated) 2.5) Number of households in the 10 target communities engaged in ecotourism, handicrafts, beekeeping, sustainable hunting, kitchen gardening, tree nurseries, etc. 2.2.6) Number of PES confirmed feasible, identified as bankable projects and start before project end (Prodoc target = 2 x PES) 2.2.7) Amount of carbon sequestration achieved and viable for trading (Prodoc target 2.78 m. tCO2eq)	1) Progress reports (PIR/PPR) 2) BD monitoring studies; 3) SFM plans and regulations at national and provincial level; 4) Interviews with stakeholders at provincial level on FLR/SFM/NTFPs/alternative livelihoods, etc.. 5) EX-ACT Tool workshops by FAO

2.3 Component 3 - Strengthened local institutions for integrated and sustainable management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems	**Question 8:** To what extent has the project delivered planned outputs to meet outcome 3 - *Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) operational, with strengthened capacities of provincial, district and local stakeholders to implement participatory Sustainable Forest Management?* In particular in relation to: 3.1) **Chilgoza CFPCCs established/strengthened** and operational at all four project sites 3.2) **National and provincial forest managers trained** in strategic development of inter-sectoral forest policies and programmes; 3.3 **Provincial, district local stakeholders trained in FLR/SFM** practices	Progress (and lessons learned) in achieving outcome 3: **Judgement criteria:** 2.3.1) No. of CFPCCs established/strengthened and percentage of community members who confirm FLR/SFM planning, implementation and monitoring meets their needs and aspirations (including recognition and value of their local knowledge and technologies). 2.3.2) No. of national/provincial forest managers trained in the identification and application of inter-sectoral policies/programmes (mentioned under 1.1). 2.3.3) No of stakeholders trained in tools and practices such as ROAM, ANR, FLR/SFM, PES, etc. and able to apply them with adequate resources	1) Progress reports (PIR/PPR) 2) Annual reports 3) Interviews with local stakeholders and beneficiaries' organisations participating in the project

2.4 Component 4 - Knowledge, partnerships, monitoring and assessment for Chilgoza forest ecosystems	**Question 9:** To what extent has the project delivered planned outputs to meet outcome 4 - *Stakeholders equipped with new knowledge on FLR of Chilgoza forest ecosystems and on strengthening private and public engagement through sharing of best practices, lessons and exchanges with TRI projects (national and global)?* In particular in relation to: 4.1) **M&E framework developed** for Chilgoza forests project; 4.2) **Communication, awareness raising and knowledge management** on Chilgoza forest ecosystems conducted at sub-national, national and global levels 4.3) **Lessons shared on progress and experiences** at sub-national, national and global levels 4.4) **Knowledge generation** via targeted applied research on FLR/SFM, PES, NTFPs, carbon monitoring and trading potential of Chilgoza forest ecosystems	Progress in meeting outcome 4: **Judgement criteria:** 2.4.1) Level of progress in developing an effective results-based M&E system geared to facilitate learning at all levels 2.4.2-2.4.4) Level of progress in developing an effective communication strategy relating to key findings, good practices and lessons on tools and application of FLR/SFM, funding mechanisms for FLR/SFM (PES, forest funds, alternative livelihoods, etc.) on the development of forest inventories, carbon monitoring and development of MRV under REDD+ (aided by inputs from other TRI projects), etc.	1) Progress reports (PIR/PPR) 2) Monitoring reports and data 3) TRI communications and documents on tools, monitoring, knowledge exchange, synergies, etc. 4) Interviews with stakeholders

2.5 - likelihood of impact - meeting project and wider TRI environmental and development objectives **5.3 factors affecting performance - achievements and challenges**	**Question 10:** Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives: a) *Local livelihoods improved through the increased productivity and enhanced services and functions of the Chilgoza ecosystem in Pakistan;* and b) *To contribute to the restoration, protection and sustainable management of Chilgoza Pine forests to provide global environment benefits as well as enhanced resilience and livelihoods of local stakeholders in Pakistan?*	Lessons learned to date on the main challenges (barriers/gaps) that are likely to affect the project meet its expected outcomes and objectives: **Judgement criteria:** 2.5.1) Level of lessons learned so far on why the project is not making adequate progress in general and/or at specific sites in relation to meeting its development objective - improved livelihoods and overall objective - improved management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems; 2.5.2) Level of good practices identified from the project that are not being adequately upscaled and outscaled 2.5.3) Identification of challenges in relation to: a) decision/policy makers b) Private sector c) Civil society d) Enabling/constraining factors e) Unintended consequences/results	1) Progress reports 2) TRI (global projest progress and annual reports 3) interviews
3. EFFICIENCY			

3.1 - Efficiency of project implementation	**Question 11:** To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?	Degree to which the project is successfully coverting resources into outputs and outcomes as planned in the Prodoc/annual work plans **Judgement criteria:** 3.1.1) How far is the PSC providing the guidance and oversight needed to plan, implement and monitor the project in an efficient and effective manner? 3.1.2) How far is the executing agency (MCC) fulfilling its role and responsibilities as foreseen in the Prodoc (in particular ensuring co-finance is channelled to the project in a timely manner and in line with the budget agreed in the Prodoc)? 3.1.3) How far is the implementing agency (FAO), through DEX/PMU proving to be an efficient way to implement the project? Could it have been done more efficiently through the application of the Operational Partner's Implementation Modality - OPIM (via an Operational Partner's Agreement)? 3.1.4) How far are project outputs achieving satisfactory levels of cost effectiveness? - for example, are the costs of the trainings (per capita) favourable in relation to government/donor programmes?	1) Progress and annual reports; 2) Financial budgets and expenditure reports 3) Interviews with project staff, FAO-PK, FAO-Rome, and national/provincial stakeholders
3.2 - Adapting to changing conditions	**Question 12:** To what extent has project management (PMU) been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?	Degree to which risk management has been successfully integrated into project planning and implementation **Judgement criteria:** 3.2.1) Are (external) risks being regularly assessed and updated (with appropriate mitigation measures) by PMU to facilitate project implementation as planned? - Are there any lessons learned on this? 3.2.2) has the PMU identified project activities that could increase risks (e.g. by not planting the right tree species, exacerbate forest fires, not taking into sufficient account the **need for/role of seed distributors** such as bats, birds and forest animals, etc.)	1) Prodoc 2) PIRs/PPRs 3) Technical progress 4) Annual reports; 5) Interviews with PMU and stakeholders in the provinces

3.3 - Combining resources	**Question 13**: To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. to avoid the duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?	Degree to which partnerships and synergies in place are producing a positive effect on project implementation (produce cost savings in relation to being implemented individually) **Judgement criteria:** 3.3.1) No. of joint initiatives and synergies at the country level that are in place and are avoiding the duplication of project resources and initiatives; 3.3.2) No. of joint initiatives and synergies at the TRI/S-South level that are in place and are avoiding the duplication of project resources and initiatives; 3.3.3) Lessons learned on where greater collaboration and synergies are needed at project and TRI levels	1) Progress and annual reports; 2) Assessment of official agreements between national partners, TRI projects, international partners on training budgets and sharing of costs, etc. 3) Interviews with PMU and government stakeholders at national and sub-national levels
4. Sustainability:			
4.1 - sustaining project results	**Question 14:** What is the likelihood that the project's results will be useful or be sustained after the end of the project?	No. of project inputs (training), outputs and outcomes where public, private, non-governmental, or community-based support is likely to continue after the project **Judgement criteria** 4.1.1) evidence that human and/or financial resources will continue to flow to operate, maintain, up-scale and/or out-scale FLR/SFM/PES, development of NTFPs, promote alternative livelihoods, monitor carbon sequestration and promote carbon trading, , etc. 4.1.2) Evidence FAO/UNEP/IUCN staff working on related forestry projects, REDD+ and biodiversity conservation in Pakistan will retain support services to Chilgoza forest ecosystems beyond the project's end date. Community willingness/ownership demonstrated during interviews	1) Progress reports 2) Monitoring and annual reports 3) Technical reports 4) interviews with PMU and key stakeholders at national and sub-national levels

4.2 - risks to project sustainability	**Question 15:** What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and its benefits (financial, socioeconomic, institutional and governance, and environmental aspects) and what is being done to ensure sustainability of TRI results in the long term?	Degree to which mitigation measures are in place to facilitate the continuation and expansion of project activities beyond its closure. **Judgement criteria:** 4.2.1) Evidence that current high/medium external risks that pose a threat to sustaining the project's main outputs and outcomes have been attended to with appropriate and realistic mitigation measures - in particular continuation of key public services, funding mechanisms and synergies that will safeguard Chilgoza forest ecosystems, support effective law enforcement, manage fiduciary risks, conduct carbon monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) under REDD+, etc. 4.2.2) Evidence beneficiary forest communities will have adequate resources to apply the CFPCCs and participate actively in FLR/SFM, benefit from PES/promotion of NTFPs, alternative livelihoods, etc.	1) Prodoc 2) Work plans and progress/annual reports; 3) Technical, training and workshop reports; 4) Internal M&E reports 5) Project communications 6) Group and individual interviews of government and local community stakeholders
4.3 - sustaining TRI results	**Question 16:** What efforts are being made to ensure sustainability of TRI results in the long term?	Degree to which TRI services can continue to operate beyond the project's end date. **Judgement criteria:** 4.3.1) Evidence the project has an exit strategy that includes a road map to ensure TRI information and technical services, promotion of S-S cooperation and synergies between TRI child projects continue under the same and/or alternative institutions	1) Prodoc 2) Work plans and progress/annual reports; 3) Technical, training and workshop reports; 4) M&E reports 5) Project communications 6) TRI (global project) documents and plans 7) Group and individual interviews with TRI global project representatives, LTO, etc.

4.4 - initial evidence of impact	**Question 17:** What project results and/or good practices (experiences) have been replicated in different geographic areas, or scaled up in the same geographic area using other sources (not from the project)?	Level of replication of project results and good practices so far in the project sites and beyond **Judgement criteria:** 4.4.1) Project's internal monitoring system is tracking results and good practices that have been replicated in the project sites 4.4.2) Government stakeholders are tracking the replication of project actions and good practices outside the project sites in the same and neighbouring provinces.	1) Prodoc 2) Work plans and progress/annual reports; 3) Project's Exit strategy 4) Forestry Department monitoring and reporting on FLR/SFM through the target provinces and elsewhere in Pakistan 4) Interviews with PMU, TRI and Forestry
5 Factors affecting performance			
5.1 - project design	**Question 18:** Are there aspects of the project design that need adjusting to deliver the expected outputs and outcomes and/or sustain them?	No. of areas where the project design has gaps/shortcomings that are impeding the delivery of results/meeting of objectives **Judgement criteria:** 5.1.1) Is the project's causal logic coherent, clear and realistic in the timeframe allowed? 5.1.2) Is the allocation of resources in the Prodoc sufficient to cover all the actions proposed under components 1-4? 5.1.3) Is the selection of the four project sites and 20 target communities feasible and based on sufficient participation of the actors proposed? 5.1.4) Are the local stakeholders identified able (legally and technically) to take ownership of expected results? 5.1.5) Has a gap analysis of these and any other issues been conducted and acted upon by the PMU in the inception phase?	1) Prodoc/logical framework; 2) FAO/OED Capacity Development Assessment; 3) GEF/OPIM Guide; 4) Association Agreements and contracts; 5) Interviews with OPIM staff, government stakeholders, end beneficiaries

5.2 - Project execution and management	**Question 19:** Is the implementing mechanism - Executing agency, PSC, PMU and CFPCCs and CSOs identified - suitable for delivering the results planned and securing sustainability of main results and what could be done better to the end of the project?	No of areas where the implementing mechanism is unable to deliver results as planned and secure their continuation/upscaling **Judgement criteria:** The implementing mechanism at the following levels is working well/has problems supporting the achievement of results according to the timeframe proposed in the Prodoc and in managing risks: 5.2.1) Executing agency (MCC) - has the resources and authority needed to discharge its role as planned in the Prodoc, in particular mobilise cross-sector dialogue, coordination and planning? 5.2.2) PSC - has the representation needed to provide the guidance and monitoring proposed in the Prodoc 5.2.3) PMU has the resources to operate effectively and mitiagte risks at the national level, in all 4 target provinces and project sites as well as at the TRI level (to promote knowledge exchange and synergies). 5.2.4) CFPCCs and the four provinces targeted are feasible for delivering results as planned in the Prodoc	1) Prodoc/logical framework 2) Theory of change 3) Interviews
5.3 - financial management	**Question 20:** What have been the financial-management challenges of the project (if any)?	Percentage of funds spent in relation to plan (to June 2021). **Judgement criteria:** 5.3.1) Level of co-financing and GEF funding delivered on time? 5.3.2) Level of additional co-financing leveraged/provided since start of implementation? 5.3.3) Have any shortfalls in co-financing/additional funding had an adverse/positive effect on project results?	1) PPRs/PIRs 2) Interviews with PMU finance staff
5.4 - see 2.5			

5.5 - Project oversight, implementation role	**Question 21:** To what extent has FAO delivered satisfactory levels of oversight, supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative and operational) during project ~~identification, formulation, approval,~~ start-up and execution?	No of interviewees (from MCC, Forestry Department, CFPCCs) who confirm the level of FAO support to project start-up and execution has been satisfactory or better **Judgement criteria** 5.5.1) At least 60% of interviewees (government stakeholders and beneficiary communities, women groups) confirm quality of FAO support has been satisfactory or better	1) FAO documents 2) Questionnaire/interviews with government stakeholders and local beneficiary community representatives (includes women and men)
5.6 - Partnerships and stakeholder engagement	**Question 22a:** To what extent have the project's main stakeholders been involved in project formulation and implementation and how could this be improved to ensure they assume ownership of results? **Question 22b**: What are the strengths and challenges of the project's partnerships/synergies established so far?	No. of interviewees who perceive the level of their participation in project design, implementation and internal M&E has been satisfactory or better **Judgement criteria** 5.6.1) At least 60% of interviewees ((public, private, civil society, vulnerable groups) confirm the stakeholder engagement plan has been adhered to and documented 5.6.2) All main stakeholders been made aware of the ESS plan and the grievance complaint mechanism and number of cases of the complaint mechanism being used	1) Prodoc 2) progress and annual reports
5.7 - Communication and knowledge management	**Question 23:** How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders and a general audience and how can this be improved?	No. of communications on results, lessons learned and good practices, case studies/experiences shared at project and TRI levels **Judgement criteria:** 5.7.1) To what extent are communication products feeding into project planning and supporting the sustainability and scaling up of project results?	1) PIRs/PPRs, annual reports 2) Knowledge and communication materials produced by the project at Pakistan and global TRI levels 3) M&E strategy/plan and reports 4) Interviews with M&E project staff and government staff involved in monitoring project actions and results.

5.6 - M&E design and implementation	**Question 24:** Is the project's M&E system based on an M&E plan that tracks stakeholder engagement (**includes gender priorities** - participation of vulnerable groups, women, youths, etc., access to resources, training, information, etc. - and how could this be improved?	Degree to which indicators being applied are realistic and allow the tracking of project results in relation to national and international goals and targets, gender priorities, etc. **Judgement criteria:** 5.8.1) The Monitoring, Review and Learning (MEL) strategy and related tools are being adequately tracked in the M&E system 5.8.2) The M&E system is applying a plan that is geared to facilitating learning on FLR/SFM/PES/NTFPs, etc. at all levels and reporting by the global TRI project on achievements in relation to the 9 core indicators required by GEF 5.8.3) The M&E system is used to adapt and improve project planning and execution in the interests of supporting the realisation of outcomes and their sustainability 5.8.4) The M&E system tracks gender-disaggregated indicators, baselines and targets to support the planning/application of the project's gender strategy 5.8.5) Lessons on the M&E systems have been addressed on the annual planning exercises	1) Prodoc/results framework; 2) Work plans 3) Progress/annual reports 4) Monitoring and evaluation system; 5) FAO Guidelines including on gender mainstreaming 6) Interviews

6. Cross-cutting priorities including gender equality			
6.1 - ESS and gender in project design and implementation	**Question 25:** To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures the ESS Mitigation Plan (if one exists) has been adhered to and gender considerations taken into full account in the project's design and implementation?	Degree to which stakeholders are satisfied FLR/SFM planning and implementation fully integrates mitigation of environmental and social risks **Judgement criteria:** 6.1.1) Environmental risks are reviewed (risk passement) and mitigation measures updated on a yearly basis to support the ecosystem approach to FLR 6.1.2) Social-related risks associated with vulnerable groups (ethnic minorities, families under the poverty line, disabled, women, youths, etc.) are reviewed and appropriate mitigation measures are updated on a yearly basis (in the form of participatory gender analysis and a gender strategy) 6.1.3) Project staff and key stakeholders have been trained in applying gender sensitive skills to ensure the needs of women and other groups are fully heard and acted upon in project planning (evidence training of local communities is, where possible, focused on both women and men participation so the latter can value and recognise the role of women's work in FLR/SFM) 6.1.4) Number of women and youths identified by the MTR who have assumed leadership roles in FLR/SFM 6.1.5) Evidence of any unexpected negative developments on women (e.g.) due increasing workload disproportionally more on women than men)	1) Prodoc 2) Work plans; 3) Technical, training and workshop reports; 4) M&E reporting 5) FAO/GEF Gender objectives and guidance documents 6) policies, plans and guidelines integrating FLR/SFM include gender priorities, ESS 7) Group and individual interviews (in particular with women and youths)

7.Additional questions in the MTR (linked to the global project and the COVID-19 pandemic) not covered in the 6 main sections of the EM			
7.1.3	**Q 1.3.** To what extent is the Global Child project providing the necessary coordination and technical support?	**Open question** to PM/M&E/LTO/PSC members (include in questionnaire) Interviews determine how far project management and national/sub-national stakeholders perceive global project support has supported project planning, implementation and monitoring and has been conducive to capturing lessons/good practices that can be fed into the next planning cycle of activities (examples to be provided).	Interviews
7.1.6	**Q 1.6:** For the remainder of the project, what could be the 5 most useful activities for the national child project to be implemented by the global child project? (to be asked to all project stakeholders, beneficiaries included)	**Open question** to PM/M&E/LTO/PSC members (include in questionnaire)	Interviews
7.4.7	**Q 4.7:** What kind of support from TRI Global support partners and FAO, if any, would be most helpful in addressing COVID-19 impacts and challenges for the national project?	**Open question** for PM/M&E/LTO/PSC members (include in questionnaire)	Interviews

Appendix 5. List of documents consulted

Documents consulted that are not available on the internet

FAO/TRI. The Restoration Initiative, 2020 Program Progress Report, 01 July 2020

FAO/TRI. TRI Quarterly Newsletter No. 1 (June 2020) and No. 2 (October 2020)

FAO/TRI. TRI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework

FAO/TRI. Templates for 9 Core Indicators

FAO/GEF. Project Environmental and Social Screening Checklist (2015)

FAO/GEF. Project Concept Note (Sept. 2016)

FAO/GEF. Project Preparation Grant (Sept. 2016)

FAO/GEF. Project Document GCP/PAK/091/GFF, 25 April 2018

FAO/PM. Project Work Plans for years 1 and 2 (2018-2019 and 2019-2020)

FAO/PM. Project Progress Report 1 (August 2018), 2 (January 2019), 3 (August 2019), 4 (January 2020).

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FAO/PM. Minutes of the Project Steering Committee meetings: PSC 1 June 2019; PSC 2 Nov. 2020

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https://www.thegef.org/project/strengthening-community-managed-protected-areas-conserving-biodiversity-and-improving-local

FAO. Pakistan - Country Planning Frameworks 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Available at:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/FAO-countries/Pakistan/docs/FAOPK_CPF-2018-2022.pdf

FAO. The Strategic Objectives of FAO: Our priorities, 2019. Available at:

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Appendix 6: Results matrix at 30 June 2021 with MTR ratings & observations*

Component/Outcome (Results Chain)	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target (30 June 2020)	End of project target (24 April 2022)	Level at 30 June 2021	Rating*	Justification for rating
PROJECT OBJECTIVE	**To contribute to the restoration, protection and sustainable management of Chilgoza Pine forests to provide global environment benefits as well as enhanced resilience and livelihoods of local stakeholders in Pakistan**						
Outcome 1	**National and provincial FLR policies and legal frameworks are strengthened and implemented with efforts aiming at maximizing the provision of the multiple goods and services provided by the Chilgoza forest ecosystems**						
Output 1.1 Replicable SFM/FLR framework developed for Chilgoza forest ecosystems in the four selected districts	(i) number of participatory FLR supportive policies/legislations/plans identified/developed/strengthened;	0	i) two participatory FLR supportive policies/legislations/plans identified/developed/strengthened; (ii) two FLR assessment conducted;	(i) five participatory FLR supportive policies/legislations/plans identified/developed/strengthened;	50% completed. (i) The PSC wanted more physical activities in the initial years to create project impact, regarding policy work the PSC opinion was that there are already good policies in place, which support the FLR. For the third year the project will work to identify any potential gaps to be addressed. (ii) Four Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology exercises	**S**	FLR/ROAM have been conducted and the FWD is committed to up-scaling ROAM to support the identification of ANR sites under the TBTTP. to avoid funding gaps to cover GIS licensed software needs for the application of ROAM, the FWD is testing the use of CEOF as a cost-

	(ii) number of FLR assessments conducted;			(ii) four FLR assessments conducted;	completed and the final report prepared.		effective alternative
Output 1.2 Policies and legal frameworks are strengthened to support integrated landscape approaches for the management of Chilgoza Pine ecosystems	number of women and men providing input to participatory policy planning;	0	At least two-hundred people providing input to policy planning with 40 percent women;	At least four-hundred per year (with 40 percent women);	20% completed. Since its inception, the project has been generating several multi-stakeholders (including women and youth) discussions around FLR and discuss policy engagement.	**MS**	Policy and legal framework is already supportive of SFM/FLR and is therefore not a priority for reform until lessons have been learned on SFM/FLR in the field.
Output 1.3 Policy & regulatory frameworks reviewed to promote/facilitate the use of innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms (PES) in Chilgoza forest landscapes	(i) number of policy/regulatory frameworks/strategies reviewed/strengthened with regards to the use of innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms (e.g. Payments for Ecosystem Services-PES);	0	(i) two policy/regulatory frameworks/strategies reviewed/strengthened with regards to the use of innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms (e.g. PES);	(i) four policy/regulatory frameworks/strategies reviewed/strengthened with regards to the use of innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms (e.g. PES);	35% completed. (i) Scoping mission to assess the feasibility of PES incentives conducted. An economic valuation study of the Chilgoza forests ecosystem services has been conducted, a workshop to discuss the final report has been conducted on 30th June 2021. Based on this workshop the project will	**MS**	Training, scoping and study on PES opportunities has been concluded and a regional workshop on PES conducted in China in 2019. No decision has been taken on the design of the bankable pilot project planned.

	(ii) number of local stakeholders skilled in design and implementation schemes of PES;		(ii) forty local stakeholders skilled in design and implementation schemes of PES;	(ii) eighty local stakeholders skilled in design and implementation schemes of PES;	start working on the selected PES options. (ii) 26 participants (32 men and 4 women) received training in Ecosystem Services valuation, incen tives, and payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)		Stakeholders have reservations on PES in a country that has no legal framework in place to formally apply it and, thus, prefer alternative solutions
Outcome 2	**Forest and landscape restoration and sustainable forest management options, increasing livelihoods based on goods and services provided by Chilgoza ecosystems, are demonstrated at district level in the four target provinces/regions**						
Output 2.1 Chilgoza Forest multifunctional management plans based on cross-sectoral approaches including restoration, BD conservation and sustainable prod. / livelihood options are prepared and implemented in each selected district of the four provinces	number of sustainable managem ent plans developed;	0	two sustainable management plans developed coverin g 32,200: (30,000 ha initiated under sustainable forest management plans by mid-term involving communities and private enterprises);	four sustainable management plans developed c overing 34,400: (30,000 ha under sustainable forest management plans involving communities and private enterprises);	25% completed. One plan (Sherani district) coverin g 26,000 ha has been finalized and shared with Balochistan Forest department for endorsement; the plan formulation for Chitral and SW has been included in the LoAs and the formulation work will start soon by the Forest department KP.	**MS**	One SFM plan has been completed and three are under elaboration through LoAs with FWD in KP (includes South Waziristan) and GB. Projections are the four plans (if approved by FWD) will cover 78,000 ha against 30,000 ha target in the Prodoc

Output 2.2 Good practices for sustainable management of Chilgoza pine forests are promoted in the targeted districts of the four provinces with at least ten different forest communities	number of reports covering good practices for sustainable management of Chilgoza pine forests developed	0	four reports covering good practices for sustainable management of Chilgoza pine forests developed	eight reports covering good practices for sustainable management of Chilgoza pine forests developed	50% completed. Four best practices reports (from four target districts) prepared and already incorporated in project implementation.	**MS**	FSM good practices have been identified and shared with 20 communities. There is evidence they have been integrated into the SFM/FLR plans in BP
Output 2.3 Assisted Natural Regeneration actions are implemented in Chilgoza forest ecosystems	number of ha of land under restoration practices Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) i n degraded Chilgoza ecosystems;	0	1,800 ha under restoration (ANR);	3,600 ha under restoration (ANR);	60% completed. Forty-eight ANR sites covering 2,153 Ha have been demarcated. The project team has conducted a survey to assess the status of Assisted Natural Regeneration.	**S**	2,153 ha of ANR have been implemented in 48 ANR sites and involving the participation of over 10,500 households
Output 2.4 NTFPs are sustainably managed and producing increased incomes for local residents in the targeted Chilgoza forest landscapes,	number of reports covering NTFPs of interest provided by Chilgoza pine forests, and guidelines on sustainable management of key NTFPs	0	four reports covering NTFPs of interest provided by Chilgoza pine forests, and guidelines on sustainable management of key NTFPs	eight reports covering NTFPs of interest provided by Chilgoza pine forests, and guidelines on sustainable	100% completed. Eight cone studies (4 per year) for the last two years conducted. In addition, the analysis of the species composition conducted during the ANR survey.	**MS**	All 8 reports planned have been completed, but only on supporting the processing of Chilgoza pine nuts. Study and

thereby increasing local participation and support for sustainable forest management				management of key NTFPs			promotion of other NTFPs to improve livelihoods not realised
Output 2.5 Increased alternative livelihoods opportunities for local residents	(i) number of households engaged in restoration programs at different levels; (ii) number of households directly benefitting from the project activities; (iii) number of small grants at district and provincial levels given out to support alternative livelihoods; (iv) number of value chain units strengthened/established	0	(i) At least 10,000 households engaged in restoration practices (50 percent women); (ii) 5,000 households directly benefiting from t he project activities; (iii) 20 small grants; (iv) two value chain units strengthened/developed;	(i)At 50,000 house holds engaged in restoration practices (50 percent women); (ii) At least 25,000 households direct ly benefiting from the project activities; iii) 60 (15 small grants in each of 4 target districts given out); (iv) four value chain units strengthened/dev eloped;	55% completed. (i) 17,500+ households engaged in restoration activities; (ii) 8443 farmers (6679 Men and 1764 Wo men) directly benefitted from project activities; (iii) Procurement is in process to provide 400 small grants to end beneficiaries in four NTFPs (fodder, honeybee, homebased nurseries); (iv) four Chilgoza nut processing units procured and installed in two of the project target areas (Diamer, Chitral & Zhob). 300 sets of cone collection tools have been distributed	**MS**	17,500 of 50,000 households targeted have participated in SFM/FLR activities, but no alternative livelihood schemes have been approved and received a grant so far.

					among CFPCC members to promote safe and sustainable Chilgoza cones collection. 24 chilgoza cone crushers provided. 1000 Fuel efficient stoves and 200 gasifiers provided to the farming communities.		
Output 2.6 Pilot programs in place for Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)	number of bankable projects developed on PES;	0	Feasibility study for the establishment of PES schemes is launched in at least two landscapes;	At least two bankable projects developed;	0% completed. The formulation of bankable project will start in the second semester of 2021.	**MU**	The scope to promote PES in Pakistan is limited and instead, the MTR found more attention is needed to apply incentives, taxes, levies and other income generating initiatives
Output 2.7 Enhanced carbon sequestration in targeted Chilgoza forest ecosystems	(i) number of ha restored under agroforestry in degraded Chilgoza ecosystems; (ii) tCO2eq emissions avoided/sequestered	0	(i) 400 ha restored (agroforestry); (ii) mid-term milestone after two/three years are	(i) 800 ha restored (agroforestry); (ii) 1,928,168 tCO2eq will be	80% completed. (i) 652.87 ha under agroforestry (35,347 fruit and 667,700 plants); (ii) n/a at June 30, 2021.	**S**	The project has made good progress on restoring degraded areas with agroforestry. It is too early to measure carbon

	in TRI target landscapes as a direct result of TRI interventions;		not relevant for CO2. Milestone after 5 years at the end of the project implementation could be considered as one mid-term milestone and tCO2eq after 20 years targets	sequestered within the 30,000 ha under SFM plans + 854,252 tCO2eq will be sequestered within the 4,400 ha under restoration practices			storage and CO2 emissions reductions while the restoration and ANR are on-going
Outcome 3	**Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) operational, with strengthened capacities of provincial, district and local stakeholders to implement participatory Sustainable Forest Management**						
Output 3.1 Chilgoza Forest Protection and Conservation Committees (CFPCCs) are established and operational in the four selected sites based on local participation and long-term ownership of forest protection, management and	number of operational CFPCCs;	0	CFPCCs needs are assessed and a capacity building plan is implemented with the support of TRI;	eight operational CFPCCs (at least two in each of the four selected districts);	100% completed. Fourteen CCFPCCs established and operationalized, and are engaged in protecting and management of their Chilgoza forests.	**S**	14 CFPCCs have been established against the target of 8, ensuring more local forest communities are actively engaged in the SFM/FLR activities (20) than planned (10).

restoration activities realised under Component 2							
Output 3.2 Capacity is built for national and provincial forest managers in strategic development of inter-sectoral forest policies and programs	number of cross-sectoral mechanisms and other relevant frameworks established/ strengthened;	0	At least one cross-sectoral mechanism is initiated in each of the 4 target areas;	At least one cross-sectoral mechanism is operational in each of the 4 target areas;	40% completed. At least 8 cross-sectoral discussions took place during the formulation of the ROAM as well as during the preparation of the sustainable management plan and survey for non NTFPs. TRI child project team on national level as a consortium partner, is monitoring the FLR implementation of the 10 billion tree programme.	**MS**	Senior provincial staff of the FWDs interviewed confirmed the trainings have been positive and facilitated the application of new forestry techniques, including ROAM and CEOF in the TBTTP, but follow-up activities to identify gaps have not taken place
Output 3.3 Capacity is built/strengthened at provincial, district and local stakeholders on sustainable forest	(i) number of capacity building events at local/ district/provincial levels organized;	0	(i) At least five capacity building events involving both men and women are organized;	(i) At least ten capacity building events involving both men and women are organ ized;	50% completed. (i) Seven capacity development events on Collect Earth, ROAM, PES, safe use of sustainable Chilgoza toolkits, tree planting and "Bridge for Billions" organised;	**MS**	Capacity development has enhanced awareness on the benefits of SFM/FLR and how it should be managed in the field. However, no follow-up

management practices	(ii) number of provincial, district and local stakeholders trained in the four selected provinces;		(ii) Capacity assessment needs are assessed and a capacity building plan is under implementation with the support of TRI;	(ii) 2700 stakeholders (200 staff + 2500 local community members and Chilgoza traders);	(ii) 391 (360 men and 31 women) stakeholders received training and participated in capacity development workshops in Collect Earth, ROAM and PES; 165 (162 men and 3 women) farmers from all 4 project districts trained to use harvesting toolkits to sustain cone production.		activities have taken place to identify gaps and learn lessons for future trainings planned. Access to tool kits remains a problem as they are not made, or sold locally.
Outcome 4*	**Stakeholders equipped with new knowledge related to forest and landscape restoration of Chilgoza forest ecosystems with strengthened private and public engagement through sharing of best practices, lessons and exchanges with both the other TRI national and the global projects.**						
Output 4.1 Monitoring and evaluation framework is developed for the TRI project in Pakistan	number of monitoring systems established: providing relevant information to managers both at national, provincial and district levels;		four monitoring systems (one for each pilot district) feeding to one comprehensive system;	four monitoring systems (one for each pilot district) feeding to one comprehensive system;	Land degradation baseline established using Collect Earth Open Foris (CEOF GIS-based tools. One national-level M&E system established to facilitate data flow; M&E plan has been prepared. Beneficiary data collection tools developed to capture the required	**MS**	M&E system plan has not yet been implemented. M&E system only monitors outputs that are aligned with 9 core indicators managed by the global child project. There is no link to show project

					data for reporting against the project indicators. The Collect Earth Open Foris tool has received a lot of positive attention and the Federal Ministry of Climate Change will adopt the Collect Earth tools for setting up baseline and monitoring the TBTTP flagship prog.		contributions to provincial, federal and international pledges, targets and goals. Reporting on core indicators is not captured in the PIR/PPRs (focusing on operational progress).
Output 4.2 Communication, awareness raising and knowledge management at the local, provincial, national and global levels on Chilgoza forest ecosystems	number of TRI knowledge products (ecosystem assessment reports, guidelines for PES, guidelines for Gender, leaflets, newsletters, case studies, etc.) developed and disseminated through relevant knowledge platforms both at provincial, national and global levels;	0	At least five knowledge products developed and disseminated on relevant issues for SFM/FLR of Chilgoza forest ecosystems;	At least ten knowledge pr oducts developed and disseminated on relevant issues for SFM/FLR of Chilgoza forest ecosystems;	Seven communication products developed and disseminated online and during project events. 15+ Events such as toolkits plant distribution covered by provincial media channels. One pager related to the project background and actions developed and disseminated in all the events conducted.	**MS**	Publications are informative, but not tied to a communication strategy designed to target different audiences (including advocacy to stimulate transformational change in FWD and CFPCCs)

Output 4.3 Lessons sharing and aggregation of progress and experiences at local, regional (district/ provincial), national and global levels	(i) number of attended TRI Annual Knowledge Sharing events, Restoration Finance events, and relevant TRI-sponsored South-South exchanges; (ii) number of knowledge sharing events/tools on forest landscape information between districts at the provincial level and between provinces in Pakistan;	0	(i) two TRI events attended; (ii) one (project website and information system operational);	(i) four TRI events attended; (ii) 11 (1 website+ 10) information-sharing events involving more than 400 four-hundred stakeholder representatives at local and national levels (technical days on Chilgoza forest ecosystems);	(i) Three events attended (Inception workshop in Kenya in Feb. 2019, TRI regional workshop on PES in Beijing in Sept. 2019 and TRI Global event in Rome in Oct. 2019). No events in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic; (ii) TRI global information sharing platform established and operationalized. Project team regularly contributes to TRI global newsletter/ other communication assets such as case studies and success stories.	**S**	TRI events have helped to bring stakeholders together and exchange information lessons, good practices, success stories and other areas of mutual interest. But development of networks and synergies were not identified to promote development of the TRI community and engage civil society in key areas where there are gaps (such as monitoring of endangered species)
Output 4.4 Knowledge generation via	Number of knowledge products on Sustainable	0	At least four knowledge products on Sustainable Management of Chilgoza	At least eight knowledge products on	Report on the valuation of the key Chilgoza ecosystem products,	**MS**	Reports are informative, but do not provide

targeted applied research actions on Sustainable Management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems	Management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems developed		forest ecosystems developed	Sustainable Management of Chilgoza forest ecosystems developed	services and functions developed as part of ROAM. 8 Chilgoza pine nut cones production survey conducted in four project areas. One ANR consolidated report.		clear-cut recommendations to fund SFM/FLR. Pine cone survey is not linked to a marketing strategy. Indeed, there is a general lack of research on how to establish inclusive value chains that benefit men and women.

Source: PM; *Achievement ratings: HS: highly satisfactory; S: satisfactory; MS: moderately satisfactory; MU: moderately unsatisfactory; U: Unsatisfactory; HU: highly unsatisfactory.

** Physical progress not requested due to the intangible nature of the outputs foreseen linked to knowledge development and communication.

Indicator assessment key

HS	S	MS	MU	U	HU

Appendix 7. Co-financing table (in USD to 30 June 2021)

Sources of co-financing[39]	Name of co-financer	Type of co-finance[40]	Amount confirmed at CEO approval[41]		Actual amount materialized (30 June 2021)		Actual amount materialized at mid-term (24 Apr. 2020)#	Expected total disbursement (24 Apr. 2022)
			Cash	In kind	Cash	In kind		
Provincial Gov.	Balochistan FWD	Cash/in-kind	4,743,383	948,677	129,180	214,500	68,840	5,692,060
Provincial Gov.	Gilgit-Baltistan FWD	Cash/in-kind	4,743,383	948,677	142,883	50,333	99,550	5,692,060
Provincial Gov.	Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa	Cash/in-kind	4,743,383	948,677	1,518,199	114,266	1,512,465	11,384,120
Provincial Gov.	FATA, KP FWD*	Cash/in-kind	4,743,383	948,677	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	All co-financiers	Cash/in-kind	**18,973,532**	**3,794,708**	**1,790,262**	**379,099**	**1,680,855**	**22,768,240**
FAO	FAO	In-kind	-	-	-	-	-	-

*****Cash/in-kind budget commitments and payments covered by KP province; # Based on accounts to 30 June 2020 in PIR-2.

[39] Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Beneficiaries, Other.

[40] Grants, loans, equity participation by beneficiaries (individuals) in the form of cash, guarantees, in kind or material contributions and other (please explain).

[41] The type of co-financing whether cash or in-kind should be indicated separately

Appendix 8. GEF evaluation criteria rating table and rating scheme

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating[42]	Summary comments[43]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS	Pakistan has a land area of 796,095 Km^2 (79.61 m. ha) and the project will support the restoration of 34 000 ha. This is equivalent to 0.0004% of total land area. It also supports the Bonn Challenge of restoring 350 million ha by 2030 and restoration will contribute directly to storing 2.7 m. tCO2eq
A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project is aligned with GEF6 BD-4-Prog9 and CCM-2-Prog7 and SFM3-Prog7; FAO's SO-2-Outcome 2.1 and the latest FAOPK-CPF 2018-2022 Priority Area 2 (Output 2.4).
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	The project is fully aligned with current national and provincial policies to restore forest cover under the framework of the Federal Government's Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, in which KP has its own Billion Tree Tsunami Project. In addition, the project supports the Federal Government's iNDC commitments which are rooted in the Pakistan 2025 One Nation One Vision; iNDCs 2016 and recognition of the ecological services of Chilgoza forests is growing. Project also supports NBCSAP 2011-2030 including reporting on relevant Aichi Targets (5, 7, 14, 15). Also supports achievement of SDG 15 (Targets 15.1 and 15.5).
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	MS	The Project has been designed to fit with UN-REDD Readiness Project to promote SFM on the ground (Prodoc section 3.2) and learn from GEF-funded projects implemented by UNDP on SFM (W. Himalayas), market and mountain project and mountain area conservation project. However, there is no mention of coordination or synergies with these, or other FAO/UNEP projects in PK.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	S	The project has made good progress since 2019 and is delivering its planned outputs under components 2 and 3 with the support of the FD, but more needs to be done to enhance mapping and modelling to identify the economic value and carbon storage capacity of the forests under SFM and restored under the FLR/ANR process. Local governance also needs strengthening to reduce the threats of illegal logging, grazing and firewood extraction and improve access to pine cone harvesting
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	S	The project has shown it is delivering most effectively on outputs where the FD is actively involved in SFM/FLR activities with the CFPCCs under components 2 and 3.

[42] See rating scheme at the end of the document.

[43] Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.

B1.2 Progress towards outcomes[44] and project objectives	MS	The project is unlikely to meet its immediate outcomes in the ToC by April 2022 due to delays at start-up and work restrictions due to the pandemic. The field visits and interviews confirm the local communities have enhanced their forest management capacity through the creation of the CFPCCs.
- Outcome 1	MS	The project has placed less emphasis on achieving this outcome so far, on the grounds SFM/FLR needs to be implemented first. ROAM methodology has been successfully applied, but mainstreaming of FLR is not a priority and PES does not seem to be the most appropriate financial instrument to support CFPCCs sustain SFM/FLR as there is no legal and regulatory framework in place for PES. Alternative more viable funding solutions are needed (some have been partially identified in the study on Valuation of Ecosystem Services). No study has been done the potential for carbon trading based on effective monitoring reporting and verification partly due to a lack of adequate coordination with UNDP on the implementation of the REDD Readiness initiatives.
- Outcome 2	S	Highly satisfactory progress observed in SFM planning (projected to cover 142% more forest area than originally planned); 48 ANR sites covering 2,153 ha established based on ROAM and highly popular CEOF software. Over 17,500 households reported to be engaged in FLR to 30 June 2021. Establishment of value chain for NTFPs not started yet, but four pine nut processing units have led to an increase in pine nut processing at all four sites. Diamer District (GB) processing of pine nuts increased from 36,000 kg (2019-20) to 44,000 kg (2020-21). Small-grants scheme to promote alternative livelihoods still in procurement phase to select service providers.
- Outcome 3	S	14 CFPCCs created against 8 planned. Internal capacity building of the district forestry departments to manage selected SFM/FLR activities has been aided by trainings in ROAM, CEOF, harvesting toolkits, fuel-efficient stoves, LoAs to implement selected SFM/FLR activities in coordination with TBTTP. Gaps identified in promoting value chains and NTFPs on basis of market analysis and quality control.
• Outcome 4	MS	M&E system is mainly operating to collect quantitative data, which can be channelled to the global child project responsible for tracking 9 core indicators identified at inception phase of TRI. M&E system is not aligned to track national indicators linked to Bonn Challenge, Aichi Targets in the NBSAP, SDGs, or carbon inventories (linked to REDD+ readiness MRV). Lack of qualitative monitoring has reduced the scope for qualitative analysis/products/research on key issues that support advocacy for transformation change that will sustain and expand SFM/FLR, develop funding mechanisms for CFPCCs, etc. Monitoring of gender equality needs strengthening.

[44] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	Achievement of environmental objective is likely, but will need more time and some outputs under components 1 and 4 to be modified. Achievement of development objective is less likely unless there is a better linkage between producers of NTFPs and markets (to establish shorter and more inclusive value chains).
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	UA	Not rated in MTRs
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[45]	MS	Overall, the project has a physical advance of around 50%, while total expenditure and committed expenditure stands at 43.1 %. indicating moderately satisfactory conversion of project resources into outputs. The project's implementation mechanism based on a PSC took almost 13 months to finalise. However, since May 2019, the PSC is demonstrating to be a cost-effective means to executing the project, thanks to inclusion of all four of FWD's provincial secretaries and chief conservators in PSC who are able to apply project activities to the TBTTP. However, due to the pandemic and application of the LoAs with provincial secretaries of FWD, co-finance is low in all four provinces (10% of planned budget). The LoAs with the FWD have helped to keep project costs down. The lack of synergies with other projects means the project has not applied cost-saving in areas such as the sharing of trainers and training materials.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	Sustainability of outcomes 2 and 3 are likely thanks to the TBTTP, which has enhanced the relevance of the child project since 2019. However, sustainability of income generating activities is unclear. Sustainability of outcome 1 is only likely after the government has assessed the success of the SFM/FLR process over several years. Outcome 4 is moderately unlikely to be sustained unless the M&E system is revised to include qualitative monitoring and aligned to relevant national indicators. Risk management also needs to be developed so that risks are monitored and mitigation measures updated annually. Also, TRI/FAO have under-estimated new external risks emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular on the national/local economy that will affect livelihoods and income generating activities from NTFPs. Likewise, the growing effects of climate change (anthropic/abiotic threats) on the Chilgoza forest ecosystems have not addressed through mitigation plans integrated into SFM/FLR planning and monitoring.
D1.1. Financial risks	ML	Financial risks have been upgraded from low in the PIR to "low-medium" by the MTR team. There are inadequate mitigation measures in place to counter the effect of the pandemic on the Pakistani economy, which has already had a major impact on promoting ecotourism in the Chilgoza forests and to counter the effects of climate change (especially rise in pests and prolonged

[45] Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

		droughts). In addition, there is no funding mechanism in place to support the CFPCCs consolidate and expand the SFM/FLR process.
D1.2. Socio-political risks	L	Socio-political risks are low, due to the Federal and provincial governments commitments to implement the TBTTP.
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	L	Institutional and governance risks are low, but require monitoring given: a) there is a lack of inter-sectoral coordination at the provincial level (especially engagement of institutions such as the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority) to support the development of inclusive value chains and NTFPs; b) no funding mechanism in place for the CFPCCs which are crucial to supporting the application of effective governance over SFM/FLR areas.
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	Environmental risks are low. However, the lack of qualitative monitoring in areas such as the application of tools such as STAR, or EHI means decision-makers at all levels are not aware of the impact of SFM/FLR on forest health and biodiversity/habitat recovery.
D2. Catalysis and replication	L	Replication of ROAM/CEOF-GIS software is already evident to identify ANR sites for TBTTP. CFPCCs are also catalysing a new mechanism for FWD to promote co-management of SFM/FLR at the local level. Pine nut processing facilities have increased number of farmers wanting to process pine nuts. However, it is too early to say if the development of alternative livelihoods and NTFPs are replicable, but lack of clearly identified markets reduces the scope for replication.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[46]	MU	The project has some design issues that need to be reviewed and a solution agreed upon because output 1.2 is not a priority for the new government and PES (outputs 1.3/2.6) does not have legal framework to support its implementation. Output 4.1 is not designed to promote learning based on qualitative data and analysis to support a robust communication strategy linked to advocacy to stimulate change as foreseen in the ToC (Appendix 9).
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	Quality of trainings and capacity building support has been satisfactory, especially where end products have had to be produced/delivered afterwards (creation of CFPCCs, ANR sites, SFM plans, plants, toolkits, fuel efficient stoves/gas fires). Training linked to income generating activities has been limited, but development of business plans based on marketing studies were not evident to date. In addition, all training has a general lack of adequate follow-up to identify gaps/challenges/good practices.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, CTA, etc.)	MS	The quality of FAO support has been satisfactory, but no visits or events including TRI events have taken place since November 2019 due to the pandemic. More should be done to establish a mechanism to facilitate synergies at the national level with other

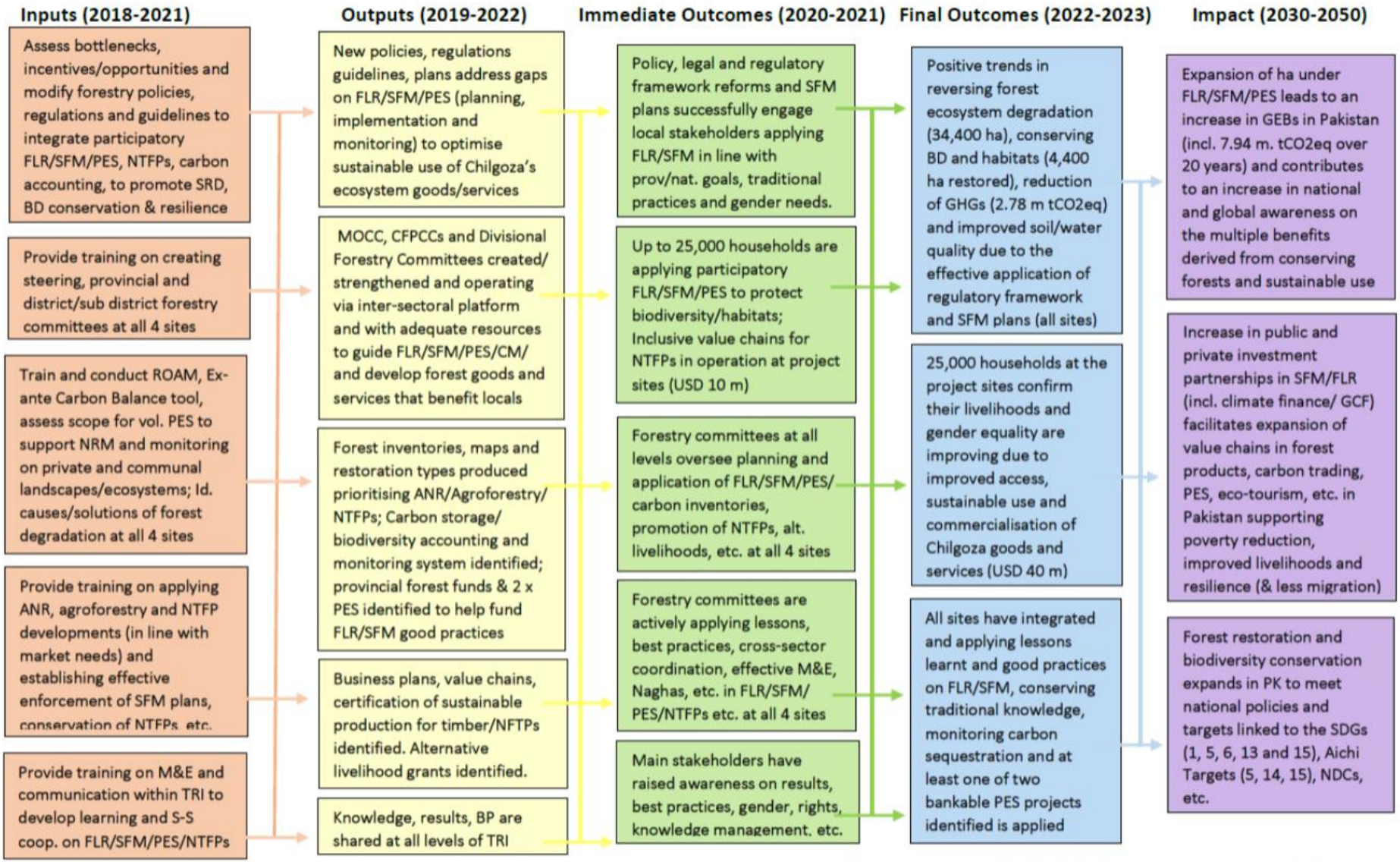
[46] This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at project launch.

		relevant projects (especially GEF-FAO, UNEP, UNDP and IUCN projects) and at the TRI level.
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	S	The PSC members took over 12 months to be finalised. However, since May 2019 it has provided a satisfactory level of support because the provincial secretaries of all four participating provinces/regions are members and have the authority to implement their decisions locally. PM needs to have better knowledge products to advocate change, especially to secure agreements on funding of CFPCCs.
E3. Quality of project execution	S	MoCC is fulfilling its role as executing partner in a satisfactory manner by attending the PSC meetings and capturing good practices that are being tested for replication in the TBTTP.
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MS	Project implementation through DEX has ensured a highly qualified PM is in place, who confirmed 80% of his time is dedicated to project duties. Full-time project coordinators are employed in all four participating districts and aided by two female enterprise development facilitators. The latter cover very large and remote intervention areas, but have limited access to the local communities because of their sez, especially in South Waziristan. The involvement of the provincial secretaries of the FWD in the three participating provinces has facilitated the implementation of decision-making in the districts concerned, which has been enhanced by engaging the FWD in LoAs to implement project activities on SFM/FLR. However, the PM has a high workload, which is not aided by the lack of a full-time assistant to cover all day-to-day tasks and logistics and a monitoring system that mainly focuses on operational progress.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S	The MTR team did not receive an audit report on the project, but found no evidence to indicate there are difficulties, or errors in accounting. Co-financing levels are low. There is no evidence this has had a major effect on project implementation. However, it needs to be reviewed by the PSC to ensure activities not implemented so far, especially the small-grants scheme, start as soon as possible and gaps such as follow-up exercises, monitoring and synergies with the SMEDA.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MS	Internal project partnerships have worked well, such as employment of IUCN to conduct ROAM, local stakeholder and community engagement through the creation of the CFPCCs and engagement of the FWD in selected SFM/FLR activities through LoAs. Partnerships with external potential partners ranging from GEF and other donor funded projects, in particular linked to UNREDD+ readiness projects, have not been developed. This has not been aided by the lack of a suitable donor coordination mechanism/interactive platform in place
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	MS	The project is producing standard knowledge products, and diffusing them via the internet, or press releases. However, an effective communications strategy is not in place, supported by qualitative learning.

E7. Overall quality of M&E	MS	The quality of the M&E system established is satisfactory from the point of view of tracking outputs linked to TRI's nine core indicators, but has no qualitative indicators or risk monitoring to support analysis on transformational change, uptake of good practices, improvements in governance, gender equality, resilience.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The M&E system has been designed to inform on the project's delivery of outputs in relation to planned outputs and report on the nine core indicators managed by the TRI global project. As a result, the main purpose of the M&E design is monitor quantitative achievements, rather than how far these achievements have induced change (such as in the policy, legal, regulatory and/or institutional framework, or on the ground in terms of sustainable management of the Chilgoza forest ecosystem.
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MS	The monitoring and evaluation plan is not aligned to national forestry monitoring indicators and targets, which means the FWD is not developing a strong sense of ownership of the M&E system, which is crucial to its continuation after the project.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	A combination of gaps in the M&E system to support qualitative learning and analysis, and an ineffective communication strategy are the main factors that are limiting the project from inducing change to optimise its effectiveness and secure the sustainability of its main outputs and outcomes.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The project's gender strategy includes gender needs assessments, but monitoring focuses only on participation rates of women and men. The MTR's data reveals women participation rates are lower than planned (10% against 40% planned) and differ from the data provided by the project, which is generally higher than the MTR's data. The MTR's data also found women are not being targeted to be the recipients of at least 30 per cent of the project's training and deliverables on the grounds the project targets households. This obscures how far women are being empowered and taking part in decision-making roles. There is little evidence the project is breaking down traditional values on women in most of the project sites.
F2. Human rights issues	S	The MTR found the emphasis given to adopting co-management approaches that incorporate viable local governance practices such as Nagahs and Nigahbans respects ethnic minority rights to participation and decision-making processes.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS	There is a high level of compliance with the ESS standards during the project design phase. However, the ESS has not been updated, or key elements integrated into the M&E system.
Overall project rating	**S**	

Ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U) Highly unsatisfactory (HU) Unable to assess (UA). Additional ratings for Section E: Likely (L), Moderately likely (ML), Moderately unlikely (MU), Unlikely (U)

Appendix 9. Participatory Theory of Change



Assumptions: →political willingness to support cross-sector coordination and participatory approaches on reforms, funding, upscaling of FLR/SFM/PES/REDD+; public/private sector apply inclusive value chains; tools and methods of FLR/SFM/PES adapted to local needs; SMEs reinvest profits to sustain/grow the business; laws and regulations on FLR/SFM/PES/NTFPs are enforced
Risks: → contingencies in place to mitigate: political stability, a financial shock, a natural disaster (incl. fires), an increase in insecurity affecting access to sites, aid duplication, etc.
Cross-cutting priorities: → gender equality focuses on improved access to services for all; rights-based approach is respected; local knowledge/customs integrated into planning/good governance.