

**Project Evaluation Series**

**Mid-Term Evaluation of Project  
participatory assessment of land  
degradation and sustainable land  
management in grassland and pastoral  
systems GCP/GLO/530/GFF**

**GEF ID: 5724**

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

## **Response by recommendation**

In this section, Management should address each recommendation, discussing them in the order presented in the executive summary of the evaluation report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party or FAO unit for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if further funding from FAO or a resource partner is required for implementing the recommendation.

Joint FAO and IUCN Management Response to the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Project GCP/GLO/530/GFF

The management of the above project from FAO and IUCN appreciate the effort and time taken to consolidate this report and for the interactions granted to the project teams, partners and stakeholders. The midterm review report provides an in-depth analysis of the project progress, which has been helpful in identifying areas for improvement in achieving the project goals and objectives.

We however note some gaps and have further comments on the midterm evaluation report as follows:

While the evaluation team acknowledged that the project started late for reasons beyond FAO and IUCN's control leading to subsequent delay of activities in some of the project countries, the evaluation team has however treated the midterm evaluation as a terminal evaluation, which it is not. At midterm, the project is expected to have delivered on some of the outcomes but not conclusively and the midterm evaluation is expected to guide on how to better achieve the remaining outcomes.

The evaluation team did not seem to understand that this is a research project and not an impact project. The project is designed to test a methodology and not implement SLM activities, if the methodology works, then SLM activities can be implemented through other projects.

It also appears that the evaluation team perhaps got lost in the technical specificities of the project including weak understanding of the assessment methodology. As a result, the technical recommendations on the methodology were misguided.

The evaluation team did not sufficiently consult the team of global experts who are the technical sounding board for the project. This was a missed opportunity that would have facilitated the evaluation team's better grasp of the PRAGA methodology and the reasoning behind the approach taken.

As one of the first OPIM implemented projects, there were operational hiccups at the beginning which were later resolved in the course of the project. However, it is hoped that this experience can inform other FAO OPIM implemented projects.

Finally, this project is of great importance to both FAO and IUCN as it will strategically advance global work on assessing and monitoring rangeland health and informing ongoing initiatives including the UNCCD on Land Degradation Neutrality; an SDG target while contributing to achieving SDG 15 – Life on Land in rangelands and grasslands. The results of this project will be useful in informing future projects and initiatives and the long-term development of the methodology for assessing rangeland health.

## Management response matrix<sup>1</sup>

Management response to the [Title]					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted, Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Time frame (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<b>Recommendation 1:</b>	Accepted/ Partially Accepted Rejected				
1.1 Use DPSIR not only for data analysis after collection but also for framing a system of “criteria and indicators” for the participatory assessment of LD and SLM in grassland and pastoral areas.	Partially accepted	DPSIR has not only been used for data analysis, it was also used to facilitate organized discussions on anthropogenic and natural influences on health of land in the consultations with stakeholders (including local communities) and in the compilation of baseline. Thereafter, DPSIR was used as a way to analyze these data systematically. We welcome the fact that this was done differently in Uruguay where it has been applied from the beginning and where it currently seems more vigorous. This can be further analysed and captured as part of good lessons learnt and will inform the revised PRAGA methodology and subsequently inform future projects. Having said the above, the project is too advanced to change approach in the other countries.	FAO/IUCN	The project is too advanced to change approach in the other countries.  Lessons learnt finalized by October 2020.	N

<sup>1</sup> Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

<p>To facilitate learning from project experiences and the final evaluation, develop an overall Project TOC and country level TOCs that better explain the causality chain to achieve the results and contribute to the Objective of SLM. The theory of change should identify intermediate states, impact drivers and assumptions that are not necessarily under the control of the project. It should also integrate an enhanced gender and youth inclusiveness approach, and engagement of the private sector.</p>	Partially accepted	<p>Based on the project design and purpose, we still emphasize that the proposed theory of change (TOC) does not fit the scope nor the objectives of this project, which was designed as a research pilot. While the evaluation team has pointed out the fact that TOC is necessary in linking Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, perhaps this needed to be captured in the project design phase to realistically inform what would have been achievable during the project period. The experience of the project is indeed that Outcome 2 is a starting point of important policy conversations on the need for participatory monitoring of rangeland and grasslands health and an integration of this within wider monitoring and reporting frameworks including informing the long-term resilience of populations that rely on rangelands and grasslands. It is hard to fully realise this within the 3-year period in all countries with varied national realities. However, the project is a contributor to this discourse while relying on future interventions that will build on this activity for the continuation of it.</p> <p>Going forward, a theory of change will be developed for the overall project. This can be used to guide national level thinking about how to institutionalise rangeland assessment. This might however be late in the project.</p>	FAO/IUCN	September 2020	
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b></p>	<p>Accepted/ Partially Accepted Rejected</p>				
<p>2.1 Take steps to enhance and complete the PRAGA methodology, by providing a</p>	Accepted	<p>This is expected to commence in the 2nd quarter of 2020, as all the countries advance on lessons learnt that are integral to designing the globally comparable indicators.</p>	FAO and IUCN	June-December 2020	N

<p>framework with globally comparable indicators and criteria in the social, economic and governance dimensions in order to capture holistically the rangeland health dynamics and the link to various ecosystem services.</p>		<p>The plans / activities are already outlined in the project document– ‘Activity 1.3.1: Revision of the procedural and operational manual based on feedback and lessons learned compiled under 1.2.3’; and to review the local indicators from the assessment to identify globally comparable indicators – ‘Activity 1.3.3: Compilation, analysis and publication of the framework of globally relevant local level indicators defined by domain of assessment and the finalized assessment and monitoring operational and procedural manual’</p>			
<p>2.2 Establish a clear and systematic approach to:</p> <p>(a) enhance engagement with partner governments, the private sector, relevant SLM partner of other FAO interventions, as well as pastoralists’ organizations, movements and networks at country and regional level, in order to facilitate and enhance the linking of LD assessment results to national decision-making processes; and</p> <p>(b) report on progress towards outcomes, disseminate the LD assessment methods, and to aggregate and disseminate best practices and lessons learned.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>(a) This is a welcome suggestion. To this effect, specific policy action plans will be designed in countries at the identified appropriate level to concretely link project outcomes and the PRAGA experience to policy and decision making. This is advanced in Kenya where pastoral county blocks are targeted.</p> <p>(b) The dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt will be slightly delayed due to ongoing Covid-19 situation as well as unrest in Niger and Burkina Faso. Many activities organized by the project and external organizations have inevitably been postponed. 2020 was to be an instrumental year for the global dissemination of project outcomes due to the numerous international meetings such as the International Rangelands and Grasslands Congress, World Conservation Congress and UN Conventions.</p> <p>(c) A publication on best practices (including SLM) and lessons learnt will commence in 2020 with the final compilation of all country lessons learnt. At the moment, focus is on the LDN and PRAGA publication.</p>	<p>FAO and IUCN</p>	<p>2020-2021</p> <p>It is difficult to provide a definitive time period with the current uncertainties under Covid-19.</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>2.3 Improve the targeting strategy for the engagement of women and youth.</p> <p>Gender sensitive indicators need to be captured in the Logframe and the PRAGA methodology and should be contextualized to the need of both men and women. The same should be done for climate change and the respective identification of indicators for the LD monitoring framework.</p> <p>At implementation level, the Project should capture specific local LD knowledge from women in pastoralist communities, and use derived indicators to inform policy and decision making processes regarding national and subnational SLM plans and strategies.</p> <p>For the above improvements, the Project needs to use a gender expert to include sex-disaggregated targets in the logical framework, and to advice on how to make LDA indicators include those that measure the socio-economic</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>Women and youth were targeted during the local consultations. Some challenging activities (e.g. the non-ownership of livestock and disconnect by majority youth from the pastoral sector) were also observed in some countries.</p> <p>The indicators used for local level assessment were provided by men, youth and women. Of course, tapping into community reservoir of knowledge on health of rangelands through community appointed leads on these. Based on our field assessment experience, these did not change based on gender (e.g. if the indicator for healthy rangeland was a particular plant species, it was the same for both gender). Perhaps the project can aim at reporting recorded differences in approaches to landscape management across gender.</p> <p>Climate change indicators such as rainfall and temperature were important ecological pointers during baseline analysis and field assessment, even if explicit reference was not made. Local communities also alluded to various climate aspects such as drought.</p> <p>The project is in advanced stage and all the indicators were decided, tested and analysed.</p> <p>Going forward, the revised methodology will be explicit on the engagement of Women and Youth in the different stages.</p>	<p>FAO and IUCN</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>N</p>

implications of LD on women in pastoral communities.					
<b>Recommendation 3:</b>					
3.1 More dialogue and interaction are required between the various project partners to coordinate project implementation, facilitate relationship building, and clarify the progress of the project and the expected roles and inputs of each project stakeholder.	Accepted	This is welcomed and can be further pursued in delivery of component 2 and 3 which are still largely ongoing e.g. under lessons gathering phase of the project.	All partners	2020-2021	N
3.2 The two partners, FAO and IUCN, should duly follow the institutional and management arrangements for the implementation of the Project as described in the PRODOC. The role of the FAORs in Project implementation must be clarified and the responsibility strengthened to ensure effective and efficient results, like in the case of Uruguay, where FAO's convening power is considered as a comparative advantage by the Project's partners, which puts it in good position for policy dialogue on range management issues, partnership engagement, sustainability and the collection of lessons learned.	Partially accepted	<p>Insitutional arrangement in the PRODOC was altered in part to address demands from countries on the difficulty in implementation in countries where the OP did not have offices. Some of the changes were not supported by IUCN as the organization felt sidelined by the decisions.</p> <p>This is an important lesson for future projects (including global ones) particularly under OPIM where more clarity will be necessary during project design to make explicit the technical, political and financial roles and contributions of the FAO offices and representations with accompanying budgetary allocations to ensure buying-in and ownerships. While FAO-country offices were actively pursued during project implementation there were challenges <i>inter alia</i> non-clarity on their functions and lack of allocated budget lines where the OP was doing direct implementation. This has hindered the ability to tap into established FAO offices, programs and networks in Kenya, Niger and Burkina Faso.</p>	All partners	<p>At the advanced stage of the project, not much can be changed on institutional arrangement.</p> <p>That said, engagement with FAO offices on policy dialogues will continue to be pursued.</p>	N

		The project has no provisions for regional components. These are being pursued, where possible, through co-financing activities e.g. in Niger and Burkina Faso.			
3.3 A one-year no cost extension is necessary, to allow the Project to complete all activities related to Outcomes 2 and 3, and in addition, to Outcome 1 for Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Burkina Faso.	Accepted	This has been effected. However, further extension maybe requested in the future as this suggestion was pre-Covid 19, which has further delayed some project activities.	All	May 2020	N
4.1 In Kenya and Kyrgyzstan, adopt and implement appropriate modalities to further involve the subnational governments in the implementation. Prepare and submit to key project partners an exit strategy that will show how key results will be sustained after project completion. The plan should indicate a coordinated approach and clear responsibilities and outputs for each project partner.  To support sustainability and scaling up of project results, collaboration with government agencies and FAOR/country programme needs to be enhanced and strategic linkages with other	Accepted	As a research project aimed at developing a tool that can then be used by the various stakeholders, the proposed exit strategy entails preparing policy action plans that point to how the various government agencies and development partners can incorporate PRAGA into the activities or baselines. This project is different from other traditional projects where for example, an SLM approach is established and an exit strategy is needed on how the practice will continue to be sustainable.  In addition, in coordination with international partners activities are aimed at creating more space for rangelands and grasslands.  Collaboration with government agencies is already ongoing but can be revamped and improved. In Kenya, the methodology has already been included as part of the national Rangeland Management Strategy by the national partner – the State Department of Livestock	FAO and IUCN	December 2020	N- for exit strategy  Y-for regional activities.

<p>SLM interventions, sector fora and multi-stakeholder / knowledge platforms, as well as regional pastoral networks (for example Central Asia Pastoral Alliance, Pastoramericas, Reseau Billital MArrobe and Eastern and Southern Africa Pastoral Network) need to be further explored.</p>		<p>which is under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and mandated to oversee rangeland management in the country. During the project national inception meeting, policy entry points for the project were analysed and documented in Kenya. The same was also done during the local inception meeting where County Executive Committee officials responsible for Environment and Natural Resources; and Agriculture and Livestock from the two counties participated and highlighted the current policy entry points the methodology could be integrated in for instance in the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs). Similar discussions were also held when the assessment results were presented for validation at the national and local level and also when the finalised assessment results were presented at the national and local level. As study has also been done on the national level and local level policies to inform a policy action plan.</p> <p>Plans are currently underway to roll the methodology out in the Arid and Semi Arid (ASAL) counties by presenting the results from the assessment at the Frontier County Development Council (FCDC) governors to create interest and awareness on PRAGA, which will be followed by capacity building of county technical officers on the use of the methodology.</p> <p>Plans to roll out the PRAGA methodology at the county level will be agreed on after the capacity building exercise planned for later in the year.</p> <p>Collaboration with government agencies is already happening especially in Kenya where the national partner is a government agency responsible for rangeland planning and management. Given the continued discussion with the county government</p>			
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		<p>especially through the FCDC, the methodology will be incorporated into the county planning processes.</p> <p>The methodology has also been written in an IUCN project which will be implemented in 11 ASAL counties of Kenya. This will ensure the methodology is rolled out in the other counties and increase its absorption in the ASAL counties.</p> <p>IUCN can improve the institutionalization process of the methodology that is already happening in Kenya, Burkina Faso and Niger.</p> <p>In Kyrgyzstan, local pasture committees are the definite entry point and user of the methodology. A pending activity is to present the PRAGA results to the committees and design a policy entry point at local level. This is because, the national government seems impenetrable and have their own established monitoring frameworks that are not easily shared with others including the pasture committees.</p> <p>Regional components including engagement of regional networks were not elaborated in the project and there are no budget allocations for these. However, for Niger and Burkina Faso, joint activities between the two countries have already been elaborated with further financing from FAO and will be executed by IUCN through an LoA in 2020. In Uruguay, there are planned regional activities also with funding from FAO through CAF. Having said this, the PKH and the MPS, who are providing co-finance to the project, will be used as a platform to share project outcomes with these regional networks. Within their co-finance capacities, further regional aspects can be explored as funds permit.</p>			
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