



MIDTERM REVIEW REPORT

	MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT OF THE PROJECT: "MULTI COUNTRY PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ON LMO TESTING IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL DECISION MAKING"
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Ministerio del Medio Ambiente
República **ANGOLA**



Ministère de l'Environnement et Développement Durable
Democratic Republic of the CONGO



Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture
LESOTHO



Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Ecologie et des Forêts
MADAGASCAR



Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment
MALAWI



Ministerio da Agricultura e Segurança Alimentar
República de MOÇAMBIQUE

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The views expressed in this report are purely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UN Environment, or project stakeholders, including beneficiaries, who were consulted in the preparation of this report.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/Abbreviation	Meaning
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CB-UEM	Biotechnology Center of Eduardo Mondlane University
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CENARE	Center National De' Recherches Sur L'environnement
DAR	Department of Agricultural Research
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IIAM	Mozambique Institute of Agricultural Research
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
LMO	Living Modified Organism
LUANAR	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
MCP-ICLT	Multi-country Project to strengthen Institutional Capacities on LMO Testing in support of national decision making
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
NBC	National Biosafety Committee
NBRC	National Biosafety Regulatory Committee
NCA	National Competent Authorities
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PBS	Program on Biosafety Systems
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PoW	Program of Work
PRODOC	Project Document
PS	Principal Secretary/ Permanent Secretary
QMS	Quality Management System
RAEIN-Africa	Regional Agricultural and Environmental Innovations Network-Africa
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable and attributable, Relevant and realistic, Time-bound, timely, Trackable and targeted (indicators) ^[1] _{SEP}
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

Table 1: PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Implementing Agency	UNEP	Executing Agency	RAEIN –Africa	
Sub- program	Environmental Governance	Expected Accomplishments	EA (b) - Institutional capacities and policy and/or legal frameworks enhanced to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals	
UNEP Approval Date	30 th May 2017	PoW Outputs	Institutional capacity and harmonised networks to support management of transboundary movement of Living Modified Organisms	
GEF Project ID	5283	Project Type	Full Sized Project	
GEF Approval Date	05 th December 2016	GEF Strategic Priority/ Objective	BD 3 - Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	
Expected Start Date	1 st June 2017	Actual Start Date	1 st July 2017	
Planned Completion Date	29 th December 2021	Actual Completion Date	TBD	
GEF Grant Allocation	USD 3,860,000	Actual GEF Grant expenditures reported as of [December 31, 2018]:	USD 1,426,530.34	
Project Preparation Grant- GEF Financing	USD 115,000	Project Preparation Grant Co-Financing	USD 57,271	
Expected Full Size Project Co-Financing	USD 6,546,752	Secured Full Size Project Co-Financing[31 st December 2018]	USD 1,770, 477.30	
First Disbursement	USD 579,000	Date of Financial Closure	TBD	
No. Of Revisions	2	Date of Last Revision	1 ST JANUARY 2019	
No. Of Last Steering Committee Meeting	2	Date of Last/ Nest Steering Committee Meeting	Last October 2018	Next July 2019
Mid-Term Review Planned Date	April 2019	Mid-term Review Actual Date	May 2019	

Terminal Evaluation (Actual Date)	TBD	Terminal Evaluation (actual Date)	Not applicable
Coverage Countries	Angola Democratic Republic of the Congo Lesotho Madagascar Malawi Mozambique	Coverage Region	Africa (Southern Africa)
Date of Previous Project Phases	Not Applicable	Phases	TBD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Review background and methodology

This Mid-Term Review covers the implementation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded “Multi Country Project to Strengthen Institutional Capacities on LMO Testing in Support of National Decision Making” in the period July 2017 - December 2018. The project is implemented by the UN Environment (UNEP) and co-executed by RAEIN Africa, a regional organization that promotes participatory development of appropriate science and technology for sustainable management of the environment and agricultural production systems and participating Laboratories in Angola, Congo Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique.

The Mid-Term Review was carried out to:

- (a) Assess project performance (relevance, effectiveness and efficiency),
- (b) Assess the likelihood of attaining the intended outcomes and impact and their sustainability, and
- (c) Capture lessons and provides recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

The Mid-Term Review was carried out in the period 10th December 2018 - 7th March 2019.

The Mid-Term Review was carried out in accordance with UN Environment’s Evaluation Policy and the methodology comprised the following elements:

- (a) Initial discussions in South Africa with RAEIN-Africa staff,
- (b) Discussions with the UNEP-GEF Task Manager;
- (b) Analysis of the project design and elaboration of the project’s Theory of Change as the framework guiding the evaluation,
- (c) A review of relevant documentation,
- (d) A two-week mission to the six project countries and meeting with stakeholders at the national levels,
- (e) Follow-up Skype interviews with the RAEIN-Africa

Summary of the main evaluation findings

A. Strategic relevance:

The Project contributes to the national policies on environment as well as the mandates of relevant ministries that are partners in the project such as Ministries of Agriculture and research institutions. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture in the various project countries are mandated to ensure biosafety. The development of science-based decisions on the use of LMOs will thus be in line with the mandate of ensuring biosafety.

The project is therefore playing an important role in the development of the Government’s policy on biosafety.

The project is fully aligned with UN Environment’s strategies and Programs of Work for 2016-2017 especially in relation to environmental governance.

B. Achievement of outputs:

Component A aims to improve laboratory infrastructure required for qualitative and quantitative testing of LMOs. Component A has two outputs namely

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- (b) Adequate functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

These outputs are well on track and are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

Component B seeks to build a critical mass of laboratory staff with the requisite knowledge and skills for LMO detection and analysis. Component B seeks to build human capacity. The activities constitute QMS, Sampling detection and documentation and LMO testing and Proficiency testing.

IN as far as their being moved to year 2, 3, and 4 they are all planned for and are sequentially presented following up to the Infrastructure capacity building. Though there has been slow progress towards actualization of this component, this component is likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

Component C is aimed at building a robust network of LMO detection laboratories in the region to facilitate sound biosafety decision making and environmental safety. The objective of this component is to facilitate dissemination of results from the project that will be within and beyond the project intervention zones through a number of existing information sharing networks including online based forums, newsletters, a network of LMO Detection laboratories, and Learn and share forums.

Component D is aimed at ensuring a strong interface between LMO testing laboratories and biosafety decision making processes. The target is a national biosafety framework in which the results of LMO testing laboratories are used to inform policy and programmes, and pre- and post-approval monitoring practices on LMOs. The delivery of the outputs under this component had not been commenced by mid-term. Overall, although delayed in commencement the outputs for Component D are likely to be fully delivered by the project completion date.

Overall, the delivery of the outputs by the date of the project completion is a mixed bag. Some outputs may not be fully delivered before the current project completion date. Achievement of the outputs under Component C and D are particularly challenging in this sense. A no cost extension of the project completion date would be the ideal position. However, considering the financial constraints that the project may face regarding the costs related to the project staff. The project therefore must remodel the activities and outputs so as to effectively and efficiently complete the project within the anticipated timeframe

C. Effectiveness (attainment of project objectives and results):

On effectiveness, the Reviewer reflects on project performance at an output level by delving into particular activities as they appear in the logical framework and annual work plans. The Reviewer does not mention every activity under every output. Instead, the reviewer gives a review of most of activities, especially if there are challenges, gaps or rooms of opportunity. Conclusions elucidated from the review are fed into capturing the larger picture of an overall

progress towards the outcome. The project seeks to achieve outcomes that in turn are expected to lead towards the achievement of the project's objective/intermediate states and further to contribute to the attainment of its goal/impact. The evaluation of the Project's effectiveness is based on the extent to which the project's outcomes, as defined in the reconstructed ToC, are likely to be achieved. Moreover, the extent to which the outcomes will contribute to the intermediate states and impact identified in the reconstructed ToC as well as the formal objective and goal specified in the ProDoc is assessed.

D. Sustainability and replication:

The sustainability of project's outcomes will rely on the regular updating of the information Sharing Platform; and, through the collective efforts by the national focal points in the project countries, (Representatives of their government). The reviewer anticipates that the sustainability of this Platform will face some challenges, as people change and the issue of providing data is always sensitive in countries and the risk measures in the project design do not include appropriate mitigation measures, in case the countries don't update and use the platform beyond the project.

Based on the extensive interviews with executing organizations and the reviewer's experience in this regard, the project outputs have very substantial replication. The approach of training the trainer provided a practical approach on increasing capacity on LMO detection and it also promoted the integration of LMO detection in the day-to-day management and decision-making processes of Biosafety. These outputs are very useful guides for government and for the academic institutions and the research departments/ scientific institutions, that haven't had this kind of practical planning projects before. It is recommended to focus further GEF financial support to build upon the considerable number of successful major initiatives of the project.

E. Efficiency:

The financial statements (Periodic Expenditure Reports) based on the template of the UN, are not broken down into components and activities e.g. (A; B; C; D; E and F), thus making it difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness in the implementation of the activities. ANUBIS reporting format is based on Project component as per the UNEP Reporting formats i.e. 10- National Project Component; 20- Sub Contract Component; 30 Training Component etc. and not project activities.

Implementation was significantly delayed, due to factors often outside the control of the project, such as complications of procurement process, which required a detailed and thorough analysis of tender documents received to avoid, procuring equipment that may not be fit for purpose and ensure the best value for money that the project could get.

Detailed and thorough review of the submitted tender documents was followed by technical meetings with all suppliers to clarify on grey issues especially on equipment technical specifications. This was necessary to ensure that the project select the best of the available equipment at the competitive amount. Although there were significant delays in the procurement of the equipment, the finally selected pieces of equipment were the best and the project ended up getting a 65% discount on the PCR machines because of the number

being procured. As a result, this availed more budget funds to the countries to procure other necessary equipment.

UN Environment reporting requirements and processes using ANUBIS was a challenge to some of project accountants. However, with Training from RAEIN-Africa and Technical backstopping from the project Task Manager, this was later resolved.

Mozambique was the only country that had no issues in the use of ANUBIS reporting system, as the same project accountant of an ongoing UN Biosafety project was familiar with the system. Although Lesotho and Madagascar had previous Biosafety Projects and experience in the use of ANUBIS, the changes of staff members assigned to the MCP-ICLT resulted in the need for the PIU to provide continuous training and Technical backstopping. Other Challenges in DRC and Angola were the appointment of non-financially trained personnel to run the project finance and ANUBIS. This was also exacerbated by the communication problems caused by the language in the two countries.

Another challenge that caused some delays in the project implementation is the long period countries took to apply for duty exemption certificates. With the procurement of equipment having been done in November 2018, by March 2019 only one Country (Malawi) had obtained its Duty exemption certificate. Suppliers had to delay dispatching the equipment while waiting for exemption certificates as this would have resulted in import duties to be paid and reducing the Budget for equipment and consumables.

Two of the six countries, (Angola and DRC) had complications of their Bank account details which resulted in the funds being returned to the RAEIN-Africa account three times due to compliance issues as the information supplied by the countries were not exactly the same with the banking details. This also causes some delays to start national projects, but was eventually rectified by both countries and RAEIN-Africa.

Although all these challenges caused the project Implementation to be slower but the MCP-ICLT project and partner countries received value for money in terms of the equipment procurement.

F. Factors affecting project performance:

Overall, the project design is coherent, but the project was overambitious in its number of activities and intended outcomes and outputs, when considering the novelty of the topic and approach, the staff resources available to RAEIN Africa and the capacities of the participating countries.

The roles of the partners in the implementation are generally clear and well aligned with their institutional mandates. Capacity constraints affect their ability to engage, but the very purpose of the project is to enhance their capacities. The project is using a co-execution model with RAEIN-Africa as the Lead Executing Agency, whose staff are qualified, but limited staff resources, who are supplemented by the Technical Advisors.

Several knowledge products of good quality have been produced under the project and disseminated to a broad range of people but low visibility of the project remains a challenge.

This does not seem to relate to major shortcomings in the approach to knowledge management, but to the novelty and complexity of the topic.

There is a clear ownership at the highest level in the National Executing Agencies, but the continued level of engagement will depend on the capacity of the laboratory technicians to detect, analyze and compute the results of the tests.

The monitoring indicators are "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented and time-bound) but are output indicators and do not capture change. The monitoring is carried out by RAEIN Africa with the involvement of the countries.

Rating of project performance

Overall, the project is rated "satisfactory". Table 2 provides a summary of the ratings of the different evaluation criteria.

Criterion	Overall Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	Satisfactory
B. Achievement of Outputs	Moderately Satisfactory
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results	Moderately Satisfactory
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed Theory of Change	Moderately Satisfactory
2. Likelihood of impact using "ROtI" approach	Likely
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document	Highly Likely
D. Sustainability of Outcomes	Moderately Likely
1. Socio-political sustainability	Moderately Likely
2. Financial Resources	Likely
3. Institutional Framework	Likely
5. Catalytic Role and Replication	Highly Satisfactory
E. Efficiency	Satisfactory
F. Factors affecting project performance	Satisfactory
1. Preparation and Readiness	Satisfactory
2. Project Implementation and Management	Satisfactory
3. Partnership, Stakeholders Participation, and Cooperation	Satisfactory
4. Communication and Public Awareness	Highly Satisfactory
5. Country Ownership and Drive-ness	Satisfactory
6. Financial Planning and Management	Satisfactory
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	highly Likely
8. Monitoring and Evaluation	Moderately Satisfactory
i. M&E Design	Moderately Satisfactory
ii. M&E Plan Implementation	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Project Rating	Satisfactory

Summary of recommendations and lessons learned

Lessons Learned

Below are lessons learned from the MCP-ICLT implementation that will be helpful for biosafety-related project managers as well as those working across other sectors and in multiple country project environments:

(a) Standardize Communications

Every project needs a communication plan and strategy. Standardizing internal and external communication channels helps avoid confusion and unify processes across all countries. Confusion easily arises when team members have overlapping responsibilities, multiple reporting lines or when information is not adequately documented.

Multi-country projects usually involve multi-cultural teams separated by distance. The PIU conducted routine remote meetings for cross-country team members to provide project updates, discuss challenges, and collectively develop resolution strategies. The PIU used various communication methods including social media such as WhatsApp to get messages across and get responses much quicker. The PIU also held mentoring sessions for country teams on best practices, routine reporting expectations, and proper documentation procedures. In addition, routine progress reports were also shared with global and country-level partners to keep them updated on project activities, change requests, challenges, and action items for collective follow up and resolution.

(b) Look Inward for Resources

To save time and improve the efficiency of the work, it's important to look inward for resources. There were potential human resources within the organization/institutions across different departments, that had relevant skill sets required for the project. For instance, The PIU engaged Lusophone and Francophone staff across country offices as part of the cross-country training teams, resulting in cost and time savings related to the regional training. The PIU also identified the strength in some of the scientists such as Dr Olivia Pedro to train her counterparts in the laboratories thus making peer training more real.

The soft skills training was appreciated and was internalized easily as the participants in the training could relate to the skills gained in applying the methodology to their day to day management at the place of work. The participants liaised with their department managers to engage their team members with the required skill sets. The soft skills training approach is a good practice which should be continued in the execution of project and should be replicated in similar projects.

(c) Leverage on Existing Relationships with Partners

Implementing the MCP-ICLT project has been a multi-organizational effort that required each partner to rely on shared resources and existing infrastructure for optimization and efficiency. One must anticipate the areas where partner assistance is required during project planning and make prompt requests through the appropriate communication channels. The PIU benefitted from partner relationships and the engagement of 3rd party recruitment and logistics vendors in establishing contractual agreements with local vendors, clearing shipped equipment at each country's Customs office, facilitating in-country travel, and securing storage space for project equipment/materials. The involvement of other ministries that had previously been involved in the development of the national biosafety frameworks also reinforced the development of the decision making process.

(d) Integrate Project Processes within Applicable Local Context

The approach taken by the PIU in the training of trainers and learning by doing to support the national training is cost-effective, efficient and enforces the knowledge gained, with the MCP-ICLT project benefitting from their wealth of experience. The training of trainers will see the training facilitators locally recruited in every country; this directly improved the engagement rates, understanding, and comfort level of participants in each country. For each country, the coordination team had to adapt to country-specific administrative structures and also understand roles and responsibilities of key personnel on the project.

(e) Acquire Business Management Knowledge per Country

When coordinating implementation of multi-country projects, adequate knowledge, and awareness of country-specific regulations and policies that may impact project implementation are critical to success. Knowledge of import/export policies for equipment procurement, and management of business relationships (internally and externally) should be researched and factored into the overall project process and strategy. One vital lesson learned is the need to understand country-specific policies and regulations around the procurement of equipment, timely shipping and clearing of goods, staff recruitment, and local currency fund transfers. DRC for instance could easily have tax exemptions by importing the equipment through the local UNDP office.

(f) Team building, embedded technical assistance and personal development

A striking feature of the MCP-ICLT Project has been the use of embedded TA providing a mentoring and training role to the national project staff.

There are two aspects of this, namely, the use of TA and the way in which the project personnel have responded by taking the experience and expanding it. There is frequently an assumption in projects that project personnel should not benefit from any training and capacity building provided by the project. However, investment in human resources is almost always cost-effective and it is unreasonable to assume that national staff will necessarily have the requisite set of skills to prosecute a project. Providing good quality TA staff with training and mentoring mandates during the early stages of the project, possibly defined during the inception phase when an assessment of the skill needs can be made.

The other aspect of this is the assumption that, within any project, the staff will automatically form a team. Invariably team building is dependent upon strong leadership. In the case of the MCP-ICLT it is striking how, a team building exercise was able to pull the different personalities together to form a tightly knit group which were able to support each other on a diversity of issues from dealing with the intricacies of UNEP-GEF reporting, technical aspects of the work and even dealing with difficult individuals in office or basic travel arrangements. The lesson being that this didn't happen by accident it required careful planning and investment of TA time.

(g) Synchronizing activities in a multi-country project

A regional project of such a nature requires that activities be synchronized across the participating countries and sequential in nature. Synchronization allows for all to go through trainings at the appropriate times as - training can only be efficient if it's done at a time when the trainees can go back to immediately practice.

The project has factored in annual review and planning processes, two have been held already. This is a good practice which is vital to ensure project delivery is flexible within the project objectives in a way that ensure incorporation of local contexts for easier intake and ownership beyond the project. This approach should be encouraged for similar donor funded projects.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Actions/decisions recommended

The Project has a broad thematic and geographic coverage. Given all the challenges with slow start- up and the implementation of the Project and limited remaining time, it is recommended to review the Project document to ensure greater coherence of its national and regional components, more target implementation, and realistic expected outcomes.

The recommendations of the review are centered around three main topics namely-

- (a) around the Project Document;
- (b) around specific knowledge management and information network and
- (c) highlighting important outstanding activities of the Project logical framework that need to be focused on.

(b) Inclusion of private sector

The recommended action is for a renewing of the Project Document to bring all stakeholders back on board, and to improve communication, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The private sector plays an important role in bringing in samples for testing so that they can carry out trade of commodities that may contain LMOs. There has been little or no engagement with the private laboratories or traders

The development of the design for phase 2 should be a participatory process, involving all stakeholders and particularly the private sector to ensure the insights from the Review are carried forward effectively into the design considerations. Inputs should also be sought from the private sector – traders of agricultural commodities that get analyzed at the laboratories for foreign material that may have an adverse effect on the environment as these stakeholders are familiar with such programs that involve testing, detection and analysis. The idea of involving these stakeholders is to ensure sustainability of the outcomes and impact after the project completion.

(c) Knowledge Management

The project has explored knowledge management through two different avenues, that is, forums bringing together staff and information technology. Numerous actions were realized, publication of leaflets undertaken and distributed. However, the reviewer did not perceive a structured approach to the different levels of intervention (macro, meso, micro) nor a differentiation of approach between awareness and 'catalytic' work. Taking into account the limited means available, a selective approach towards strategic players should be designed to maximize impact and efficiency.

Laboratories generate information that must be captured and transmitted either on written reports or electronically in a laboratory information system. Within a national biosafety system, a laboratory information system may be desirable to transmit laboratory orders and results electronically. The ability to carry out laboratory testing/reporting with one

biotechnology sector computer system will be most efficient and cost-effective for the country. An alternative is a laboratory information management system that interfaces with a variety of other systems/databases in the country. The laboratory information management system must be capable of generating a variety of management reports that provide data for LMO surveillance and laboratory monitoring and evaluation purposes. These reports should be able to easily pull LMO data and reports.

A web-based Knowledge Management System that will feature a best practices database, executive information system and soft copies of all project related work and findings of the analysis from the laboratory work, should be developed. The information can be shared with neighboring countries in the region or parties to the CPB.

The PIU has introduced a paper based laboratory information and data management system through the use of the registers. Malawi has internalized this register extremely well as it already records the information and details relating to the material received in the laboratory for analysis

(d) Regional LMO Detection Network

The regional LMO Detection Network, should be the centerpiece of the project. This project having being a buildup from the SANGL Project must consolidate the gains and the platform build by the SANGL project and design a data sharing, has no formal plan, either to maintain it working in the future, or to guarantee the input from countries who will provide key data to the platform. In addition, the project has not invested sufficient effort to educate national stakeholders from the outset regarding how they can benefit from the data and what to do with different types of information.

The project should be realigned to allow for inclusion of activities on the management of the data including data sharing. The project must include a financial sustainability plan, to keep the Platform working. Furthermore, raising awareness on the value of data sharing at an early stage in any future follow-on project can build trust between project team and national stakeholders.

(e) Finalization of the Legal Framework

Some of the countries participating in the project do not have legal framework that is necessary for determining the decision making processes and procedures. It is upon these laws that the findings of the LMO detection work can be pronounced to have legal effect.

Any follow-on project should have a strong focus on building capacities on the legal framework

Summary of Recommendations and Actions

No.	Recommendation	Action	Actor
1	Review of the Project document to ensure greater coherence of its national components, more target implementation, and realistic expected outcomes	Review of work plans with realistic results in mind	LEA Project partners
2.	a renewing of the Project Document to bring all stakeholders back on board, and to improve communication, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The private sector plays an important role in bringing in samples for testing so that they can carry out trade of commodities that may contain LMOs. There has been little or no engagement with the private laboratories or traders The development of the design for phase 2 should be a participatory process, involving all stakeholders and particularly the private sector	Update of stakeholder inventory Update of stakeholder participation plans	LEA Project Partners with guidance from UNEP
3.	Establish Forums to support information sharing and mentoring Prepare and disseminate outreach material A structured approach on knowledge management is needed A web based laboratory information system that interfaces with other national and regional systems needed with links to project website in the second half of the project Project website should be revamped with clear links to social media Laboratory information system should generate reports on surveillance data on monitoring for end use regulators	Develop a laboratory information management system Revamp website with linkages to project partners	LEA

	A web- based management system to capture best practices, execute information system with a registry to manage LMO detection data., For instance the paper based system in Malawi should be digitized	
4	The regional LMO detection network should be formalized to consolidate the gains of the SANGL project	Reinitiate actions on a potential LEA
	Design a data sharing and supportive mechanism to support LMO detection	regional LMO network and link to the LMO detection network
	Designate resources to support continuous national training	Project partners on the BCH
	Need to redesign activities to support management of data	
	Develop financial sustainability plan to keep the platform working	
	Value of data as a tool for decision making should be highlighted in all future project design among stakeholders	
5.	Legal frameworks that can support biosafety decision making is not existent in some of the project countries. Highlighted as a high priority.	Develop, review and update Project countries
	Lack of regulatory frameworks will impact negatively in decision making processes and procedures	biosafety legal framework to support biosafety decision making
	Any follow-on project should have a strong focus on building capacities on legal frameworks to support implementation and harmonization of biosafety frameworks	

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of the Review

The objective of the MTR is to gain an independent analysis of the progress mid-way through the project. The review also looked at project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management, and the likelihood that the envisaged global environmental benefits will be realized and makes recommendations on how the project results could be sustained after closure.

1.2. Scope and Methodology


The MTR is an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and also a review of available documents and findings made during field visits.

The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation follows the guidelines outlined in the UN Environment Guidance for Conducting mid-term reviews (MTRs) of UN Environment supported, GEF-financed Projects.


The MTR was carried out by an international consultant and included the following activities-


(i) An evaluation mission was completed over the period of 9th-12th December 2018 and January 27-March 7TH 2019; the itinerary and project stakeholders interviewed for their feedback are listed in

Annex 2.

(ii) The MTR completed a desk review of relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project progress reports, financial reports, and key project deliverables. An inception report was prepared to guide the review process. A complete list of information reviewed is compiled in **Annex 5.** 

(iii) As a data collection and analysis tool, an evaluation matrix was developed to guide the review process. Evidence gathered during the fact-finding phase of the MTR was crosschecked between as many sources as practicable, in order to validate the findings.

(iv) The project results framework was also used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of project objective and outcomes. 

(v) Project co-financing realized by mid-term was assessed, and summarized in the co-financing table compiled as **Annex 4.** 

(vi) The MTR consultant presented the preliminary findings of the MTR at the end of the mission at a debriefing on 8th March 2019 by Skype call to the PIU.

(vii) The MTR consultant also reviewed the mid-term GEF Tracking Tool. The baseline filled-in tracking tool is annexed in a separate file to this report.

1.3. Structure of the Review Report

The MTR report starts out with a description of the project, indicating the duration, principal stakeholders, and the immediate and development objectives. The findings of the review are then broken down into the following aspects:

- Project strategy [SEP]
- Progress towards results [SEP]
- Project implementation and adaptive management
- Sustainability [SEP]

The report culminates with a summary of the conclusions reached and recommendations, formulated to enhance implementation during the final period of the project implementation timeframe. [SEP]

1.4. Rating Scales

Progress towards results and project implementation and adaptive management are rated according to a 6-point scale, ranging from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory.

Sustainability is evaluated across four risk dimensions, including financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks. According to UNEP-GEF evaluation guidelines, all risk dimensions of sustainability are critical: i.e., the overall rating for sustainability is not higher than the lowest-rated dimension. Sustainability was rated according to a 6-point scale, including highly likely, likely, moderately likely, moderately unlikely, and unlikely.

1.5. Ethics

The review was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators. In particular, the MTR consultant ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of individuals who were interviewed and surveyed. In respect to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, results are presented in a manner that clearly respects stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.

1.6. Audit Trail

As a means to document an "audit trail" of the evaluation process, review comments to the draft report are compiled along with responses from the MTR consultant and documented in an annex separate from the main report. Relevant modifications to the report will be incorporated into the final version of the MTR report.

1.7. Limitations

The review was carried out over the period of December 2018-March 2019, including preparatory activities, field mission, desk review, and completion of the report, according to the guidelines outlined in the Terms of Reference.

There were no limitations with respect to language for review of written documentation. Interviews were held in English and nearly all project documentation is prepared in English. The MTR consultant was assisted by an interpreter during some of the interviews during the field visits in DRC and Madagascar which are French speaking and Angola and Mozambique that are Portuguese speaking countries.

Interviews were made with the key national and subnational stakeholders during the mission. The MTR consultant feels that the information obtained during the desk review and MTR mission phases of the review is sufficiently representative.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1. Development Context

To address the impact of the fast-expanding living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology on economy and environment, countries have come together and have ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The main objective of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) is to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements.

In order for laboratories to provide high quality test results, the following systems must be in place: human capacity, infrastructure and management of quality systems. LMO detection is an indispensable component in the decision making process under the CPB.

The Southern African countries identified to participate in this project include Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique, indicated in **Figure 1** below, which includes the southern African countries.

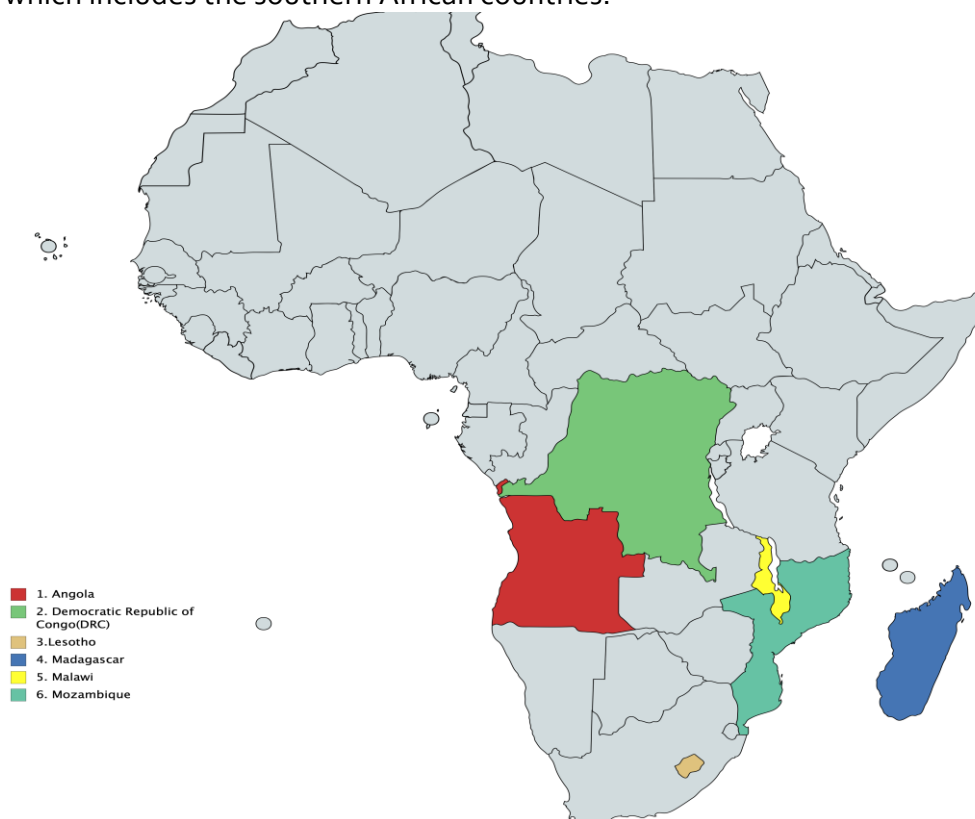


Figure 1: Project Countries in Southern Africa Marked in Numbers¹

Angola

Angola is one of the most biologically diverse countries in Africa. With over 50% of its population living in rural areas, the Biodiversity components influence the daily survival of each of them. Virtually all activities carried out in rural areas depend on Biodiversity: Agriculture, livestock, fisheries, subsistence, hunting, house construction etc. are activities that use the biodiversity components.

¹ Copied from ontheworldmap.com

Before 1975, Angola had a flourishing tradition of family-based farming and was self-sufficient in all major food crops except wheat. The Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) and the consequent deterioration of the rural economy and neglect of the farming sector dealt the final blow to the country's agricultural productivity. Shortage of seed and fertilizer has led to the importation of these commodities. The importation and trade of agricultural commodities, means that the commodities can be sourced from countries producing LMOs. It is thus important that as trade continues to supply the country with essential commodities, the commodities that may contain LMOs are handled and used in a safe manner.

Article 75 of the Law of Aquatic Biological Resources (New Fisheries Law) - Law No. 6A/048 prohibits the introduction into the environment of Genetically Modified Organisms and exotic species into the aquatic environment without the authorization of the Minister. Further the Presidential Decree No 120/10 prohibits importation into Angola of genetically modified or transgenic grain and seed of any variety except where it is destined to Food Aid in which case it can only be imported under the authorization of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Due to the protracted war, Angola lost out on crucial capacity development. There is limited technical capacity to collect data, to carry out environmental assessments or to monitor for compliance

Having emerged from nearly three decades of civil war, the priority of the Government of Angola has been on reconstruction with particular emphasis on peace and security though the environment is also high on the agenda. [L]
[SEP]

The objective for Angola is therefore to enter into the project is to strengthen their capacity in LMO detection and enhance the decision making process. Angola needs to develop and implement a national biosafety framework to set in place a national biosafety in the country as besides the MCP-ICLT there is no biosafety system in the country.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The DRC is one of the most important countries in Africa for biodiversity conservation. It is a mega-biodiverse country. It has the highest number of species for almost all groups of organisms with the exception of plants, in which it is second only to South Africa. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. The Government of the DRC has enacted the Law No. 11/009 of 09 July 2011 (Basic Principles on the Environmental Protection) which provides for regulation of GMOs. Section 63 of the Act stipulates that a specific Law must be enacted to regulate the methods of assessment and management of biotechnology and the process of decision making on transboundary movements of GMOs.

With assistance from UNEP/GEF, the Project on the "Development of National Biosafety Framework" was implemented and the Government of the DRC drafted a Bill on Biosafety which was submitted to parliament in 2007. [L]
[SEP]

DRC completed the development of the National Biosafety Framework (NBF) IN 2008. From 2008, the country did not advance the operationalization of the NBF. The project is therefore timely and has rekindled the biosafety discussions and need for the advancement of the drafted bill into law and related Biosafety Framework implementation project. DRC should utilize the inertia gained and endorse a follow up Biosafety Implementation Framework Project as they are among the 71 countries that never implemented the developed final draft National Biosafety Framework. DRC

should take advantage and take part in the proposed GEF 7 multi country project in Southern Africa for Implementation and harmonization of their national Biosafety Framework.

Lesotho

Lesotho is a land-locked mountainous country completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. The country is a persistent net food importer, externally sourcing up to 65 percent of its annual maize requirements and 80 percent of its annual wheat requirements.² South Africa exported 2.0 million tons of corn in the 2013/14 MY and almost a million tons of corn were exported to South Africa's neighboring countries e.g. Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland and Namibia. This proximity and trading partnerships make Lesotho open to receiving produce that may contain LMOs.

The Environment Act (2008) provides for the protection and management of the environment as well as the sustainable use of Lesotho's natural resources and matters incidental thereto. Whilst it does not directly address modern biotechnology, it does address issues of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.^[1]

Lesotho has drafted her Biotechnology Policy whose objectives, *inter alia*, are

- To ensure effective control of trans-boundary movements of GMOs or products thereof resulting from modern biotechnology, through the exchange of information and a scientifically based, transparent system of Advance Informed Agreement, ^[1]_[SEP]
- To develop human resource and institutional development so that Lesotho can make an informed decision on applications, ^[1]_[SEP]
- Lesotho has also drafted a Biosafety Bill awaiting Parliamentary approval.

These interventions were developed through the UNEP-GEF National Biosafety Framework for Lesotho which is its closing stages. Lesotho is also supported by the UNEP-GEF Project on Support to the implementation of National Biosafety Framework. The country should harmonize that project with the MCP-ICLT sub project. The proposed sub regional project on harmonization project in Southern Africa also provides opportunity for Lesotho to finalize its regulatory frameworks, knowledge sharing and harmonization of its processes in handling of LMOs in the sub region. Lesotho was involved in the SANGL project. This project therefore was in a bid to scale up and build on the SANGL project and also address potential human and material capacity specifically in LMO Detection from the NBF project. Participation in the proposed GEF 7 Sub-regional or multi-country project to strengthen and harmonize national biosafety frameworks will be extremely helpful in addressing gaps in the national biosafety system.

Madagascar

Madagascar is one of eight 'hottest' biodiversity hotspots based on richness and endemism of plants and vertebrates and 98 per cent in amphibians, reptiles and mammals, (Langrand & Wilme, 1997). Madagascar also stands out because of its endemism at higher taxonomic levels (genera and families) among plants and vertebrates (Myers et al., 2000). Nine-tenths of its plants aren't found anywhere else on Earth. The island is home to a quarter of the world's primate species, including around 100 types of lemur. Protecting Madagascar's biodiversity

² **FAO.** 2003. *Country Policy Profile for Lesotho on the State of Policy, Strategy and Foreseen Support.*

is important. There has therefore got to be a delicate balance between conservation and sustainable use. The Malagasy government has had to balance economic development and environmental conservation. Local communities are especially sensitive and resistant to changes that prohibit traditional economic practices if a close substitute practice that preserves perceived economic sufficiency is not available.

Madagascar has in place the National Biosafety Policy that was passed in the year 2004. The objective of the Policy is to address the issue of GMOs in a rational, objective and secure way on the basis of well controlled information, a legal tool, and appropriate technical and scientific capacities and according to a process of decision-making based on public participation. On the other hand, Article 48 of the LOI n°2011-002 portant Code de la Santé¹⁶ (The Health Code) Article 48 of the Code declares food products of plant origin derived from GMOs as dangerous for human consumption and thus prohibits sale of such food commodities throughout Madagascar territory. Violation of this provision is a criminal offence.

Further Decree No. 2012-833 on the powers of the organs of biosafety in Madagascar sets out the institutional framework for management of biosafety in Madagascar. These instruments were developed through the two UNEP-GEF projects on Development and Implementation of National Biosafety Framework of Madagascar.

Madagascar benefited from the SANGL Project. This project will therefore build on the gains of the SANGL project and the ongoing Biosafety Implementation project and build capacity to enable scientific decision-making processes to support the decrees and laws in place.³ Madagascar should take advantage and take part in the proposed GEF 7 multi country project in Southern Africa for Implementation and harmonization of their national Biosafety Framework. The proposed hybrid national and regional focused project will assist Madagascar to fine tune and pass its Biosafety Law, address gaps and fully operationalize its national biosafety framework.

Malawi

Agriculture is the mainstay for the economy of Malawi. In 2002, the Government of Malawi enacted the Biosafety Act (2002).

Malawi has approved the contained use trials of maize, cassava and cotton that is LMO. Bt cotton is at the variety registration trial stage, while Bt cowpea has completed two years of confined field trials (CFT) and virus resistant banana is in its first year of CFTs at proof of concept stage. The Bt cotton trials have made three years of successful CFTs at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and an application for environmental release has been made to the National Biosafety Regulatory Committee (NBRC) and approval was granted in April 2016. Bt cotton was deregulated and the Ministry of Agriculture, through its Department of Agriculture and Research Services (DARS), has been carrying out the variety registration trials on the open field since December 2016. After three years of the trials, Bt cotton will be commercialized.

Malawi has also completed two years of National Performance Trials (NPT) on Bt cowpea. The trials are testing the efficacy of the Bt gene against the *maruca vitrata*, which is a notorious pest for the cowpea grown by many small-holder farmers in the country.

³ The Environment Charter (Act No 90-033 of 21 December 1990, amended by Laws No 97-012 of June 1997 and No 2004-015 of August 19 2004

Malawi thus has to make a final decision on whether to release the LMOs into the environment or not, based on the results of the trials. This decision-making process and procedure has been put to test through these trials. This project is therefore timely as it seeks to improve and enhance the capacity of the relevant authorities to detect LMOs and help make informed decisions.

Mozambique

Agriculture continues to be the mainstay of Mozambique's economy, contributing more than 25 percent of its GDP and employing 80 percent of its labor force. Majority of producers are subsistence farmers. Mozambique's Chronic food insecurity is exacerbated by climate shocks and natural disasters such as floods, droughts and cyclones.

The country has vast potential to eventually become a major food producer in Southern Africa. Its geographic location between landlocked countries to ocean ports raises its potential to play a role in regional food security and international markets. Improving agricultural productivity and ensuring access to food are now top priorities for the country's leaders. An inter- institutional Biosafety Working group- Grupo Inter-Institucional Sobre Bio-Segurança (GIIBS) was established in 2005 to coordinate the process of developing the National Biosafety Framework for Mozambique. The Group developed the Draft NBF which was published in 2005 and further refined through public consultation process leading to development of a consolidated document which was the basis of Decree no. 6/2007- the Biosafety Regulations.

The Decree aims to establish regulation of modern biotechnology activities in Mozambique with intent to contribute to adequate protection of the environment, biological diversity, and human health thus setting the framework for an enabling environment for safe and responsible application of modern biotechnology in Mozambique.

Under current arrangements, imports of GM crops intended for use as Food, Feed and for Processing (FFPs) are allowed under authorization of the National Biosafety Authority dependent on a risk assessment and risk management plan for human health and the environment. GM food aid consignments are also allowed where no alternative solutions can be sought but there is a requirement that these are processed prior to distribution.

Currently, Mozambique is carrying out field trials on water efficient Maize that is LMO. These results will determine if the country is ready for LMO or not as it will put to test the decision making systems developed through the on going UNEP-GEF Biosafety Implementation Project.

Mozambique benefitted from the Southern African GM Detection Laboratories' Network (SANGL)⁴⁴ project and this project therefore leverages from the SANGL project. Mozambique is also currently implementing its national biosafety framework through a UNEP-GEF project. Harmonization of activities with the MCP-ICLT will help the country to provide tools to support decision making. Madagascar should take advantage and take part in the proposed GEF 7 multi country project in Southern Africa for Implementation and harmonization of their national Biosafety Framework. The proposed hybrid national and regional focused biosafety project in GEF 7 will assist Mozambique to fine tune its biosafety system and also help in development of additional tools to support deliberate releases into the environment post field trials. This will help address gaps, strengthen the capacity of GIBBS and fully operationalize its national biosafety framework.

⁴⁴ Southern African GM Detection Laboratory Network is RAEIN-Africa GM Detection capacity network formed in 2009. It supported a gaps and needs analysis of GM Detection laboratories in nine countries in southern Africa. Mozambique and Malawi participant in the SANGL.

UN Environment Strategic Plan Strategy of the Sub Program on Environmental Governance) on Environment and Sustainable Development Primary Outcome:

Outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.

Output 2.5: Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation.

The Project is consistent with the UN Environment Mid-Term Strategy of the sub program on Environmental Governance, whose objective is to ensure that environmental governance at country, regional and global level is strengthened to address agreed priorities.

With respect to the UN Environment Strategic Plan, the project is consistent with the following primary and secondary outcomes of the UN Environment Strategic Plan ⁵

2.2. Problems that the Project Sought to Address

LMO detection is a vital and indispensable component in a broad system aimed at taking science-based decisions on handling, transport and use of LMOs. It is therefore internationally recognized that for effective implementation of the CPB, Countries will need capacities to test, detect and quantify LMOs in commodities and the local environment.

Access to reliable LMO detection facilities is among the major challenges in Southern Africa contributing to the delay or lack of appropriate and timely decisions on the use of LMOs. Major barriers for laboratory capacity in Africa include: lack of funds, weak infrastructure, lack of basic essential equipment and laboratory consumables, scarcity of educators and training programs, inadequate logistical support, insufficient monitoring of test quality, de-emphasis of laboratory testing and inadequate representation of laboratory personnel in biosafety policy development and implementation of biosafety interventions. This situation calls for a major investment to building capacity for LMO sampling and detection in the Southern African Region.

The main barriers to the effective implementation of the CPB in participating countries of the project include

Barrier No. 1: Lack of or Inadequate Policy, Institutional and Legal Framework Policies and supporting legislation need to create an environment that enables LMO detection and analysis.

At the regional level, the six countries had worked collectively during the first phase of the SANGL project but a coordination mechanism had not been established.

At the national level, the six countries lack capacity to adequately comply and enforce any decisions on handling and use of LMOs. These countries also lack experience and capacity to apply market-based instruments, such as certification, to meet international requirements for import or export of commodities that may contain LMOs.

From the UNEP-GEF National Biosafety Framework Implementation Projects, all six countries were able to establish National Biosafety Committees as an interim measure to the decision making process. These committees' decisions would therefore be strengthened once the capacity to detect LMOs is built.

⁵ UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017

Barrier No 2: Weak or limited regional knowledge and information framework on detection methods

At the time of project preparation, there was no regional repository for data on LMO sampling and detection, lessons learned and best practices in LOM sampling and detection; this impedes the exchange of knowledge on LMO detection which is necessary to improve the regional knowledge management regime.

Establishing a regional knowledge platform on LMO sampling and Detection is therefore priority. More specifically, the remaining barriers included:

- Limited information shared via the Biosafety Clearing House Mechanism and national websites;
- Limited outreach to stakeholders at national and regional level; and
- Limited participation in knowledge sharing events at international and regional level

Barrier No 3: Lack of or weak monitoring and surveillance system

At the time of project preparation, with the exception of Lesotho, five of the six participating countries reported that they had not established mechanisms for monitoring potential effects of LMOs. The lack of capacity to detect LMOs makes it difficult to carry out monitoring and surveillance.

Barrier 4: Limited Funding

Funding for environment and other related activities appears to be weak. Many governments have relied on donor funding for biodiversity conservation programs.

2.3. Project Description and Strategy

The project was designed to remove the main barriers to effective implementation of the CPB by strengthening national capacities and regional capacity to:

- Strengthen regional and national infrastructure for LMO testing;
- Strengthening institutional and human capacities for LMO detection;
- Strengthening information sharing, lessons learning and partnerships; and
- Strengthening biosafety decision making processes

The Project objective is *to build and strengthen institutional and human capacities for LMO detection is support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African Countries.*

This objective was envisaged to be achieved through six interlinked components:

COMPONENT A: Strengthening Infrastructure for LMO Detection

This component aims to improve laboratory infrastructure necessary for qualitative and quantitative testing of LMOs.

Result 1:	Designated LMO testing laboratories designed, equipped and able to carry out LMO detection
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COMPONENT B: Strengthening Institutional and Human Capacities for LMO Detection

This component seeks to build a critical mass of laboratory staff with the requisite knowledge and skills for LMO detection and analysis.

Result 2:	Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO testing laboratories
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COMPONENT C: Strengthening information sharing, lesson learning and partnerships

This component is aimed at building a robust network of LMO detection laboratories in the region to facilitate sound biosafety decision making and environmental safety.

Result 3:	Sustainable opportunities for sharing expertise, lessons and resources on LMO detection
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COMPONENT D: Strengthening Biosafety Decision Making

The fourth component is aimed at ensuring a strong interface between LMO testing laboratories and biosafety decision-making processes.

Result 4:	Technical support to strengthen LMO detection and biosafety making processes in target countries
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2.4 Implementation Arrangements and Project Partners

The project is being co-executed over a period of four years, by RAEIN-Africa through its Participatory development of appropriate science and technology innovations for sustainable development program in collaboration with National Executing Agencies and the 11 participating Laboratories in the six countries.

UN Environment is the GEF Implementing Agency for this project. Operational oversight will be ensured by UN Environment through the Biosafety Task Manager based in Nairobi. This oversight also ensures that the project practices due diligence with regard to UN Environment's Environmental and Social Standards.

As the implementation agency, UN Environment is responsible for ensuring that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves the expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. The UNEP project task manager is responsible for project supervision on behalf of the Director of the designated Division.

UN Environment is also expected to ensure timelines, quality and fiduciary standards in project delivery.

RAEIN-Africa is the Lead Executing Agency (LEA) for the project, and thus holds the direct responsibility for the execution. RAEIN-Africa handles the financial management, contracting, recruitment and supervision of consultants and the overall day-to-day implementation of the project.

Implementation is overseen by the Regional Steering Committee (RSC), which is chaired on a rotational basis by the project countries. The RSC comprises the National Focal Point/Competent Authority from the six participating countries, the project manager from the LEA and the UNEP Biosafety Task Manager (UN Environment) with RAEIN-Africa providing Secretariat Services. ^[SEP]

To facilitate the day-to-day implementation, each of the partner institutions represented in the RSC have an appointed focal point for the project, albeit not full-time.

The Regional Steering Committee is responsible for making management decisions for the project, in particular when guidance is required by the Project Manager/PIU. The Regional Steering Committee approves the annual work plans and budgets, and also plays a critical role in project monitoring and evaluation. As needed, the Committee also is tasked with arbitrating potential conflicts within the project and negotiating appropriate solutions. Based on the approved annual work plan, the Regional Steering Committee can also approve any essential deviations from the original plans in consultation with the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Task Manager.

Project Implementation Unit (PIU): The PIU was envisaged to have the following permanent staff, assembled to assist the RAEIN-Africa in performing its role as lead executing agency:

- Project Manager [SEP]
- Project Finance Associate [SEP]
- Project Assistant Manager
- Project Technical Advisors (2)

[SEP]The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager closely coordinates project activities with relevant Government institutions and holds regular consultations with other project stakeholders and partners. Under the direct supervision of [SEP]the Project Manager, the Project Finance Associate is responsible for administrative and financial issues, under the guidance of the UN Environment Biosafety Task Manager and Fund Management Officer.

The Project Assistant Manager reports to the Project Manager, and is responsible for ensuring quality products, developing reports and knowledge management products, technical backstopping and maintaining the project website.

The project has two technical advisors. The two are experts in LMO testing they are responsible for technically guiding and advising the project, leading in the training on technical issues and also supporting with Monitoring on technical issues.

The technical advisors provide technical guidance for the overall management and administration of the project; They also ensure knowledge management and professional capacity development of the project partners and national counterparts.

Eleven (11) laboratories are participating in the project. Each country has two laboratories, with the exception of Angola that has one laboratory taking part in the project. These labs will be equipped and the personnel's capacity built with a view to enabling them sample, test and detect LMOs.

(See Figure 3- Implementing Arrangements)

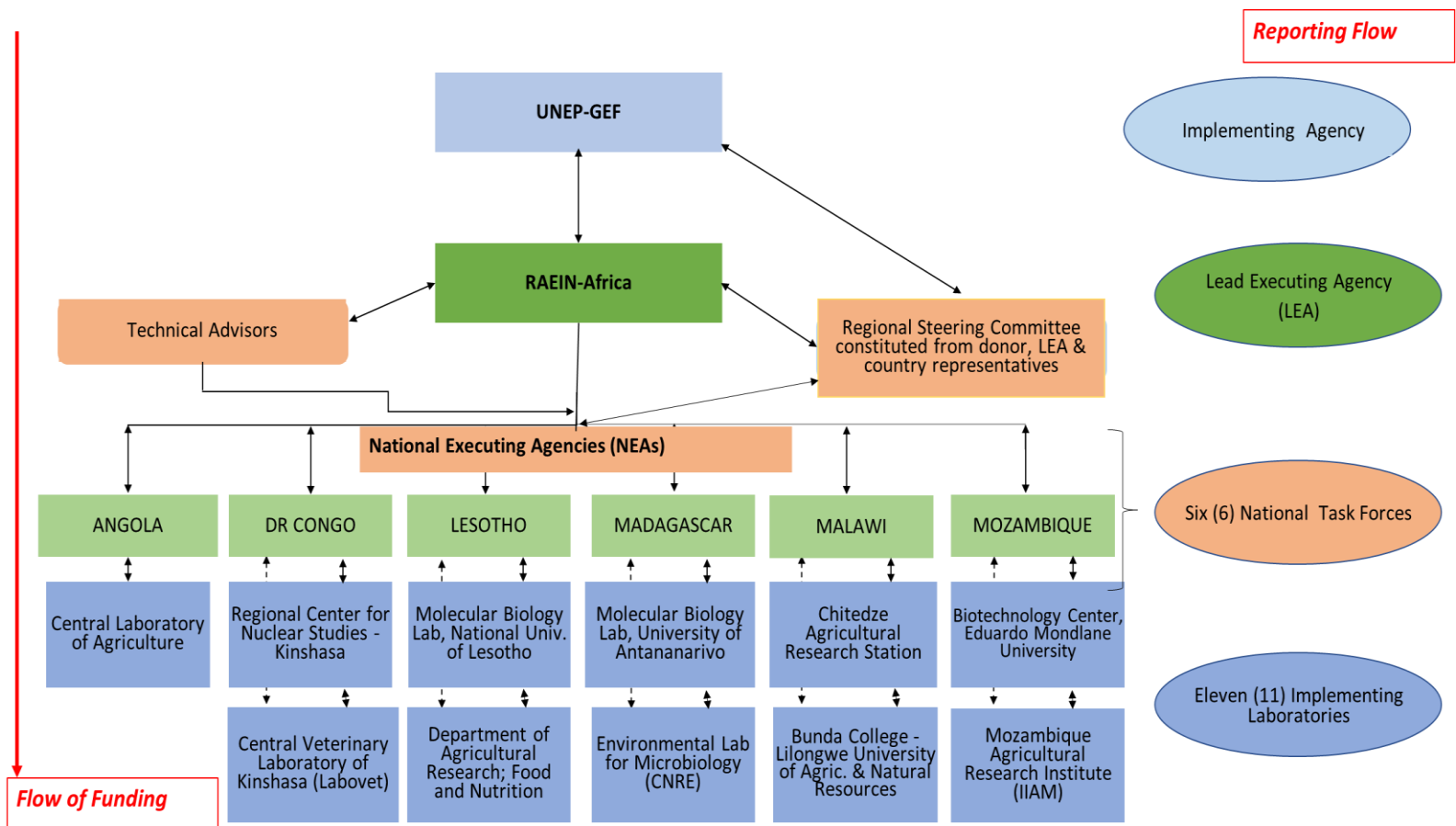


Figure 2: Implementation Arrangements

2.5. Project Timing and Milestones

Table 2: Project Milestones

Full Project Proposal Received by GEF:	5 TH September 2016
GEF CEO Endorsement	5 th December 2016
Project Concept Approval	29 th April 2016
Project Internalized by UN Environment and Approved for Implementation	30 th May 2017
Start Date:	1 st July 2017
Closing Date (Planned):	31 st December 2021

The project identification form (PIF) was approved in August 2016 and following an approximate one-year long project preparation phase, the project obtained endorsement by the GEF CEO on 5th December 2016. The project was internalized and finalized for implementation on 30th May 2017. Representatives of the national governmental partners and the UN Environment signed the project document on 30th May 2017. The first cash advance was disbursed on the 1st July 2017 to mark the official start of operational activities. The 4-year duration project is slated to close on 29th December 2021⁶.

The project inception workshop, which was arranged coincident with the first Regional Steering meeting, was held on 4-5 November 2017. Project activities effectively started as follows-

⁶ The project has a technical completion date of 30th June 2021 with an administrative closure for 31st December 2021

Table 3: MCP-ICLT Timelines/Dates

	1 st MoU signing	LEA MoU signing	Operational Start Date	Actual Start Date	1 st Funds Request	1 st Funds Acknowledgement
Regional	30/05/2017	30/05/2017	30/05/2017	01/07/2017	01/07/2017	06/07/2017
Angola	No date	03/08/2017	01/07/2017	03/07/2017	30/11/2017	04/12/2017
DRC	22/03/2017	02/04/2017	02/04/2017	21/09/2017	19/09/2017	21/09/2017
Lesotho	No date	05/08/2017	01/07/2017	01/07/2017	08/12/2017	19/12/2017
Madagascar	No date	07/08/2017	01/07/2017	03/07/2017	19/09/2017	21/09/2017
Malawi	19/05/2017	22/05/2017	22/05/2017	21/09/2017	15/09/2017	21/09/2017
Mozambique	No date	11/08/2017	11/08/2017	21/09/2017	21/09/2017	27/09/2019

Stakeholder Analysis

Table 4: Main Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
RAEIN-Africa (LEA)	Regional coordination and implementation, Lead executing partner.
Lead National Ministry/ Institution	
Angola	
Government Ministries of Environment (NEA), Energy and Water Resources, Fisheries, Science and Technology, External Relations, Health	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments; Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies
Academia and Research Institutions Central Laboratory of Angola (CLA) – Participating laboratory Agostinho Neto University Angolan Catholic University National Institute for Fisheries National Technological Center Luanda Herbarium	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies National Institute for Nature Conservation National Institute for Environmental Promotion National Educational Development Institute Directorate for Natural Resources Forest Development Institute Environmental Protection Association National Center for Phytogenetic Resources	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
National Museum for Natural History	
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	
Government Ministries Agriculture, Environment (NEA), Nature Conservation, Water and Forests, Scientific Research, Rural Development, External Trade, Industry and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments; Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies
Academia and Research Institutions University of Kinshasa University of Kasingani General Atomic Energy Commission/ Regional Center for Nuclear Studies Kinshasa (CGEA/CREN-K) - Participating Laboratory Veterinary Laboratory of Kinshasa (VLK) - Participating Laboratory National Natural Science Research Center (CRSN-Lwiro) National Institute for Agronomic Study and Research (INERA) Agri-food Research Center (CRAA) National Seed Service (SENASEM) Maize Research Center (CRM) National Livestock Development Center (ONDE) National Institute of Biomedical Research (INRB) Animal and Plant Quarantine Service	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies The Biosafety Focal Point The National Biosafety Consultative Council The National Competent Authority The Technical and Scientific Committee	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
The National Biosafety Clearing House	
Lesotho	
Government Ministries Tourism, Environment and Culture [NEA]: Agriculture and Food Security, Health and Social Welfare, Trade and Industry, Communications, Science and Technology, Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs, Education and Training, Finance, Development Planning	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments; Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies
Academia and Research Institutions National University of Lesotho (NUL) - Participating Laboratory Health Research and Laboratory Services Agricultural Research - Participating Laboratory	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies National Executive Agency-National Environment Secretariat National Coordinating Authority (NCC) Focal Points Competent Authorities Scientific Advisory Committee Socio- Economic Panel Disaster Management Authority	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight
Madagascar	
Government Ministries Environment (NEA), Water, Forests and Tourism, Agriculture, livestock and Fishing, Industrialization, Trade and Private Sector Development, Health and Family Planning, National Education and Scientific Research	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments; Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
Academia and Research Institutions Molecular Biology Laboratory- University of Antananarivo(MBL-UA) - Participating Laboratory Environmental National Research Center - Participating Laboratory Industrial and Technological National Research Center Horticultural Technical Center of Antananarivo Malagasy Institute of Applied Research Malagasy Institute of Veterinarian Vaccines Plant Protection Management Research Center	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies National office of Environment (CAN)- (Competent National Authority) The National Association for the Management of Protected Areas (ANGAP) The Biosafety National Committee Scientific and Technical Committee Official Service of Mixed Control Standards office of Madagascar Office of Public Participation Making Investments Compatible with the Environment Control Unit of the Foodstuffs Quality	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight
Malawi	
Government Ministries Environmental Affairs (NEA), Agriculture and Food Security, Industry and Trade, Health, Local Government	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments;

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
	Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies
Academia and Research Industries Chitedze Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) - Participating Laboratory Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUNDA) - Participating Laboratory Chancellor College Central Veterinary Laboratories University of Malawi University of Malawi University of Mzuzu Natural Resources College Forestry Research Institute of Malawi National Herbarium and Botanical Gardens Mokoka Research Station Bvumbwe Agricultural Research Station Lunyangwa Agricultural Research Station	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) National Biotechnology Committee Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) National Biosafety Regulatory Committee (NBRC) Agricultural Biotechnology and Biosafety Committee (ABBC) Biosafety Regulatory Authority of Malawi	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight
Mozambique	
Government Ministries	Involved in the national project steering committee; Development of regulatory instruments;

Stakeholder	Expected Involvement
Agriculture (NEA), Health, Coordination of Environment Affairs, Industry and Trade, Science and Technology, Fisheries, Finance/Customs	Technical execution of project activities through designated agencies
Academia and Research Institutions Biotechnology Center of Eduardo Mondlane University(CB-UEM) - Participating Laboratory Mozambique Research Institute of Biotechnology Laboratory (MRIBL) Agriculture Research Institute of Mozambique (IIAM) - NEA/Participating Laboratory National Institute for Disaster Management	Technical Execution of the Project; Providing technical support in the development of operational manuals; Delivery of training
Regulatory Agencies National Biosafety Committee (NBC) National Biosafety Competent Authority (NBCA) Biosafety Technical Secretariat (BTS) National Biosafety Focal Point (NBFP) National Coordinating Committee Biosafety Working Group National Directorate of Agriculture National Directorate for Livestock National Directorate for Environmental Impact Assessment National Directorate of Health Department of Seeds Directorate for Environment Management	Development of monitoring and enforcement instruments Contribution to capacity on regulatory oversight

2.6 Changes in Design during Implementation

There were no changes to the project's design and the implementation process was based on the results framework of the project document. There were adjustments to activities and budget lines in response to changing circumstances that did not affect the expected deliverables or project budget. This reflected the project's good design as well as good adaptive management and project ownership on the part of the Project National Executing Agencies.

2.6.1 Reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) for the Project

The intervention logic in the Project Document and the results framework was carefully scrutinized to establish the project's theory of change (ToC). The ToC was assessed for consistency and a "reconstructed" ToC is therefore elaborated to ensure that there is a consistent and clear conceptual understanding of the project impact pathways.

Theory of Change (ToC) is often defined as a process of project planning and evaluation which maps the relationship between the long-term goal of a project and the intermediate and early changes that are required to achieve that goal. The ToC emphasizes the scheme and assumptions underlying the pathway of change from the implementation of selected interventions and activities to intended outcomes.

The current Theory of Change is the first one to be constructed for this project. Based on the project document and project log frame, the Reviewer reconstructed the current ToC, using the GEF Evaluation Office's approach to review the project's logical framework to assess whether the design of the project is consistent with and appropriate for the delivery of the intended impact.

The first step involves the identification of all outcomes "results from project activities" for reaching the project long-term goal. Outcomes are changes that must occur prior to the achievement of the long-term goal. For example, online multi-country data Platform on LMO detection and science-based decisions on Biosafety entails identifying of set of data and indicators. The outputs might include short-term products or processes occurring during the life of the project.

The series of changes required to achieve long-term outcomes from implementation of project activities is called "change pathway". The change pathway of outputs to outcomes through intermediate state is called impact Pathway (Figure 2), the "Intermediate states" as defined by UNEP are necessary changes expected to occur as a result of the project outcomes that are expected, in turn, to result into impact. There may be more than one intermediate state between the immediate project outcome and the eventual impact.

To assess the likelihood of impact, the impact pathways were analyzed by the reviewer in terms of the 'assumptions' (the significant external factors that if present are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impacts but are largely beyond the control of the project partners and stakeholders) and 'drivers' (the significant, external factors that if present are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impacts and can be influenced by the project / project partners & stakeholders)

The assessment of the theory of change led to the identification of the impact pathways and specification of the impact drivers and assumptions, as summarized below:

The existing ToC exercise identified four intermediate outcomes between project outcomes and desired impact (Figure 2) resulting from 10 project outputs and identified one-impact pathway. The intermediate outcomes were identified based on the project tools, methodology, and assessment of countries' capacities. Four Assumptions given in this analysis were identified by the Reviewer along with four other external factors (Drivers) that if present are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impacts and can be influenced by the project partners and stakeholders.

Particular effort was made to identify impact pathways, implying the transformation of project outputs to impacts via intermediate states to project objectives. In this exercise the long-term global impact "Adequate Conservation & sustainable use of Biodiversity, taking into account human health and environment" was identified by the Reviewer.

2.6.1.1. Impact pathway 1 (intermediate states 1 & 2): From project outcome 1 & 2 to project objectives

To produce desired impact, two intermediate states are identified, first, LMOs' safe intentional release into the environment, thus they take steps forward towards ensuring safe release of LMOs into the environment and second, Improved governance of national/ regional biosafety systems based upon Rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, Accountability and Liability, Equity, Transparency, Citizens' Participation. Both intermediate outcomes required external factors, two drivers and two assumptions were identified, namely

- a) intermediate state 1: LMOs' safe intentional release into the environment,
 - **Driver 1:** Human Resources critical mass in place. Quality information available and flowing into platform and the BCH. Stakeholders and public participation.
 - **Assumption 1:** The Competent National Authority on Biosafety still has the financial resources. Including through the National Budget Allocation; The relevant competent authorities ensure coordination in full harmonization with participating laboratories and designated Regulatory agencies

(b) Intermediate State 2: Improved governance of national / regional biosafety systems based upon Rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, Accountability and Liability, Equity, Transparency, Citizens' Participation.

- **Driver 1:** Effective forms of stakeholder participation (in planning, decision making and funding). BCH is regularly and meaningfully updated; decision processes at different levels are open and transparent.
- **Assumption 1:** Political will of the Government. A national Action Plan is developed to streamline national policy on biosafety into government plans; an effective resource mobilization plan is in place.

2.6.1.2 Impact pathway 2 (intermediate states 3): From project outcome 2 & 3 to project objectives.

The intermediate outcomes, which are also the direct outcomes are-

- (a) Institutions competent & proficient internationally acceptable LMO Testing practices, informing biosafety decision making processes; and
 - (b) Science informed decision making process at national and regional level attained.
- **Driver-1:** The capacity of the CNA to continuously update its decision-making mechanisms with supportive LMO testing capacity best practice following pre- and post-approval of LMOs
 - **Assumption:** Political will, enforcement of legislation and regulations, proficient procurement strategies, regional cooperation, international commitment. Financial Resources flow is consolidated

2.6.1.3 As a final end, for ultimate impact

The desired impact is a collective effect resulting from the integration and interaction of the previously identified impact pathways.

It defines how the project objectives contribute to produce project outcomes which lead to define the desired long-term impact: "Science based decisions contributing to human and animal health and protection of the environment".

It should, however, be noted that the ToC presents simplified impact pathways and has not attempted to show the many context-specific 'implementation' pathways that lead from national plans, policies and financial instruments to the management changes on the ground that are required for the final intermediate state of Protection of biological diversity against possible adverse effects of LMOs by means of ensuring safe transfer, handling, use and transboundary movement of LMOs. (In other words there would be many additional steps in the pathways leading from the outcomes numbered 2, 3 and 4 to reach "Science based decisions contributing to human and animal health and protection of the environment").

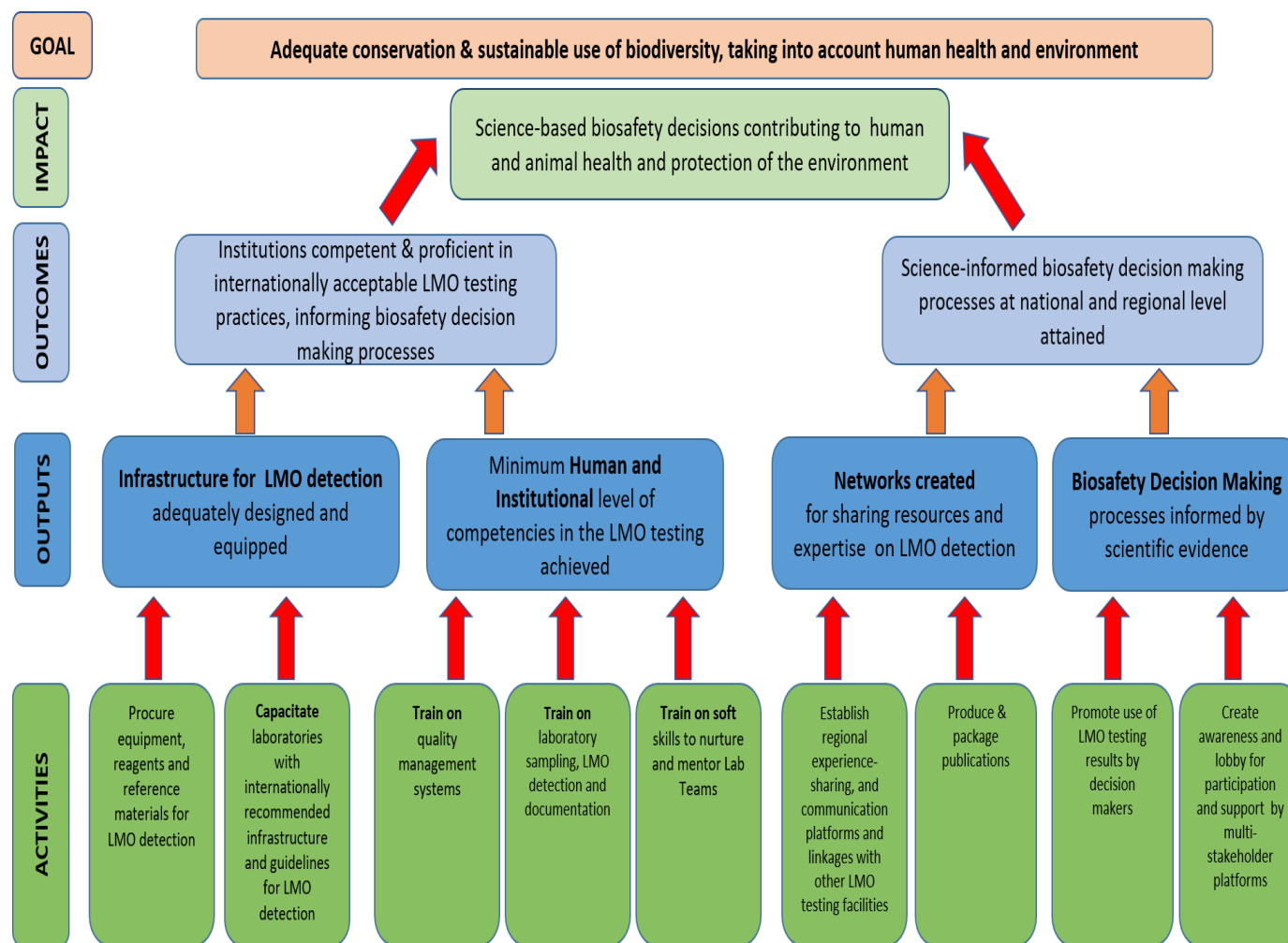


Figure 3: Theory of Change - at Mid-Term

Figure 4: Reconstructed Theory of Change (at Mid-Term): UNEP-GEF “Multi Country Project to Strengthen Institutional capacities on LMO Testing in Support of National Decision Making”

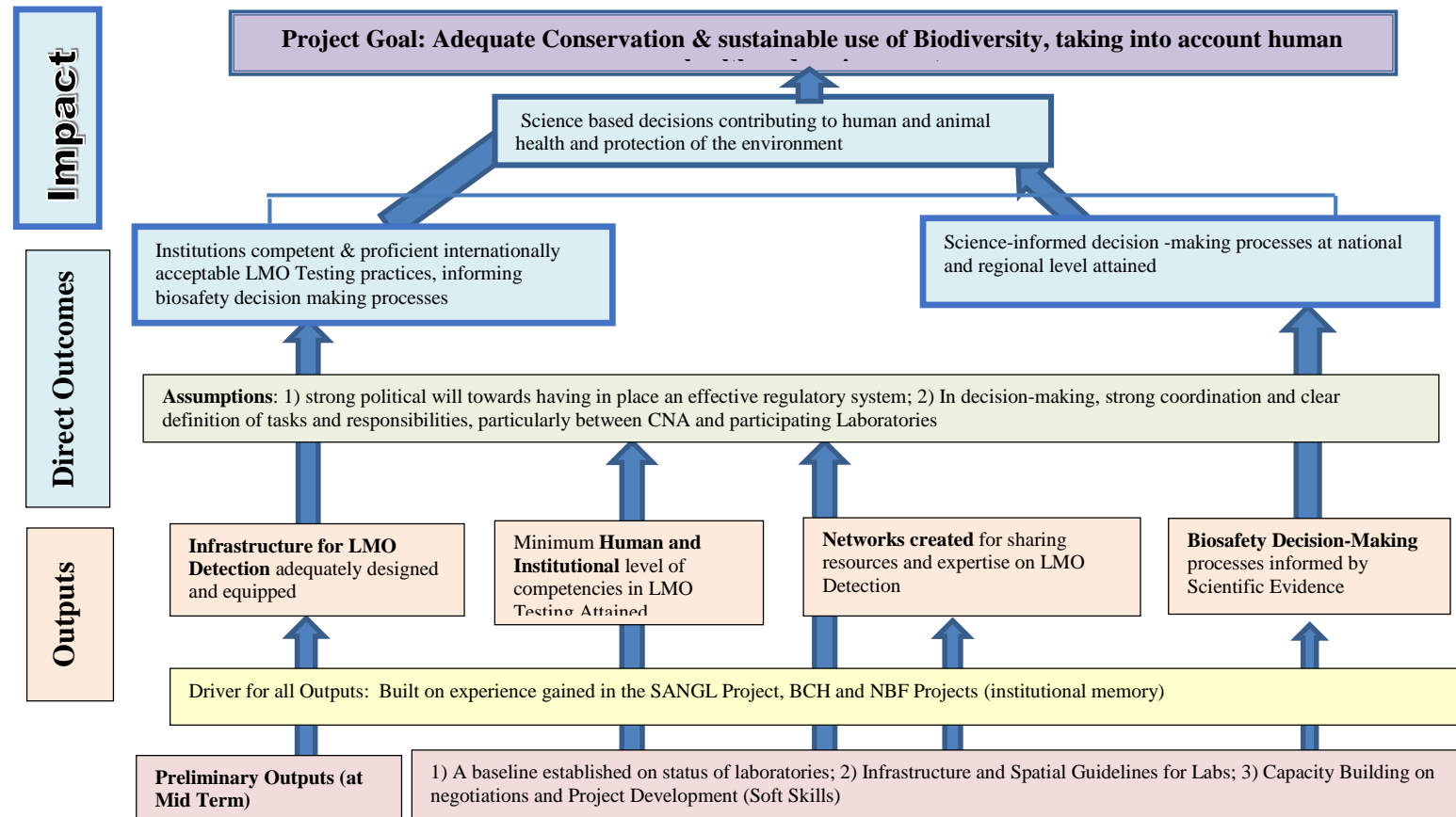


Figure 5: Draft Reconstructed TOC from Project Outcome to Impact

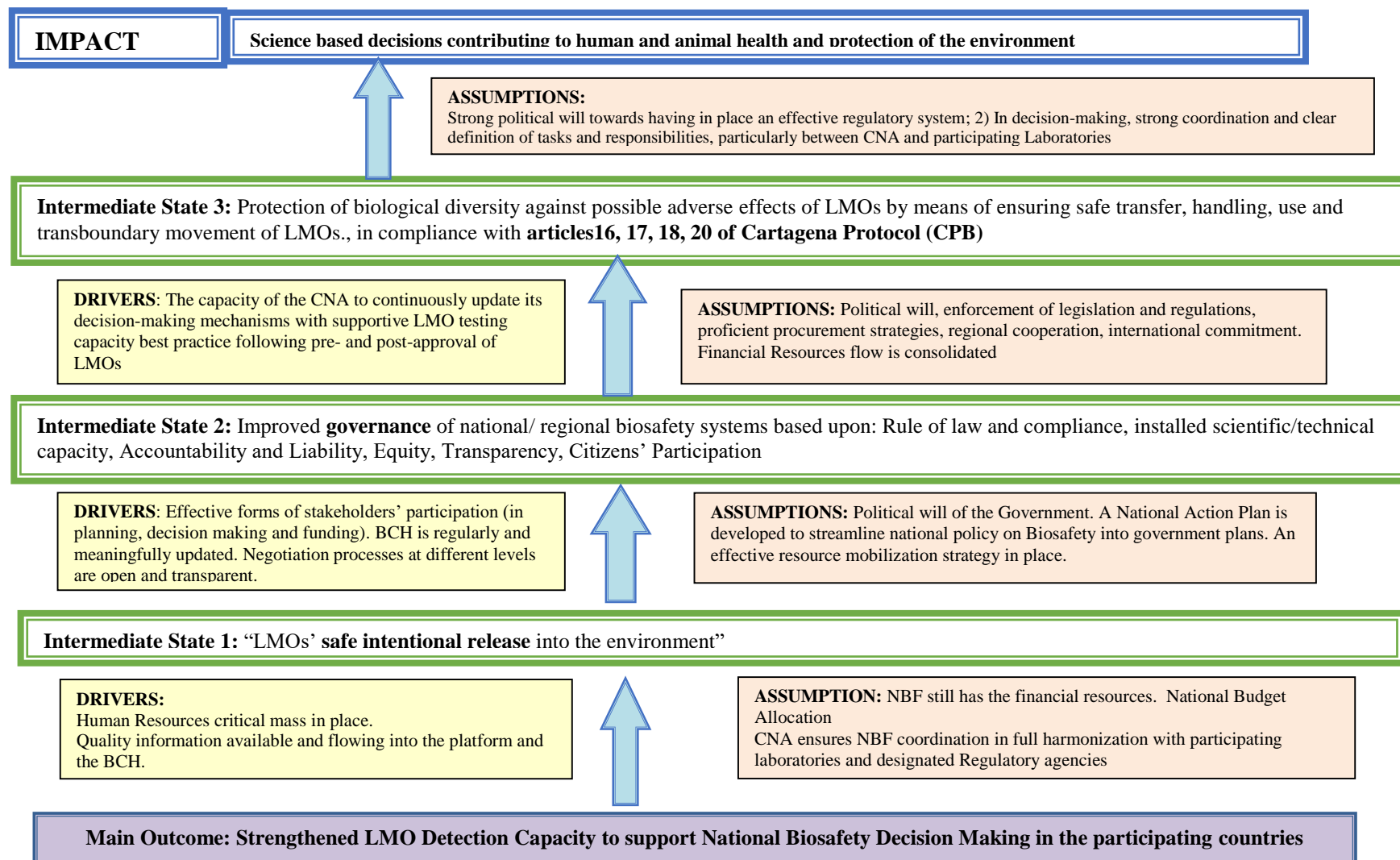


Table 5: Project Outcomes

Original	Reconstructed	Explanation
O1. Designated LMO laboratories fully capacitated and achieving a minimum level of functionality on LMO detection	Institutions competent & proficient at internationally acceptable LMO Testing practices, informing biosafety decision making processes	This outcome has changed and has now become a direct outcome as it is a result of application of the other outcomes of the project (capacities and knowledge) - hence a new / modified outcome has been added to the ToC
O2. Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories	Science-informed decision making process at national and regional level attained	
O3. Sustainable opportunities for sharing expertise, lessons and resources on LMO detection created		
O4. Technical support to strengthen LMO detection and biosafety decision making processes in target countries provided.		

Outcomes to intermediate state to impact

The project objective (which is broken down into three intermediate states) and the goal (impact) are virtually identical, both presenting a combination of a) enhanced resilience, and b) improved institutional capacity. However, the Institutions competency and proficiency, internationally acceptable LMO Testing practices, informing biosafety decision making processes are rather immediate outcomes of the project (which will enable the decision making process), whereas science based decisions contributing to human and animal health and protection of the environment is an impact as it entails tangible changes on the ground.

Moreover, as mentioned above, the intentional release of an LMO into the environment is an intermediate state (or an immediate small-scale impact), which in turn can be up-scaled and replicated and thereby lead to adequate Conservation & sustainable use of Biodiversity, taking into account human health and environment

(Component B) Strengthening Institutional and Human Capacities for LMO Detection and (Component C) Strengthening information sharing, lesson learning and partnerships will help disseminating the lessons - thereby promoting further replication.

A second Immediate state has been added, namely 'Improved governance of national / regional biosafety systems based upon: Rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, Accountability and Liability, Equity, Transparency, Citizens' Participation'

A third intermediate state has been identified as 'Protection of biological diversity against possible adverse effects of LMOs by means of ensuring safe transfer, handling, use and

transboundary movement of LMOs., in compliance with articles 16, 17 & 18 of Cartagena Protocol (CPB) whose impact will be science based decisions contributing to human and animal health and protection of the environment which is an outcome of Component D

Table 6: Intermediate State and Impacts

Faithful	Reconstructed	Explanation
Intermediate State		
Objective To build and strengthen institutional and human capacities for LMO detection in support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African Countries	Intermediate State 1: "LMOs' safe intentional release into the environment"	A strengthened or enhanced institutional and infrastructural capacity will lead to a sound decision of safe intentional release of LMOs into the environment.
	Intermediate State 2: Improved governance of national/ regional biosafety systems based upon: Rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, Accountability and Liability, Equity, Transparency, Citizens' Participation	This intermediate state has been introduced since the decisions taken within the decision making process need to be done within a framework of policies and Laws. These laws have to be in place in order to have impact.
	Intermediate State 3: Protection of biological diversity against possible adverse effects of LMOs by means of ensuring safe transfer, handling, use and transboundary movement of LMOs., in compliance with articles 16, 17 & 18 of Cartagena Protocol (CPB	This intermediate state and the impact or goal in the ProDoc are virtually identical
Impact		
Goal: To contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, transport and use of LMOs resulting from LMOs that may have adverse effects	Adequate Conservation & sustainable use of Biodiversity, taking into account human health and environment	See above explanation regarding the intermediate state from the Project Document. The impact level has been modified to only contain the actual impact (impact is defined in UNEP terminology as a lasting

on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, also taking into account risks to human health and specifically focusing on transboundary movement		change that benefits people and improves the state of the environment).
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All the outcomes are all important building blocks that contribute to ensuring the intermediate states. However, some factors outside the control of the project (assumptions) have to be in place for this to happen: the countries have to be truly committed at both political and technical levels and that the capacities and systems put in place by the project are sustained, up-scaled and replicated.

3.0 THE REVIEW FINDINGS^[L]_{USE} OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MCP-ICLT AT MID-TERM

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE PROJECT CONCEPT AND DESIGN

The elaboration of this Project counted on the intensive participation of national players, national and local actors, civil society organizations, the private sector and the academy. These participations were reflected in the engagement of these groups in the project implementation.

The activities proposed by components are relevant to the expected outcomes.

The project has identified and successfully established strategic and operational partnerships to ensure the participation of the main actors from the Biotechnology sector in its implementation. The project had no direct results to affirm that the egalitarian or the democratic gender participation had impacts on the project implementation.

3.1.1. Project Design

The project components present the objectives and activities to be developed, contributing to the achievement of intended results set forth in the project official document, signed in 2014 May 2017 - Project Cooperation Agreement.

The project was designed with the activities to be developed in a 4-year period. Until the Mid-Term Review (MTR) the project was in the middle of its first implementation cycle.

The project was designed to have presence both at the national and the regional levels.

The project is a follow-up to a successful first phase implemented from 2010 to 2012 of the SANGL project and was drawn in response to the needs and gaps identified through of the Project Preparatory Grant (PPG) implemented between 2013 and 2014.

The project was designed under Objective 3 of the Biodiversity Focal Area – Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety under GEF 5 of the GEF-5 Strategy, aligned with Outcomes 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 of Objective 2.

As part of the project preparation phase, environmental and social risks were screened using the UN Environment Environmental and Social Screening Template. The screening analysis concluded that the project does include activities and outputs that support upstream planning processes that potentially pose environmental and social impacts or are vulnerable to environmental and social change. Furthermore, the analysis reported that the project would have positive socioeconomic impacts, through support of strengthening sub-regional collaborative mechanisms and national management processes.

As part of the environmental and social screening process, the proposed project was concluded to not include implementation of downstream activities that potentially pose environmental and social impacts or are vulnerable to environmental and social change. And, there were no environmental or social aspects that required additional screening.

The key objective of strengthening the capacity at the national and regional level agencies to sample, analyze and detect LMOs remains relevant. This is so in light of a situation where there is no evidence-based method of determining whether a product contains LMOs or not.

The key objective of *building and strengthening institutional and human capacities for LMO detection is support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African Countries* has been validated through baseline studies. The results of these

identified the lack of human and infrastructural capacity to detect LMOs in the selected Countries, thus, the need for mechanisms to mainstream them into biosafety activities within the respective government institutions charged with making decisions on biosafety.

3.2 STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

Rating: Satisfactory

The relevance of the project was analyzed in the context of the project design, the approach and strategy, logic of intervention, and the objectives and activities set out to address the problems and the needs of the target group and project relevance to national policies, laws and international commitments.

3.2.1 Relevance to National Policies

The Project contributes to the national policies as well as the mandates of relevant ministries that are also partners in the project. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture in the various project countries are mandated to ensure biosafety. The Objective of the Madagascar National Policy on Biosafety is to address the issue of GMOs in a rational, objective and secure way on the basis of well controlled information, a legal tool, and appropriate technical and scientific capacities and according to a process of decision-making based on public participation. Malawi on the other hand has National Biotechnology and Biosafety Policy 2008 which provides an enabling framework to promote and regulate the development, acquisition, and dissemination of relevant biotechnology to fulfil the needs of Malawi and provides a springboard for development in the agricultural, nutrition, health, environment, industry and trade sectors. In addition, Mozambique's Environment Law prohibits all activities that threaten conservation, reproduction, quality and quantity of biological resources.⁷ The Law also provides for a range of citizens' rights including the right to information, the right to education and the right of access to justice.

The development of science-based decisions on the use of LMOs will thus be in line with the mandate of ensuring biosafety.

The project is therefore playing an important role in the development of the Government's policy on biosecurity.

3.2.2 Relevance as to the Design of the Project

The structural coherence of the project is examined from the perspective of the problem identification, addressing the identified problems and the quality of the outcomes. The project identified the main problem to be the low capacity to detect LMOs and the inadequate support for decision makers.

The project is designed to achieve its objectives through four components namely

- (a) Strengthening Infrastructure for LMO Detection;
- (b) Strengthening Institutional and Human Capacities for LMO Detection;
- (c) Strengthening information sharing, lesson learning and partnerships;
- (d) Strengthening Biosafety Decision Making

⁷ Article 12 of the Environmental Law No 20 / 97

The project activities generally support a logical causal chain for desired outcomes.

3.2.3 Relevance of strategy to national structures, systems, processes

Given that the project undertook to facilitate a solution of the LMO Detection method at the regional level in a profound way and for a long term perspective, it has to operate at every level, i.e. it has to assume a holistic approach which implies three main levels, institutional, national and regional levels. This is the project's main implementation strategy. At the institutional level, the project aims to strength capacities to sample, analyze and detect LMOs whereas at the national level and the regional level the project aims to contribute to adequate conservation and sustainable use of Biodiversity, taking into account human health and environment.

These three levels are supposed to be inter-linked and mutually supportive, forming a results chain pyramid.

It is clear from the activity listings for every output that interventions at each level are closely interlinked and aimed at mutually reinforcing one another for greater synergy and impact. Relevance at the country level was reinforced by its complementarity with earlier biosafety projects, building on the progress that was achieved in all the six project countries.

3.2.4 Relevance of design to international and national legislation

The project appears to be well aligned with national laws and International commitments of the six project countries. Namely, it seeks to assist the countries with fulfilling commitments under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The project objectives were aligned with UN Environment's 2010-2013 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) as reflected in the cross-cutting priority of global, regional and national environmental governance to address common environmental priorities, and the third objective of capacity building and technology transfer in support of the Bali Strategic Plan's (BSP) implementation. There was also consistency with the UN Environment's 2016-2017 Programme of Work (PoW) and Expected Accomplishment (EA) of enhanced State capacities to implement environmental obligations and achieve priority targets/objectives.

The Project design addressed the need for national biosafety frameworks to implement the CPB, as emphasized in the Updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol (adopted at COP-MOP-3).

The project links the countries relevant National Competent Authorities (NCAs) to an integrated information system that streamlines LMO decision-making, a national training framework, and improved laboratory capabilities for LMO analysis. The project objective is aligned with UN Environment's 2010-2013 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) as reflected in the cross-cutting priority of global, regional and national environmental governance to address common environmental priorities, and the third objective of capacity building and technology transfer in support of the Bali Strategic Plan's (BSP) implementation. There was also consistency with the UN Environment's 2016-2017 Programme of Work (PoW) and Expected Accomplishment (EA) of enhanced State capacities to implement environmental obligations and achieve priority targets/objectives.

Relevance at the national level was reinforced by its complementarity with earlier biosafety projects, building on the progress that was achieved. The project is part of a broader

cooperation context and built on the cumulative improvements that were achieved over the years, with the aim of closing the remaining capacity gaps and strengthening systemic performance through improved information flows and coordination mechanisms. The project's rationale and design were based on past empirical experience, and for the most part focused on specific capacity needs that were deliverable within the project timeframe. By strengthening institutional capacities on LMO testing the project addressed an essential element of a functional national biosafety decision making framework that was lacking. The support provided for laboratory infrastructure, reagents and other materials is extremely relevant to all the six project countries material needs given the fact that they are least developed countries with small budgets that do not necessarily prioritize Biosafety.

Gender balance

The Project Document (PRODOC) referred to gender equity and social inclusion. The Project did not include any clear mainstreaming of gender, however, in terms of involvement in project activities, gender balance was reflected by the number of women involved in the implementing, administering of the project, which outnumbered the men (70% women-30% men), and by women who were involved in the training of trainer's activities. The project has also ensured that women are well represented in the project teams, the Regional Steering Committee, the annual planning meetings and training activities; several of the doctoral and masters candidates identified in the project reports were women.

Human rights based approach (HRBA)

Human rights based approaches (HRBA) and the inclusion of indigenous peoples were not explicitly addressed in the project design or in its approach to implementation although the project is relevant to achieving World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) environmental targets. The inclusion of indigenous people was not relevant to this project considering that the project components are technical.

South to South Cooperation

The project promoted South-South cooperation at the regional level through the involvement of the countries that have all collaborated in the execution of the project, and through a sharing Platform on LMO detection and exchange of information, which was developed to boost the cooperation and consultation between Southern countries. The reviewer considers that the implementation strategy which already includes exchange programs and twinning activities for further transfer of skills and knowledge between southern African countries in the field of LMO detection to facilitate the replication of best-practices should be given high priority in the second half of project execution. The twinning program in the University of Free State and also regional activities to share knowledge, further twinning and knowledge will have a ripple effect and will require additional resources beyond the project. The soft skills and regional training planned or executed also are meant to facilitate the replication of best practices.

The rating on relevance is satisfactory, reflecting strong overall relevance of the project activities across all five sub criteria.

3.3 Achievement of outputs

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

Table 8 at the end of this chapter provides a detailed overview of the current status of the project's outputs and an assessment of the likelihood of their full delivery by the end of the current project completion date (Dec 2021). The following sections provide an overall assessment of the progress of key elements per component.

3.3.1 Component A: Strengthening Infrastructure for LMO Detection

3.3.1.1 Regional Level

This project component aims to improve laboratory infrastructure required for qualitative and quantitative testing of LMOs. Component A has two outputs namely

- a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- b) Adequate functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

These outputs are well on track and are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date. The guidance documents on minimal infrastructure have been developed and have been used by the countries to refurbish the existing selected laboratories in accordance with the plan.

The requisite equipment has been procured and was in the process of being delivered to the respective countries by the time of the mid-term review. The process of ensuring adequate and functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection included refurbishment of the designated laboratories to fit the minimum requirements set under the project. It also entailed procuring equipment for each of the identified laboratory. The process of procuring the equipment was laborious as it entailed development of a regional procurement framework, identification of suppliers, purchase of the equipment and transportation of the equipment to the respective countries. The change of strategy from national procurement as per agreements with countries to regional centralized procurement (an approach that had been indicated in the pro-doc).

The PIU drew a regional procurement strategy that was presented to the SC for approval. The process of making sure that equipment quoted by suppliers are fit for purpose was done mainly by the TAs working with Dr Maredza. The in-country processes of applications for exemption of duties and customs clearance were also was lengthy and complicated in some countries. The delayed procurement triggered many changes to the implementation of the project especially Project component B which include moving trainings on laboratory related activities to commence end of year 2 when equipment had been delivered. The training could not proceed without the equipment and as such the human capacity building activities could not be implemented as per original work plan.

Despite the delays occasioned by the procurement process, the outputs under this component will be fully delivered by the project completion.

3.3.1. 2 National Level

(a) Angola

Angola has designated one laboratory, namely the Central Laboratory of Angola (CLA) as the main laboratory for LMO detection. Angola had two main outputs namely-

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection.
- (b) Designated laboratories refurbished, fully capacitated and achieving international standards

The Central Laboratory of Angola which is under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, is mandated to analyze agricultural soils, domestic and imported food and organic and inorganic fertilizers, to ensure food security for the population and prevent entry of unwanted food and fertilizers in Angola.

The laboratory designated three rooms for the project. The rooms were refurbished and adjustments made so as to comply with the unidirectional flow of the LMO and the detection process, and in accordance with the spatial plan provided by the Technical Advisors.

The laboratory had minimum equipment which had been provided under other existing projects.

The equipment was to arrive by 1st June 2018. However, as the refurbishment of the laboratory to meet the required standard had not been completed, the supplier had to hold the equipment till the completion of the work. By the time of the Mid-Term Review, the refurbishment was yet to be completed and the equipment had not been delivered.

The project team and the laboratory manager were however concerned that the country would not be able to sustain the supply of the reagents, as they had not factored it into the Ministry's budget.

Despite the delay in completing the activity within the set period, these outputs are well on track and are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

(b) Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The DRC designated two laboratories namely the General Atomic Energy Commission/ Regional Center for Nuclear Studies Kinshasa (CGEA/CREN-K) and the Veterinary Laboratory of Kinshasa (VLK) as the laboratories for the LMO testing and detection.

The DRC developed two outputs under this component, namely

- (a) Guidance Documents on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- (b) Adequate functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

While the CREN-K laboratory is fully refurbished with modern facilities, the VLK facility is modified and refurbished to meet the minimum spatial plans set under the project.

The CREN-K laboratory is a research laboratory set up as a reactor. The Laboratory has the state of the art equipment, courtesy of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Government of DRC set aside funds to partition the laboratory to meet the specifications under the project. The laboratory has permanent staff that are scientists. They also receive students (Bachelors, Masters and PhD) on attachment to work in the laboratory.

The second LMO laboratory is situated in the Veterinary Laboratory of Kinshasa. The VLK was established with a view to carry out animal diagnostics. The LMO laboratory was thus modified and refurbished to meet the requisite specifications.

Both Laboratories were ready and there had been partial delivery of the equipment.

Despite the delay in completing the activity within the set period, these outputs are well on track and are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

(c) Lesotho

The Government of Lesotho had designated two laboratories for the LMO detection work, namely the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and the Department of Agricultural Research (DAR) under the Ministry of Agriculture. The intended outputs for Lesotho under this component were

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection.
- (b) Designated laboratories refurbished, fully capacitated and achieving international standards

By the time of the mid-term review, Lesotho had adopted the guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection.

The Laboratory at the National University of Lesotho had been equipped as part of the UNEP-GEF National Biosafety Framework (NBF) Implementation Project for Lesotho. This project therefore leveraged and build on the existing biosafety framework. The laboratory in meeting the minimum standards, had to modify the settings of the laboratory so as to ensure a unilateral flow of LMOs.

At the time of the mid-term review, the Laboratory at the Department of Agricultural Research had not yet started the refurbishment work. The country project team had invited bids for the refurbishment work and were in the process of evaluating the tenders.

The outputs are on track and are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

(d) Madagascar

The Government of Madagascar had designated two laboratories for the LMO detection work, namely the Molecular Biology Laboratory at the University of Antananarivo (MBL-UA) and the National Research Center for the Environment (CNRE).

The two outputs for Madagascar under this component were

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- (b) Functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

By the time of the mid-term review Madagascar had adopted the guidance documents on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection. Both Laboratories were in the process of carrying out major refurbishment work.

By the time of the mid-term review, the equipment for both laboratories had not been supplied, though it had been procured. The delay was occasioned by the tax exemption procedures that the project had to seek from the National Treasury. The letter requesting for the exemption had been delivered to the responsible Minister at the Ministry of Finance and they were awaiting a response. However, as it is an election year and period for the Country, a lot of decisions were expected to be delayed hence affecting the project's delivery.

The outputs under this component are highly likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

(e) Malawi

The Government of Malawi had designated two laboratories Chitedze Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) and the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR-Bunda).

The outputs for Malawi under this component were

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- (b) Functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

By the time of the mid-term review, Malawi had adopted the guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMOs. Malawi had refurbished the two laboratories in line with the spatial plan prepared under the guidance documents.

Malawi had also received all the equipment that they had identified as necessary for the two laboratories and were awaiting the regional training on Quality Management Systems.

The delivery of this output for Malawi is on track and will be satisfactorily completed by the project completion date.

(f) Mozambique

The Government of Mozambique had designated two laboratories for the LMO detection work, namely Biotechnology Centre of Eduardo Mondlane University (CB-UEM) and the Mozambique Research Institute Biotechnology Laboratory (MRIBL)

The two outputs for Mozambique under this component were-

- (a) Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection;
- (b) Functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection

By the time of the mid-term Review, both the laboratories at the Biotechnology Center and the Research institute had adopted the minimal spatial plan set out in the guidance documents.

The Biotechnology center has a strong partnership on biotechnology research and development with a consortium of Italian universities. For this reason, the Center has benefited from the partnership and has received several "state of the art" equipment from Italy.

By the time of the mid-term review the equipment for both Laboratories had not been delivered. This is due to the fact that the laboratories had to obtain tax exemption status so as not to pay duty on the project equipment. The Biotechnology Center had been granted exemption but the Research Institute was still awaiting the decision of the Ministry of Finance on the exemption.

The delivery of this output for Mozambique is on track and will be satisfactorily completed by the project completion date.

3.3.2 Component B: Strengthening Institutional and Human capacities for LMO detection

3.3.2.1 Regional Level

This component seeks to build a critical mass of laboratory staff with the requisite knowledge and skills for LMO detection and analysis. The intended outputs under component B are -

- (a) Laboratory personnel equipped with technical expertise in Quality Management Systems;
- (b) Adequate technical backstopping in support of implementation processes;
- (c) Guidance document in Best Practices in LMO detection adapted for the regional context

The project has held one Regional workshop which reviewed and defined competence levels for LMO Detection for all the participating countries. The workshop also defined the infrastructural requirements.

To achieve the outputs under this component, the project has also trained the project participants on “soft skills” for effective delivery of the project. The training included project planning and self-monitoring, narrative and financial reporting, communication skills, leadership skills, team building, conflict resolution and interpreting findings for policy decision makers. 12 participants in total - 2 from each country were trained at the regional level.

Though there has been slow progress towards actualization of this component, this component is likely to be delivered by the project completion date. The project is expected to carry out a training of trainers at the regional level on quality management systems. These trained trainers will in turn carry out training on laboratory personnel at the national level. The regional training has been delayed and has had an effect on the national training. The delay has been occasioned by the delay in delivery of laboratory equipment under component A.

The project has adequately provided technical backstopping and support in the implementation process. The project has a Project Assistant Manager who is also providing technical assistance to the countries - Dr Alice Maredza- embedded on the project management team, has a PHD on molecular and cell biology and extensive hands on experience on LMO work in Africa. The project has also collaborated with the University of the Free State, South Africa, through Professor Chris Viljoen who is an Associate Professor of Human Molecular Biology in the Department of Haematology and Cell Biology with expertise on bio-safety and regulatory aspects regarding GMO detection and behavior, and the impact of GMOs on gene flow. Prof. Viljoen (Project Technical Advisor) and Dr Dahlia Garwe who has a PHD in Plant Molecular Biology and Dr Maredza who is a Molecular and Cell Biologist. The two Technical Advisors with support from the Project Assistant Manager were instrumental in the development of the guidance documents and the minimal spatial plan requirements. They also were on the ground and actively participated in helping the countries set up the laboratories with the aim of ensuring a unidirectional gene flow and non-contamination of experiments.

The Project also benefitted from the backstopping support received from the UNEP Task Manager. The Task Manager provided his knowledge and technical inputs during the regional training meetings. The Task Manager has also been instrumental in providing guidance and insights on the project management including the technical and financial reporting by Countries.

The progress on the Output on the guidance document for best practices in LMO detection adapted in the regional context is far from being achieved and may be partly delivered by the project completion date. Development of the document is one thing and adoption of the best practices is another thing. Adoption of the best practices is something that the project will continuously undertake to promote to ensure uptake of the best practice.

Overall, the outputs for Component B seek to build human capacity. The activities constitute QMS, Sampling detection and documentation and LMO testing and Proficiency testing.

In as far as their being moved to year 2, 3, and 4 they are all planned for and are sequentially presented following up to the Infrastructure capacity building. Though there has been slow progress towards actualization of this component, this component is likely to be delivered by the project completion date.

3.3.2.2 National Level

At the National Level, these outputs were common for all the countries. Thus

- (a) Laboratory personnel equipped with technical expertise in Quality Management Systems;
- (b) Adequate technical backstopping in support of implementation processes;
- (c) Guidance document in Best Practices in LMO detection developed

The following were the achievements and challenges for each of the countries

(a) Angola

Angola had not commenced any activities under this component. At the time of the Mid-Term Review, Angola was conducting its inception meeting that also served as experience sharing meeting and learning of best practices from Mozambique. Angola had invited Dr Paulino Munisse who is also the project manager for Mozambique to share lessons and best practices from the experience of Mozambique. The UNEP Task Manager was also able to share experiences from countries in other regions that are already using detection methods for science-based decision-making.

Angola had designated only two scientists to manage the laboratory, though they had planned for three scientists to undergo the regional training.

Though the outputs under this component are far from being delivered by midpoint, with the delivery and installation of the equipment in the laboratory, the activities will be undertaken, however the delivery of the outputs under this component may not be satisfactorily achieved by the project completion date.

(b) The Democratic Republic Of Congo (DRC)

The delivery of the outputs under this component has been slow for the DRC.

By the time of the mid-term review the training on quality management systems had not been undertaken. This was attributed to the fact that the regional training had not been conducted. The design of the program is such that the laboratory managers are trained on the train the trainer approach at the regional level and they in turn carry out the national training on their personnel.

The project at the country level had received technical backstopping on the various activities in the project, right from the development of the guidance material to the refurbishment of the laboratories in line with the spatial plan. The technical backstopping is considered continuous hence the delivery of this output is on track.

By mid-term review, the DRC had not developed a guidance document on best practices in LMO detection. There was no indication from the monitoring and evaluation framework that the project was compiling best practices on LMO detection.

The delivery of this output may not be satisfactorily achieved by the project completion date.

(c) Lesotho

Like the other project countries, the delivery of this output had not been commenced by the time of the mid-term review.

The delivery of this output despite not having been commenced is likely to be achieved because effort is being made.

(d) Madagascar

By the time of the mid-term review, Madagascar had translated the guidance documents into French language. They had published 200 copies and disseminated them to the university, the center of environmental research and the relevant Ministries.

Madagascar also held the national taskforce meeting and at this meeting the guidance document was discussed at length. Taskforce meetings are held quarterly. So far three quarterly meetings have been held. These include inception meeting, which was held in December 2017; the soft skills meeting which was held in April 2018 and the RAEIN-Africa meeting which was held in October 2018. The taskforce meetings were on track as they had been held at each quarter.

For the output on technical backstopping, it is a continuous activity and the Technical advisors were continuously present to provide support. Dr Alice Maredza had paid the laboratory a visit in April 2018 in a joint mission with the Task Manager and had provided guidance in the spatial planning process. The meeting also explored synergies with the ongoing Biosafety Framework Implementation project.

The training on quality management systems was yet to be conducted. The CENARE has one laboratory manager, one PHD student, Two Masters students and Two laboratory technicians. the University on the other hand has one laboratory manager, a Director of Genetics, Two laboratory technicians and four masters students. Both laboratories allow access to masters and PHD students.

Madagascar is on track for outputs under this component and are highly likely to be satisfactorily completed by the date of the project completion.

(e) Malawi

Malawi has implemented the spatial plan to the letter. The Technical advisor had visited the laboratories and had made recommendations on areas to be improved. The recommendations had been implemented.

The training on quality management systems had not been undertaken. The delay had been occasioned by the delay in procurement of the equipment.

The delivery of this output for Malawi is on track and will be satisfactorily completed by the project completion date.

(f) Mozambique

Mozambique had not conducted the national training on quality management systems. Like all countries, this training depended on the regional training.

The translation of the guidance documents was scheduled for April 2019. It had not been done by the time the mid-term review was being conducted.

The training on soft skills had been conducted.

The outputs for Mozambique under this component are on track and are likely to be satisfactorily completed by the project completion date.

3.3.3 COMPONENT C: Strengthening Information Sharing, Lesson Learning and Partnerships

This component is aimed at building a robust network of LMO detection laboratories in the region to facilitate sound biosafety decision making and environmental safety. The objective of this component is to facilitate dissemination of results from the project that will be within and beyond the project intervention zone through a number of existing information sharing networks including online based forums, newsletters, a network of LMO Detection laboratories and Learn and share forums.

The intended outputs under Component C are-

- (a) Platforms for information exchange established and functional;
- (b) Project materials and guidance manuals well documented and published;
- (c) Established Linkages and partnerships with other regional, international LMO detection laboratories and Networks as well as other institutions

3.3.3.1 Regional Level

The project has developed and produced several knowledge and communication products have been produced, targeting a broad range of audiences, such as policy-makers, government and other technical staff, communities, and the general public. The material has been given to the respective project countries for dissemination. A range of channels is used for dissemination.

Initially the PIU expected each country to develop its own platform but with the development of the project and events of the project, the PIU has developed a website hosted by RAEIN-Africa that will host the information collated by the countries. The website is scheduled for completion by end 2019. The countries have been slow to populate this website with information or create links on other biosafety related activities within their countries.

The output on establishment of linkages and partnerships with other regional and international LMO detection laboratories and networks as well as other institutions has been partly and minimally delivered. The project must be aggressive in finding the partnerships and networks that exist in the region and globally. By mid-term, the project had interacted with the University of Free State South Africa and the University had provided its laboratory facilities for the training of personnel from the project countries. The project had also facilitated the one laboratory personnel from the CREN-K Laboratory to attend a training on LMO sampling and Detection that was held in Tunis in 2018 and one laboratory personnel from Angola toured a laboratory in Italy on a bench marking exercise.

3.3.3.2 National Level

At the national level, the activities and the outputs are common. The following are the achievements and challenges for the delivery of outputs under Component C.

(a) Angola

Angola had made effort in establishing partnerships and linkages. The invitation of their Mozambique counterpart to their experience sharing workshop is one such example of even ensuring that the regional network platform is sustained.

(b) Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The DRC had held the taskforce meeting in February 2018. At this meeting the stakeholders approved the work-plan of activities for the rest of the year.

The country also was to hold another task force meeting but had not received its next tranche of finances hence was constrained.

On the activity on establishing linkages and partnerships, DRC argued that a regional platform was to be established but there was no clear direction as to how the information was to be collected from each country.

The establishment of linkages and partnerships was a continuous exercise. A member from the CREN-K Laboratory had benefited from an exchange program where he had attended a training in Tunisia on LMO detection. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is a principle partner of the CREN-K laboratory. CREN-K has benefited from the IAEA through the supply of equipment that is relevant to LMO detection.

The VLK laboratory on the other hand has a number of partners including FAO, IAEA and the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp. The institute was also going into partnership with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on Hemorrhagic pathology with specific reference to EBOLA. This partnership may leverage on the LMO detection training and capacity that has been built.

(c) Madagascar

Madagascar has developed a national communication strategy which was to be validated by the stakeholders. This communication strategy will determine how decisions will be communicated to the public.

Madagascar has also produced and published project material including the guidance documents that have been translated into Malagasy and have disseminated over 200 copies

(d) Malawi

Malawi has produced 30 copies of a newsletter. The country has a National Biosafety Clearing House though the portal is not functioning. The country is currently using the BIOFIN website to collate and disseminate information on the project through this website. The Laboratory at Chitedze has several partners in farmers, several research centers under CGIAR including International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), International Potato Center (CIP), World Agroforestry (ICRAF) and the Tea Research Foundation.

(e) Mozambique

Mozambique has produced brochures which was used to disseminate information about the project to the participants in the national stakeholders training on soft skills.

3.3.4 COMPONENT D: Strengthening Biosafety Decision Making

This component is aimed at ensuring a strong interface between LMO testing laboratories and biosafety decision making processes. The target is a national biosafety framework in which the results of LMO testing laboratories are used to inform policy and programmes. The component also aimed at ensuring that the decision makers are on board at all levels and are aware of the projects outputs and how they are expected to link with them as decision makers.

The intended outputs are as follows-

- (a) Policy makers aware of the importance of LMO testing to support decision making.

- (b) Skills and techniques for sampling, handling documentation of LMOs provided to regulatory chain actors (Border officials etc.).

3.3.4.1 Regional Level

The delivery of the outputs under this component had not been commenced by mid-term. The delivery of skills and techniques of sampling, handling documentation of LMO to regulatory chain actors was delayed due to the fact that all equipment needed to have been delivered and fitted so that the hands-on training was done using the existing facilities and equipment. This component has therefore suffered the ripple effect of the delay in the procurement and delivery of the equipment.

The policy makers are constantly being invited to attend meetings organized by the PIU hence their awareness of the importance of LMO testing is always being improved. To create awareness at policy level - High-level national dialogues were held in all the six countries. The LEA attended meetings with the high level designated NEAs in Angola meetings were held with Minister of Environment and then a second meeting with the State secretary of Ministry of Environment and the Director of the Laboratory.

In the DRC meetings were held and the Mission reports on this assignment were posted on the ANUBIS.

The LEA also visited Lesotho and met with the Minister responsible for Tourism Environment together with the Directors of Environment, Agricultural Research and Head of the Department under which the lab at NUL falls.

The result of these missions is that the Laboratories and NEAs have since shown more project ownership based on their responses to the project needs.

3.3.4.2 National Level

At the National Level the outputs are common.

Not much activity has been done to produce outputs under this component.

3.3.5 Overall progress against outputs

As described in the sections above, the delivery of the outputs by the date of the project completion is a mixed bag. Some outputs may not be fully delivered before the current project completion date. Achievement of the outputs under Component C and D are particularly challenging in this sense. A no cost extension of the project completion date would be the ideal position. However, considering the financial constraints that the project may face regarding the costs related to the project staff, a no cost extension is not an option.

3.4 Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

On effectiveness, the Reviewer reflects on project performance at an output level by delving into particular activities as they appear in the logical framework and annual work plans. The Reviewer does not mention every activity under every output. Instead, the reviewer gives a review of most of activities, especially if there are challenges, gaps or rooms of opportunity.

Conclusions elucidated from the review are fed into capturing the larger picture of an overall progress towards the outcome. The project seeks to achieve outcomes that in turn are expected to lead towards the achievement of the project's objective/intermediate states and further to contribute to the attainment of its goal/impact. The evaluation of the Project's effectiveness is based on the extent to which the project's outcomes, as defined in the reconstructed ToC, are likely to be achieved. Moreover, the extent to which the outcomes will contribute to the intermediate states and impact identified in the reconstructed ToC as well as the formal objective and goal specified in the ProDoc is assessed.

3.5 Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC)

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

3.5.1. OUTCOME 1.0: Designated LMO laboratories fully capacitated and achieving a minimum level of functionality on LMO detection

3.5.2 Achievement and Challenges of Outputs and Activities

3.5.2.1 Regional Level

(a) Achievements

- The soft skills training involved team building and creation of a common understanding of the project so that the participants could own the project. The soft skills training was undertaken first at the regional level after which it was replicated at the national level for sustainability. The soft skills training has received a positive review and feedback from the participants and they have expressed the importance of incorporating the training in all their plans. The soft skills training has enabled the participants to communicate effectively with co-workers, employers, friends and family members and has particularly enhanced relationship at the workplace hence improving teamwork, creativity, efficiency and productivity.
- The PIU has been able to hold three regional meetings namely the inception workshop and two other planning meeting. With the inception meeting which was held in October 2017, the PIU was able to form the Regional Steering Committee and at this meeting the countries were taken through the project logical framework and the regional work plan was revised. The second meeting (April 2018) and third meetings (October 2018) were planning meetings which saw the revision of the work plans and rescheduling of activities. It is at these meetings where the procurement strategy was developed and list of equipment also developed and prioritized. The PIU also took advantage of this and maximized on the opportunity by having a back to back meeting and training session where the soft s
- The PIU was able to develop a procurement strategy that saw the project intervene on behalf of the six countries in procuring the necessary equipment for the project. The development of a regional procurement strategy was necessary to avoid bureaucracies and lengthy procurement procedures thus removing unnecessary restrictions at the national level.

- The PIU was also able to manage the procurement of the equipment effectively thus saving the project colossal amounts of money. Equipment that was originally going for USD 12,000 was negotiated down to USD 6000.
- The PIU also produced the guidance documents on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection. The guidance documents provided details on laboratory set up

(b) Challenges

- The procurement process was lengthy and laborious. The suppliers were from different countries in Europe, South Africa and USA.
- Each country was to work towards obtaining tax exemption on the equipment that was to be supplied from suppliers who were not within their respective countries. The exemption procedures seemed bureaucratic for most if not all countries thus causing delay on delivery and installment of the equipment. The delay had a ripple effect on the entire project because the delivery of all other components, including national training was dependent on each country having equipment to enable hands on training.

Full capacity may be said to be achieved when all the project countries have the equipment installed and properly supported and the personnel also well trained to conduct LMO detection. The equipment being in place provides opportunity and facilitates in the increasing of the capacity of personnel who will carry out the LMO detection work. Outcome 1.0 is therefore partly achieved but will be full achieved by the project completion date

3.5.2.2. National Level

(a) Achievements

The Laboratory at the Department of Seeds in the Ministry of Agriculture in Mozambique is a good example of a fully capacitated laboratory achieving a minimum level of functionality on detection. This laboratory carries out detection of diseases on conventional seed. The processes of analysis, documentation of the findings and management of the information in this laboratory is worth learning from.

(b) Challenges

The reviewer is concerned that even though the laboratory at the University of Lesotho is well equipped, it may not be used to its full capacity. At the moment there are no students using the laboratory for LMO work or testing. The university does not offer any postgraduate degrees. The laboratory manager is the only person with a PhD while the rest of the technicians are first degree or diploma holders. With postgraduate students using the laboratories, the likelihood of a sustainable continuity of churning out trained personnel on LMO detection is high as they would learn on the job. With just one person being the only personnel in the laboratory the laboratory faces the risk of closure or programs coming to a standstill when the one personnel is not available.

3.5.2 OUTCOME 2.0: Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories

3.5.2.1 Regional Level

(a) Achievements

- The project conducted its annual regional project lesson sharing and planning workshop.
- The first Soft skills training was held in November 2017 while the second was carried out in October 2018. The first Soft skills was aimed at developing a common and shared understanding on the project goals objectives approach and the expected outputs and outcomes. It also trained the participants on general project management, reporting, use of ANUBIS and it built and equipped the MCP-ICLT team with relevant soft skills to ensure Team efficiency in the implementation of the project. The soft skills imparted to the participants included communication skill, leadership skills, team building, conflict resolution and interpreting findings for policy decision makers.
- The second soft skills training was done back to back with the Project review and planning meeting of October 2018. The soft skills training focused on issues of sustainability of results. Partners were trained on proposal writing and fundraising skills
- During the mid-term review, the beneficiaries of this training confirmed that the training is useful to them in their day to day management of the project. This therefore makes the outcome partly achieved.

(b) Challenges

- By the time of the mid-term review, the regional Training the of Trainer workshop on quality management had not been conducted. The delay in this training has an effect on the national training that was to take place after the regional training. The purpose of the quality management systems training was to orient the laboratory managers and personnel to document processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving **quality** policies and objectives of LMO detection. The delay in the training meant that the minimum competencies on responsibilities, schedules, relationships, contracts, and agreements not yet acquired.
Countries needed to have refurbished the laboratories to enable procured equipment to be directly delivered into fully refurbished laboratories.
The QMS training was to be undertaken in tandem with the delivery of equipment to enable the teams to work on the Quality management systems while trying their laboratory equipment configurations and also their new spatial orientation.
- Training on sampling, documentation and LMO testing can only be efficient if it's done when the laboratory is well equipped.
- Awareness creation to private companies and other possible supplier of samples needs also to be timely done so that when the laboratories are functional have carried out

their first proficiency testing, the laboratories will be well equipped are ready to receive samples.

- By the time of the mid-term review, the six national workshops on LMO sampling and Detection had not been conducted. With the training not having been conducted means that the capacity to carry out LMO detection has not been developed. By the time of the mid-term review, it is fair to assess and say that the laboratory personnel are not able to apply and demonstrate awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to perform tasks and duties successfully and which can be measured against well-accepted standards (levels) on LMO detection
- The delay on this training was occasioned by the delay in the procurement of the laboratory equipment and reagents.

This outcome is partially achieved because to measure competence as a result, we need to see that the laboratory personnel have the ability to perform the specific task of sampling and detecting LMOs, we should be able also to recognize the required knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for this ability to sample and detect LMOs

It is imperative that the TOT and the laboratory personnel attain and maintain a specified level of competence to be able to detect LMOs. The project focuses on building skills in a stepwise manner to achieve competence. However, how competence is achieved, measured and maintained has not been typically standardized and is also not clearly defined.

3.5.3 Outcome 3.0: Sustainable Opportunities for sharing expertise, experiences and resources on LMO detection created

3.5.3.1 Regional Level

(a) Achievements

- At the regional level information material has been published and packaged and disseminated to the respective countries for dissemination. The guidelines on getting laboratory ready and a flyer on general project activities are among the documents that were developed for dissemination by the countries.
- The information was also shared at the Africa UNEP-GEF Biosafety Project Coordinator's meeting and the side event of the COP-MOP

(b) Challenges

- The PIU was to develop a Knowledge sharing and e-platform that would allow for exchange of information and technical support in laboratory detection services through the project website at the Regional level with national nodes. A Regional platform that would facilitate dissemination of results from the project, within and beyond the project intervention zone. This proved difficult and the alternative was

that the PIU decided to develop a website and requested that countries post their information on the regional website. This too had not been developed by the mid-term review. The PIU had requested the countries to post their information on the RAEIN-Africa website so that REAIN Africa would in turn disseminate the information appropriately.

- The project was also to establish linkages with the LMO Detection Network Portal on the BCH. The networks would include laboratory twinning Programmes beyond the project with other laboratories to allow for study visits, outreach materials shall also be developed including e-newsletters, brochures. By the time of the mid-term review this had not been achieved.
- The role of the private sector is silent in the entire design of the project and particularly this output.
- The knowledge and capacity-related outcomes are likely to be achieved but not to an extent where the stakeholders can fully engage in LMO detection without further support. The project is a first mover on LMO detection not only in the southern Africa region but also in the entire African region. Therefore, while it is laying the foundation, it is too early to assess whether it will fully lead to the intended impact of contributing to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, transport and use of LMOs, this as well as sustainability and replication of the project would largely depend on whether external funding and capacity development support can be secured for continuation of the processes initiated/supported by the project.

A knowledge management system has been defined as **a system** that stores and retrieves knowledge, improves collaboration, locates knowledge sources, mines repositories for hidden knowledge, captures and uses knowledge, or in some other way enhances the KM process.

The activities and outputs geared towards this outcome will not result to this outcome if not refocused in the remaining part of the project.

The centerpiece of outcome 3.0 is a regional Information and Knowledge Management system. This is expected to provide the overall guidance to all LMO testing and detection analysis and information within the region.

The range of knowledge products, tools and training modules, trainings, conferences, workshops, awareness raising events, websites and social media pages, etc., all contribute to enhancing sustainable sharing expertise, experiences and resources on LMO detection. Majority of the outputs under Component C have not been fully delivered. The project has to significantly redesign the outputs and activities under this component so as to achieve the outcome and the broader objective and goal of the project.

3..5.2.2 National Level

(a) Madagascar

- At the time of the mid-term review, Madagascar is the only country that had developed a communication strategy. From the strategy, Madagascar was able to

identify their audience and the strategies of disseminating and communicating with the various audiences.

- Madagascar had also developed a national project website that was hosted by the Ministry of Environment. This website had not been linked to the regional website.
- Madagascar translated the documents including pamphlets that had been prepared at the regional level, into Malagasy and had disseminated the same to the public and relevant stakeholders.
- Madagascar had also created a communication channel using the social media. The project manager stated that a large part of the population communicates through Facebook thus the need to set up an online discussion through Facebook.

(b) Malawi

- Malawi received USD 3000 to develop a communication strategy. They did not develop the communication strategy and instead developed a newsletter and disseminated 30 copies of these letters to the relevant Ministries and stakeholders.
- Malawi has a national Biosafety-Clearing House (nBCH) which is not functional. However, the project on biodiversity financing (BIOFIN) has a website and the project has established a link within this website.

(c) Mozambique

Mozambique has designated a desk officer within the department of communication to handle communication, information and data on Biosafety generally. This is a good way of having the entire system integrated within the government system and budget, hence assuring sustainability.

3.5.4 Outcome 4.o: Technical support to strengthen LMO detection and biosafety decision making processes in target countries provided

3.5.4.1 Regional Level

(a) Achievements

The achievements under this output can be said to be the centerpiece of the entire project. This is where it all began. A strong decision making process will require the contribution and the interconnectivity of all the other activities, outputs and outcomes. The project's inception workshop was held in November 2017. It was at this inception meeting that an agreement between RAEN Africa and the project countries was signed. The agreement among other things, mandated the designated laboratories as LMO referral laboratories.

(b) Challenges

For there to be a decision making process, there must be a policy, legal and institutional framework that defines the decision-making process and forms the basis of the decisions to be made. It also gives mandate to a competent authority or the designated institution to make the decision. Out of the six countries, only Malawi and Mozambique have a legal framework for decision making. The other four countries only have draft laws that are at different stages of development.

The process of getting the designated laboratories as reference laboratories proved difficult because with the exception of the DRC, the other five countries needed a legal instrument for instance an executive order or subsidiary legislation to define the laboratories as the main reference laboratories for LMO detection.

3.5.4.2 National Level

(a) Achievements

(a) Malawi and Mozambique

These two countries have conducted confined field trials on Maize and are in the process of conducting National Performance Trials. The confined field trials have been a good training ground for the decision making process and has brought out the gaps in the decision making process.

(b) DRC

DRC has mandated both the CREN-K and the VLK laboratories as the reference laboratories on LMO detection. This was done through a letter by the Principal Secretary responsible for Agriculture. For DRC, the letter alone was enough.

(c) Madagascar

has developed a draft decree that will mandate the laboratories as reference laboratories. The Director General is awaiting the laboratories to be functional before completing the decree and having it signed.

(d) Mozambique

Previously had a system in which the Biotechnology Center was used as the reference laboratory. However, with the change of the Minister responsible for Agriculture, the system collapsed this goes to show that the reference system needs to be anchored in law and this was it will be shielded from politics of the day.

For a decision process to be considered strengthened, the parameters of the right person, the best available evidence and a sound process must all work together. As earlier said, the other outputs and outcomes in the supporting components, all culminate in a strengthened decision making process. This means that with the laboratory equipped with the trained personnel, with the right equipment, the analysis and findings will be evidence based and will hence contribute to the entire decision making process.

Outcome 3.0 is only achieved to a moderate extent and an increased attainment would require a stronger engagement at the sector level. The required drive ^[1]_{SEP} The achievement of Outcome 3.0 is therefore not only dependent on the delivery of the outputs under this component but also the delivery of the other components.

3.6 Overall assessment of the attainment of outcomes

As can be seen from the assessment of the attainment of the project outcomes, progress has been made and the outcomes have been partly achieved, albeit to various extents and with significant differences between the six target countries and with some important gaps remaining. It is likely that the intended outcomes will be fully attained at the anticipated

levels by the current completion date. Indeed, the full attainment of the intended outcomes at the expected level would to a large extent on the effort at the individual country level. Due to this mixed picture, there is no single rating category that accurately reflects the delivery of project outcomes. Hence, the progress towards outcomes is rated 'Moderately Satisfactory'

3.7 Likelihood of Impact using the Review of Outcomes to Impact (RotI) approach

Rating: Likely to be achieved

The RotI approach is used to assess the likelihood of impact by building upon the concepts of the Theory of Change (ToC), see chapter 2.8. As identified in the reconstructed ToC, there are two intermediate states, which need to occur before the final impact can be realized by the project. The project's direct outcomes contribute to achieving these intermediate states, but it is beyond the project control deliver the intermediate states - a number of other factors need to be in place. The key factors are identified in the reconstructed ToC, some are "drivers" which the project can influence, whereas others are "assumptions" which the project cannot control.

3.7.1 Achievement of the formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document

The overall goal of the project is "to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, transport and use of LMOs resulting from LMOs that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, also taking into account risks to human health and specifically focusing on transboundary movements."

The objective of the project is "to build and strengthen institutional and human capacities for LMO detection in support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African countries."

The RotI approach requires ratings to be determined for the outcomes achieved by the project and the progress made towards the 'intermediate states' at the time of the review. As identified in the reconstructed ToC, there are two intermediate states, which need to occur before the final impact can be realized by the project. The project's direct outcomes contribute to achieving these intermediate states, but it is beyond the project control deliver the intermediate states - a number of other factors need to be in place. The key factors are identified in the reconstructed ToC, some are "drivers" which the project can influence, whereas others are "assumptions" which the project cannot control.

The rating system is presented in table 5 below and the assessment of the project's progress towards achieving its intended impacts is presented in **table 6** further below.

Table 7: Scale for Outcomes and Progress Towards Intermediate State Rating Scale for Outcomes and Progress towards Intermediate State

Outcome Rating	Rating of Progress towards intermediate State
D. The projects intended outcomes are unlikely to be delivered	D: No measures taken to move towards intermediate states.
C. The project's intended outcomes are likely to be delivered but are not designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding	C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started, but are unlikely to produce results.
B. The project's intended outcomes are likely to be delivered and are designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding	B: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and are likely to produce results, but there is no indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.
A: The project's intended outcomes are likely to be delivered, and are designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding.	A: the measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and are likely to produce results, with clear indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact
Rating of impact on environmental status	
+: Projects that achieve documented changes in environmental status during the project's lifetime receive a positive impact rating, indicated by a "+".	

Measures designed to move towards intermediate states and eventual impact are evident in the momentum that the project has created as well as favorable conditions and a foundation for mainstreaming LMO testing and detection into biosafety strategies. As observed during the site visits and interviews, countries are becoming more concerned about LMO risks and are taking measures to convince the private sectors to put Biosafety into their investment plans. The demonstration activities enhanced the capacity of the countries to apply innovative tools and methodologies to assess the impacts of LMOs on natural resources and socioeconomic consequences, and to identify appropriate responses and adaptation strategies.

Though these key measures could be considered necessary for the desired change of stakeholders' behavior and progress towards the long-term impacts, achievement of the long term impact is uncertain as it is dependent on various factors and assumptions. Furthermore, risks associated with LMOs are long-term processes and the real impact of them may not be apparent for decades. How then to measure or evaluate the progress towards impact? The evaluator feels it is not realistic to expect significant and wide scale progress towards intermediate states and impacts as the project activities have been done on small-scale.

(Intermediate State Rating C).

Table 8: Overall Likelihood of Achieving Impacts

Results Rating of the MCP-ICLT Project							
Outputs	Outcomes	Rating A-D	Intermediate State	Rating A-D	Impact	Rating (+)	Overall
Guidance document on minimal infrastructure for LMO detection.	Designated LMO laboratories fully capacitated and achieving a minimum level of functionality on LMO detection.	B	LMOs safe intentional release into the environment	B	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal health protection of the environment	+	BB+
Adequate functional equipment and facilities for LMO detection					Science based decisions contributing to human and animal health protection of the environment		
Laboratory personnel equipped with technical expertise in Quality Management	Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories	B	LMOs safe intentional release into the environment	B	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal health protection of the environment	+	BB+
Adequate technical backstopping in support of implementation processes	Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories	B	LMOs safe intentional release into the environment	C	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	BC+

Guidance document in Best Practices in LMO detection adapted for the regional context	Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories	B	LMOs safe intentional release into the environment	B	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	BB+
Guidance document in Best Practices in LMO detection adapted for the regional context	Minimum level of competence achieved in the designated LMO detection laboratories	B	LMOs safe intentional release into the environment LMOs safe intentional release into the environment;	B	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	BB+
Platforms for information exchange established and functional	Sustainable Opportunities for sharing expertise, experiences and resources on LMO detection created.	C	improved governance of national and regional biosafety systems based upon rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, accountability and liability, equity, transparency, citizen participation	C	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	CC+
Project materials and guidance manuals well documented and published	Sustainable Opportunities for sharing expertise, experiences and resources on LMO detection created.	B	improved governance of national and regional biosafety systems based upon rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, accountability and liability, equity, transparency, citizen participation	B	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	BB+

Established Linkages and partnerships with other regional, international LMO detection laboratories and Networks as well as other institutions	Sustainable Opportunities for sharing expertise, experiences and resources on LMO detection created.	C	improved governance of national and regional biosafety systems based upon rule of law and compliance, installed scientific/technical capacity, accountability and liability, equity, transparency, citizen participation	C	Science based decisions contributing to human and animal	+	CC
Policy makers aware of the importance of LMO testing to support decision making.	Technical support to strengthen LMO detection and biosafety decision making processes in the targeted countries	C	Protection of biological diversity against possible adverse effects of LMOs by means of ensuring safe transfer, handling, use and transboundary movement of LMOs	C			
Skills and techniques for sampling, handling and documentation of LMOs provided to regulatory chain actors (Border Officials etc.)	Technical support to strengthen LMO detection and biosafety decision making processes in the targeted countries	B	Protection of biological diversity against possible adverse effects of LMOs by means of ensuring safe transfer, handling, use and transboundary movement of LMOs	C			
	Justification for rating		Justification for rating		Justification for rating		
	B. The project's intended outcomes		C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate				

	are likely to be delivered and are designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding		states have started, but are unlikely to produce results. The results give indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.				
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All of the projects intended outcomes will largely be achieved. The outcomes are feeding into longer processes, some of which UNEP will continue to support, but a specific handover strategy is not fully in place - and while RAEIN Africa has the formal mandate for continuation, they are affected by capacity and financial constraints which are likely to hamper the continuation unless further donor support is secured.

Table ** Overall likelihood of impact achievement' on a six-point scale.

Highly Likely	Likely	Moderately likely	Moderately unlikely	unlikely	Highly unlikely
AA AB BA CA BB+ CB+ DA+ DB+	BB CB DA DB AC+ BC+	AC BC CC+DC+	CC DC AD+ BD+	AD BD CD+ DD	CD DD

NB: projects that achieve documented changes in environmental status during the project's lifetime receive a positive impact rating, indicated by a "+".

The aggregate rating is "BC". Considering the high level of national appropriation of the results and the solidity of the NCA, producing a final rating "BC". The Project, with an aggregated rating of BC as described in the Table 8 above, can therefore be rated as "Moderately Likely" to achieve the expected Impact.

Overall Likelihood of Achieving Impact

Rating: Highly likely _____

3.8 Achievement of the formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document

Rating: Highly likely

The MCP-ICLT Project has been built to support the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety through the enabling environment and tools to address science based decision making through LMO testing and detection. The objective of the project is to build and strengthen institutional and human capacities for LMO detection in support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African countries.

The activities and the outputs of the projects are like building blocks - all lead to the attainment of the objective.

The abovementioned objective is yet to be achieved but is highly likely to be achieved within the project completion date.

3.9 Sustainability

Rating for Project Sustainability: Moderately Likely

3.9.1 Sustainability and Replication

Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the project funding and assistance has ended. The achievement of sustainability has been taken into consideration in the design of the project and activities. The ProDoc, outlines the following approach to achieving sustainability:

1. Promotion of stakeholder ownership through their involvement in the project design.
2. Latching on to existing interventions (e.g. NBF) and structures.
3. A focus on capacity building (including learning-by-doing and ToT) to enable stakeholders to continue their engagement after the project.
4. An incremental reduction in the level of international technical advisory and capacitation of national consultants.

Sustainability is dependent on actions by national and regional stakeholders. The level of sustainability is not expected to be homogeneous across all the project countries, as each country has its own resources and specific environment that would limit its ability to sustain and replicate the project outcomes.

A related challenge is that the conceptual understanding the project, and thus the real buy-in is uneven. The country project managers all display clear commitment to the project. Some, but far from all, laboratory staff at the project countries have a good understanding of LMOs and Biosafety. At the ministerial level, very few have a good conceptual understanding of the project, and the linkages from the planning to the physical implementation.

Moreover, there are still some significant capacity constraints that need to be addressed, and thus it is not realistic to assume that the process initiated by a project with a 4-year timeframe can be continued without further external support. This is not surprising, considering that the project in a number of ways is a first mover and that it is engaged in capacity-development process that takes time. It is thus not realistic to expect that the project within its timeframe can achieve full sustainability, a more long-term engagement with follow-up projects is needed.

The sustainability of project's outcomes will rely on the regular updating of the information Sharing Platform; and, through the collective efforts by the national focal points in the

project countries, (Representatives of their government). The reviewer anticipates that the sustainability of this Platform will face some challenges, as people change and the issue of providing data is always sensitive in countries and the risk measures in the project design do not include appropriate mitigation measures, in case the countries don't update and use the platform beyond the project.

Based on the extensive interviews with executing organizations and the reviewer's experience in this regard, the project outputs have very substantial replication. The approach of training the trainer provided a practical approach on how to integrate LMO detection in the day to day management and decision making processes of Biosafety. These outputs are very useful guides for government and for the academic institutions and the research departments/ scientific institutions, that haven't had this kind of practical planning projects before. It is recommended to focus further GEF financial support to build upon the considerable number of successful major initiatives of the project.

The roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders are not well documented in relation to the project outcome delivery to promote the project sustainability.

3.9.2 Socio-Political Sustainability

Rating: Moderately Likely

Socio-political sustainability refers to social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts. These factors are linked to the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) and their capacity to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained over time.

Among the factors that could hamper socio-political sustainability are; the lack of the legal framework upon which the decision may be based. Most of the project countries still had their Biosafety Laws in draft form. The research institutions carrying out confined field trials are facing the danger of the decision makers shying away from taking the decision because the legal framework is lacking. In addition, the project countries also trade with countries that export agricultural products that may contain LMOs. They also receive relief food that may contain LMOs, in times of crisis such as floods or drought. Thus the pressures of economic crisis in the project countries may severely undermine sustainability of the project results. In fact, the sustainability impact is often overshadowed by the impact of economic emergencies.

Long-term impact and socio-political sustainability will only be achieved if project results are integrated into policy and regulatory instruments and tangible initiatives in the countries. This is a long-term process that stretches far beyond the span of project life time.

3.9.3 Sustainability of Financial Resources

Rating: Likely

The project design identifies a set of measures to sustain funding for implementation of the project activities in the project life time. The importance of LMO testing and detection remains high amongst the project' countries' and the executing organizations. This was demonstrated by a co-financing that was committed by the executing organizations as a part of the project financing. Also, participating countries supporting follow on project

activities from their national budget as a part of the project co-financing package. Without such co-financing, the project cannot meet its objectives.

Biosafety issues currently have a high profile at the global level and there are broad and committed levels of support to handle them, for their regional and international and immediate impacts.

As, funding is essential to sustain project outcomes and follow up of the project outcomes, a new project is already in the pipeline (Biosafety Capacity Building Project). This project is derived directly from the SANGL and MCP-ICLT projects. As noted by the project manager, some funding will be secured from the new project to keep the MCP ICLT platform active and maintained.

Based on interviews with a large number of national and local stakeholders, and policy members, it was concluded that financial resources have been severely affected by political transition and the change of governments in some countries, as it means shift in political priorities and the GEF current resource allocation framework – which tends to bundle Biodiversity, Biosafety and ABS under one umbrella. For replication and sustained project outcomes, some countries are in need of financial support to enhance their technical and human capacities. Also, during the country visits made by the evaluator, local stakeholders expressed their interest in another phase of the project.

In reference to above, the reviewer commented that, the international financial support to sustain project outcomes is not sufficient to rely on; countries should find other national financial resources, e.g. from the private sector. National private sector contributions are highly recommended to improve financial sustainability which would, in turn, increase the likelihood of tangible effects for the countries. Consequently, greater efforts are needed to disseminate the project results and lessons learned to wider national private sectors.

Additionally, the projects outputs could also potentially be taken up in other new funding projects, for up-scaling the best practices. Building a national expert team in each project country is recommended along with future projects. South-south cooperation- oriented agenda should be incorporated in the project design in new funding project, focusing on the data, skills and resources sharing, for facilitating the replication of best- practices. Thus, a learning program in “outcomes-based management” is essential for up-scaling the project best-practices.

3.9.4 Sustainability of Institutional Frameworks

Rating: Moderately Likely

This section assesses the likelihood that institutional and government structures which will allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained. The institutional factors are the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, e.g. stronger institutional capacities or better informed decision - making. The project's participating countries are represented in the project by the relevant Ministries of Environment, and Agriculture including GEF focal points in the participating countries. The main project stakeholders comprised academic and research institutions All these national institutions responsible for Biosafety have a strong role in sustainability, and are in place to assist the sustainability of the project outcomes.

Supporting the Inter-Ministerial Committees on Biosafety in countries such as Mozambique and Madagascar, will help support the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. This may be through the development and implementation of subsidiary legislation to guide the implementation of the already enacted laws.

3.10 Catalytic Role and Replication

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

3.10.1 Catalytic effect

The project has played a catalytic role in some ways. The project has demonstrated the value of, and thereby promoted, inter-ministerial cooperation on Biosafety. For example, in Mozambique, the inter-ministerial committee on Biosafety has been instrumental in the conduct of the national performance trials and the confined field trials on the WEMA water efficient Maize Project. All decisions are taken in consultation with all the members of the inter-ministerial committee. Another good example is that in Malawi, the Biosafety Committee approved applications for confined field trials of cotton, cowpea and banana. The cowpea and the cotton have undergone the national performance trials. As the decision that was awaited was whether to approve the two for environmental release or not. This project that will help build capacity on LMO detection thus provided clarity for the relevant decision makers and the assurance that with technical capacity built in the country, it becomes easier to monitor activities involving LMOs.

The engagement in curriculum development at university levels are also important measures that are likely to catalyze change in the future, as it contributes to creating a cadre of future civil servants and laboratory technicians with a good grasp of LMO detection.

3.10.2 Replication

Component B and Component C contain several activities dedicated at promoting replication; lessons and best practices of the project are communicated to relevant stakeholders and organizations. Moreover, the trainers' manuals and course materials for training courses developed by the project are made available for others to replicate the trainings. The project has also engaged in "training of trainers", which is also another useful tool for replication. The soft skills training had a positive effect on project staff and their national counterparts. The soft skills training is a classic example of replicable lessons. The project's catalytic role and replication is rated as "highly satisfactory".

3.11 EFFICIENCY

Rating: Satisfactory

This section describes (a) the governance and management structures of the project and their contribution to the effective implementation of its operations and coordination of partners; and (b) the collaboration and coordination mechanisms between and within the six project countries that ensure efficiencies and coherence of response.

3.11.1 Project Governance and Management

A. Project Management was Smooth, Flexible And Well Valued

During implementation there was a good relationship between the PIU and the countries on mutual knowledge and trust. The project countries valued very positively the management of RAEIN Africa as lead agency of the project.

In the course of project execution, close consultations had to be maintained. The regional steering committee meetings were a good opportunity to coordinate with all the countries. The countries presented and reviewed their work plans during the regional steering committee meetings which helped to improve data and reporting systems and reconcile discrepancies.

3.11.2 Cost efficiencies

By the midpoint, the spending was moderate. However, project spending is rarely linear, many projects experience exponential spending patterns, with low spending in the beginning, and significantly increased spending in the second half of the implementation period, thus this moderate initial spending is not necessarily a major concern in its own right.

The financial statements are broken down into components, (see annex 4)

Steering Committee Meetings were organized back to back with training activities: hence premises, and miscellaneous expenses, were shared thus maximizing cost effectiveness.

The financial statements (Periodic Expenditure Reports) based on the template of the UN, are not broken down into components and activities e.g. (A; B; C; D; E and F), thus making it difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness in the implementation of the activities. ANUBIS reporting format is based on Project component i.e. 10-National Project Component; 20-Sub Contract Component; 30 Training Component etc. and not project activities.

Implementation was significantly delayed, due to factors often outside the control of the project, such as complications of procurement process, which required a detailed and thorough analysis of tender documents received to avoid, procuring equipment that may not be fit for purpose and ensure the best value for money that the project could get.

Detailed and thorough review of the submitted tender documents was followed by technical meetings with all suppliers to clarify on grey issues especially on equipment technical specifications. This was necessary to ensure that the project select the best of the available equipment at the competitive amount. Although there were significant delays in the procurement of the equipment, the finally selected equipment were the best and the project ended up getting a 65% discount on the PCR machines because of the number being procured. As a result, this availed more budget funds to the countries to procure other necessary equipment.

UN Environment reporting requirements and processes using the ANUBIS was a challenge to some of project accountants. However, with Training from RAEIN-Africa and Technical back stopping from the project Task Manager, this was later resolved.

Mozambique was the only country that had no issues in the use of the ANUBIS reporting system, as the same project accountant of a previous UN Biosafety project was familiar with the system. Although Lesotho and Madagascar had previous Biosafety Projects and experience in the use of ANUBIS the changes of staff members assigned to the MCP-ICLT

resulted in the need for the PIU to provide continuous training and Technical backstopping. Other Challenges in DRC and Angola were the appointment of non-financially trained personnel to run the project finance and ANUBIS. This was also exacerbated by the communication problems caused by the language in the two countries.

Another challenge that caused some delays in the project implementation is the long period countries took to apply for duty exemption certificates. With the procurement of equipment having been done in November 2018, by March 2019 only one Country (Malawi) had obtained its Duty exemption certificate. Suppliers had to delay dispatching the equipment while waiting for exemption certificates as this would have resulted in import duties to be paid and reducing the Budget for equipment and consumables.

Two of the six countries, (Angola and DRC) had complications of their Bank account details which resulted in the funds being returned to the RAEIN-Africa account three times due to compliance issues as the information supplied by the countries were not exactly the same with the banking details. This also causes some delays to start national projects, but was eventually rectified by both countries and RAEIN-Africa.

Although all these challenges caused the project Implementation to be slower but the MCP-ICLT project and partner countries received value for money in terms of the equipment procurement.

3.11.3 Timeliness

As described in earlier sections, the implementation of a number of project activities has been affected by significant delays. There are several reasons behind the delays, and to a large extent the delay has been cured and the project is on course.

In Madagascar, Moreover, the presidential elections in 2018 and the constituency elections later in 2019 caused several months of delay, due to a mix of concerns and disruptions to the operations of the concerned ministries as new ministers were yet to be and decisions were postponed, delaying their work plans and planning including crucial decisions such as tax exemption that was needed for the importation of the laboratory equipment.

For the DRC, the key staff in the CREN-K laboratory left the project thus affecting implementation. The staff had been trained at the regional level as a ToT.

The Inception Phase of the project officially started after the Internalization and signing of the Project Cooperation Agreement in May 2017. The Project operational started on the 1st July 2017 with release of the first cash advance.

The financial and technical reporting requirements and processes internally between the project countries and the Project manager and from the PIU to UN Environment were also a source of delays. Comments and requests for revisions are then sent back from the UNEP GEF Unit, through the PIU to the countries and the reports are revised. Further funds are only made available once the reports are approved by the UNEP GEF Unit, and this review and approval process takes time and is a source of delays.

Despite the delays, the PIU coordination and proactive attitude of the executing partners allows the execution of most of the project activities easier. The overall rating for efficiency is 'Moderately satisfactory'.

3.12 Factors and processes affecting project performance

3.12.1 Preparation and readiness

Rating: Satisfactory

Overall, the project design and results framework presented in the Project Document is coherent. The indicators are generally “SMART” (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) and have targets. However, the targets are mainly specified as final targets for the project completion. Relevant assumptions and risk were identified but not always placed at the appropriate level.

Relevant stakeholders and partners were identified for the project, and the stakeholders mainly from government were duly involved in the project design, but stakeholders outside government were only involved to a limited extent in the design.

The project was overambitious in its geographical coverage and intended outcomes and outputs, when considering the staff resources available to the PIU, the challenging context and the four-year time period of the project; this has meant that available staff resources have been spread over a large area and the frequency of engagement at the National level, has been insufficient.

In total there were thirty four regional activities which may be considered as too many. UNEP has to a certain extent been able to adapt the implementation to these challenges, e.g. by merging/combining a number of activities, but the results framework and intended results and coverage of the project have so far not been revised.

Overall, the project preparation and readiness was “satisfactory”

3.12.2 Project implementation and Adaptive management

Rating: Satisfactory

3.12.2.1 Management Arrangements

The PIU executes the project in accordance with regional and national implementation modalities and guidelines agreed between the UN Environment and the project countries. The PIU assumed full ownership and responsibility for the effective management and execution of all aspects of the project and remains accountable to the UN Environment. In line with the project document and agreement, and under the overall supervision of the Project Manager, the coordination, monitoring and reporting on project activities are shouldered by the National Project Manager. The project manager is assisted by Project assistant. The project accountant assists on managing the flow of project budget and expenditures.

The responsibilities and reporting lines were agreed during the inception workshop and adhered during implementation. The project resources (fund, staff, and facilities) are effectively used to achieve the project outcomes and outputs through the implementation of activities on time. The Project assistant supports the national project manager in day-to-day activities.

Any significant implementation issues outside the purview of the PIU are put up to the RSC meeting for deliberation and decisions. Prompt decisions are taken in a transparent and consultative manner with the UNEP Task Manager to expedite the implementation of project activities

The Regional Project Steering Committee (RPSC) has met on an annual basis since inception of the project. While this is not frequent, the overall impression is that the PSC provides a reasonable degree of strategic guidance and ensures that the project partners at the higher level are aware of, and generally committed to, the project. At each annual meeting the RSC reviewed and approved the annual work-plan; revised annual budget; reviewed and provided feedback on the Project Implementation Reviews (PIR) as well as annual technical report and strategy papers.

The roles of the partners in the implementation are generally clear and well aligned with their institutional mandates. The national focal points from participating countries were members of the SC and were responsible for communicating between the project executing organizations and the national parties.

All the countries project managers implement their activities in accordance with the PIU's direction, guidelines and timeframe. The annual work plan implementation progress is reported in accordance with the Project Periodic Expenditure Report (PER) on a quarterly basis. To date, there are no major implementation issues.

The PIU releases budget to the countries on a quarterly basis and provides technical backstopping in project implementation and monitoring on a need basis. By the time of the mid-term review, each country had received two tranches of USD 33,000 per tranche. Technical assistance provided included one-time procurement of expensive laboratory facilities, the spatial planning and even the financial reporting and management. Many of the project accountants struggled with the reporting using ANUBIS and Mr. Shepherd Kapayapundo, the Project's Finance Manager was able to give personalized attention to each project accountant and the quality of the finance reports has improved. The quality of services provided by RAEIN Africa as the PIU has been timely and adequate but needs continuous backstopping in quality monitoring and reporting. For example, the post-training benefits and impact are not included in the monitoring reports.

The project's performance in implementation and management is rated "satisfactory".

3.12.3 Partnerships, Stakeholder participation and cooperation

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

3.12.3.1 Partnerships

Stakeholder involvement is an integral part of the structure of the Biosafety Strategy. In the project document, the stakeholders were identified as belonging to 4 groups: (i) Government, including Ministries- who can provide commitment, influence and be responsible for approving policies and plans, and when to conduct stakeholder analysis; (ii) Academia and Research Institutions whose role was to provide for technical support for capacity building and training (iii) Regulatory agencies and (iv) Users association/ industry, community based organizations. The project stakeholders were categorized according to their position in relation to their role in planning, development and implementation of the project.

The project has not reached out to the private sector. In Madagascar and Mozambique, the private sector, notably the importers and exporters are active in the trade of agricultural commodities. In Madagascar, the importation and exportation of commodities such as fish

and seed, is rife and largely contributes to the economy of the country. The interaction with the private sector will thus be beneficial in the development of the LMO detection capacities.

3.12.3.2 Stakeholder participation

Stakeholders are significantly involved in the project implementation. Firstly, the relevant ministries and institutions were actively involved in the project design, through the participation in a series of workshops. Moreover, trainings take departure in the mandates and work of biosafety. The project is supporting existing processes, whenever possible, rather than starting new, parallel ones - for example by engaging in ongoing decision making on the confined field trials of the WEMA Maize project in Malawi and in Mozambique, the NBF's are actively involved.

However, while it is difficult to engage the general public experiences from rural development NGOs is that it is possible to engage them more, e.g. in the consultations in relation to the decision making processes.

Generally speaking, only few stakeholders have a broad understanding of the project objective, concept and its approach - indeed, it seems that the project concept is mainly understood by a few stakeholders from the scientific community. Hence it takes a continuous effort to cultivate a shared vision among stakeholders. A shared vision will also help building a stronger understanding of the project especially for institutions that view it as a UN Environment Project rather than a national project. The mid-term review noted, that quite a low level of stakeholder engagement in the project activities in comparison to the main stakeholder groups identified in the project design.

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships is rated satisfactory

3.12.4 South-South Cooperation

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

The term 'South-South cooperation' in the Project leaves room for various interpretations. The Projects national and regional teams understand it primarily in terms of the events that were started in one of the countries and then scaled-up to include other countries in the region, for instance, joint training events, or study tours. The 'South-South cooperation' component may also imply a much broader perspective - sharing knowledge and experience with other relevant initiatives across the globe. This goes far beyond the boundaries of the project.

With respect to 'South-South cooperation' in the Project, the following has been observed. As a multi-country initiative the cooperation between the intervention countries was not initially envisaged as part of the Project. However, as the implementation process progressed the need to share experience and learn from each other across the country along the implementation became apparent. To address this need, a 'South-South' initiative has been initiated under the Project to facilitate cross-country peer review, learning, and joint efforts. The project has benefited through the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge from experts from the Global South.

The need and importance for such activities is unquestionable. By introducing this dimension, the Project has gained more of a 'regional' nature, ¹² which is certainly justified, especially from the perspective of achieving economies of scale. However, it

remains important to clearly define those regional activities that will enable economies of scale to be achieved.

With respect to 'South-South cooperation' beyond the Project itself, it indeed constitutes an important contribution to the global learning processes of the UN and beyond. Sharing lessons with other partners from around the globe, more so, through the BCH should remain one of the priorities of the Project. However, without clearly defined lessons learned this process has a slow pace at this moment.

The South to South Cooperation is rated Moderately Satisfactory

3.12.5 Communication and public awareness

Rating: highly satisfactory

The project's Component C is dedicated to knowledge management, i.e. making knowledge accessible and creating awareness. This has not been adequately achieved by the midpoint of the project. Several knowledge products of good quality have been produced and disseminated by the PIU. However, with the exception of Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique, the dissemination of the material has not been effectively done. Madagascar has translated the material into Malagasy and French. This is commendable.

The communication and public awareness under component C targets a broad range of stakeholders as well as the general public: technical staff are targeted through technical trainings and participation in detection and decision making activities. All technical staff interviewed report that the project has significantly enhanced their awareness of, and knowledge about, LMOs generally. The project also targets decision-makers and policy-makers with policy briefs and participation in national events. The wider public is targeted through social media, publications and events. For example, Malawi has prepared a monthly publication which are printed and disseminated to various departments. Madagascar printed t-shirts and caps which were disseminated through different channels, e.g. to schools and at events.

The project's performance in ensuring communication and public awareness is rated "highly satisfactory".

3.12.6 Country ownership and driven-ness

Rating: Satisfactory

The Project was designed in response to the request of the countries. All project countries, were also heavily involved in the design of the project that helped to ensure ownership of the countries at the beginning of the project. Subsequently, the six governments signed the Project Document, thereby making a commitment to participate and deliver project activities in their respective countries and agreed to contribute co-financing.

As described herein, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) only meets on an annual basis, but it comprises high level representatives of the key participating country institutions. Overall, the institutions, which are members of the PSC, display a good degree of commitment to the project and they were duly involved in the project design.

However, the project is still mainly driven forward by the UN Environment. The other key partner ministries and agencies also generally show a good degree of commitment, as evidenced in the active role of the departments of agriculture. The level of commitment at the top level is commendable. The Reviewer was able to meet with the Principal Secretary of Environment in Angola, DRC, Malawi and Mozambique. In Madagascar and Lesotho the Reviewer met the Directors at the respective Ministries of Environment who are also the NEA and they all were keen to ensure the full implementation of the project. Country ownership and driven-ness is rated “satisfactory”

3.12.7 Financial planning and management

Rating: Satisfactory

The estimated and actual costs as well as the expenditure ratio (actual/planned) of the project are summarized table 7 below. The total project’s value was USD 10 406 751.87. The project was financed with USD 3 860 000.00 from GEF grant, and USD6 546 751.87 in kind contribution from participating countries.

The cash and in kind co financing complemented the GEF funded activities as per the project’s budget.

Table 8: Summary of project Expenditures (as per 31st March 2019)

GEF Grants Budget Burn Rate Analysis

Codes	Budget Component	Estimated Costs at Design(USD)	Actual Costs (USD)	Expenditure Ratio
				(Actual/ Planned)
1101-1101	Project Coordination	380,000.00	166,250.00	44%
1201-1601	National Project ⁸	345,994.40	63,688.55	18%
2200-2301	Sub contract	6253.12	-	0%
3201-3301	Training and Meeting Costs ⁹	1,312,825.36	546,700.88	42%
4100-4302	Equipment and Premises ¹⁰	1,052,512.00	527,503.67	50%
5100-5375	Miscellaneous ¹¹	762,415.12	275,175.09	36%
	Totals	3,860,000.00	1,579,318.19	41%

3.12.8 Supervision, Guidance and Technical Backstopping

Rating: Satisfactory

Supervision and backstopping were under the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager. Based on the interviewed national project managers and project team, the review found that the countries were very satisfied with the support and advice received from UNEP-GEF.

^{8 8} 1201-International Consultants, 1202-National Consultants and 1601-Staff Travel & Transport

⁹ 3201- training costs, 3301 meeting costs

¹⁰ Office supplies and consumables, 4102 laboratory supplies, 4201 non laboratory purchases, 4202 laboratory equipment, 4301 office premises and 4302 research facilities

¹¹ 5101 equipment maintenance, 5201 publication, translation, dissemination and reporting costs, 5202 Audit Reports, 5301 communications, 5302 other costs and 5303 technical support 4202 laboratory equipment

Many project participants noted the high degree of commitment, responsiveness and cooperation on the part of the UNEP-GEF coordinating team and Task Manager, as well as the quality of outputs, despite the challenges that faced the project. DRC for instance, stated that the procurement of the equipment would have been easier if they had used the services of the UNDP Country office. The Task Manager therefore facilitated the communication between the DRC project office and the UNDP country office in Kinshasa. The Task Manager supervises the overall implementation, the Task Manager approves and provides feedback on technical reports (PIRs, half-yearly reports) and work plans, and participates over Skype in PSC meetings. Moreover, the Task Manager approves disbursement/sub- allocation of funds to the project.

Overall, the roles and responsibilities of UN Environment are clear to all, and there is regular communication between the PIU and the Task Manager.

Overall UN Environment supervision and backstopping is rated as "satisfactory".

3.12.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

Section 05. M&E design

The project followed UNEP standard reporting and evaluation processes, consistent with UN Environment and GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) requirements. The Project has been monitored and throughout UN Environment implementation. An indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan and corresponding budget were included in the project design. Basic M&E reporting requirements and templates are an integral part of the UN Environment legal instrument.

M&E plan and budget included and conformed to GEF and UN Environment requirements and project needs, and the design; M&E design consisted of the standard tools including PSC meetings, annual PIRs, semi-annual progress reports, annual project reviews, financial reports and a final project evaluation by the independent UN Environment Evaluation Office. The Project's log frame was updated in the inception phase.

The project's results framework includes objectively verifiable indicators, sources and means of verification for the project objective and outcomes. Most indicators are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), and those that were not SMART were revised as part of the baseline assessment report. All the indicators are quantitative. Moreover, most outcome indicators presented are in reality output indicators (e.g. number of people trained, number of training events, documents produced, equipment provided), and they do not capture change and the achievement of the intended outcomes.

All indicators have targets, both mid-term targets and final targets for the project completion. The baseline situation is described for each component.

The monitoring plan mainly provides a brief outline of the M&E with reference to the results framework. The monitoring arrangements are clear, but involve mainly the PIU and the Project Manager. The envisaged involvement of government partners is limited and not specified, although it is stated that other partners will have responsibilities to collect specific information to track the indicators.

The budget in the Project Document contains allocations for baseline assessment, the MTR, and the final evaluation.

The M&E design is rated as “Moderately Satisfactory”.

M&E plan implementation

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

There is a multi-layered monitoring system established as part of the project to reflect on the progress made towards the project’s objective *vis-à-vis* its results framework.

The monitoring system includes a core set of quarterly, monthly, half yearly and annual reports. There are also monthly teleconferences with the Project country teams and the PIU.

The Programme has two reporting lines: one within the Project– from the country through the PIU to the Regional Steering Committee, and the second, parallel one, from the PIU to UN Environment.

The structure and the content of the Project quarterly report (that constitutes the basis for annual and half yearly reports) focuses on the progress made *vis-à-vis* the work plan, lessons learned, and risks to the realization of the Project. Analysis of the reports however shows that their quality varies significantly and there are some issues which need to be addressed:

- (a) *Information provision*: quality of the reporting is uneven, ranging from very little information about the activities to excessive wordiness and volumes of duplication. ^[1-1]_{SEP}
- (b) *Lessons learned*: this part of the report focuses on describing the challenges encountered with some details of how they were overcome. It is important to crystalize the lessons that have been learnt from the implementation and define the clear sequence of steps needed to set up and implement each ‘case’ that is aimed to be scaled up.
- (c) *Budget*: the focus is on budget realization per activity result. This provides very little information from which to conclude anything about the efficiency with which the resources were spent.
- (d) *Overall focus of the reports*: the reporting focuses on the outputs. This is also understandable given the state of the Project realization. However, it is important to demonstrate the link wherever possible and when the Project has produced results at the outcome level. Given the nature of the Project, no linear cause-effect relationships between output and outcomes, complex results chain, it is recommended to consider applying the ‘outcome harvesting’ method to provide collective evidence of what has been achieved. With such a multi country project, attributing results remains a challenging and sensitive issue. ^[1-1]_{SEP}

It is recommended that the reporting be revisited and the need for more precision information be highlighted to better convey a more concrete picture of the achievements made and challenges encountered, as well as to better demonstrate the outcomes produced. ^[1-1]_{SEP}

This Review noted that, the M&E section in project document had no mechanisms for involving key project stakeholder groups in the M&E plan, and the responsibilities of co-

executing agencies were without a specific mechanism in M&E. The Reviewer therefore recommends that project monitoring should be a responsibility for all parties (project countries, executing organizations). The project's technical monitoring using consolidated Key Performance Indicators (KPI), apart from the administrative monitoring, should be part of M&E plan in the project design.

The M&E plan implementation is rated as “moderately satisfactory”.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

4.1 Conclusion

The project aims to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, transport and use of LMOs resulting from LMOs that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, also taking into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements. Specifically, the project addresses capacity constraints in LMO detection detection in support of national biosafety decision-making processes.

The project is very timely, considering all the six project countries are highly vulnerable to the impact of LMOs and their capacity to detect LMOs is very low or non-existent.

Mixed progress was found in regards to the achievement of outputs. Several outputs had not been fully delivered before mid-term review, but it is highly likely that they will be delivered and outputs achieved by the project completion date. The full results are yet to be seen. The project demonstrated some visible and potentially promising results and therefore given all challenges it has faced its performance can be rated as **satisfactory**.

The Reviewer concludes, that the Project should put additional efforts to achieve most of its outcomes, the objective and the goal, and yield substantial benefits in terms of ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, transport and use of LMOs.

4.2 SWOT analysis

The key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats faced by the project are outlined below.

Strengths

The project came at a very opportune time, where an appreciation of the importance of addressing transboundary movement of LMOs and the significant opportunities that the safe use of LMOs may bring to the southern Africa region– as such the need and there is thus both a demand and need for enhanced capacity for LMO detection that will ensure safe use of the LMOs. The project is in general logically conceived and the components are mutually reinforcing. Moreover, the technical quality of the project outputs is generally high and the capacity-development is overall well-targeted vis-à-vis the needs and capacities of the stakeholders. There is a good buy-in to the project by the implementing partners and stakeholders; they see the value and relevance of the project and are appreciative of the support received. An important factor behind the results achieved is the process facilitation provided by a highly dedicated and well-qualified PIU team.

Weaknesses

The project's scope is overambitious in terms of the number and range of activities, considering the time-frame available, the limited staff resources of RAEIN Africa the limited stakeholder capacities.

The number of staff also with the appropriate scientific background in biotechnology so as to get the right person to be trained on the detection may be a limiting factor to the project.

The progress monitoring and reporting is insufficient and activity-focused and thus does not capture outcomes; and there are challenges related to the financial reporting, which have also contributed to delays in disbursement of funds.

Opportunities

The project is the first multi country project on building capacity for LMO detection in the GEF Biosafety Portfolio. It will influence and provide opportunities to further consolidate and expand the results achieved by the previous SANGL project.

The knowledge network if created will provide a good platform for information sharing in the region.

Threats

Angola, DRC, Madagascar and Mozambique are all biodiversity hotspots. Lesotho is landlocked within the Republic of South Africa Malawi also has close proximity with and has trade with South Africa on agricultural commodities. All these countries are faced with the possibility of getting unintentional release of LMO into their environment thus posing threat to their biodiversity.

The lack of a policy or legal framework in all the project countries, except Malawi is a threat to the sustainability of the project. The lack of a policy or legal framework means that the decisions made cannot be anchored on law hence cannot be enforced. This is a major threat to implementation as well as the sustainability and replication of the results achieved, in particular at the national level.

4.3 Implications for future implementation

As already highlighted in several places, the project has been significantly delays and many of the intended outputs may be further delayed. The possibility of the project is not an option because of the financial constraints. The project does not have extra resources to cater for the PIU should an extension be granted. The project will need to prioritize and focus its remaining resources and time on fewer activities and the key partnerships – priority needs to be given to those that are essential vis-à-vis impact, enhanced ownership, and sustainability.

Critical gaps to address include: Knowledge management and creation of the regional knowledge network and platform; integrating the project activities more in the work plans of the implementing partners; strengthening the link to sector and national policy and planning processes; and engaging more systematically in the development of a post-project financing strategy.

4.4 Overall assessment ratings

The MTR's overall assessment is that the project performance can be rated as **"satisfactory"** based on the assessed criteria, when considering the challenging context, it is being implemented in and that the project is a "first mover" on LMO detection in the region. Table 10 below provides an overview of the ratings given for each evaluation criterion.

Table 9: Summary of Evaluation criteria, assessment and ratings

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	The project countries are biodiversity hotspots hence vulnerable to the impacts of unintentionally release LMO. The project is in line with the countries international commitments under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The project is fully aligned with UNEP-GEF priorities especially in relation to Biosafety	Satisfactory (S)
B. Achievement of outputs	Most outputs under component A are on track and likely to be delivered. Two out of three of the outputs under component B have been delivered, the outputs in component C have not been realized. They are not likely to be realized unless they are re-designed. The outputs in component D are not yet delivered but are likely to be by the project completion date.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results		Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC	Outcome 1.0 is not achieved fully but is likely to be achieved once all the all the designated laboratories are fully capacitated. Outcome 2.0 has not been achieved. With the training on QMS and with learning by doing, minimum level of competence is likely to be achieved by the project completion date; Outcome 3.0 on creating sustainable opportunities for sharing experience has also not been achieved and is not likely to be achieved unless the activities are redesigned. Outcome 4.0 is more of an output and should also be redesigned so as to create opportunities for strengthening decision-making processes.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
2. likelihood of impact using the RotI approach	while the project is laying the foundation for LMO detection in the region, it is too early to assess whether it will lead to the intended impact. The drivers and assumptions needed to move from the outcomes to the intermediate	Likely(L)

	states and on to impact are generally in place, but sufficient security in the future is uncertain.	
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the project document	The objective of the project is to build and strengthen institutional and human capacities for LMO detection in support of national biosafety decision making processes in selected Southern African countries. The activities and the outputs of the projects are like building blocks – all lead to the attainment of the objective.	Highly Likely (HL)
D. Sustainability of Outcomes	The project has focused on supporting existing processes. Capacity development is at regional and national levels “Learning-by-doing” is an important element, but has not always materialized fully, this may be attributed to the fact that the PIU wants to recover the time lost in the procurement delays so the learning by doing may be limited.	Moderately Likely (ML)
1. Socio- Political sustainability	The policy and legal framework is lacking in most of the countries hence will make it difficult for the decisions made to be anchored on law. This of course beats the entire purpose of the project which is to strengthen decision making	Moderately Likely(ML)
2.Financial Resources	A major constraint for the sustainability is the scarcity of financial resources at all levels, which poses a real challenge to the maintenance of equipment and the ability of project partners to follow up after the project. New international funding opportunities are emerging. The project is engaged in fund-raising, but mainly through inputs to project proposals, which do not always aim at deepening LDCF-1 project results. The project budget at national and regional level were done on a bare minimum. Some of the activities in the national Budgets were not covered adequately and when its implementation time it was apparent that some transfer of funds from some line items were necessary, for example the national project had not budgeted for project laptops which is a requirement	Likely (L)

	<p>for timely project reporting. All countries had to request for transfer of funds from their Equipment budget to cover procurement of laptops and communication (emails and Internet).</p> <p>National Training on some of the training such as Soft skills were not budgeted by DRC and Madagascar, funds transfer had to be requested and granted by the Lead Executing Agent (LEA) to cover these trainings.</p> <p>Partner countries received ANUBIS training from The LEA and will continue to be assisted in this regards to ensure proper financial management and timely reporting</p>	
3. Institutional Framework	Existing institutional structures and processes are used by the project for delivery, and the project partners are operating within established institutional mandates. The project's work plans are not fully integrated into the annual work plans of the relevant departments.	Likely(L)
5. Catalytic role and replication	The project has demonstrated the value of, and thereby promoted, inter-ministerial cooperation on Biosafety. For example, in Mozambique, the inter-ministerial committee on Biosafety has been instrumental in the conduct of the national performance trials and the confined field trials on the WEMA water efficient Maize Project. All decisions are taken in consultation with all the members of the inter-ministerial committee	Highly Satisfactory (HL)
E. Efficiency		Satisfactory
Project governance and management	During implementation there was a good	Highly Satisfactory
Cost efficiencies	<p>By During implementation there was a good relationship between the PIU and the countries on mutual knowledge and trust. The project countries valued very positively the management of RAEIN Africa as lead agency of the project.</p> <p>In the course of project execution, close consultations had to be maintained. The regional steering committee meetings were a good opportunity to</p>	Satisfactory

	<p>coordinate with all the countries. The countries presented and reviewed their work plans during the regional steering committee meetings which helped to improve data and reporting systems and reconcile discrepancies.</p> <p>The midpoint, the spending was moderate.</p> <p>The financial statements are broken down into components, (see annex 4)</p> <p>Steering Committee Meetings were organized back to back with training activities: hence premises, and miscellaneous expenses, were shared thus maximizing cost effectiveness.</p>	
Timeliness		
F. Factors affecting project performance		Satisfactory
1. Project Preparation and Readiness	Overall, the project design is coherent. However, the project was overambitious in the number of activities and intended outcomes and outputs, when considering the novelty of the topic and approach, the staff resources available to the countries, the PIU and to UNEP, and the timeline of the project.	Satisfactory
2. Project Implementation and Management	The roles of the partners in the implementation is generally clear and well aligned with their institutional mandates. Capacity constraints affect their ability to engage, but the very purpose of the project is to enhance their capacities.	Satisfactory
3. Stakeholder Participation and Partnerships	<p>The project stakeholders were categorized according to their position in relation to their role in planning, development and implementation of the project.</p> <p>In Madagascar and Mozambique, the private sector, notably the importers and exporters are active in the trade of agricultural commodities. In Madagascar, the importation and exportation of commodities such as fish</p>	Satisfactory

	and seed, is rife and largely contributes to the economy of the country. The interaction with the private sector will thus be beneficial in the development of the LMO detection capacities.	
4. Communication and Public Awareness	The communication and public awareness under component C targets a broad range of stakeholders as well as the general public: technical staff are targeted through technical trainings and participation in detection and decision making activities. All technical staff interviewed report that the project has significantly enhanced their awareness of, and knowledge about, LMOs generally. The project also targets decision-makers and policy-makers with policy briefs and participation in national events.	Highly Satisfactory
5. Country Ownership and Drivenness	The Project was designed in response to the request of the countries. All project countries, were also heavily involved in the design of the project that helped to ensure ownership of the countries at the beginning of the project. Subsequently, the six governments signed the Project Document, thereby making a commitment to participate and deliver project activities in their respective countries and agreed to contribute co-financing.	Satisfactory
6. Financial Planning and Management		
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	Supervision and backstopping were under the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager I. Based on the interviewed national project managers and project team, the review found that the countries were very satisfied with the support and advice received from UNEP-GEF. Many project participants noted the high degree of commitment, responsiveness and cooperation on the part of the UNEP-GEF coordinating team and Task Managers, as well as the quality of outputs, despite the challenges that faced the project.	Satisfactory
8. Monitoring and Evaluation		Moderately Satisfactory

i. M&E Design	The project's results framework includes objectively verifiable indicators, sources and means of verification for the project objective and outcomes. Most indicators are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), and those that were not SMART were revised as part of the baseline assessment report. All the indicators are quantitative. Moreover, most outcome indicators presented are in reality output indicators (e.g. number of people trained, number of training events, documents produced, equipment provided), and they do not capture change and the achievement of the intended outcomes.	Moderately Satisfactory
ii. M&E Plan Implementation	This Review noted that, the M&E section in project document had no mechanisms for involving key project stakeholder groups in the M&E plan, and the responsibilities of co- executing agencies were without a specific mechanism in M&E. The Reviewer therefore recommends that project monitoring should be a responsibility for all parties (project countries, executing organizations). The project's technical monitoring using consolidate Key Performance Indicators (KPI), apart from the administrative monitoring, should be part of M&E plan in the project design.	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall project rating		Satisfactory
Rating scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).		

4.5 LESSONS LEARNED

Below are lessons learned from the MCP-ICLT implementation that will be helpful for biosafety-related project managers as well as those working across other sectors and in multiple country project environments:

(a) Standardize Communications

Every project needs a communication plan and strategy. Standardizing internal and external communication channels helps avoid confusion and unify processes across all countries. Confusion easily arises when team members have overlapping responsibilities, multiple reporting lines or when information is not adequately documented.

Multi-country projects usually involve multi-cultural teams separated by distance. The PIU conducted routine remote meetings for cross-country team members to provide project updates, discuss challenges, and collectively develop resolution strategies. The PIU used various communication methods including the social media such as WhatsApp to get messages across and get responses much quicker. The PIU also held mentoring sessions for country teams on best practices, routine reporting expectations, and proper documentation procedures. In addition, routine progress reports were also shared with global and country-level partners to keep them updated on project activities, change requests, challenges, and action items for collective follow up and resolution.

Summary

Need for a clearly defined communication plan and strategy (with standardized internal and external communication plans)

Define reporting lines and information flow

Use social media for quick and easy responses

Mentoring sessions on best practices on reporting and proper document

(b) Look Inward for Resources

To save time and improve the efficiency of the work, it's important to look inward for resources. There were potential human resources within the organization/institutions across different departments, that had relevant skill sets required for the project. For instance, The PIU engaged Lusophone and francophone staff across country offices as part of the cross-country training team, resulting in cost and time savings related to the regional training. The PIU also identified the strength in some of the scientists such as Dr Olivia Pedro to train her counterparts in the laboratories thus making peer training more real.

The soft skills training was appreciated and was internalized easily as the participants in the training could relate to the skills gained in applying the methodology to their

day to day management at the place of work. The participants liaised with their department managers to engage their team members with the required skill sets.

Summary

Resource mobilization in country and from other bilateral and multi lateral sources e.g. Mozambique
Use of human resources across ministries, department and agencies
Peer group training e.g. Dr. Olivia Pedro training her peers
Soft skills training gained to enhance skills sets in project management, proposal writing and engagement of high level management

(c) Leverage on Existing Relationships with Partners

Implementing the MCP-ICLT project has been a multi-organizational effort that required each partner to rely on shared resources and existing infrastructure for optimization and efficiency. One must anticipate the areas where partner assistance is required during project planning and make prompt requests through the appropriate communication channels. The PIU benefitted from partner relationships and the engagement of 3rd party recruitment and logistics vendors in establishing contractual agreements with local vendors, clearing shipped equipment at each country's Customs office, facilitating in-country travel, and securing storage space for project equipment/materials. The involvement of other ministries that had previously been involved in the development of the national biosafety frameworks also reinforced the development of the decision making process.

Summary

Use of partnership and third party engagements e.g process of equipment procurement
Multi-organizational effort anchored on shared resources and existing infrastructure and in some cases linkages with closed on ongoing biosafety implementation projects

(d) Integrate Project Processes within Applicable Local Context

The approach taken by the PIU in the training of trainers and learning by doing to support the national training is cost-effective, efficient and enforces the knowledge gained, with the MCP-ICLT project benefitting from their wealth of experience. The training of trainers will see the training facilitators locally recruited in every country; this directly improved the engagement rates, understanding, and comfort level of participants in each country. For each country, the coordination team had to adapt to country-specific administrative structures and also understand roles and responsibilities of key personnel on the project.

Summary

Trainer of Trainers approach and learning by doing was cost effective and efficient use of resources
Adaptation of country- specific administrative structures

(e) Acquire Business Management Knowledge per Country

When coordinating implementation of multi-country projects, adequate knowledge, and awareness of country-specific regulations and policies that may impact project implementation are critical to success. Knowledge of import/export policies for equipment procurement, and management of business relationships (internally and externally) should be researched and factored into the overall project process and strategy. One vital lesson learned is the need to understand country-specific policies and regulations around the procurement of equipment, timely shipping and clearing of goods, staff recruitment, and local currency fund transfers. DRC for instance would easily have the tax exemptions by importing the equipment through the local UNDP office.

Summary

The need to understand and codify country specific regulations and policies that may impact on the project implementation is critical to success

Knowledge of procurement rules and management of business relationships is critical to acquisition of equipment and knowledge management

(f) Team building, embedded technical assistance and personal development

A striking feature of the MCP-ICLT Project has been the use of embedded TA providing a mentoring and training role to the national project staff.

There are two aspects of this, namely, the use of TA and the way in which the project personnel have responded by taking the experience and expanding it. There is frequently an assumption in projects that project personnel should not benefit from any training and capacity building provided by the project. However, investment in human resources is almost always cost-effective and it is unreasonable to assume that national staff will necessarily have the requisite set of skills to prosecute a project. Providing good quality TA staff with training and mentoring mandates during the early stages of the project, possibly defined during the inception phase when an assessment of the skill needs can be made.

The other aspect of this is the assumption that, within any project, the staff will automatically form a team. Invariably team building is dependent upon strong leadership. In the case of the MCP-ICLT it is striking how, a team building exercise was able to pull the different personalities together to form a tightly knit group which were able to support each other on a diversity of issues from dealing with the intricacies of UNEP-GEF reporting, technical aspects of the work and even dealing with difficult individuals in office or basic travel arrangements. The lesson being that this didn't happen by accident it required careful planning and investment of TA time.

Summary

Team building with supportive technical assistance and personal development is key to implementation and sustenance of the process

Use of project technical advisors with adaptive client drive demand base

Continuous mentoring process effected through soft skills training, team building and technical advisory support

Team building needs careful planning and investment of time and resources

(g) Synchronizing activities in a multi-country project

A regional project of such a nature requires that activities be synchronized across the participating countries and sequential in nature. Synchrony allows for all to go through trainings at the appropriate times as - training can only be efficient if it's done at a time when the trainees can go back to immediately practice.

This lesson is vital to ensure development partners and funding partners are aware of the need for a flexible project that allows the annual review and planning processes to move the program work-plan according to local contexts and progress made.

Summary

Flexible process for annual review and planning should allow for incorporation of progress and local context
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Sequential execution of project activities helps to harmonize regional activities

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Review of Project to ensure coherence

The Project has a broad thematic and geographic coverage. Given all the challenges with slow start- up and the implementation of the Project and limited remaining time, it is recommended to review the Project document to ensure greater coherence of its national components, more target implementation, and realistic expected outcomes.

The recommendations of the review are centered around three main topics namely-

- (a) around the Project Document;
- (b) around specific knowledge management and information network and
- (c) highlighting important outstanding activities of the Project logical framework that need to be focused on.

(b) Inclusion of private sector

The recommended action is for a renewing of the Project Document to bring all stakeholders back on board, and to improve communication, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The private sector plays an important role in bringing in samples for testing so that they can carry out trade of commodities that may contain LMOs. There has been little or no engagement with the private laboratories or traders. The development of the design for phase 2 should be a participatory process, involving all stakeholders and particularly the private sector to ensure the insights from the Review are carried forward effectively into the design considerations. Inputs should also be sought from the private sector - traders of agricultural commodities that get analyzed at the laboratories for foreign material that may have an adverse effect on the environment as these stakeholders are familiar with such programs that involve testing, detection and analysis. The idea of involving these stakeholders is to ensure sustainability of the outcomes and impact after the project completion.

(c) Knowledge Management

The project has explored knowledge management through two different avenues, that is, forums bringing together staff and information technology. Numerous actions were realized, publication of leaflets undertaken and distributed. However

the reviewer did not perceive a structured approach to the different levels of intervention (macro, meso, micro) nor a differentiation of approach between awareness and 'catalytic' work. Taking into account the limited means available, a selective approach towards strategic players should be designed to maximize impact and efficiency.

Laboratories generate information that must be captured and transmitted either on written reports or electronically in a laboratory information system. Within a national biosafety system, a laboratory information system may be desirable to transmit laboratory orders and results electronically. The ability carry out laboratory testing/reporting with one biotechnology sector computer system will be most efficient and cost-effective for the country. An alternative is a laboratory information management system that interfaces with a variety of other systems/databases in the country. The laboratory information management system must be capable of generating a variety of management reports that provide data for LMO surveillance and laboratory monitoring and evaluation purposes. These reports should be able to easily pull LMO data and reports.

The A web-based Knowledge Management System that will feature a best practices database, executive information system and soft copies of all project related work and findings of the analysis from the laboratory work, should be developed. The information can be shared with neighboring countries in the region or parties to the CPB.

The PIU has introduced a paper based laboratory information and data management system through the use of the registers. Malawi has internalized this register extremely well as it already records the information and details relating to the material received in the laboratory for analysis

(d) Regional LMO Detection Network

The regional LMO Detection Network, should be the centerpiece of the project. This project having being a buildup from the SANGL Project must consolidate the gains and the platform build by the SANGL project and design a data sharing, has no formal plan, either to maintain it working in the future, or to guarantee the input from countries who will provide key data to the platform. In addition, the project did has not invested sufficient effort to educate national stakeholders from the outset regarding how they can benefit from the data and what to do with different types of information.

The project should be redesigned to develop activities on the management of the data including data sharing. The project must include a financial sustainability plan, to keep the Platform working. Furthermore, raising awareness of the value of data sharing at an early stage in any future follow-on project can build trust between project team and national stakeholders.

(d) Finalization of the Legal Framework

Many of the countries participating in the project do not have legal framework that is necessary for determining the decision making processes and procedures. It is upon these laws that the findings of the LMO detection work can be pronounced to have legal effect.

Any follow-on project should have a strong focus on building capacities on the legal framework

Summary of Recommendations And Actions Needed

No.	Recommendation	Action	Actor
1.	Review of the Project document to ensure greater coherence of its national components, more target implementation, and realistic expected outcomes	Review of work plans with realistic results in mind	LEA Project partners
2.	a renewing of the Project Document to bring all stakeholders back on board, and to improve communication, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The private sector plays an important role in bringing in samples for testing so that they can carry out trade of commodities that may contain LMOs. There has been little or no engagement with the private laboratories or traders The development of the design for phase 2 should be a participatory process, involving all stakeholders and particularly the private sector	Update stakeholder inventory Update of stakeholder participation plans	LEA Project Partners with guidance from UNEP
3.	Establish Forums to support information sharing and mentoring Prepare and disseminate outreach material A structured approach on knowledge management is needed A web based laboratory information system that interfaces with other national and regional systems needed with links to project website in the second half of the project Project website should be revamped with clear links to social media Laboratory information system should generate reports on surveillance data on monitoring for end use regulators	 Develop a laboratory information management system Revamp website with linkages to project partners	LEA

	A web-based management system to capture best practices, execute information system with a registry to manage LMO detection data., For instance the paper based system in Malawi should be digitized	
4	<p>The regional LMO detection network should be formalized to consolidate the gains of the SANGL project</p> <p>Design a data sharing and supportive mechanism to support LMO detection</p> <p>Designate resources to support continuous national training</p> <p>Need to redesign activities to support management of data</p> <p>Develop financial sustainability plan to keep the platform working</p> <p>Value of data as a tool for decision making should be highlighted in all future project design among stakeholders</p>	<p>Reinitiate actions on a potential regional LMO network and link to the LMO detection network on the BCH</p> <p>LEA</p> <p>Project partners</p>
5.	<p>Legal frameworks that can support biosafety decision making is not existent in some of the project countries. Highlighted as a high priority.</p> <p>Lack of regulatory frameworks will impact negatively in decision making processes and procedures</p> <p>Any follow-on project should have a strong focus on building capacities on legal frameworks to support implementation and harmonization of biosafety frameworks</p>	<p>Develop, review and update biosafety legal framework to support biosafety decision making</p> <p>Project countries</p>

ANNEX 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Key Review Principles

Review findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the review report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The “Why?” Question. As this is a Mid-term Review particular attention should be given to identifying implementation challenges and risks to achieving the expected project objectives and sustainability. Therefore, the “Why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the review exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of “*what*” the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “*why*” the performance was as it was. This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

Baselines and counterfactuals. In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project intervention, the reviewers should consider the difference between *what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project*. This implies that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions, trends and counterfactuals in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. It also means that there should be plausible evidence to attribute such outcomes and impacts to the actions of the project. Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions, trends or counterfactuals is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the reviewers, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the reviewer to make informed judgements about project performance.

Communicating review results. A key aim of the review is to encourage reflection and learning by UN Environment staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the review process and in the communication of review findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all review deliverables. There may be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The Task Manager will plan with the consultant(s) which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key review findings and lessons to them. This may include some or all of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of a review brief or interactive presentation. Draft and final versions of the Main Review Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Task Manager and a copy of the final version will be submitted to the UN Environment Evaluation Office.

Objective of the Review

In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy¹² and the UN Environment Programme Manual¹³, the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is undertaken approximately half

¹² <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

¹³ http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf . *This manual is under revision.*

way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The MTR will assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and impacts, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and RAEIN-Africa and the six Countries. Therefore, the review will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation (especially for the remainder of the project).

Key Strategic Questions

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the review will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UN Environment and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

- a. Does the results so far achieved meet the accountability requirements?
- b. Does the project execution approach learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among the project partners?
- c. Does the MCP-ICLT project contribute to the decision making processes under the national biosafety systems
- d. Identify key lessons of operational relevance to guide and support the implementation of the ongoing project and for future project formulation and implementation?

Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1). A weightings table will be provided in excel format (link provided in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the achievement of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The reviewer(s) can propose other review criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

The review will assess, in line with the OECD/DAC definition of relevance, *'the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'*. The review will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UN Environment's mandate and its alignment with UN Environment's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

i. *Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy¹⁴ (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)*

The review should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW.

ii. *Alignment to UN Environment / Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities*

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UN Environment strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building¹⁵ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

iii. *Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities*

The review will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented. Examples may include: implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or regional agreements etc.

iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions*

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project mobilization, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UN Environment sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The review will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UN Development Assistance Frameworks or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UN Environment's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness

¹⁴ UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes.

¹⁵ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org/display/PSPT/Strategies>

B. Quality of Project Design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the review inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established (www.unep.org/evaluation). This overall Project Design Quality rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item B. In the Main Review Report a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage is included, while the complete Project Design Quality template is annexed in the Inception Report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

Section 05. *Nature of External Context*

At review inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Review Consultant and Project/Task Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

Section 05. *Effectiveness*

i. Achievement of Outputs

The review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs (*products, capital goods and services resulting from the intervention*) and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the TOC. In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The achievement of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their delivery. The review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision¹⁶

ii. Achievement of Direct Outcomes

¹⁶ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment.

The achievement of direct outcomes (*short and medium-term effects of the intervention's outputs; a change of behaviour resulting from the use/application of outputs, which is not under the direct control of the intervention's direct actors*) is assessed as performance against the direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed¹⁷ Theory of Change. These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs. As in 1, above, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of direct outcomes is necessary. The review should report evidence of attribution between UN Environment's intervention and the direct outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UN Environment's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the direct outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Communication and public awareness

iii. Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of longer term effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from direct outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the review will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long term impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available on the EOU website, web.unep.org/evaluation and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from direct outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

The review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.¹⁸

¹⁷ UN Environment staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2013 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the evaluation.

¹⁸ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://www.unep.org/about/eses>

The review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication¹⁹ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact.

Ultimately UN Environment and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the review will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the high level changes represented by UN Environment's Expected Accomplishments, the Sustainable Development Goals²⁰ and/or the high level results prioritised by the funding partner.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under two themes: *completeness* of financial information and *communication* between financial and project management staff. The review will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output level and will be compared with the approved budget. The review will assess the level of communication between the Project/Task Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach. The review will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UN Environment's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

In keeping with the OECD/DAC definition of efficiency the review will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is

¹⁹ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

²⁰ A list of relevant SDGs is available on the EO website www.unep.org/evaluation

the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The review will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The review will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

The review will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. The review will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint.

The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

The review will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART ²¹ indicators towards the achievement of the projects outputs and direct outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation. The review will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal evaluation/review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

The review will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This should include monitoring the

²¹ SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-specific.

representation and participation of disaggregated groups in project activities. It will also consider how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

iii. Project Reporting

UN Environment has a web based online reporting Information Management System (ANUBIS) in which project managers upload six-monthly status reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Review Consultant(s) by the Project/Task Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The review will assess the extent to which both UN Environment and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

Sustainability is understood as the probability of direct outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes (ie. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

The review will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project direct outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular, the review will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

Some direct outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other direct outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new resource management approach. The review will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the direct outcomes of a project have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

The review will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the review will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)
- Communication and public awareness
- Country ownership and driven-ness

I. Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance

(These factors are rated in the ratings table, but are discussed within the Main Review Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above)

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (i.e. The time between project approval and first disbursement). The review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular, the review will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. *(Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).*

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UN Environment.

The review will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); communication and collaboration with UN Environment colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UN

Environment. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be considered.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

The review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context, the review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UN Environment's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment.

In particular, the review will consider to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

v. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government/ public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, ie. Either a) moving forwards from outputs to direct outcomes or b) moving forward from direct outcomes towards intermediate states. The review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. This ownership should adequately represent the needs of interest of all gendered and marginalised groups.

vi. Communication and Public Awareness

The review will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Mid-Term Review will use a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the review implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) should provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

The findings of the review will be based on the following:

(a) **A desk review** of:

Relevant background documentation, inter alia [Original Project document, the Project Cooperation Agreement, original work-plans and budgets, and any other relevant initial project document as applicable];

Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;

Project reports such as six-monthly periodic progress and expenditure reports, progress/expenditure reports from the six country sub projects and collaborating partners, meeting minutes, Steering Committee meetings, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;

Project outputs: as uploaded in ANUBIS under Technical documents guided by timelines of the work plan;

Evaluations/Reviews of similar projects.

(b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:

UN Environment Task Manager;

Project management team at RAEIN-Africa;

UN Environment Fund Management Officer (FMO);

Sub-Programme Coordinator (SPC);

Project partners, including National Focal Points, Heads of Competent Authorities and Laboratory Manager;

The Two Project Technical Advisors;

Selected members of the Project Steering Committee at the Regional and National Levels;

Relevant resource persons.

(c) **Surveys** through questionnaires

(d) **Field visits** to the Laboratories in the Six Countries

(e) **Other data collection tools as applicable**

Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

The review team will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework and a tentative review schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
- **Draft and Final Review Report:** (see links in Annex 1) containing an executive summary that can act as a standalone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by review criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

Review of the draft review report. The review team will submit a draft report to the Task Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Task Manager will share the cleared draft report with key project stakeholders for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Task Manager for consolidation. The Task Manager will provide all comments to the reviewer for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

At the end of the review process, the Task Manager will either circulate **the Mid-Term Report including Lessons Learned** or prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by RAEIN-Africa.

The Consultants' Team

For this review, the review team will consist of a one Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Task Manager [Alex Owusu-Biney], in consultation with Fund Management Officer [Paul Vrontamitis]. The reviewer will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the review. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Consultant will be hired for 3 months spread over the period [10/12/2018 to 31/03/2019] and should have: an advanced university degree in environmental sciences, environmental Law, international development or other relevant natural or social sciences area; a minimum of 5 years of technical / evaluation experience, including of evaluating large, regional or global programs and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of [Biosafety systems]; proficiency in English along with excellent writing skills in English; team leadership experience and, where possible, knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN

Environment, experience in managing partnerships, knowledge management and communication is desirable for all evaluation consultants.

The [consultant] will be responsible, in close consultation with the Task Manager, for overall management of the review and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. [The consultant] will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Details of Evaluation Consultants' Team Roles can be found on the Evaluation Office of UN Environment website: www.unep.org/evaluation. [Team members will play the following roles: *insert details if specific roles are envisaged*]

ANNEX 2

REVIEW PROGRAM AND LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED

PROGRAM

Date	Location	Name of Interviewee	Position	GENDER	Organization
11.12.2018	Luanda, Angola	Eng. Nascimento Antonio	Director	MALE	National Directorate of Biodiversity
11.12.2018	Luanda, Angola	Eng. Jacquim Manuel	Secretary of State	MALE	Ministry of Environment
11.12.2018	Luanda Angola	Doraliana Da Graca e Silva Francisco Da Conceição	Quality Coordinator	FEMALE	Ministry of Agriculture
11.12.2018	Luanda, Angola	Eng. Nadia Bernardo	Project Coordinator	FEMALE	Ministry of Environment
11.12.2018	Luanda, Angola	Alex Owusu-Biney	Task Manager	MALE	UN ENVIRONMENT
29.01.2019	Pretoria, South Africa	Doreen Mnyulwa- Shumba	Project Manager Director- RAEIN Africa	FEMALE	RAEIN-Africa
29.01.2019	Pretoria, South Africa	Dr Alice Maredza	Project Assistant Manager	FEMALE	RAEIN-Africa
29.01.2019	Pretoria, South Africa	Shepherd Kapayapundo	Project Finance Officer	MALE	RAEIN-Africa
30.01.2019	Maseru, Lesotho	Maboi Mahula	Project Coordinator	MALE	Ministry of Environment
30.01.2019	Maseru, Lesotho	Motlalentoa Mabejane	Assistant Project Coordinator	MALE	Ministry of Environment
31.01.2019	Maseru Lesotho	Dr Taole	Laboratory Manager	FEMALE	National University of Lesotho
31.01.2019	Maseru Lesotho	Dr Maleo	Director	FEMALE	Department of Agricultural Research
04.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Desire Randriamasimanana	Project Coordinator	MALE	Ministry of Environment

Date	Location	Name of Interviewee	Position	GENDER	Organization
04.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Julia Raholidrivony	Project Accountant	FEMALE	Ministry of Environment
05.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Noella Rasoatiana	Legal Officer/ Member NBC	FEMALE	Ministry of Environment
05.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Christine Edmee Ralalaharisoa	Director of Environment	FEMALE	Ministry of Environment
05.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Hiarinirina 'Hiary"Randrianizahana	Task Force Member (National Steering Committee) Biosafety Coordination Unit Member	MALE	Ministry of Water and Forest Services
05.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Picot Facques Benjamin	Director of Trade and Environment Task Force Member	MALE	Ministry of Trade
05.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Stefan Mahay Rivo Pakotomalaza	Task Force Member	MALE	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries
06.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Razafindrazaka Tony Harilala	Task Force Member	MALE	Ministry of Fisheries and Heulitiic Resources
06.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Rasamoeliasoa Vololoniaene	Task Force Member	FEMALE	Ministry of Fisheries and Heulitiic Resources
06.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Randrianarijaona Niasy	Scientist/ Fisheries Officer	MALE	Ministry of Fisheries and Heulitiic Resources
06.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Dr. Radanielina Tendro	Laboratory Manager	MALE	University of Antananarivo

Date	Location	Name of Interviewee	Position	GENDER	Organization
06.02.2019	Antananarivo Madagascar	Dr. Rasolomampianina Rado	Laboratory Manager	MALE	CENARE
13.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Dr Paulino Munisse	Project Coordinator	MALE	IIAM
13.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Marta Solemanegy	Project Assistant	FEMALE	IIAM
13.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Dr Olivia Pedro	Laboratory Manager	FEMALE	CB-EUM
13.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Eugenia Tembe	Project Accountant	FEMALE	IIAM
14.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Dr Elsa Damane	Director- Seed Department	FEMALE	Ministry of Agriculture
14.03.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Guilemina Amurane	Head of Biodiversity Focal Point CBD Task Force Member	FEMALE	Ministry of Environment
15.02.2019	Maputo Mozambique	Rhoda Nuvunga Louis	Task Force Member Member, National Biosafety Committee Member, Group of Biosafety Institutions (GIIBS)	FEMALE	Ministry of Science and Technology
19.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Mike Ipanga Mwaku	Project Coordinator	MALE	Ministry of Environment
19.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Benjamin Toirambe Bamoninga	Permanent Secretary	MALE	Ministry of Environment
20.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Freddy Bulubulu Otono	Laboratory Manager	MALE	CREN-K
21.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Dr Julienne Sumbu Walandila	Director	FEMALE	Central Laboratory, VLK

Date	Location	Name of Interviewee	Position	GENDER	Organization
21.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Dr Pius Ngolomingi	Laboratory Manager	MALE	Central Laboratory, VLK
22.02.2019	Kinshasa DRC	Jean Mukanya	Chairperson, Task Force	MALE	Ministry of Environment
03.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Dr Lillian Chimphepo	Project Coordinator	FEMALE	Environmental Affairs Department
04.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Briget Vakusi	Laboratory Manager	FEMALE	LUANAR
05.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Bonface Mkoko	Team Leader	MALE	PBS
05.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Tawonga Mbale-Luka	Director	FEMALE	Environmental Affairs Department
05.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Kumbukani Mkawa	Project Accountant	MALE	Environmental Affairs Department
06.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	E.D.L Mazuma	Deputy Director	MALE	Chitedze Research Center
06.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	Andrew Mtonga	Laboratory Manager	MALE	Chitedze Research Center
06.03.2019	Lilongwe Malawi	K Mbalame	Assistant Laboratory Manager	MALE	Chitedze Research Center

ANNEX 3

LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED

- The project document
- Half Yearly Progress Report (HYPR) on MCP-ICLT project (2017, 2018)
- Signed MOU between The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Project Countries
- Project's Organogram
- The Project's Logical Framework and the Results Framework
- The Project Monitoring documents for 2017 and 2018
- Project Countries individual work plan for 2017-2020
- The project countries Progress Implementation Reports (PIR) (2017 and 2018)
- The projects progress reports
- The projects Progress Implementation Reports
- Regional Project Steering Committee meeting documents including minutes (2017, 2018) agendas, meeting minutes, and any summary reports
- Regional Workshop Proceedings on the soft skills training, (Oct 2018)
- Project countries Taskforce meeting reports
- Project's Manual on Financial Management Procedures
- Project's training manual on soft skills
- Project's training manual on grants proposal writing
- Spatial planning manual
- Report on the Synthesis of the Review of the Biosafety Regulatory Environment in Six Countries Participating in the Multi-Country Project to Strengthen Institutional Capacities for LMO Testing in Support of National Decision Making Project
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ANNEX 4

PROJECT COSTS AND CO-FINANCING TABLES

Project Costs

Component/ Component/Output	Sub-	Estimated Cost at Design	Actual Cost	Unspent Funds (1 st January 2019)	Expenditure Ratio (Actual/ Planned) by 31 st December 2018
Component A		1,302,538.60	609172.52	693,366.08	47%
Component B		758,289.36	311936.59	446,352.77	41%
Component C		531,616.60	168544.57	363,072.03	32%
Component D		378,729.48	134341.6	244,387.88	35%
Component E		508,825.96	166250	213,750.00	44%
Component F		380,000	189072.91	319,753.05	37%
Total		3,860,000.00	1579318.19	2,280,681.81	41%
Unspent Funds (1 st January 2019)				2,280,681.81	

UNEP-GEF Financing and Co- Financing at Mid-Term

Financing (Type/Source)	UNEP Own Financing		Government (USD)		Total		Total Disbursed as at 31 st December 2018
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
Grants (GEF)	3,860,000.00	1,579,318.19			3,860,000.00	1,579,318.19	41%
In-kind support		-	6,546,752.00	2,856,663.39	6,546,752.00	2,856,663.39	44%
Totals	3,860,000.00	1,579,318.19	6,546,752.00	2,856,663.39	10,406,752.00	4,435,981.58	43%

ANNEX 5

PHOTOS

The photos can be found at the following link-

Angola: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/Zqyqn24vBXNqZACd8>

DRC: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/yCGfU6MFr3kz92aj9>

Lesotho: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/EiyHzpCfuRrsPHNKA>

Madagascar: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/NhzGa3gXSprpogUHA>

Malawi: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/NwFfe166QAzZe26n9>

Mozambique: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/8LZwG4oeh5g8sKTp8>