



FAO-GEF Project Implementation Report

2021 – Revised Template

Period covered: 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021



1. Basic Project Data

General Information

Region:	Asia Pacific
Country (ies):	Sri Lanka
Project Title:	Rehabilitation of degraded agricultural lands in Kandy, Badulla and Nuwara Eliya Districts in the Central Highlands
FAO Project Symbol:	GCP/SRL/063/GEF
GEF ID:	5677
GEF Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation
Project Executing Partners:	Ministry of Environment
Project Duration:	Four years
Project coordinates: (Ctrl+Click here)	Kandy District : N 7° 18' 15" E 80° 42' 26" Badulla District : N 6° 59' 5" E 81° 3' 23" Nuwara Eliya District : N 6° 58' 48" E 80° 46' 7"

Milestone Dates:

GEF CEO Endorsement Date:	01 April 2015
Project Implementation Start Date/EOD :	1 July 2016
Proposed Project Implementation End Date/NTE¹:	30 June 2020
Revised project implementation end date (if applicable) ²	30 December 2021
Actual Implementation End Date³:	

Funding

GEF Grant Amount (USD):	1,344,657.00
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¹ As per FPMIS

² In case of a project extension.

³ Actual date at which project implementation ends - only for projects that have ended.

Total Co-financing amount as included in GEF CEO Endorsement Request/ProDoc⁴:	9,859,100.00
Total GEF grant disbursement as of June 30, 2021 (USD m):	1,188,392
Total estimated co-financing materialized as of June 30, 2021⁵	18,029,107.82

Review and Evaluation

Date of Most Recent Project Steering Committee Meeting:	14 September 2020
Expected Mid-term Review date⁶:	
Actual Mid-term review date:	23 August 2019 to 03 September 2019
Mid-term review or evaluation due in coming fiscal year (July 2021 – June 2022)⁷:	Yes, final evaluation due in July 2021
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date:	July 2021
Terminal evaluation due in coming fiscal year (July 2021 – June 2022):	Yes
Tracking tools/ Core indicators required⁸	Yes

⁴ This is the total amount of co-financing as included in the CEO document/Project Document.

⁵ Please see last section of this report where you are asked to provide updated co-financing estimates. Use the total from this Section and insert here.

⁶ The MTR should take place about halfpoint between EOD and NTE – this is the expected date

⁷ Please note that the FAO GEF Coordination Unit should be contacted six months prior to the expected MTR date

⁸ Please note that the Tracking Tools are required at mid-term and closure for all GEF-4 and GEF-5 projects. Tracking tools are not mandatory for Medium Sized projects = < 2M USD at mid-term, but only at project completion. The new GEF-7 results indicators (core and sub-indicators) will be applied to all projects and programs approved on or after July 1, 2018. Also projects and programs approved from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018 (GEF-6) must apply core indicators and sub-indicators at mid-term and/or completion

Ratings

Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes (cumulative):	S
Overall implementation progress rating:	S
Overall risk rating:	L

Status

Implementation Status <i>(1st PIR, 2nd PIR, etc. Final PIR):</i>	Final PIR
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Project Contacts

Contact	Name, Title, Division/Institution	E-mail
Project Manager / Coordinator	Nimal Gunasena, National Project Manager	Nimal.Gunasena@fao.org
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2. Progress Towards Achieving Project Objectives and Outcome (DO)

(All inputs in this section should be cumulative from project start, not annual)

Project objective and Outcomes (<u>as indicated at CEO Endorsement</u>)	Description of indicator(s) ⁵	Baseline level	Mid-term target ⁶	End-of-project target	Level at 30 June 2021	Progress rating ⁷
<p>Objective(s): <u>Project Environment Objective:</u> To reverse and arrest land degradation in agricultural lands in Kandy, Nuwara Eliya and Badulla districts in the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka</p> <p><u>Project Development Objective:</u> To increase the provision of ecosystem goods and services and enhance food security in the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka through the promotion of SLM</p>						

⁵ This is taken from the approved results framework of the project. Please add cells when required in order to use one cell for each indicator and one rating for each indicator.

⁶ Some indicators may not identify mid-term targets at the design stage (refer to approved results framework) therefore this column should only be filled when relevant.

⁷ Use GEF Secretariat required six-point scale system: **Highly Satisfactory** (HS), **Satisfactory** (S), **Marginally Satisfactory** (MS), **Marginally Unsatisfactory** (MU), **Unsatisfactory** (U), and **Highly Unsatisfactory** (HU).

<p>Outcome 1: Enabling institutional policy and regulatory frameworks for SLM established and operational in accordance with participatory land use development (PLUD) principles</p>	<p>Indicator: 50,000 ha of agricultural land of the Central Highlands managed under SLM methods</p> <p>Indicator: Mainstreaming of SLM in planning and budgetary processes</p>	<p>The enabling environment for SLM in Sri Lanka is weak and fragmented, and does not properly integrate PLUD principles, which impede the scaling up of SLM.</p>	<p>25,000 ha of agricultural land of the central highlands managed under SLM methods</p>	<p>50,000 ha of agricultural land of the central highlands managed under SLM methods</p> <p>SLM mainstreamed into 3-4 sector plans and budgets (Agriculture and Fisheries, Water Supply and Sanitation, and Forestry)</p>	<p>Altogether 96 PLUPs for mini watersheds/ GN levels/ DS levels were developed under the project as well as the own initiatives of LUPPS. Its cover average of 14,900 ha of land area. Based on the experience of developing these PLUPs, the PLUP guideline was developed and it will be used by LUPPD officers across the country. The impact of these pilot PLUPs is expected to diffuse across 58,000 ha of sub watersheds that cover the area where PLUPs are developed.</p> <p>Existing SLM related policies were reviewed and recommendations were finalized with the participation of more than 15 likeminded organizations.</p> <p>The policy dialog platform was created as a strategy to implement recommendations. Under this comprehensive</p>	<p>S</p>
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					<p>discussion, a study and survey were conducted on Site-specific fertilizer application and developed recommendations aiming to promote efficient use of chemical fertilizers.</p> <p>National level Technical Expert committee on SLM was established under the ministry of environment to look after the technical aspects of the national action program for SLM.</p> <p>Discussions with two national policy review teams on agriculture and environment will be conducted to mainstream key findings of the study.</p>	
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<p>Outcome 2: Appropriate technologies for rehabilitation of degraded lands demonstrated and scaled up by strengthened networks of training and extension institutions</p>	<p>Indicator: 20,000 of farmers benefitting (disaggregated by gender) from enhanced capacity of the three district training units providing consistent training and transfer of technologies to farmers</p> <p>Indicator: 6,000 ha of agricultural land restored and under SLM</p>	<p>Farmers in Kandy, Nuwara Elyia and Badulla have scarce knowledge of the adverse impacts of land degradation and climate change on agricultural productivity and sustainability, and minimal experiences in SLM technologies and approaches. They therefore continue old land management practices that exacerbate soil erosion and cause other LD problems.</p>	<p>10,000 farmers benefitting from SLM training and technology transfer</p> <p>3,000 ha agricultural lands restored and under SLM</p>	<p>10,000 farmers benefitting from SLM training and technology transfer</p> <p>6,000 ha of agricultural land restored and under SLM</p>	<p>277 field level officers from all stakeholder agencies were trained on SLM technologies and FFS as a result of institutional capacity building. 12,630 farmers (Male: 4616 and Female: 8014) were directly benefitted from SLM trainings implmented by the projet and stakeholders. Altogether 24,395 farmers including indirect beneficiaires benefitted from SLM training and transfer of technology through the field officers officers and project approaches to restore and manage (estimated) 5133 ha of lands as per SLM methodologies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four government training sites were developed as SLM demonstration sites. Training were provided to 3545 farmers by the project and the stakeholder agencies provided training to 6050 farmers covering 2650 ha. 2. Technology packages were developed for five different farming systems and 3035 farmers in 9 mini watersheds (717 ha) in the field were directly trained by the project through FFS and other 	<p>S</p>
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					<p>SLM training. 576 farmers provided with financial support, materials and technical support to implement SLM practices. Out of this 110 farmers' land were developed as demonstration models that will act as role models for adjacent farmers.</p> <p>3. FFS Training; FFS facilitator draft guides were developed for 4 main farming systems such as Homegardens, Seed potato cultivation, GAP certification and smallholder tea cultivation and altogether 112 field level officers and technical officers were trained on FFS and SLM practices to facilitate FFS in the field.</p> <p>The "Saubhagya" Home Garden Program, one of the main agricultural program of the Government, was supported by the project by developing two model DS divisions that use FFS approach. 1295 active farmers from selected GN divisions from Bandarawela, Hali Ela</p>	
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					<p>and Doluwa DS divisions trained through FFS home garden to diffuse SLM practices to entire community. This will indirectly be diffused to 10,812 farmers in 1,540 ha as follows: (in every GN division, 200 farmers were selected for government homegarden program. Bandarawela: 3401 farmers in 24 GNs – 808 ha Hali Ela: 3592 farmers in 12 GNs – 368 ha Doluwa: 3819 farmers in 14 GNs – 364 ha</p> <p>260 farmers on seed potato and 193 farmers in Gap in Vegetable were trained to mainstream SLM through FFS.</p> <p>Agri business division in the DOA has stated to promote FFS across country and included this in their year plan. They also developed FFS for paddy cultivation as well.</p>	
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<p>Outcome 3: Capacity of developing innovative funding mechanisms established in both public and private sector</p>	<p>Indicator: Increased resources flowing to SLM from diverse sources such as social responsibility funds and other innovative funding systems (e.g. CSR, PES, PPPs developed through GEF SGP, other PPPs, etc.)</p>	<p>At present, there are number of on-going funding mechanisms for SLM with different organizations such as, GEF SGPs, state companies, Dept. Export Agriculture – soil conservation measures in Tea lands, Hadabima. Further, with regard to the Soil Conservation Act, budgetary allocations are directed to identified soil erosion areas in the Project Provinces.</p>	<p>US\$ 3 million in increased resource flow to SLM from innovative funding mechanisms</p>	<p>A total of US\$ 6 million mobilized by end of Project.</p>	<p>The project contributed to develop watershed management project called “integrated watershed and water resource Management in upper watershed in Mahawali area” and now being implemented. It was allocated US\$ 1 million for watershed planning and US\$ 5 million for Implementation. Apart from that demonstration level three Innovative financing models on Public Private Partnership for SLM were implemented in collaboration with national level co-operate organizations and government counterparts mobilizing approximately US\$100,000.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GAP certification for vegetable farmers with Department of Agriculture and Cargills Pvt Ltd. 2. Introduction of Vanilla cultivation in home gardening with Department of Export Agriculture, Department of Agrarian Service Development and Adamjee Luckmenjee & Sons Ltd Integrated livestock crop farming with Fontera Sri Lanka, the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH), the Department of Agrarian Development and Samurdhi Development Authority 	<p>s</p>
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<p>Outcome 4: Enhanced national knowledge base for sustainable land management and project implementation based on adaptive results-based management</p>	<p>Indicator: National knowledge base on SLM to support adaptive resultsbased management and monitoring of SLM upscaling resulting from the project.</p>	<p>No SLM knowledge base or M&A system in place</p>	<p>M&A system in place</p> <p>Adaptive results-based M&A</p>	<p>Strengthened national SLM knowledge base</p> <p>Adaptive resultsbased M&A</p>	<p>National information sharing platform, www.sricat.net was established under the supervision of Ministry of Environment. Project activities, experience and best practices uploaded in the website and SLM practices will be documented according to WOCAT methodology and uploaded as well. National level awareness program for likeminded government and private organization was conducted to encourage their contribution. Technical packages on SLM, newsletters, newspaper articles, outreach events Radio programs, and one TV program were conducted. Some project letters were published in FAO global page, Global soil partnership and FAO sri Lankan page as well. The booklet on project experience is being developed. 81 WhatsApp groups with farmers and officers were formed and provide novel experience to share the SLM knowledge among farmers, among farmer and officers and among officers. Apart from SricAT web site, two local wise FB pages on home garden were developed for better communication within the area.</p>	<p>S</p>
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Action plan to address MS, MU, U and HU ratings

Outcome	Action(s) to be taken	By whom?	By when?

3. Progress in Generating Project Outputs (Implementation Progress, IP)

(Please indicate progress achieved during this FY as planned in the Annual Work Plan)

Outputs ¹²	Expected completion date ¹³	Achievements at each PIR ¹⁴					Implement. status (cumulative)	Comments Describe any variance ¹⁵ or any challenge in delivering outputs
		1 st PIR	2 nd PIR	3 rd PIR	4 th PIR	5 th PIR		
Output 1.1: Guidelines for Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) established and agreed among the involved agencies for coordinated action	Q1 Y3	LOA with LUPPD Draft guideline prepared	3rd draft of PLUP guideline completed	final draft of PLUP guideline completed		Final PLUP guideline validated and will be disseminated.	95 %	The validated guideline will be published and disseminated to all relevant government institutions.
Output 1.2: A package of modifications in policies and standards for SLM and good agricultural practices	Q2 Y4	Preliminary draft report on SLM policy study completed. Gaps of SLM policies identified.	Consultation meeting on SLM Policy studies with stakeholders was conducted	A package of modification of SLM policies and standard for SLM prepared and validated with			95%	Prodoc mentioned that six policy area will be reviewed. But more than 15 policies relevant to the land management were reviewed. Final report was validated with the stakeholders and

		IC on SLM Policies recruited.	Review Report on SLM related policy study completed	stakeholders.				agreed to do the improvement with professional editing with IUCN.
Output 1.3: Strategy to align related policies with SLM endorsed by concerned sectors.	Q2 Y4			Creating policy dialog platform was suggested by the stakeholders as a strategy to implement the recommendation.		Policy dialog created on fertilizer issue and developed recommendation for efficient and correct use of chemical fertilizer and will be validated with stakeholders. Policy dialogue will be conducted with two national policy review teams: agriculture and environment which are appointed by the present government	90%	Recommendations to be reflected on sectoral planning need to be a long consultative process and volatile environment in Covid situation adversely hindered the process. This will be implemented after July once the Covid 19 restrictions is lifted.
Output 1.4: Establishment of a new coordination and	Q2 Y4	Draft project proposal developed.		Information sharing platform created.	Information sharing platform updated with project	Information sharing platform (www.sricat.net) will be handed over to an independent institution and smoothly functional.	90%	Documentation process of the institutional experience and knowledge is

¹² Outputs as described in the project logframe or in any updated project revision. In case of project revision resulted from a mid-term review please modify the output accordingly or leave the cells in blank and add the new outputs in the table explaining the variance in the comments section.

¹³ As per latest work plan (latest project revision); for example: Quarter 1, Year 3 (Q1 y3)

¹⁴ Please use the same unity of measures of the project indicators, as much as possible. Please be extremely synthetic (max one or two short sentence with main achievements)

¹⁵ Variance refers to the difference between the expected and actual progress at the time of reporting.

<p>information sharing platform among the stakeholders</p>					<p>activities and best practices</p>	<p>Stakeholder awareness on information sharing platform was conducted. TCC Established and several meeting on implementation of SLM were conducted.</p>		<p>challenging and needs continued capacity building process. Now we are in the process of negotiation with Soil science division of the University of Peradeniya for continuous support for this process.</p>
<p>Output 1.5: Degraded agricultural lands in the project areas in the central highlands classified and mapped</p>	<p>Q3 Y5</p>	<p>Initial stake holder meeting was held. Basic information was collected by LUPPD.</p>	<p>IC on LRIS was recruited. Stake holders' Consultation Workshop to develop LRIS was held on 5th April 2019. Assessment of data and capacity needs of stakehold</p>	<p>LOA with Natural Resources Management Center signed and fund delivered.</p>	<p>Land degradation assessment ongoing</p>	<p>Training on LADA for officers from relevant government departments was conducted.</p>	<p>50%</p>	<p>This program was planned to complete before 30th April. But COVID 3rd wave completely stopped field activities which is integrated part of LADA local level planning.</p>

			ers are being assessed. Based on this LOA with NRMC is ready to sign.					
Output 2.1: Demonstration sites established in the three districts in the CH	Q2 Y5	Demonstration site establishment modality was agreed in PSC and PCC and District Agriculture Committee (DAC). Development of three government sites were started as demonstrated models.	Development of four government training sites on SLM started. 08 contiguous blocks implementation started. 80 individual sites were selected and implemented in 40 sites.	Out of four, two demonstration sites in government sites completed. Development of nine contiguous sites (8 mini watershed and one Grama Niladhari division) as demonstration models started. 60 individual demonstration sites completed		Four demonstration sites in government institutes, 8 farming model micro watersheds and 110 individual demonstration sites developed in all three districts.	100%	

<p>Output 2.2: Participatory land use plans (PLUP) using SLM technologies formulated and implemented</p>	<p>Q1 Y5</p>	<p>LOA with LUPPD to prepare for 32 PLUP. Nine PLUP completed.</p>	<p>46 number of PLUP completed . Implementation of 08 PLUPs started.</p>	<p>62 PLUPs completed and implementation started in 08 locations. One PLUP is being developed for Doluwa Divisional secretariat as pilot model which considered geographical and administrative boundaries together.</p>		<p>Altogether 96 PLUPs for mini watersheds/ GN levels/ DS levels were developed and its cover average of 14,900 ha of land area. 08 PLUPs were implemented by the project and another 27 were implemented by other organizations such as LUPPD, Mahawali Authority, Hadabima Authority etc.</p>	<p>100%</p>	
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<p>Output 2.3: training programme developed and implemented</p>	<p>Q1 Y5</p>	<p>Consultant on SLM recruited. Trainer's training manual on farming system developed.</p>	<p>Five technology packages were developed. 75 training events completed by the project - male 1560 and female 1224 farmers were trained on SLM (Total 2784)</p>	<p>78 training events completed - male 1620 and female 1415 farmers were trained on SLM (Total 3035)</p>	<p>FFS for Home Garden, Seed Potato, GAP certification and Smallholders Tea farmers started.</p>	<p>Altogether 4783 farmers trained on SLM as follows: SLM Training in demonstration sites: 3035 FFS Training: 1748 participants in 86 training</p>	<p>130%</p>	<p>With MTR recommendation, project initiated the FFS process for extension. The first part of FFS was implemented through the COVID situation, but third wave almost stopped field activities, and badly hindered the implementation process.</p>
<p>Output 3.1: Tailored guidelines on innovative project financing prepared and disseminated to the stakeholders under the Soil Conservation Act</p>	<p>Q2 Y5</p>		<p>Consultation meeting conducted in March 2019 Ecosystem services identification and mapping</p>	<p>Guideline on innovative project financing on SLM was prepared and validated.</p>			<p>90%</p>	<p>The guideline will be disseminated to the stakeholders. The guideline will be published in the SriCAT website and copies will be sent to the relevant institutions by post in July</p>
			<p>and questionnaire survey completed</p>					

<p>Output 3.2: Training on innovative project financing guidelines organized and implemented in the project area, involving public officers and private sector stakeholders</p>	<p>Q2 Y5</p>				<p>3 Training and 1 ToT on innovative financing guideline conducted: one ToT (35 participants), one national level awareness (41 participants), and two district level workshops (111)</p>		<p>100%</p>	
<p>Output 3.3: One workshop per DS division organized for innovative funding systems, involving both private and public sectors stakeholders</p>	<p>Q3 Y5</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Activity yet to start</p>	<p>Not yet started.</p>		<p>Three District level training were conducted covering 8 DS Divisions.</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>Three district level trainings were conducted with divisional level participation.</p>

<p>Output 3.4: Main environmental services provided by the agricultural sector valuated as a basis for establishing innovative project financing</p>	<p>Q2 Y4</p>			<p>Main environmental services were valued in the project area</p>		<p>03 innovative financing modalities implemented in partnership with public and private institutions</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>The three innovative financing models implemented under the project are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) SLM through GAP certification program of DoA 2) SLM through economical homergarden with a private company namely Adamjee and Luckmanjee Pvt Ltd. 3) SLM through integrated crop-livestock farming with a dairy nutrition company namely Fontera
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<p>Output 4.1: Public awareness increased on the issues of land degradation and the benefits of SLM</p>	<p>Q2 Y5</p>	<p>Project website development started 03 public awareness programs conducted parallel to Soil Day (2017 & 2018) and Water Day (2018) Four newspaper articles published</p>	<p>Final stage of project web site development Five public awareness programs completed Seven videos on SLM produced One newsletter issued Seven paper articles published</p>			<p>Information sharing platform developed by the project was used as the project web site. 07 public awareness programs conducted including activities in parallel to following international days Water Day: 2018 Soil Day: 2017, 2018 and 2020 03 number of project newsletter published in all three languages (total 9) One leaflet and 8 videos published More than 12 number of paper articles published. Three radio programs and one TV program were conducted.</p>	<p>80%</p>	<p>Knowledge management materials are being developed on project experience. But the activity is delayed due to strict field travel restriction and will be completed within the project extension period.</p>
<p>Output 4.2: Targeted education, awareness and outreach campaigns for SLM implemented</p>	<p>Q3 Y5</p>					<p>SLM campaigns were conducted in parallel to following international days Water Day: 2018 Soil Day: 2017, 2018 and 2020</p>	<p>90%</p>	
<p>Output 4.3: SLM good practice guidelines developed and disseminated</p>	<p>Q3 Y5</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>The activity is in progress</p>			<p>The activity is in progress</p>	<p>50%</p>	<p>The project will conduct consultative discussions with experts and develop the guideline during July-August .</p>

<p>Output 4.4: M&E system established to measure project progress and impact</p>	<p>Q2 Y4</p>	<p>M&E plan technically cleared. No PIR reports submitted.</p>	<p>M&E system in progress PIR 2018 June - July 2019 submitted Jan – June six month report submitted</p>	<p>M&E system in progress 2 PIRs submitted.</p>		<p>04 PIRs submitted Project progress is constantly reviewed against result framework and database is updated Frequent progress review meetings conducted with the government stakeholders to measure the FFS progress</p>	<p>80%</p>	
<p>Output 4.5: Midterm and terminal evaluations carried out</p>	<p>Q4 Y5</p>	<p>MTR evaluation is scheduled to end of 2018 early 2019</p>	<p>MTR is rescheduled to 15 30 July 2019</p>	<p>MTR conducted</p>			<p>100%</p>	

4. Information on Progress, Outcomes and Challenges on Project Implementation

Please briefly summarize main progress achieving the outcomes (cumulative) and outputs (during this fiscal year):

Outcome 1: Enabling institutional policy and regulatory frameworks for SLM established and operational in accordance with participatory land use development (PLUD) principles

The project closely worked with the Land Use Policy Planning Department (LUPPD) and supported to develop Participatory Land Use Plan (PLUP) for the selected mini watershed in the project locations. The program promotes Sustainable Land Management (SLM) through water shed management approach. Participatory Land Use Plans (PLUP) were developed for 20 mini watersheds and 01 Divisional Secretariat level (covering 33 Grama Niladhari divisions) under the project support, facilitating a sound framework for implementation of SLM in landscape approach with multi-sector collaborations. Based on the experience of PLUPs preparation and implementation, and series of consultation and round of discussions with relevant officials and institutions, the PLUP guideline was prepared. The LUPPD is promoted to expand this activity in the other districts as well and so far, 43 number of PLUPs have been developed by the LUPPD under their programs. This document serves as institutional guideline for establishing PLUPs around the Island. These PLUPs will be used and referred by various local government agencies during the planning and designing of the various development activities in the mini watershed.

Existing SLM policies were reviewed and identified the gaps related to SLM and eight recommendations for mitigating those gaps. The final report was validated with the stakeholders. The stakeholders suggested to initiate policy dialog platform to implement the following recommendation.

Measures to control overuse of fertilizer and chemical inputs in agricultural lands under the existing policy and regulatory frameworks were identified as one of the weakness and policy review recommended to conduct a study to promote effective use of fertilizer. Accordingly, the project conducted a study to promote site-specific fertilizer recommendations. The report of the study will be circulated to national level decision makers as well as the key findings will be advocated with the national policy review teams.

National level information sharing platform, namely Sri Lanka Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies – SiCAT, was established under the supervision of Ministry of Environment. This platform addresses the 25th program - Development of a Knowledge Management System for SLM- in National Action Programme (NAP) for Combating Land Degradation in Sri Lanka 2015 – 2024. This platform is updated with project activities and SLM practices demonstrated in the field by other institutions. A national level awareness program was conducted to all likeminded government and private organization to promote knowledge sharing through the SriCAT. For the continuation of this platform, the Project and the Ministry of Environment are discussing with soil department of the University of Peradeniya for handing over the hosting and technical management task.

Training on LADA for the officials and institutions under the NRMC's purview was conducted and NRMC has started the land degradation mapping process. The LADA local level assessment was planned to be conducted before April and due to COVID third wave, field activities are almost restricted.

Outcome 2: Appropriate technologies for rehabilitation of degraded lands demonstrated and scaled up by strengthened networks of training and extension institutions

Land users in selected mini watersheds were supported with technical, financial, and material supports to implement SLM practices to reduce land degradation in the areas. Technical packages were developed for key farming systems in the central highlands, including smallholder tea, home garden, high-input vegetable, and low-input vegetable. Demonstrations of SLM technologies were implemented with the support of relevant government and private sector participation. The PLUP development process, capacity building through technical packages, and implementation of Farmer Field Schools were interlinked interventions to scale up SLM demonstration and implement a number of innovative SLM approaches for rehabilitating degraded lands in the region such as economical home garden, public-private partnership (GAP certification for vegetable) for GAP certification, Farmer field School, Digital agriculture, and integrated crop-livestock farming etc.

One hundred ten individual demonstration sites for SLM technologies were established, while eight mini watersheds developed as farming system demonstration sites in three project districts covering 717 ha. Out of four SLM demonstration sites in government institutions, two sites in Bidunuwawa In-service Training Centre and NRMC, Kundasale are

completed. Another two are being developed as training models for the training of farmers and extension officers on SLM in Tea Research Institute, Passara and Tea Small Holding Authority, Suriyagoda.

Altogether 96 PLUPs were developed by the project and the LUPPD in providing strong baseline information and a platform for good intersectoral collaboration of all stakeholders. With the experience of PLUPs in selected mini watersheds, it was understood that divisional secretariat level planning would facilitate and encourage stakeholders' support for the implementation. PLUP for Dolowa divisional secretariat was developed with 33 GN divisions.

Out of 20 PLUPs developed under the project, Eight PLUPs were implemented by the project with the close collaboration of government counterparts, namely the Divisional secretariat, Department of Agriculture, Department of Agrarian Development, Department of Animal Production and Health, Department of Export Agriculture, private sector, some NGOs, etc. while remaining PLUPs are expected to be implemented by above-mentioned stakeholders through their own funds. Already, 27 PLUPs were implemented by the LUPPD with the support of some institutions such as the Presidential Secretariat, Water and Sanitation Board, Mahawali Authority, and Hadabima Authority etc.

Farmer Field School for better diffusion of SLM in the home garden, seed potato cultivation, GAP certified vegetable cultivation and smallholder tea production were implemented. FFS training manuals are being prepared, and ToT training for extension team and field officers of Department Agriculture, Department of Export Agriculture, Department Agrarian Development, and Tea Smallholdings Development Authority were provided to strengthen the extension services for promoting SLM in the above farming systems.

Outcome 3: Capacity of developing innovative funding mechanisms established in both public and private sector

An Innovative Financing Guideline on SLM was developed to support public and private sector stakeholders to mobilize resources for promoting SLM. The guideline provides a set of guiding principles and processes to develop a tailored, innovative financing mechanism that will support SLM. A report on ecosystem services assessment and valuation prepared under the project was a complementary document for the organizations to establish and implement innovative financing mechanisms.

Accordingly, The project contributed to the Ministry of Environment to develop a watershed management project called "integrated watershed and water resource Management project in the upper watershed in Mahawali area" and is now being implemented under the ministry of irrigation. It was allocated US\$ 1 million for watershed planning and US\$ 5 million for implementation of SLM in Mahwali watershed. Apart from that demonstration level three Innovative financing models on Public-Private Partnership for SLM were implemented in collaboration with national level cooperate organizations and government counterparts mobilizing approximately US\$100,000.

1. PPP model for promoting SLM through GAP certification was implemented with DOA and Cargills supermarket chain. The rationale of supporting GAP certification for SLM is that the GAP certification process includes soil and water conservation and conservation of the entire ecosystem. Under this program, 193 farmers were trained and motivated to implement GAP procedures. Out of the 193 farmers mentioned above, 102 were supported with the total package of inputs and modern technologies to implement good agricultural practices that reduce land degradation and increase the profitability of farming. The total project was USD 155,000 (RS. 31 million), and the RDAL project allocation was USD 50,000 (RS 10 million) . Balance costs were shared by Cargills' company, DOA, and the community. With this program, the project promotes the proper land preparation, polythene mulch, drip irrigation, fertigation through drip irrigation, insect-proof net to cover the farm land, good agricultural practices including IPM through FFS and ICT (WhatsApp groups), GAP certification, and finally marketing linkage through Cargills Supermarket Channel. The program has caused to reduce farmers' use of chemical fertilizer by up to 70 %, water usage by up to 50%, soil erosion by up to 90%, labour cost by up to 50% and pest and other animal damages significantly. Due to the high efficiency of water consumption, number of growing seasons of some farmers has increased. Most of the farmers' profit has been increased up to 20 %. Already 43 farmers were certified on GAP. The program has generated interest nationally and few TV programs also telecast. This was further strengthened by involving beneficiaries under the FFS training and motivating them to implement SLM best practices. Cargills and DOA further expanded the project with Government funds and a soft loan scheme with Cargills bank through out the central highland.

2. The private partnership for promoting Economical Home Gardening was implemented in collaboration with the private company, Adamjee Luckmenjee & Sons Ltd., focusing on vanilla cultivation with other home gardening crops to promote SLM. This program was initiated under the “Sithamu” Women home garden program conducted by Agrarian Service Department. Department of Export Agriculture extended their support to establish new market links. Initially 40 farmers from many villages under Doluwa Divisional Secretariat Division supported implementing this model and benefitting from increased household income due to improved productivity of their lands. This concept was further promoted under the FFS homegardening training and another 20 farmers growing vanilla in their homegardens.
3. Private partnership for integrated crop-livestock farming was conducted with a dairy nutrition company Fontera - Sri Lanka, the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH), the Department of Agrarian Development and Samurdhi Development Authority. Integrated croplivestock program promote proper management of livestock waste for increasing the soil nutrient and productivity of the land. The pilot initiative was conducted with 08 farmers and the knowledge and experience disseminated to government and private companies through the demonstration of these activities supported them to expand similar interventions in other locations.

Outcome 4: Enhanced national knowledge base for sustainable land management and project implementation based on adaptive results-based management

Apart from awareness creation and capacity building activities implemented within the project locations, the project closely worked with the Ministry of Environment and other national-level government bodies to establish a national-level information sharing platform and increase national-level awareness and interest to streamline SLM promotion in Sri Lanka. As a result, the project established a website, namely SriCAT – Sri Lanka Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies and it has been promoted among all like-minded organizations to update their experience and best practices of promoting SLM in Sri Lanka. The activities, approaches and technologies implemented under the RDAL project already updated on the website.

The SriCAT was designed similar to WOCAT – “World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies” and initial discussions were conducted with the WOCAT secretariat to further develop the SriCAT to a higher standard. As per the original plan, the NRMC was nominated to host and maintain the website. But due to some practical reasons, NRMC rejected the hosting task, and now, with the guidance of the Ministry of environment, the project started the discussion with the soil science department of the University of Peradeniya. Already, University is verbally agreed and expected to initiate LOA within a short period of time. As a strategy to develop the website as a SLM information sharing platform and ensure its sustainability, the university will be provided with a grant to build their capacity to host and continue the website. The project also published 12 newspaper article, three newsletters in English, Sinhala and Tamil, three radio program, one TV program, eight videos on SLM and project activities. The project supported three symposium on SLM and seven out reach events.

What are the major challenges the project has experienced during this reporting period?

□ The main challenge that hindered the project's progress is the Covid-19 outbreak and its consequences in the country. Especially, the restrictions for traveling and gathering people in the field adversely affected the progress of FFS implementation, LADA local level assessment, and preparation of knowledge Management products.

Development Objective (DO) Ratings, Implementation Progress (IP) Ratings and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall DO and IP ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported in the Section 2 and Section 3 of the PIR.

For DO, the ratings and comments should reflect the overall progress of project results.

FY2021 Development Objective rating ⁸	FY2021 Implementation Progress rating ⁹	Comments/reasons ¹⁰ justifying the ratings for FY2021 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period
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⁸ **Development/Global Environment Objectives Rating** – Assess how well the project is meeting its development objective/s or the global environment objective/s it set out to meet.

For more information on ratings, definitions please refer to Annex 1.

⁹ **Implementation Progress Rating** – Assess the progress of project implementation. For more information on ratings definitions please refer to Annex 1.

¹⁰ Please ensure that the ratings are based on evidence

Project Manager / Coordinator	S	S	<p><i>Development objective – The project was able to develop SLM policy recommendations and initiated the discussion on the implementation of these recommendations and initiated with fertilizer issue. PLUP guideline developed landscape-level SLM implementation and provided a common platform for intersectoral collaboration and initiated an information-sharing platform for SLM.</i></p> <p><i>The number of approaches the project promoted were highly involved with intersectoral collaboration and addressed the economic and conservation needs with greater participation of the private sector and community. Some approaches are already promoted by the government and private sector across the country. Ex. SLM through GAP certification - PPP model. FFS promoted by the project is an extension model by many stakeholders as a methodology to diffuse not only SLM but also for other technology as well and DOA also promoted it for the GAP certification program across the country. Still missing part of the project is the completion of LADA assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Implementation progress. Despite the severe impact of COVID, the project was able to complete most of the field activities and the documentation process, Project uses ICT increasingly to implement FFS in the field. But due to COVID third wave, in the total lockdown of the country, later part of the FFS program and LADA local level assessment and production of knowledge management materials (Photos, Videos etc.) were badly affected.</i></p>
Budget Holder	S	S	<p><i>Major objectives are being met. Performance, despite COVID is commendable, especially using online initiative for FFS activities.</i></p>
GEF Operational Focal Point			<p><i>Optional Ratings/comments</i></p>
Lead Technical Officer¹¹	MS	MS	<p><i>Eventually conducted the pending activities which were the core of the project technical approaches and technologies including the LADA Local Assessment training based on the Land Use Type and land degradation assessment mapping and the implementation of Farmer Field School (FFS) for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and being able to meet the ends by the end of the project period. However, the implementation remained in the training and piloting scale and its further adaptation and expansion are expected beyond the project life.</i></p>

¹¹ The LTO will consult the HQ technical officer and all other supporting technical Units.

FAO-GEF Funding Liaison Officer	S	S	<p><i>Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the project managed to achieve some important milestones and a few learnings with potential to be replicated and scaled up and out. These include three innovative financing models under the public-private partnership initiative that has generated wide interest, apart from the demonstration models implemented on the ground.</i></p> <p><i>Digitalization of agriculture through farmer’s WhatsApp groups is an innovative approach in dealing with COVID-19 restrictions helping farmers to connect and learn on GAP certification, home gardens, etc. Moving ahead, an exit strategy is recommended to sustain these learnings and achievements. Critical field-based activities that were delayed/hampered due to COVID-19 restrictions affecting the overall timeframe of the project will have to be rescheduled.</i></p>
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5. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

Under the responsibility of the LTO (PMU to draft)

This section of the PIR describes the progress made towards complying with the approved ESM plan, when appropriate. Note that only projects with **moderate** or **high** Environmental and Social Risk, approved from June 2015 should have submitted an ESM plan/table at CEO endorsement. This does not apply to **low** risk projects. Please add recommendations to improve the implementation of the ESM plan, when needed.

Social & Environmental Risk Impacts identified at CEO Endorsement	Expected mitigation measures	Actions taken during this FY	Remaining measures to be taken	Responsibility
ESS 1: Natural Resource Management				
ESS 2: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Natural Habitats				
ESS 3: Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 4: Animal - Livestock and Aquatic - Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 5: Pest and Pesticide Management				
ESS 6: Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement				
ESS 7: Decent Work				
ESS 8: Gender Equality				
ESS 9: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage				
New ESS risks that have emerged during this FY				

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In case the project did not include an ESM Plan at CEO endorsement stage, please indicate if the initial Environmental and Social Risk classification is still valid; if not, what is the new classification and explain.

Overall Project Risk classification (at project submission)	Please indicate if the Environmental and Social Risk classification is still valid ¹² . If not, what is the new classification and explain.
Low	It is still valid

Please report if any grievance was received as per FAO and GEF ESS policies. If yes, please indicate how it is being/has been addressed.

6. Risks

Risk ratings

RISK TABLE
<p><i>The following table summarizes risks identified in the Project Document and reflects also any new risks identified in the course of project implementation. Please make sure that the table also includes the Environmental and Social Management Risks captured by the Environmental and social Management Risk Mitigations plans. The <u>Notes</u> column should be used to provide additional details concerning manifestation of the risk in your specific project, as relevant.</i></p>

¹² **Important:** please note that if the Environmental and Social Risk classification is changing, the ESM Unit should be contacted and an updated Social and Environmental Management Plan addressing new risks should be prepared.

	Risk	Risk rating ¹³	Mitigation Actions	Progress on mitigation actions ¹⁴	Notes from the Project Task Force
1	Slow uptake of policy recommendations	L	Increase awareness among the decision makers	Few meetings with top-level officers were conducted and policy dialogue will be conducted to increase awareness about the recommendations.	The project's recent study on site-specific fertilizer promotion can be supplementary document for policy dialogue.
2	Climate change induced losses	M	Capacity building of farmers and stakeholders through FFS and other project activities	Adaptive measures to changing climatic conditions and reduce crop loss integrated in the FFS modules	
3	COVID 19 effect for the implementation of remaining activities of the project.	H	Three months extension received and with the present situation, sometime, might be needed another short extension.	Already received three months extension.	

Project overall risk rating (Low, Moderate, Substantial or High):

FY2020 rating	FY2021 rating	Comments/reason for the rating for FY2021 and any changes (positive or negative) in the rating since the previous reporting period
Low	Low	The risks encountered during the implementation has been substantially addressed by the project through different approaches such participatory designing and multi-sectoral collaboration etc.

¹³ GEF Risk ratings: Low, Moderate, Substantial or High

¹⁴ If a risk mitigation plan had been presented as part of the Environmental and Social management Plan or in previous PIR please report here on progress or results of its implementation. For moderate and high risk projects, please Include a description of the ESMP monitoring activities undertaken in the relevant period".

7. Adjustments to Project Strategy – Only for projects that had the Mid-term review (or supervision mission)

If the project had a MTR review or a supervision mission, please report on how the MTR recommendations were implemented as indicated in the Management Response or in the supervision mission report.

MTR or supervision mission recommendations	Measures implemented
Recommendation 1: Emphasis on how project activities contribute to CCA and CCM to increase land users' interest in SLMs – also considering introducing the concept of climate smart agriculture (CSA)	The FFS training modules were prepared considering the promotion of climate smart agriculture. Specifically FFS in GAP in vegetable and home gardening directly address the CCA
Recommendation 2: Advocate with government counterparts to involve private sector contribution through PPP approach	The project already promoted the private sector involvement on SLM in three programs. The project supports the farmers while promoting the private sector and government partners' engagement for extension, certification, and marketing.
Recommendation 3: Adoption of well-proven FFS approach in the project	Project developed a comprehensive training and implementation strategy to implement FFS in four farming systems including home garden, seed potato cultivation, GAP certification and smallholder tea production. IT based extension approach was also implemented under the project to overcome Covid-19 imposed challenges during the implementation.
Recommendation 4: Review of the Outputs of the IUCN work under Outcome 3	PMU with IUCN had a serious review on this activity and eco system evaluation and innovative financing guideline would be conducted under the limitation of budget allocation to LOA with IUCN. Remaining budget would be allocated for promoting private sector engagement for SLM and GAP implementation and the FFS training.
Recommendation 5: Compensate land users who are awaiting for promised payments for the SLM demonstration	Payment for land users has already been completed. The project supported value addition and value chain development through FFS
Recommendation 6: Recruit NGOs in each district to implement FFS component	Due to lack of funds, one NGO would be hired for implementing FFS for three districts.
Recommendation 7: No-cost extension for the project for a period of 12 months from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021	One year no-cost extension was granted for the project

Recommendation 8: The project should retrofit baseline data and monitor the indicators for the Environment and Development Objectives	The survey was planned conduct the project implementation sites and non implementation sites to analyse the project impact. But due to travel restriction it was unable to start yet.
Recommendation 9: Introduce participatory M&E for use in all activities with land users	M&E framework was developed for all activities and implemented participatory M&E tools specially for FFS implementation.
Recommendation 10: Increase emphasis on Outcome 4 and to produce knowledge management products in both Sinhala and Tamil	All knowledge management products are published in both Sinhala and Tamil languages. The information sharing platform SriCAT was also designed with multi-lingual user interface and available in all three languages. Some materials were already developed on project experience and wait for the travel restrictions to be lifted for adding the visual matters.
Recommendation 11: Combine and develop a common website for national SLM information sharing and project knowledge management	The national level information sharing platform SriCAT was used for knowledge management of the project
Recommendation 12: Women and youth participation in project activities	Special attention was paid when designing and implementing all activities to ensure women and youth participation, especially during FFS implementation.

Adjustments to the project strategy.

Please note that changes to outputs, baselines, indicators or targets cannot be made without official approval from PSC and PTF members, including the FLO. These changes will follow the recommendations of the MTR or the supervision mission.

Change Made to	Yes/No	Describe the Change and Reason for Change
Project Outputs	No	
Project Indicators/Targets	No	

8. Stakeholders Engagement

Please report on progress, challenges, and outcomes on stakeholder engagement (based on the description of the Stakeholder engagement plan included at CEO Endorsement/Approval (when applicable))

If your project had a stakeholder engagement plan, specify whether any new stakeholders have been identified/engaged:

If a stakeholder engagement plan was not requested for your project at CEO endorsement stage, please

- list all stakeholders engaged in the project
- please indicate if the project works with Civil Society Organizations and/or NGOs
- briefly describe stakeholders' engagement events, specifying time, date stakeholders engaged, purpose (information, consultation, participation in decision making, etc.) and outcomes.

Please also indicate if the private sector has been involved in your project and provide the nature of the private sector actors, their role in the project and the way they were involved

Stakeholder	Progress	Challenges	Role	Outcome
Ministry of Environment	Provided necessary support in coordinating with government agencies and national level events		Government focal point	Government stakeholder's cooperation is very satisfactory. <i>Project focal point and coordinate all stakeholders.</i>
Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture (DOA)	Supported to develop technical packages for SLM Technical inputs for field implementation. Technical inputs for developing policy recommendations on SLM	With the busy schedules of officers, continuous engagement is somewhat difficult.	Lead Technical Agency	SLM training programs and SLM campaigns were implemented <i>Lead technical agency of the project and support to develop technical packages on SLM, Development of Project proposal etc.</i>

	Implement SLM campaigns in the field.			
Natural Resources Management Centre (NRMCC)	Initiate LRIS development. Technical support from land and water management.		Lead technical Agency	Supported with technical support for implementation <i>Lead technical agency of the project.</i> Provide technical expertise for the field implementation of SLM. PMU is established in the premises.
Department of Land Use Policy Planning Department	Preparation of PLUPs in mini watersheds. Preparation of PLUP guideline.		<i>Lead agency of the project for land use planning.</i>	96 PLUPs were prepared. Final PLUP guidelines drafted.
Department of Export Agriculture	Involvements for PRA in the field level Farmer training and planting materials	No enough field level extension officers	Lead technical agency for export crops	Farmers have been trained on tea and pepper intercropping, Vanilla, Ginger and coffee cultivations.
Hadabima Authority	Technical and field coordination for implementing soil conservation in Kandy area.		Technical support	Soil conservation have been successfully implemented in Doluwa and Deltota divisions.
The Department of Animal Production and Health	Technical assistance to implement crop – livestock integration		Technical support	Six dairy farmers have completed crop – dairy integrated models as demonstrations
Tea Research Institute (TRI)	SLM demonstration model in TRI Passara Regional Training Centre, Support for development of		Technical support	A SLM demonstration site have been completed <i>Support to develop technical package for SLM in tea</i>

	technical materials on SLM for tea.			
Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDOA)	Inputs for technical packages Field training activity implementation		Mandatory government technical agency for agriculture extension at provincial level	Five technical packages have been developed <i>Lead agency for the implementation of SLM in Nuwara eliya and Badulla and Kandy District.</i> 3 Provincial coordinating meetings in each province have been conducted.
Tea Small Holdings Development Authority (TSHDA)	Validation of technical package for tea SLM demonstration model in Kandy district Field implementation of SLM in tea.		Mandatory government technical agency for tea small holders	Technical package for tea was developed SLM demonstration model on Tea is being implemented <i>Lead agency for implementation of SLM in tea lands in project districts.</i>
District Secretariats	District Agriculture Committee (DAC) meeting		District level coordinator	Conducted DAC in 2018 (field coordination and supervision)
Divisional Secretariat	Divisional Agriculture Committee (DAC) meeting		Divisional level coordinator	Conducted DAC in 2018
PLUP Groups at each mini watershed	PLUP preparation, implementation and participatory monitoring		CBO at the mini watershed level supporting the implementation	08 PLUP are being implemented. Participatory monitoring

University of Rajarata	Water quality testing in Kandy district		Academic collaboration	Water quality report of 3 mini watersheds in Kandy district Graduate student completed the final thesis
Cargills Ceylon Sri Lanka.	Marketing and coordination for GAP certification program		Market for GAP farmers	GAP program initiated SLM implementation through GAP certification and Marketing.
SAPP project-IFAD	Implementation on GAP for seed potato program		Financial contribution and coordination	Seed program started and in progress.
Fonterra Sri Lanka	Implementation of dairy-crop model for SLM	Slow adaptation due to higher cost	Marketing and coordination	6 sites are established.
Adamjee and Lukmanjee company	Implementation home economical vanilla with cultivation		Marketing and coordination	40 farmers in Pambadeniya are adopted and continue with home garden Promotion SLM through economical home garden.
IUCN	Valuation of ecosystem benefit conducted and for guideline financing innovative fi developed.	Generating financing is time consuming slow process.	Consultancy	70 master trainers were trained on this subject.

9. Gender Mainstreaming

Information on Progress on gender-responsive measures as documented at CEO Endorsement/Approval in the gender action plan or equivalent (when applicable)

Was a gender analysis undertaken or an equivalent socio-economic assessment made at formulation or during execution stages? Please briefly indicate the gender differences here.

Gender analysis was conducted at the initial stage of the project and gender principles are followed during planning, execution and evaluation stages of all project activities.

Does the M&E system have gender-disaggregated data? How is the project tracking gender results and impacts?

The project M&E system provides gender-disaggregated indicators for some of the project outputs. Equal male and female participation is always encouraged in all project activities.

Does the project staff have gender expertise?

If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

- closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources.
- improving women's participation and decision making; and or
- generating socio-economic benefits or services for women

Project team have completed Gender related mandatory training available in the FAO's E-learning portal and possess experience in gender mainstreaming and prevention of gender based discriminations. Following are some examples how the gender participation is ensured in the project implementation.

Outcome 2: Appropriate technologies for rehabilitation of degraded lands demonstrated and scaled up by strengthened networks of training and extension institutions –

In this result area, project considered women active participation with leadership role while developing technologies which are feasible for women farmers as well.

The home garden program is mainly coordinated by the "Sithamu" (Think) women home garden societies managed by the Department of Agrarian Development. A great emphasis was given to increase the participation of women in FFS home garden training as women can play a major role in managing and sustaining home gardens. The home garden program was also promoted as an alternative way of income generation among women.

The project supported productivity development of the small holder tea sector in which women play the main role for tea plucking, weeding etc. The increased income of this sector will reduce the women migration to urban areas, which causes many social issues like looking after the children etc.

10. Knowledge Management Activities

Knowledge activities / products (when applicable), as outlined in knowledge management approved at CEO Endorsement / Approval

- Does the project have a knowledge management strategy? If not, how does the project collect and document good practices? Please list relevant good practices that can be learned and shared from the project thus far.

Yes, Component 4 in the result framework set guideline for planning knowledge management activities and publishing best practices in the project.

I. Inter-sectoral collaboration for better SLM implementation:

The project's approach to collaborate all like-minded organization during implementation of SLM activities was a great success in terms of sustainability of the interventions. One of the project interventions to restore Dambugasagala forest and Kalubulanda Tank as part of implementation of PLUP is a good example for this approach. This process is facilitated by all relevant government agencies and they collectively work with the community to achieve the common task. In the participatory land use planning process, around 25 officers of 15 government agencies that are responsible for land resources management participated and enabled the stakeholders to pool their resources to implement the plan. The divisional secretary resolved issues in demarcation of the forest reserve. A fence was constructed around the forest and it was funded by the Department of the Provincial Land Commissioner, Uva. RDALP financed the survey charges for demarcation. The Forest Department supplied plants. Divisional secretary monitored planting while the village youth organization, school children and community were involved in planting and maintaining the forest.

II. Crop-dairy integrated approach in sustainable land management:

A story of one of the RDALP beneficiary K.M. Shantha Kallora is a good example for this approach.

The RDALP helped Kallora to modernize his dairy farm by building a proper cowshed, introducing a farm waste disposal system and an integrated approach to develop his farming activities - tea and vegetable cultivation and dairy farming. He combined tea and vegetable cultivation with the dairy farm by using cow dung as organic fertilizer. Earlier he used compost for vegetable cultivation but did not use it for tea. With the use of organic fertilizer, income from vegetables and tea has increased. The most significant achievement is the increase in milk production. This is good example for PPP model for better SLM implementation

III. Conversion of Annual Crop to Perennial Crop to prevent land degradation:

The RDAL project with relevant government agencies introduced the conversion of annual crops cultivated lands in unsuitable steep slope terrains in in Welimada in the Badulla district to perennial crops 15ha of annual crops lands of 26 farmers have been converted to tea and fruit based intercropping models in a demonstration scale. Objective of the approach was to stop severe soil erosion and other forms of land degradation. Several causes were identified for soil erosion including the geography, with

steep mountain slopes, unsustainable farming practices, lack of awareness of the farmers on soil erosion and conservation technologies and cultivation of unsuitable crops for the terrain. The farmers were provided with training and awareness about the bad practices that they have been doing for long time. They also provided technical, financial and materials support with the support of government institution to plant tea in their eroded lands. Orange and pomegranates were introduced as intercropping. The Tephrosia plant was introduced as a land cover to reduce erosion and now farmers use them as a wind barrier as well. The rationales behind this conversion approach are;

- Shifting to perennial crops will stop frequent land preparations for annual crops
- Introduce tea cultivation with proper conservation methods
- Reduce agrochemical usage
- Prevent damages by stray cattle and bushfire in the fallow period
- Ensure higher income to farmers throughout the year

IV. FFS for diffusion of FFS technology.

With MTR guidance, instead of top-down traditional extension mechanism, FFS was introduced and successfully implemented in GAP certification in vegetable cultivation, seed potato production and home gardening. Facilitator draft guides were developed for four main farming systems such as Home-gardens, Seed potato production, GAP certification and smallholder tea cultivation. Altogether 112 field level officers and technical officers were trained on FFS and SLM practices to facilitate FFS in the field. 86 FFS groups were formed, and 1747 farmers were trained last year under this program. With the COVID situation, ICT was widely used and formed 81 WhatsApp groups for sharing knowledge and information among the farmers and between the farmers and officers. Three WhatsApp groups with experts on vegetable, seed potato and home garden were formed to address issues that village level / field level officers cannot solve. The program was highly appreciated by all stakeholders and Agri business division of the department of Agriculture has implemented FFS methodology for paddy cultivation and also planned to use across the country for promoting GAP certification.

V. SLM through GAP certification

PPP model for promoting SLM through GAP certification was implemented with DOA and Cargills supermarket chain. The rationale of supporting GAP certification for SLM is that the GAP certification process includes soil and water conservation and conservation of the entire ecosystem. Under this program, 193 farmers were trained and motivated to implement GAP procedures. Out of the 193 farmers mentioned above, 102 were supported with the total package of inputs and modern technologies to implement good agricultural practices that reduce land degradation and increase the profitability of farming. The total project was RS.31 million, and the RDAL project allocation was Rs. 10 million. Balance costs were shared by Cargills' company, DOA, and the community. With this program, the project promotes the proper land preparation, polythene mulch, drip irrigation, fertigation through drip irrigation, insect-proof net to cover the farmland, good agricultural practices including IPM through FFS and ICT (WhatsApp groups), GAP certification, and finally marketing linkage through Cargills Supermarket Channel. The program has caused to reduce farmers' use of chemical fertilizer by up to 70 %, water usage by up to 50%, soil erosion by up to 90%, labour cost by up to 50% and pest and other animal damages significantly. Due to the high efficiency of water consumption, number of growing seasons of some farmers has increased. Most

of the farmers' profit has been increased up to 20 %. Already 43 farmers were certified on GAP. The program is nationally interested and few TV programs were also telecast. This was further strengthened by involving beneficiaries under the FFS training and motivating them to implement SLM best practices. Cargills and DOA further expanded the project with Government funds and a soft loan scheme with Cargills bank through out the central highland.

- Does the project have a communication strategy? Please provide a brief overview of the communications successes and challenges this year.

The project has communication strategy and able to conduct one webinar on soil bio diversity, one radio program, and one two TV programs. Two newsletters were published in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Information sharing platform on SLM was established and updated with project experience. Four newspaper articles were published.

Field visits on demonstration sites for farmers, extension officers and experts of technical coordinating committee in MOE were planned and was unable to implement due to travel restrictions.

- Please share a human-interest story from your project, focusing on how the project has helped to improve people's livelihoods while contributing to achieving the expected global environmental benefits. Include at least one beneficiary quote and perspective, and please also include related photos and photo credits.



Balagolla, is a village in the Hanguranketha Divisional Secretariat Division of the Nuwara Eliya District. It is one of the main farmlands that produced a significant share of vegetables to cover local market demand. Located in the eastern slope of the central highlands, it is blessed with a favorable climate and soil for vegetable cultivation.

However, the dry climatic conditions and sloped terrain also pose challenges for farmers. They mainly depend on the North Eastern Monsoon rain, from October to January and cultivate one cropping season. In addition to natural challenges, impacts of their own unsustainable practices have posed them challenges. As a result of the unsustainable use of the sloped lands over decades and destruction of forest reserves in sensitive catchment areas of rivers, they now face a severe shortage of water for farming.

This is the most sensitive catchment area of the Mahaweli River. All water streams that flow through the area directly go into Victoria or Randenigala Reservoirs downstream. Therefore, land degradation in the area directly affects the capacity of the reservoirs by silting.

Considering the gravity of land degradation, its impacts to the economy and environment and various issues faced by the farmers, the Rehabilitation of Degraded Agricultural Lands Project (RDALP) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations selected Hanguranketha Divisional Secretariat Division to implement Sustainable Land Management (SLM) programs in vegetable cultivation.

RDALP uses the market based Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) approach that has been recognized as one of the best innovative financial mechanisms for SLM. In this initiative, RDALP works with the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and Cargills (Ceylon) PLC in Hanguranketha and several other areas of

the central highlands. In this approach RDALP also attempts to strengthen public private partnership in SLM.

Chandrika and Nishanthi

Chandrika Kumari (49) and Nishanthi Nishanka (44) are two women beneficiaries of the RDALP who have changed their destinies and improved their socio-economic situations by modernizing agriculture. They were traditional farmers who cultivated vegetables once a year during the monsoon season. Farming was not lucrative to them, as to the other farmers here. Extreme weather conditions such as drought, market volatility (especially over production that drops prices below the cost of production) degraded lands, low productivity and high cost of production affect their crop yield, income and lives. In 2019 Chandrika and Nishanthi joined RDALP as beneficiaries. They began a joint agricultural venture with the support of the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and Cargills (Ceylon) PLC. After joining the training and awareness programs organized by the project, they cleared half an acre of land to begin the first modern model farm in the area.

“Agriculture Instructors Prageeth and Prasanna of the DoA and Provincial DoA (Central) motivated us to implement this venture, assuring us a higher yield and income. We invested money for land preparation and Cargills PLC provided a state-of-the-art drip irrigation system along with a soft loan of USD 877 over a long grace period, to cover other costs. We formed a farmer organization initially consisting 12 farmers and collectively work, supporting each other,” they said.

“The drip irrigation system resolved the water issue, the main challenge we faced. Now we cultivate three or four cropping seasons per year and apply fertilizer through the drip irrigation system. This has reduced fertilizer usage significantly. RDALP provided insect proof net to cover the whole farm to lessen pests and diseases. We use plastic mulch and this has cut labour cost sharply. We can cultivate three or four cropping seasons in the same beds without land preparation. There is no need of weeding and we do not labour all throughout the day on farming. We have time to do our routine household chores - cooking, washing and attending to our children’s education needs. Therefore, we see farming as an interesting and decent job now,” Chandrika said.

They have now cultivated long beans on their farm and are profiting from the seasonal short supply of vegetables, expecting a much higher price during the New Year festival season. Although most of the traditional farmers have ceased farming during this drought period, all GAP certified farmers continue farming in their modernized farms.

- Please provide links to publications, leaflets, video materials, related website, newsletters, or other communications assets published on the web.

All the knowledge management products of the project are uploaded and available in the SLM information sharing platform develop under the project in the following link: <https://www.sricat.net/index.php/en/>

- Does the project have a communication and/or knowledge management focal point? If yes, please provide their names and email addresses - Gamini Warushamana - gwarushamana@gmail.com

11. Indigenous Peoples Involvement

Are Indigenous Peoples involved in the project? How? Please briefly explain.

If applies, please describe the process and current status of on-going/completed, legitimate consultations to obtain Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) with the indigenous communities

Do indigenous peoples have an active participation in the project activities? How?

12. Innovative Approaches

Please provide a brief description of an innovative¹⁵ approach in the project / programme, describe the type (e.g. technological, financial, institutional, policy, business model) and explain why it stands out as an innovation.

Use of IT in agriculture extension service

Implementation of FFS training in field was challenging with the Covid-19 restriction for staff movement and community gatherings. Project conducted series of discussions with relevant government institutions and private experts to introduce a virtual alternative to resume field activities that were halted due to pandemic issues. The project tried many options including online capacity building through Zoom, education through documentary videos and use of local media platforms etc. But the project's attempt to introduce IT based agriculture extensions through Farmer WhatsApp Groups became very successful. Initially a ToT training for Field Officers were conducted to introduce the model and module of field events especially the FFS and plan the practical aspects of implementing them. Each Field officers were supported to create individual Farmer WhatsApp groups for each group in the field. Another officers level WhatsApp groups established in each project location with the participation of experts and district and provincial officers from extension departments. So the field officers have the opportunity to bring the field issues to the expert's platform and find instant solution to issues brought up by farmers in the Farmers groups. This approach facilitated a smooth interaction between the RDALP project, agriculture extension service officers and farmers beside the practical challenges induced by Covid-19. Following numbers of Farmer FFS WhatsApp group active in the field so far.

- Seed Potato FFS – 88 farmers in 13 WhatsApp groups
- GAP Certification FFS – 133 farmers in 09 WhatsApp groups
- Home Garden FFS – 826 farmers in 59 WhatsApp groups

The WhatsApp groups being an effective tool to mobilize farmers to initiate discussions and FFS sessions. Experience and knowledge sharing among farmers also encouraged through the groups. Altogether, there are more than 80 field level officers facilitating 81 Farmer WhatsApp Groups to give technical guidance and support farmers with various crops related issues.

Market-based Approach to mainstream SLM

RDALP strategically used a market-based approach and promoted rehabilitation of degraded lands and implementation of SLM and GAP as a way of increasing farmer income through increasing the harvest.

¹⁵ Innovation is defined as *doing something new or different in a specific context that adds value*

Market-based approach in the field level SLM implementation and always ensure financial and economic benefits to the farmers. In home gardening the project supported the farmers to shade management, using pruning and training techniques of trees and bushes. Multilayer cropping system is introduced to increase productivity. Micro irrigation systems enhance soil moisture content. Prevention of pest attacks by introducing agro fence and strengthening live fence that provides green manure. RDALP promoted cultivation of high value cash crops such as Vanilla, ginger in home gardens. In tea smallholdings, the project supported infilling, intercropping with high value crops such as pepper, vanilla and fruits to increase farmer income and support shade management. Project provided technology and training in shade and weed management, production and application of organic and green manure, pruning, fencing and protection against pest attacks to remain sustainable income from tea lands.

Conversion of steep slope vegetable cultivated lands to perineal crop cultivation too is financially and economically beneficial to the farmers. In these interventions RDALP direct funded the farmers for soil conservation and SLM implementation and training farmers on SLM and GAP.

Crop livestock integrated model was introduced to minimize soil and water pollution from animal husbandry. This intervention helps to increase dairy production and farmer income as the cowsheds providing housing for the animals and better supply of food and water improves the nutrition and health of the animals. Farmers also earn additional income from organic manure produced from waste dung and urine

13. Possible impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the project

Please indicate any implication of the Covid-19 pandemic on the activities and progress of the project. Highlight the adaptative measures taken to continue with the project implementation.

- the outcomes/outputs still achievable within the project period.
- Will the timing of the project MTR or TE be affected/delayed?
- What is the impact of COVID-19 on project beneficiaries, personnel, etc.
- Are there good practices and lessons learned to be shared?
-

The Covid-19 outbreak in the country adversely affected the implementation of the project. Many of the planned activities could not be conducted as planned due to restriction imposed by the government to public movement and gathering in the field. Especially the implementation of FFS require great amount of presence of the staff and facilitator in the field with the farmers for an effective implementation.

The support of government department and field officers was also significantly reduced as they were fully engaged in Covid-19 related relief and prevention activities.

The pandemic also severely affected the economic condition of the farmers due to restriction on movement and transportation, supply chain disruption and subsequent earning losses. This caused less participation and support from the farmer community even during post-lockdown times.

Project's initiative to introduce IT based extension service through Farmer WhatsApp groups was an alternative and feasible methodology to continue some of the interventions started by the project before the pandemic. Especially, the farmers in the FFS benefitted from the Farmer WhatsApp Group through experience sharing and mutual learning.

14. Co-Financing Table

Sources of Cofinancing ¹⁶	Name of Cofinancer	Type of Cofinancing	Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement / approval	Actual Amount Materialized at 30 June 2021	Actual Amount Materialized at Midterm or closure (confirmed by the review/evaluation team)	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
National Government	DOA	In kind	5,720,000.00	415,286.00	286,127.60	
National Government	LUPPD	In kind	154,100.00	836,759.31	836,759.31	
National Government	Forest Department	In kind	615,400.00	-	-	
National Government	Hadabima Authority	In kind	2,087,700.00	-	-	
National Government	MOE&WR	In kind	168,500.00	14,698,863.64	14,698,863.64	
National Government	Irrigation Department	In kind	30,800.00			
National Government	PDOA - Uva	In kind	187,700.00	174,374.09	174,374.09	

¹⁶ Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Beneficiaries, Other.

National Government	Mahaweli Authority	In kind	701,800.00	-		
National Government	PDOA - Central	In kind	73,100.00			
	FAO	In kind	120,000.00	271,000.00	271,000.00	
National Government	Tea Research Institute- TRI			58,313.96	58,313.96	
National Government	TSHDA - Badulla			364,169.91	364,169.91	
National Government	TSHDA - Kandy			1,210,340.91	549,438.72	
		TOTAL	9,859,100.00	18,029,107.82	17,239,047.23	

Please explain any significant changes in project co-financing since Project Document signature, or differences between the anticipated and actual rates of disbursement

Annex 1. – GEF Performance Ratings Definitions

Development/Global Environment Objectives Rating – Assess how well the project is meeting its development objective/s or the global environment objective/s it set out to meet. **DO Ratings definitions:** **Highly Satisfactory (HS)** - Project is expected to achieve or exceed **all** its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”); **Satisfactory (S)** - Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings); **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** - Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve **some** of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits); **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)** - Project is expected to achieve of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only **some** of its major global environmental objectives); **Unsatisfactory (U)** - Project is expected **not** to achieve **most** of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits); **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)** - The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, **any** of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.)

Implementation Progress Rating – Assess the progress of project implementation. **IP Ratings definitions:** **Highly Satisfactory (HS):** Implementation of all components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be resented as “good practice”. **Satisfactory (S):** Implementation of most components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only a few that are subject to remedial action. **Moderately Satisfactory (MS):** Implementation of some components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with some components requiring remedial action. **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU):** Implementation of some components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with most components requiring remedial action. **Unsatisfactory (U):** Implementation of most components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan. **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):** Implementation of none of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.