

GEF - PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (PIR)

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UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year 2024
Reporting from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

1 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Project Details

GEF ID: 10525	Umoja WBS: SB-018532
SMA IPMR ID: 95144	Grant ID: S1-32LDL-000052
Project Short Title: UNILEAD	
Project Title: Strengthening Endogenous Capacities of Least Developed Countries to Access Finance for Climate Change Adaptation	
Duration months planned:	24
Duration months age:	31
Project Type:	Medium Sized Project (MSP)
Parent Programme if child project:	
Project Scope:	Global
Region:	Africa
Countries:	Bangladesh,Bhutan,Burkina Faso,Ethiopia,Gambia,Liberia,Malawi,Mozambique,Nepal,Rwanda,Senegal,Tanzania,Uganda
GEF Focal Area(s):	Climate Change Adaptation
GEF financing amount:	\$ 1,980,000.00
Co-financing amount:	\$ 2,074,424.00
Date of CEO Endorsement/Approval:	2021-08-31
UNEP Project Approval Date:	2021-11-18
Start of Implementation (PCA entering into force):	2021-12-31
Date of Inception Workshop, if available:	2022-03-07
Date of First Disbursement:	2022-04-04

Total disbursement as of 30 June 2024:	\$ 1,033,845.00
Total expenditure as of 30 June:	\$ 1,073,873.00
Midterm undertaken?:	n/a
Actual Mid-Term Date, if taken:	
Expected Mid-Term Date, if not taken:	
Completion Date Planned - Original PCA:	2023-12-31
Completion Date Revised - Current PCA:	2024-12-31
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date:	2024-12-01
Expected Financial Closure Date:	2025-12-31

1.2 Project Description

The University Leadership in Catalyzing Climate Finance (UNI-LEAD) project seeks to strengthen capacities of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to achieve scaled up and effective adaptation by fostering sustained endogenous technical services for project development, policy mainstreaming and creation of an enabling environment for financing of climate change adaptation. The focus of the capacity strengthening effort is on 13 universities within the LDC University Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC).

UNI-LEAD's Executing Agency is START International, Inc., and the main partners are universities and national governments in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Liberia, The Gambia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. Additional partners are Climate Analytics and the International Centre on Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD).

Component 1: Collaborative mechanisms established for strengthening and sustaining capacities for climate change adaptation finance. Capacity development and institutional strengthening activities for all 13 LUCCC members, activities of which include development of a guidance manual on university-government collaboration for climate finance; policy and institutional mapping to identify entry points for university-government collaboration, development of collaboration agreements, and webinars on climate finance topics to build capacity within the LUCCC network.

Component 2: LDC thinktanks established to meet government's knowledge and technical service demands related to climate change adaptation. Develop a proof-of-concept for LDC-university thinktanks that have the expertise and capacity to provide demand-led technical products to their respective national government through a fee-for-services model and/or through other sources of grant funding to sustain the think-tanks. This project will support three thinktanks, with the premise that the LDC thinktank model can be upscaled to additional universities within the LUCCC network if additional sources of funding are identified.

Component 3: Capture the lessons learned from the initial establishment of the three LDC thinktanks to mobilize resources and create enabling conditions for other thinktanks to be established.

1.3 Project Contacts

Division(s) Implementing the project	Climate Change Division
Name of co-implementing Agency	
Executing Agency (ies)	START International
names of Other Project Partners	
UNEP Portfolio Manager(s)	Jessica Troni
UNEP Task Manager(s)	Atifa Kassam
UNEP Budget/Finance Officer	Bwiza Wameyo-Odemba
UNEP Support Assistants	
Manager/Representative	
Project Manager	Jon Padgam
Finance Manager	Sarah Shweizer
Communications Lead, if relevant	

2 Overview of Project Status

2.1 UNEP PoW & UN

UNEP Current Subprogramme(s):	Thematic: Climate action subprogramme
UNEP previous Subprogramme(s):	Climate Change
PoW Indicator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate : (i) Number of national, subnational and private-sector actors that adopt climate change mitigation and/or adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies and policies with UNEP support. • Climate: (iv) Positive shift in public opinion, attitudes and actions in support of climate action as a result of UNEP action • Partnerships: (ii) Amount of financial resources mobilized from public and private sources and made available to developing countries by UNEP-supported partnerships for the implementation of international agreements and other environmental initiatives
UNSDCF/UNDAF linkages	N/A global project
Link to relevant SDG Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Link to relevant SDG Targets:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning • 13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth, and local and marginalized communities

2.2. GEF Core and Sub Indicators

GEF core or sub indicators targeted by the project as defined at CEO Endorsement/Approval, as well as results

Indicators	Targets - Expected Value			Materialized to date
	Mid-term	End-of-project	Total Target	
11- People benefitting from GEF-financed investments	117 men		260 of which 100 are women and 160 are men	Current total: across the 2023 and 2024 PIR is 190 individuals (125 men and 65 women)

Implementation Status 2024: 2nd PIR

2.3. Implementation Status and Risks

	PIR#	Rating towards outcomes (section 3.1)	Rating towards outputs (section 3.2)	Risk rating (section 4.2)
FY 2024	2nd PIR	S	S	L
FY 2023	1st PIR	S	S	L

Summary of status

In this, the second PIR reporting period, significant progress has been achieved with respect to meeting project goals. Achievements include:

University-government engagement: Regional meetings were convened in West Africa (for Senegal, Liberia, The Gambia, and Burkina Faso), in East and Southern Africa (for Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Malawi, and Mozambique) and South Asia (Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh). The purpose of the regional meetings was to bring together LUCCC/UNI-LEAD Points of Contact (PoC) with national focal points to the UNFCCC and GCF from their countries to initiate the development of a climate finance roadmap for university-government engagement that identified potential, initial entry points for the universities to provide value to the government in terms of technical advisement on climate finance. Following the regional meetings, 11 of the 13 LUCCC PoCs held follow-up meetings with their respective government officials, over a 6 month period. The purpose of the follow-up meetings was to enable a broader dialogue between the university and the government that served to validate and further refine areas for university-government engagement. A key product emerging from this engagement process has been a series of ‘country profiles’ that provide a reference document containing analysis of country policy and institutional mapping, the roadmap priorities, and results of validation workshops in terms of potential entry points for university-government engagement. At the time of this report, 6 of the 11 countries have developed country profile reports. The remaining five will be completed before the end of the 2024 calendar year.

Establishment of climate finance think tanks: Climate finance think-tanks have been established at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal), Makerere University (Uganda), Pokhara University (Nepal), and Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique). The first three think-tanks were established through direct funding from the UNI-LEAD project, and the last of the four think-tanks was established through collateral funding secured through an agreement between START and UNIDO. The four think tanks were selected through a competitive review process enabled by an open call for proposals distributed across the LUCCC network. Applications were reviewed and selected by a review committee formed from within the UNI-LEAD Project Steering Committee. The think-tanks are in the process of developing business plans and sustainability strategies. It is anticipated that these will be complete by August 2024.

In the run-up to establishing the think-tanks, the issue of capacity deficiencies in how to develop successful climate finance proposals was a consistently expressed sentiment by the LUCCC, and, by the LDC Chair, at the Nairobi UNEP meeting, and in subsequent meetings with the LUCCC and Project Management Unit, and consultations with the Project Steering Committee. This led to a general consensus by the project partners to focus on developing fundable climate finance proposals as a key aspect that the universities would play in a technical advisory role with their governments. In that context, the GCF has emerged as a key (though not exclusive) funding

source to focus on. This approach was built upon consultation with the LDC Chair and LUCCC, expert advice from the Mentoring Institution (Climate Analytics) and consultation with, and approval by, the PSC.

This approach in turn informed how the think-tanks consulted with their governments during the pre-establishment phase. The Phase 1 consultation by the think-tank with their governments was critical to identifying technical services and products that the government viewed as priorities for increasing their capacity to access international climate finance that addressed sectors and scales that the government viewed as priorities for climate adaptation. Establishing a sustained think-tank model in a resource constrained environment (and broadening beyond a pilot phase) requires careful strategic planning to ensure that products are developed that are demanded by the government, and are of sufficient quality and utility to demonstrate a value proposition of the think-tank in the long run.

Think-tank progress: Three (Mozambique, Uganda and Nepal) of the four think-tanks are on track in establishing the think-tanks and developing demand-driven products. Senegal (the 4th) is lagging and the EA and MI are working to ensure progress. Below is a brief summary of progress by the three centers.

Uganda: The Uganda think-tank is embedded within Makerere University's Center for Climate Research and Innovation (MUCCRI). This integration is allowing the think-tank to utilize existing university infrastructure, administrative support (particularly for activities such as hiring procedures/regulations, formal entity registration, etc), and established partnerships (with state and non-state stakeholders), minimizing costs and startup time. This arrangement has also enabled the think-tank to effectively consolidate expertise and resources from across the University towards its goals, with Uganda's Business Plan explicitly seeking to include arrangements for hiring students into their staffing plans in order to build domestic expertise/capacities and expand their human resource base for future advisory services.

By building a strategic partnership aligning with the Climate Finance Unit (CFU) of the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development (MoFPED), the Uganda TT is positioning itself as a practical partner for implementing the country's climate finance strategies, rather than just producing academic research. The initial funding through the UNI-LEAD's Small Grants Program is supporting co-development (by the think-tank and the Uganda Climate Finance Unit) of a national climate finance tracking tool, and in doing so is directly responding to government needs and demonstrating the think-tank's capacity for impactful collaboration. This is already bearing fruit, with the CFU (Climate Finance Unit) expressing willingness to engage the think-tank in collaborations surrounding the implementation/development/launch of Uganda's National Climate Finance Strategy in the coming months.

Mozambique: The Mozambique think-tank is integrating well into Eduardo Mondlane University's existing faculties and research centers (CEAGRE), similarly reducing startup costs and benefiting from established relationships, such as the university's decades-long umbrella MoU with the government Ministry of Land and Environments. This progress is welcome, as the Mozambique situation has been one of significant and rigid bureaucracy, which has required careful strategic maneuvering by the Coordinator in order to embed the think-tank within a sustained position in the long run. The think-tank has been proactive in engaging the government and SIDA (which has a significant investment in the country) to tap into ongoing government collaborations. In addition, the establishment of the think-tank and the development of climate finance short courses has attracted the interest of Enabel (Belgium funder), which has expressed an interest in collaborating with the think-tank.

Based on consultation, Mozambique's think-tank has prioritized its focus on support mechanisms and instruments for subnational (provincial and local) adaptation, where there is a significant capacity gap by government actors at those scales. In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, the think-tank is deploying its expertise to support the review of provincial adaptation planning guidelines, and is in the process of developing a training program related to the guidelines. With the support from the UNI-LEAD Small grants Programme, strategic partnerships are also underway with two provincial governments to assist them through UNI-LEAD project funding to develop their provincial adaptation plans, strengthen their capacities in mobilizing decentralized climate finance, and co-develop concept notes and proposals that will facilitate their resource mobilization efforts.

Nepal: The Nepal think-tank (hosted at Pokhara University) undertook significant consultation with their government in phase 1, from which emerged priorities related to developing a strongly domesticated (Nepal-oriented) climate change resource books. (Resource Book on building Climate Rationale for climate projects in Nepal, and a Resource Book on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) mainstreaming in climate finance implementation in Nepal.) In developing these resource books, the Nepal think-tank is working closely with the Ministry of Forests and the Environment, and, within that, the Division of Climate Change Management, which is the pivotal agency for all government-directed climate action in Nepal. Similar to the Mozambique situation, sub-national adaptation planning emerged as a priority focus given the significant challenges the country faces related to decentralization. Unlike the Uganda and Mozambique centers, the Nepal think-tank represents the first effort at establishing a dedicated interface between the university and the government, where only ad-hoc collaboration with faculty had existed before.

Development of a small-grants program for the think-tanks: A two-phase small-grants program was initiated during this reporting period. Phase 1 grants were provided to three of the 4 think-tanks (UEM did not receive phase 1 funds because of a delay in getting their TT established) to undertake close consultation with government officials in identifying priority technical services and products that the think-tanks could develop with phase 2 funds. All four think tanks developed successful phase-2 funding proposals, which underwent review by the project steering committee, and funds have been disbursed for undertaking development of technical services and products. The phase-2 small grants are being carried out and will be completed by December 2024.

Development of climate finance short courses: Climate finance short courses have been developed as of this PIR reporting period. The short courses consist of a detailed workbook for the short course participants, combined with a corresponding Powerpoint presentation, an instructor's guide and an instructor video to assist with the teaching of the course. In addition, three training-of-trainers webinars are being planned for July 2024 for the specific purpose of offering training to the UNI-LEAD PoCs on how to offer training to government officials. The five short courses are: 1) Fundamentals of Climate Finance; 2) Public and Private Sector Financing for Climate Change Adaptation; 3) Mainstreaming GESI in Climate Finance; 4) Fundamentals of Developing a Climate Rationale; and 5) Developing Concept Notes and Proposals for Existing Climate Finance Mechanisms. The short course topics emerged from consultation with the LUCCC network. Eight of the 13 LUCCC universities plan to offer training to their governments on the short course material in quarter 4 of 2024 through quarter 1 of 2025.

Leveraging collateral support from a 3rd-party: Based on strong engagement between the LUCCC and START, the UNI-LEAD project has successfully received collateral funding from UNIDO. The funding is being used to provide 80% of the think-tank personnel support for UEM (thus enabling a 4th think-tank to be established), and support

for developing modules and online training on gender and youth aspects of climate finance to the LUCCC network, thus strengthening the overall GESI impact of the UNI-LEAD project.

Regarding challenges to the project, the short (2-year) tenure of the LDC Chair is an intrinsic limitation that makes it difficult to fully engage the Chair in the project. (Since the inception of this project, the LDC Chairship has changed three times.) After several months' delay, the current Chair is now more closely engaged. Another significant challenge concerns the Capacity Development Hub, which is significantly underperforming. (A formal documentation of this problem has been shared with UNEP.) Lastly, the project is ambitious for its 2-year duration (i.e. setting up think-tanks in LDCs, establishing functioning relationships across the LUCCC network, etc.). Therefore, a no-cost extension for an additional 6 months will be submitted for consideration by the PSC within this calendar year in order to ensure deliverables from the grants to the think tanks are finalised to the quality required, and a sustainability/ upscaling strategy is developed. This is in addition to the 12-month no-cost extension that was approved in 2023 by the PSC.

Rating towards outcomes: Based on the progress, challenges and risks described above, overall progress has been Satisfactory with respect to deliverables (roadmaps, university-government engagement events, short courses, think-tank establishment) that, taken together, has provided a strong foundation for universities on which to engage their governments.

Rating towards outputs: Overall progress has been Satisfactory with respect to key deliverables being produced. The think-tanks have been established in a timely manner and their small grant projects are solidly underway, the short course drafts are nearing completion, and plans are being made for virtual training of trainers for the PoCs to gain understanding and skills on teaching the short courses.

Overall risk rating: The overall risk rating of the project is Low as a result of reasonable and timely completion of activities to date despite needing to undertake a fairly significant change to the project activities in order to increase capacity to strengthen outcomes. However, there are risks associated with the poor performance of the Capacity Development Hub and the tight timeline of this project.

2.4 Co Finance

Planned Co-finance:	\$ 2,074,424
Actual to date:	2,311,795
Progress	Justify progress in terms of materialization of expected co-finance. State any relevant challenges:

<p>\$2,074,424 in co-financing is confirmed in the endorsement.</p> <p>Actual to date is \$2,311,795 and 111.44%. "This value is valid from project inception through 30 June 2024. Sources of co-financing (in USD) are from START International (614,837), University of The Gambia (494,500), Pokhara University (10,827), University of Dar Es Salaam (3,100), Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (399,000), Addis Ababa University (61,706), Royal University of Bhutan (222,030), Université Cheikh Anta DIOP de Dakar (35,400), University of Liberia (52,720), Université de Dédougou (UDDG) Burkina Faso (305,000), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (22,475), Makerere University (20,200), Independent University, Bangladesh (10,000), UNIDO (60,000).</p> <p>Additional co-finance leveraged by the project is from UNIDO (60,000) which is going toward the support of another think tank. Challenges relate to materializing co-finance from UNEP GAN, as funding for GAN activities is yet to be realized in the reporting period.</p>

2.5. Stakeholder

Date of project steering committee meeting	2023-11-03
Stakeholder engagement (will be uploaded to GEF Portal)	<p>PSC meeting dates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. November 3, 2023 2. May 16, 2024 <p>Level 1 stakeholders: The LDC Chair and the LUCCC representatives are active members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC). The PSC has met five times since the project inception, and two times during this PIR reporting cycle. The Project Management Unit (PMU) was constituted in June 2022 and brings significant expertise in climate finance and capacity development to the project. They are initiating project activities and are actively engaging the PoCs. The PMU meets biweekly, and START and UNEP also meet biweekly to troubleshoot and to proactively plan. START has engaged the current LDC Chair (Evans Njewa, Malawi) on this project. Through that outreach, he has become an active member of the PSC.</p> <p>Level 2 and 3 stakeholders: Level 2: Good progress with the LUCCC university Points of Contact (PoC) with respect to their participation in the project. Engagement has increased since the project was restructured to enable more in-person LUCCC network training events. Level 3: Engagement with government officials increased substantially in this PIR cycle due to validation workshops held in 11 of the 13 LUCCC countries.</p> <p>The project will continue to engage stakeholders going forward. Specific areas of engagement for Level 1 stakeholders will consist of continuing semi-annual meetings with the PSC and bi-weekly meetings with the PMU. Levels of engagement with Level 2 and 3</p>



	stakeholders will increase as the Points of Contact convene training on the short courses to their respective governments.
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2.6. Gender

Does the project have a gender action plan?	Yes
Gender mainstreaming (will be uploaded to GEF Portal):	<p>Gender mainstreaming activities include:</p> <p>The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion for Climate Finance short course was developed and a training webinar conducted for the 13 PoC teams in July 2024. An earlier version of the GESI short course and training was conducted in October 2023.</p> <p>Gender was a criteria in the think-tank application and their small grants. The Nepal think-tank is developing a GESI guidance manual, and the Mozambique think-tank has a strong gender representative criteria.</p> <p>The development of the short course had a strong basis in a survey on GESI aspects of the capacity development assessment that was carried out in 2022. The GESI survey centred around understanding of gender issues, capacity within institutions in terms of skills in the unit as well as in the university in general, and projects and implementation in relation to GESI.</p>

2.7. ESSM

Moderate/High risk projects (in terms of Environmental and social safeguards)	<p>Was the project classified as moderate/high risk CEO Endorsement/Approval Stage?</p> <p>No</p> <p>If yes, what specific safeguard risks were identified in the SRIF/ESERN?</p>
New social and/or environmental risks	<p>Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during the reporting period?</p> <p>No</p> <p>If yes, describe the new risks or changes?</p>
Complaints and grievances related to social and/or environmental impacts	<p>Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential) during the reporting period?</p> <p>No</p> <p>If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail, including the status, significance, who was involved and what actions were taken?</p>

	No complaints received
Environmental and social safeguards management	In reference to the SRIF document developed for this project, there has been no change in the environmental and social safeguard status as a result of implementing this project. Taking into consideration that this project is a normative project aimed at building technical capacity - The SRIF identified no negative environmental or social impacts (Safeguard Standards 1-8) as a result of this project. The project does have a Stakeholder Response and Grievance Redress Mechanism that has been shared with project stakeholders and is posted on the project website.

2.8. KM/Learning

Knowledge activities and products	<p>The knowledge activities/products at the time of this report include the following: 5 short courses on climate finance</p> <p>Short courses have been created on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundamentals of climate finance 2. Public and Private Sector Financing for Climate Change Adaptation 3. Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Climate Finance 4. Fundamentals of Developing a Climate Rationale 5. Developing concept notes and funding proposals for existing climate finance mechanisms <p>Each of the short courses consist of a course workbook, a companion Powerpoint presentation on key aspects, and an instructors guide. In addition, five training of trainers webinars (one for each course) were held with the PoCs from the LUCCC network.</p> <p>The short course topics were selected through consultation within the LUCCC network in which PoCs also consulted with their governments on the relevance and appropriateness of the topics. This consultation was combined with expert judgment by the PMU (ICCCAD and CA). The short courses are designed to provide in-depth understanding on: 1) trends in climate finance for LDCs, and how to navigate the increasingly complex climate finance landscape of multilateral, bilateral, private, public, and sub-national funding sources (Courses 1 and 2); and 2) how to develop strong, well-reasoned, and ultimately successful concept notes related to development of a climate rationale, effective incorporation of GESI, constructing a theory of change and other key aspects (Courses 3-5). These courses provide extensive learning on practical how-to steps for these key elements and provide examples of successful and unsuccessful proposals from LDCs. The last three courses are strongly oriented towards ultimately producing a successful concept note</p>
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	<p>and proposal to the GCF.</p> <p>All five courses were designed to be information dense, so that they can exist as stand-alone learning resources, in addition to serving a training function offered by the LUCCC university to their counterparts in the government. Each course consists of an information-rich workbook, an accompanying Powerpoint presentation that corresponds with the workbook content, a trainer’s guide for how to teach the course (through use of the presentation and the workbook), and a pre-recorded ‘how to’ webinar for teaching the content. Based on feedback from the LUCCC members, it is anticipated that up to 8 of the 13 LUCCC countries (4 think-tanks plus 4 non-TT universities) will offer training on the short course topics within Q4 of this year or Q1 of next year.</p> <p>6 country profile reports</p> <p>Country profile reports have been prepared for Senegal, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Uganda, Mozambique and Nepal. The country profile reports consist of an analysis of the climate finance landscape and entry points within the country based on the policy & institutional mapping, and climate finance roadmaps.</p> <p>3 phase 1 engagements between think-tanks and their governments</p> <p>Three of the think-tanks underwent extensive consultations with their governments regarding climate finance priorities for which the think-tanks developed proposals for small grants to develop technical services and products.</p> <p>11 national validation workshops</p> <p>Following the South Asia, West Africa, and East and Southern Africa regional meetings on roadmap development, 11 of the 13 LUCCC members held validation workshops with their respective governments.</p> <p>4 think-tanks have been initially established across the LUCCC network, in Senegal, Uganda, Mozambique and Nepal.</p>
Main learning during the period	<u>Learning that has taken place during the 2024 PIR period:</u>

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- 1) The establishment of the think-tanks produced significant learning related to government engagement. The EA decided to split the small grants into two phases: phase 1 provided a rapid amount of modest funds in order for the TTs to develop workshops and dialogues that engaged their governments in identifying needs and priorities for developing technical services and products in phase 2. The phase 1 funds were quite effective at engaging the government and giving them a sense of ownership in the process. Three of the four think-tanks (Nepal, Uganda and Mozambique) show evidence of substantive engagement with the government going forward, which will help to ensure the sustainability of the TTs after project completion. Another important lesson learned has been the consistent priority across the TTs to focus on sub-national adaptation rather than national level because of the significant capacity gaps at sub-national levels.
 - 2) Given that the think-tanks have had roughly one year to establish themselves and begin operations, they have made significant progress in maximizing their efficiency, visibility and value proposition, and are positioning themselves well for longer-term sustainability. The think-tanks are leveraging the initial grants to prove their value and build a track record that will attract future partnerships. As stated by the LUCCC and LDC Chair, it was communicated that it would be impractical to expect newly established think-tanks to immediately begin receiving fees-for-services partnerships, and thus these first Small Grants-funded initiatives aim to kickstarting the process by showcasing the capacities, expertise, and potential of these think-tanks to potential governmental (and non-governmental) clients. The business plans (currently under development) will emphasize transitioning to a mixed funding model (including fee-for-service provision) once they have demonstrated their capabilities. The integration within the universities also facilitates access to diverse funding streams, including government contracts and international climate finance, while building capacity through training and collaboration with multiple stakeholders. Within the university context, the think-tanks are well positioned to function as conduits (coordinating function) that leverage university resources and expertise building on the relationships that are being built between the think-tank and the government in this pilot round of actions and products. The focus on climate finance-implementation support distinguishes the think-tanks from other established research institutions or initiatives within their host universities.
 - 3) The LUCCC PoCs showed significant motivation (11 of the 13 LUCCC partners) to convene engagement events with their respective governments following the in-person regional events (held in 2023) to develop roadmaps that identified climate research priorities related to accessing climate finance in their countries. The follow-up engagement events were used to validate and further clarify the priorities initially identified during the roadmap development exercise. The compilation of policy & institutional mapping, the roadmaps, and the validation findings are being compiled into 'country profile' reports, which are expected to function as a resource for prioritization that will serve as a legacy of this project. In particular, Rwanda, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Bhutan demonstrated a high level of motivation to engage government stakeholders through offering the climate finance short courses (process is currently underway in those countries, and results will be reported at the next reporting juncture).

	<p>4) The capacity development hub has been the weakest link of this project. Housed at ICCCAD in Bangladesh, the hub has significantly underperformed. The unfortunate loss of leadership at the top of the institute has further exacerbated this problem.</p> <p><u>Learning reported in the 2023 PIR:</u></p> <p>Much of the learning-by-doing to date has focused on the process of creating a useful and impactful project outcome for the LUCCC network in terms of building capacity for universities to support governments to access climate finance. In that respect, the design of the project to be fully virtual (reflecting the Covid pandemic period during which the project was conceived) created barriers to learning by the LUCCC network points of contact. There was strong preference articulated by the PoCs to have in-person (rather than webinar-based) training for gaining skills on climate finance. To date, the project has responded to that by convening in-person regional (i.e. West Africa, Eastern/Southern Africa and South Asia) meetings between PoCs and National Focal Points to the UNFCCC and GEF, as well as an in-person meeting of the PMU (at UNEP Headquarters in Feb. 2023) to collaboratively develop a shift in project emphasis away from fully-remote learning towards a hybrid of remote and in-person experiences.</p>
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2.9. Stories

Stories to be shared	
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3 Performance

3.1 Rating of progress towards achieving the project outcomes

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
to strengthen capacities of LDCs to achieve scaled up and effective adaptation by fostering endogenous technical services for project development, policy mainstreaming, and creation of an enabling environment for adaptation to climate change	Positive satisfaction ratings in Government for think tank services to support in scaling up of adaptation finance	0	n/a	3 countries that have positive feedback on think tank services	60% complete	Three think-tanks are in the process of being established. MoUs have been created between the think-tank and the university or government (depending on local circumstance). Substantive consultation has been carried out between the TT team and the government to identify needs and priorities of the government, which are in turn shaping the technical services and products being developed by the TTs. A 4th TT is being developed through UNIDO co-support. All TTs are in the process of developing business plans and sustainability strategies.	S
Outcome 1.1: LUCCC universities effectively facilitate access to climate finance in their respective countries	Number of institutions with increased ability to access and/or manage climate finance	0	n/a	3 institutions with level 3 ability [1] to access climate finance [1] A scorecard will be defined based on project outputs. Will be	70% complete	Four think-tanks (3 supported by this project; 1 by UNIDO, through co-financing) have undertaken significant consultations with their respective national governments to set TT-action priorities, and are in the process of developing technical services and products for multi-scalar governments within their countries. A	S

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
				based on a 3 level approach – Level 1 = Institutions have some capacity, Level = Institutions have capacity and a coordination mechanism in place, Level 3= Institutions have systems and processes in place		formal M&E of capacity built will be done in the first quarter of 2025.	
Outcome 1.2: Select LDC universities have institutional capacity to support adaptation policy and project formulation	Number of people trained through capacity building activities/ initiatives	0	n/a	260 people [2] – of which 100 are women and 160 are men. [2]: Assuming 20 people per University	65% complete	Total across 2023 &2024 PIRs:190 individuals (125 men; 65 women)From the 2024 PIR period: — July 2023 regional workshop_Kathmandu: 10 individuals (6 men; 4 women)— October 2023 initial short course training workshop: 25 individuals (18 men; 7 women)— Webinar for SC 1&2: 23 individuals (18 men; 5 women)— Webinar for SC 3: 13 individuals (7 men; 6 women)— Webinar for SC 4: 17 individuals (13 men; 4 women)— Webinar for SC 5: 14 individuals (8 men; 6 women)From the 2023 PIR period: — 50 individuals (32 men;18 women)	S

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
						<p>trained in the first webinar (basics of climate finance) — 20 (13 men; 7 women) and 18 individuals (10 men; 8 women) in the regional workshops (roadmaps for univ-gov't engagement) held in Dakar and Kampala, respectively. In addition there has been significant engagement by the think-tanks at the government level that are not yet reflected here; a formal accounting of this engagement will be done for the final PIR. It is very likely that the target will be met.</p>	
<p>Outcome 2.1: Think tanks at select LDC universities provide technical services that meet government demands</p>	<p>Number of people made aware of think tank services and their ability to assist with appropriate adaptation responses</p>	0	n/a	<p>105 people (35 technical officers/planners per each country) The project will use a scorecard approach to measure levels of awareness</p>	50% complete	<p>Technical services are in the process of being developed based on significant consultation by the think-tanks with their government counterparts that has resulted in significant awareness raising of the TTs to the government. The TTs are in the process of, inter-alia, developing resource books on GESI and climate rationale, developing training programs based on the resource books, developing training on GCF Concept Note Development, and developing training programs for local and provincial government, related to climate adaptation financing. In addition there has been significant engagement by the</p>	S

Project Objective and Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-Term Target or Milestones	End of Project Target	Progress as of current period (numeric, percentage, or binary entry only)	Summary by the EA of attainment of the indicator & target as of 30 June	Progress rating
						think-tanks at the government level that are not yet reflected here; a formal accounting of this engagement will be done for the final PIR. It is very likely that the target will be met.	
Outcome 3.1: Think tank model incorporated into LUCCC expansion and scale up plan	Number of additional institutions with confirmed interest and funded workplan to pilot the model	0	n/a	2 institutions	50% complete	The University of Rwanda and Addis Ababa University have expressed a strong interest in eventually creating think-tanks at their respective universities. As of the date of this PIR, no funded workplan has been developed for either of these universities. It is anticipated that a funded workplan will be created within the first quarter of 2025.	S

3.2 Rating of progress implementation towards delivery of outputs (Implementation Progress)

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
1 Collaborative mechanism for sustained endogenous capacity on climate change adaptation finance	Output 1.1.1: LUCCC universities formulate engagement plans with host LDC governments to provide specific technical services to government agencies	2024-10-31	15%	90%	Six engagement plans (referred to as Country Profile Reports) have been developed; they consist of policy and institutional mapping, road maps for university-government engagement and priority setting established through consultations between universities and governments. The 7th to be completed. Project activities approved by the PSC reduced the amount of engagement plans from 13 to 7.	S
	Output 1.1.2: LUCCC capacity development hub established	2023-07-30	15%	100%	The hub is technically established, hence the 100% rating but the work of the hub has been slow and incomplete in completing the deliverables in its scope of work. Since the 2023 PIR, they have developed a rudimentary web-based platform and have released three newsletters.	S
	Output 1.1.3: At least 5 short course programs inclusive of GESI/CC developed for use by LUCCC institutions for technical service delivery to host governments	2024-08-31	40%	90%	5 short courses have been developed, and 6 trainings on the short-courses delivered to the LUCCC network. The first training was in October 2023 in Kampala; the other 5 trainings took place in July 2024. The short course package consists of a workbook, an instructor's guide, and a powerpoint presentation linked to the guide, in	S

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
					addition to the training webinars that were developed into an instructional video.	
	Output 1.1.4: Knowledge and information resource management system set up at the capacity development hub with procedures for updating and disseminating resources repository contents	2024-12-31	10%	30%	The structure of the hub has been set up but significant revisions and refinement are needed to the resource management system. Since the 2023 PIR, they have developed a rudimentary web-based platform and have released three newsletters.	MU
	Output 1.2.1: At least 3 thinktank institutions formalized through MoU or similar mechanism at 3 LUCCC universities	2024-06-30	0%	100%	4 think-tanks have been established; 3 through the UNI-LEAD project; 1 through co-funding by UNIDO. MoUs have been finalized between the think-tanks and their respective governments.	HS
	Output 1.2.2: Thinktanks formally operational through development of organizational charters, staffing plans and steering committees (no less than 3). At least 1 multidisciplinary technical working clusters established at each thinktank (no less than 3 thinktanks).	2024-09-30	0%	70%	A steering committee, organizational charter, staffing plans, and a technical working cluster have been established at all of the think tanks. Business plans are still under development, which, when completed, will contain final versions of all of these materials in one document.	S
	Output 1.2.3: Technical working clusters and support system established to provide technical goods and services.	2024-06-30	0%	100%	At least one technical working cluster has been established at each think-tank	S
	Output 1.2.4: Business and sustainability plans formulated for each thinktank (at least 3).	2024-09-30	0%	70%	Draft business and sustainability plans have been developed. Climate Analytics (as the MI) is working closely with the TTs to complete the plans by September 2024.	S

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
2 Technical capacity building for LDC governments	Output 2.1.1: Small grants program set up with proposal guidelines, procedures, and evaluation criteria to support demand-led policy research and technical services.	2024-03-31	0%	100%	The small grants program was divided into two phases: phase 1 featured outreach to the government for priority setting around technical services and products. Phase 1 is complete. Phase 2 implementation is currently underway. Guidelines, procedures, and evaluation criteria were created in the process of developing the small grant phases.	S
	Output 2.1.2: At least 12 demand-led and policy relevant technical outputs prepared across university thinktanks in a minimum of 3 countries.	2024-12-31	0%	50%	The development of technical services and products is actively underway through the Phase 2 small grants. To be completed by the end of this calendar year.	S
3 Scaling up	Output 3.1.1: Two meetings (1 per year of project implementation) conducted to a) share knowledge and learning about the thinktank experience; b) strengthen the overall LUCCC thinktank network; and c) increase regional and global awareness of the thinktanks and their capabilities.	2024-12-31	30%	50%	One in-person meeting involving all of the 13 universities within the LUCCC network was convened in October 2023. The meeting enabled cross-learning within the network on early prototypes of the climate finance short course. A culmination meeting of the entire LUCCC network is planned for December 2024.	S
	Output 3.1.2: LUCCC thinktank network upscaling and sustainability strategy developed.	2024-12-31	0%	0%	As of this PIR reporting period, the upscaling strategy development has stalled out. Developing this strategy will be a priority for the last half of 2024.	MS
	Output 3.1.3: At least 2 knowledge products developed to synthesize and disseminate lessons learned and best practices from thinktank	2024-12-31	0%	0%	As of this PIR reporting period, no knowledge products have been developed.	MS

Component	Output/Activity	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of previous reporting period (%)	Implementation status as of current reporting period (%)	Progress rating justification, description of challenges faced and explanations for any delay	Progress Rating
	network.				Developing these products will be a priority for the last half of 2024.	

The Task Manager will decide on the relevant level of disaggregation (i.e. either at the output or activity level).

4 Risks

4.1 Table A. Project management Risk

Please refer to the Risk Help Sheet for more details on rating

Risk Factor	EA Rating	TM Rating
1 Management structure - Roles and responsibilities	Low	Low
2 Governance structure - Oversight	Low	Low
3 Implementation schedule	Low	Low
4 Budget	Low	Low
5 Financial Management	Low	Low
6 Reporting	Low	Low
7 Capacity to deliver	Low	Low

If any of the risk factors is rated a Moderate or higher, please include it in Table B below

4.2 Table B. Risk-log

Implementation Status (Current PIR)

Insert ALL the risks identified either at CEO endorsement (inc. safeguards screening), previous/current PIRs, and MTRs. Use the last line to propose a suggested consolidated rating.

Risks	Risk affecting: Outcome / outputs	CEO ED	PIR 1	PIR 2	PIR 3	PIR 4	PIR 5	Current PIR	Δ	Justification
1. LUCCC universities will not participate in the project (CEO endorsement)		L	L	L					=	
2. High turnover within the LUCCC universities' faculties and staff (CEO		M	M	L					↓	No significant turnover has been observed.

Risks	Risk affecting: Outcome / outputs	CEO ED	PIR 1	PIR 2	PIR 3	PIR 4	PIR 5	Current PIR	Δ	Justification
endorsement)										
3. During implementation. LUCCC university staff/faculty will not have time to work with the project. (CEO endorsement)		M	M	L					↓	The TT and non-TT PoCs have demonstrated strong capacity to engage their governments during this PIR period. Three of the TTs are actively working on phase 2 small grants. If a no-cost extension through Q2 2025 is approved by the PSC then the implementation schedule will be readily accommodated within the project period.
4. LUCCC universities that establish thinktanks will not support them after the project ends (CEO endorsement)		M	M	L					↓	Close engagement by the TT coordinators with their governments in phase 1 of the small grants has lessened this risk.
5. Governments will not utilise the services of the thinktanks (CEO endorsement)		M	M	L					↓	Close engagement by the TT coordinators with their governments in phase 1 of the small grants has lessened this risk.
6. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic prevents the project from implementing its activities (CEO endorsement)		L	L	L					=	
7. Limited sharing and learning among participating universities (CEO endorsement)		L	M	L					↓	Progress on developing short courses and related training of trainers webinars has increased the learning potential among participating universities.
8. Project activities do not benefit women and end up reinforcing existing gender		M	L	L					=	

Risks	Risk affecting: Outcome / outputs	CEO ED	PIR 1	PIR 2	PIR 3	PIR 4	PIR 5	Current PIR	Δ	Justification
inequalities (CEO endorsement)										
9. Project activities are impacted by climate change processes (e.g.. flooding. storms) (CEO endorsement)		L	L	L					=	
10. Political instability/ unrest affects project activities among participating countries (CEO endorsement)		M	L	L					=	
11. Low capacity of the mentoring institute to deliver on various project outputs		M	M	L					↓	Mentoring Institution has demonstrated strong capacity to carry out their assigned role.
Consolidated project risk		N/A	M	L					↓	Overall. the risk profile has decreased in this PIR period.
			M	L					↓	Overall risk rating reduced as the think tanks are set up and engaged with Governments

4.3 Table C. Outstanding Moderate, Significant, and High risks

Additional mitigation measures for the next periods

Risk	Actions decided during the previous reporting instance (PIRt-1, MTR, etc.)	Actions effectively undertaken this reporting period	What	When	By Whom

High Risk (H): There is a probability of greater than 75% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face high risks. Significant Risk (S): There is a probability of between 51% and 75% that assumptions may fail to hold and/or the project may face substantial risks. Moderate Risk (M): There is a probability of between 26% and 50% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only modest risks. Low Risk (L): There is a probability of up to 25% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only modest risks.

5 Amendment - GeoSpatial

Project Minor Amendments

Minor amendments are changes to the project design or implementation that do not have significant impact on the project objectives or scope, or an increase of the GEF project financing up to 5% as described in Annex 9 of the Project and Program Cycle Policy Guidelines. Please tick each category for which a change occurred in the fiscal year of reporting and provide a description of the change that occurred in the textbox. You may attach supporting document as appropriate

5.1 Table A: Listing of all Minor Amendment (TM)

Minor Amendments	Changes
Results Framework:	No
Components and Cost:	No
Institutional and implementation arrangements:	No
Financial Management:	No
Implementation Schedule:	
Executing Entity:	No
Executing Entity Category:	No
Minor project objective change:	No
Safeguards:	No
Risk analysis:	No
Increase of GEF financing up to 5%:	No
Location of project activity:	No
Other:	No

Minor amendments

5.2 Table B: History of project revisions and/or extensions (TM)

Version	Type	Signed/Approved by UNEP	Entry Into Force (last signature Date)	Agreement Expiry Date	Main changes introduced in this revision

Version	Type	Signed/Approved by UNEP	Entry Into Force (last signature Date)	Agreement Expiry Date	Main changes introduced in this revision
Revision 1	Extension	2023-03-15	2021-12-31	2024-12-31	Rev1 :March 15. 2023The technical extension through the end of 2024 was requested and approved by the PSC at the March 15. 2023 PSC meeting.
Revision 2	Revision	2023-11-03		2024-12-31	Rev 2:Nov. 3. 2023On this date. the PSC approved changes to the project activities and budget resulting in reducing the number of think tanks from 5 to 3. replacing webinars with in-person training. allocating resources for regional meetings between PoCs and government officials. and national validation workshops between PoCs and government officials. Approved changes were made for the revised logframe. budget. and project activities.

GEO Location Information:

The Location Name, Latitude and Longitude are required fields insofar as an Agency chooses to enter a project location under the set format. The Geo Name ID is required in instances where the location is not exact, such as in the case of a city, as opposed to the exact site of a physical infrastructure. The Location & Activity Description fields are optional. Project longitude and latitude must follow the Decimal Degrees WGS84 format and Agencies are encouraged to use at least four decimal points for greater accuracy. Users may add as many locations as appropriate. Web mapping applications such as OpenStreetMap or GeoNames use this format. Consider using a conversion tool as needed, such as: <https://coordinates-converter.com> Please see the Geocoding User Guide by clicking here

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GEO Name ID	Location Description	Activity Description
Independent University. Bangladesh (IUB)	23.8157	90.4277			
College of Natural Resources. Royal University of Bhutan	27.5165	89.8562			
University Joseph Ki-Zerbo. Burkina Faso	12.3772	-1.5008			
Climate Science Centre. Addis Ababa University	9.0337	38.7629			
The University of the Gambia	13.4605	-16.67589			
University of Liberia	6.2996	-10.79454			
Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). Mawali	-14.1795	33.7780			
Eduardo Mondlane University. Mozambique	-25.9521	32.6035			
School of Environmental Science and Management (SchEMS). Pokhara University. Nepal	27.6746	85.3420			

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GEO Name ID	Location Description	Activity Description
Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management. University of Rwanda	-1.9586	30.0633			
University of Cheikh Anta Diop. Dakar	14.7046	-17.4768			
University of Dar-es-Salaam	-6.7816	39.2057			
Makerere University Centre for Climate Change Research and Innovation (MUCCRI). Makerere University. Uganda	0.3326	32.5678			

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions is taking place as appropriate. *

[Annex any linked geospatial file]