Mid-Term Review of FAO-GEF Project

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Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan Project

Final Report

MTR mission conducted in December 2022

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADPP	Agriculture Development Priority Program, 2016-2020
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, 2017-2021
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BH	Budget holder
CBNRM	Community-based natural resources management
CBSLFMA	Community-based sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan (project)
CDCs	Community Development Councils
DDA	District Development Assembly
DFA	De-facto authority
DoWA	Department of Women Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus group discussion
FMA	Forest Management Association
FPMIS	Field Programme Management Information System
GCU	GEF Coordination Unit
GDNRM	General Directorate of Natural Resources Management
Ha	Hectare
HCVF	High conservation value forest
IGDK	Independent General Directorate of Kuchis
INDC	Intended nationally determined contribution
KII	Key informant interview
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MTR	Mid-term review
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action for Climate Change
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, 2014–2017
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency
NPD	National Project Director
OED	Office of Evaluation
PIR	Project implementation report
PMU	Project management unit
PPR	Project progress report
PRRD	Provincial Directorate of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTF	Project Task Force
RMA	Rangeland Management Association
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SLM	Sustainable land management
TEF	United Nations Transitional Engagement Framework for Afghanistan
ToC	Theory of change
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Executive summary

Introduction

1. This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the independent mid-term review (MTR) of the project GCP/AFG/084/GFF *Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan*. The project implementation period is six years (2018–2024), and the MTR covers the period from August 2018 to June 2022. The MTR took place between November 2022 and February 2023 by a three-member evaluation team comprised of an international team leader and two national experts.

2. The project is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and has a total budget of USD 64,753,106, of which USD 10,495,873 is Global Environment Fund (GEF) financing and the remaining USD 54,257,223 is co-financed by the FAO; Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL); Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD); National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA); and Independent Directorate General of Kuchis (IDGK).

3. The FAO requires MTRs for monitoring and reporting purposes, as stated in the project's Component 4: Knowledge and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The terms of reference (ToR, see Annex 1) for this MTR follows the FAO-GEF's 2020 guide for planning and conducting mid-term reviews of FAO-GEF projects and programmes. The MTR provides an independent, external assessment of the project's progress towards expected outputs, outcomes, and objectives and identifies areas for improvement and corrective measures. It also recommends how to enhance the delivery of the project's intended results.

Methodology

4. The MTR used a mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) approach to capture the tangible and intangible results of all four project components according to their outcomes, outputs, and activities. The MTR followed the FAO-GEF's mid-term review guidelines in the evaluation approaches and methods as specified in the ToR. The information gathering was guided by: (i) project results framework; (ii) evaluation matrix, (iii) achievement rating system, (iv) semi-structured questions for key informant interviews and focus group discussion guide, (v) stakeholder engagement matrix, and (vi) various data sources. The MTR team also conducted field visits in four project implementation provinces: Badghis, Bamiyan, Kunar, and Paktia.

5. The MTR team conducted 64 key informant interviews and 23 focus group discussion and outreach to 369 people and stakeholders of whom 126 were women. The MTR process engaged the main project stakeholders, decision-makers, and implementers, including those at the sub-national level[1] and participants in community-based associations. The MTR team reviewed documents to assess project implementation and achievement of project outcomes. It also examined relevant procedures and strategies used for achieving project results. The team also analyzed the potential for achieving the project's mid-term milestones. All information and data was triangulated to ensure the accuracy of findings, conclusions, and recommended corrective actions.

[1] The UN TEF has restricted collaboration with de-fecto authorities (DFA), however the MTR interviewed provincial and district level government officials.

Main Findings

6. The MTR resulted in 23 findings organized according to six criteria used to assess the project's (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness towards achieving outputs and each of the four outcome indicators, (iii) efficiency, (iv) sustainability, (v) factors affecting performance, and (vi) cross-cutting priorities. The findings are summarized below.

MTR Criteria -1: Relevance

7. **Finding 1:** The project aims to increase the livelihood resilience of communities by addressing unsustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country. The project has a high degree of global, regional, national, and community level strategic relevance. The project components, outcomes, outputs, activities, and even entire intervention logic well align with Afghanistan's NRM sector priorities, including its NRM strategy, ANPDF, ADPP, NAPA, and NBSAP. It is fully aligned with the GEF's multiple focal areas, including biodiversity, climate change mitigation, land degradation, and sustainable forest management. The project's objectives and outcomes are also in-line with the FAO's Global Strategic Objective 2 and Outcome 3 of UN TEF for Afghanistan. The project is highly relevant in addressing the actual needs of the target communities.

MTR Criteria - 2 Effectiveness: Progress towards outputs

8. **Finding 2:** Delivery of the project's 21 planned outputs and related mid-term targets have been mixed with some outputs meeting their mid-term targets, some delayed, and some unlikely to be achieved in the current political context. Some outputs under Component 1, specifically capacity building at the community and sub-national level and awareness raising campaigns at the community level, exceed the mid-term targets with a substantial number of women participating in the trainings and awareness raising. Three outputs under this component, however, seem unlikely to continue due the FAO's non-engagement with the DFAs considering post August 2021. Most of the outputs under Component 2 have made good progress on restoring degraded forest through different management practices, such as afforestation, protecting and promoting natural regenerations, community nursery and woodlots establishment, and alternative livelihood interventions. Mixed progress was noted on Component 3 outputs, especially the restoration of rangeland and capacity building on sustainable rangeland management. However, some outputs are yet to meet their mid-term and consequently the end-of-project targets. Some of the crucial outputs under Component 4 on M&E systems have yet to be effectively implemented.

MTR Criteria 2 Effectiveness: Progress towards outcomes

9. **Finding 3:** With mixed progress on many outputs (for details see 4.1), the overall progress towards outcomes is also mixed within 46 months of implementation.

Outcome 1.1: Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM.

10. **Finding 4:** There is mixed progress towards outcome 1.1 as assessed by the result framework indicators. The project set an indicator of increasing capacities of MAIL/DAIL and other relevant government institutions and staff to plan for and implement SLM/SFM. A capacity needs assessment was conducted by using capacity score card during the design phase and presented the baseline score. However, the MTR could not find any substantial evidences such as an outcome survey to be able to determine improvements from the baseline scores. Furthermore, the MTR noted national and sub-national government staff trained.

11. **Finding 5:** Out of four outputs for Outcome 1.1, three partially met their respective mid-term targets, but continued progress is unlikely considering the post-August 2021 situation. Some preparatory works for Output – 1.1.3 (fine scale inventory) is completed and is likely to be met by the end of the project.

Outcome 1.2: Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans.

12. **Finding 6:** The outcome has generally achieved it mid-term target, though there are some mixed results. Three of the five outputs under this outcome have met or highly exceeded their mid-term targets, while one target has been achieved and one on track to be achieved. The MTR, however, noted numerous resource materials have been prepared but are not aligned with topics set in the targets. The mid-term target calls for at least 10 Community Development Councils (CDC), Forest Management Associations (FMA), and Rangeland Management Associations (RMA) trained. The project established 61 associations (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) and trained 5,952 people, of whom 659 (11%) were women. The associations were established through more than 15 different sets of trainings for executive committees, users, and CDC representatives.

Outcome 2.1: Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.

13. **Finding 7:** This outcome has mostly achieved it mid-term target. Of this outcome's four outputs, two exceeded their mid-term targets, one far exceeded part of its target while falling far behind on the other part of the target, and the fourth output has only accomplished preparatory works. The project exceeded—by a factor of six times—its mid-term target of restoring 2,000 ha of high conservation value forests (HCVFs) and partially met its tart of restoring 4,000 ha of other forest types. The project has restored 13,250 ha of HCVF, of which 5,122 ha were restored through plantation and 8,128 ha through improved management practices. In the case of restoring other forest types, the project achieved only 10% of its target.

Outcome 3.1: Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces

14. **Finding 8:** This outcome has mixed results. Two outputs support the achievement of this outcome, of which one exceeded it mid-term target whereas for the other one the project has not started some crucial activities. Interventions, such as value chain assessment for livestock husbandry is completed. However, some of the major activities designed under this output such as establishing a pasture network and providing extension services through the network are yet to be started. The mid-term target of 50,000 ha of rangeland under pastoral management practices has been exceeded (132,198.57 ha) in terms of area coverage. However, the MTR is concerned on whether intensive management practices in such a large area with the budget allocated to Component-3 is possible or not.

Outcome 4.1: Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices

15. **Finding 9:** All the outputs under this outcome are behind schedule. The indicator and target set for this outcome explicitly mentions improved capacity for knowledge management on SFM/SLM and proposed a mid-term milestone score of 2.8. However, the MTR did not find any outcome survey or other assessments conducted to compare against the baseline value and, thus, could not assess this outcome.

MTR Criteria-3: Efficiency

16. **Finding 10:** The project's efficiency has been mixed, with some delays affecting the progress on outcomes. The project was unable to make good progress during the first 16 months (August 2018 – December 2019) of project implementation. The project encountered many delays related to hiring, difficulties in finding well-matched human resources, high staff turnover (both national and international), withheld approvals by GDNRM leadership. The delays have likely affected cost- effectiveness and institutional memory loss. The budget expenditure is 54.51 percent.

17. **Finding 11:** The project mobilized communities through FMAs and RMAs to implement most of the interventions. For example, FMAs were engaged in afforestation, nursery establishment, reseeding, and land preparation. Their engagement is believed to have helped the project make substantial savings. Another efficient strategy involved engaging local communities (FMA users) in establishing small community nurseries to produce saplings of high conservation value tree species for afforestation.

MTR Criteria-4: Sustainability

18. **Finding 12:** The project results and benefits are likely to be sustained because of the work that has gone into establishing and strengthening the association's institutional capacity, increasing awareness, and skill enhancement of forest and rangeland users, local level technical officers, and extension workers in the protection, conservation, and management of natural resources in an integrated way.

19. **Finding 13:** Externalities could influence beneficiaries' socio-ecological resilience, such as unpredictable impacts of climate change and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The DFA's continued non-involvement could also impact the delivery of the remaining project outputs, jeopardizing its sustainability. However, the forthcoming economic benefits from high value and cash crop yielding trees should sustain some socio-economic benefits of the project. The planting of high conservation value trees are expected bring economic returns after a few years, as will the cash crop from fruit and nut yielding trees.

MTR Criteria 4: Factor Affecting Performance

20. **Finding 14:** *Project design*. The project design and its result framework interlink different themes for sustainable NRM and build capacity at national, sub-national and community level. The main shortcoming is the inconsistency between outcomes and outputs with corresponding indicators and targets. Many of the result framework indicators and targets are not sufficiently SMART (specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and time-based) and unrealistic, with some project targets too ambitious for the corresponding allocated budget.

21. **Finding 15:** *Implementation delays*. The project followed a direct execution (DEX) modality for implementation and was guided by a Project Steering Committee[2] chaired by NEPA with FAO and other executing agency partners, with GDNRM/MAIL, MRRD, and IDGK as members. The project has faced several challenges that have delayed project activities proposed in the annual work plans. Challenges include delayed approvals and endorsements by the GDNRM, finding suitable human resources, the fragile security situation, and high staff turnover—all exacerbated by COVID-19.

22. **Finding 16:** *Financing and financial management*. The overall financial management of the project seems to be in good order with timely release and payments, although budget allocations have not been consistent with budget categories and headings. The project

[2] Defunct since Post August 2021 since DFA took over the power.

revised the budget in May 2020. GEF co-financing of USD 11.68 million was disbursed in end-June 2022.

23. **Finding 17:** *Project oversight and implementation roles.* The PMU has been receiving regular support from RAP, HQ, and BH. The FLO and Technical Officer from HQ and LTO from RAP have been providing the necessary support to implement the project and provide quality assurance in the absence of the PSC..

24. **Finding 18:** *Partnerships and stakeholder engagement.* Country ownership was high during the design and has remained high during implementation. The project has collaborated well with the executing agencies at national and sub-national levels. However, the GDNRM leadership withheld approvals that caused substantial delays to implementing the annual work plans.

25. **Finding 19:** *Communication and knowledge management.* The project developed and followed a communication and knowledge management strategy, and outreach activities were implemented. Radio messages and an animated video was used to raise awareness in communities and found to be effective. Several visual materials with the logo of the GEF, FAO, and the government were produced and distributed to stakeholders and communities. The project is active on social media (Facebook and Twitter) and attracted high media coverage of project activities from local television programs.

26. **Finding 20:** *M&E design and implementation.* The M&E requirements mentioned in the ProDoc are well elaborated with clear milestones for reporting (PIR/PPR) and conducting outcome surveys. However, the project did not fully follow the M&E requirements and lacks a robust M&E system and adaptive results management. Some of the reported progress does not match the descriptions of indictors and mid-term targets. The project has not yet developed an M&E system. The results framework has insufficient SMART indicators and some are not well aligned with their targets, which are also possibly too ambitious to be realistic and achievable.

MTR Criteria 6: Cross-cutting priorities

27. **Finding 22:** *Consideration of gender and minority group issues.* Gender aspects are integrated in the indicators and targets. The project has focused on women through alternative livelihood interventions. However, the project has not sufficiently considered the minority group (Kuchis). The project is yet to establish the pasture network as envisioned by the ProDoc, which is key to addressing Kuchi issues.

28. **Finding 23:** *Environmental and social safeguards.* Environmental benefits are highly certain because of the project's interventions, such as increasing vegetation and restoring high conservation forests and other forest types through natural and artificial methods, biodiversity conservation, and promotion of alternative energy. Interventions carried out by the project seem not to cause any negative impact on the environment and nearby communities. The project is taking participatory NRM approaches, focusing on poor, women, and vulnerable families, while implementing alternative livelihood activities to ensure social safeguards.

Conclusions

29. Based on the above 22 findings, the MTR drew 14 conclusions, which are also organized according to the same criteria.

MTR Criteria 1: Relevancy

30. **Conclusion 1:** The project's objective, components, outcomes, outputs, activities, and entire intervention logic aligns well with Afghanistan's NRM sector priorities, GEF's focal areas, FAO's global strategic objective and the UN TEF for Afghanistan outcome. The project is highly relevant in addressing the needs of beneficiaries in terms of increasing the resilience of local communities by addressing unsustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country.

MTR Criteria 2: Effectiveness

31. **Conclusion 2:** The project experienced mixed progress despite startup delays. Some outputs and outcomes surpassed their targets, some are on the way to being achieved, and some are unlikely to be achieved mainly due to the non-engagement with DFA post August 2021. Progress was better at the community level than the national level. The project reached out to a substantial number of people through several awareness-raising campaigns and attracted good participation among women beneficiaries. The project used adaptive measures to engage women, e.g. hiring female community mobilizers to conduct awareness-raising campaigns. The current political situation is likely to negatively impact the achievement of remaining targets, e.g., building the capacity of government staff, the establishment of a functioning COE, and the development of a REDD+ Readiness Roadmap, including an MRV system.

32. **Conclusion 3:** Some of the project's capacity development materials are different than those called for in the results framework. The project did not distinguish between awareness-raising materials, training toolkits, and resource materials to ensure these materials would have a good impact at the higher logical order of outcomes/impact.

33. **Conclusion 4:** The project made promising progress and exceeded the mid-term target in restoring HCVFs and carbon sequestration through afforestation, assisted natural regeneration, protection and conservation, prohibiting grazing, and the regulated collection of firewood and timber. However, the "other forest types" did not receive equal attention.

34. **Conclusion 5:** The project achieved its targets set for alternative livelihoods interventions. A remarkable prospect of this intervention is that it mostly targets women and has enabled them to earn money to meet their daily needs. However, it is difficult to assess increment prior to their engagement in the project in absence of an income survey.

35. **Conclusion 6:** The project is yet to conduct some of the major activities designed for climate resilient sustainable land management practices, such as establishing a pasture network and providing extension services through it.

MTR Criteria 3: Efficiency

36. **Conclusion 7:** Many activities were delayed, disrupted, and not achieved on time. Some of the project's approach including sapling production in community nurseries, user-organized plantations, and monitoring afforestation sites and other activities even when security situation was fragile was found to be cost-effective.

37. **Conclusion-8:** Considering the overall situation of project implementation, a no-cost extension for at least one year would provide sufficient time to accomplish remaining activities.

MTR Criteria 4: Sustainability

38. **Conclusion 9**: Project results and benefits are likely to be sustained because of, namely, the wide scope of capacity building of government technical staff, extension workers, and communities; community mobilization; and investments in restoring forest and rangelands

with likely economic returns from their products. Strengthening internal governance of the associations could reduce conflict in and among inter and intra associations and are likely to enhance institutional sustainability.

MTR Criteria 5: Factors Affecting Project Progress

39. **Conclusion 10**: The four project components were designed as complementary packages of work with success or failure in one influencing the success or failure of all the others. The project's performance has been adversely affected by the design, specifically: scattered project locations; over-ambitious targets for some outcomes; non-SMART indicators for some outcomes and outputs; over stretched outputs and activities; repetitive activities; poorly worded outcomes, outputs, and activities; and inconsistencies in budget headings.

40. **Conclusion 11:** M&E in general is weak. The project did not prepare a detailed M&E plan, thus reporting on progress in the PPR/PIRs is inconsistent and does not fully adhere to the indicators and targets. Specific and basic M&E requirements, such as assessments and outcome surveys, were not conducted according to the frequency and timeline specified in the ProDoc. The project lacks a robust M&E system and mechanism to promote adaptive result-based management including internal learning and knowledge management.

41. **Conclusion 12**: The project implementing team has been adaptive as the project encountered significant human resource capacity gaps and difficulties in recruiting and retaining national and international staff. The project implementation team was unable to complete some activities included in the annual workplan mainly due to delayed government approval, especially from GDNRM.

42. **Conclusion 13:** The project maintained good communication and visibility by ensuring high media coverage of success stories across diverse mediums, including radio broadcasts, social media, and local television channels. The project also produced many visual materials and reached out to stakeholders and communities.

MTR Criteria 6: Cross-cutting priorities

43. **Conclusion 14:** The project design integrated gender into its indicators and targets. The project during implementation focused on women through awareness raising, capacity building, and alternative livelihood interventions. However, the project has not paid sufficient attention to indigenous and minority groups, such as the Kuchis.

Recommendations

44. Based on the MTR findings and conclusions, the MTR offers six broad recommendations to inform the remaining project implementation. Detailed presentation of recommendations, responsible persons, and timing is provided in the recommendation section (see section 5).

45. **Recommendations: Effectiveness**

- The project should allocate more budget and human resources to identifying areas other than HVCF forest types for restoration and rehabilitation to achieve indictors for Outcome 2.1 and Output 2.1.3.
- Develop resource materials, including training toolkits, consistent with the indicators and targets, specifically regarding land degradation and restoration assessment, livelihood and resilience assessments, approaches and technologies for SFM and SLM, and an M&E framework for SFM and SLM. If the project does not have the capacity to develop these materials, it should hire a national or international capacity-building consultant.

- Considering the literacy levels of the project communities, revise and update existing resource materials—specifically the community-level capacity-building materials—to make them more user-friendly and visual to ensure everyone can understand and follow them.
- Establish pasture networks by identifying stakeholders, including farmers, livestock owners, veterinary services, livestock health and diseases prevention experts and service providers, and the private sector. Include indigenous people (the Kuchis) in developing the network. Conduct awareness-raising trainings on sustainable pasture management, including different practices to reduce conflict between farmers and the Kuchis. Engage the pasture network in extension services and conflict resolution.
- Support beneficiaries in cultivating NTFPs and adding value to enhance their benefit, while strengthening market linkages.
- Document the project's best practices after reviewing similar interventions in the region or other countries and document anecdotal impact stories and project good practices and lessons learnt. Provide details on the processes and mechanisms used for reaching a wide audience of stakeholders. GEF 7 and future GEF projects will benefit from the documentation of these best practices. If the PMU is unable to do this, it should hire a short-term national or international consultant. Upload these collected and synthesized best practices to the project's online portal so that academics, policy-makers, and development partners working in the NRM sector can benefit.

46. **Recommendations: Efficiency**

- Consider a no-cost one-year time extension to allow for more substantive achievement of the project's outcomes and to ensure that there are sufficient structures for enhancing the sustainability of project benefits.
- Revise the budget to support the revised results matrix (see Recommendation 1) and expedite disbursements.
- Hold biannual PTF meetings to provide guidance to the PMU, thereby helping to make up for the absence of a PSC and a CTA.
- Conduct risk assessments and update the risk log accordingly. Document challenges and risks well in the PPRs and PIRs.

47. **Recommendations: Sustainability**

- Design participatory governance assessment (PGA) tools based on the maturity index, and conduct PGAs in each FMA and RMA in order to assess their capacity to manage the association, enhance networking capacity, institutionalise, and implement its CBNRM plan effectively. The assessments will help the PMU identify the level of support needed to strengthen the capacity of each FMA/RMA and sustain the project's benefits. Develop the PGA tools and train field teams to conduct assessments and document findings. File documentation in the M&E database to inform annual work plans.
- Consult FMAs/RMAs and local-level extension and technical experts in developing an exit strategy that supports the sustainability of project's benefits.

48. **Recommendations: Factors affecting performance**

- The results matrix needs revised for SMART indicators and consistency with other indicators, mid-term targets, and activities to make the project more assessable. A logical coherence is needed among outcomes, outputs, and activities, and activities need to be categorized thematically to avoid redundancy. If the PMU lacks capacity to revise the entire matrix, it should hire a short-term international consultant.
- Revise or remove outputs that are unlikely to be achieved in the remaining project period, specifically 1.1.1 on the establishment of a CoE on NRM, 1.1.2 on training for government staff, and 1.1.4 on the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap adhering with TEF respectively. Reallocate

the budget for these outputs to outcomes and outputs related to community interventions. Strengthen the knowledge management component with a revised second budget. Revise Output 4.1.1 on establishing a national information and resource center with an associated M&E system and database for SFM/SLM: narrowing the original scope, limiting it to the project level by establishing a knowledge hub for the NRM sector for SFM and SLM. In addition, create an online portal linked to the M&E and knowledge management systems to reach a wider audience.

- Revise the project workplan, and align it with the revised results matrix, using the lessons from implementation to make it realistic and achievable within the remaining project period.
- Prepare an orientation package for newly hired staff to more easily internalize the project's concept, strategy, and implementation approaches. Doing so will help close some of the knowledge gaps between new and existing personnel of the PMU and PPMU. For the PPMU teams, organize orientation trainings on administrative and financial requirements, procurement requisitions, submission deadlines for financial documents, and keeping suppliers informed.
- Develop a systematic, robust, and comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for all outputs and outcomes with a regular review. Formulate a clear and detailed M&E plan, set up a database aligning with the indicators, and maintain indicator-based data. In addition, develop a participatory M&E framework for SFM and SLM.
- Support the quality and consistency of project progress and implementation reporting by aligning reports with indicators. Assign a full-time M&E specialist with adequate capacity to support the M&E system and enhance the quality of project implementation. If the capacity of PMU staff is insufficient, get support from the FAO CO or hire an international M&E expert for short-term inputs, especially the creation of an effective M&E system.
- Generate baseline data for alternative livelihood activities including a beneficiary income survey to determine the change at the terminal evaluation. Link this with the M&E framework.
- Conduct outcome surveys for fuel-efficient cooking stoves, changes in the area and type of vegetation cover on forest and rangeland, and capacity development; use a score card and other such mechanisms.

49. **Recommendations: Cross-cutting priorities**

- Develop a gender mainstreaming strategy and gender action plan with budget allocated to both and include the gender action plan in the project's annual work plan. A gender action plan will help the project systematically achieve its gender-focused indicators and targets and enable women and vulnerable people to benefit more from the project than they currently do. If the project does not have a gender expert, consult the gender focal point at the FAO CO.
- Reflect the issues and concerns of the Kuchis in the pasture network to be developed by the project and encourage their participation in rangeland management and creating an enabling environment through awareness raising and other outreach approaches.

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating[3]	Summary comments[4]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS	The project is highly satisfactory in terms of its strategic relevance at the country and global levels.
A1.1 Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project remains strongly aligned to GEF-6's focal areas BD-4, P9, CC-2-P4, LD-3-P4, and SFM-3 as well as FAO's SO-2 and country programming framework
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	HS	The relevance of the project is undoubtable. The project's development objective and its strategy for national-level capacity-building in the NRM sector is fully aligned with the country's priorities. The project's objectives, components, and outcomes are well aligned with the country's NRM sector priorities and with regional and global priorities (reduction in GHG emission).
A1.3 Relevance to beneficiary needs	HS	The project is primarily framed in terms of increasing resilience and diversifying the livelihoods options of local communities by contributing to sustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country.
A1.4 Complementarity with existing interventions	S	The project maintained synergies with other GEF projects (5 and 7) implemented by FAO.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	The project made good progress in restoring forests and rangelands and in biodiversity conservation through different management practices and increased carbon sequestration, community capacity-building, and alternative livelihood interventions. However, the delivery has been impacted by numerous delays and disruptions in implementation since its approval. It was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in terms of capacity development-related activities, as well as by delays in obtaining government approval, the fragile security situation, and the political change in August 2021. Despite this, the project met some mid-term targets.
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	Delivery of the project's outputs was mixed. Twenty-one planned outputs and the mid-term targets show mixed progress. Seven outputs exceeded the target, five partially met the target, and eight have not met the MTR targets. However, four out of the five that partially met their targets, those related to government capacity-building, CoE, REDD+ Roadmap, and the national resource centre hub, are unlikely to be achieved at all due non-involvement with the DFAs.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes[5] and project objectives	MS	Overall, progress towards the outcomes is mixed. Out of the five outcomes one well meets it mid-term targets and the other four do so only partially. Despite delays, the outcomes are achievable and will meet their endline target within a no-cost time extension. Progress towards objectives against the indicators and mid-term targets are progressing well and are achievable.
Outcome 1.1	MS	The project had mixed progress on this outcome. Out of the four outputs under outcome, three partially met their respective mid-term targets but considering the post-August 2021 situation they are unlikely to be met in their entirety. One output is likely to be meet either by the end of the project or within a no-cost time extension.
Outcome 1.2	S	This outcome had mixed progress. Out of the five outputs, three have met or highly exceeded their mid-term targets, one met its target, and one has partially met its target and is underway and likely to achieve that target. The project has developed numerous resource materials but did not take into account the topics set in the target. The project is yet to develop one crucial resource material, a M&E framework for SFM/SLM.
Outcome 2.1	S	The project made some promising progress under this outcome. Out of four outputs, some preparatory works were made in one, two exceeded their mid-term targets, and one met its first target (HCVF) but is far behind in the second target (other forest types).

[3] See rating scheme at the end of the document.
[4] Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.
[5] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

Outcome 3.1	MS	The project had mixed progress in this outcome. Two outputs made some progress toward meeting the mid-term target. Although the projected exceeded its outcome level targets in terms of area covered, being able to provide the degree of intensive management practices specified is questionable given the limited budget allocation.
Outcome 4.1	MU	The project has maintained activity progress data well but has reported progress in achieving outcomes and outputs differently. It has reported only on activity-level progress and achievements rather than reporting against indicators and targets and its reporting does not match the descriptions of indicators and mid-term targets. The project lacks a comprehensive M&E system.
Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	As a whole, the project attempts to reduce pressure on natural resources and enhance carbon sequestration through different forest and rangeland management practices. The project made good progress in restoring forests, rangelands, and biodiversity conservation applying different management practices such as plantation, promoting natural regeneration, quarantine, reseeding rangelands, rotational grazing, and prohibiting grazing in forest areas. In terms of improving the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities, the project made substantial progress by implementing numerous alternative livelihoods interventions, specifically targeting women.
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	The project is on the way to delivering the major impacts in terms of addressing unsustainable natural resource management, reducing GHG emissions, and improving livelihoods in rural Afghan communities. Its planned global benefits also materialized through carbon sequestration.
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[6]	MS	The efficiency of the project was negatively impacted by numerous implementation delays, high staff turnover, difficulty in finding suitable experts for national positions, key positions (STA and other international consultancies), staying vacant for long periods, the fragile security situation, a weak M&E system, delays in obtaining approvals from GDNRM, and the political changes in August 2021. The budget expenditure reached only 40.70% in 46 months of implementation.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	The project is following participatory and community-based approaches for restoring degraded natural resources. This approach will contribute to sustainability of the project results and benefits. The project has to strengthen the internal governance of associations and develop a strong M&E mechanism.
D1.1. Financial risks	ML	If the political situation of the country remains the same, the DFAs are unlikely to be able to fund extension and training services. Not all forest and rangeland restoration activities needed extra budget to be maintained, but the associations may need some funding, for example for hiring forest and rangeland site watchers (guards) prior to the production of nuts.
D1.2. Socio-political risks	ML	The risks associated with sustainability are mainly due to poverty and a possible negative economic downturn, both of which might have a negative impact on the protection of natural resources in the long run. Beneficiaries are supported in diversifying livelihoods options that might complement in their engagement.
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	ML	The project has not conducted any participatory governance assessments to find out the status of or level at which FMAs and RMAs are functioning. A strong monitoring mechanism needs to be established for sustainability. Without such a mechanism, institutional capacity will erode. There is a moderate chance of sustaining the project's initiatives.
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	The project does not have any plans for large construction such as the construction of a large reservoir or check dam, but instead gives priority to low-cost soil conservation structures such as contour bonds, ponds, and reservoirs in forests and on rangelands. The risks seem mitigable.

[6] Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

D2. Catalysis and replication	MS	The probability of replication is likely to be high once the project shares its best practices and lessons learnt with a wider group of stakeholders. Some activities have been replicated in neighboring communities.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[7]	MS	The project tried to interlink multiple thematic areas but those links are not free of shortcomings, some of which pose challenges during implementation. Some of those shortcomings include the scattering of project locations, over-ambitious targets for some outcomes, lack of SMART indicators for some outcomes/outputs, over-stretched outputs and activities, repetition of activities, poorly worded outcomes/outputs/activities, inconsistencies in budget categories (headings), and lack of consistency between indicators and targets.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	In general, oversight and quality implementation ensured that the annual workplan, PIRs PPRs, and reports were completed on time. Quality assurance and adaptive management aspects could be improved.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	MS	FAO's oversight was not able to overcome delays in project implementation at the beginning.
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	MS	The project was guided by the PSC. Only one PSC meeting has been held till date although the ProDoc envisioned holding such meetings biannually.
E3. Quality of project execution	MS	Quality of project execution is mixed. Generally, coordination with government execution partners was good, but that fact was not reflected in some actions, mainly obtaining approvals and endorsements.
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MS	The project faced challenges in finding suitable human resources in NRM and preventing high staff turnover. It also faced delays in hiring inter/national consultants. A lack of induction training for P/PMU staff and discrepancies while submitting bills and procurement requests were other shortcomings.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	MS	No major financial management issues were detected except that the budget was underspent.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MS	The PMU faced several issues regarding the implementation of project activities with the lead executing partner, GDNRM/MAIL. The GDNRM leadership tried to manage the project on its own terms and on many occasions did not approve or endorse activities and thereby caused substantial delays in implementing activities proposed in the annual work plan. There was no inter-departmental or ministerial coordination for joint monitoring and no stakeholder engagement plan was developed
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	A communication strategy and action exists, promising progress in communication. The project mobilized radio, television, and social media well to raise awareness and reach out to a larger audience and establish and maintain good visibility. Knowledge management is very weak, however, as there was no proper documentation.
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MU	Limited attention was given to M&E systems and the project did not prepare a detailed M&E plan. Reports highlight activity-level progress only, and progress reporting in the PPR/PIRs was not related to indicators and targets. The project lacks a robust M&E system and mechanism to incorporate adaptive results-based management. Overall, M&E at the implementation level is weak.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The ProDoc includes a basic M&E plan with different milestones and budget but many weaknesses were observed in the results framework including the lack of SMART indicators and targets.
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MU	Inadequate attention was given to M&E, and a detailed M&E plan was not prepared.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	The project faced numerous challenges and delays in implementation. High staff turnover, delays in securing approvals, and the lack of substantial project activities and budget expenditure (approx. 5%) in first 16 months of implementation (Aug 2018 – Dec 2019) impeded. The project picked up momentum only from start of 2020, and its performance after that was

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

		moderate. Several improvements are emphasized in the recommendation section.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The project did not conduct a gender assessment at the design phase and no gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan is in place. The project did, however, encourage women beneficiaries and engaged them in RMAs, alternative livelihoods, and capacity-building through training and awareness-raising activities. However, indigenous and minority groups, the Kuchi, are yet to be engaged in rangeland activities as envisioned by the ProDoc.
F2. Human rights issues	NA	Not evaluated.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	S	Interventions carried out by the project seem not to impact the environment negatively. The project mobilizes communities through associations.
Overall project rating	**MS**	

1. Introduction

1. This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the independent mid-term review (MTR) of the project GCP/AFG/084/GFF *Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan*. This is a six-year (2018–2024) project of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) funded through the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and co-financed by the Government of Afghanistan. It has a total budget of USD 64,753,106, of which USD 10,495,873 is GEF financing and USD 54,257,223 is co-financing from the FAO as well as the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), and Independent Directorate General of Kuchis (IDGK). The MTR covers the implementation period from August 2018 to August 2022. The MTR took place between November 2022 and February 2023 by a three-member evaluation team comprised of an international team leader and two national experts.

1.1. *Purpose and scope of the MTR*

2. This mid-term review was called for in the project document under Component 4: Knowledge and M&E. It is also required by the FAO for monitoring and reporting purposes. The terms of reference (ToR, Annex 1) for this MTR follows the FAO-GEF's 2020 guide for planning and conducting mid-term reviews of FAO-GEF projects and programmes. The MTR provides an independent, external assessment of the project's progress towards expected outputs, outcomes, and objectives and identifies areas for improvement and corrective measures. It also includes recommendations to enhance the delivery of the project's intended results.

3. The MTR team conducted field visits in four of the five project implementation provinces, Badghis, Bamiyan, Kunar and Paktia. The MTR process engaged the main project stakeholders, decision-makers, and implementers, including those at the sub-national level[8] and participants in community-based associations. The MTR team reviewed a series of documents in the context of project implementation and achievement of project outcomes. It also examined the strategy it took to achieve the project's results, measured in terms of its outputs and outcomes, and analysed the potential for achieving its mid-term milestones. The MTR explored the procedures the project followed after establishing them at the start of the project. All four project components as well as outcomes, outputs, and activities were assessed to identify findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for corrective actions.

1.2. *Objective of the MTR*

4. The main objectives of the MTR were to identify the status of the project in terms of its achievements and challenges and needs for further improvement and corrective actions in order to ensure that the project will be on track to achieve its expected results within the remaining project period. The MTR aimed to answer a number of major questions and related complementary sub-questions. These questions, which are summarized in Box 1, are aligned with the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) as well as GEF and FAO criteria related to factors affecting the project 's performance and cross-cutting issues, including considerations of gender as well as indigenous and other marginalized and vulnerable groups. The main review questions formulated in the inception report are as follows.

[8] The UN TEF restricted collaboration with DFA, so the MTR did not interview or consult government officials.

Box 1: MTR review questions

A. Relevance

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

B. Effectiveness of project results

3. To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?
4. What broader results (if any) has the project had at regional and global level to date?
5. Were there any unintended consequences?
6. Is there any evidence of environmental stress reduction (for example, in direct threats to biodiversity) or environmental status change (such as an improvement in the populations of target species), reflecting global environmental benefits or any change in policy, legal or regulatory frameworks?
7. To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?
8. To what extent are the projects outcomes and outputs achievable given the current national context, engagement with de-facto authorities and political situation?

C. Efficiency

9. To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?
10. To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?
11. To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. and avoided duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?

D. Sustainability

12. What is the likelihood that the project results will be useful or persist after the end of the project? What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and its benefits (consider financial, socioeconomic, institutional and governance, and environmental aspects)?
13. What project results, lessons or experiences have been replicated (in different geographic areas) or scaled up (in the same geographic area, but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources)?
14. What results, lessons or experiences are likely to be replicated or scaled up in the near future?

E. Likelihood of impact

15. Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives? What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project?
16. To what extent can the progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project?

F. Factors affecting progress

17. Is the project design suited to delivering the expected outcomes? Is the project's causal logic (per its theory of change) coherent and clear? To what extent are the project's objectives and components clear, practical and feasible within the timeframe allowed? To what extent was gender integrated into the project's objectives and results framework? Were other actors – civil society, indigenous peoples or private sector – involved in project design or implementation and what was the effect on project results?
18. To what extent did the executing agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities in managing and administering the project? What have been the main challenges in terms of project management and administration? How well have risks been identified and managed? What changes are needed to improve delivery in the latter half of the project?
19. What have been the financial-management challenges of the project? To what extent has pledged co-financing been delivered? Has any additional leveraged co-financing been provided since

implementation? How has any shortfall in co-financing or unexpected additional funding affected project results?

20. To what extent has FAO delivered oversight and supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative, and operational) during project identification, formulation, approval, start-up and execution?
21. To what extent have stakeholders, such as government agencies, civil society, indigenous populations, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and the private sector, been involved in project formulation and implementation? What has been the effect of their involvement or non-involvement on project results? How do the various stakeholder groups see their own engagement with the project? What are the mechanisms of their involvement and how could these be improved? What are the strengths and challenges of the project's partnerships? Has the stakeholder engagement plan been adhered to and documented? Have all stakeholders been made aware of the ESS plan and the grievance complaint mechanism?
22. How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders, and a general audience? How can this be improved? How is the project assessing, documenting, and sharing its results and lessons learned and experiences? To what extent are communication products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results?
23. Is the project's M&E system practical and sufficient? How has stakeholder engagement and gender assessment been integrated into the M&E system? How could this be improved?
24. Does the M&E system operate per the M&E plan? Has information been gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies? To what extent has information generated by the M&E system during project implementation been used to adapt and improve project planning and execution, achieve outcomes and ensure sustainability? Are there gender-disaggregated targets and indicators? How can the M&E system be improved?

G. Cross-cutting priorities

25. To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project? Has the project been designed and implemented in a manner that ensures gender-equitable participation and benefits? Was a gender analysis done? How has the project cross-cutting priorities been affected by the current national context?
26. To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project? Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures the ESS Mitigation Plan (if one exists) has been adhered to?

1.3. *Intended users*

5. The main intended users of the MTR are the main project decision-makers and implementers, specifically the FAO Afghanistan Country Office, the Project Management Unit, the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Project Task Force (PTF), national and provincial implementation teams, and the communities. These organizations will benefit from the MTR findings and recommendations for improving future project design as well as from the implementation of activities for the remaining period.

Table 1: Intended MTR users

Primary user of the MTR	**What they want to learn from the MTR**	**Why and how they expect to use the MTR**
International level – FAO- HQ OCB-GEF CU and Forestry Division FAO – RAP (including LTO)	▪ Was the design suitable, does it need change ▪ What is the progress towards objective/indicators/mid-term milestones ▪ Is the project approach suitable, what needs to be improved ▪ What lessons can be learned	▪ Adjustments to be made in the project design ▪ Timeframe for the project and case for extension ▪ Assess theory of change ▪ Share and build lessons learned and advice on implementing recommendations

National level – FAO Afghanistan Budget holder, PMU	▪ Is the project contributing to FAO CCF, national policies and priorities ▪ What is the progress towards agreed goals ▪ Was mid-term target achieved ▪ Impact of the capacity building activities ▪ What is the progress fund disbursement	▪ Review the project progress ▪ Agree on adjustment, taking corrective measures to achieve the targets on time ▪ Share and disseminate best practices and lessons learned ▪ Take early actions in case of project extension ▪ Advice province team to take timely actions
Province level – Field coordinators, CMs, community volunteers	▪ How effective was the project support ▪ What could be improved to achieve the agreed targets ▪ Is the project on track or alternative approach required to achieve targets ▪ Was provincial target achieved ▪ Impact of the capacity building activities at community level	▪ Help PMU to take adaptive measures based on field scenario ▪ Better plan activities for remaining project period
Community level – FMAs/RMAs users	▪ How effective was project support ▪ What went well and what did not work out ▪ What is the impact of capacity building on institutional and personnel level ▪ How is internal governance and functioning of user's associations	▪ Enhance community capacity on SNMR ▪ Support FMAs/RMAs to be more functional, maintain internal governance, participatory decision making, enhance participation of women marginalized groups

1.4. *Methodology*

6. **Overall methodological approach**: The MTR made a balanced, consultative, transparent and evidence-based review of the project's outcomes, outputs, activities, and performance to August 2022, drawing upon a review of the available reports and compiling quantitative and qualitative information from internal and external stakeholders through reviews, focus group discussions (FDGs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and field observations. It compared baseline data with achieved mid-term milestones. To assess the contribution of the project towards its stated outputs and outcomes, specifically its mid-term milestones, as stated in the result framework given in the program document (ProDoc), the MTR team organized field visits to interact with users' associations (RMAs/FMAs), beneficiaries of alternative livelihoods activities, livestock-rearing groups, and other stakeholders, including ordinary men and women, and observe changes in forest and rangeland as well as livestock-rearing practices.

7. The MTR used a mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) to capture the visible and invisible results of the project and provide a complete and holistic picture of the project's progress, challenges it faces, and areas for improvement in the remaining project period. A mixed-method approach triangulates and utilizes data better than do separate collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. Triangulation was carried out by a review of project documents and secondary sources of information, direct field observations, and interviews with FAO staff, provincial teams, communities, and other stakeholders engaged in the project's implementation and design. Evidences and information gathered underpinned its validation and analysis and aided in the drafting of conclusions and recommendations. The MTR followed the FAO-GEF's mid-term review guidelines in its evaluation approaches and methods as specified in the ToR of the MTR.

8. **Sample and sampling frame**: The MTR used purposive sampling while selecting provinces. Out of the five project provinces, four (Bamyan, Badghis, Paktiya, and Kunar) were selected for collecting field data. Ghazni was skipped because of transportation and logistical issues, but virtual interviews were conducted with the government technical officials and project field team. Locations and participants for FGDs were purposively selected, specifically considering

women beneficiaries of different project activities, logistics and accessibility while selecting FMAs and RMAs. To minimize bias, the MTR conducted FGDs separately with the executive committee members and general users from associations.

9. The MTR team conducted key informant interviews with 64 people, out of whom two in FAO HQ, one in FAO RAP, one previous FAO Afghanistan Representative, three in AFG CO, 11 in PMU, 11 in PPMU, and 35 at the sub-national government levels. In addition, the MTR team conducted 23 FGDs, eight of which comprised women beneficiaries reaching 369 people out of whom 126 were women.

10. **Data collection methods and sources:** The evaluation provides evidence-based information that is credible, realizable and useful. The findings were triangulated with reference to multiple lines of evidence collected using numerous evaluation tools and gathering information from different types of stakeholders and different levels of management. In order to conduct this MTR the following evaluation instruments were used:

11. **Project Result Framework**: The project's results framework was used as a tool to assess project progress-based indicators and mid-term milestones. While reviewing the project's achievements, the MTR adhered to FAO-GEF's evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, factors affecting performances, cross-cutting dimension including gender and equity concerns, and environmental and social safeguards.

12. **Evaluation Matrix**: As part of the inception report, the MTR team developed an evaluation matrix with evaluation indicators, data collection methods and sources based on the ProDoc, results framework and reviews of PPRs and PIRs, all aligning with the evaluation questions given in the ToR. The evaluation matrix provides overall directions for the evaluation and was used as a basis for developing interview tools and guides. It also helped in reviewing project documents in a structured manner and provided a basis for structuring reporting on the project's progress.

13. **Achievement rating**: The MTR rated project achievements according to the GEF's project review criteria, using the ratings highly satisfactory (HS), satisfactory (S), moderately satisfactory (MS), moderately unsatisfactory (MU), unsatisfactory (U), highly unsatisfactory (HU) and not applicable (NA). All evaluation criteria mentioned in the ToR were rated accordingly, including the completion of an overall ratings table as per Annex 11 of the FAO-GEF MTR guide.

14. **Semi-structured questions and FGD guide**: The MTR team, prepared a set of semi-structured questions and FGD guides for administering interviews and conducting FGDs. The MTR conducted semi-structured interviews at the central level with the implementing team, including budget holder, the LTO, the technical officer at HQ, the operations Officer, PMU members, the FAO-GEF funding liaison officer, the previous FAOR, and the PPMU teams in all five project provinces. The FGD guide was used to conduct FGDs at the community level.

15. **Stakeholder engagement matrix**: This matrix was used as a tool to collect data for the evaluation. Stakeholders were selected based on their involvement as listed in the ProDoc as well as their relationship to the project and their contributions.

16. **Data source**: The MTR reviewed project documents made available by the project, including project implementation reports (PIRs), project progress reports (PPRs) and monitoring information, different assessment reports, GEF tracking tools, capacity-development materials, communications and awareness-raising materials. The list of documents reviewed is presented in Annex 5.

17. Information collected through the review of documents and field-level consultations were triangulated and verified. A list of FGDs and KII participants is provided in Annex 3. The

interviews at the provincial and community level were conducted in local languages by national consultants with support from provincial project teams.

18. **Composition of the MTR team**: A three-member evaluation team comprising an international team leader and two national experts. The specific roles and responsibilities of each member are given in their respective ToRs.

1.5. *Limitations*

19. The constraints and challenges faced by the MTR can be summarized in four broad categories-- (i) timing, (ii) lack of institutional memory, (iii) the remoteness of the project's intervention locations, and (iv) an unbalanced MTR team. Each category is discussed below.

20. **Timing:** The timing of the MTR (wintertime) was challenging. Because snow fell early in Bamiyan and Paktiya, there were several flight cancellations. The snowfall also made it difficult to observe on-the-ground activities such as reseeding, plantation, and woodlots. Site observations to assess plant growth and biodiversity were accordingly rendered difficult. Indeed, the snow cover was so heavy, it partially prevented the interpretation of data and the MTR relied on secondary information, comparing photos before and after interventions.

21. **Institutional memory**: Newly hired staff did not have much institutional memory of project activities and were not able to provide as much information as the MTR team had hoped. For example, the field coordinators in Badghis and Bamyan only recently joined the project. This further got exacerbated in absence of interactions with government executing partners considering the post-August 2021 situation as agreed during the inception meetings. This gap limited the MTR team's understanding of the broader perspectives and priorities considered specifically during project design and coordination during implementation.

22. **Remoteness of project intervention locations:** Field interactions in and observations of ground activities in Ghazni Province were not planned because of the remoteness and consequent logistics issues. Even in other four provinces where field observations were made, were limited to accessible areas. Many of the project's activities, especially afforestation, reseeding, and quarantine for rangeland areas, are located in remote mountainous areas; hence, the MTR team could not visit them or observe the progresses made by the project. The remoteness of the sites where the project is active also limited the team's ability to capture field-level progress through independent observations.

23. **Unbalanced MTR team**: Members of the MTR team were all male. Respecting cultural restrictions, they did not interact with women's groups. This limitation was, however, resolved with the support of female project community mobilizers in some provinces. There were no female community volunteers in Badghis; as a result, the planned FGDs were not conducted.

2. Project background and context

24. **Project title**: Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan.

25. **Context**: This project promotes community-based forest and rangeland management to address unsustainable use of natural resources and reducing vulnerability. The project adopts multi-focal approaches for sustainable land management, biodiversity conservations, climate change mitigation through reducing emission from land use activities and sustainable forest management. The project is being implemented in five provinces: Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktiya. In Kunar and Paktiya, the project focused on high conservation-value forest and biodiversity conservation through sustainable forest management, whereas in Badghis, Bamyan, and Ghazni the rangeland is highly degraded, a state which is having a negative

impact on livestock production. Land degradation is mainly caused by overgrazing and deforestation, which are, in turn, one of the largest contributors to desertification in Afghanistan.

26. **Threats and barriers addressed by the project**: Rangeland and forest ecosystems in Afghanistan have been severely degraded by human activities and climate-induced disasters and continue to be threatened by land degradation, deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change. The project addresses major environmental and economic threats by promoting sustainable, community-based rangeland and forest management and biodiversity conservation in vulnerable landscapes. For effectively combating land degradation and biodiversity loss, the project addresses the following key barriers:

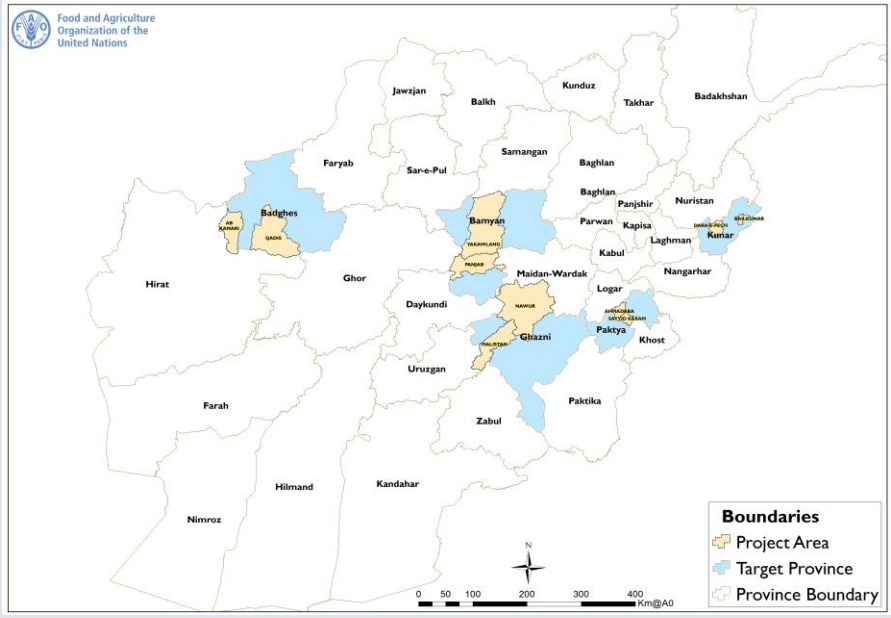
Box 2: Barriers and underlying issues

Barriers	Underling issues
Barrier 1: Over-harvesting of riparian forests and dwarf alpine shrublands	▪ Lack of knowledge on SLM results in unsustainable land-use practices having adverse effects on these ecosystems, including: i) deforestation; ii) overgrazing; iii) erosion; iv) lowered soil fertility; and v) the loss of biodiversity ▪ Over exploitation of natural resources through shrub and wood collection for both fuelwood and livestock grazing ▪ Continued over-harvesting threatens community livelihoods, as well as ecosystem functioning and the conservation of biodiversity in such areas
Barrier 2: Insufficient data on land and forest ecosystems to inform appropriate decision-making and planning	▪ Limited fine-scale data available to inform planning at the provincial or district levels ▪ Lack of characterization of current condition of Afghanistan's rangeland and forest ecosystems ▪ Limited information on: i) extent, condition and current productivity of land; ii) rates of deforestation and current condition of forest ecosystems; iii) current status of threatened biodiversity; and iv) deforestation and forest degradation resulting in greenhouse gas emissions ▪ Insufficient knowledge and values of ecosystem goods and services
Barrier 3: Weak enabling environment for SLM/SFM	▪ Absence of National Action Programme outlining priorities relating to UNCCD ▪ Need for further capacity building on planning and decision-making to support identification, prioritization, and implementation of activities to reduce rates of land degradation and desertification in Afghanistan. ▪ No clearly defined roadmap for the achievement of REDD+ Readiness objectives. ▪ Few examples of participatory mechanisms for forest management and cross-sectoral planning and decision-making on SFM ▪ Limited capacity of government officials particularly at the sub-national level to deliver support services on SFM for multiple environmental benefits
Barrier 4: Inadequate frameworks for coordinating community-based SLM/SFM	▪ Over exploitation of natural resources, ecosystem degradation and increased incidences of conflict between resource users, particularly between sedentary and nomadic pastoralists ▪ Limited frameworks for community-based planning and decision-making processes for coordination of SLM/SFM
Barrier 5. Limited incentives for SLM/SFM	▪ Limited incentives for ensuring sustainability of resource consumption and conservation of biodiversity. ▪ Limited understanding among natural resource users on the impacts of land and forest degradation

Barrier 6. Inadequate extension services for SLM/SFM	▪ Insufficient extension services relating to land management and forest conservation ▪ .Lack of updated scientific information on best practices of land and forest management among extension officers

Source: ProDoc, pp 16-17.

Box 3: Project description

GEF CEO endorsement date:	25 April 2018
Project implementation start date	26 August 2018
Project implementation end date	25 August 2024
Project duration	6 years
GEF project ID number	9285
Project country	The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Project location	Badghis, Bamiyan, Ghazni, Kunar, and Paktia
Project map:	
Contribution to GEF TF focal area strategic objectives and program	• Land degradation (LD1, Program 2) • Biodiversity (BD 4, Program 9) • Climate change mitigation (CCM 2, Program 4); Sustainable forest management (SFM 3, Program 7)
GEF Trust Fund financing Co-financing (in-kind)	US$10,495,873 US$ 54,257,233 (government)
Executing partners	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) General Directorate of Natural Resources Management (GDNRM) Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) Independent General Directorate of Kuchis (IGDK)

Source: ProDoc

27. **Project strategy and expected results**: The project strategy for addressing unsustainable rangeland and forest ecosystem practices is centered on the concept of participatory community-based sustainable natural resource management. Using this participatory

approach, the project focuses on building community capacity though trainings, workshops, and handholding, and motivates communities to implement sustainable land and forest management, biodiversity conservation and diversify alternative livelihoods options by creating community-based associations. The major expected results of the project are as follows.

- *Rehabilitate and restore 10,000 ha of high conservation value forest through assisted natural regeneration and sustainable forest management in Kunar and Paktiya*
- *20,000 ha of other forest types leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches in Badghis*
- *200,000 ha of degraded rangelands rehabilitate through climate resilient sustainable land management practice in Badghis, Bamyan, and Ghazni*
- *Conduct fine scale forest and range inventory*
- *Train at least train 10 community-based associations*
- *Develop at least 10 community gender response sustainable SLM/SFM plan*
- *Train 120 national and sub-national government staff on SLM/SFM and mainstreaming it in sectoral planning and budgeting process*
- *Conduct at least 20 awareness raising programmes on SLM/SFM and climate change mitigation and adaptation*
- *Train 300 community people through pastoral field school*
- *Support 50 households in agroforestry, alternative energy sources, and value addition in timber and non-timber forest.*

28. **Project objective**: The objective of the project is to support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity.

29. Project components, outcomes, and outputs: According to the ProDoc, the project has four components, five outcomes and 21 outputs presented in Box 4 below.

Box 4: Project components, outcomes, and outputs

Component 1: Capacity-building for SLM/SFM at the national, sub-national and district levels
Outcome: Enhanced capacity for SLM/SFM among national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors
Output: National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all level
Output: Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes
Output: Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces
Output: National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated
Outcome 2: Enhanced capacity for developing and implementing community based SLM/SFM plans among local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces
Output: Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tool
Output: Training provided to local-level technical government staff on facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use

Output: Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E
Output: Community Development Committees (CDCs), Forest Management Associations (FMAs) and Rangeland Management Associations (RMAs) supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans
Output: Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices
Component 2: Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes
Outcome: Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces
Output: Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces
Output: Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya
Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches
Output: Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces
Component 3: Community-based rangeland management
Outcome: Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangeland in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces
Output: Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/ rehabilitation with palatable species – implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands
Output: Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry
Component 4: Knowledge management and M&E
Outcome: Improved knowledge to inform the planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices
Output: National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established
Output: Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration
Output: Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated
Output: Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally
Output: Mid-term review (MTR) and Terminal Evaluation (TE) conducted

Source: ProDoc

30. **Groups and beneficiaries**: The ProDoc does not explicitly state the total numbers of the project's direct and indirect beneficiaries. Notwithstanding, the project clearly mentions targets for different activities.

31. **Key partners involved in the project**: FAO is the GEF agency responsible for the operational execution of the project, including supervision and financial operations. The main executing partners are GDNRM/MAIL, NEPA, MRRD, and IDGK[9]. The project is supported by a project

[9] Post August 2021, FAO following TEF does not recognize DFA. Accordingly, the project has halted collaboration with government executing partners.

management unit (PMU) which holds the executing responsibility for the delivery of the project's outputs and achievement of its project outcomes and day-to-day operations.

3. Theory of change

32. The MTR team noted that while there is no ToC in the project document, there is a detailed hierarchy, intervention logic and strategy. The proposed ToC constructed during the MTR inception phase is based on the result framework matrix of the ProDoc. This ToC needs to be reviewed and verified throughout the remaining project period.

33. As described in the ProDoc, the rangeland and forests in Afghanistan provide critical ecosystem goods and services that underpin the livelihoods of millions of Afghans in rural communities. However, many rangeland and forest ecosystems in the country have been severely degraded due to a range of biotic and abiotic factors, including human activities, and continue to be threatened by land degradation, deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change. The strategy underlying the project's concept is explicitly outlined in the ProDoc.

34. The project assumes that impacts of current and future climate change on degraded lands in Afghanistan will be reduced. To ensure that those impacts will be mitigated, decision-makers will be capacitated to incorporate climate change considerations into planning for SLM and SFM practices. Restoring ecosystems will reduce the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities, enhancing the benefits provided by ecosystems and ensuring their resilience even under conditions of climate change. Ecosystem rehabilitation builds resilience and adaptive capacity and promotes disaster risk reduction by improving the regulation of water resources through enhanced ecosystem functioning. Project activities will also have direct benefits for climate change mitigation by increasing carbon stocks through the restoration and sustainable management of forests and rangelands.

35. The goal of the project is improving and maintaining the livelihoods of rural Afghani communities by addressing unsustainable land and forest use. To achieve its development objective (the project's goal), the project adopted the specific objective of supporting integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan in order to promote biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity. Promoting the sustainable, community-based management of natural resources, including rangeland and forests, and developing capacity at the national and targeted provincial and community levels are the main project strategies for addressing unsustainable natural resource use as well as achieving the goals and objectives of the project.

36. The project was designed to enhance natural resource management, and crop and livestock production and livelihoods in the target areas in order to achieve a systemic change which will have global environmental benefits. Progress towards meeting this goal will be achieved through supporting the implementation of the four interlinked and mutually reinforcing technical components presented above (see Box 3). All interventions, outputs, outcomes, broad objectives, and development objective (goal) are interlinked to achieving long-term sustainable natural resource management.

37. The ToC explicitly describes five interlinked outcomes - enhanced capacity for SLM/SFM among national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors; enhanced capacity for developing and implementing community based SLM/SFM plans among local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces; improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces; climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangeland in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces; and improved knowledge to inform the planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices.

38. The project in collaboration with the government, specifically MAIL-GDNRM plays a pivotal role by strengthening national, sub-national and community level capacity for sustainable forest and rangeland management. This would be achieved through designing and implementing tailored interventions, including soil and water conservation measures, rotational grazing and rangeland restoration with appropriate pasture management techniques and species, rehabilitation and restoration degraded forest and rangeland specifically HCVF and other forest types, alternative livelihoods options, promotion of clean energy, value chain of livestock products, support to sustainable forest and rangeland systems, support to associations to prepare community based NRM plans, share the learnings and best practices with wider stakeholders in five provinces.

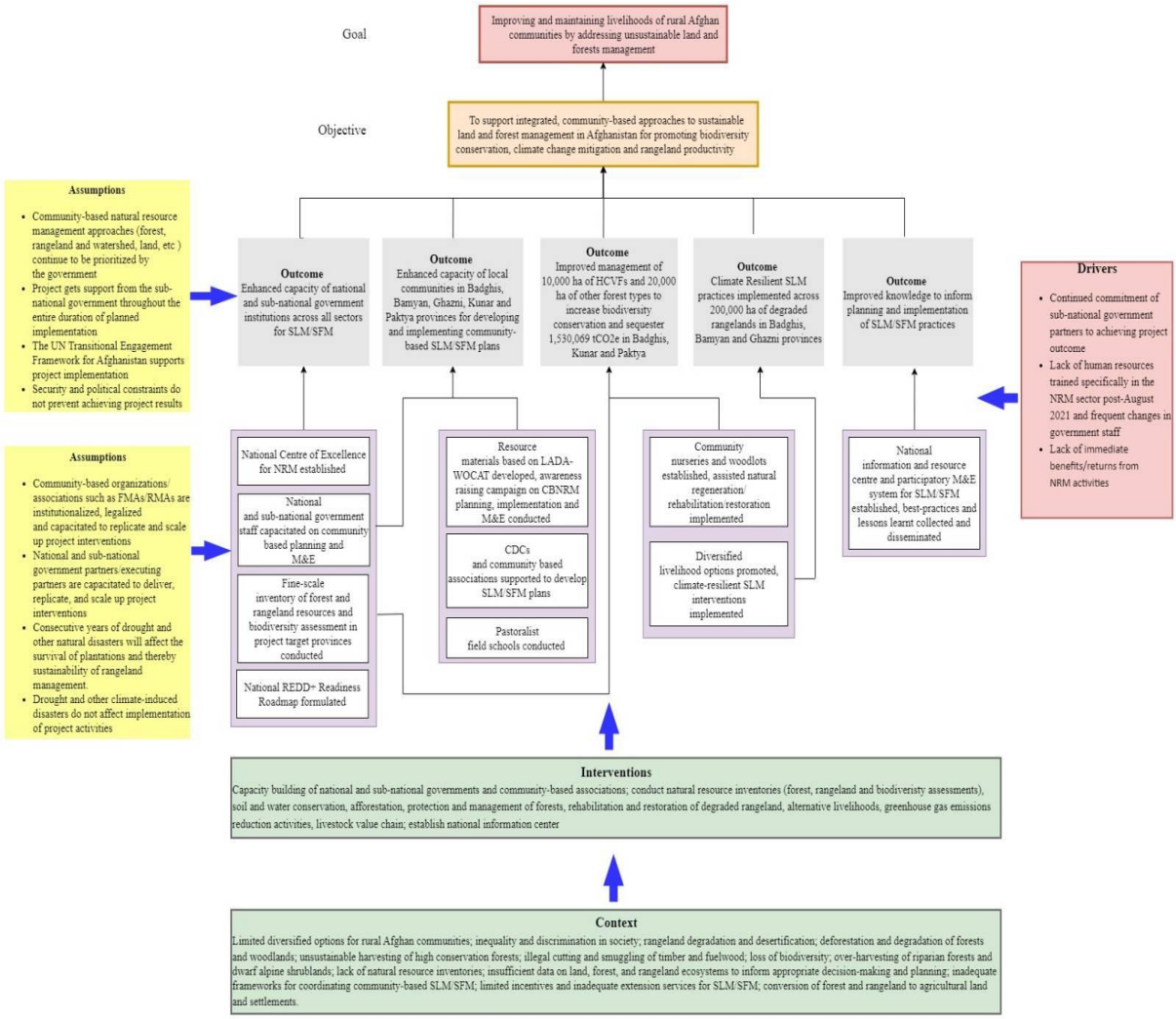
39. The outputs outlined in the ProDoc are in a causal pathway with outcomes and project goal. However, some of the outputs are over stretched and are redundant, specifically under outcome 1 and 2. For example, output 1.1.2 and 1.2.2 have same content.

40. The interventions described above are expected to be interface between the communities and external entities such as market and government institutions, other service provides. To make the existing NRM systems sustainable, the rural communities are provided with different livelihoods options. The community-based approach, as the implementation strategy adopted by the project, is expected to better manage natural resources and use of products as well as improve biodiversity, carbon storage, and alternative livelihoods of the communities thereby contribute to achieve the project development goal. Capacity development activities envisioned by the project, enhanced skills of government officials at the national and sub-national levels, convincing them to adopt integrated land-use planning and promote community-based natural resource management. To build community resilience by mitigating the impacts of climate change, the project addresses the critical barriers and environmental threats outlined in the ProDoc.

41. The assumptions outlined in the ProDoc are partly true, however, they are not sufficient according to the FAO-GEF guidelines on Theory of Change (MTR guide, Appendix 10). It appears as if elaboration of the context and are not given in explicit manner. While constructing the ToC, assumptions are described based on the interviews, review of document, and country current situation. For example, consecutive years of drought and other natural disasters will not affect the project interventions, and the UN Transitional Engagement Framework for Afghanistan supports project implementation in post August 2021 situation

42. The ToC is summarized in the figure below (next page).

Figure 1: Theory of Change



4. Key findings and MTR questions

43. The MTR's findings on each evaluation criterion and its questions are presented in this sections below.

MTR Criteria-1: Relevance

Finding: Congruent with country priorities

44. The review of the information package made available to the MTR team and interviews with the PMU and government officials at the sub-national level indicate that the project's objectives and outcomes are highly coherent with the government's development goals, sectoral policies, strategies and national priorities for the NRM sector of the country. The project has enhanced national and local policies and legal frameworks related to the decentralization of the roles and responsibilities for forest conservation and sustainable management, including biodiversity conservation through mobilizing the community. The MTR noted that the project's objectives, components, and outcomes are well aligned with the country's NRM sector priorities, as is elaborated in Box 5 below.

Box 5: Alignment of the project's objective and outcomes with country priorities[10]

NRM Strategy, 2017- 2021: Project Outcomes 2.1, 1.2, and 3.1 contributes to achieving NRM Strategy Objectives 1, 2, and 4 respectively.

Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF), 2017-2021: Project Outcome 2.1 and 3.1 contributed to the ANPDF priority by stimulating rural economies through livelihoods

Agriculture Development Priority Program (ADPP), 2016-2020: Project outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 align with Outcome 5 of the ADPP

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2014–2017: Project Outcome 2.1 is well aligned with country-level targets 5 and 7

National Adaptation Program of Action for Climate Change (NAPA): Project outcomes: Project outcomes 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1 contributed to sectors ranked most

Finding: Congruent with the GEF's focal areas and operational programme strategies

45. The project was designed keeping in mind several of the GEF's focal areas, including biodiversity, climate change mitigation, sustainable forest management, and land degradation. Specifically, the project is fully aligned with the GEF's focal areas shown in Box 6 below.

[10] NRM Strategy, 2017- 2021; Strategic Objective 1: Community-based forest management that includes conservation, restoration, reforestation, afforestation, sustainable utilization and local-based value addition, and watershed improvement for resilient, climate-adapted and sustainable economies in rural and pre-urban communities.

Strategic Objective 2: Community-based forest management

Strategic Objective 4: Institutional and human capacity development to build an enabling environment for meeting the expected outcomes of this NRM strategy.

ANPDF: The topmost priority of the ANPDF is the creation of sustainable jobs and economic growth. Of the ten new national priority programmes of Afghanistan, the project is aligned with National Comprehensive.

Targets 5 and 7 of NBSAP: Target 5: rate of loss and degradation of natural habitat decrease and Target 7: resilience of the components of bio-diversity to adapt to climate change and enhanced; pollution and its impact on bio- diversity reduced.

Box 6: The GEF's focal areas and aligned project outcome/component

GEF focal area	Project outcome and components aligned with
BD-4[11], Programme 9 (adapted from GEF Indicator 4)	The overall objective of the project aligns with GEF Indicator 4 and the interventions are intended to support the integration of community-based approaches to SLM/SFM and promote bio-diversity conservation
CC-2[12] and Programme 4 and Indicator 4	Objective-level Indicator 2 and the project target set to achieve this indicator are well aligned with the GEF's Focal Area CC-2
LD-1[13], Programme 2 and Indicator 1.3	Outcome 3.1 of the project is well aligned with LD-1 and Programme 2 and Indicator 1.3
SFM-3[14], Programme 7 and Indicator 5	Outcome 2.1 of the project calls for the rehabilitation of HCVFs as well as other forest types and the introduction of improved management methods

Finding: FAO Country Programming Framework and UN TEF

46. The project's objectives and outcomes fully align with the FAO's Global Strategic Objectives 2 (SO2): *increase and improve the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner*. In particular, the project contributes to improving an enabling environment for participatory-based SFM/SLM work in Afghanistan, demonstrating various practices and tools feasible for the Afghan context. Box 7 summarizes the alignment of the FAO CO programme framework with the project's components and outcomes.

Box 7: Alignment of the FAO country programme and the project's components and outcomes

FAO country programme framework	Project component and outcomes aligned
Pillar 1: Better governance through improved capacity for policy planning, land reform, decentralization, and management of common natural resources	Objective, and outcome 1.1 and 1.2 contribute to this pillar, which calls for the capacity-building of government officials at the national and sub-national levels.
Pillar 2: Fostering expansion of irrigation and field-water management	The construction of small-scale water reservoirs for irrigation in reforested areas under Outcome 2.1 contributed to this pillar.
Pillar 3: Intensive agriculture for surplus commercialization, value chain development, and job creation	Interventions and actions designed to achieve Outcome 3.1, specifically, the value chain of livestock products and cultivation and value addition of non-timber forest products are aligned with this pillar.

[11] BD 4: Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes and seascapes and production sectors and programmes; BD 9 : Managing the human-biodiversity interface

[12] Demonstrate Systemic Impacts of Mitigation Options Programme 4: Promote the conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests, and other land-use areas and support climate-smart agriculture

TEF strategic priorities: To support the people of Afghanistan by saving lives, sustaining essential services, and preserving social investments and community-level systems addressing basic human needs.

[13] Agriculture and Rangeland Systems: Maintain or improve the flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods and Programme 2: LM for Climate-Smart Agriculture

[14] Restored forest ecosystems: Reverse the loss of ecosystem services within degraded forest landscapes. Programme 7: Building technical and institutional capacities to identify degraded forest landscapes and monitor forest restoration; Indicator 5: Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, stratified by forest management actors.

Pillar 4: Supporting vulnerable farmers for improved food and nutrition security, resilience, and emergency response to natural and man-made disasters and climate change	Interventions and actions designed to achieve Outcome 2.1, specifically diversifying livelihood activities to reduce the reliance of communities upon forest ecosystems that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and increasing value addition for timber and NTFPs to generate more wealth for communities
TEF framework[15]	While designing the project, the political scenario was different, so there was no specific focus on TEF. With the government run by DFA since August 2021, the project is still aligned with TEF Outcome 3[16]

Finding: Needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries

47. The project is primarily framed in terms of increasing the resilience of the livelihoods of local communities by addressing unsustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country. In several other countries CBNRM models address unsustainable NRM. The strong connection between rural communities and their forest and rangeland in Afghanistan provides a good basis for developing such a model. During interviews and FGDs with communities, alternative livelihood opportunities, specifically agroforestry, clean cooking stoves, and passive solar are small income-generating activities. Backyard poultry and afforestation are also considered to be good interventions for addressing their urgent needs and priorities. Livelihood interventions such as backyard poultry, agroforestry and NTFP cultivation, particularly Hing (Ferula; a medicinal plant) cultivation, under pistachio seeding areas were highly appreciated by the communities interviewed.

48. Participants in focus group discussions with users and executive committee members and interviews with technical officers at the sub-national level claimed that the project is highly relevant to addressing the actual needs of the target communities. They shared that the project had been the first to initiate plantation in large-scale, highly degraded forest areas. Women's groups in project areas where the MTR interacted opined that the alternative livelihoods packages implemented by the project, specifically backyard poultry, improved cooking stoves, and agroforestry, were highly relevant for women for their ability to generate income and reduce pressure on forest and rangelands.

Finding: Changes in relevance of the project, barriers and risks likely to prevent future progress, and actions to enhance the likelihood that the project will have positive impacts

49. The MTR noted that the project is still highly relevant in addressing unsustainable natural resource use and in meeting the needs of communities. Its approach, specifically the strengthening of the capacity of government partners to address risks and barriers in the NRM sector as stated in the ProDoc, seems unlikely to be feasible, however, if the current scenario continues. The change in the political situation in the country since August 2021 (non-engagement with DFAs) may limit the project's ability to achieve some of its outcomes and outputs as well as to pursue its planned strategy. The MTR believes that the project has to reassess and revise outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.4 and reallocate their budgets to other outputs and activities. There is still substantial budget for these outputs despite the first budget revision, which is understandable since the current political situation was not foreseen during the revision.

50. The MTR noted inadequate participation of the Kuchis in the project's activities and believes the project has to engage the Kuchis and respect their customary rights. It needs to devise a mechanism to engage them as well as implement interventions to reduce conflict with them.

[15] to support the people of Afghanistan by saving lives, sustaining essential services, and preserving social investments and community-level systems addressing basic human needs
[16] By the end of 2022, Afghanistan will preserve social investments and community-level systems essential to meeting basic human needs, protect gains to the SDGs, and develop scenarios for future engagement.

For example, the CBNRM plan of RMAs needs incorporate the Kuchi's traditional rights and practices. With the Kuchi nomadic nature in mind, the project should carefully mobilize the pasture network in rangeland management areas.

51. Another risk that, the MTR foresees is the government not taking forward the project's achievements through their own mechanisms. In particular, it may not provide technical and legal support to FMAs and RMAs after the project comes to an end. These institutions, however, need a few more years to see them fully mature and functioning independently.

52. Considering Afghanistan's country development priorities, the needs and priorities of the target beneficiaries, the GEF's focal area and operational programme strategies, and the FAO country programme framework, the MTR found that the relevance of the project is highly satisfactory.

MTR Criteria-2: Effectiveness

53. In line with the GEF's and the FAO's mid-term review requirements, progress towards outputs and outcomes was assessed against indicators and mid-term targets. In assessing its progress against mid-term targets, the MTR used the template presented in Annex 6.

Finding: Delivery of outputs and outcomes

Component-1: Capacity-building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM

54. The primary focus and most of the planned outputs and outcomes under this component aim to enhance the capacity of government at different levels (sub-national and national) and communities. It further ensures that knowledge about the integrated planning for SFM and SLM is strengthened and mainstreamed into sectoral planning and budgeting processes. In achieving this end, Component 1 includes nine outputs and two outcomes. Details regarding progress under each output and outcome are presented below.

55. Output 1.1.1: *National Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Natural Resource Management established for coordinating capacity development in and knowledge management of SLM/SFM at all levels*. The indicator and mid-term target explicitly describe the existence of an MoU, including an organogram and a methodology for the Centre of Excellence for NRM, formulated and endorsed by the government. The document review and interviews with the project team revealed that a concept note on the Centre of Excellence for NRM was prepared by an international consultant and approved by FAO Afghanistan and submitted to GDNRM for endorsement. The CoE concept explicitly elaborates the methodology, strategic framework, collaboration model, and documents to be produced in future. They include financial and operational sustainable strategies. The project was unable to implement all the activities stated in the result framework of this output, however, specifically signing MoU with relevant institutions and developing financial strategy. Interviews with PMU revealed that GDNRM was not supportive throughout the process and the proposed activities were repeatedly delayed. With post August 2021 situation, this output is most likely not be implemented and accordingly achieved. This output needs to be reviewed and budget allocated can be transferred to community level activities such as plantations, reseeding, restoration rangelands and forest, and alternative livelihoods interventions. Based on available data, the MTR rates achievement of this output moderately unsatisfactory.

56. Output 1.1.2: *Training programme on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes, developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials.* This output will be achieved through long-term capacity building-programmes and training packages, modules,

and course materials produced with the mid-term target of training 45 people, 20% of them women. The PIRs indicate that 392 male and 20 female national and sub-national government employees were trained on over 25 different topics through 76 events. The mid-term target set was significantly exceeded, but, as only 5% of trainees were female, it failed to meet the target set for female staff. However, this limited number is well understood as there are very few female staff in the government, especially at the sub-national level. The MTR noted that the project has not prepared detailed capacity-building packages for national or sub-national government employees. Considering the changes since August 2021, this output may not be completely implemented. This output needs to be reviewed. Budget allocated to this output should be transferred to hardware activities at the community level activities such as low-cost soil conservation activities alternative livelihoods. Based on available data, the MTR rates the achievement of this output moderately satisfactory.

57. Output 1.1.3: *Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources, including ecosystem goods and services, rangeland and forest conditions and socio-ecological resilience, undertaken in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces.* Review and analysis of project reports reveal that the indicators and targets set for this output, such as that a draft methodology and plan for the fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland are developed, field enumerator training is conducted, and necessary equipment is procured. Considering the evidence, the MTR rates this output satisfactory.

58. Output 1.1.4: *National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap, including provisions for a national MRV system, formulated*. The project has developed a REDD+ Readiness Roadmap and submitted it to GDNRM for endorsement. A technical working group was formed with government executing partners and the project team. The MTR did not find provisions for detailed MRV systems. Keeping in view the situation after August 2021 this output is most likely not going to be achieved as the government did not endorse the REDD+ Roadmap and the other documents listed in the roadmap should be formulated by the government with support from other stakeholders. This output needs to be reviewed, and budget allocated to this output should be transferred to other activities. The MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

59. Output 1.2.1: *Resource materials on local-level planning and, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools*. This output is aligned to the number of resource materials on SLM/SFM tailored to local socio-economic and environmental conditions, with a mid-term target of four sets of resource materials prepared. The project has developed five sets of resource materials, but these materials are different from those specified in the mid-term targets. Materials were developed without taking into account the topics set in the target. Interviews with government technical staff revealed that the materials which were prepared need to take into account the literacy level of the community people. The project has not yet developed one of the crucial resource materials on the M&E of SFM/SLM. If the project team does not have the capacity to develop the right materials, the project should hire national or international experts. The project needs to revise and update the materials and make them more friendly to the illiterate, for example, by including more self-explanatory pictorial material. The MTR rates this output moderately unsatisfactory.

60. Output 1.2.2: *Training on the facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use provided to local-level technical government staff*. According to project implementation reports, 254 people, 3% of them women, were trained on SFM/LSM, animal husbandry, and the sustainable use of NRM. The target was significantly exceeded. KIIs with sub-national government technical staff from the project's implementation provinces highly appreciated the trainings provided to them. They shared that the topics covered in the trainings were highly relevant to local-level extension workers and technical

staff and that the project was the first project to have delivered a training specifically focused on natural resource restoration and management. The MTR rates this output satisfactory.

61. Output 1.2.3: *Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E*. The project conducted 1,040 events and reached 22,088 people, more than 41% of whom were women. It raised awareness about different themes, including sustainable natural resources, alternative livelihoods for reducing pressure on NRM, and soil conservation. It was noted that the project has prepared audio messages about the conservation of natural resources in local languages and broadcasted them through local radio programmes. Participants in FGDs revealed that these radio messages were useful for them and liked by the communities. Such campaigns were effective on reaching large communities and making them aware of the importance of SLM/SRM. During FGDs with women beneficiaries, the participants opined that many women, girls and boys are interested in participating in such campaigns. They shared that the campaigns were very helpful in reducing the cutting of forests and the uprooting of bushes from the rangelands. Interviewed provincial-level government officials also appreciated the awareness raising-campaigns. The MTR rates this output satisfactory.

62. Output 1.2.4: *Community development committees, FMAs and RMAs supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans*. The project created 61 community-based natural management associations (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) and prepared CBNRM plans for each of them. While comparing this with the output level target for mid-term, the MTR has impression that it the project has exceeded the target. FGDs with executive committee members of FMAs and RMAs revealed that they are carrying out activities such as afforestation, conservation, protection, reseeding, quarantine, rotational grazing in line with CBNRM plan. While reviewing the list of executive committee member of these associations, the MTR has an impression that women participation in such associations in all provinces might not exist. It is, however, understandable that participation of women may be limited due to cultural restrictions. The MTR rates this satisfactory.

63. Output 1.2.5: *Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland*. The project has developed the methodological framework for pastoralist field schools and translated it into local languages. It also trained 273 community people, 18 (7%) of whom were women, though 25 events. The MTR noted that though the project greatly exceeded the mid-term target, it failed to reach the required number of women participants. It is highly recommended that during the remaining project period, the projects pays attention to meeting the end-of-project target. The MTR rates this moderately satisfactory.

64. Outcome 1.1: *Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM*. To achieve this outcome, the project set an indicator of increasing the capacities of MAIL/DAIL and other relevant government institutions and staff to plan for and implement SLM/SFM. The MTR did not find any evidence contributing in achieving the mid-term. A capacity needs assessment was conducted by using the capacity score card during the design phase and provided as the baseline score. Having said, the MTR did not find any outcome survey, as indicated in the results framework to compare between the baseline and mid-term scores. The PIR and project database reported the numbers of government staff at national and sub-national levels that had been trained. The first PIR reported that no outcome surveys had been conducted whereas the following PIRs were silent on this matter. Interviews also confirmed that no surveys were conducted using capacity score cards. Based on the available data, the MTR rates the achievement of this outcome moderately satisfactory.

65. Outcome 1.2: *Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans*. The project mid-term target is to train at least 10 CDCs, FMAs and RMAs. Review of PIRs revealed

that, the project established 61 associations (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) and trained 5,952 people, 659 (11%) of whom were women, through more than 15 different sets of trainings. Considering the outcome-level indicator and mid-term target, the outcome was over achieved. The MTR rates this outcome satisfactory.

Component-2: Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes

66. Most of the planned outputs and outcomes under this component focus on biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration through the restoration of degraded forest landscapes, opportunities for diversified alternative livelihood options, and promotion of alternative energies for reducing GHG emissions. These are achieved through four outputs and one outcome. Details regarding progress under each output and outcome are presented below.

67. Output 2.1.1: *Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces.* The project has not conducted the biodiversity assessments given as the mid-term target. The PIRs reveal that only some preparatory work, such as the development of a manual for biodiversity assessment and a work plan and the procurement of necessary equipment and tools, has been completed. Comparing the level of achievements against the mid-term targets, the MTR recommends that the project pay careful attention so that it can, accomplish the activities under this output. This output is rated moderately satisfactory.

68. Output 2.1.2*: Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.* The target for this output was exceeded. The project established 165 small community nurseries and 827 small woodlots as shelterbelts. Together, these establishments cover approximately 160 ha. During the field observations it was noted that cutting plantation survival was approximately 70 percent which the MTR believes is low. Interviews with the project team revealed that small woodlots were established for two reasons: community interest and lack of sites suitable for establishing large woodlots. This output is rated moderately satisfactory.

69. Output 2.1.3*: Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis), leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches.* The project has restored 8,128 ha of HCVFs through improved management practices, including assisted natural regeneration and quarantine. FGDs with communities revealed that they have witnessed positive changes such as more greenery, regeneration of native species, less cutting of trees, and less soil erosion in those locations where management practices were implemented. During KIIs, government officials at the sub-national level confirmed the same. The MTR formed the impression that the situation is similar to that presented in Outcome 2.1 below. In the case of HCVFs, achievement is excellent but in the case of other forest types it is very low. Considering the achievements in both targets of this output, the MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

70. Output 2.1.4: *Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces.* The interviews revealed that the project has conducted alternative livelihood assessments and identified activities prioritized by the community. The project has implemented both activities well and exceeded the mid-term target. The project supported 9,660 families with fuel-efficient cooking stove, 850 families with backyard poultry, and 1,654 families with agroforestry. Participants from all 23 FGDs had similar views on the alternative livelihood activities and highly appreciated their quality, and usefulness. The packages did well in meeting the community needs. They further expressed their happiness that the project targeted poor families. Some women shared that they are making an income by selling eggs. They use the earnings to fulfill daily needs, buy clothes

and food items, and pay the school fees of their children. They shared that they use fuel-efficient cooking stoves that the project distributed, which help to reduce smoke, cook faster, and consume less fuel than traditional stoves. However, many of them complained on the size which cannot accommodate large utensils. They further opined that they currently benefit from the crop cultivation associated with agroforestry but hope to get more benefits in the future from fruits and fuel wood from trees. Government officials also appreciated that the alternative livelihood activities implemented are truly helping women, mainly those from poor households, in multifold ways. Analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, the MTR rates this output satisfactory.

71. Outcome 2.1: *Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces*. Most of the planned outputs under this outcome are related to biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration through the restoration of degraded forest landscapes, opportunities for diversified alternative livelihood options, and promotion of alternative energies for reducing GHG emissions. The mid-term target set for this outcome, restoration of 2000 ha of HCVFs and 4,000 ha of other forest types, was partially met. According to the PIRs, 13,250 ha of HCVF were restored, 5,122 ha through plantation and 8,128 ha through improved management practices. The MTR observed that while the mid-term target for HCVFs was exceeded by a factor of six times, in the case of restoring other forest types restored, the project achieved only 10% of its target. The MTR got the impression that the project paid a great deal of attention to restoring HCVF and gave other forest types less priority. The reason for this, as shared by the PMU, was due to communities not interested to work in other forest types in bigger or commercial scale. One other reason shared was that they do not have enough resources such as suitable land and irrigation water facilities. The MTR considers that the restoration of both HCVF and other forest types has equal weightage and recommends that the project pays more attention to this activity by identifying areas to work in and starting the process. This could be in the form of cash for work, LoAs, training and capacity building of the associations. The MTR rates the achievement of this outcome satisfactory.

Component-3: Community-based rangeland management

72. Component 3 largely focuses on the management of degraded rangelands and pastures in three provinces (Badghis, Bamyan, and Ghazni) through participatory initiatives which mobilize communities. Through this component, the project aims to restore and enhance vegetative coverage by implementing different rangeland management practices such as reseeding, applying rotational grazing, quarantine, and soil and water conservation measures. To achieve the aforesaid aspects, this component comprises of two outputs and one outcome. Details regarding progress under each output and outcome are presented below.

73. Output 3.1.1*: Climate-resilient SLM interventions, including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/ rehabilitation with palatable species, implemented on over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands*. The project has restored 132,198.57 ha of rangeland through different management practices such as reseeding (1,222 ha) and rotational grazing (130,976 ha). The target for the mid-term is well met in terms of area covered. The MTR is critical of the quality of intensive management considering the area and corresponding budget allocated to this component. Out of the six activities proposed in the result framework, the project has carried out only three. Activities such as establishing seed and fodder banks, check dams, contour bunds and other appropriate measures have not yet been conducted. The project needs to conduct the remaining activities within the remaining project period. The MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

74. Output 3.1.2*: Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry*. The project has completed a value chain for livestock husbandry and

identified alternative livelihoods activities. However, the project has not conducted major activities designed under this output such as establishing a pasture network and providing extension services through the network. The project is recommended to form pasture networks by engaging famers and pasture users and keeping in mind the inclusion of indigenous peoples, the nomadic Kuchis, and conduct awareness-raising trainings on sustainable pasture management, including different practices to reduce conflict between pasture users and Kuchis. The MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

75. Outcome 3.1: Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces. The area of land under effective agricultural, rangeland, and pastoral management practices, and supporting climate-smart agriculture is set as the indicator to assess this outcome. The mid-term target is 50,000 ha of rangeland under pastoral management practices. Substantiating information and data gathered from documents reviewed, FGDs, and KIIs revealed that the indicators set for the outcome were partially achieved. The project made good progress and greatly exceeded the targets (see the progress reported under Output 3.1.1). However, the MTR believes that several activities under this outcome are yet to be implemented. The MTR noted that not all of the outputs under this outcome have achieved the targets set for the mid-term. In addition, the project was unable to start some of the activities. The project is recommended to start and timely conduct the remaining activities within the remaining project period. The MTR rates this outcome moderately satisfactory.

Component-4: Knowledge management and M&E

76. This component is crucial for learning about the overall effectiveness of the project. It highlights knowledge improvement for implementing SLM and SFM through informed planning and decision-making. It focuses equally on documenting the lessons learnt and the best practices of the initiatives taken by GEF projects with the aim of replicating and scaling them up in future projects and initiatives. This component foresees the dissemination of knowledge management products by utilizing a 'knowledge hub' created by the project to reach out effectively to a wider audience of stakeholders than it currently does. Five outputs and one outcome are designed to achieve the above-mentioned interventions. Details regarding progress under each output and outcome are presented below.

77. Output 4.1.1: *National information and resource center with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established*. Reporting for this output is not consistent with the indicators and targets set. The mid-term target calls for the establishment of a knowledge hub/ national information and resource center with an M&E system and database, however, the MTR noted that reported progress in PIRs does not match with the target and instead refers to establishing database for SLM/SFM with segregated data for male and female beneficiaries. The progress/achievement in this output, however, is interlinked with Output 1.1.1, CoE establishment. The MTR notes that since a CoE was not established, this output is unlikely to achieve its target. Considering the post August 2021 situation, the project should develop a separate online platform or website for FAO-GEF projects and upload all data and all knowledge products so they can be used by professionals, academics, NRM practitioners, and other interested people. The MTR rates this output moderately unsatisfactory.

78. Output 4.1.2: *Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration*. KIIs with provincial teams revealed that the project conducted joint monitoring with national and sub-national executing agencies prior to August 2021 and that this practice continued informally even after August 2021. However, the output indicator calls for the number of participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites, whereas the mid-term target explicitly mentions a participatory M&E framework. In the

remaining project period, the project has to develop a participatory M&E framework including implementation protocols for forest and rangeland conditions. The MTR rates this output moderately unsatisfactory.

79. Output 4.1.3: *Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated*. The indicator for this output calls for the number of synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated, and sets a mid-term target of four guidelines. According to the PIRs, the project prepared and uploaded four success stories in the FAO Afghanistan website. The MTR noted that the progress reported for this output is not consistent with the indicators. The project should collect, document and disseminate best practices in rangeland and forest restoration of different flora within the remaining project period. The MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

80. Output 4.1.4: *Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally*. The project has produced and disseminated nine success stories and shared them on the FAO Afghanistan website and in its newsletter. Besides, the project shared key lessons learnt in an international forum, the World Forestry Congress, in 2022. The MTR rates this output moderately satisfactory.

81. Outcome 4.1: *Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices*. The indicator and target set for this outcome explicitly mentions improvement in capacity for knowledge management and assess the knowledge management using a scorecard. However, the MTR did not find that any outcome survey/assessment was conducted to compare the scores. Thus, it is not possible for the MTR to assess this outcome. While reviewing the PIRs, it was noted that the reporting on this outcome does not fit well with the given indicator. For example, the reporting on this outcome (awareness-raising campaigns conducted at the community level with numbers of events and participants) is not consistent with the mid-term target, which best suits Output 2.1.1. The MTR is not clear whether the indicators and targets set for this outcome are for the community or for the national or sub-national governments. The project needs to conduct an outcome survey by using the same methods for setting scorecard as were used during the baseline. The MTR rates this outcome moderately unsatisfactory.

Project objective

82. The project aimed to support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity. To achieve this goal, the project explicitly set two indicators, one focusing on carbon sequestration and the other on restoration and rehabilitation of forest and rangeland area.

83. On the basis of mixed progress and achievements presented above, the MTR has the impression that the project is well on its way to achieving objective. The MTR noted that, based on the tracking tools, Indicator-1 (*number of tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions sequestered through the deployment of sustainable land and forest management practices, resulting in reduced GHG emissions from land and forest degradation*) and its mid-term target of 765,034 tCO_2e was fully met, with the project sequestered 2,319,513 tCO_2e of carbon, an amount more than three times that of mid-term target. Indicator-2, *number of ha of production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management*, with the MTR target set as 56,000 ha (2,000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands) was partially met. Data shows that the target set for HCVFs (2000 ha) was exceeded by a factor of six (13,250 ha). The achievement in the other forest types, with a 4,000 ha target, was substantially lower, just 409 ha. The mid-term target set for rangeland (50,000 ha) was also greatly exceeded, with 116,799 ha degraded rangeland being restored though

improved management practices mainly rotational grazing and quarantine as well as though reseeding of rainfed *Alfa-alfa* and other local grasses With reference to this data, the MTR rates the achievement of these objective-level indicators moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Environmental stress reduction

84. Analysis of project data and KIIs show that the project has not conducted any survey or assessment to compare the changes or assess improvement in natural resources. However, the communities in Kunar and Paktiya shared that they have observed visible changes in the conditions of forest areas where the restoration has taken places. Forest users, both male and female, also claimed that in those areas brought under the quarantine zone they have witnessed more greenery, occurring of natural regeneration and native tree species, stability in soil conditions, less timber cutting, and uprooting of shrubs than before the project started. Sub-national government officials and the project field team substantiated this fact during KIIs. Rangeland users also shared similar observations where rangeland management activities are ongoing.

85. The project activities have generated environmental benefits not only within the community but at the global level as well. The amount of carbon sequestered (2,319,513 tCO_2e) as of the mid-term substantially exceeded the set target. Considering this achievement, it can be inferred that the project has significant contribution to global environmental benefits.

Finding: Possibility of project's outcomes and outputs achievement in the current political situation

86. When the project began to be implemented, the political scenario was different than it is now and the project was designed considering the situation then. Following the UN Transitional Engagement Framework since August 2021, the project has not been involved with the de-facto authorities. As a result, the project steering committee was dissolved. In this circumstance, some project outcomes and outputs--Outcome 1.1; outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4; and some of the activities under Output 4.1.1 that are linked with Output 1.1.1 seem unachievable. The MTR sees this as a major concern in utilizing the budget under this outcome. The MTR recommends that the project consider revising the result framework and remove outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.4 and activities 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2 under Output 4.1.1. Budget allocated to these outputs needs to be transferred to other outcomes and outputs containing community-level activities through a second budget revision.

MTR criteria 3: Efficiency

Finding: Timeliness, cost and efficiency

87. The GEF endorsed the project in April 2018 and set an implementation date of August 2018. The project was launched with an inception workshop on 17–18 September 2018 in Kabul and was attended by the executing partners, namely, MAIL, MRRD, NEPA and IDGK. Besides, other stakeholders such as ANDMA, the directors of PAIL and NEPA in the five project provinces, Kabul-based INGOs and NGOs, representatives from FAO HQ, RAP, and CO also attended.

88. Following the project kick-off meeting (inception workshop) several positions were advertised towards the end of November 2018 and some of the positions, namely, National NRM and Capacity-Development Specialist, Sustainable Rangeland Management Specialist, Communication and Knowledge Management Officer, five provincial field coordinators (one for each project province), and Senior Technical Advisor had been recruited by June 2019. The five provincial project management units had been set up by August 2019, the date marking the formal implementation of project activities, one year after the project EOD. The reason for this delay was given as the need to hire project staff and establish provincial offices. A project steering committee (PSC) was formed with NEPA chairing and the other four executing partners participating. The first PSC meeting, held on 25 July 2019, endorsed, in principle, the

project work plan and budget. A second meeting was proposed for December 2019 but did not take place. It was postponed to 2020 but was never materialized.

89. While reviewing the documents, the MTR noted that the project was unable to make good progress during the first 16 months of project implementation. The project encountered many delays in implementing activities, and several activities that were planned were not achieved. The reasons given during the interviews included delays in hiring, difficulties in finding well matched human resources and high staff turnover (both national and international), the withholding of several approvals by the GDNRM leadership, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the fragile security situation prior to August 2021.

GEF funding and co-financing

90. The project's financial disbursement was USD 5721801.06, which is 54.51 percent of the total GEF contribution. This amount, the MTR believes considering the remaining project period, represents an under-spending of budget. The reasons given for low budget expenditure included Covid-19, lack of approval for many activities, specifically hiring technical service providers for the sustainable land management (Component – 3), and international consultants. This was further exacerbated by the absence of a full-time CTA (STA) in the beginning (and now as well) of the project and withhold of activities planned for carrying out with government counterparts since August 2021. The MTR was unable to analyse budget expenditure on components, outcomes, and outputs as it had no access to the annual breakdown of such expenditures.

91. The MTR noted that the total project expenditure for co-financing as of June 2022 amounted to USD 11,679,568, which is equivalent to 21.53 percent of the co-financing planned in the ProDoc. The total materialized co-financing by June 2022 is reported inconsistent and was far less than that reported in the PIR of 2021. Tables illustrating co-financing and project's summary of GEF expenditure and are given in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively below.

Table 2: Co-financing table

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement/ approval	Actual amount materialized at mid-term	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
Implementing agency	FAO	In-Kind	USD 7,860,000	USD 4,716,000	USD 7,860,000
Local government	MAIL	In-Kind	USD 38,656,984	USD 2,319,419	USD 38,656,984
Local government	MRRD	In-Kind	USD 3,630,249	USD 2,178,149	USD 3,630,249
Local government	NEPA	In-Kind	USD 710,000	USD 426,000	USD 710,000
Local government	IDGK	In-Kind	USD 3,400,000	USD 2,040,000	USD 3,400,000
TOTAL			**USD 54,257,233**	**USD 11,679,568**	**USD 64,753,106**

Table 3: GEF proposed budget and expenditure

Budget Head	2018 (Aug - Dec)		2019		2020		2021		2022 (Jan – June)	
	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure
Salaries Professional	0	0	266,660	0	127,161	0	195,213	17,853	193,410	40,997
Consultants	0	0	623,267	200,515	912,388	701,702	1,066,643	598,161	845,017	245,217
Contracts	0	0	891,667	0	441,969	79,922	619,613	50,117	97,382	190,690
Locally contracted labour	0	0	9,000	0	35,444	33	35,444	0	35,444	0
Travel	0	0	86,060	54,431	110,111	475,65	149,745	31,986	127,446	11,217
Training	0	0	435,667	6605	67,831	11,803	211,545	23,828	204,545	1,3269
Expendable procurement	0	0	44,000	19,478	693,838	219,513	682,138	326,618	457,138	233,180
Non-expendable procurement	0	0	33,000	26,714	128,875	8,599	78,100	2,500	76,850	0
Technical support services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,788	0	0
General operating expenses	0	0	114,200	19,721	77,022	49,999	76,224	69,891	6,8622	57,793
Total	**0**	**0**	**2,503,521**	**327,464**	**2,594,639**	**1,119,136**	**3,114,666**	**1,122,742**	**2,105,854**	**792,363**

Cost effectiveness

92. The MTR did not assess cost effectiveness in monetary terms as it did not have sufficient information. However, the MTR did note the project's mobilization of communities through FMAs and RMAs to implement most of the interventions. For example, FMAs were engaged in afforestation, nursery establishment, reseeding, and land preparation. Their engagement is believed to have saved a substantial amount. Another strategy adopted by the project noted by the MTR was the production of saplings of high conservation value tree species for afforestation by establishing small community nurseries engaging local communities (FMA users). In this process, the project, rather than buying saplings from the market, which were difficult to get as what was available did not meet the project's requirements, specifically in terms of tree species, but instead provided technical, material, and skill supports to communities with a buy-back guarantee to pay for plants belonging to the FMAs. This, the MTR believes, is a complete value chain process of forest tree sapling production. This whole process contributed to a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, the communities earned money for growing and transplanting saplings; on the other, they enhanced their skills through numerous trainings supported by the required accessories. This approach, the communities said, contributed to their livelihoods.

Finding: Adaptation to changing conditions

93. The MTR noted that the project adapted to the changing conditions of project implementation as envisioned in the ProDoc. For example, the ProDoc calls for LOAs and technical service providers to implement project interventions and for the FAO to assume a capacity-building and monitoring role. Considering the ground realities, a request from GDNRM, the situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic, and handling underspent budget during 2018 and 2019, the project made its first budget revision in May 2020. It also made some changes in its modality, opting to hire community facilitators from target communities to closely work with FMAs and RMAs.

Finding: Complementarities and project partnership

94. The project was able to develop synergies with the FAO implemented GEF-5 project which closed in 2020. Based on lessons learned from the GEF-5 project, it replicated interventions for reducing GHG emissions such as fuel-efficient cooking stoves. Experiences of implementing project activities (GEF-6) shared with the GEF-7 design team and were addressed well in the (GEF-7) ProDoc. The project built good synergies with government stakeholders and organisations working in NRM through NRM coordination meetings, an initiative that helped prevent duplication of similar activities. The MTR rates this as satisfactory.

MTR Criteria-4: Sustainability

Finding: Sustainability of the project results

95. A number of factors will enhance the prospects that results achieved by the project will be sustained after the project ends. For example, developing associations' institutional capacities, increasing awareness, and enhancing the skills of forest and rangeland users in the protection, conservation, and management of natural resources in an integrated way, plantation of high conservation value trees with the expectation of economic returns after a few years, and the intensive capacity-building of local-level technical officers and extension workers will contribute to sustainability. Achieving durable change requires time, and NRM extension services have an important role in maintaining support to forest and rangeland users. Limited engagement of stakeholders in the NRM sector, in contrast, reduces the likelihood that results will be sustained. Conflict between nomads (the Kuchi) and local communities over the

ownership of rangeland restricted the implementation of interventions such as reseeding, quarantine, and rotational grazing in some RMAs sites in Ghazni and Bamyan.

96. Externalities also affect sustainability, for example, socio-ecological resilience could be influenced by the unpredictable impacts of climate change. The current COVID-19 pandemic poses further uncertainty; for instance, a prolonged economic downturn or disruptions in supply chains associated with the pandemic might affect the viability of some project interventions. The changes in the political situation in the country in the presence of the de facto authority and the non-involvement of the project with the DFA could also impact project delivery in the remaining project period and therefore, potentially influence its sustainability. The MTR rates this moderately likely.

Finding: Risks likely to affect the sustainability of results

97. **Socio-economic sustainability**: The project took participatory natural resource management as a strategy and community-based associations. During FGDs local communities expressed a high level of commitment for continuing project activities. However, one of the challenges repeatedly mentioned in the PPRs and PIRs was the low motivation of communities to invest their time and energy in natural resources due to the fact that natural resources do not give a quick return. The MTR got the impression that the risks associated with sustainability were mainly due to poverty and a negative economic downturn that would have a negative impact on the protection of natural resources in the long run because the project supports beneficiaries though alternative livelihood opportunities. By considering this, socio-political sustainability is therefore rated as moderately likely.

98. **Financial sustainability**: The MTR believes that after the project ends and if the political situation of the country remains the same, the de facto authorities are unlikely to be able to fund extension and training services. Not all forest and rangeland restoration activities needed extra budget to maintain, however, the associations may need some amount, for example, for hiring forest and rangeland site watchers (guards). During the FGDs, communities in all four provinces revealed that they have hired watchers to protect the quarantine areas. They further raised their concern about paying watchers after the project ends, saying that they would not be able to pay the watchers themselves. They, however, are confident that they will be able to manage through their tribal structure. In some communities, two to three years after they plant walnut trees in the forest areas will start producing nuts and by selling them they could manage to maintain the expenses of their association and watchers. The financial sustainability of the project's results can therefore be rated moderately likely.

99. **Institutional and governance sustainability**: FGDs with FMAs revealed that their associations maintain bank accounts and keeps track of financial activities. The project helped to improve technical capacity at the sub-national and community levels. Interviews of the provincial project teams also revealed that they have regular meetings with associations and have been implementing CBNRM plans. The MTR noted that most associations have not maintained meeting minutes and other documents, except the inputs they received from the project (e.g. the number of saplings planted, poultry packages, agroforestry, etc.). The project has not conducted any participatory governance assessments to find out whether FMAs and RMAs are function well or not. For sustainability, a strong monitoring mechanism needs to be established, good SFM and SLM practices need to be continued, adequate financial resources need to continue, the capacity of stakeholders need to be updated, and activities related to SFM/SLM need to be updated in the future. In the absence of these supports, there is a significant risk that existing institutional capacity will erode. Thus, there is a moderate chance of sustaining the project's initiatives. So far, the MTR observes institutional and governance sustainability as moderately likely.

100. **Environmental sustainability**: The project is designed to reduce pressure on natural resources and promote sustainable NRM aiming at reducing the environmental stress through SFM/ SLM by mobilizing communities. One of the main rationales of the project was to generate environmental benefits. The FGDs and KIIs confirmed that the project's interventions, such as capacity-building on SFM/SLM at the sub-national and community levels, help to improve goods and services from forests and ecosystems, build resilience through bio-diversity conservation, and reduce carbon emissions. However, with the increasing impact of climate change (for instance, increased temperatures and long droughts), the risks to sustainable forest and rangeland management, such as the impacts of forest fires and impacts on natural regeneration in the restored and quarantined areas, are increasing. With increasingly complex climate phenomena and uncertainty in forest and rangeland ecosystems, the risks for the sustainability of what has been achieved will also increase. The project does not have any plans for the construction of structures such as big reservoirs or check dams but gives priority to low-cost soil conservation structures such as contour bonds, small ponds, and small reservoirs in forests and on rangelands. In short, the risks seem mitigable, so the environmental sustainability is considered to be likely.

Finding: Replication and catalysis

101. The project activities geared up only from early 2020, so it is bit early to look for evidence of the replication of interventions. The FGDs revealed that neighbouring communities gained interest and started low investment activities such as agroforestry, fuel-efficient cooking stoves, and backyard poultry packages. The probability of replication is likely to be high once the project shares its best practices and lessons learnt with a wider group of stakeholders. The MTR rates replication as moderately satisfactory.

MTR Criteria-5: Factors affecting progress

Finding: Project design

102. The project design followed the GEF's requirements. The design tried to interlink different themes for sustainable NRM and institutional, community, and government capacity-building. The main shortcoming is the inconsistency between outcomes and outputs and corresponding indicators and targets in the result matrix. The matrix is inconsistent, and many activities are redundant and lack SMART indicators. For example, the target set for Outcome 1.2 is 10 community associations trained which compared to the target set (230,000 ha) for rehabilitation and restoration of forest and rangelands, meaning one community association on an average taking care of 23,000 ha. While the project has its strategy to manage forest using community-based approaches, this indicator and target are focused on training FMAs/ RMAs and CDCs and is silent on the formation or creation of such associations. The indicator and target are inconsistent with the project strategy. Some activities are not consistent with their outputs and should be shifted to another output. For example, conducting a soil carbon survey, which falls under Output 2.1.3 is better suited for Output 2.1.1.

103. The MTR also observed that some project targets are too ambitious for the budget allocated to them. Interviews with the PMU also revealed that the project is not certain at what level intensive management practices can be done in such large areas. For example, Component 3 calls for improving 200,000 ha of rangeland. This seems unrealistic, especially considering the range of activities to be performed, such as reseeding, rotational grazing, quarantine, check dam construction, and other soil conservation measure, with the limited budget allocated (USD 3.47 million). Calculating the cost, it comes to around 17 USD per ha. The MTR believes that the budget is not sufficient, though there is no average calculation for rangeland improvement in Afghanistan. In consideration of the above-raised concerns, the MTR recommends that the project revise the results matrix and make each result SMART and clear for the remaining project period. The MTR rates the project design moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Project execution and management

104. The modality implemented by the project is a direct execution (DEX) modality where the FAO has complete budget responsibility. The other executing partners were GDNRM-MAIL, NEPA, MRRD, and IDGK. The project has established a PMU on government premises and is lead by a National Project Manager and supported by thematic specialists and administrative and financial officers. To deliver project activities, five provincial project offices were set up and staff recruited.

105. Execution of the project was supported by the National Project Director (NPD) designated by MAIL as the lead person responsible for ensuring the smooth execution of the project on behalf of the government. The project was guided by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by NEPA and with other executing partners as members. Only one PSC[17] meeting had been held in July 2019 since the start of the project although the ProDoc envisioned holding such meetings at least twice per year.

106. The KIIs revealed that the project has faced several challenges since its design and initial years of implementation. These challenges resulted in delays in accomplishing planned project activities. Several outputs and activities proposed in the annual work plan were not completed on time due to delayed approvals by the NPD, specifically the CoE concept note, REDD+ Roadmap mechanism, and recruitment of international experts to accomplish the activities planned. A full time Chief Technical Advisor was envisioned by the ProDoc but was not approved; the post was thus converted to a consultant position (Senior Technical Advisor).

107. The project faced challenges in finding suitable human resources with extensive expertise in NRM sectors, specifically forest and rangeland restoration, and had to go through several rounds of vacancy announcements. High staff turnover was another challenge for project implementation. These administrative challenges were further exacerbated by COVID-19, during which time planned capacity-building activities did not materialize. The ProDoc well identified the risks, presenting seven different categories with ratings and mitigation measures which was further updated during COVID-19. The project also faced severe security challenges to implementing project activities, a fact which consumed a substantial amount of the time of senior management officials. Considering the post August 2021 situation, the MTR recommends revising the result framework, making a second budget revision and relocating budget which is not expected to be used for government capacity building at the national level. The MTR rates the project design moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Financial management and co-financing

108. The financial management of the project seems to be in good order as far as the MTR could judge from interviews with PMU and Operations. However, the project faced some challenges due to budget allocations not being consistent with budget categories/headings. The project made a budget revision in 2020 with justifications that most of the activities were implemented by the project but large portions of the budget were under the LOA and contract categories. The then GDNRM leadership was not in favour of LOAs for fine-scale inventory and onboard technical service providers for Component 3. After a series of discussions, the project decided to implement those activities by hiring consultants but the thematic consultant budget was not enough. KIIs with PMU revealed that with budget revisions, the project smoothly handled the procurement the goods and services.

109. The ProDoc projected GEF financing of USD 10.47 million accompanied by another USD 54.5 million of co-financing by the FAO and four executing partners. According to the PIR, the total co-financing that had materialized by the end of June 2022 was 11 million. A big concern here is the post-August 2021 situation and, following the TEF, whether it would be possible to get

[17] The PSC no longer existed after August 2021.

co-financing from the four executing partners except the FAO. By considering the situation, the MTR suggests discussing these issues among the PTF members and find out the solution in the remaining project period. Considering all of the above factors, the MTR rated this as moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Project oversight and implementation roles

110. Interviews revealed that the PMU has been receiving regular support from RAP, HQ, and BH. The FLO and technical officer from HQ and LTO from RAP have been providing the necessary support to implement the project and provide quality assurance in the absence of the PSC. Oversight by the FAO involves strict procedures which provide a high degree of accountability. The MTR, however, noted that FAO oversight was not able to prevent the delays in field implementation in the beginning of project implementation. The reason explained for this was mainly due to the assertion of DGNRM to act as project manager and implement the project in operation partners implementation modality which was not possible to follow due Micro Financial Assessment ranking it with high risks. The MTR rates project oversights and implementation as moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

111. Country ownership was high during the design and implementation of the project prior to August 2021. Representation in the steering committee was from all executing partners and chaired by NEPA. The project maintained good collaboration with the executing partners both at national and sub-national levels. The project engaged key stakeholders in the NRM sector.

112. The PMU faced several challenges regarding the implementation of project activities with the lead executing partner, GDNRM/MAIL since the beginning of the project. Interviews with FAO Operations, the PMU, and previous FAOR shared that the GDNRM leadership tried to manage the project on its terms and on many occasions did not provide approval or endorsement. One of the major challenges faced by the project was that the GDNRM leadership insisted on the PMU ignoring the results framework, instead implement only few activities and leaving others. The project did not agree to the GDNRM's request, however, mentioning that the results framework needs to be revised first. Other challenge shared was lack of inter-departmental and ministerial coordination. They further iterated that meetings and discussions to convince the GDNRM leadership caused substantial delays in implementing the project activities proposed in the annual work plan. The MTR rates this component as moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Communication and knowledge management

113. The project has developed a communication and knowledge management strategy and out-reach activities have been implementing by following it. The project has a full-time communications officer assigned to smooth communication and outreach with wider stakeholders and communities. The review of PIRs and interviews revealed that audio radio messages produced and broadcast through local radios were effective. Several visibility-related materials with the logo of the GEF, FAO and government were produced and distributed to stakeholders and communities. They include pen drives, wall clocks, tea mugs, diaries, brochures, posters, and stand banners. An animated video was produced by the project and used to raise awareness in communities. Further, signboards are placed on afforestation and restoration sites. The project also got high media coverage from local television broadcasting project activities. KIIs with government officials in Kunar and Paktia revealed that they appreciated the project's contribution to NRM by covering large areas for the first time.

114. The project made good use of events namely; World Environment Day, National Plantation Day, and national-level agri-fairs by presenting posters and other awareness raising materials to the general public. The project also shared their findings in several workshops at the

national, provincial and district levels. The project team communicated and shared events via social media such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, local radio and television. Data shared show that nine success stories were uploaded in the FAO websites and published in its newsletter, more than 30 tweets, Facebook, and government websites. The MTR suggests that communication and knowledge management should be linked to Outcome 4.1. The MTR rates this as satisfactory.

Finding: M&E design

115. The M&E requirements are explicitly mentioned in the ProDoc. They are well elaborated and clearly mention deadlines for the submission of PPRs, PIRs, the MTR, and the final evaluation. It further illustrates milestones for conducting outcome surveys to assess progress against the baseline, however, these deadlines seemed to be ignored. The ProDoc explicitly mentions developing a participatory M&E assessment framework and using it at the provincial level. The MTR rates M&E design of the project as moderately satisfactory.

Finding: M&E implementation

116. The ProDoc clearly states that an M&E plan to track project progress at the objective, outcome and output levels should be developed and GEF tracking tools used. The GEF tracking tools were made available to review, but the M&E tracking sheet was not shared with the MTR team. The MTR has the impression that the project has not yet developed the M&E plan mentioned in the ProDoc.

117. The project has well-maintained activity progress data. However, the progress reported in the PIRs also show that as of the mid-term review, no outcome survey has been conducted by the project. The MTR has the impression that the project has been reporting progress on outcomes and outputs differently, by only highlighting activity-level progress and achievements rather than reporting against the indicators and targets. In a nutshell, the reported progress does not match the descriptions of indictors and mid-term targets. The MTR noted that project does not fully adhere with the M&E requirements laid out in the ProDoc. Considering the above raised concerns, the MTR suggests developing clear and elaborated M&E plan, set up a database aligning with the indicators and maintaining such data in the remaining project period. The MTR also recommends designing and conducting outcome surveys for fuel-efficient cooking stove, changes in vegetation coverage on rangeland and in forest areas, capacity development against the baseline, etc. The MTR rates this as moderately unsatisfactory.

MTR Criteria-6: Cross-cutting priorities

Finding: Consideration of gender and minority group issues

118. The review of the results matrix found gender aspects are integrated in the indicators and targets of the outcomes and outputs. For example, the project emphasizes that the CBNRM plan should be gender responsive and that a certain percentage of women should be trained at the government and community levels. Such indicators are explicitly mentioned along with the targets.

119. Following the FAO gender strategy, the project has been trying to adopt balanced treatment and to achieve its target for gender inclusion, for example, female government staff trained at the national and sub-national level. It was unable to reach the MTR target, however. It is very understandable that there are few female staff in the government. KIIs with the PMU and PPMU team indicated that the project adopted the strategy of hiring female community mobilisers, a strategy which was not specified in the ProDoc or budget. Through budget revision, the project hired female community mobilisers for conducting awareness-raising program and implement the alternative livelihood interventions in all five provinces. As shared

with the MTR team, the project focuses on woman beneficiaries for alternative energy promotion and income generation through its backyard poultry distribution. However, these activities were done even without having either a gender action plan or an allocated budget.

120. FGDs with FMAs and RMAs indicated that ensuring representation of women in the executive committees is somewhat not possible due to cultural restrictions, especially in Kunar and Paktia. FGDs in Bamiyan shows that women are in the executive committee of RMAs. However, since August 2021 women have been staying silent and not taking part in the association's meeting due to the restrictions on women's being a part of such institutions posed by the de facto authority. This is understandable as cultural restrictions on women's community management roles were already stringent and were made more so by the de facto authority. It is advised that the project develop a gender action plan and implement it in the remaining project period.

121. The ProDoc clearly states the issues of the indigenous minority, Kuchis, needs to be benefited by interventions. Interviews with provincial field team shows that the Kuchis were informed through the IDGK and consulted during the project design phase as well as during the implementation period. However, the MTR did not find any evidence that this minority group, whose livelihood is directly related to pasture and rangeland were trained or participated in awareness-raising activities. The project has provisions for establishing a pasture network. Since this has yet to be established, the project has to ensure that Kuchis issues and concerns are brought into the pasture network. The MTR rates the consideration of gender and minority group issues moderately satisfactory.

Finding: Environmental and social safeguards

122. The project is centred around managing the degraded landscape and associated negative socio-economic and environmental effects by increasing vegetative coverage and upgrading ecosystems by employing community-based sustainable NRM approaches. The project's interventions such as increasing vegetation and restoring high conservation and other forest types through natural and artificial methods, biodiversity conservation, and promotion of alternative energy will definitely have environmental benefits in the long run. Interventions carried out by the project seem not to cause any negative impact on the environment including communities. The project prepared the environmental and social risk management plan, however, the MTR did not find environmental and social safeguard management plans prepared by the project though this omission is well understood given that the project did not foresee major infrastructural constructions. Besides, the project ranks its environmental and social risks as medium to low which could be the reason for its not preparing such plan in the design phase. The MTR has the impression that the project seems to be in a position to address environmental issues through the implementation of the project interventions.

123. The project document foresaw a number of approaches in the project design and implementation to ensure social aspects. The project is taking a participatory NRM approach and focusing on the poor, women and vulnerable families while implementing alternative livelihood-related activities. The KIIs with field teams and FGDs with FMAs and RMAs shared they have been communicating with the association's executive committee to target ultra-poor, single women-headed households, vulnerable, and disabled people for these activities and implement them accordingly. The MTR rates environmental and social safeguards satisfactory.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

(a) Progress towards the achievement of the project's development objectives

Conclusion: Sustainable forest and rangeland management and biodiversity conservation

124. The project adopted a community-based approach as its strategy for initiating sustainable forest and rangeland management, making that its entry point for achieving its development objectives in addressing the unsustainable use of natural resources. This strategy is well backed up by the government's priorities and its programs for managing NRM. The project has been able to establish community-based associations and mobilize them well.

125. As a whole, the project attempts to reduce pressure on natural resources (forest and rangeland) as well as enhance carbon sequestration through different forest and rangeland management practices. These include the restoration of forest and rangeland area in part by increasing vegetative coverage through various management practices. The project made good progress in restoring forests, rangelands, and biodiversity conservation through different management practices such as plantation, promoting natural regeneration, quarantine, reseeding rangelands, rotational grazing, and prohibiting grazing in forest areas. Some preliminary results are reported and observable. These include increase in carbon sequestration, greenery in forest and rangeland restoration areas, and varieties of trees, shrubs, and herbs occurring in forest and rangeland areas.

Conclusion: Improving and maintaining the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities

126. In pursuit of its development objective of improving the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities, the project conducted an alternative livelihoods assessment, identified suitable activities, and implemented those activities. Targeting especially women, the project implemented small income-generating activities such as backyard poultry, passive solar houses, and improved livestock management. It also supported communities in developing plant nurseries. The plantation of high-value nut trees contributes on the one hand to the restoration of forests and, in turn, greater carbon sequestration, and, on the other hand, will generate income once the trees start producing nuts which is expected as a good source of income for the entire community.

127. The alternative livelihoods activities increased household-level income to some extent, helping to meet daily needs. However, since no baseline for income status and outcome survey was envisioned during the design, it is not possible for the MTR to assess the changes (increase) in their income other than to rely on the perceptions of the beneficiaries.

(b) Overall progress on implementation

Relevance

Conclusion: Relevance of the project

128. The project was designed to address the unsustainable use of natural resources and specific barriers to NRM and to improve the livelihoods of rural Afghan families by devising interlinked and interconnected outcomes and outputs with explicit focus on the integration of community-based approaches to SLM/SFM and promoting bio-diversity conservation. Based on findings presented in the findings (see 4.1), the MTR concludes that the project's objective, components, outcomes, activities, and even entire intervention logic aligns well with Afghanistan's NRM sector priorities. including its NRM strategy, ANPDF, ADPP, and NBSAP. The project was designed keeping in mind several of the GEF's focal areas, including biodiversity, climate change mitigation, sustainable forest management, and land degradation. It is fully aligned with all four themes. The project's objectives and outcomes also fully align with the FAO's Global Strategic Objective 2 and the UN TEF for Afghanistan Outcome 3.

129. The project is highly relevant in addressing the needs of beneficiaries in terms of increasing the resilience of local communities by addressing unsustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country. The MTR concludes the project to be highly relevant.

Effectiveness

Conclusion: Overall achievement

130. Adhering to GEF and FAO requirements, the MTR assessed progress toward outcomes and outputs against the existing result matrix given in the ProDoc and the mid-term indictors and targets. The MTR 's impression of the strengths and weaknesses of the results framework, indicators, and targets are discussed in the project design section of the MTR criteria 5: factors affecting project.

131. Based on the findings presented in the progress and achievement section based on the indicators and mid-term targets show, the project made mixed progress, with some outputs and outcomes surpassed, some on the way to being achieved, and some unlikely to be achieved mainly due to the change in political conditions after August 2021.

132. Major interventions such as the establishment and functioning of a COE and the development of a REDD+ Readiness Roadmap including an MRV system were partially achieved. The MTR believes that activities under outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, and 4.1.1 are unlikely to be achieved considering the non-recognition of the de facto authorities based on the UN TEF framework.

Conclusion: Capacity-building

133. The project's strategy was to strengthen capacity at the community, sub-national and national levels to ensure the effective delivery of the project and also to make the project's results sustainable. This seems like a good strategy to making the interventions of the project a success. In this pursuit, however, the project achieved only mixed progress. At the community level, the progress was good and at the national level, less so. Achieving the remaining targets for building the capacity of government staff is unlikely. Since no outcome survey was conducted, the MTR could not assess the degree that capacity increased. The project reached out to a substantial number of people through several awareness-raising campaigns and saw good participation among women beneficiaries. The project used adaptive measures to engage women: it hired female community mobilizers to conduct awareness-raising campaigns at the community level.

134. The resource materials developed by the project, as reported in the PIRs, are different than those called for in the results framework. The MTR noted that the project did not differentiate among awareness-raising materials, training toolkits, and resource materials.

Conclusion: Restoration of HVCFs and other forest types and carbon sequestration

135. The project made promising progress in achieving the targets set for the restoration and management of HCVFs and enhancement of carbon sequestration. However, the MTR has the impression that the project focused mostly on the restoration of HCVFs through afforestation, assisted natural regeneration, protection and conservation, prohibiting grazing, and the regulated collection of firewood and timber. The project significantly exceeded the mid-term target for HCVFs. Although other forest types also had the same weightage in the indicator, they did not receive equal attention. The MTR surmises that the project implemented activities without considering the indicators.

Conclusion: Alternative livelihoods

136. The MTR has the impression that the project made good progress in achieving its targets as well as interventions which are highly relevant to the needs of the communities. Another remarkable prospect of this intervention is that it mostly targets women and has enabled them to earn money

to meet their daily needs. However, unless an income survey is conducted, it is difficult to assess the total amount they have earned or how much more their income is now compared to the baseline.

Conclusion: SLM

137. The project has not conducted some of the major activities designed for sustainable land management, such as establishing a pasture network and providing extension services through it. Some of the activities such as establishing seed and fodder banks, check dams, contour bunds, and other appropriate measures are yet to be conducted. Furthermore, the MTR is concerned about how far the project can carry out different management practices considering the area and corresponding budget allocated to this component.

Efficiency

Conclusion: Project efficiency

138. The project encountered many delays in implementing activities. Several activities that were planned were not achieved on time. Delays and disruptions were caused by different factors which together affected the delivery of the project. In short, the factors that caused delays include; not finding suitable experts and high staff turnover (both national and international), the withholding of approvals by the GDNRM leadership, the Covid-19 pandemic, the fragile security situation prior to August 2021, and political turmoil in August 2021. Despite these impediments, the project achieved a moderately satisfactory level of efficiency, specifically concerning the delivery of outcomes and outputs. Even so, the MTR noted that the project budget was still underspent.

139. The MTR did not notice that there was any mechanism in place to provide structured induction to new staff. Staff induction training is an important aspect of projects, one that contributes to the timely and effective implementation of project interventions and enhances understanding among PMU and field staff. The concept and the modality the project has espoused seems to be, to some extent, quite a new approach and modality for working with communities. Structured induction training is expected to help the project enhance its efficiency and timely management and ensure the smooth implementation of the project.

140. Some of the project's strategies were cost-effective, as was discussed in the findings section. In particular, the entire value chain of sapling production placed the project in a position to carry out planation at the appropriate time. This was probably more effective approach than purchasing plants from suppliers. Another promising approach that the project took was mobilizing the executive committees of FMAs and RMAs to monitor afforestation sites and other activities in communities even when security situations were fragile.

141. Considering the overall situation of project implementation, the MTR concluded that a no-cost time extension for at least one year would provide sufficient time to accomplish those activities that are under-performing and exhaust the allocated budget.

Sustainability

Conclusion: Sustainability of project results

142. The fact that the project adopted a participatory approach as a strategy resulted in community-based associations being engaged in the management of activities with handholding and technical and material support from the project. The project also focused on developing the capacity of communities and governments at the national and sub-national levels. The results of these interventions are likely to contribute to the sustainability of the project's results and benefits. One means of financial sustainability may be through the production of nuts. In addition to contributing to the association-related activities of restoration, protection, and management; afforestation of areas will contribute toward maintaining the livelihoods of communities. The increase in fodder and

forage crops on rangeland will also contribute toward the rearing of top-quality livestock, which, in turn, may contribute to the livelihoods of pasture users.

143. The strong internal governance of the associations will also play a vital role in their sustenance as they well maintain meeting minutes and other documentation. Good governance will also reduce conflict among the members of the associations. However, as shared in the findings, these aspects need be taken into consideration to make them sustainable. Overall, the MTR concludes that the project is likely to be sustainable.

Conclusion: Factors affecting progress

144. The project tried to interlink between and among multiple thematic areas, but it is not free of shortcomings, some of which pose challenges during the implementation. Specifically, scattered project locations, over-ambitious targets for some outcomes, insufficiently SMART indicators for some outcomes/outputs, over stretched outputs and activities, repetitions of activities, poorly worded outcomes, outputs and activities, and inconsistencies in budget categories (headings), and lack of consistency between indicators and targets. The project design includes an unrealistic work plan. For example, the proposed timeline for the first year was establishment of CoE was over-ambitious and unrealistic.

145. Notwithstanding the crucial importance of M&E and adaptive learning for the overall effectiveness of the project, the MTR notes inadequate attention is given to M&E. The need for a detailed M&E plan, which builds on the results matrix and defined specific requirements such as assessments and outcome surveys conducted with specified frequency and timelines, along with required budget is well articulated in the ProDoc. However, the MTR noted that during the implementation the project paid little attention to such activities and did not prepare a detailed M&E plan. The database seems weak and reports only on activity-level progress. Reporting on progress in the PIRs is not consistent and does not fully adhere to the indicators and targets. Overall, M&E at the implementation level is weak.

146. The project managed to complete ground-level activities such as reseeding rangeland areas, plantation, conducting assessments, and livelihoods interventions despite the fact that the government imposed a lockdown in response to the first wave of Covid-19. However, it was unable to complete other activities included in the annual workplan, specifically, capacity-building activities. Another factor affecting the implementation of the activities was the fragile security situation. Prior to August 2021, the security situation and the lengthy process for obtaining approval to visit field sites also consumed a significant amount of time of PMU team.

147. A delay in getting government (GDNRM) approval impeded the achievement of the project's annual workplan. The efforts made by the project implementing team were adaptive, but the project nonetheless encountered significant human resource capacity gaps and faced difficulty in recruiting and retaining national and international staff. The absence of qualified staff is believed to be one of the factors which affected implementation.

148. The project maintained good communication and visibility in part by ensuring high media coverage using different means. These include radio broadcasts, social media, and local television channels, all of which shared success stories. The project also produced a lot of visibility materials and reached out to stakeholders and communities.

Cross-cutting priorities

Conclusion: Inclusion of gender and minority groups

149. Considering the country context, the project explicitly integrated gender into its indicators and targets despite lacking a gender assessment and gender actions plan. The MTR inferred that women's participation in awareness-raising campaigns and alternative livelihood activities was even higher than envisioned in the results framework. In the case of a significant indigenous and minority group, the Kuchis, however, the project failed to include them, whose livelihoods directly depends on livestock and pasture. The Kuchis are yet to be engaged as envisioned by the project.

150. The main thrust of the project is addressing socio-economic and environmental effects through sustainable NRM. As discussed in the findings section, the interventions carried out by the project seem not to impact the environment negatively.

c) Overall risk rating for the project

Conclusion: Risk assessment

151. There is considerable risk that the project may not be able to achieve its objectives. Some of the key risks associated with the project are that associated with sustainability, which are mainly due to poverty. A negative economic downturn would have a negative impact on the protection of natural resources in the long run because the project supports beneficiaries' though alternative livelihood opportunities. The changes in the political situation in the country in the presence of the de facto authorities and the non-involvement of the project with the DFAs could also impact project delivery in the remaining project period and, as a result, potentially influence the project's sustainability unless the government assumes ownership. Another risk is the lack of rangeland law, which might result in rangeland associations not getting legalized, thereby contributing to the high risk of losing institutions which functioned during the project period.

5.2. Recommendations

Table 4: Recommendations

Rec. No.	Rationale for recommendation	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timing	Prioritization
Strategic relevance					
A.1	Highly satisfactory	No recommendation made			
A.2					
Effectiveness					
B.1	Target for other forest types was not taken seriously and could not achieve the target	The project should allocate more budget and human resources to identifying areas other than HVCF forest types for restoration and rehabilitation to achieve indictors for Outcome 2.1 and Output 2.1.3. This could be done through incentivising the community such as cash for work, LoAs, alternative livelihoods, or other suitable options suitable to the context.	PMU, PPMU Badghis	Completed by 4th quarter of 2023	P 1
B.2	Developed materials are not fully aligned with targets to align with the project target	Develop resource materials, including training toolkits, consistent with the indicators and targets, specifically regarding land degradation and restoration assessment, livelihood and resilience assessments, approaches and technologies for SFM and SLM, and an M&E framework for SFM and SLM. If the project does not have the capacity to develop these materials, it should hire a national or international capacity-building consultant.	PMU in consultation with LTO	Completed by 2nd quarter of 2023	P 1
B.3	Resource materials not fully user friendly to community people who are just literate or illiterate	Considering the literacy levels of the project communities, revise and update existing resource materials—specifically the community-level capacity-building materials—to make them more user-friendly and visual to ensure everyone can understand and follow them.	PMU	Completed by 3rd quarter of 2023	P 2

B.4	Pasture network not established and little behind the target	Establish pasture networks by identifying stakeholders, including farmers, livestock owners, veterinary services, livestock health and diseases prevention experts and service providers, and the private sector. Include indigenous people (the Kuchis) in developing the network. Conduct awareness-raising trainings on sustainable pasture management, including different practices to reduce conflict between farmers and the Kuchis. Engage the pasture network in extension services and conflict resolution.	PMU and PPMU Bamiyan and Ghazni	Completed by 1st quarter of 2023	P 1
B.5	Not yet achieved, especially value addition of NTFPs	Support beneficiaries in cultivating NTFPs and adding value to enhance their benefit, while strengthening market linkages.	PMU, all PPMUs	Completed by 2nd quarter of 2024	P 2
B.6	Not achieved the mid-term target	Document the project's best practices after reviewing similar interventions in the region or other countries and document anecdotal impact stories and project good practices and lessons learnt. Provide details on the processes and mechanisms used for reaching a wide audience of stakeholders. GEF 7 and future GEF projects will benefit from the documentation of these best practices. If the PMU is unable to do this, it should hire a short-term national or international consultant. Upload these collected and synthesized best practices to the project's online portal so that academics, policy-makers, and development partners working in the NRM sector can benefit.	PMU with the help of LTO	Start from 1st quarter 2023 and continue till end of the	P 2
Efficiency					
C.1	To accomplish all activities and achieve project targets	Consider a no-cost one-year time extension to allow for more substantive achievement of the project's outcomes and to ensure that there are sufficient structures for enhancing the sustainability of project benefits.	BH, FAO operation, LTO, FLO and PMU	Post MTR	P 1
C.2	Expenditure little behind with only 40. 72% expenditure in 46 months of project	Revise the budget to support the revised results matrix (see Recommendation 1) and expedite disbursements.	PMU and BH and operation	Post MTR	P 1
C.3	Provide strategic guidance to the project	Hold biannual PTF meetings to provide guidance to the PMU, thereby helping to make up for the absence of a PSC and a CTA.	BH and LTO	Post MTR and continue till project	P 2
C.4	Risk-log not updated even after post August 2021 situation to address new challenges	Conduct risk assessments and update the risk log accordingly. Document challenges and risks well in the PPRs and PIRs.	PMU	Completed by 1st quarter of 2023	P 1
Sustainability and catalysis/replication					
D.1	PGA not conducted which is very crucial to enhance institutional sustainability of project results	Design participatory governance assessment (PGA) tools based on the maturity index, and conduct PGAs in each FMA and RMA in order to assess their capacity to manage the association and implement its CBNRM plan effectively. The assessments will help the PMU identify the level of support needed to strengthen the capacity of each FMA/RMA and sustain the project's benefits. Develop the PGA tools and train field teams to conduct assessments and document findings. File documentation in the M&E database to inform annual work plans.	PMU and all PPMU	Start immediately and complete within 3rd quarter of 2023	P 2
D.2	Project's non-involvement with DFAs	Consult FMAs/RMAs and local-level extension and technical experts in developing an exit strategy that supports the sustainability of project's benefits.	PMU	Post MTR	P 2

Factors affecting performance					
E.1	Addressing shortcomings in results matrix	The results matrix needs revised for SMART indicators and consistency with other indicators, mid-term targets, and activities to make the project more assessable. A logical coherence is needed among outcomes, outputs, and activities, and activities need to be categorized thematically to avoid redundancy. If the PMU lacks capacity to revise the entire matrix, it should hire a short-term international consultant.	PMU with support from LTO, FAO Operations	Post MTR	P 1
E.2	Project's non-involvement with DFAs	Revise or remove outputs that are unlikely to be achieved in the remaining project period, specifically 1.1.1 on the establishment of a CoE on NRM, 1.1.2 on training for government staff, and 1.1.4 on the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap adhering with TEF respectively. Reallocate the budget for these outputs to outcomes and outputs related to community interventions. Strengthen the knowledge management component with a revised second budget. Revise Output 4.1.1 on establishing a national information and resource center with an associated M&E system and database for SFM/SLM: narrowing the original scope, limiting it to the project level by establishing a knowledge hub for the NRM sector for SFM and SLM. In addition, create an online portal linked to the M&E and knowledge management systems to reach a wider audience.	PMU with support from BH, LTO, FAO Operations	Post MTR	P 1
E.3	Addressing shortcomings in workplan and making it realistic	Revise the project workplan, and align it with the revised results matrix, using the lessons from implementation to make it realistic and achievable within the remaining project period.	PMU with support from LTO, FAO Operations	Post MTR	P 1
E.4	Ensuring quality of project implementation	Prepare an orientation package for newly hired staff to more easily internalize the project's concept, strategy, and implementation approaches. Doing so will help close some of the knowledge gaps between new and existing personnel of the PMU and PPMU. For the PPMU teams, organize orientation trainings on administrative and financial requirements, procurement requisitions, submission deadlines for financial documents, and keeping suppliers informed.	PMU	Post MTR	P 2
E.5	Project's result based management	Develop a systematic, robust, and comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for all outputs and outcomes with a regular review. Formulate a clear and detailed M&E plan, set up a database aligning with the indicators, and maintain indicator-based data. In addition, develop a participatory M&E framework for SFM and SLM.	PMU	Completed by 1st quarter 2023	P 1

E.6	Quality assurance	Support the quality and consistency of project progress and implementation reporting by aligning reports with indicators. Assign a full-time M&E specialist with adequate capacity to support the M&E system and enhance the quality of project implementation. If the capacity of PMU staff is insufficient, get support from the FAO CO or hire an international M&E expert for short-term inputs, especially the creation of an effective M&E system.	PMU and LTO	Post MTR and regular till the project end	P 1
E.7	No baseline to compare income	Generate baseline data for alternative livelihood activities including a beneficiary income survey to determine the change at the terminal evaluation. Link this with the M&E framework.	PMU	Completed by 2nd quarter 2023	P 2
E.8	No any surveys conducted as stated in the ProDoc	Conduct outcome surveys for fuel-efficient cooking stoves, changes in the area and type of vegetation cover on forest and rangeland, and capacity development; use a score card and other such mechanisms.	PMU	Completed by 3rd quarter 2023	P 2
Cross-cutting dimensions					
F.1	No gender strategy and action plan exists	Develop a gender mainstreaming strategy and gender action plan with budget allocated to both and include the gender action plan in the project's annual work plan. A gender action plan will help the project systematically achieve its gender-focused indicators and targets and enable women and vulnerable people to benefit more from the project than they currently do. If the project does not have a gender expert, consult the gender focal point at the FAO CO.	PMU	Completed by 2nd quarter 2023	P 1
F.2	Indigenous people's (Kuchi) issues not addressed	Reflect the issues and concerns of the Kuchis in the pasture network to be developed by the project and encourage their participation in rangeland management and creating an enabling environment through awareness raising and other outreach approaches.	PMU and PPMU	Completed by 1st quarter 2023	P 1

Appendices

Appendix 1. Terms of reference for the MTR

MTR ToR

Appendix 2. MTR itinerary, including field missions (agenda)

Timeline of MTR including deliverables

Deliverable	Proposed timeline	Notes
Inception meeting	7 November 2022	Virtual meeting with PMU team, Commissioning Manager, MTR consultants
Document review	1 – 12 November 2022	Review documents shared
Draft Inception report, including MTR questions	12 November 2022	Rescheduled to 19 November; agreed during inception meeting
Inception meeting with PTF	16 November 2022	Virtual meeting with PMU team, MTR Liaison, HQ team, MTR consultants
Submission of final inception report	30 November	Incorporating feedbacks
MTR field mission	3 – 15 December 2022	
Briefing on preliminary findings of the MTR following the field mission	25 January 2023	FAO team and stakeholders
First draft of the report	25 January 2023	Comments by 1 Feb
Second draft of the report final MTR report, including comments matrix/audit trail	6 February 2023	Expecting feedbacks by 9 Feb
Final MTR report, including comments matrix/audit trail	13 February 2023	Incorporating feedbacks
Two pages summary on main findings and recommendations	13 February 2023	

Data collection itinerary

Activity	Date	Place
Travel to Paktiya	8 December 2022	Gardez
Orientation meeting with project female staff to facilitate FGDs	10 December 2022	Gardez
KII with NEPA		Directorate of NEPA
FGD with EC of Mansor Khil FMA	11 December 2022	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
FGD with EC of Taroo khil FMA		Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
FGD with users of Salam Khil FMA		Sher Ali Gala, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
FGD with women user of Bazoo Khil FMA		Bazoo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
FGD with EC of Osman Khil FMA	12 December 2022	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
FGD with users of Koseen Khano Khilo FMA		Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
FGD with women users of Kalgar FMA		Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
KII with DAIL	13 December 2022	Directorate of DAIL, Paktiya
KII with MRRD		Directorate of MRRD, Paktiya
KII with IGDK	14 December 2022	Directorate of IDGK, Paktiya
KII with project team		PPMU, Paktiya
Return back to Kabul	15 December 2022	Gardez to Kabul

Activity	Date	Place
Arrival to Kunar	22 December 2022	Travel to Kunar
Orientation meeting with project female staff to facilitate FGD	24 December 2022	Asadabad city
KII with NEPA		Directorate of NEPA, Kunar
FGD with EC of Belay FMA	25 December 2022	Khanano, Asmar, Kunar
FGD with users of Belay FMA		Khanano, Asmar, Kunar
FGD with women users of Belay FMA		Dambaro, Asmar, Kunar
FGD with women users of Shangar FMA		Shangar, Asmar, Kunar
FGD with EC of Managi FMA	26 December 2022	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
FGD with EC of Sandry aw Shamond FMA		Kase, Manogi, Kunar
FGD with mix users of Managi FMA		Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
FGD with women user of Barkandi FMA		Barkandi, Manogi, Kunar
KII with DAIL	27 December 2022	Directorate of DAIL, Kunar
KII with IGDK		Directorate of QABAIL, Kunar
KII with MRRD	28 December 2022	Directorate of MRRD, Kunar
KII with project team		PPMU, Kunar
Return back to Jalalabad	29 December 2022	

Appendix 3. Stakeholders interviewed during the MTR

S	Name	Position	Organization/location
FAO Afghanistan Country Office			
1	Richard Trenchard	BH/ Country Director	FAO Afghanistan
2	Moeenuddin Siraj	National Operations Officer	FAO Afghanistan
3	Rajendra Aryal	Previous Country Director of Afghanistan	FAOR of Indonesia and Timor Leste
FAO HQ and RAP			
4	Yurie Naito	GEF Liaison Officer	HQ
5	Kenichi Shono	Technical Officer	HQ
6	Illias Animon	Lead Technical Officer	RAP
Project Management Unit (PPMU)			
7	Mohammad Safi	National Program Manager	GEF Programme Manager
8	Mohammad Rahimy	National Project Manager	PMU, CBSLFMA project
9	Bashir Mawlawizada	National Admin/Finance Associate	PMU, CBSLFMA project
10	Azatullah Sahil	National Knowledge Management/ Communications Officer	PMU, CBSLFMA project
11	Hamidullah Akbary	National Sustainable Forest and Rangeland Management Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
12	Mir Wali Lakanwal	National NRM Capacity Development Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
13	Habib Ur Rehman	National Alternative Livelihoods Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
14	Mohammad Hussaini	National Alternative Livelihoods Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
15	Md Mustafa Sahebzada	National Biodiversity Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
16	Hafizullah Naeemy	National Draftsman / AutoCAD Technician	PMU, CBSLFMA project
17	Hamed Qurbani	M&E and Community Mobiliser Specialist	PMU, CBSLFMA project
18	Sayed Omar Dost	Geospatial and E-learning Assistant	PMU, CBSLFMA project
Provincial Project Management Unit (PPMU)			
19	Ahmad Khalid Wiyar	Project Coordinator	PPMU-Kunar, CBSLFMA project
20	Sharifullah Safi	Forestry Technician	PPMU-Kunar, CBSLFMA project
21	Md Ibrahim Qaderi	Project Coordinator	PPMU- Paktya, CBSLFMA project
22	Md Wazir Alham	Forestry Technician	PPMU-Paktya, CBSLFMA project
23	Obaidullah Durani	Project Coordinator	PPMU-Badghis, CBSLFMA project
24	Shamsulhaq Shams	Forestry Technician	PPMU-Badghis, CBSLFMA project
25	Gul Nabi Khan Noorani	Project Coordinator	PPMU-Bamyan, CBSLFMA project
26	Sayed Basir Alamy	Forestry Technician	PPMU-Bamyan, CBSLFMA project
27	Md Amin Nesar	Project coordinator	PPMU-Ghazni CBSLFMA project
28	Ahmadullah Hamdard	Community mobilizer Technician	PPMU-Ghazni CBSLFMA project
29	Ahmad Jalalzai	Community mobilizer Consultant	PPMU-Ghazni CBSLFMA project
Sub-national technical stakeholders			
30	Mowlawe Raouf Said	Director	DAIL, Patiya
31	Mowlawe Zahibullah	NRM Provincial Manager	
32	Khial Mohammad	Ahmad aba District Extension officer	

S	Name	Position	Organization/location
33	Noroz	Sayed Karam District Extension Officer	
34	Mowlawe Abdul Hidayat	Director	NEPA, Patiya
35	Md Fared Sediqyar	Manager	DRRD, Patiya
36	Mowlawe Mirza Sadiq	Director	
37	Mowlawe Saifurahman	Social Development Manager	
38	Mohammad aAan	Programme Manager	
39	Saifurahman Hiran	Manager	IGDK, Patiya
40	Mowlawe Ibrahim Shahin	Director	DAIL, Kunar
41	Abdul Wasi Ihsas	NRM Provincial Manager	
42	Ashabuddin	Asmar District NRM Officer	
43	Hakimullah	Manogi District NRM Officer	
44	Ali Shah	Acting Director	NEPA, Kunar
45	Matiuullah	Public Awareness Manager	
46	Zahidullah safi	Sustainable Development Manager	
47	Abdul Shakoor Hamdard	Quality control Manager	
48	Nasirullah	Administrative Officer	DRRD, Kunar
49	Rahmanullah	Manager	IGDK, Kunar
50	Qari Md Mohsen Ehsan	Director	DAIL, Badghis
51	Safiullah Mohammadi	Head of NRM	
52	Hekmatullah Sami	Environmental Inspection Officer	NEPA, Badghis
53	Hesamuddin Akbari	Monitoring Officer	DRRD, Badghis
54	Farhad Sultani	Rangeland Officer	DAIL, Ghazni
55	Wahidullah Alemy	Natural Heritage Officer	NEPA, Ghazni
56	Alhaj Mohammad	Social and Development	DRRD, Ghazni
57	Shah Gul Sediqi	Monitoring Officer	
58	Said Agha Sadat	Service Officer	IGDK, Ghazni
59	Md Sharif Poya	Natural Heritage Officer	NEPA, Bamyan
60	Mohammadodin Moradi	Head of NRM	DAIL, Bamyan
61	Ziaullah Khadim	Director	DRRD, Bamyan
62	Hussain Frotan	Social associate staff	
63	Abdul Mateen Rohani	Head of programs	
64	Aminullah Fazel	Social Monitoring Officer	

List of FGD participants

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
Executive committee members			
1	Malak Nabi	Head, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
2	Abdul Jabar	Deputy Head, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
3	Yar Mohamad	Clerk, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
4	Maqbol	Cashier, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
5	Jilani	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
6	Zadran	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
7	Taj Mohammad	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
8	Gul roze	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
9	Awal khan	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
10	Agha Jan	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
11	Mohammad	Member, Mansor Khil FMA	Gharak, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
12	Gul Shiren	Head, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
13	Aziz Khan	Deputy, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
14	Wilayat mer	Clerk, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
15	Dost Mohammad	Cashier, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
16	Sidajan	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
17	Rais	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
18	Mirza	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
19	Faiz Mohammad	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
20	Hebat Khan	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
21	Amir	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
22	Shahzada	Member, Taroo Khil FMA	Taroo Khil, Ahmad Aba, Paktya
23	Akbar Jan	Head, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
24	Ziarat Khan	Deputy, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
25	Haje Yousuf	Clerk, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
26	Haji Habibdin	Cashier, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
27	Khan	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
28	Ghazi	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
29	Mirzaman	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
30	Madat	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
31	Khiali Jan	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
32	Rahman	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
33	Haje Shermast	Member, Osman Khil FMA	Issa Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
34	Torsam	Head, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
35	Juma Gul	Deputy, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
36	Bihram	Clerk, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
37	Razi khan	Cashier, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
38	Gul zarin	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
39	Nawab	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
40	Bazbin	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
41	Abdul Rahman	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
42	Ahmad khan	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
43	Ishaq	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
44	Ahmad khan	Member, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
45	Mohammad Afzal	Head, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
46	Shafaq	Deputy, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
47	Qiamuddin	Clerk, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
48	Abdul nabi	Cashier, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
49	Mohammad Ghafar	Member, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
50	Fazalullah	Member, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
51	Matiullah	Member, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
52	Janat gul	Member, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
53	Mangal	Member, Managi FMA	Barakzai village, Manogi, Kunar
54	Muen Khan	Head, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
55	Fazal Rabi	Deputy, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
56	Pacha	Clerk, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
57	Shahabuddin	Cashier, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
58	Noor Ali Khan	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
59	Jamal Khan	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
60	Atiqullah	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
61	Bashir Ahmad	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
62	Abdul Shakoor	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
63	Abdul Wahab	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
64	Fazal Nabi	Member, Sandry aw shamond FMA	Kase village, Manogi, Kunar
65	Khalid Ahmady	Head, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
66	Sarwar	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
67	Mohammad Hasan	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
68	Aziz	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
69	Hosain Dad	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
70	Hosain Dad	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
71	Amin	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
72	Yaqob	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
73	Rajab	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
74	Fatema	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
75	Nabi	Member, Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
76	Abdul Wahab	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
77	Abdul Baes	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
78	Amanullah	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
79	Abdul Rahman	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
80	Omar	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
81	Ahmada	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
82	Habibullah	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
83	Ghualm Hazrat	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
84	Abdul Ghafar	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
85	Mirza Ahmad	Member, Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
86	Mohammad Daud	Head, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
87	Mohammad Wazir	Deputy Head, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
88	Abdul Haq	Cashier, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
89	Ramazan	Secretary, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
90	Mohammad Issa	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
91	Ali Mohammad	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
92	Hafizullah	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
93	Abdul Rahman	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
94	Mohammad Sarwar	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
95	Abdul Baqi	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
96	Mulah Imamuddin	Member, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
FMA/RMA users			

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
97	Gul Mohammad	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
98	Zafar khan	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
99	Gulzada	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
100	Zabit	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
101	Khan Kareem	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
102	Abdulsalam	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
103	Mohammad Yousuf	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
104	Malok	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
105	Mahammad Wazir	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
106	Nik Mohammad	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
107	Noor Mohammad	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
108	Manawar	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
109	Bajo	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
110	Noorullah	User, Salam Khil FMA	Sher Ali Qala, Ahmad aba, Paktya
111	Said Akbar	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
112	Lal Gul	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
113	Akhter Jan	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
114	Raz Mohammad	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
115	Mohammad	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
116	Abdul Hanan	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
117	Said Rahim	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
118	Sahar gul	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
119	Mohammad Khan	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
120	Naqibullah	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
121	Hakim Shah	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
122	Gul Nabi	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
123	Yar Mohammad	User, Koseen Khano FMA	Sultan Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
124	Zar Wali Khan	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
125	Juma Gul	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
126	Nazmin	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
127	Aminullah	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
128	Saidajan	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
129	Mohammad Yousuf	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
130	Abdulrahman	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
131	Bahadar Said	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
132	Mohammadajan	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
133	Khan Zada	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
134	Wahid	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
135	Faqir	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
136	Zafar	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
137	Shamsuddin	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
138	Fareddullah	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
139	Masihullah	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
140	Mirakhan	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
141	Arfanullah	User, Belay FMA	Khanano village, Asmar, Kunar
142	Hayatullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
143	Zabihullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
144	Noor zaman	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
145	Md Dad Khan	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
146	Turab	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
147	Bashirullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
148	Ibrahim	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
149	Ismail	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
150	Jaded khan	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
151	Naqibullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
52	Wasiullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
153	Samiullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
154	Abdur Rahim	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
155	Ali ahmad Khan	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
156	Qiamuddin	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
157	Tariq	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
158	Abadullah	User, Managi FMA	Barakzai, Manogi, Kunar
159	Ali Juma	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
160	Abdulllah	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
161	Habib	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
162	Hamidullah	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
163	Jawad	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
164	Mohammad	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
165	Mohammad	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
166	Baqer	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
167	Abdullah	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
168	Khan Mohammad	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
169	Mohammad Zaher	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
170	Mohammad Husain	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
171	Mosa	User, Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh – Yakawlang, Bamyan
172	Zikrullah	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
173	Din Mohammad	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
174	Inayatullah	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
175	Mohammad Nader	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
176	Mohammad Naseem	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
177	Ahmad Shah	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
178	Mohammad Yonus	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
179	Murtaza	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
180	Ghulam Haidar	User, Khannah RMA	Khannah, Ab Kamari, Badghis
Alternative livelihoods beneficiaries (female)			

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
181	NawAba	EF-cook stove + Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
182	Gulo	Poultry farm, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
183	Bibi Aisha	Poultry farm, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
184	Nik amala	Poultry farm, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
185	Hukum Jan	Poultry farm, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
186	Mima	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
187	Sakina	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
188	Faloda	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
189	Fatima	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
190	Habiba	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
191	Wara	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
192	Amina	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
193	Bibi	Poultry farm, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
194	Glonga	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
195	Fare	EF-cook stove, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
196	Atlasa	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
197	Bakht Zamina	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
198	Ziarat bibi	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
199	Janat bibi	Agro forestry, Bazoo Khil FMA	Bazoo Khil, Ahmad aba, Paktya
200	Gul Fare	Agro forestry, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
201	Akhtiara	Poultry farm, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
202	Bakht bibi	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
203	Safina	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
204	Gul babo	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
205	Zar fare	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
206	Shukria	Poultry farm, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
207	Satamana	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
208	Rahim bibi	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
209	Hasan bibo	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
210	Gul kamina	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
211	Warekhmena	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
212	Gul shana	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
213	Sakina	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
214	Shakila	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
215	Zarbakhta	Poultry farm, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
216	Hawa	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
217	Salma	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
218	Sakina	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
219	Anisa	Agro forestry, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
220	Wazira	EF-cook stove, Kalgar FMA	Ghafoor Khil, Sayed Karam, Paktya
221	Nooria	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
222	Asma	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
223	Maryam	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
224	Adila	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
225	Bilqisa	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
226	Halima	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
227	Faqira	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
228	Muslima	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
229	Khalida	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
230	Nazaka	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
231	Yasmin	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
232	Masalima	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
233	Rana	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
234	Rohina	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
235	Fazia	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
236	Rana	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
237	Waraki	EF cook stove, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
238	Safaia	Poultry farm, Belay FMA	Dambaro village, Asmar, Kunar
239	Nasrin	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
240	Fatima	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
241	Hadiqa	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
242	Shamim	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
242	Liloma	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
243	Bibi gula	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
244	Abida	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
245	Madina	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
246	Kainat	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
247	Latifa	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
248	Hakima	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
249	Mahria	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
250	Zinab	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
251	Sadar	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
252	Sarwasia	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
253	Asia	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
254	Bibi hawa	Poultry farm, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
255	Bajore	EF cook stove, Shangar FMA	Shangar village, Asmar, Kunar
256	Farmina	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
257	Noorsiad	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
258	Fareda	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
259	Fatima	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
260	Tawhida	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
261	Faroqa	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
262	Gorgora	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
263	Atifa	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
264	Halima	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
265	Safna	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
266	Kimia	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
267	Farhabon	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
268	Zarena	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
269	Rohina	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
270	Nahida	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
271	Dohina	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
272	Jalwa	Poultry farm, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
273	Masia	EF cook stove, Barkandi FMA	Barkandi village, Manogi, Kunar
274	Hawa	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
275	Razia	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
276	Rahima	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan

S No	Name	Position/Association	District/Province
277	Belqis	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
278	Tahera	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
279	Benazeer	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
280	Sharifa	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
281	Razia	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
282	Shahnaz	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
282	Fatema	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
283	Rahima	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
284	Soghra	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
285	Roqia	Sokhta Qash RMA	Sokhta Qash, Panjab, Bamyan
286	Sakina	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
287	Nikbaght	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
288	Soraya	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
289	Nigar	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
290	Fatema	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
291	Karima	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
292	Razia	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
293	Gulafroz	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
294	Maryam	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
295	Rahima	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
296	Zahra	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
297	Bano	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
298	Bakhtawar	Char Fasl RMA	Dahan Seerdagh & Sar-e-Seerdagh, Yakawlang, Bamyan
299	Nasima	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
300	Fatema	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
301	Khanuman	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
302	Najiba	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
303	Gulrokh	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
304	Farida	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
304	Zarifa	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis
305	Nazia	Deh Berenj RMA	Deh Berenj, Qadis, Badghis

Appendix 4. MTR matrix (review questions and sub-questions)

Evaluation Component	Evaluative questions/ sub-questions	Indicators	Sources	Data collection methods
Relevance: *How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?*				
Relevance	Are the project outcomes congruent with country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (local communities, men and women, and indigenous peoples, if relevant)?	▪ Alignment of the objectives of the project with the priorities and GEF focal area's strategies. ▪ Alignment of the Objective with GEF core indicators ▪ Intended results are consistent with local national and sub- national and countries environmental and development priorities ▪ Aligned with the FAOAF country programing framework ▪ FAO strategic priorities and objectives; its complementarity with existing interventions ▪ Level of alignment between the key assumptions formulated in the ProDoc and the situation in the project implemented sites ▪ Level of alignment of project outcomes and outputs with national priorities at the beginning of the project; and in the mid-term	Project document, GEF priorities area Interviews of GEF focal point, and participating government ministries and bodies PPRs, AFAO AFG country framework, review of GEF core indicators worksheets and bio-diversity focal area	Document review, interviews
	Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its formulation, such as adoption of new national policies, plans or programs that affect the relevance of the project objectives and goals? If so, are there any changes that need to be made to the project to make it more relevant?	▪ Emerging new policy after project came to implementation ▪ Extent of changes in government priorities ▪ Alignment of the project with the priorities agreed between UN-FAO and the government of Afghanistan ▪ Relevance of the project outcomes after the current political scenario of Afghanistan (in the changed post August 2021 political context	ProDoc, steering committee meeting minutes, PTF meeting minutes, PIR and interviews with FAO-GEF team, PMU, Steering committee members	Document review, interviews
Effectiveness delivery of the Project result: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project has been delivered/ achieved been?				

Effectiveness	To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives?	▪ Extent to which the objectives, outcomes and outputs indicated in the results implemented ▪ Expectation to meet the project targets by its Mid-term milestone have been achieved ▪ Existence of unplanned activities and outcomes and their impact ▪ Progress between the most recent GEF monitoring tool and its baseline version	Interviews with project participants, project staff and project qualitative and quantitative results, review of PIR and PPR	Document review and analysis, interviews
	What broader results (if any) has the project had at regional and global level to date?	▪ Extent the project result framework and objectives contributed to regional and global level for bio- diversity conservation and ecosystem benefits ▪ Extent to which results against relevant core indicators have been achieved (as per the mid-term targets)	Interviews with staff, FAO budget holders, LTO, review of ProDoc and steering committee meeting minutes	Document review, interviews
	Were there any unintended consequences?	▪ Positive and negative unintended consequences of the project	PIR and PPR and steering committee meeting minutes, document uploaded in FPMIS	Document review, interviews
	Is there any evidence of environmental stress reduction (for example, in direct threats to biodiversity) or environmental status change (such as an improvement in the populations of target species), reflecting global environmental benefits or any change in policy, legal or regulatory frameworks?	▪ Interventions outlined in the ProDoc and successful delivery of them	PIR, PPR and interviews with PMU staff and executing partners	Document review, interviews
	To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?	▪ Broader objective of the project set out in the design phase ▪ Contribution of the project to the implementation of national policies	Interviews with executing partners, PMU, budget holder, FLO and LTO and FAO-GEF team	Document review, interviews
Likelihood of impact	Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of	▪ Internal and external risk to the project, degree of the risk	PIR and PPR, steering committee meetings minutes,	Document review,

	the project's longer-term objectives?	▪ Nature and extent of factors that are hindering progress towards the objectives and expected result	interviews with PMU staff and provincial government partners	interviews
	What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project?	▪ Major learning and corrective measures ▪ Nature and extent of opportunities generated by the most significant achievement by the project to the date.	Interviews with PMU, provincial executing partners, project participants, PIR and steering committee meeting minutes	Document review and analysis, interviews
	To what extent can the progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project?	▪ Stakeholder views on the need and contribution of the project to improve lives of beneficiaries ▪ Efforts undertaken by the project to share success, best practices, and lessons with wider audience	Review of PIR and PPR, interviews provincial executing partners, project participants, PMU team	Document review, interviews
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?				
Efficiency	To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively?	▪ Costs related to the result achieved in to similar inputs in other project ▪ Cost ratio in implementing activities by other agencies in the provinces. ▪ Level of management costs and discrepancy with planned costs ▪ Costs related to the results achieved compared to the costs of similar projects ▪ Level of discrepancy between planned and executed budget (total, by year and component)	Financial reports, budget execution analysis reports and adjustments made by project team, interviews with PMU team and Operations unit, budget holder	Document review, interviews
	To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?	▪ Comparison of start-up activities with agreed approach and methodology ▪ List of delays and causes ▪ Appropriateness of corrective actions in relation to delays and causes	PIR, interviews with PMU team, Operations unit, budget holder, FALO/ LTO	Document review and analysis, interviews

	To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. and avoided duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?	▪ Complementarities with other projects ▪ Partnership and coordination with the executing partners ▪ Duplication of the activities	PIR, interviews with budget holder, provincial executing partners	Document review and analysis, interviews
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?				
Sustainability	What is the likelihood that the project results will be useful or persist after the end of the project?	▪ Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained	Interviews with provincial executing partners, project participants	Interviews, observations
	What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and its benefits (consider financial, socioeconomic, institutional and governance, and environmental aspects)?	▪ Likely budgetary allocations by implementing partner for repair, operation and maintenance of project investments after closure of the project ▪ Ownership level and ability of the implementing partner and potential usefulness of project investments for communities	Interviews with provincial executing partners, project participants, PMU team	Interviews, observations
Replication and catalysis	What project results, lessons or experiences have been replicated (in different geographic areas) or scaled up (in the same geographic area, but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources)?	▪ Commitment of communities, provincial government, and national government to project objectives and approach ▪ Evidence that particular practices will be sustained	Interviews with provincial executing partners, project participants, PMU team	Interviews, observations
	What results, lessons or experiences are likely to be replicated or scaled up in the near future?	▪ Degree of satisfaction expressed by project beneficiaries and government departments and ministries on achievements of the project ▪ Commitment from the DAIL and MAIL to replicate the activities/ already replicated	PIR, PPR, interviews with provincial executing partners, project participants	Document review and analysis, interviews
Factors affecting performance: To what extent the different affecting the project performance				
Project design	Is the project design suited to delivering the expected outcomes?	▪ Degree to which results framework indicators are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)	ProDoc, theory of change, interviews	Document review,

			with Operations unit, PMU team	interviews
	Is the project's causal logic (per its theory of change) coherent and clear?	▪ Consistency between project objective, outcomes, outputs and activities ▪ Feasibility of the objectives, outcomes and outputs within the project's budget and timeframe ▪ Appropriateness measures taken to address any weaknesses in project design or to respond to changes made between project approval (prior to project inception)	Project inception report, interviews with Operations unit, FAO-GEF unit	Document review, interviews
	To what extent are the project's objectives and components clear, practical and feasible within the timeframe allowed?	▪ Degree to which results framework indicators are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)	ProDoc, interviews with PMU team	Document review and analysis, interviews
	To what extent was gender integrated into the projects objectives and results framework?	▪ Use of gender-disaggregated indicators and targets ▪ Availability of gender action plan ▪ Allocation of the budget according to gender action plan	Gender assessment report and action plan, interviews with PMU team	Document review and analysis, interviews
	Were other actors – civil society, indigenous peoples or private sector – involved in project design or implementation and what was the effect on project results?	▪ The stakeholder engagement in the design phase, list of them ▪ Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the ProDoc	ProDoc, interviews with stakeholders	Document review, interviews
Project execution and management	To what extent did the executing agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities in managing and administering the project?	▪ Evidence of clear roles and responsibilities ▪ Evidence of timely and transparent decision making ▪ Adequacy in project-management arrangements (initial staffing, procurement of good and services, and financing) in place when the project began ▪ Level of responsiveness of the project team and respective implementing agencies to the changing political context	PIR, interviews with Operations unit, PMU team, provincial executing partners, project participants	Document review and analysis, interviews
	What have been the main challenges in terms of project management and administration?	▪ The risk log developed during the Design phase and updated during COVID-19 period ▪ Extent of mitigation and management of risks posed by COVID-19	Risk log and changes made on it	Document review, interviews

	How well have risks been identified and managed?	▪ Risk log proposed in the ProDoc and evidence of updating those in PSC/PTF and during Covid-19 scenario for adaptive management	PSC meeting minutes, interview with PMU team	Document review and analysis, interviews
	What changes are needed to improve delivery in the latter half of the project?	▪ Correction measure of risk and mitigation measures	Interviews with PMU team, Operations unit	Document review, interviews
Project oversight, implementation role	To what extent has FAO delivered oversight and supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative, and operational) during project identification, formulation, approval, start-up and execution?	▪ Implementing agency's supervision and support ▪ Implementation support by the executing entity ▪ Approval process within FAO ▪ Supervision, guidance, operational and technical support provided by FAO (BH, LTO and FLO), the PSC and other supervising/supporting bodies ▪ Reporting lines clear, transparent and on timely manner ▪ Support through PTF meeting	Interviews with PMU, LTO and FLOs, budget holder	Interviews, back to office reports
Financial management and co-financing)	What have been the financial management challenges of the project?	▪ PMU and FLO knowledge of the project financials, including knowledge of project progress/status ▪ Status of co-financing availability of budget on time within organization ▪ -Expenditure by outcome and output ▪ Revisions to budgets and any issues with disbursement ▪ PMU and FLO responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues ▪ Degree of attention paid to compliance with procurement rules and regulations ▪ Any relevant legal agreements, such as letters of agreement	Financial data, interviews with PMU team, Operations unit	Financial data analysis, interviews
	To what extent has pledged co-financing been delivered?	▪ Status of co-financing disbursement	FPMIS data, interviews with Operations unit, PMU team	Document review and analysis, interviews
	Has any additional leveraged co-financing been provided since implementation?	▪ Status of additional financial resources	FPMIS data, interview with Operations unit, finance	Document review, interviews

	How has any shortfall in co-financing or unexpected additional funding affected project results?	▪ Co-financing and their utilization and effectiveness	FPMIS data, interview with Operations unit, finance	Document review, interviews
Partnerships and stakeholder engagement	To what extent have stakeholders, such as civil society, indigenous populations, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and private sector been involved in project formulation and implementation?	▪ Role and responsibilities of different stakeholders in project formulation and implementation phase ▪ Evidence of clear roles and responsibilities ▪ Evidence of timely and transparent decision making	ProDoc and interviews with provincial executing partners, stakeholders	Document review and analysis, interviews
	What has been the effect of their involvement or non-involvement on project results?	▪ The coordination and synergy building	Interviews with PMU team	Interviews
	How do the various stakeholder groups see their own engagement with the project?	▪ Roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in ProDoc ▪ Ownership taken by stakeholders	Interviews with provincial executing partners, stakeholders	Interviews
	What are the mechanisms of their involvement and how could these be improved?	▪ Existence of specific mechanism for stakeholders' involvement ▪ Joint project monitoring missions	Interview with PMU team	Document review, interviews
	What are the strengths and challenges of the project's partnerships?	▪ Mobilization of multiple partners especially Government at different level ▪ -Situation of co-financing post August 2021	Interviews with PMU team, Operations unit, provincial executing partners	Interviews
	Has the stakeholder engagement plan been adhered to and documented?	▪ List of stakeholders consulted during design and implementation phases	ProDoc, PIR, PPR	Document review
	Have all stakeholders been made aware of the ESS plan and the grievance complaint mechanism?	▪ Existence of GRM at the project level	PIR, PPR, interviews with stakeholders	Document review, interviews
	How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting	▪ Communication strategy, mechanism, communication materials produced	Project communication	Document review and

Communication and knowledge management	its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders, and general audience? How can this be improved?	▪ Availability of resources (both financial and specialized technical communication expertise) for communication and knowledge-management activities ▪ Expertise on financial and specialized technical communication ▪ Mechanism for improving communication and promoting key messages	materials, interviews with PMU team	analysis, interviews
	How is the project assessing, documenting, and sharing its results and lessons learned and experiences?	▪ Experience sharing, lesson learnt sharing, participation in international conference	Case story/ documentation, interviews with PMU team	Document review, interviews
	To what extent are communication products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project design	▪ Value added by communication strategy and mechanism ▪ Communication approaches and activities to support sustainable project results	Communication documents, interviews with PMU team	Document review, interviews
M&E design	Is the project's M&E system practical and sufficient?	▪ Existence of project progress tracking system ▪ Requirement of reformulation of outcome indicators to make them 'SMART'	Interviews with PMU team, FAO M&E	Interviews
	How has stakeholder engagement and gender assessment been integrated into the M&E system? How could this be improved?	▪ Gender analysis and stakeholder analysis report, ▪ Sex- disaggregated data maintained at the project level ▪ Availability of baseline information for the indicators at the design stage ▪ Adequacy of gender-disaggregated indicators included in the project logframe and M&E framework	M&E plan, database, interview with project M&E	Document review and M& E data analysis, interviews
M&E implementation	Does the M&E system operate per the M&E plan?	▪ Availability of M&E plan, human and financial resources, dedicated M&E staff ▪ Submission of PIRs and updating of tracking tools and core indicators	Interview with project M&E	Interviews
	Has information been gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies?	▪ Existence of different methods for information gathering ▪ Mechanisms used for capturing lessons learned (for example, external facilitators, annual project retreats or stakeholder-led workshops)	Interview with PMU team, FAO M&E	Interviews
	To what extent has information generated by the M&E system during project implementation been used to adapt and improve project planning and execution,	▪ Degree of utilization of M&E data and lesson learnt adaptive management process identified, captured, documented, shared and incorporated into project implementation	Monitoring tracking sheets, interviews with PMO and	Document review and analysis, interviews

	achieve outcomes and ensure sustainability?			
	Are there gender-disaggregated targets and indicators?	▪ Gender sensitive indicator in ProDoc	M&E data base, interview with project M&E	Document review and analysis, interviews
	How can the M&E Plan system be improved?	▪ Functioning of M&E plan ▪ Quality, utility and timeliness of PMU and partner reporting to both GEF and FAO	M&E plan, interview with project M&E	
Gender and minority groups, including indigenous peoples, disadvantaged, vulnerable and people with disabilities	To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project?	▪ Gender specific needs identified and interventions proposed accordingly in ProDoc ▪ Likelihood of the project having same level of positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys ▪ Evidence of activities that mainstream gender in planning or activities as a result of the project ▪ Representation and participation of gender and marginalized groups in decision making level of the project (PMU, PSC, PPCC) ▪ Availability of gender action plan ▪ Allocation of the budget according to gender action plan	PIR, PPR, interview with the PMU team	Document review, interviews
	Was a gender analysis done?	▪ Extent of gender differentiate impact identified during the design phase ▪ Extent of gender specific activities and indicators listed in ProDoc	ProDoc, interviews with PMU team	Document review and analysis, interviews
	Has the project been designed and implemented in a manner that ensures gender-equitable participation and benefits?	▪ Extent of evidence of participation of women and girls during project design ▪ Degree and extent of women's participation in project activities and specific mechanism to include them ▪ Project contribution in addressing gender gaps in (1) access to and control of natural resources; (2) participation and decision-making; and (3) access to socioeconomic benefits and services. ▪ Constraints on women's participation in the project activities ▪ Gender responsive results framework	ProDoc, interviews with PMU team, Operations unit	Document review and analysis, interviews

		▪ Availability of gender expertise in the project ▪ Contribution of project in achieving GEF and FAO's gender equality objectives		
ESS	To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?	▪ Quality of risk analysis in the project document / Completeness of risk identification during project planning and design ▪ Extent to which the planning documents foresaw or reflected the risks already faced by the project during implementation ▪ Quality of existing information systems to identify and analyse new risks ▪ Quality of risk mitigation strategies developed and followed ▪ Assessment of environmental and social risks during project	Interview with PMU team	Interviews
	Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures the ESS Mitigation Plan (if one exists) has been adhered to?	▪ Existence of ESS plan including risk classification ▪ Consistency of risk analysis and implementation of mitigation measures with FAO standards ▪ Degree of progress in the implementation of the environmental and social management plan ▪ Adequacy of definition and implementation of measures to prevent negative effects of Covid-19 on technical and financial implementation ▪ Risks posed by climate change and other natural hazards ▪ Environmental and social instruments applied by the project	ProDoc, PIR, PTF meeting minutes, steering committee meeting minutes	Document review, interviews

Interview questions

(For: FAOR/budget holder, FLO, TO, LTO, PO, NPM, PMU and PPMU team, Operation Head)

Q 1. Background information

Name of interviewee		Date	
Position and title		Time	
Department/unit		Person(s) present	
Address			

Relevance

Q 2. Is the project's design appropriate for addressing the substantive problems that the project intended to address? How useful are the project's outputs in meeting the needs of the target beneficiaries?

Q 3. Is the project design's appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? Was the project's design congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities and FAO Afghanistan Country Programming Framework? Is the project aligned with the priorities agreed upon by the FAO and the Government of Afghanistan?

Q 4. Are the project's objectives consistent with substantive needs and realistic given the technical capacity, resources and time available?

Q 5. Were lessons from other relevant national and international projects properly incorporated into the project's design?

Q 6. Did the project's result framework capture the intended and/or desired results adequately? If not, what needs to be changed? Are the project's targets realistic, feasible and achievable? Are the assumptions and risks listed in the result framework realistic? Is the project still relevant? Did any contextual changes affect its relevance?

Q 7. Are the project's components and outcomes still relevant in the changed, post-August 2021 political scenario?

Effectiveness

Q 8. What constraints, risks, and challenges to progress on each outcome of the project remain? What is the project doing to respond to these difficulties?

Q 9. To what extent are the objectives, outcomes and outputs laid out in the project's results framework being implemented?

Q 10. What is your assessment of the progress of the project (outcomes/outputs/interventions) with respect to the mid-term target milestones? If targets were not met, what were the reasons they were not and do you expect that they will be met towards the end of the project? What strategy would you adopt in order to meet the targets?

Q 11. Which stakeholders were involved in designing and implementing the project? How did their involvement impact the project's results?

Q 12. Do you think that the project's objectives contributed to the conservation of regional and global biodiversity and ecosystem benefits? Can you give any examples of its contributions?

Q 13. What are the positive and/or negative unintended consequences of the project to beneficiaries, stakeholders, and implementing partners?

Q 14. Is there any evidence that environmental stress was reduced due to the project's interventions (afforestation, agro-forestry, reseeding of rangeland, grazing management, usage of improved cook stoves, poultry rearing, etc), especially in reducing pressure on natural resources (forests and rangeland)? Were any assessments conducted in order to compare later developments with the baseline situation?

Q 15. What major factors hinder the achievement of the project's objectives regarding the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use and management of natural resources, and reduction of GHG emissions from land and forests?

Q 16. What are the significant achievements of the project?

Efficiency

Q 17. Do you see any discrepancy between the planned and executed budget (total as well as annual) in terms of the cost ratios of implementing similar activities by other projects in the province and by other agencies? Could the budget be spent differently?

Q 18. How successful do you think the project is in building synergy and complementarities with other projects implemented by the FAO, other GEF-funded projects, and other natural resource management and climate change projects in the provinces and at the national level?

Sustainability

Q 19. What is the early evidence that the partnerships/linkages established by the project will last?

Q 20. What are the risks to the sustainability of project's results and benefits, both socio-economic and environmental?

Q 21. How has the project managed to enhance the interest and motivation of communities to adopt a community-based natural resource management approach in the project's areas of implementation?

Q 22. What project activities are likely to continue after the project comes to an end? Which ones seem unlikely to continue and why?

Q 23. What are the possibilities and potentialities of project results and experiences that have been scaled up in the project's target areas and replicated in other provinces or areas of Afghanistan?

Q 24. Does the project have any process by which to monitor the internal governance of FMAs and RMAs or any institutional performance assessments? How are these associations functioning? Do you think these associations will be able to continue their activities after the project's funding stops?

Factors affecting performance

Q 25. What is your impression of the consistency among the project's objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities in terms of being a logical pathway? Are the project's objectives, outcomes and outputs feasible within the budget and time frame allocated? Are the indicators mentioned in the result matrix specific, measurable and achievable? Was there any need to update the result matrix after August 2021? Are all components, outcomes and outputs still valid and achievable even in the changed, post-August context?

Q 26. Was there any delay in the project's start-up? Why were there no project activities or progress in the first year? What mitigation and corrective measures has the project adopted to cover the delay in activities?

Q 27. Were management arrangements (initial staffing, procurement of good and services, and financing) in place when the project began? Were sufficient numbers of national and international staff hired on time?

Q 28. How has rapid turnover of provincial level affected the project's progress? How easy has it been to find replacements for the staff who left the country after 2021? How has project tried to address the high rate of attrition?

Q 29. How has the lack of high-level guidance (not having had any project steering or task force meeting since February 2021 and no CTA since March 2021) affected the project's progress?

Q 30. Is the project facing any difficulties in procuring goods and services? How have delays in payments to suppliers and service providers affected the project's progress? What is needed to improve the rate of progress?

Q 31. What is the quality of the implementing agency's supervision and support? What is the quality of the technical backstopping provided by RAP (LTO) HQ FLO, the forestry senior officer and the GEF unit?

Q 32. How have Covid -19 restrictions impacted outputs/outcomes? Was the risk log which was developed during the design phase updated during Covid -19 period? What mitigation

measures were adopted to minimize the risks to achieving the project's results? How did the project continue its activities during the lockdown period?

Q 33. Were any appropriate measures taken during the project's inception to address any weaknesses observed in the project's design?

Q 34. Has the security situation affected the project's ability to implement activities and achieve progress in its targets? If yes, what measures were adopted to counter the difficulties?

Q 35. What is the status of co-financing and is budget available on time? Have any revisions in the budget been made? Are there any issues regarding budget disbursement? Was there a need for any budget revisions to ensure the effective implementation of the project after August 2021?

Q 36. Was a stakeholder engagement plan developed during the project's design phase? Was the stakeholder engagement plan followed and monitored during the implementation phase? Are all the stakeholders listed in the ProDoc engaged in the project?

Q 37. What is the status of stakeholder participation in project decision-making and implementation? How can participation and ownership be increased during the time remaining?

Q 38. Have the FAO and other executing partners (NEPA, MAIL-GDNRM, MRRD, and IDGK) been participating in the joint monitoring of the project's activities? What lessons have been learnt from that joint monitoring?

Q 39. What partnerships have developed among stakeholders' groups? How do they contribute toward achieving the project's results?

Q 40. Are stakeholders negatively impacted by the project's activities? If yes, why and how? What can be done to mitigate these adverse impacts? Is there any grievances redressal mechanism in place?

Q 41. Has the project developed a communication strategy? Is it followed properly?

Q 42. How effective has the project out-reached activities with partners and stakeholders? How available are resources, both financial and technical, for communication, outreach, and knowledge management? Is there any mechanism for improving communication and promoting the project's key messages to a wide body of stakeholders?

Q 43. What mechanism does the project use to capture lessons learnt and best practices from both internal and external sources? How does the project share its best practices and lessons learnt with a wide audience?

Q 44. Are the M&E plan and progress tracking sufficient? If not, what needs to be done to make them more efficient and functional?

Q 45. What is your impression of the quality of the M&E data produced by the project? How has the logframe been used to monitor the results of the project and bring about corrections in its course?

Cross cutting issues

Q 44. Was a gender analysis conducted during the project's design phase? Are the project's indicators and targets gender-responsive?

Q 45. Are relevant gender issues raised in the project's design? Was a gender assessment conducted during the project's design phase? Was a gender action plan developed?

Q 46. What mechanisms are used to increase women's participation in the project's activities? Are they the same now as they were before August 2021?

Q 47. Are project's cross-cutting priorities affected by the current national context (post August 2021)?

Q 48. Did the project apply application of free and prior informed consent process in project activities?

Q 49. Were social risks analyzed at the project inception period?

Q 50. Were environmental and social concerns considered in the design and implementation of project activities?

Q 51. Is there an ESS mitigation plan? Has the project integrated ESS in design and implementation phases? How does the project ensure activities implementation adhering to the ESS Mitigation Plan? How does the project monitor the environmental and social impacts of its activities?

Questions for Provincial Project Team

1. Introduction

Name of interviewee		Date	
Position and title		Time	
Department/section		Person(s) present	
Location			

Q 2. What are your roles and responsibilities in the project? How does your office support the project's interventions? How relevant is the project in terms of your mandate?

Q 3. What is the process for collaborating and coordinating among different executing partners within the province? How has that process changed since August 2021?

Q 4. Who are the main stakeholders you deal with within the province? How does collaboration take place?

Name of stakeholder	Roles	Benefits of collaboration	Areas of improvements

Q 5. What is the level of acceptance of the project's objectives among NGOs and civil society organisations in the province? What has the project contributed in terms of building public awareness about sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation and mitigation?

Q 6. Which project outcomes and outputs are progressing well in your provinces? Which interventions and outputs are lagging behind in terms of being able to achieve the expected targets? What are the reasons for the lack of timely progress and what can be done to improve the situation?

Q 7. What is the status of the internal governance mechanisms of FMAs and RMAs? Do they have management plans and group constitutions? Are they legally registered? How often do associations organize internal meetings and how does the project support the conduction of these meetings?

Q 8. What is the project doing to ensure good governance in FMAs and RMAs? How is the internal governance of FMAs and RMAs monitored?

Q 9. What is your view of the improvements in forests and rangeland? Are these improvements effective and sustainable? Please compare these improvements with the improvements other agencies have achieved using similar initiatives and interventions.

Q 10. What are the strengths of the project in terms of achieving results? What factors have contributed to the securing of good achievements in your province?

Q 11. How much have local stakeholders participated in the project's decision-making and implementation processes? How can participation and ownership be increased?

Q 12. How does the project communicate with its stakeholders at the provincial level? Has anyone been left out? What is communicated to stakeholders? What is the feedback mechanism?

Q 13. Do you believe that the communities will maintain the project's efforts in afforestation and forest and rangeland management work after the project's support ends? Do you have any suggestions to improve the sustainability of the project's interventions?

Q 14. Have any stakeholders or groups been negatively impacted? What is the nature of that impact? What could or should be done to mitigate it?

Q 15. Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of the project's outcomes?

Q 16. Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality and women's empowerment? What can the project do to mitigate this impact? What are your suggestions to enhance the project's benefits for women?

Q 17. What activities have you done to enhance women's participation in the project's interventions?

Q 18. Is there any emerging evidence that the project's interventions (e.g. agroforestry, reforestation, rangeland management, cookstove improvement, and poultry rearing) contribute toward reducing pressure on forests and rangeland? (Note: Ask this same question to FMAs as well.)

Q 19. What are the major risks (political, financial, socio-economic, governance, and environmental) likely to impede the project's progress, prevent it from realizing its planned achievements, and adversely impacting its sustainability? How could these risks be mitigated?

Q 20. How have security issues before and after August 2021 affected the project's progress?

Q 21. Have there been any changes in intervention modalities since August 2021? If yes, have these changes impacted the project's progress?

Q 22. How have Covid-19 restrictions impacted the project's progress and how has the project responded? Were any implementation modalities changed during the Covid-19 lockdown?

Q 23. Are local stakeholders aware of the concept of free prior informed consent? Do local stakeholders have a mechanism for addressing grievances? How aware are they of this mechanism?

Q 24. Are gender-related progress outcomes/targets on track? If not, why? How do security risks and mobility limitations impact women's participation?

Q 25. What are the main difficulties facing sustainable natural resource management in the provinces? How can the project contribute toward minimize these problems?

Q 26. What are the main challenges you have faced in coordinating and collaborating with multiple partners and mobilizing communities?

Q 27. How do you share the project's progress and best practices with the various stakeholders in the province? What responses have you received from PAIL, DRRD, DOWA, NEPA, PPCC and other partners in the province?

Q 28. Would you like to share anything about or add any information to any of the issues we have discussed?

Questions for provincial executing partners

1. Introduction

Name of interviewee		Date	
Position and title		Time	
Department/section		Person(s) present	
Location			

Q 2. How does your office support the project's interventions? How relevant is the project in addressing community needs, especially regarding sustainable natural resource management?

Q 3. On what does the project collaborate and/or coordinate with your office and other executing partners? Has this collaboration/coordination changed since August 2021?

Q 4. What is the level of acceptance of the project's objectives by the provincial government and the NGOs and civil society organization in the province? What has been the contribution of the project in building public awareness on sustainable natural resource management, climate change adaptation and mitigation?

Q 5. Which project activities are progressing well in your province?

Activity	What are the main achievements of this activity	How do you rate the quality of project implementation (excellent, very good, moderately good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)? If it is unsatisfactory, how can it be improved?	How do you rate the participation of communities and the benefits they get from the project (excellent, very good, moderately good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)? If they are unsatisfactory, how can the situation be improved?
Activity 1 (name it)			
Activity 2 (name it)			
Activity 3 (name it)			

Q 6. What is the status of the internal governance of FMAs and RMAs? Does each have a management plan and constitution? Are they legally registered? How often do they hold meetings and how does your organization supporting them?

Q 7. What is the project doing to ensure good governance in FMAs and RMAs? How is the project monitoring the (internal) governance of FMAs and RMAs?

Q 8. How do you view the project-generated improvements in forests and rangeland? Are they effective and sustainable? Please compare the project's work with other, similar initiatives and/or interventions implemented by other agencies?

Q 9. Have you observed any changes in the forests and rangeland in your province/district since the project's interventions began? If yes, name them.

Condition	Before implementation of FAO-GEF project	Current situation (since project implementation)

Q 10. How much have local stakeholders participated in the project's decision-making and implementation? How can participation and ownership be increased?

Q 11. How does the project communicate with its stakeholders? What does it share with stakeholders?

Q 12. Do you believe that project communities will continue implementing afforestation and forest and rangeland management measures after the project's support ends? Do you have any suggestions about how to improve the sustainability of the project's interventions?

Q 13. Have any stakeholders/groups been negatively impacted? How have they been impacted? What could or should be done to mitigate those adverse impacts?

Q 14. Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of the project's outcomes?

Q 15. What activities does the project engage in to enhance women's participation in its interventions?

Q 16. Is there any emerging evidence that the project's interventions (agroforestry, reforestation, rangeland management, cookstove improvement or poultry farming) help reduce pressure on forests and rangeland?

Q 17. What are the main issues related to sustainable natural resource management in the province/district? How can the project help address these issues?

Q 18. Do you think the project's interventions and benefits will be sustainable? What is the likelihood that the project's achievements will be continued after the project's funding stops? What strategies will the government adopt?

Q 19. How does the project share its progress and best practices in the province/district?

Q 20. Do you have any advice regarding project implementation?

FGD Checklist for the Executive Committee Members of FMAs and RMAs

Q 1. Identification of group

Name of FMA/RMA		Date	
Name of community		Total number of participants	
District		Male participants	
Province		Female participants	
Name of interviewer		Time taken	

Q 2. Participants' details

S No	Name of participant	Designation	Gender			Age
			Male	Female	Other	

Q 3. Are you familiar with the FAO/GEF sustainable land and forest management project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?

Q 4. Which project activities have you participated in/engaged in/ benefited from? Please list all such activities

Activity	How did you participate and how did you benefit from or be affected by it?	How would you rate your participation and benefits from the project (excellent, very good, moderately good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)
Activity 1 (name it)		
Activity 2 (name it)		
Activity 3 (name it)		

Q 5. What have you and your community learned from this project? How has the project improved the capacity of your community to manage natural resources sustainably?

Activity	What you have learned?	Are you applying the knowledge and skills you learned? If you are, how, and if you are not, why not?

Q 6. What community institutions exist to manage forests and rangeland in your area? What are their mandates and how often do they meet? Do these institutions have written rules and regulations? What is going well with them, and what is not? Do the institutions minutes of their meetings and records of their activities?

Institution (write in the appropriate row)	Mandates	Meetings (number till date)	Rules/ regulations in place (management plan and charter)	What is going well?	What is not going well?	What problems still need to be addressed?
Forests management association (FMA)						
Rangeland management associations (RMA)						

Agroforestry committee (if any exist)						

Q 7. What do you think is the main problem that your community faces in terms of forest and rangeland management?

Q 8. What trainings have you and your FMA/RMA executive members received from the project? Are you satisfied with it?

Name of training	What have you learned	Satisfaction with training (highly satisfied, satisfied, not satisfied at all)	Application of training (highly useful, useful, not useful at all)

Q 9. Have you received any awareness-raising materials related to sustainable natural resource management, conservation forestry, sustainable land management, or climate changes and its impacts and ways to adapt to it?

Q 10. Is your community engaged in the afforestation/restoration program of your FMA/RMA? How does the afforested/restored area look now? How many hectares have been afforested/restored with the help of the project?

Q 11. Is your RMA engaged in the vegetation of rangeland through fodder crops? How effective has it been in rehabilitating rangeland areas?

Q 12. Have you observed any changes in the forest and rangeland in your area after project interventions? If yes, name them.

Changes	Before FAO/GEF project implemented	Current situation (after project's arrival in your village)

Q 13. What is your opinion of the project's alternative livelihood activities, especially those for women? Did poor women benefit from these interventions? How? Are the interventions likely to increase the incomes of women and their households? How men have benefited from these interventions?

Q 14. What is your opinion of the improvements in rangeland due to the project's efforts to restore and rehabilitate them? Are those improvements effective and sustainable?

Q 15. Will your association continue its activities after completion of the project? If yes, what will it do?

Q 16. Are there any conflicts within your association? What are they? How is the project helping to resolve them?

Q 17. Do you have any suggestions about what the project could do differently from what it is already doing to tackle these conflicts?

FGD checklist for FMA and RMA users

1. Identification

Name of the FMA/ RMAs		Date	
Name of the community		Total number of participants	
District		Male participants	
Province		Female participants	
Name of interviewer		Time taken	

2. Participants details

S No	Name of the participant	Gender of the participants			Age
		Male	Female	Other	

Q 3. Have you heard about the GEF/FAO sustainable land and forest management project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?

Q 4. Which project activities have you participated/ engaged/ benefited from? Please list out the activities

Activity	How did you participate and how did you benefited/ affected from the activity	How do you rate your participation and benefits from the project (excellent, very good, moderately good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)
Activity 1: (name of activity)		
Activity 2: (name of activity)		
Activity 3: (name of activity)		

Q 5. What have you and your community learned from the project? How has the project improved the capacity of your community to manage natural resources sustainably?

Activity	What you have learned?	Are you applying the knowledge and skills you learned?

Q 6. What do you think is the main problem for forest/rangeland management in your community?

Q7. What trainings have you and your FMA/ RAMA executive members received from the Project? Are you satisfied with the training provided by the project ?

Name of training	What have you learned	Satisfaction towards training (Highly satisfied, satisfied, not satisfied at all)	Application of the training (highly useful, useful, not useful at all)

Q 8. Have you received any awareness raising materials on sustainable Natural resource management / high conservation forest, sustainable land management and climate impact of climate and ways to adopt it?

Q 9. Is your community engaged in the afforestation program in your FMA/RAMA? How does the afforestation looks now? In your FMA/RAMA how many ha have been brought under afforestation with the help of project?

Q 10. Have you observed any changes in the forest and rangeland in your area after project interventions? If yes, name them.

Changes	Before FAO/ GEF project implemented	Current situation (after project coming to your village)

Q 11. Is your RAMA engaged in the vegetation of rangeland through fodder crops? How effective it to rehabilitate the rangeland areas.

Q 12. How do you view alternative livelihood activities, especially for women? Did poor women benefit from these interventions? Are they likely to increase income of women and their households? How men have benefit from these interventions?

Q 13. Is there any conflict within your association? What are they? How is the project helping in resolving them?

Q 14. Do you have any suggestions of what the project could be doing differently (what it is already doing) to tackle this problem?

FGD checklist for women users

1. Identification

Name of the FMA/RMA you belong to		Date	
Name of the community		Total number of participants	
District		Time taken	
Province			
Name of interviewer			

2. Participants' details

S No	Name of participant	Age

Q 3. Have you heard about the GEF/FAO sustainable land and forest management project? What do you know about the project and how did you come find out about it?

Q 4. Which project activities have you participated or engaged in or benefited from? Please list out all activities.

Activity	How did you participate and how did you benefit from or be affected by the activity?	How do you rate your participation in and benefits from the project (excellent, very good, moderately good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)

Activity 1 (name)		
Activity 2 (name)		
Activity 3 (name)		

Q 5. What have you and your community learned from the project? How has the project improved the capacity of your community to manage natural resources sustainably?

Activity	What you have learned?	Are you applying knowledge and skills you learned?

Q 6. Apart from participation in the above-mentioned activities, do you think women in your community have benefited from the project? If yes, please list the benefits.

Q 7. What trainings have you received from the project? Are you satisfied with the training provided by the project?

Name of training	What have you learned	Satisfaction towards training (highly satisfied, satisfied, not satisfied at all)	Application of the training (highly useful, useful, not useful at all)

Q 8. Have you received any awareness-raising materials on sustainable natural resource management, conservation forestry, sustainable land management, and climate change and its impacts and ways to adapt to it?

Q 9. How do you view alternative livelihood activities? Did poor and marginalized women benefit from these interventions? Are these activities likely to increase income?

Q 10. Are there any additional project activities in which you would like to participate? Which ones? What is stopping you from participating in these activities?

Q 11. Are you always invited to participate in project meetings and activities or only sometimes? How easy or difficult is it for you to attend project meetings?

Q 12. Do you think the project can do more to help women in this community to take leadership roles in community associations?

Q 13. Do you have any suggestions about what the project could do differently from what it is already doing so that women can benefit more than they currently do?

Appendix 5. List of documents consulted ("Reference list")

1. A Practical Guideline for Biodiversity Assessment (Terrestrial Diversity Assessment Techniques)
2. Awareness-raising and communications materials (booklet on forestry, rangeland, brochures) produced by the project (in local languages)
3. Budget revision documents
4. Capacity assessment reports
5. CEO Endorsement letter
6. CoE Workshop Report
7. Concept Note on CoE
8. Environmental and Social Management Guidelines
9. FAO Policy on Gender Equality
10. Financial management information
11. Free Prior and Informed Consent
12. GEF Gender Implementation Strategy
13. GEF PIF Approved Letter
14. GEF PIF with technical clearance
15. GEF Policy on Gender Equality
16. Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programmes
17. Guide to mainstreaming gender in FAO's project cycle
18. Lessons learned during implementation of GEF-6 project at project management and field implementation activities
19. Minutes of the meetings of the PSC and PTF
20. MTR Guide documents
21. MTR supporting documents
22. NRM Sector Development Plan
23. Project document (ProDoc)
24. Project Implementation reports (2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022)
25. Project Progress Reports (Dec 2018, Jan –June and June – Dec 2019, July – Dec 2020, July - Dec 2021)
26. REDD+ Readiness Roadmap
27. Relevant technical, backstopping and project-supervision mission reports, including back-to-the-office reports by relevant project and FAO staff, including any reports on technical support provided by FAO headquarters or regional office staff
28. The GEF Gender Policy (GEF, 2017), GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF, 2018a), GEF Guidance on Gender Equality (GEF, 2018b) and the GEF Guide to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programmes (GEF, 2018c)
29. Tracking tools
30. UN Transitional Engagement Framework

Appendix 6. Results matrix showing achievements at mid-term and MTR observations

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
Development objective: Improving and maintaining the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities by addressing unsustainable land and forest use								
Project Objective: *To support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity*	Number of tCO_2e sequestered through deployment of sustainable land and forest management practices resulting in reduced GHG emissions from land and forest degradation *[from GEF Indicator 4 – CCM2 Pr4]*	Zero tCO_2e sequestered	765,034 tCO_2e	1,530,069 tCO_2 e sequestered	Not reported	2,319,513tCO_2e	HS	The Tracking tools shows that the project carbon sequestration is exceeded its target approximately 3 factor.
	Number of ha of production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management demonstrated by objective data *[from GEF Indicator 9.1 – BD4 Pr9]*	Zero ha	56,000 ha (2000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands)	230,000 ha (10000 ha of HCVF, 20000 ha of other forest types, and 200000 ha of rangelands)	74,392.36 ha (HCVF– 1035 ha through plantation, 2000 ha through assisted natural regeneration; 890 ha other forest type through natural regeneration; 6 ha through woodlot; 81.36 ha rangeland rehabilitated through reseeding, 70,380 ha rangeland through protection and management)	130,458 ha (13250 of which 5122 through plantation and 8128 ha improved management, and 409 ha woodlots, and 116799 ha of rangelands)	MS	Exceeded rangeland and HCVF target but restored only 10% of other forest types target. Targets for both have equal weightage but HCVF got high priority and other forest types was ignored. .
Outcome 1.1 Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national	Increased capacities of MAIL/DAIL NRM and other relevant government institutions and staff	Baseline scores for capacity on: • Institutional , policy and	Mid-term milestone scores for capacity on:	Target scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal	13 government officials capacitated (3 trained on forest policy in Malaysia, 10 participated in the REDD+ workshop.	448 government staff of national (13) and sub-national (435) trained	MS	Reported only in numbers of government staff trained , no outcome survey for capacity

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM	to plan for and implement SLM/SFM	legal framework for SLM/SFM: 2.7 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 2.8 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.5	• Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 3.0 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.0 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.8	framework for SLM/SFM: 3.2 • Planning, implementation and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.2 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 3.0				assessment conducted to compare the scores set for MTR target. The first PIR reported of having no outcome survey conducted but following PIRs do not mention on this. Interviews also confirmed no such surveys conducted using capacity score cards.
Output 1.1.1. *National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all levels*	Existence of MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM'	No MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' currently exist	MoU, organogram and methodology for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	A concept note for an Afghan "Centre of Excellence" (CoE) was developed and approved by FAO and shared with the GDNRM for government endorsement. As requested by the GD-NRM the document was translated into local languages. The project team delivered a presentation and held a series of discussions about further steps. GDNRM provided green	Concept note on CoE endorsed by GDNRM, procurement process was initiated but post August 2021 the activity is halted, no MoU signed	MU	Only concept note prepared not other activities accomplished. No MoU signed with government and activity halted post Aug 2021.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
					signals to initiate further process of CoE			
Output 1.1.2. *Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes*	Existence of a long-term capacity building programme and a training package outlining modules and course material Number of people trained (% women)	No long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material exist No people have been trained	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated 45 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated A total of 95 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	Capacity-building training conducted only at the sub-national level. 91 governmental officials participated. At the national level 3 government officials trained on forest policy in Malaysia and 10 trained on REDD+ Roadmap process	448 government staff of national (13) and sub-national (435) trained. Only 5% Women	MS	Over achieved by 996%. However, only 5% women participated. The capacity development package did not made available to MTR.
Output 1.1.3. *Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem*	Existence of a forest/ rangeland inventory for each target province	There are no forest/rangel and inventories for the target provinces	Methodologies for conducting fine-scale forest and rangeland inventories have been developed	Methodologies for conducting fine-scale forest and rangeland inventories have been developed	A brief methodological framework for a national forest and rangeland inventory prepared and shared with stakeholders for their feedback	Draft methodology for forest and rangeland inventory prepared, work plan for fine scale inventory developed, field enumerator	S	Target accomplished

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces						training conducted, equipment procured		
***Output 1.1.4**. National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated*	Existence of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	There is currently no REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	A draft REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	A final REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	REDD+ roadmap developed	REDD+ roadmap formulated and submitted to GDNRM for endorsing, TWG ToR approved by GDNRM and TWG formed	MS	Target partially achieved, MRV not developed and other necessary documents. This output unlikely to continue
Outcome 1.2. Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans	Number of Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations trained	Zero	At least 10 Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained	At least 10 Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained	58 (43 FMAs and 15 RMAs) established and trained, CBNRM plan developed	61 (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) established and trained, CBNRM plan developed; trained 5952 community members including 659 women	S	Project established 61 associations (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) and trained 5,952 people, 659 (11%) of whom were women, through more than 15 different sets of trainings. Considering the outcome-level indicator and mid-term target, the outcome was over achieved. The resource materials

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
								yet to be make user friendly for the just literate people
Output 1.2.1 *Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools*	Number of resource materials on SLM/SFM tailored to local socio-economic and environmental conditions	Zero resource materials developed tailored to local conditions	At least 4 sets of resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	At least 4 sets of resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	Updated CBNRM Plan, and introduction and importance of NRM manuals prepared by GEF-5;	CBNRM Planning and implementation manuals for SLM/SFM developed, translated in languages, and shared with FMA/RMA; 6 sets of training manuals (Agroforestry, PRA training, NRM, rangeland management training, threats causing forest degradation and benefits of sustainable forest management, and threats causing rangeland degradation and benefits of sustainable rangeland management) prepared	MU	The project has developed five sets of resource materials, but these materials are different from those specified in the mid-term targets. The project has not yet developed one of the crucial resource materials on the M&E of SFM/SLM. Materials were developed without taking into account the topics set in the target. If the project team does not have the capacity to develop the right materials,
Output 1.2.2 *Training provided to*	Number of local-level technical government staff	Zero local-level technical	At least 25 local-level technical	At least 25 local-level technical government	CBNRM plan preparation, forest and rangeland management association	254 people, 3% of them women, were trained on	S	The Mid term target is significantly exceeded and

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
local-level technical government staff on facilitation of community-based planning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use	members trained (% women)	government staff members have been trained	government staff members have been trained	staff members have been trained	(FMA/RMA) formation, and nursery establishment training conducted for local-level government staff	SFM/LSM, animal husbandry, and the sustainable use of NRM.		appreciated by the local extensions officer and technical officers at the district level
Output 1.2.3. *Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E*	Number of awareness-raising activities undertaken, disaggregated by type and theme	Zero awareness-raising activities undertaken	At least 5 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of	At least 20 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of M&E to inform	1127 people (151 female and 976 male) participated in 44 awareness raising campaigns and sessions in the five targeted provinces. The major topics were the importance of forestation, the rehabilitation of degraded rangeland, the importance of natural resources, and the roles and responsibilities of local communities in	The project conducted 1,040 events and reached 22,088 people, more than 41% of whom were women. about different themes, including sustainable natural resources, alternative livelihoods for reducing pressure on NRM, and soil conservation	S	It was noted that the project has prepared audio messages about the conservation of natural resources in local languages and broadcasted them through local radio programmes. Such campaigns were effective on reaching large communities and making them aware of the

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
			M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making	SLM/SFM decision-making	NRM at the community level			importance of SLM/SRM.
Output 1.2.4. *CDCs, FMAs, RMAs supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans*	Number of community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	Zero community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans have been developed	At least 10 community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	At least 10 community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	58 CBNRM plans for 43 FMAs and 15 RAMAs developed and submitted to GDNRM for registration	The project created 61 community-based natural management associations (46 FMAs and 15 RMAs) and prepared CBNRM plans for each of them	S	Target over achieved.
Output 1.2.5. *Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices*	Number of pastoralists trained (% women)	No pastoralists have been trained and no pastoralist field schools have been conducted	Existence of a training programme for the pastoralist field schools	At least 300 pastoralists (20% women) trained through pastoralist field schools	Not planned for this reporting period	PFS methodological framework developed and translated into local language. trained 273 community people, 18 (7%) of whom were women, though 25 events.	MS	The MTR noted that though the project greatly exceeded the mid-term target, it failed to reach the required number of women participants.
Outcome 2.1 Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation	Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, supported by forest management actors, training and materials	Zero ha	2,000 ha of HCVFs and 4,000 ha of other forest types restored	10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types restored	3035 ha HCVF planted brought under community-based forest management; 890 ha of other forest types restored	13,250 ha of HCVF were restored, 5,122 ha through plantation and 8,128 ha through improved management practices. other forest types restored, the	S	Mid- term target for HCVFs was exceeded by a factor of six times, in the case of restoring other forest types restored, the project achieved only 10% of its target.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
and sequester 1,530,069 tCO_2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces						project achieved only 10% of its target		
Output 2.1.1. *Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces*	Number of biodiversity assessments conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	Zero biodiversity assessments have been conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	A methodological framework is in the preparation stage	Some preparatory work, such as development of a manual for biodiversity assessment and a work plan and the procurement of necessary equipment and tools, has been completed.	MS	
Output 2.1.2. *Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar*	Number of nurseries and woodlots established	Zero nurseries and woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	165 small community nurseries established; no woodlots were established	167 small community nurseries and 827 small woodlots established by covering 160 ha	MS	Achieved the target but cutting plantation survival was approximately 70 percent

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
and Paktya provinces								
***Output 2.1.3**. Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches*	Same as Project Objective Indicator	Zero ha	56,000 ha (2,000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands)	230,000 ha (10,000 ha of HCVFs, 20,000 ha of other forest types and 200,000 ha of rangelands)	1035 ha HCVF species planted, 2000 ha HCVFs brought under natural regeneration, protection and management; 890 ha other forest types protected and natural regeneration is promoted through grazing control and collecting the fire-woods and other products; some medicinal plants appeared in protected sites	The project has restored 8,128 ha of HCVFs through improved management practices, including assisted natural regeneration and quarantine.	MS	In the case of HCVFs, achievement is excellent but in the case of other forest types it is very low
***Output 2.1.4**. Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative*	Number of households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	Zero households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and	At least 20 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber	At least 50 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	Alternative livelihood assessment conducted and identify most suitable interventions for alternative energy promotion and livelihoods options	The project has implemented both activities well and exceeded the mid-term target. The project supported 9,660 families with fuel-efficient cooking stove, 850 families with backyard poultry,	S	The outcome survey has conducted, baseline to compare income

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces		non-timber forest products	forest products			and 1,654 families with agroforestry		
Outcome 3.1 Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces	Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture [GEF Indicator 1.1 – LD1 Pr2]	Zero ha	At least 50,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices	At least 200,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices	70,840 ha of rangeland brought under RMA; management practices such as rotational grazing, closure, conservation, and protection carried out; 81.7 ha degraded rangeland reseeded; 6 ha small woodlots established	The project has restored 132,198.57 ha of rangeland through different management practices such as reseeding (1,222 ha) and rotational grazing (130,976 ha). The target for the mid-term was well met in terms of area covered.	MS	Target over achieved in terms of coverage but quality of management practices adopted with limited budget but the community informed that the germination rate is 30% only.
***Output 3.1.1**. Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/ rehabilitation with palatable*	Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture [GEF Indicator 1.1 – LD1 Pr2]	Zero ha	At least 50,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	At least 200,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	81.7 ha reseeded with local varieties of the fodder crops	The project has restored 132,198.57 ha of rangeland through different management practices such as reseeding (1,222 ha) and rotational grazing (130,976 ha). The target for the mid-term was	MS	Area coverage over achieved but 2 activities under this output not reported

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
species – implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands						well met in terms of area covered.		
***Output 3.1.2**. Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry*	Number of households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	Zero households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 20 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 50 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	Not planned for this reporting period	Assessment of value chain on livestock husbandry conducted, key intervention identified for enhancement of livelihoods.	MS	Not reported on number of HHs benefitting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry. Several activities has not implemented yet.
Outcome 4.1. Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices	Improved capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM	Baseline score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.6	Mid-term milestone score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.8	Target score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 3.0	1,127 individuals briefed on planning and implementation of SLM/SFM; due to COVID-19 no activities conducted to improve capacity on knowledge management	Reported data not fully aligning with the indicator	MU	Reported progress does done fit well with the outcome; indicators are not clear and SMART
***Output 4.1.1**. National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established*	Existence of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database	No 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database currently exists	Organisational and operational structure of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre formulated	Knowledge hub/ national information and resource centre operationalized	Not planned for this reporting period	Reported data not fully aligning with the indicator	MU	Indicator calls for establishment of knowledge hub/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database but data reported differently

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
***Output 4.1.2**. Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration*	Number of participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Zero participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Existence of framework document outlining design and implementation protocols for participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition	At least 10 participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Not planned for this reporting period	Reported differently	MU	Indicator calls for number of participatory M&E assessment and MTR target is existence of framework for participatory M&E but reports mentions of quarterly participatory M&E assessment
***Output 4.1.3**. Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated*	Number of synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	Zero synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed, with a least one each on the following themes: • Rangeland management and restoration • Improved livestock and herd management • Restoration of HCVFs	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated, with a least one each on the following themes: • Rangeland management and restoration • Improved livestock and herd management • Restoration of HCVFs	Not planned for this reporting period	Reported differently	MS	Indicator calls for number of synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated and MTR target is 4 numbers, but PIR mentions of 3 success stories uploaded in FAO website

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Level at first PIR (self reported)	Mid-term level and assessment (colour coded red, yellow or green)	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
			• Restoration of other forest types	• Restoration of other forest types				
Output 4.1.4. *Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally*	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Zero lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Not planned for this reporting period	Reported differently	MS	Not reported; indicator not clear and SMART

Indicator assessment key

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On target to be achieved	Red = Not on target to be achieved

***** As presented in the results framework in the original project document or subsequently updated by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) at project inception

Appendix 7. Co-financing table

Sources of co-financing[18]	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing[19]	Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement/ approval[20]	Actual amount materialized as of (date of MTR)	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
Implementing agency	FAO	In-Kind	USD 7,860,000	USD 4,716,000	USD 7,860,000
Local government	MAIL	In-Kind	USD 38,656,984	USD 2,319,419	USD 38,656,984
Local government	MRRD	In-Kind	USD 3,630,249	USD 2,178,149	USD 3,630,249
Local government	NEPA	In-Kind	USD 710,000	USD 426,000	USD 710,000
Local government	IDGK	In-Kind	USD 3,400,000	USD 2,040,000	USD 3,400,000
TOTAL			**USD 54,257,233**	**USD 11,679,568**	**USD 64,753,106**

[18] 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.
[19] Grants, loans, equity participation by beneficiaries (individuals) in the form of cash, guarantees, in kind or material contributions and other (please explain).
[20] The type of co-financing whether cash or in-kind should be indicated separately

Appendix 8. GEF evaluation criteria rating table and rating scheme

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating [21]	Summary comments[22]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS	The project is highly satisfactory in terms of its strategic relevance at the country and global levels.
A1.1 Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project remains strongly aligned to GEF-6's focal areas BD-4, P9, CC-2-P4, LD-3-P4, and SFM-3 as well as FAO's SO-2 and country programming framework
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	HS	The relevance of the project is undoubtable. The project's development objective and its strategy for national-level capacity-building in the NRM sector is fully aligned with the country's priorities. The project's objectives, components, and outcomes are well aligned with the country's NRM sector priorities and with regional and global priorities (reduction in GHG emission).
A1.3 Relevance to beneficiary needs	HS	The project is primarily framed in terms of increasing resilience and diversifying the livelihoods options of local communities by contributing to sustainable natural forest and rangeland management practices in the country.
A1.4 Complementarity with existing interventions	S	The project maintained synergies with other GEF projects (5 and 7) implemented by FAO.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	The project made good progress in restoring forests and rangelands and in biodiversity conservation through different management practices and increased carbon sequestration, community capacity-building, and alternative livelihood interventions. However, the delivery has been impacted by numerous delays and disruptions in implementation since its approval. It was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in terms of capacity development-related activities, as well as by delays in obtaining government approval, the fragile security situation, and the political change in August 2021. Despite this, the project met some mid-term targets.
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	Delivery of the project's outputs was mixed. Twenty-one planned outputs and the mid-term targets show mixed progress. Seven outputs exceeded the target, five partially met the target, and eight have not met the MTR targets. However, four out of the five that partially met their targets, those related to government capacity-building, CoE, REDD+ Roadmap, and the national resource centre hub, are unlikely to be achieved at all due non-involvement with the DFAs.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes23 and project objectives	MS	Overall, progress towards the outcomes is mixed. Out of the five outcomes one well meets it mid-term targets and the other four do so only partially. Despite delays, the outcomes are achievable and will meet their endline target within a no-cost time extension. Progress towards objectives against the indicators and mid-term targets are progressing well and are achievable.
Outcome 1.1	MS	The project had mixed progress on this outcome. Out of the four outputs under outcome, three partially met their respective mid-term targets but considering the post-August 2021 situation they are unlikely to be met in their entirety. One output is likely to be meet either by the end of the project or within a no-cost time extension.
Outcome 1.2	MS	This outcome had mixed progress. Out of the five outputs, three have met or highly exceeded their mid-term targets, one met its target, and one has partially met its target and is underway and likely to achieve that target. The project has developed numerous resource materials but did not take into account the topics set in the target. The project is yet to develop one crucial resource material, a M&E framework for SFM/SLM.
Outcome 2.1	MS	The project made some promising progress under this outcome. Out of four outputs, some preparatory works were made in one, two exceeded their

[21] See rating scheme at the end of the document.
[22] Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.
[23] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

		mid-term targets, and one met its first target (HCVF) but is far behind in the second target (other forest types).
Outcome 3.1	MS	The project had mixed progress in this outcome. Two outputs made some progress toward meeting the mid-term target. Although the projected exceeded its outcome level targets in terms of area covered, being able to provide the degree of intensive management practices specified is questionable given the limited budget allocation.
Outcome 4.1	MU	The project has maintained activity progress data well but has reported progress in achieving outcomes and outputs differently. It has reported only on activity-level progress and achievements rather than reporting against indicators and targets and its reporting does not match the descriptions of indicators and mid-term targets. The project lacks a comprehensive M&E system.
Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	As a whole, the project attempts to reduce pressure on natural resources and enhance carbon sequestration through different forest and rangeland management practices. The project made good progress in restoring forests, rangelands, and biodiversity conservation applying different management practices such as plantation, promoting natural regeneration, quarantine, reseeding rangelands, rotational grazing, and prohibiting grazing in forest areas. In terms of improving the livelihoods of rural Afghan communities, the project made substantial progress by implementing numerous alternative livelihoods interventions, specifically targeting women.
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	The project is on the way to delivering the major impacts in terms of addressing unsustainable natural resource management, reducing GHG emissions, and improving livelihoods in rural Afghan communities. Its planned global benefits also materialized through carbon sequestration.
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[24]	MS	The efficiency of the project was negatively impacted by numerous implementation delays, high staff turnover, difficulty in finding suitable experts for national positions, key positions (STA and other international consultancies), staying vacant for long periods, the fragile security situation, a weak M&E system, delays in obtaining approvals from GDNRM, and the political changes in August 2021. The budget expenditure reached only 40.70% in 46 months of implementation.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	The project is following participatory and community-based approaches for restoring degraded natural resources. This approach will contribute to sustainability of the project results and benefits. The project has to strengthen the internal governance of associations and develop a strong M&E mechanism.
D1.1. Financial risks	ML	If the political situation of the country remains the same, the DFAs are unlikely to be able to fund extension and training services. Not all forest and rangeland restoration activities needed extra budget to be maintained, but the associations may need some funding, for example for hiring forest and rangeland site watchers (guards) prior to the production of nuts.
D1.2. Socio-political risks	ML	The risks associated with sustainability are mainly due to poverty and a possible negative economic downturn, both of which might have a negative impact on the protection of natural resources in the long run. Beneficiaries are supported in diversifying livelihoods options that might complement in their engagement.
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	ML	The project has not conducted any participatory governance assessments to find out the status of or level at which FMAs and RMAs are functioning. A strong monitoring mechanism needs to be established for sustainability. Without such a mechanism, institutional capacity will erode. There is a moderate chance of sustaining the project's initiatives.
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	The project does not have any plans for large construction such as the construction of a large reservoir or check dam, but instead gives priority to low-cost soil conservation structures such as contour bonds, ponds, and reservoirs in forests and on rangelands. The risks seem mitigable.

[24] Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

D2. Catalysis and replication	MS	The probability of replication is likely to be high once the project shares its best practices and lessons learnt with a wider group of stakeholders. Some activities have been replicated in neighboring communities.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[25]	MS	The project tried to interlink multiple thematic areas but those links are not free of shortcomings, some of which pose challenges during implementation. Some of those shortcomings include the scattering of project locations, over-ambitious targets for some outcomes, lack of SMART indicators for some outcomes/outputs, over-stretched outputs and activities, repetition of activities, poorly worded outcomes/outputs/activities, inconsistencies in budget categories (headings), and lack of consistency between indicators and targets.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	In general, oversight and quality implementation ensured that the annual workplan, PIRs PPRs, and reports were completed on time. Quality assurance and adaptive management aspects could be improved.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	MS	FAO's oversight was not able to overcome delays in project implementation at the beginning.
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	MS	The project was guided by the PSC. Only one PSC meeting has been held till date although the ProDoc envisioned holding such meetings biannually.
E3. Quality of project execution	MS	Quality of project execution is mixed. Generally, coordination with government execution partners was good, but that fact was not reflected in some actions, mainly obtaining approvals and endorsements.
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MS	The project faced challenges in finding suitable human resources in NRM and preventing high staff turnover. It also faced delays in hiring inter/national consultants. A lack of induction training for P/PMU staff and discrepancies while submitting bills and procurement requests were other shortcomings.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	MS	No major financial management issues were detected except that the budget was underspent.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MS	The PMU faced several issues regarding the implementation of project activities with the lead executing partner, GDNRM/MAIL. The GDNRM leadership tried to manage the project on its own terms and on many occasions did not approve or endorse activities and thereby caused substantial delays in implementing activities proposed in the annual work plan. There was no inter-departmental or ministerial coordination for joint monitoring and no stakeholder engagement plan was developed
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	A communication strategy and action exists, promising progress in communication. The project mobilized radio, television, and social media well to raise awareness and reach out to a larger audience and establish and maintain good visibility.
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MU	Limited attention was given to M&E systems and the project did not prepare a detailed M&E plan. Reports highlight activity-level progress only, and progress reporting in the PPR/PIRs was not related to indicators and targets. The project lacks a robust M&E system and mechanism to incorporate adaptive results-based management. Overall, M&E at the implementation level is weak.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The ProDoc includes a basic M&E plan with different milestones and budget but many weaknesses were observed in the results framework including the lack of SMART indicators and targets.
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MU	Inadequate attention was given to M&E, and a detailed M&E plan was not prepared.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	The project faced numerous challenges and delays in implementation. High staff turnover, delays in securing approvals, and the lack of substantial project activities and budget expenditure (approx. 5%) in first 16 months of implementation (Aug 2018 – Dec 2019) impeded. The project picked up momentum only from start of 2020, and its performance after that was

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

		moderate. Several improvements are emphasized in the recommendation section.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The project did not conduct a gender assessment at the design phase and no gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan is in place. The project did, however, encourage women beneficiaries and engaged them in RMAs, alternative livelihoods, and capacity-building through training and awareness-raising activities. However, indigenous and minority groups, the Kuchi, are yet to be engaged in rangeland activities as envisioned by the ProDoc.
F2. Human rights issues	NA	Not evaluated.
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	S	Interventions carried out by the project seem not to impact the environment negatively. The project mobilizes communities through associations.
Overall project rating	**MS**	

Annex 9: Suggested modifications to the results matrix

The proposed modifications or revision of the results matrix does not include suggestion for activities and is only for objective, outcome and output level indicators and targets.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Project Objective To support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity	Number of tCO_2e sequestered through deployment of sustainable land and forest management practices resulting in reduced GHG emissions from land and forest degradation [*from GEF Indicator 4 – CCM2 Pr4*]	Zero tCO_2e sequestered Revisit the baseline	765,034 tCO_2e	1,530,069 tCO_2e sequestered	Degraded forest exist and besides, soil also bear carbon; there must be some carbon deposited
	Number of ha of production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management demonstrated by objective data [*from GEF Indicator 9.1 – BD4 Pr9*]	Zero ha	56,000 ha (2000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands)	230,000 ha (10000 ha of HCVF, 20000 ha of other forest types, and 200000 ha of rangelands) Revisit target	Ambitious target considering the allocated budget and progress activities (1200 ha reseeding and woodlots)
Outcome 1.1 Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national government institutions across all sectors for SLM/SFM Revisit outcome	Increased capacities of MAIL/DAIL NRM and other relevant government institutions and staff to plan for and implement SLM/SFM Revisit indicator	Baseline scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 2.7 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 2.8 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.5	Mid-term milestone scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 3.0 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.0 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 2.8	Target scores for capacity on: • Institutional, policy and legal framework for SLM/SFM: 3.2 • Planning, implementation, and M&E of SLM/SFM measures: 3.2 • Community engagement on SLM/SFM: 3.0	The indicator is not SMART and also does not represent all outputs under this outcome. Considering non-involvement with DFAs, this outcome is unlikely to achieved and suggested to remove.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Output 1.1.1. National 'Centre of Excellence for Natural Resource Management' established for coordinating the capacity development and knowledge management on SLM/SFM at all levels	Existence of MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM'	No MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM currently exist	MoU, organogram and methodology for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	MoU, organogram, methodology and sustainability strategy for 'Centre of Excellence for NRM' have been formulated and endorsed by government	This output seems unlikely to continue, suggest to remove or find other alternative
Output 1.1.2. Training programme developed and delivered to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes	Existence of a long-term capacity building programme and a training package outlining modules and course material Number of people trained (% women)	No long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material exist No people have been trained	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated 45 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	A long-term capacity building programme with associated training packages, modules and course material have been formulated A total of 95 people (including at least 20% women) have been trained using the training packages, modules and course material	This output seems unlikely to continue, suggest to remove
Output 1.1.3. Fine-scale inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces	Existence of a forest/ rangeland inventory for each target province	There are no forest/rangeland inventories for the target provinces	Methodologies for conducting fine-scale forest and rangeland inventories have been developed	Methodologies for conducting fine-scale forest and rangeland inventories have been developed	
Output 1.1.4. National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated	Existence of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	There is currently no REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system	A draft REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	A final REDD+ Readiness Roadmap document with provisions for national MRV system has been formulated	This output seems unlikely to achieve due to non-involvement with DFAs, suggest to remove
Outcome 1.2. Enhanced capacity of local communities in Badghis, Bamyan,	Number of Community Development Committees,	Zero	At least 10 Community Development	At least 10 Community Development Committees,	Split the indicator in two by considering the community

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces for developing and implementing community-based SLM/SFM plans	Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations trained • Number of community-based association established or strengthened • Number of community based associations (FMA and RMA and CDC) trained		Committees, Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained	Forest Management Committees and/or Rangeland Social Associations trained Proposed: Establish, train, and strengthen at least 50/55 community-based associations	based approaches taken by the project and its strategy. Target to be increased by considering the object level indicator # 2.
Output 1.2.1 Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools	Number of resource materials on SLM/SFM tailored to local socio-economic and environmental conditions	Zero resource materials developed tailored to local conditions	At least 4 sets of resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	At least 4 sets of resource materials developed, including on the following themes: • Land degradation and restoration assessments • Livelihood and resilience assessments • Approaches and technologies for SLM/SFM and restoration • M&E of SLM/SFM interventions	
Output 1.2.2 Training provided to local-level technical government staff on facilitation of community-based pl anning and M&E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for inter alia animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation and sustainable resource use	Number of local-level technical government staff members trained (% women)	Zero local-level technical government staff members have been trained	At least 25 local-level technical government staff members have been trained	At least 25 local-level technical government staff members have been trained	

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Output 1.2.3. Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based and gender-sensitive SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E	Number of awareness-raising activities undertaken, disaggregated by type and theme	Zero awareness-raising activities undertaken	At least 5 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making	At least 20 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken on the following themes: • Threats causing rangeland and forest degradation • The benefits of SLM/SFM • The importance of M&E to inform SLM/SFM decision-making	
Output 1.2.4. CDCs, FMAs, RMAs supported to develop participatory, community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans	Number of community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed and implemented	Zero community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans have been developed	At least 10 community based and gender responsive SLM/SFM plans developed	At least 10 community-based and gender-responsive SLM/SFM plans developed Increase the target 50/55 referring to outcome target 1.2	The overall project strategy and approach expects developing CBNRM plans and its implementation
Output 1.2.5. Pastoralist field schools conducted on livestock husbandry and community-based rangeland management/SLM practices	Number of pastoralists trained (% women) • Pastoralist field school implementation framework in place • Number of pastoralist field school conducted • Number of pastoralists trained (% women)	No pastoralists have been trained and no pastoralist field schools have been conducted	Existence of a training programme for the pastoralist field schools	At least 300 pastoralists (20% women) trained through pastoralist field schools Number of pastoralist field school conducted	By considering the concept of the pastoralist field school split indictor in three and revisit the target
Outcome 2.1 Improved management of 10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types to increase biodiversity conservation and sequester 1,530,069 tCO2e in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces	Area of forest resources restored in the landscape, supported by forest management actors, training and materials	Zero ha	2,000 ha of HCVFs and 4,000 ha of other forest types restored	10,000 ha of HCVFs and 20,000 ha of other forest types restored	

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Output 2.1.1. Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVFs in Kunar and Paktya provinces	Number of biodiversity assessments conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	Zero biodiversity assessments have been conducted in Kunar and Paktya provinces	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	At least 1 biodiversity assessment conducted in each of Kunar and Paktya provinces (2 total)	
Output 2.1.2. Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces	Number of nurseries and woodlots established	Zero nurseries and woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	At least 10 nurseries or woodlots established	
Output 2.1.3. Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/ restoration and SFM implemented over 10,000 ha of HCVFs (Kunar and Paktya) and 20,000 ha of other forest types (Badghis) leading to an overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches	Same as Project Objective Indicator	Zero ha	56,000 ha (2,000 ha of HCVFs, 4,000 ha of other forest types and 50,000 ha of rangelands)	230,000 ha (10,000 ha of HCVFs, 20,000 ha of other forest types and 200,000 ha of rangelands)	
Output 2.1.4. Diversified livelihood options promoted to reduce pressure on forest resources, including agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products in Badghis, Kunar and Paktya provinces	Number of households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products • Number of beneficiaries increasing their income by xx%	Zero households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	At least 20 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	At least 50 households benefiting from agro-forestry, alternative energy sources and value addition for timber and non-timber forest products	Support outcome surveys
Outcome 3.1 Climate-resilient SLM practices implemented across 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands in Badghis, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces	Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting	Zero ha	At least 50,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices	At least 200,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices Revisit target	Same as objective level indicator 2

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
	climate-smart agriculture [*GEF Indicator 1.1 – LD1 Pr2*]				
Output 3.1.1. Climate-resilient SLM interventions – including soil and water conservation, rotational grazing and restoration/ rehabilitation with palatable species – implemented over 200,000 ha of degraded rangelands	Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture [*GEF Indicator 1.1 – LD1 Pr2*]	Zero ha	At least 50,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	At least 200,000 ha of rangelands under rangeland and pastoral management practices.	Same as objective level indicator 2
Output 3.1.2. Enhanced livelihoods through strengthened value chains for products from livestock husbandry	Number of households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	Zero households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 20 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	At least 50 households benefiting from strengthened value chains for livestock husbandry	
Outcome 4.1. Improved knowledge to inform planning and implementation of SLM/SFM practices	Improved capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM	Baseline score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.6	Mid-term milestone score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 2.8	Target score for capacity for knowledge management on SLM/SFM: 3.0	
Output 4.1.1. National information and resource centre with associated M&E system and database for SLM/SFM established	Existence of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database	No 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre with M&E system and database currently exists	Organisational and operational structure of 'knowledge hub'/ national information and resource centre formulated	Knowledge hub/ national information and resource centre operationalized at the project level	Considering non-involvement with DFAs, this is unlikely to happen at the national level so down size to project level
Output 4.1.2. Local-level, participatory M&E system for SLM/SFM established for monitoring of rangeland and forest condition, including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration	Number of participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Zero participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	Existence of framework document outlining design and implementation protocols for participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition	At least 10 participatory M&E assessments of rangeland and forest condition undertaken in project sites	

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End of project target	Rationale for suggested changes
Output 4.1.3. Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated	Number of synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	Zero synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed, with a least one each on the following themes: • Rangeland management and restoration • Improved livestock and herd management • Restoration of HCVFs • Restoration of other forest types	At least 4 synthesised best-practice guidelines developed and disseminated, with a least one each on the following themes: • Rangeland management and restoration • Improved livestock and herd management • Restoration of HCVFs • Restoration of other forest types	
Output 4.1.4. Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces collated and disseminated nationwide as well as regionally	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Zero lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	Number of lessons learned on SLM and SFM practices documented, disaggregated by theme	