



FAO-GEF Mid-Year Implementation Update

Period covered: 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021



1. Project Basic Data

General Information

Region:	Asia Pacific
Country (ies):	Bangladesh
Project Title:	Pesticide Risk Reduction in Bangladesh
FAO Project Symbol:	(GCP/BGD/060/GFF)
GEF ID:	9076

Review and Evaluation

Expected Mid-Term review date:	31 August 2021
Actual Mid-term review date:	N/A
Terminal Evaluation Date planned (if applicable):	N/A
Expected Project Completion date (NTE):	31 December 2021

Project Contacts

Contact	Name, Title, Division/Affiliation	E-mail
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Budget Holder	Mr. Robert D. Simpson, FAO Representative (FAOR) in Bangladesh	Robert.Simpson@fao.org
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2. Information on Progress, Outcomes and Challenges of Project Implementation Activities

Please structure your response as follows:

1. *Progress since the FY20 update.* Assess component by component the progress of activities and delivery of outputs (and outcomes, if appropriate) in relation to the implementation plan to deliver on the project objective. Please provide one or two paragraphs per component summarizing the progress of each outcome.
2. *Challenges.* Provide an update on the key challenges faced by the project such as procurement, disbursement, audit findings, co-financing, M&E and effectiveness. This section should look in particular at how the challenges posed by COVID-19 are impacting project activities.
3. *Adaptive measures and actions.* Highlight the workarounds identified to adapt and enhance implementation. References to proactive actions being taken to improve implementation should be highlighted here, including management change, update in activities and possible project restructuring.

Overall, during this reporting period the implementation of project activities has been severely hampered by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus the progress has been slow.

Under component 1, communication with DAE and DGHS has been initiated to do an inventory of POPs status in Bangladesh. However, field visits, assessments and trainings could not be undertaken due to travel restrictions. On the other hand, there is good progress in the tendering process (done on 31 March 2020) for “Provision of Safeguarding, Transport, and Final Destruction of Pesticide Stockpile”. The project site was surveyed and sample collection was done by the international bidders on 25 August 2020. In addition, a contract for DDT disposal was signed with POLYECO S.A. on 25 January 2021.

The process of identifying the quantity and location of obsolete pesticides has started. Correspondence with government agencies is underway. In addition, the process to conclude a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with i) Department of Environment (DoE), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC); (ii) Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); (iii) Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) (iv) Department of Fisheries (DoF), Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL) has started and is progressing well.

Activities related to the management options for empty pesticide containers have not yet started due to prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

Component 2: Governance and enforcement

Activities under this component have not yet started.

Component 3: POPs pesticides uses addressed

During this reporting period, the processes for signing LOAs with government agencies to speed up the analysis of POPs Pesticide residue in foods and to strengthen POPs pesticide residues monitoring and reporting have started. Once this process is completed, the project will be able to put in place an environmental pesticide monitoring and incident reporting system.

There is however no progress in identifying ongoing and illegal uses of POPs pesticides and sources of unintentional exposures to POPs pesticides as this would require to conduct an assessment on the field.

Currently, filed activities remain under restriction due to the pandemic. In addition, for the same reason, the activities related to the promotion of alternative, low hazard pest control options in agriculture and public health have not yet started.

Component 4. Awareness and communication

There is no progress to be reported under this component. Awareness and communication activities could not be undertaken as field activities have not yet started.

Major challenges experienced during this reporting period

- ☐ Emergence of COVID-19 pandemic that does not allow field activities
- ☐ Government agencies engaged to manage COVID-19 situation as top urgent and priority.
- ☐ The STA was recruited but infected by COVID-19 in her homeland and was unable to join the team; the overall staff recruitment process has been delayed due to COVID-19 and conditions are not conducive to deliver field activities.
- ☐ UN agencies (e.g. WHO, FAO, UNDP) moved into teleworking modality instead of physical presence in the field.
- ☐ Project staff/consultants movements are restricted/stopped due to the pandemic situation in the country and due to instructions from national authorities and the UN. However, initiatives are taken whenever the situation appears to have eased.
- ☐ Project activities have started but progress is hampered/stopped due to lockdowns, red zone restrictions, etc

Adaptive measures for project implementation

- ❖ Active involvement of government agencies, ground preparation and operation, allocation of funds are the key management actions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic period.
- ❖ Specifying suitable facility for POPs pesticides disposal in compliance with the Stockholm Convention, address guidelines on BAT (Best Available Techniques) and BEP (Best Environmental Procedures), shipment of packaged POPs pesticides to the identified designated facility, and issuance of contract for shipment and destruction.
- ❖ Prioritize project activities that can be done through online or virtual platforms such as preparation of paper documents, completion of contracts and LoAs involving concerned authorities and persons.
- ❖ The project design needs to address COVID-19 pandemic related issues, particularly in ground operation, and hands-on training and capacity building of local level beneficiaries.
- ❖ The ongoing pandemic situation has delayed the project activities and this may result in shifting of the overall implementation and completion schedule. The existing result matrix may need to be reviewed and revised accordingly.
- ❖ The project work plan needs to be restructured to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and a no-cost extension will probably be required.

3. Stakeholders Engagement

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

Please provide an update with a particular focus on how COVID-19 is impacting stakeholder's engagement and how the project is overcoming these challenges, for instance engaging stakeholders is done differently. Of course, please consider also mentioning any major non-COVID related change since the FY20 update.

- ✓ Due to the existing COVID-19 pandemic situation, stakeholder consultation workshops were not held. In addition, the mid-term evaluation, including pre- and post-assessment of the project interventions was not possible.
- ✓ Approval of Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TAPP) by the Planning Commission and signing of contracts (e.g. LoAs) with government agencies is delayed due to the existing COVID-19 related restrictions.

Alternative measures proposed / taken by the project

- ✓ As per the project implementation organogram, formation of (a) Project Steering Committee (PSC), (b) Project Implementation Committee (PIC), and (c) Project Management Unit (PMU) is essential to start up the project activities.
- ✓

4. Gender-responsive measures

Please report on the progress of gender-responsive measures taken as documented at CEO Endorsement/Approval in the gender action plan or equivalent (when applicable)

Please provide an update with a particular focus on how COVID-19 is impacting gender and how the project is overcoming these challenges, for instance consequences of women facing disruptions in health and education services, local women's organizations supported etc. Please mention as well any major non-COVID related change since the FY20 update.

No progress to be reported at this point.

5. Knowledge Management Activities

Please report on the progress of implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach approved at CEO Endorsement (when applicable), knowledge products documenting good practices, lessons learned, websites/ other platforms developed, a communication strategy adopted.

Please provide an update with a particular focus on how COVID-19 is impacting knowledge management activities and how the project is overcoming these challenges, for example "face-to-face knowledge events are moved to virtual settings". Please mention as well any major non-COVID related change since the FY20 update.

No progress to be reported at this point.

6. Risks

RISK TABLE					
<p><i>The following table summarizes risks identified in the Project Document and reflects also any new risks identified in the course of project implementation. The <u>Notes</u> column should be used to provide additional details concerning manifestation of the risk in your specific project, as relevant.</i></p>					

	Risk	Risk rating ¹	Mitigation Action	Progress on mitigation actions ²	Notes from the Project Task Force
1	Extreme weather events, global warming, poor infrastructure & livelihood opportunities	Low	Detailed in ProDoc	None yet	Immediate actions to be taken as soon as the COVID-19 restrictions ease.
2	A new and completely unforeseen risk evolved after project formulation due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and the occurrence of tropical cyclone Amphan.	Substantial	Needs to be addressed once COVID-19 restrictions ease and in accordance with safety measures prescribed by the Government of Bangladesh and the UN	None yet	Immediate actions to be taken as soon as the COVID-19 restriction ease.

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

FY2020 rating	Mid-Year 2021 rating	Comments/reason for the rating for Mid-Year 2021 and any changes (positive or negative) in the rating since the previous reporting period
Low	Substantial	We foresee substantial changes in vulnerability rating of the project areas because of Global Covid-19 infection and Tropical Cyclone Amphan's impact in Bangladesh. We can be more certain once the proposed risk and vulnerability assessment is conducted as and when the COVID-19 situation permits

¹ GEF Risk ratings: Low, Medium, Substantial or High

² If a risk mitigation plan had been presented as part of the Environmental and Social management Plan or in previous PIR please report here on progress or results of its implementation. For moderate and high risk projects, please Include a description of the ESMP monitoring activities undertaken in the relevant period.

7. Development Objective Ratings, Implementation Progress Ratings and Overall Assessment

	Mid-Year 2021 Development Objective rating ³	Mid-Year 2021 Implementat ion Progress rating ⁴	Comments/reasons justifying the ratings for Mid-Year FY2021 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period
Project Coordinator	MS	MS	<i>[Mandatory Ratings/comments] The progress has been slow as the Government approval process was delayed, Technical Project Proposal (GoB doc) is yet to be signed and therefore field work was not initiated as FAO is unable to work remotely without the support of the government. Besides Prevailing Covid-19 situation delaying project implementation and working in the field due to lock down.</i>
Budget Holder	MS	MS	<i>[Mandatory Ratings/comments] Besides Prevailing Covid-19 situation, delays in project implementation and working in the field due to lock down have slowed progress. However, the overall core benefit of removing the DDT is now on track and this will pay massive dividend to the country and in particular the populations living around the stock pile.</i>
Lead Technical Officer⁵	MS	MS	<i>[Mandatory Ratings/comments] For the reasons described in the report, the rating is moderately satisfactory. COVID-19 is an unforeseen once-in-a-century challenge the impacts of which the project team (and Bangladesh as a whole) has worked hard to mitigate. The challenge will continue in the foreseeable future and accordingly, the implementation of the project has to be reworked while ensuring the safety and well-being of all concerned.</i>

³ **Development/Global Environment Objectives Rating** – please refer to Annex 1.

⁴ **Implementation Progress Rating** – please refer to Annex 1.

⁵ The LTO will consult the HQ technical officer and all other supporting technical Units.

FAO-GEF Funding Liaison Officer	MS	MS	<p>During this reporting period, project implementation continues to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Progress has been made in identifying the quantity and location of obsolete pesticides. Similarly, the project is moving towards a formal agreement with the Govt of Bangladesh to analyse POPs residue in foods and in strengthening pesticide residue monitoring and reporting, which will eventually lead to an environmental pesticide monitoring and incident reporting system.</p> <p>In view of the setback in project implementation, the work plan and planned budget for the rest of the project duration has to be revisited and adjusted. The mid-term review, planned for mid-2021, is expected to focus on the challenges faced and suggest adaptive measures to meet the project objectives, while recommending practical timelines for key milestones, including project closure.</p>
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Annex 1. – GEF Performance Ratings Definitions

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

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