Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Terminal evaluation of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico"

Project Evaluation Series
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Abstract

This report presents the results of the terminal evaluation report of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico". Financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the project, executed by Mexico's National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), aimed to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in Mexico.

A participatory and collaborative evaluation methodology, rooted in the theory of change, provided a qualitative analysis of the project's design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and cross-cutting concerns. Data collection involved primary and secondary sources, including documentation analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and on-site observation.

The evaluation found that at the strategic level, the project aligned with national and global priorities, effectively contributing to the supply of nutritious food, genetic diversity conservation and resilient production systems in the face of climate change. Coherence was evident in the project's coordination with ongoing actions of CONABIO and government initiatives, fostering internal and external collaborative relationships. Networks created during the project enhanced effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, avoiding duplication of efforts. Furthermore, the evaluation highlighted achievements in knowledge availability, capacity development, interinstitutional coordination and communication strategies. Cross-cutting concerns such as gender and Indigenous Peoples were addressed, although gender considerations were lacking in project design; and positive signals for sustainability included interest from public institutions, autonomous replication of initiatives and a supportive political context.

The project design revealed inconsistencies in the logical framework matrix, impacting clarity and hierarchical alignment of objectives, outcomes and outputs. Despite this, the project exhibited high compliance with established indicators, reflecting rigorous technical execution that surpassed planned activities.

Recommendations underscore joint efforts to ensure sustainability, suggesting the establishment of a joint working group between CONABIO and FAO to develop a strategy for institutionalizing project results. Further recommendations advocate for refining logical framework matrices, actively managing knowledge and fostering collaboration mechanisms for knowledge exchange, aiming to enhance future project results.

Contents

Box, figures and tables

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Abbreviations

CONABIO	Mexico's National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIAgroBD	Integrated Information System on Agrobiodiversity

Executive summary

1. This is the executive summary of the terminal evaluation of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico". The project was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which contributed USD 5 329 452, and was executed by Mexico's National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), under the operational partners implementation modality (OPIM), and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The project execution began in July 2018 and was completed in July 2023.

2. Its objectives were to: "ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including the knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from its use" (global environmental objective) and "develop policies and mechanisms that support the conservation, sustainable use and resilience of agrobiodiversity, by promoting knowledge of traditional agroecosystems and the cultural methods that maintain this agrobiodiversity in Mexico" (development objective). The territorial scale of intervention was national, regional and local, and the states chosen for the implementation of regional and local actions were Chiapas, Chihuahua, Valley of Mexico City, Michoacán, Oaxaca and Yucatán.

3. The purpose of the evaluation was to carry out an independent assessment of the strategic relevance of the design and actions implemented by the project, the coherence of the intervention, its effectiveness in achieving outputs, outcomes and objectives, the efficiency in the use of resources, the incorporation of cross-cutting concerns, the likelihood that the effects obtained will be sustained once funding ceases (sustainability) and other factors that may have affected the execution of the project, in order to extract lessons learned and offer recommendations aimed at improving the potential impact of this and, eventually, future initiatives.

4. A participatory and collaborative methodological approach was used, based on the theory of change and oriented towards learning, which was non-experimental and qualitative in nature. The causal relationships between the inputs, outputs, outcomes, and expected and unexpected effects to which the project contributed and/or should have contributed, along with the conditions and determining factors for these to occur, were analysed based on the observations made during the evaluation.

5. Data collection was from primary and secondary sources, using different methods of information production including: the analysis of documentation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and on-site observation. To select those to be interviewed, purposive sampling was carried out. As a result of this exercise, a sample of 122 key actors belonging to seven characteristic types was obtained, including beneficiaries, members of the steering committee, external consultants, project team personnel, FAO officials and professionals from partner institutions and local partners.

6. The background information collected from these different sources was systematized in a matrix organized by evaluation subquestions. For the effectiveness analysis, the reconstructed theory of change was used, and the results reported by the project through its monitoring and evaluation system were considered. This data was contrasted with

other sources and methods of information collection and then validated in the field. Finally, methodological and source triangulation were carried out to identify the trends in the background information obtained from the different sources and information collection tools, and to obtain findings that were sufficiently tested.

Results of the evaluation

Strategic relevance

7. The project's response to the national and global priorities of ensuring the supply of nutritious food, safeguarding the genetic diversity of species, and moving towards sustainable and resilient production systems adapted to climate change is highly satisfactory.

8. Its design and implementation integrated the key aspects of the GEF biodiversity strategy (GEF, 2006), the four betters prioritized by FAO in its Strategic Framework 2022–2031 (FAO, 2021a) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 15 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015).

9. In accordance with the National Development Plan 2019–2024, and the sectoral plans of the Mexican State (Government of Mexico, 2021), the project responded to the need to strengthen support for Indigenous communities and small-scale agricultural producers through the promotion of agroecological and sustainable practices and the conservation of soil, water and agrobiodiversity.

Coherence

10. The project coherently coordinated its intervention with the ongoing actions of CONABIO and the government regarding the promotion of agrobiodiversity (internal coherence). It generated complementary relationships with 134 initiatives led by public institutions, civil society organizations and private individuals at the local, regional and national levels (external coherence).

11. The project played an important role in creating and promoting collaboration networks, which facilitated the establishment of synergies that avoided duplication of efforts. These networks generated a chain reaction that increased the project’s effectiveness, efficiency and the possibilities of its sustainability.

Project design

12. The project's logical framework matrix presents inconsistencies in its vertical and horizontal logic. The narrative summary of the objectives, outcomes and outputs lacks clarity and does not always coincide with their level of hierarchy within the proposed causal logic. The indicators are limited to providing information on the quantity and timing of the goods and services that are expected to be achieved, and are not useful for measuring expected results and effects.

Effectiveness

13. Compliance with the established indicators was high, reflecting the rigorous technical execution of activities that went beyond what was planned. Although the goals achieved do not explain, by themselves, the effectiveness of the project in achieving intermediate

results and its ability to contribute to medium- and long-term changes, they show the development of outputs that had the potential to contribute to the achievement of these changes. In summary:

i. **Component 1.** The generation and consolidation of data in an information system (output) made it possible to increase and improve the availability and accessibility of knowledge about Mexican agrobiodiversity (outcome).

ii. **Component 2.** The implementation of a capacity development programme in the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity; the generation, strengthening and expansion of exchange and collaboration networks, and the provision of infrastructure for the community conservation of seeds (outputs) led to the strengthening of the capacities of Indigenous Peoples and farmers to protect, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity.

iii. **Component 3.** The design and implementation of interinstitutional communication and coordination strategies to influence public policies (output) generated the conditions so that the relevant Mexican public institutions were better prepared to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.

iv. **Component 4.** Meanwhile, the design and development of proven methodologies and initiatives to promote consumption and economic valuation (output) did not generate an increase in consumption and economic valuation of agrobiodiversity (expected outcome).

14. As a result of the achievement of these outputs and outcomes, the evaluation determined that the project contributed to developing enabling environments and strengthening individual, collective, community and institutional capacities that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity (direct effect of the project).

15. In terms of the evaluation, the effect achieved is a step towards addressing the challenge of guaranteeing the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including valuing the knowledge and related cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from their use (long-term change).

Knowledge management and communication

16. Knowledge management and communication are recognized as a strong point of the project, which allowed the activities and outputs to be disseminated, and raised awareness and positioned the importance of conserving agrobiodiversity on the public agenda. In addition, abundant knowledge was generated about agrobiodiversity which, through adequate management after project closure, has the potential to be used to achieve the desired long-term impact.

Efficiency

17. The project was efficient in the use of available resources. The planned activities were executed, and the expected outputs were achieved at a high level of quality. This was achieved thanks to a quality team, a decentralized intervention design, the synergies

generated, and materialized co-financing that was greater than the amount initially committed.

Implementation and execution

18. FAO, as the project implementing agency, and CONABIO, as the executing partner, generally fulfilled the basic functions and standards required by GEF. Regarding the role of the implementing agency, room for improvement was identified in its support for the formulation of the logical framework matrix and in the technical support provided.

Stakeholder participation

19. In line with the GEF participation policy, project partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders have participated, accessed information in a timely manner and maintained a fluid dialogue with other interested parties.

Monitoring and evaluation

20. The monitoring and evaluation of the project was carried out in a highly satisfactory manner. This assessment is mainly due to the project's ability to systematize data with adequate levels of disaggregation and provide access to timely and quality information, as well as its usefulness for timely and informed decision-making and the technological innovations adopted.

Cross-cutting concerns

21. *Gender*. The gender approach was not included in the project design, which affected the possibility of incorporating this approach on a systematic basis in the budgeting and planning of the project activities. However, the evaluation identified some achievements in terms of gender and recognizes that the minimum standards established in the GEF policy for the implementation phase were guaranteed.

22. *Indigenous Peoples*. The project, in line with the requirements of FAO, GEF and the Mexican State, implemented mechanisms and procedures to ensure the effective participation of people and communities belonging to the different Indigenous Peoples present in the intervention territory. Among others, these included the implementation of 56 free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) processes; the development and dissemination of materials in Indigenous languages, and the formation of operational teams capable of communicating in local Indigenous languages.

23. *Environmental and social safeguards*. In accordance with the GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards and the moderate risk rating, the project has taken the necessary measures to avoid negative effects on the environment and the communities affected by its intervention.

Sustainability

24. The evaluation identified positive signals for the sustainability of the project. For example, some processes, outputs and effects have raised interest in maintaining and incorporating them in Mexican public institutions (e.g. the Integrated Information System on Agrobiodiversity [SIAgroBD] linked to CONABIO and the cooperation agreement signed with the French Development Agency to promote the agroecological transition and agrobiodiversity in family farming). There are indications of the autonomous

replication of seed banks and management practices by beneficiary producers, and a favourable political context exists to achieve the project's objectives (e.g. the draft Food Law and the National Food Strategy).

Conclusions

25. The high strategic importance of the project ensured a high level of interest of stakeholders, facilitating the establishment of synergistic relationships in networks of collaboration and complementarity, adherence to its processes and ownership of the results obtained. The relevance and coherence of the project laid the foundation for effective technical execution: thanks to the project, the availability and accessibility of knowledge related to agrobiodiversity increased; the Indigenous and farmer beneficiaries managed to revalorize and are better prepared to protect, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity; and the capacity of Mexican public institutions to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity improved. These intermediate results are considered by this evaluation as a contribution to the intended impact of the project. The good performance of the project in these key areas (relevance, coherence and effectiveness) suggests there are positive prospects for its long-term sustainability.

26. The technical execution and the results obtained are a consequence of the management structure established, the programmatic support measures promoted, the operational and strategic decisions made, and the processes developed by the executing and implementing agencies. Some of these actions served as a multiplier of the project's effectiveness and as a factor that promoted its efficiency and sustainability. However, others, either by omission or due to deficiencies in their implementation, limited the potential scope of the project. For example, the lack of a gender diagnosis and strategy, a logical framework design that limited the possibilities of measuring and collecting evidence of the changes that the project intended to achieve in the medium- and long-term, and the delays in the execution of component 4 are some of the factors that hindered the project's performance.

27. In summary, the evaluation determined that the project performed satisfactorily. In general, its execution was relevant, coherent, efficient and effective. It also generated enabling environments and strengthened individual and institutional capacities that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity, which represents progress towards the project's main environmental objective.

Lessons learned

Lesson learned 1. The promotion of *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity is a process inseparable from the valuation and preservation of the cultural practices of the communities and farmers who protect, use and benefit from it.

Lesson learned 2. The consultation processes at the local level, and the multistakeholder dialogues in which the project participated, made it possible to respond to the needs, priorities and interests of the local communities that were not contemplated in the project's original design but that were equally important.

Lesson learned 3. Programmatically linking the project with ongoing processes led by national, regional and local institutions made it possible to enhance the effectiveness of the project, improve its efficiency and increase the prospects of sustainability.

Lesson learned 4. For FAO to successfully carry out its capacity development functions, it is key to generate an attractive and relevant knowledge transfer proposal, agreed upon between the parties, and formalized as a plan at the beginning of the project, which is included in the related partnership agreements.

Lesson learned 5. A high-quality results matrix design (vertically and horizontally coherent and with correctly written narrative summaries of the components) is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the project and for the generation of evidence of its intended effects.

Lesson learned 6. Ensuring linkages with health, nutrition and food issues is one of the keys to the sustainability of projects that seek to protect agrobiodiversity.

Lesson learned 7. Community seed banks are a tool that promotes *in situ* conservation, while contributing to ensuring genetic diversity in the territories where they are implemented, promoting food security and sovereignty, and improving the capacity for climate change adaptation in the communities where they are developed.

Lesson learned 8. An intervention model based on specific strategies adapted to the diverse realities in the field was a successful response to the social, cultural and organizational diversity of the communities where the project was implemented.

Lesson learned 9. Conducting an *ex ante* gender gap analysis, developing a strategy to reduce this gap and designing gender-responsive results frameworks maximizes the possibilities of achieving transformative changes.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. For CONABIO and FAO on the sustainability of the results: Establish a joint working group aimed at developing a strategy to ensure the institutionalization of the project's achievements and design a roadmap for the continuity of technical cooperation.

Recommendation 2. For FAO Mexico on the quality of project design: Strengthen the review mechanisms of the logical framework matrices, include in the design products that generate counterfactual evidence, and consider objective indicators aimed at measuring progress in achieving medium- and long-term changes (effects and impacts).

Recommendation 3. For CONABIO on the use of the potential of the information generated by the project: Design a plan for the active management of the knowledge generated by the project, differentiating actions by target audiences (decision-makers, producers, consumers, etc.) and the objectives pursued (political influence, improving supply and demand for outputs, and strengthening capacities of farmers and Indigenous Peoples, among other possible objectives).

Recommendation 4. For the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean knowledge management area on the management of knowledge obtained from agrobiodiversity conservation projects in Latin America: Establish a mechanism aimed at exchanging and systematizing knowledge, experiences and lessons learned from the GEF agrobiodiversity conservation projects implemented by FAO in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico and eventually other countries where this topic has been addressed.

1. Introduction

1. This document corresponds to the terminal evaluation report of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico" (hereinafter the "project") (see Box 1 for general project information).

2. The evaluated project was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for an amount of USD 5 329 452 and co-financed by different government entities for an amount equivalent to USD 36 185 188, reaching a total budget of USD 41 514 640.

3. The implementation of the project was under the responsibility of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and it was executed by Mexico's National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO).

4. The execution of the project began in July 2018, and it was closed in July 2023.

Box 1. General project information

Project title: Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico **FAO Project code:** GCP/MEX/305/GFF **GEF ID:** 9380
Project duration: Five years • Start date: July 2018 • Expected end date: July 2023
GEF-6 focal area: Biodiversity – Objective 3 of Programme 7
Financing partner: GEF **Executing partner:** CONABIO **Implementing agency:** FAO
Total project budget: USD 41 514 640 **National contribution:** USD 36 185 188 **GEF contribution:** USD 5 329 452

Source: FAO. 2023. Terminal evaluation of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico" – Terms of reference. Rome. Internal document.

1.1 Context of the project

5. Agrobiodiversity in Mexico consists mainly of local agricultural varieties and wild relatives managed by small farmers using traditional methods in their milpas (a traditional agricultural system in which maize is intercropped with other species, such as beans, squash or other vegetables) or other agroforestry cropping systems.

6. The three levels of agrobiodiversity – genes, species and ecosystems – are essential to achieve food and nutritional security for small-scale producers and the population in general. The consumption of these species generates benefits for the nutrition and health of farmer families and contributes to the regulation and purification of water, as well as to the control of erosion.

7. The main guarantors of the conservation, evolution and domestication of agrobiodiversity have historically been local and Indigenous communities, which play an important role in maintaining ancestral knowledge regarding the management of these species.

8. At the global level, agrobiodiversity is declining. The confluence of climate change, modern agricultural practices characterized by monocultures, urbanization, pastoralism and development approaches have impacted crop diversity and the varieties on which food systems depend.

9. Although Mexico maintains cultivated territories and significant genetic diversity in the form of traditional varieties, it is no exception; it has been gradually losing its agrobiodiversity and moving towards standardization of diets and the reduction of available nutrients.

10. According to the project document, the causes that explain this situation are: the expansion of monocultures and modern large-scale retailers; the gradual abandonment of traditional agrobiodiversity management practices; the decrease in the consumption of products resulting from these practices; public policies that do not favour traditional agricultural practices, and a weakness in agrobiodiversity conservation strategies and actions.

11. Along with these causes, six barriers were identified during the formulation of the project that could hinder the reversal of this trend and prevent guaranteeing the *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity in Mexico. These barriers are: limited scientific information due to the lack of systematization and reliable databases; limited interinstitutional coordination and communication; perverse incentives that cause degradation of agroecosystems; the continued expansion of intensive, large-scale monoculture agriculture that puts traditional agroecosystems under pressure; the social dynamics in rural areas that continue to threaten traditional agricultural practices and knowledge, and the lack of valuation of agrobiodiversity and the agroecosystems that maintain it.

12. More background information can be found in the terms of reference of the evaluation and the project document.

1.2 Project intervention logic

13. The project team designed an intervention strategy with the following global environmental and development objectives: "ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including the knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from its use" (global environmental objective) and "develop policies and mechanisms that support the conservation, sustainable use and resilience of

agrobiodiversity, by promoting knowledge of traditional agroecosystems and the cultural methods that maintain this agrobiodiversity in Mexico" (development objective).

14. These objectives, according to the project intervention logic, were to be achieved through the development of outputs that contribute to the fulfilment of four outcomes with the same number of associated components (see Figure 1 for the project intervention logic).

15. Regarding the intervention territory where the actions were carried out, the project considered three scales (national, regional and local), with the execution organized as follows: components 1 and 3 prioritized actions and sought to generate outputs at the national and regional levels, while components 2 and 4 were carried out at the regional and local levels.

16. For the project execution on a regional and local scale, territories in the following states were selected: Chiapas, Chihuahua, Valley of Mexico City, Michoacán, Oaxaca, and Yucatán.

Figure 1. Project intervention logic

Outputs	Outcomes
Output 1.1.1. New knowledge generated through participatory research. **Output 1.1.2.** An Integrated Information System on Agrobiodiversity (SIAgroBD) was developed through a protocol designed, approved and adopted by key actors to facilitate public access. **Output 1.1.3.** A participatory economic valuation strategy and the communication/dissemination of agrobiodiversity values among the different stakeholders, aimed at small-scale producers and their families (in coordination with Output 2.1.1), policy developers (see Output 3.1.1) and consumers (see Output 4.1.1), was designed and implemented.	**Outcome 1.1.** Extensive knowledge was generated, communicated and made available for use on globally important agrobiodiversity, its values, traditional practices, scientific and technological research and development activities, the knowledge base and related capabilities that maintain agrobiodiversity in Mexico.
Output 2.1.1. Capacity building programmes were developed and implemented to increase local knowledge and skills for regional agrobiodiversity management through participatory research and information exchange among farmers. **Output 2.1.2.** Seed conservation projects (community and family seed banks, seed custody networks, seed exchange initiatives and others) to improve self-management and control of local and regional agrobiodiversity by farmers were implemented. **Output 2.1.3.** Milpa and other agroforestry systems (MoAS) were improved and diversified, making them more productive and better adapted to climate change.	**Outcome 2.1.** Local capacities were strengthened to support long-term plans and actions for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, adopting strategies to revalue traditional knowledge and support continuous adaptation to climate change.
Output 3.1.1. A communication and awareness strategy aimed at decision-makers about the value and importance of conserving and sustainably using agrobiodiversity was formulated and implemented. **Output 3.1.2.** An interinstitutional strategy for the integration of conservation and use of agrobiodiversity was agreed and implemented.	**Outcome 3.1.** The protection and promotion of traditional knowledge, practices and production systems were incorporated into public plans and policies, generating effective partnerships with local communities and disseminating values associated with agrobiodiversity and local cultures.
Output 4.1.1. Dissemination and education campaigns aimed at consumers on specific values of agrobiodiversity, such as nutrition, health, well-being and others, were developed (values identified in the participatory economic assessment in component 1, Outcome 1.1.3.). **Output 4.1.2.** The access of smallholder farmers (family farmers and Indigenous communities) to local and regional markets was strengthened to support conservation through the sustainable production of food and products based on agrobiodiversity. **Output 4.1.3.** Innovative market incentives were developed to promote the conservation of agroecosystems and generate a transformational change in rural production.	**Outcome 4.1.** The marketing and consumption of agrobiodiversity products were improved through new agrobiodiversity valuation strategies and market incentives, with a short value chain approach.
Project objective Develop policies and mechanisms that support the conservation, sustainable use and resilience of agrobiodiversity, by promoting knowledge of traditional agroecosystems and the cultural methods that maintain Mexico's agrobiodiversity.	
General aim of the objective Guarantee the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including the knowledge and traditional methods used in the agroecosystems present in Mexico, while considering fair and equitable benefits from its use.	

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

17. The proposed results chain has design problems that are discussed in depth in section 3.3 and are among the limitations identified by this evaluation (see section 2.4).

1.3 Theory of change of the project

18. The mid-term review (MTR) and the project team both developed a theory of change (TOC) of the project. However, this evaluation proposes a reconstruction of the TOC, taking as a reference the previous exercises carried out, the project document, the results matrix and the background information provided by the key informants of the evaluation.

19. The theory of change is structured as follows:

i. Barriers: aspects identified during project design that may hinder progress towards the intended impact, which is to guarantee the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity.

ii. Strategies of change: these correspond to the main axes of the project intervention. In this case, four strategies were identified that start, guide and trigger the pathway of change.

iii. In accordance with the project components, the four strategies of change identified were:

- research, systematization and data infrastructure;
- promotion of agrobiodiversity in communities of farmers and Indigenous Peoples;
- impact on public policies; and
- economic valuation and access to markets.

iv. Short-term changes: these are the changes that have occurred, or should occur, during the course of the project's execution.

v. Medium-term changes: these are understood as the direct and achievable effects once the implementation of the project is completed. Some of these have already been achieved, while others may be realized in the future.

vi. Intermediate states: medium- and long-term changes or preconditions necessary to achieve the desired long-term change or impact.

vii. Long-term changes: these are the impacts to which the project is expected to contribute if the preceding effects and assumptions are materialized.

viii. Assumptions: these are the factors/conditions that influence the final realization of the project's results and impacts, but which are beyond the immediate power or influence of the project.

20. Figure 2 presents the changes and assumptions identified for each of the stages or phases mentioned above.

Figure 2. Reconstructed theory of change

Long-term change
The conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity is guaranteed, including the knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from its use.

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Intermediate states		
Evidence of the multidimensional benefits resulting from the practices promoted by the project is generated, systematized and shared.	Interinstitutional dialogue spaces generate public policy proposals that promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.	The number of farmers and Indigenous Peoples who receive training and infrastructure to improve the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity is increased thanks to the implementation of public programmes.
Processes and outputs developed by the project are incorporated in the institutions of the Mexican State.	Exchange and collaboration networks are strengthened so that they continue operating and expanding.	Small-scale producers, guardians and users of agrobiodiversity improve their livelihoods as a result of the commercialization of products from agrobiodiversity.

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Assumptions		
CONABIO, FAO and other interested parties continue to participate in interinstitutional spaces.	SIAgroBD is used by officials, authorities and producers to make evidence-based decisions.	The eventual rotation of State officials does not significantly affect the approach promoted by the project.
Small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples and farmers implement and replicate the agrobiodiversity management practices learned.	In the event of possible changes in government, the interest and political will to promote the conservation of agrobiodiversity is maintained.	Communities, producers and consumers incorporate products from agrobiodiversity into their diet.

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Medium-term changes			
Enabling environments have been generated and individual, collective, community and institutional capacities have been strengthened that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.			
The availability and accessibility of knowledge about Mexican agrobiodiversity is increased and improved.	The capacities of Indigenous Peoples and farmers to conserve, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity are strengthened.	The capacity of Mexican public institutions to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity is improved.	The consumption and economic valuation of the products of agrobiodiversity has increased thanks to the project.

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Short-term changes		
Indigenous Peoples and farmers develop capacities in the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.	An information system on agrobiodiversity is generated.	Stakeholders participate in exchange and collaboration networks.
Strategies to promote consumption and economic valuation of agrobiodiversity products are implemented.	Decision-makers are informed and sensitized about the importance of promoting agrobiodiversity.	Communities develop the necessary infrastructure to conserve their seeds locally.

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Assumptions

Communities, researchers and academic institutions are able and willing to participate.	Producers participate in project activities.	The agreements reached are *legally* binding.	Local media incorporate content on agrobiodiversity into their guidelines.
Institutional key actors share the information contained in their databases.	Producers are willing to share their knowledge.	The officials involved in negotiations have the power to make decisions.	There is a market niche for products from agrobiodiversity.

Strategies			
Research, systematization and data infrastructure.	Promotion of agrobiodiversity in farmer and Indigenous communities.	Impact on public policies.	Economic valuation and access to markets.

Barriers			
Lack of systematized scientific information and reliable databases.	Limited coordination and interinstitutional communication.	Public policies that discourage traditional agricultural practices.	Gradual abandonment of traditional agrobiodiversity management practices.
Decrease in consumption of products from agrobiodiversity.	Low economic valuation of agrobiodiversity.	Expansion of intensive, large-scale monoculture agriculture puts traditional agroecosystems under pressure.	

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

2. Methodology

2.1 Scope and objectives of the evaluation

2.1.1 Scope of the evaluation

21. The evaluation's temporal scope coincided with the project's execution period from its start date in July 2018 until the closure of the evaluation data collection activities in June 2023.

22. The geographical scope of the evaluation coincided with the territory of the project intervention and the interaction between the different scales, including institutions, people and actions that had a national, regional or local impact.

2.1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

23. The purpose of the evaluation was to carry out an independent assessment of the strategic relevance of the design and actions implemented by the project, the coherence of the intervention, its effectiveness in achieving outputs, outcomes and objectives, the efficiency in the use of resources, the incorporation of cross-cutting concerns, the likelihood that the effects obtained will be sustained once funding ceases (sustainability), and other factors that may have affected the execution of the project. This was done to extract lessons learned and offer recommendations aimed at improving the potential impact of this and, eventually, future initiatives.

2.2 Users of the evaluation

24. The main users of this evaluation are the following:

i. FAO, as the implementing agency, and CONABIO, as the project executing partner, may use the findings, lessons learned and recommendations to improve the design and implementation of future interventions in the country or region, including ongoing projects in similar areas and/or potential work areas.

ii. The local governments involved, partners and beneficiary communities will be able to use the evaluation to improve and strengthen the scope of the results and provide continuity to the processes generated by the project.

iii. The FAO-GEF Coordination Unit will use the results to report back to the GEF, including information on the achievement of project objectives and indicators. In addition, it will use the evidence to improve the implementation of the FAO-GEF portfolio at the regional and country levels. It will also share good practices developed by this project with the FAO-GEF community.

iv. The FAO Representation in Mexico, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC) and FAO headquarters will be able to use the main results of the evaluation for their strategic planning and design of future GEF and non-GEF proposals.

v. The GEF, as a financing partner, will use the results as evidence to improve the implementation of the FAO-GEF portfolio.

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Methodological approach

25. The evaluation used a participatory and collaborative methodological approach, based on the theory of change and oriented towards learning, which was non-experimental and qualitative in nature.

26. The aim was to identify the causal relationships between the inputs, outputs, expected results, and unplanned effects to which the project contributed and/or should have contributed, the conditions for this to occur, and what was observed in practice.

2.3.2 Evaluation questions

27. The information needs were determined by the evaluation criteria and questions described in the terms of reference. Each of these elements was analysed taking into consideration the design, performance, promoted processes, structure and results of the project. Below is a list of questions associated with ten evaluation criteria:[1]

[1] The questions were adapted based on the new FAO-GEF reporting structure; information needs did not change. The evaluation matrix incorporates all information needs as evaluative subquestions and judgement criteria.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria and questions

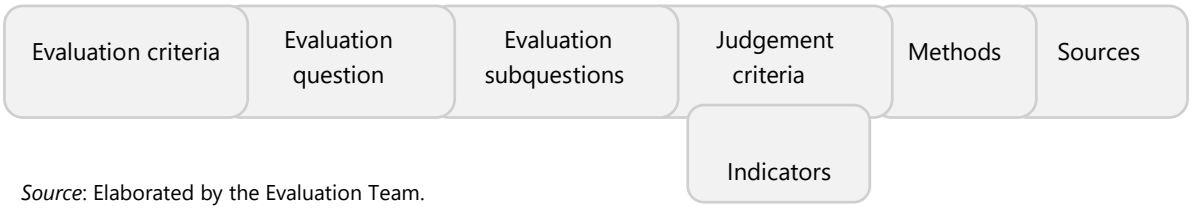
Strategic relevance
EQ 1. To what extent are the project results aligned with the focal areas/strategies of the FAO GEF operational programme, the country's priorities and the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) (FAO, 2024)?
Coherence
EQ 2. How well is the intervention harmonized with other interventions carried out by the implementing agency and other institutions?
Effectiveness
EQ 3. What outcomes, either intentional or unintentional, has the project achieved, and to what extent did these contribute to the achievement of the project's environmental and development objective?
Knowledge and communication management
EQ 4. How is the project documenting and sharing its results, good practices, lessons learned and experiences? Are the communication products and activities contributing to the sustainability and improvement of the project results?
Efficiency
EQ 5. To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively? To what extent has it been able to adapt to any changes in conditions (government and/or policy changes, the COVID-19 pandemic, project team changes, etc.) to improve the efficiency of project delivery?
Implementation and execution
EQ 6. To what extent have FAO and CONABIO exercised their roles and assumed the responsibilities of implementing agency and executing entity, respectively?
Stakeholder participation
EQ 7. Have other actors – such as civil society, the Indigenous population or the private sector – participated in the design or execution of the project? How is the level and quality of participation and involvement of partners, key counterparts and other stakeholders assessed?
Monitoring and evaluation system (M&E)
EQ 8. Has the M&E plan and its implementation been efficient and contributed to the management and accountability of the project? Has information from the M&E system been used appropriately to make timely decisions and promote learning during project implementation?
Cross-cutting perspectives
EQ 9. To what extent have gender, Indigenous Peoples and safeguard considerations been taken into account in the design and execution of the project?
Sustainability
EQ 10. How sustainable are the results achieved to date at the environmental, social, institutional and financial levels? What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?

Source: FAO. 2023 Terminal evaluation of the project "Securing the Future of Global Agriculture in the face of climate change by conserving the Genetic Diversity of the Traditional Agroecosystems of Mexico" – Terms of reference. Rome. Internal document.

2.3.3 Evaluation matrix

28. As a methodological guide for the collection and analysis of information, an evaluation matrix was developed. This included the ten questions and subquestions associated with the evaluation criteria established in the terms of reference. The matrix was structured as follows:

Figure 3. Structure of the evaluation matrix



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

2.3.4 Information collection techniques

29. The evaluation consulted primary and secondary sources and used different methods of information collection. These were:

i. Document analysis: the documents reviewed included the project document, the sources of verification of the indicators and the reported products, the semi-annual and annual progress reports and technical reports generated as part of the four components, training materials, studies, consulting reports, legislation and national public policy instruments, key press releases, publications and communication products. In addition, strategic and technical documents from GEF's Sixth Replenishment Period (GEF-6) and FAO were reviewed, along with protocols, conventions, treaties and conventions signed by Mexico and other relevant documents from the United Nations System.

ii. Semi-structured interviews: to obtain in-depth information about people's impressions or experiences, 55 in-depth interviews (in person or virtual) were carried out with different key actors, giving priority to those responsible for the execution (CONABIO) and implementation (FAO) of the project, state officials, partner institutions and external consultants.

iii. Focus groups: to incorporate the different opinions and points of view of the beneficiaries, as well as their understanding and perception of the processes and results of the project, seven focus groups were held aimed at the project beneficiaries.

iv. *In situ* observation: this technique was used during visits to the intervention territories, in order to obtain information about the implementation of the project, the activities carried out, the processes, debates, social interactions and results as observed directly in the field.

2.3.5 Information analysis

30. The background information collected using the different techniques and sources was systematized by evaluation subquestions. This information was then analysed considering subcategories developed based on the indicators and evaluative judgement criteria reflected in the evaluation matrix.

31. In order to identify the trends in the data collected and to obtain sufficiently validated findings, methodological and source triangulation were carried out. To answer the evaluation questions and subquestions, the information retrieved through different data collection techniques and from different sources was compared.

32. For the overall effectiveness analysis, the evaluation reconstructed the project's theory of change and used it as the main analytical framework. The data reported by the project through its monitoring and evaluation system associated with the logical framework was used as an input for the analysis of the level of progress on the proposed path of change. This information was contrasted with other sources and methods of information collection and, in turn, validated in the field. In this regard, the achievement of outputs, outcomes and effects was evaluated based on the extent to which the identified barriers were overcome, the materialization of the assumptions and the changes observed in the short- and medium-term.

2.3.6 Sampling

33. Considering that access to and participation in the evaluation process for all the key actors were not ensured a priori, and that the information needs of the evaluation required informants with a high level of involvement in the project, it was decided that the selection would be carried out through a purposive sampling process.

34. To ensure heterogeneity of the sample, potential informants were subdivided into seven categories: beneficiaries, members of the steering committee, external consultants, project team personnel, FAO officials, professionals from partner institutions and other local partners. Three general criteria were then applied: i) information management level; ii) level of responsibility; and iii) level of intensity of connection with the project. Each criterion was assigned a high, medium or low rating. An actor was considered eligible only if they obtained at least two high scores, ensuring that the sample as a whole included key actors from all components and considered women in the same proportion as their participation in project activities.

35. Once the sample was defined, the sites to be visited during the mission were selected. The locations visited were prioritized according to four criteria: i) density of actions carried out; ii) availability of the actors; iii) financial and temporal feasibility of making the trip; and iv) security conditions of the preselected locations.

36. As a result of this exercise, a sample of 122 people located in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area and the states of Oaxaca and Yucatán was obtained, in addition to 10 people who, for reasons of availability, were interviewed virtually (see Table 2).

Table 2. Key actors interviewed, according to type and location of beneficiaries

Type of actor	Men	Women	Total	State	Beneficiaries
Beneficiaries	33	33	66		
Steering committee	2	1	3	Oaxaca	19
Consultants	2	1	3		
Project team	7	15	22	Mexico City	14
FAO officers	2	5	7		
Partner institutions	4	2	6	Yucatán	33
Local partners	9	5	14		
Total	**59**	**62**	**121**	**Total**	**66**

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

2.3.7 FAO Office of Evaluation/GEF Evaluation frameworks

37. The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) and GEF have developed reference frameworks that provide technical and methodological guidelines for the evaluation for gender inclusion (FAO, 2013, 2017; GEF, 2017b), capacity development (FAO, 2019a), participation of Indigenous Peoples (FAO, 2011, 2016) and environmental and social safeguards (GEF, 2018). Following the guidelines established in these instruments, the Evaluation Team has selected elements of each framework to be incorporated into the evaluation matrix to carry out the analysis of these perspectives.

38. Finally, it is important to mention that the evaluation was aligned with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG, 2005) and the FAO-OED project evaluation guidelines (FAO, 2015), adopting a consultative, transparent and independent approach with the internal and external project stakeholders.

2.4 Limitations

39. The development of the evaluation process faced the following limitations:

40. Given the temporal and financial characteristics of the project, and the conditions of insecurity in some of the territories, it was not possible to obtain a sample that would ensure territorial representativeness. This made it difficult to make generalizations that could be extrapolated to the entire target population. Therefore, to mitigate the possible impact of this situation on the evaluation, informants with general knowledge of the project were selected, along with case studies in the territories visited, and virtual consultations were held with actors from the regions not visited.

41. The quality of the project's logical framework matrix was a limitation for the evaluation. The imprecision of the narrative summary of the expected outcomes and outputs, the inconsistencies in the causal logic and the prevalence of indicators that provide information only on the goods and services generated from the project (outputs), made it difficult to use this instrument as the main parameter to assess the effectiveness of results and effects (see section 3.3 on project design). As mentioned in section 2.3 on methodology, as a way to mitigate this limitation, the evaluation reconstructed the theory

of change and used it as the main analytical framework to assess the project's effectiveness.

2.5 Structure of the report

42. The report has been structured according to the guidelines provided by the FAO Office of Evaluation. These have been formulated in accordance with the GEF Evaluation Policy (FAO, 2019a) and the GEF Guidelines for Conducting Terminal Evaluations (GEF, 2022).

43. Following the introduction, the objectives, scope and methodology set out in this section, the results linked to the evaluation criteria are presented in section 3. Section 4 presents the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned derived from the evaluation process.

44. This document includes six appendices: 1) People interviewed; 2) GEF evaluation criteria rating table; 3) GEF rating scheme; 4) Results matrix; 5) Co-financing table; and 6) Public/private institutions linked to the project.

3. Findings

3.1 Strategic relevance

Finding 1. The intervention strategy implemented by the project and the approach taken provide a satisfactory response to global priorities and guidelines to ensure the provision of nutritious food, safeguard the genetic diversity of species and move towards sustainable, resilient production systems adapted to climate change.

45. The project addressed the problem related to the conservation of agrobiodiversity, proposing solutions aligned with global priorities in this area. It responded to challenges such as the gradual loss of traditional crops, the standardization of diets and the growing vulnerability of farmers and Indigenous Peoples to climate change. It did so through strategies that promoted *in situ* conservation, the generation and management of new knowledge, its influence on public policies, the strengthening of the capacities of small-scale producers to protect genetic diversity and improve their agricultural practices, and the opening of marketing channels, while at the same time respecting and revaluing local knowledge. These actions are consistent with the priorities and guidelines supported by the international community and are reflected in various human rights instruments and international agreements (United Nations General Assembly, 1966, Article 11.2.a; United Nations, 2008, Articles 29.1 and 31.1; Organization of American States, 1988, Article 12.2; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity [SCBD], 2011, Article 1 and others; SCBD, 1992, especially Articles 6, 7, 8, 10 and 12; SCBD, 2010) to which Mexico and other Member States of the United Nations have adhered.

46. The aspects contained in such agreements have also been part of the strategic approach of the GEF, FAO and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015). These bodies have not only ratified the importance and benefits of taking measures to ensure the conservation of agrobiodiversity, but have also included them as central axes of their institutional actions. The project was coherently aligned with these priorities.

3.1.1 GEF-6 Biodiversity Strategy

47. The project demonstrates strong alignment with Programme 7 of GEF-6,[2] which focuses on ensuring sustainable agriculture through the responsible use of plant and animal genetic resources. The project not only identified the same problems and the long-term objective pursued by this programme, but its strategies were also aligned with this purpose. In particular, the most notable outcome of the project in response to Programme 7 is Outcome 2.1, which focuses on strengthening local capacities to support long-term plans and actions in the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. This focus on training farmers and Indigenous Peoples in the identification, development and implementation of solutions, as well as promoting productive systems based on local and traditional knowledge, is aligned with four of the five priorities established by GEF-6 in this programme. The other results of the project are also highly relevant; Table 3 shows in more detail its contribution to the different strategies prioritized by the programme to

[2] The primary purpose of the GEF-6 biodiversity strategy is to preserve global biodiversity and the services it provides to society.

achieve a sustainable impact on the conservation and use of agrobiodiversity at the global level.

Table 3. GEF-6 Programme 7 strategies and associated project outcomes

GEF-6 Programme 7 strategies	Project response
i. Maintain and strengthen different production systems and their elements, including agricultural practices based on local and traditional knowledge, allowing for continuous evolution and adaptation.	The promotion of agricultural practices based on local and traditional knowledge is central to Outcome 2.1 of the project.
ii. Link the maintenance of genetic diversity with improved food security and economic opportunities for rural communities and farmers.	The project, in its entirety, is committed to maintaining genetic diversity and, in particular, Outcome 4.1 seeks to improve the economic opportunities for farmers and Indigenous Peoples.
iii. Strengthen the capacities of the community and organizations of small-scale producers and farmers (both men and women) to participate in the identification, development and implementation of solutions.	The design of interventions in local communities, within the framework of Outcome 2.1, considered the active participation of small-scale producers.
iv. Develop policies, strategies, legislation and regulations that shift the balance in agricultural production in favour of diversity-rich approaches.	Outcome 3.1 seeks to promote the incorporation of the conservation of agrobiodiversity in national public policy instruments.
v. Strengthen the capacity of communities and institutions for agricultural development, extension and research needed for *in situ* conservation, so that agrobiodiversity is integrated into production intensification and adaptation to climate change.	The promotion of research is central to the design of Outcome 1.1, and the strengthening of capacities for *in situ* conservation is present in Outcome 2.1 (producers) and Outcome 3.1 (extension programmes).

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

3.1.2 FAO Strategic Framework

48. The project is also aligned with the objectives of the FAO Strategic Framework to move towards "more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems to achieve better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life" (FAO, 2021a). The project responds coherently to programmatic areas 1 and 4 of the first better (better production) through its focus on vulnerable small-scale producers and in the importance attributed to access to economic and natural resources, markets, services, information and education. Also, by ensuring *in situ* conservation and the genetic evolution of species under conditions of domestication as mechanisms of climate resilience and adaptation to climate change, the project contributes to programmatic areas 1 and 3 (better environment) and 5 (a better life). Finally, although the alignment of the project with better nutrition, which is explicit in the project justification, was not incorporated in the definition of strategies during the design, its importance emerged during execution. The objective of moving towards healthy diets (programmatic area 1) and improving the nutrition of the most vulnerable people (programmatic area 2) increased in importance during project execution, to the point that it became one of the most important themes of the initiative.

3.1.3 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

49. Finally, the project strategy provides a coherent response to the priorities contained in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 15 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015). Its contribution lies in the set of results and effects sought by the project, rather than in the alignment of each of the components separately. In this regard, the objectives of SDG 2 "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" and SDG 15 "Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (...)" were integrated by the project in its formulation and subsequent execution.

Finding 2. The project's response to the priorities of the Mexican State, in terms of conservation of agrobiodiversity, food security and sustainable and resilient production of the agriculture sector, was strengthened during its implementation.

50. The project document describes the strategic relevance of the project in relation to public policy instruments that, coinciding with the change in state administration, expired in the same year as its execution began (2018).[3] In the current six-year term (2018–2024), the government has included strategies consistent with the promotion of agrobiodiversity conservation in national and sectoral programmes. The importance of this issue for Mexico in this period is expressed in its National Development Plan 2019–2024 (Government of Mexico, 2019), which emphasizes the need to strengthen support for Indigenous communities and small-scale agricultural producers through the promotion of agroecological and sustainable practices, and the conservation of soil, water and agrobiodiversity, along with encouraging self-sufficiency in the production of seeds and other inputs. A similar situation is observed at the sectoral level, since the Environment and Natural Resources Sector Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, 2020) encourages ministerial action aimed at "Promoting the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems and their biodiversity". The instrument establishes that this objective should be achieved through the implementation of five priority strategies. The project is aligned with two of these strategies, as shown in Table 4.

[3] These public policy instruments were: the National Development Plan 2013–2018 (Government of Mexico, 2013a); the Environment and Natural Resources Sector Programme 2013–2018 (Government of Mexico, 2013b); the Sector Programme for Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food 2013–2018 (Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, 2013); and the National Crusade Against Hunger programme (Government of Mexico, 2015).

Table 4. Project response to the priority strategies of the Environment and Natural Resources Sector Programme 2020–2024

Objective 1. Promote the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems and their biodiversity.	
Strategic priorities	**Project response**
1.1. Promote the conservation, protection and monitoring of ecosystems, agroecosystems and their biodiversity to guarantee the provision and quality of their environmental services, considering regulatory instruments.	The project, in its entirety, was aimed at promoting the conservation of agrobiodiversity as a provider of public goods.
1.2. Promote the sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity, based on participatory planning with respect for autonomy and self-determination, through a territorial and biocultural approach, in order to promote regional and local development.	The project, in particular Outcome 2.1, paid special attention to ensuring that the promotion of the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity was carried out participatively and with respect for Indigenous communities.

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

51. The project is even more closely aligned with the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2019), since it shares two of its three objectives and five of its priority strategies. In this regard, the priorities considered in the design and implementation of the project (especially Outcomes 2.1 and 4.1) included contributing to the well-being of the rural population through the inclusion of historically excluded producers (Indigenous Peoples and farmers), harnessing the potential of local markets (Objective 2), and promoting sustainable practices as a mechanism for adaptation to climate change (Objective 3). Finally, the project was also consistent with the aims of the National Seed Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2021a) (as part of the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Programme), which seeks to "implement local native seed production systems according to the needs of each region, ecological niche or community". The project contributed to this objective through the promotion of guardian networks and the establishment of community native seed banks.

Finding 3. The project activities responded appropriately to the interests of the beneficiary small-scale producers thanks to a successful identification of needs in the initial phase, and the ability to adapt their actions to the specific characteristics of the different territories.

52. During the project design stage, interviews and participatory workshops were carried out to identify the needs of the beneficiaries in the regions where it would be implemented. In addition, once the execution began, consultations were held at the local level in the Indigenous and farmer communities affected by the project. The needs raised, which were ratified by the evaluation and included improving livelihoods, diversifying production on milpas and farms, increasing access to agricultural inputs and considering the social, economic, environmental and cultural characteristics of each community, allowed the project to adapt the general strategies proposed in its design to the local priorities.

53. In this regard, the practices promoted by the project, the capacities developed and the methodologies used to promote the use and management of agrobiodiversity, the exchange and preservation of seeds (Outcome 2.1) and the strengthening of links with markets (Outcome 4.1) were designed in such a way that they responded to the specific

characteristics of each territory, thereby ensuring that the project actions were locally relevant and providing a response consistent with the needs and interests of the beneficiary producers.

3.2 Coherence

Finding 4. The project was aligned with the existing actions of CONABIO and the government in terms of promoting agrobiodiversity (internal coherence) and generated complementary relationships with initiatives led by numerous public institutions, civil society organizations and private individuals at the local, regional and national levels (external coherence).

54. The fact that the project was linked with ongoing processes and institutions focused on the conservation of agrobiodiversity was identified by the evaluation as its defining feature and one of its main success factors. The project was not only aligned with these processes but was the protagonist in the formation of what the evaluation describes as "a network of connections" promoting the establishment of synergistic relationships that avoided the duplication of efforts. These became a chain reaction that increased the effectiveness and efficiency of the project (see sections 3.4 on effectiveness and 3.6 on efficiency).

55. The definition of the network of connections is based on the coordination with institutions that led or participated in existing processes that the project influenced and/or promoted through content, knowledge, technical assistance, financial resources (as in the case of implementing partners of component 2 and the research carried out within the framework of component 1) and linkages with other processes.

56. The project was directly linked with a total of 134 organizations and institutions (public, private and civil society, international, national, regional and local) distributed in each region. As for the project's indirect links, these increased exponentially depending on the density of the networks managed by each of the actors directly connected to the project (see Table 5 for direct links established by the project and Appendix 6 for a list of institutions linked to the project). Some examples of the networks and synergies developed by the project include the partnership established at the national level with the Interinstitutional Group on Health, Food, the Environment and Competitiveness (GISAMAC) aimed at developing public policy instruments that ensure a healthy, fair, sustainable and competitive food system; local coordination with the co-executing organization Mixteca Sustentable Project that works towards sustainable development and the improvement of livelihoods in the communities of Mexico, as well as the collaboration established with the Ecosystem and Sustainability Research Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

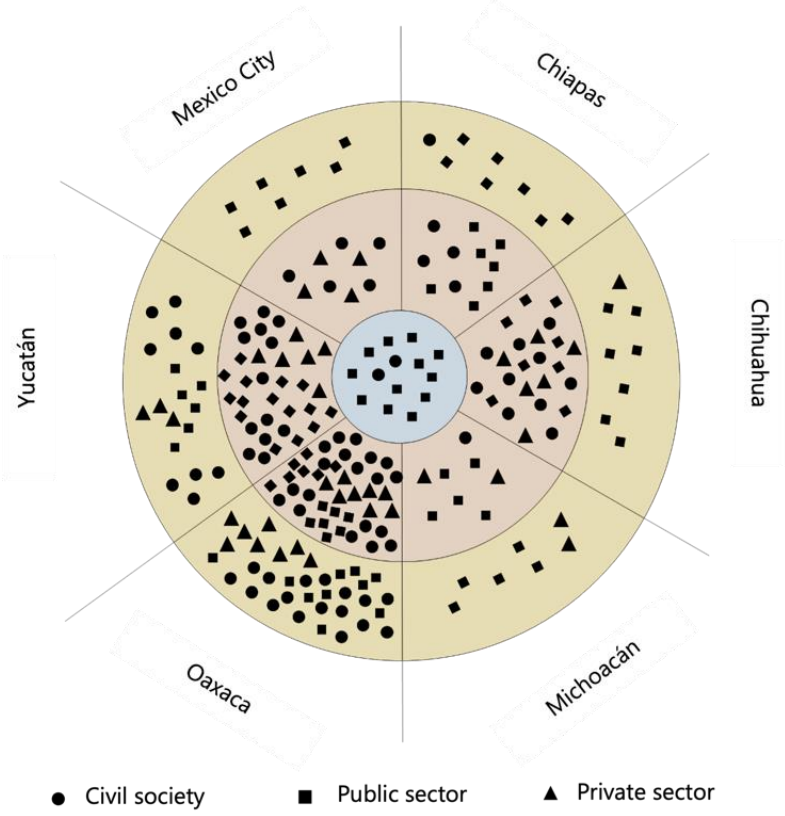
Table 5. Direct links established by the project, by state and scale

State	Public	Private	Civil society	Total
Mexico City	10	5	4	**19**
Chiapas	7	-	4	**11**
Chihuahua	9	5	9	**23**
Michoacán	5	2	1	**8**
Oaxaca	15	5	18	**38**
Yucatán	17	6	12	**35**
Total	**63**	**23**	**48**	**134**

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

57. In an approach based on social capital (Lin, 1999; Putnam, 1993; Coleman, 1988) and the synergistic capital of Boisier (2004), the network of connections catalysed by the project could be conceived as a system made up of diverse actors from different sectors that have shared interests, values and objectives, which is based on the exchange of ideas, knowledge and actions that facilitate the creation of networks of collaboration and mutual influence, thereby promoting synergies between the people and organizations involved in the project.

Figure 4. Spatial distribution of connections by type of actor



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

3.3 Project design

Finding 5. The results matrix presents inconsistencies in both its vertical and horizontal logic.

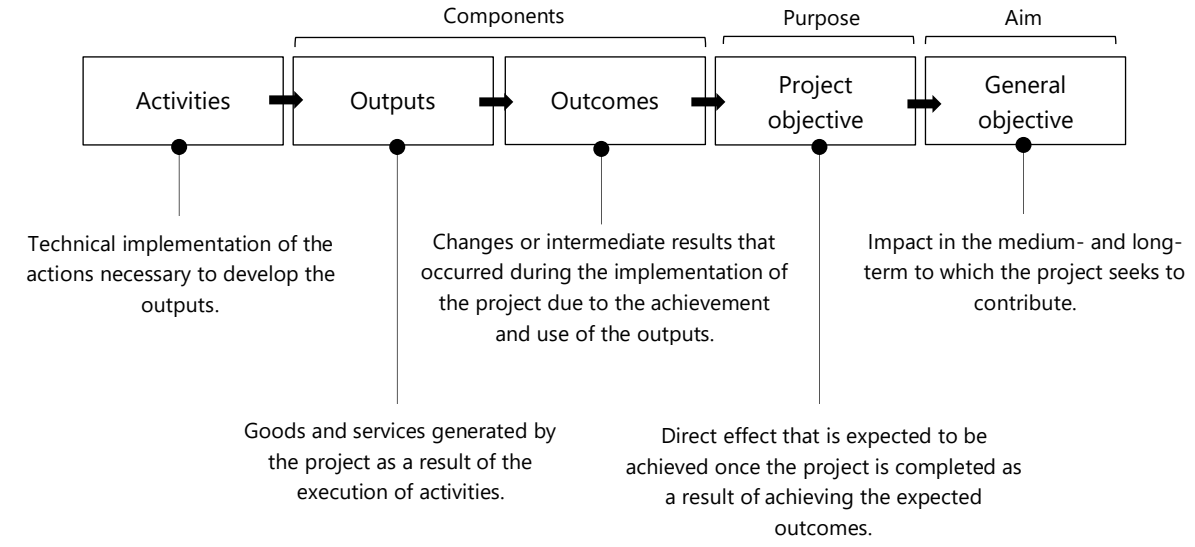
58. In accordance with the GEF format, the descriptive part of the project, specifically the sections corresponding to the identification of barriers and rationale, feasibility, implementation and management arrangements, and sustainability of results, are adequately presented in the respective sections of the project document.

59. However, the project's logical framework matrix presents weaknesses in its vertical or causal logic (chain of results) and in its horizontal logic (indicators, sources of verification and assumptions). These had consequences for project management and represented, as explained in section 2.4, a limitation for the evaluation of the project.

3.3.1 Analysis of vertical logic

60. The project developed a causal logic model made up of five levels of hierarchy (activities-products-results-project objective-general objective). As shown in Figure 5, from left to right, each level should contribute to the achievement of the next, and each of these should have a narrative summary in accordance with its position.

Figure 5. Causal logic model designed by the project



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team with data from the project document.

61. Based on the structure and descriptions included in the diagram, an analysis of the components, purpose and aims of the project was carried out.

62. The wording of the project's general objective or aim is clear and well-focused; its narrative summary, "Ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including the knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits arising from its use", adequately addresses the objective indicated in the methodology used for the construction of the results matrix, which is to provide a description of the solution to

a higher level problem to which the project seeks to contribute (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2005).

63. The specific objective or purpose of the project, which is to "Develop policies and mechanisms that support the conservation, sustainable use and resilience of agrobiodiversity, by promoting knowledge of traditional agroecosystems and the cultural methods that maintain this agrobiodiversity in Mexico", has problems in terms of its wording and internal inconsistencies. In this regard, it is not clear how promoting knowledge of traditional agroecosystems, and the cultural methods that maintain them, would result in the development of public policies that support the conservation, sustainable use and resilience of agrobiodiversity in Mexico. It also does not describe the direct effect or the "central hypothesis of the project", and the causal relationship of the components (outcomes and outputs) with its achievement is not clear. Clarity in the causal relationship, and the development of a narrative summary that describes the desired effect, are two elements that are absent and that are crucial for an adequate formulation of the specific objective in the context of the development of a results matrix (USAID, 2020; World Bank, 2004; Sansom, 2011; ECLAC, 2005).

64. The causal chain not only shows breaks between the components and the purpose, but also between some outputs and their outcomes. For example, it is difficult to understand how Output 2.1.3. "Milpas and other agroforestry systems (MoAS) are improved, diversified, more productive and better adapted to climate change" contributes to Outcome 2.1 "Local capacities have been strengthened to support long-term plans and actions for conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, adopting strategies to revalue traditional knowledge and supporting continuous adaptation to climate change". In this case, it would have been more accurate to establish a relationship in the opposite direction, that is, to propose that the strengthening of capabilities would result in the diversification of productive systems.

65. The most critical point of the vertical logic identified by the evaluation, as in the case of the project objective, lies in the wording of the components of the results chain. Formulating outcomes and outputs by describing how they will be achieved, or explaining the effect expected from their realization, is an error. Integrating two or more levels of hierarchy (forward or backward in Figure 5) in the same statement could generate confusion in the interpretation of the results matrix and may lead to errors in the formulation of the associated indicators (Sansom, 2011). Several cases are identified in the logical framework matrix, including the following examples:

   i. Output 1.1.2. "An Integrated Agrobiodiversity Information System (SIAgroBD) has been developed through a protocol designed, approved and adopted by interested key stakeholders to facilitate public access."

   ii. Outcome 2.1. "Local capacities have been strengthened to support long-term plans and actions for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, adopting strategies to revalue traditional knowledge and supporting continuous adaptation to climate change."

66. In the first example, it is not clear whether the desired output is the creation of an information system, the design of a protocol or the improvement in public access. Also, in the second example, it is not clear whether the expected outcome is the strengthening of

capacities or supporting plans and actions for conservation or revaluing traditional knowledge. These questions arise because of the confusion generated by their wording.

3.3.2 Analysis of horizontal logic

67. The horizontal logic of the project results matrix is comprised of indicators, sources of verification and assumptions.

68. With respect to the indicators, it should be noted that the majority provide information on the quantity and timing of the goods and services that are expected to be obtained (outputs), while only a few provide information on their quality and the changes generated as a result of their materialization (outcomes). Both requirements are essential for the formulation of good indicators (ECLAC, 2005; Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, 2001; Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, 1993). In addition, the indirect or "proxy" indicators formulated are based on assumptions that will not necessarily be met. For example, indicators of verification (IOV) 2.1.1 "Area in hectares where knowledge, practices and/or management derived from capacity-building projects for the conservation of agrobiodiversity are applied" was measured based on the sum of the land areas owned by the participants in the training sessions, assuming a direct correlation between training received and the implementation of practices in their milpas, farms or solares (small gardens, usually managed by women). Finally, the fact that indicators were not defined at the objective level limited the possibility of measuring and verifying the direct effects of the project and identifying the medium-term changes generated by the project. In this regard, it should be noted that the GEF guidelines do not incorporate as a requirement the formulation of objective indicators (only outcomes); however, the guidelines leave open the possibility for implementing agencies to design their own results frameworks.

69. Although the verification sources formulated in the project preparation phase indicate where the information can be obtained, some sources are very general and did not necessarily allow verification of compliance with the respective indicator. This characteristic is noticeable in the results in which the verification sources stipulated for all the output and outcome indicators were the "Annual project progress reports by region" and "the reports of regional project coordinators".

70. To correct the deficiencies in the formulation of indicators and their sources of verification, concept notes were prepared, which proposed additional indicators (mainly related to process), data analysis tools, calculation formulas, methods and instruments needed to obtain information from the original indicators, as well as from some of the proposed indicators. Although this instrument was important to homogenize the understanding of horizontal logic in the project team and improve sources and verification methods, it was not used to its full potential, since it did not result in substantial changes in the conceptualization of the indicators or adjustments in the logical framework matrix, which is ultimately the instrument that should guide – and that ultimately guided – the management of the project.

71. Finally, the assumptions were correctly identified in the logical framework matrix and represented judgements of the probability of success of each link in the results chain. They were correctly formulated as hypotheses that, if confirmed, would facilitate progress towards the next level in causal logic.

72. The possible implications of the design flaws identified were mitigated thanks to the fact that the management team participated in the project's design and, therefore, understood the objectives of the project beyond the quality of its logical framework matrix. Furthermore, thanks to the *ex post* elaboration of a theory of change, inconsistencies were partially corrected, which facilitated a better understanding of the logical pathway that the project sought to follow. However, it should be noted that, for the purpose of the evaluation, the development of a theory of change would have been better carried out before the design of the logical framework, since it would have provided inputs to achieve greater coherence in the results chain, thereby allowing the development of a more robust vertical logic.

3.4 Effectiveness

73. The review of the project's effectiveness is divided into three subsections: the first will review the project's technical execution and achievement of indicators at a general level; the second involves the same analysis but detailed by component and adding the identification of the outputs and their contribution to overcoming the barriers that hindered progress towards the project objective, and how these contributions resulted (or not) in outcomes that could be attributed to the project; finally, the third section assesses the effects resulting from the development of the project's outputs and outcomes, and to what extent these resulted in progress towards achieving the general objective of the project, which is the conservation of Mexican agrobiodiversity.

74. For the purposes of this analysis, the evaluation will use the word "outputs" to refer to the goods and services generated by the project, and "outcomes" to refer to the intermediate changes to which these outputs contributed. Given the project's design weaknesses, in some cases the outputs and outcomes identified did not match the narrative summaries included in the logical framework matrix.

3.4.1 General technical execution of the project

Finding 6. The project met, and in some cases exceeded, most of the goals established for the output and outcome indicators.

75. Compliance with the outcome and output indicators was high, reflecting a level of technical execution of activities that went beyond what was planned. Considering the outcome indicators, six were 100 percent achieved and four exceeded the initial objectives. Of the output indicators, the majority were achieved or surpassed, except for six indicators of component 2 that did not reach the goal (the details by component are discussed in section 3.4.2).

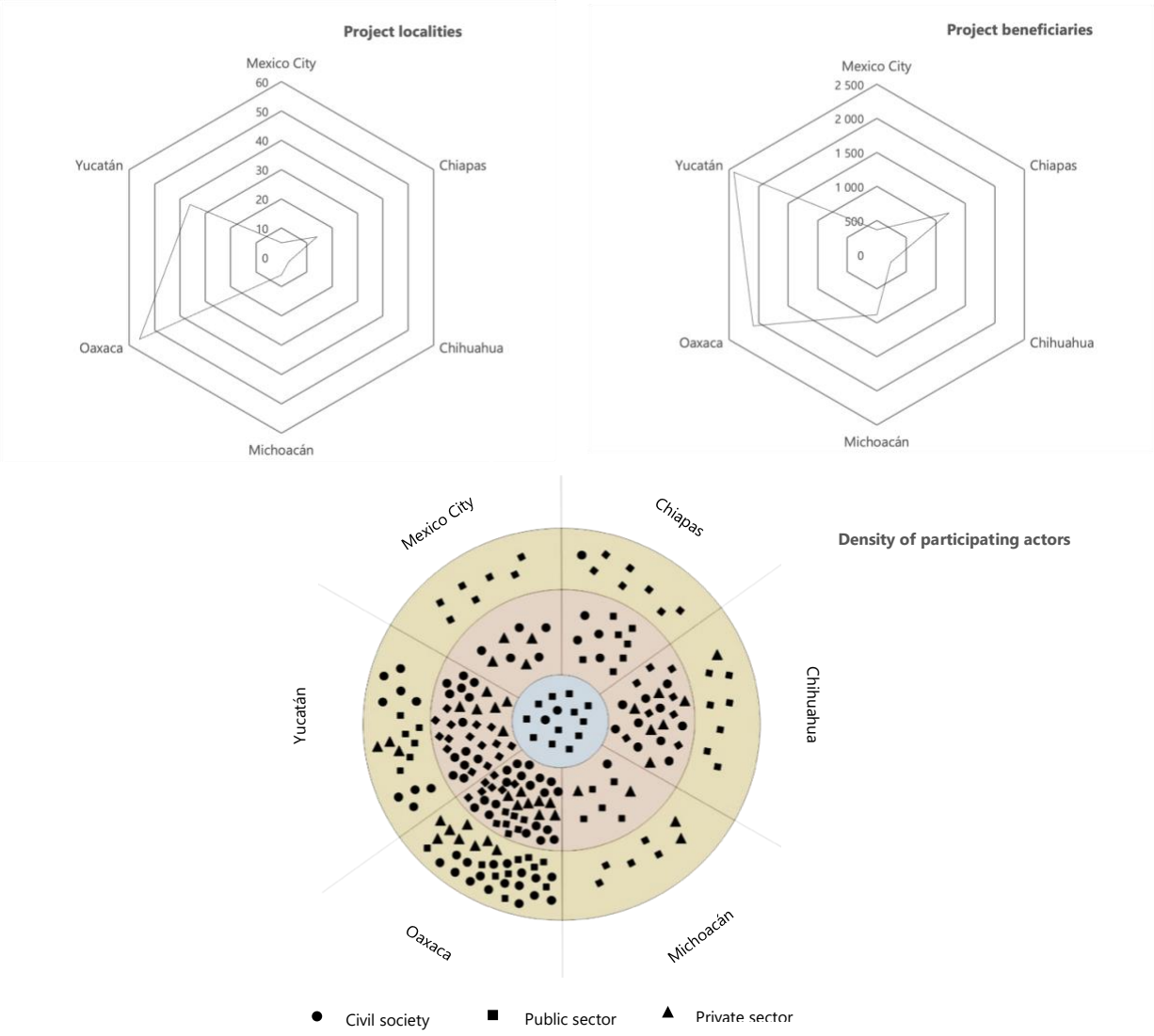
76. The achievement of the project goals was the result of the implementation of many activities;[4] at the national level, and considering all four components, the project benefited 180 communities in six states and encouraged the participation of 9 782 people in the 1 289 activities that were carried out. When the key actors were

[4] Some among the project's achievements are: 91 education, marketing and communication campaigns; support for 32 productive enterprises to obtain a specific certification; the collection of 4 901 new species records; the publication of 21 scientific articles; the development of more than 650 training spaces aimed at Indigenous Peoples and farmers; and 130 activities for exchanging experiences and knowledge, among others.

consulted about the reasons for these achievements, and in order to confirm or discard the hypothesis of a possible undervaluation of the indicators, they emphasized that the progress was due to the intervention model used – described by the Evaluation Team as a "network of connections" – and a political, economic and social context that contributed to further energizing collaboration networks, strengthening institutional commitments and promoting the participation of people in the activities developed by the project.

77. Indeed, the collaboration networks generated by the project contributed to expanding the number of communities and producers that benefited from the project. There was a direct relationship observed between the number of local actors involved in the project and the territorial coverage and number of participants. For example, Oaxaca and Yucatán (where the greatest number of local partnerships were generated) showed the highest participation of producers and communities, while in Mexico City and Chihuahua (with fewer partnerships) the opposite occurred (Figure 6). This confirms the first reason given by the informants of the evaluation for the project's success; the cooperation links established were directly proportional to the scope of the project.

Figure 6. Project localities, beneficiaries and density of participating actors



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

78. The main factors identified by the evaluation that contributed to the effectiveness of the project were: the favourable political environment generated by the government that took office almost simultaneously with the start of the project; the social awareness generated by the COVID-19 pandemic about the importance of self-consumption and the role that farmers and Indigenous Peoples play as suppliers of agricultural products to society; and, at the economic level, the explosive rise in the prices of industrial agricultural fertilizers and pesticides, which positioned bio-inputs and agroecological practices as an alternative that was not only viable but also necessary.

3.4.2 Efficacy analysis by component

Component 1. Information and knowledge management

79. The measurements carried out for the three outcome indicators shows that: an area of 1 012 500 ha was covered with collections of genetic crop varieties of global importance (50 percent higher than the goal); 39 agrobiodiversity databases of species were expanded (250 percent more than stipulated); and 12 analyses or syntheses were carried out based on the information contained in the SIAgroBD, or 300 percent more than the planned number (Table 6). The performance shown by the outcome indicators reflects the results at the output level. Of the ten indicators, six were 100 percent achieved and four exceeded the initial objectives of the project (Table 6).

Table 6. Achievement of indicators of Outcome 1.1

Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
1.1.1	No. of hectares with genetic crop varieties of global importance	700 000	1 012 500	145%
1.1.2	No. of existing agrobiodiversity databases of species expanded	12	39	325%
1.1.3	No. of analyses and syntheses based on the SIAgroBD and the results of research projects to guide decision-making	3	12	400%
Output indicators				
1.1.1.1	No. of research projects completed	10	15	150%
1.1.1.2	Implementation areas with projects in development	6	6	100%
1.1.1.3	No. of publications	3	21	700%
1.1.2.1	Protocol designed, approved and adopted	Protocol adopted	Protocol adopted	100%
1.1.2.2	SIAgroBD adopted and used by key actors	System developed	System developed	100%
1.1.2.3	No. of key institutional actors that have adopted the SIAgroBD and are using it	40	213	533%
1.1.3.1	Protocol for the assessment (…) of agrobiodiversity services (…)	Protocol created	Protocol created	100%
1.1.3.2	Protocol for the economic valuation (…) of agrobiodiversity products	Protocol created	Protocol created	100%
1.1.3.3	No. of materials for communication and dissemination of the value of agrobiodiversity	30	61	203%
1.1.3.4	A communication strategy (…) is designed and made available (…)	Strategy implemented	Strategy implemented	100%

Source: GEF, FAO and CONABIO. *Mexican Agrobiodiversity Project Monitoring and Evaluation System*. https://conabio.shinyapps.io/shiny_project_GEF/

Finding 7. The availability and accessibility of knowledge about Mexican agrobiodiversity was increased and improved.

80. The performance shown in the indicators is a result of the execution of the project activities, which in turn was responsible for the achievement of the following output: data was generated and consolidated in an information system on agrobiodiversity (CONABIO, n.d.) that is open to the public. This output is identified by the evaluation as the main contributor to the outcome described in the finding. In turn, this outcome represents a contribution to the elimination of one of the six barriers to agrobiodiversity conservation that were identified by the project: the lack of systematized scientific information and reliable databases.

81. In this regard, the project, through the transformation of databases and the generation of new knowledge, consolidated information on 7 679 species of agrobiodiversity and 2 428

wild relatives in a single site to provide nutritional information, as well as information on uses, potential distribution, cultural importance, academic research, communications materials, manuals and technical guides, among other outputs related to species of agrobiodiversity. Some of the new information integrated into the SIAgroBD was provided by the project. The financing of 24 research studies[5] allowed the project to obtain 4 901 new records of agrobiodiversity species collected in an area covering a total of 1 012 500 ha, carry out 12 analyses of the information collected, and generate 21 publications in specialized magazines (15), books (3) and websites dedicated to scientific dissemination (3).

82. The stakeholders consulted about the value they assign to this outcome stated that having access to accessible and organized information on the biodiversity of traditional crops is important to achieve the project's objectives. In addition, they affirmed that the SIAgroBD can: i) provide evidence so that criteria for the promotion and conservation of agrobiodiversity are incorporated into the design of public policies; ii) foster interinstitutional dialogue and exchange between specialists in the field; iii) ensure the non-replication of efforts in the future, and contribute to the revaluation of the uses and benefits of the products of agrobiodiversity, while highlighting the role of the local guardians (Indigenous Peoples and farmers). Finally, as part of a shared reflection of the evaluation and the stakeholders interviewed, it is important to understand the information system developed by the project as a tool, and not as an end in itself, since the management of this knowledge will be essential for the use of the SIAgroBD to achieve the project's long-term objectives.

Component 2. Strengthening local capacities

83. The three outcome indicators of this component were exceeded. The first indicator reached an area equivalent to 209 percent of the target area; the second, related to the number of producers that have strengthened their capacities, achieved 108 percent of the goal; and the third reached 323 species, i.e. 192 percent of the number expected for this indicator (Table 7).[6] At the level of output indicators, half of the indicators reached or exceeded the goals, while the other six were, to varying extents, below the goals (Table 7).

[5] The evaluation identified the verification source (final reports) of 17 research projects on the monitoring platform. The project team reported that the remaining seven projects are in the process of closing.

[6] Indicators 2.1.1 and 2.1.3 showed deficiencies in the measurement methodologies, meaning that the results obtained do not necessarily imply their fulfilment and/or may not be attributable to the project.

Table 7. Achievement of indicators of Outcome 2.1

Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
2.1.1	Area in hectares where knowledge, practices and/or management approaches derived from capacity building projects for agrobiodiversity conservation are implemented	2 180	4 549	209%
2.1.2	No. of producers who have strengthened their capacities to conserve and manage agrobiodiversity and have received multiple benefits as a result of its sustainable use (improved productivity and self-subsistence, conservation and improvement of seeds and traditional practices)	6 750	7 313	108%
2.1.3	No. of globally important species (cultivated and wild) present in the agroecosystems described in the specific implementation areas	168	323	192%
Output indicators				
2.1.1.1	No. of annual knowledge exchange events on agrobiodiversity	75	133	177%
2.1.1.2	No. of annual publications for the dissemination of knowledge on agrobiodiversity	66	61	92%
2.1.2.1	No. of projects for seed conservation	21	77	367%
2.1.2.2	No. of localities included	54	66	122%
2.1.2.3	No. of farmers involved in seed conservation activities	400	1,444	361%
2.1.2.4	Percentage of women participating	50	41.13	82%
2.1.2.5	Percentage of young participants (<30 years)	30	14.27	48%
2.1.3.1	No. of projects, differentiated by project type	300	550	183%
2.1.3.2	No. of localities where MoAS are improved	180	114	63%
2.1.3.3	No. of farmers participating in MoAS improvement	4,100	4,387	107%
2.1.3.4	Percentage of women participating in MoAS improvement	50	47	94%
2.1.3.5	Percentage of young people (<30 years) participating in MoAS improvement	30	26.1	87%

Source: GEF, FAO and CONABIO. *Mexican Agrobiodiversity Project Monitoring and Evaluation System*. https://conabio.shinyapps.io/shiny_project_GEF/

84. As shown in Table 7, most of the indicators that were not achieved were those related to the participation of young people and women (marked in pink). The main actors explain this deficit by the social context, namely the lack of interest and absence of young people in the territories, as well as cultural and social conditions that limit the possibilities of women's participation in the project areas. The evaluation confirms this reality, but at the same time emphasizes that this situation could have been foreseen. The design of strategies to promote participation and/or modify the goals to make them more realistic, based on the preparation of a gender diagnosis which was not carried out, would have partially mitigated this scenario (see section 3.10.1 on gender).

85. The data generated by the indicators, both in terms of outputs and outcomes, is based on the execution of activities related to: i) the development of capacities (courses, workshops, demonstration plots and others) on different topics (Table 8); ii) the reactivation and establishment of community germplasm banks (packaging, inaugurations, seed donation, collection and registration, among others); and iii) the exchange of species, as well as experiences and knowledge.

86. The decentralized intervention strategy – through local partners – and the multiple needs and interests of the beneficiary groups in the different states and localities of the intervention area resulted in the execution of diverse capacity development activities (Table 8). Although each of the topics covered and methodologies used seem, when considered individually, to address different objectives, when analysed as a whole they share a common purpose, which was aligned with the achievement of intermediate results established in the project's pathway of change.

Table 8. Topics addressed in capacity development processes, by state

Chiapas	
• Seed selection in native corn plants	• Digging of planting hole and fertilization of fruit trees
• Production and conservation of native grains and seeds	• Selection and planting of annual crops
• Improved fertilization	• Preparation of herbal products
• Compost and application of vermicompost to crops	• Production of organic fertilizers
• Management of the milpa system	• Cleaning the land and creating runoff filters
• Soil conservation	• Preparation of pesticides and organic biofertilizers
Chihuahua	
• Production and use of organic fertilizers	• Pest control of agricultural crops
• Planting of milpas	
Mexico City	
• Vermicompost	• Use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity
• Water and soil conservation	• Agrohomeopathy
• Soil chromatography	• Preparation of biopreparations
• Agroecological practices	• Climate change and integrated resource management
• Pest and disease control	
Michoacán	
• Pest control	• Weeding with a motor cultivator
• Control of fall armyworm based on pheromones	• Soil conservation
• Vermicompost	• Fungal control
• Application of hydrolate and bioles	• Weed control
• Mass selection	• Application of foliar fertilizers
Oaxaca	
• Introduction to maguey cultivation	• Soil chromatography
• Participatory improvement of native seeds	• Negative selection of corn plants
• Agroecological management of pests and diseases	• Planting and/or transplanting species of trees, vegetables and annual crops
• Conservation of humidity	• Seed germination in seedbeds
• Mass selection	• Foliar fertilizers
• Agronomic practices for milpa production	• Methods for preparing beds, corridors and biomass lines
• Conservation agriculture and its importance in soil improvement	• Preparation of amendments
• Production of bioinputs	• Soil fertility and amendments in early stages of development
• Participatory genetic improvement	

• Soil fertility management • Stubble management for soil cover • Selection of female plants in the milpa	• Establishment of backyard family gardens • Pest control • Microorganism production
Yucatán	
• Characterization, selection and participatory improvement of seeds • Production of biofertilizers and bioinsecticide • Phased production of agroecological inputs • Agroecological management of milpas	• Compost • Integrated management of milpas, monte and solares • Integrated management of backyard gardens • Creole corn seed production • Production, food and healthy nutrition

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

Finding 8. Indigenous and beneficiary farmers are better prepared to protect, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity.

87. The project outputs, including the implementation of a capacity development programme in the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity, as well as the provision of infrastructure for community seed conservation and the generation, strengthening and expansion of exchange and collaboration networks, were effective in generating behavioural changes in the beneficiaries that improved their capacities to protect, use and manage agrobiodiversity sustainably. They also represent a step forward in overcoming three of the barriers identified in the project design: i) the gradual abandonment of traditional agrobiodiversity management practices; ii) the continued expansion of intensive, large-scale monoculture agriculture, which puts traditional agroecosystems under pressure; and iii) the decrease in the consumption of agrobiodiversity products, as in the case of the producers themselves.

88. The training spaces provided by the project generated good results. Key beneficiaries highlight that the project allowed them to learn about and test new management and conservation techniques. Although they declared that at first they were sceptical of the effectiveness of non-conventional methods and the advantages of returning to traditional forms of management – "before I didn't believe in these things" said one beneficiary – they have noted a reduction in their production costs as a consequence of the preparation and use of bioinputs to replace their industrial equivalents, as well as improvements in their harvests and greater crop yields ("healthy land produces more"), thereby generating adherence to and adoption of the practices promoted by the project.

89. In addition, as a result of the exchanges carried out (133 in total) and the knowledge acquired about the properties of unknown or underused species in the communities, the producers have been revaluing and incorporating them into their production systems – "now we have access to seeds from other places that grow well here". As a result, producers have been able to diversify the production of their farms and gardens while also improving the nutrition of their families.

90. Access to seeds has improved, not only through the exchanges carried out, but also thanks to the community gene banks that the project helped to establish (32 in total). In addition, according to the beneficiaries themselves, the community seed houses allow greater access to more varieties, thus reducing the need for purchases and providing peace of mind that, since the seed houses are protected, they can be used in times of shortages and/or climatic emergencies.

91. The participation of farmers and Indigenous Peoples in the project allowed them to connect and learn from peers, both within and outside their communities, exchanging knowledge with academics, public officials, civil society organizations and technicians specializing in agrobiodiversity conservation. These experiences strengthened and expanded their collaboration networks and allowed them to appreciate the value of their roles, not only as users and producers, but also as generators and guardians of agrobiodiversity.

Component 3. Improvement of public policies

92. The indicator targets for the outcomes and outputs of Outcome 3.1 were all achieved. At the outcome level, elements aimed at promoting the conservation, use and/or sustainable management of agrobiodiversity were incorporated into the National Development Plan (IOV.3.1.1), five sectoral programmes (IOV.3.1.3) and three budgets (IOV.3.1.3) (Table 9). Of the output indicators, two were 100 percent achieved and the other two exceeded their targets (Table 9).

Table 9. Achievement of indicators of Outcome 3.1

Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
3.1.1	The National Development Plan (PND) incorporates agrobiodiversity in one or more objectives, strategies or lines of action	Agrobiodiversity included in the PND	Yes	100%
3.1.2	No. of sectoral programmes that incorporate agrobiodiversity in one or more of their objectives, strategies or lines of action	4	5	125%
3.1.3	No. of budget programmes that incorporate norms, rules, criteria or incentives aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity	3	3	100%
Output indicators				
3.1.1.1	Communication and awareness-raising strategy formulated and implemented	Strategy implemented	Strategy implemented	100%
3.1.1.2	Awareness index of public officials measured by the Agrobiodiversity Awareness Index developed in Output 1.1.3	85	87.9	103%
3.1.2.1	No. of prioritized policies (considering the PND, sectoral and budget programmes and legal and regulatory instruments)	15	15	100%
3.1.2.2	No. of public policies formulated	12	19	158%

Source: GEF, FAO and CONABIO. *Mexican Agrobiodiversity Project Monitoring and Evaluation System*. https://conabio.shinyapps.io/shiny_project_GEF/

93. Indicator 3.1.1.2 (in pink), which strictly should not be an output but rather an outcome, is important since measuring the level of awareness among public officials has the potential to provide information on progress towards intermediate results. However, the instrument developed to do so did not include an interpretation of the results, thereby making it difficult to use the index to draw conclusions about what it is expected to measure.

94. In the case of component 3, the output that the evaluation considers most important for the achievement of the intermediate result described in the following finding is the design and implementation of interinstitutional communication and coordination strategies for advocacy.

Finding 9. Mexican public institutions have strengthened their capacity to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.

95. Public policies that discourage traditional agricultural practices and poor interinstitutional coordination and communication are important barriers to be overcome on the way to ensuring the conservation of agrobiodiversity in Mexico. This was identified in the design of the project, which incorporated a component specifically aimed at achieving this purpose. The two strategies used (interinstitutional communication and coordination) were both aimed at facilitating participation in interinstitutional groups to influence laws and public policy instruments so that they incorporate criteria to promote the conservation of agrobiodiversity in the country.

96. The project had an effective impact on five sectoral programmes: National Forestry Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, 2021); Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2019); Sectoral Well-being Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Well-Being, 2020a); Environment and Natural Resources Sector Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, 2020); and the Health Programme 2020–2024 (Secretariat of Health, 2020); and three budgets: Rural Supply Programme (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2021b); Sowing Life Programme (Secretariat of Well-Being, 2020b); and Production for Well-being (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2022).

97. Of the programmes mentioned, the most important in terms of the synergies achieved, its scope and capacity to catalyse changes, is the Production for Well-being programme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (in 2022 it benefited 45 000 small-scale producers). The project not only promoted the inclusion of agroecological and conservation criteria in the development of the programme, but it also achieved the incorporation of agrobiodiversity in the technical support strategy (training programme) aimed at monitoring field schools at the national level.

98. Additionally, the project participated in interinstitutional discussion roundtables, including with the Interinstitutional Group on Health, Food, the Environment and Competitiveness, which aims to create an institutional framework to promote the development of transversal initiatives to promote a fair, healthy, sustainable and competitive agrifood system.

99. The "National Strategy for Healthy, Fair and Sustainable Eating" is in the final phase of review, and the "Food Guides for the Mexican population" and the "Healthy Regional Food Baskets" have already been published. These are key instruments for the purpose of the project since they incorporate the importance of including local agrobiodiversity products in diets, which represents an opportunity to promote the consumption, management and conservation of these products.

Component 4. Valuation of agrobiodiversity and linking products to markets

100. The project developed a strategy for the promotion and marketing of products from agrobiodiversity (IOV 4.1.1) and exceeded the accessibility index by 77 points, or 136 percent. This index consists of the sum of the performance of different activities that are also reported as indicators of Output 4.1.2 (marked in pink in Table 10).

101. The mid-term review reported delays in the execution of Outcome 4.1. However, at the time of the closing of the evaluation, this situation had changed. During the previous year, the technical execution of activities accelerated and, as a result, all the goals were achieved (Table 10). Even so, the delays had consequences: some beneficiary key informants that had obtained the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification (collective certification in Indicator 4.1.3.1) in the first or second phase[7] stated that they were satisfied with the results, but they also expressed some concerns. On the verge of project closure, even though the producers viewed the certification as providing recognition and added value to their production, not all have been able to use it, which has prevented the verification of its receptivity in markets. A similar situation occurred with the participatory guarantee systems, the gastronomy app and the websites to promote the commercialization of products from agrobiodiversity (in blue in Table 10), which were not developed until the end of 2022 and even as late as the second quarter of 2023.

[7] The process to obtain the certification was developed in two phases: the first, led directly by the consultant company, benefited 12 enterprises; while the second, carried out by the project regional coordination team, benefited 20 enterprises.

Table 10. Achievement of indicators of Outcome 4.1

Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
4.1.1	Strategy on promotional and marketing campaigns for agrobiodiversity products designed and implemented	Strategy implemented	Yes	100%
4.1.2	Access to local and regional markets for agrobiodiversity products (…)	58	52	90%
Outputs indicators				
4.1.1.1	No. of market studies	6	6	100%
4.1.1.2	No. of agrobiodiversity valorization and marketing campaigns	6	11	183%
4.1.1.3	No. of social communication and promotion materials on the value of agrobiodiversity (…)	Not specified	217	-
4.1.1.4	No. of consumer surveys on agrobiodiversity products	15	32	213%
4.1.2.1	No. of stores and marketing stands in short supply chains	12	31	250%
4.1.2.2	No. of agrobiodiversity fairs	20	35	205%
4.1.2.3	No. of gastronomic fairs or meetings between traditional cooks and chefs	6	43	583%
4.1.2.4	No. of agreements with a third party to market products of Biodiversity-Friendly Practices in Traditional Agroecosystems (ABAT, by its Spanish acronym) (…)	6	11	167%
4.1.2.5	No. of companies formed	8	15	188%
4.1.3.1	Registration of a collective trademark	A collective trademark registered	A collective trademark registered	100%
4.1.3.2	No. of participatory guarantee systems	4	4	100%
4.1.3.3	No. of webpages for the promotion and marketing of products	6	22	367%
4.1.3.4	Agrobiodiversity gastronomy app	App functioning	App functioning	100%

Source: GEF, FAO and CONABIO. *Mexican Agrobiodiversity Project Monitoring and Evaluation System*. https://conabio.shinyapps.io/shiny_project_GEF/

102. The outputs generated by this component that have been developed and tested, specifically the development of methodologies and initiatives to promote consumption and economic valuation, have the potential to overcome barriers and generate intermediate results that would contribute to ensure the conservation of biodiversity.

Finding 10. The outputs developed by this component have the potential to contribute to the improvement of the livelihoods of farmers and Indigenous Peoples who produce agrobiodiversity products in the medium-term. However, they do not constitute the achievement of intermediate results attributable to the project.

103. Even though the project developed dissemination and education campaigns aimed at consumers, as well as fostering relationships between family farmers and local and regional markets, and creating a market incentive aimed at promoting the conservation of agroecosystems, the evaluation did not find evidence that these achievements helped to overcome the obstacles they were designed to address or that they led to an increase in the consumption of local products and a greater economic valuation of agrobiodiversity.

104. Although the project activities aimed at improving access of products from agrobiodiversity to markets – such as farmers' markets, marketing stands, agreements with third parties and others – were successful, with beneficiaries indicating that many of their products were sold in these spaces, such activities were specific and, over time, are not likely to represent a sustained improvement in demand or the income of the participating farmers and Indigenous Peoples.

105. A similar situation occurred with the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification, which is a well-valued incentive in terms of the methodology designed to obtain it and because the certification itself provides recognition to farmers and Indigenous families, which was non-existent before the project, and highlights the importance of productive processes carried out through sustainable practices. However, the number of producers that obtained the certification (32), and the short time that has elapsed, makes it difficult to observe tangible results and generalize regarding their contribution to overcoming the obstacles previously mentioned.

106. Although the benefits generated by these outputs can be seen as anecdotal, analysing them as part of a pilot project is a more appropriate way of interpreting them for the purposes of this evaluation. Extracting the lessons learned from these outputs, as well as institutionalizing the mechanisms and products generated, providing continued support to the local enterprises and expanding the coverage of beneficiaries would increase their potential contribution to the expected effects and impacts of the project.

3.4.3 Progress towards impact

Finding 11. Enabling environments were generated and individual, collective and institutional capacities were strengthened to promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.

107. The main driver of the results chain that triggered the project – explained in detail in Table 11 – was the strengthening of capacities in the three dimensions established by the FAO Office of Evaluation Capacity Development Assessment Framework, that is: individual, institutional and environmental. Individual capacities were developed within the framework of the training provided to farmers and Indigenous Peoples, as well as indirectly to public officials who are part of the Production for Well-being programme. Institutional strengthening took place at the state level through the construction of the SIAgroBD, and at the community level through the establishment of germplasm banks, both with organizational and administrative structures capable of sustaining their infrastructure over time. Meanwhile, the generation of enabling environments was also achieved thanks to: i) the creation of spaces for the exchange of knowledge and experiences between various actors and the complementary relationships that the project established with multiple institutions that led to the generation and expansion of

collaboration networks; and ii) the development of public policy instruments and the strengthening of interinstitutional spaces in which the project actively participated.

3.4.4 Results chain generated by the project

108. The development of outputs facilitated progress in overcoming some barriers, and this progress was analysed by the evaluation through the project's intermediate results, which were responsible for the generation of enabling environments and the strengthening of individual, collective, community and institutional capabilities that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity.

109. The effect achieved is a step towards addressing the challenge of guaranteeing the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including the knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from their use (project impact objective).

110. To continue the progress towards this impact, it will be necessary to strengthen the project's contribution. This exercise – outside the scope of action of the project – should be oriented towards the materialization of intermediate states between the achieved effect and the desired impact, which in turn will be partly conditioned by the confirmation of certain assumptions (details in Table 11).

Table 11. Reconstruction of the results chain of the project

Barriers to be overcome	Products developed	Intermediate results achieved
Lack of systematized scientific information and reliable databases	Generation and consolidation of data in an information system on agrobiodiversity (SIAgroBD)	Increased and improved availability and accessibility of knowledge about Mexican agrobiodiversity
Gradual abandonment of traditional agrobiodiversity management practices Expansion of intensive, large-scale monoculture agriculture puts traditional agroecosystems under pressure	Capacity development programme in the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity Generation, strengthening and expansion of exchange and collaboration networks Provision of infrastructure for community seed conservation	The capacities of Indigenous Peoples and farmers to protect, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity were strengthened
Public policies that discourage traditional agricultural practices Little coordination and interinstitutional communication	Design and implementation of communication and interinstitutional coordination strategies for impact on public policies	The capacities of Mexican public institutions to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity were increased
Decrease in the consumption of products from agrobiodiversity Low economic valuation of agrobiodiversity	Methodologies and initiatives to promote consumption and economic valuation of agrobiodiversity products developed and tested	No intermediate results are observed regarding increased consumption and economic valuation of agrobiodiversity products attributable to the project

Barriers to be overcome	Products developed	Intermediate results achieved
Direct effect of the project		
Enabling environments were generated and individual, collective, community and institutional capacities were strengthened that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity		
Intermediate states		
Evidence of the multidimensional benefits of the practices promoted by the project is generated, systematized and shared		Interinstitutional dialogue spaces generate public policy proposals that promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity
Processes and products developed by the project are institutionalized in the policy framework of the Mexican State		Exchange and collaboration networks are supported so that they continue operating and expanding
The number of farmers and Indigenous Peoples who receive training and infrastructure to improve the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity is expanding thanks to the implementation of public programmes		Small-scale producers, guardians and users of agrobiodiversity improve their livelihoods as a result of the commercialization of products from agrobiodiversity
Assumptions		
CONABIO, FAO and other stakeholders continue to participate in interinstitutional spaces		The SIAgroBD is used by officials, authorities and producers to make evidence-based decisions
Small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples and farmers implement and replicate the agrobiodiversity management and use practices learned		In the event of possible changes in government, the interest and political will to promote the conservation of agrobiodiversity is maintained
The eventual rotation of state officials does not substantially affect the project's approach		Communities, producers and consumers incorporate products from agrobiodiversity into their diet
Impact		
The guaranteed conservation and sustainable use of globally significant agrobiodiversity, including knowledge and associated cultural methods within the agroecosystems present in Mexico and considering fair and equitable benefits from its use		

Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

3.5 Communication and knowledge management

Finding 12. Communication materials have contributed to disseminating the activities and products of the project, as well as to raising awareness and putting the conservation of agrobiodiversity on the public agenda.

111. Communication is one of the most highly valued aspects of the project. Designing and implementing a strategy with a communications specialist ensured good dissemination of the activities and content generated by the project. A total of 80 communication products were developed, including podcasts, manuals, video guides and posters, among others, which were disseminated through social networks, the CONABIO website, and in physical format. These actions are understood as cross-cutting project activities, which provided communication support to its four components, while increasing access to information for beneficiaries and increasing the likelihood of achieving the expected results. Much of the communication material generated by the project and the knowledge products developed, such as research, scientific publications and consolidation of databases, are

available on the SIAgroBD information platform. This represents progress in improving the availability of and access to information on Mexican agrobiodiversity.

112. A separate point is the communications support and materials that were provided to the local enterprises within the framework of the execution of component 4. Under the responsibility of an external consultant, the communications campaign described in the project reports, and confirmed by the Evaluation Team, consisted of the design and development of the logo of the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification, as well as banners, flyers and posters for each enterprise. However, although these materials were well received by beneficiaries since they increased the visibility of their products, the evaluation considered that they are insufficient to generate significant changes in consumer behaviour.

113. The high volume of knowledge that the project generated can be used to support the consolidation of intermediate states and confirm the assumptions that are necessary to move towards the desired impact. However, in order to realize the potential represented by this knowledge, it will be necessary to actively manage it following the project's closure.

3.6 Efficiency

Finding 13. The financial resources provided by the GEF (USD 5.6 million) were sufficient to execute the activities and achieve the products described in the project document.

114. Thanks to the GEF resources, the project was able to form a national and regional execution team of appropriate size and high technical quality, as well as hiring specialized external services that delivered well-made products (such as academic research, the design and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system and the development of the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification). It also allowed the project to reach agreements with institutions that generated inputs and developed activities that contributed significantly to the achievement of the results (for example with the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the Production for Well-being programme and civil society organizations specialized in agricultural extension with a presence in the project territories, among others).

Finding 14. The decentralized intervention design and execution arrangements, under the operational partners implementation modality (OPIM) modality, were factors that promoted project efficiency.

115. The project's intervention strategy was implemented in a decentralized manner. A national structure coordinated and supported regional teams that, among other functions, provided support for the technical execution of activities carried out by institutions that acted as co-executing partners. In Michoacán and Chihuahua, the model was different since the agreements were established with executing entities responsible for all the actions in the territories. These institutions, with some adaptations, replicated the design used by the project in other states.

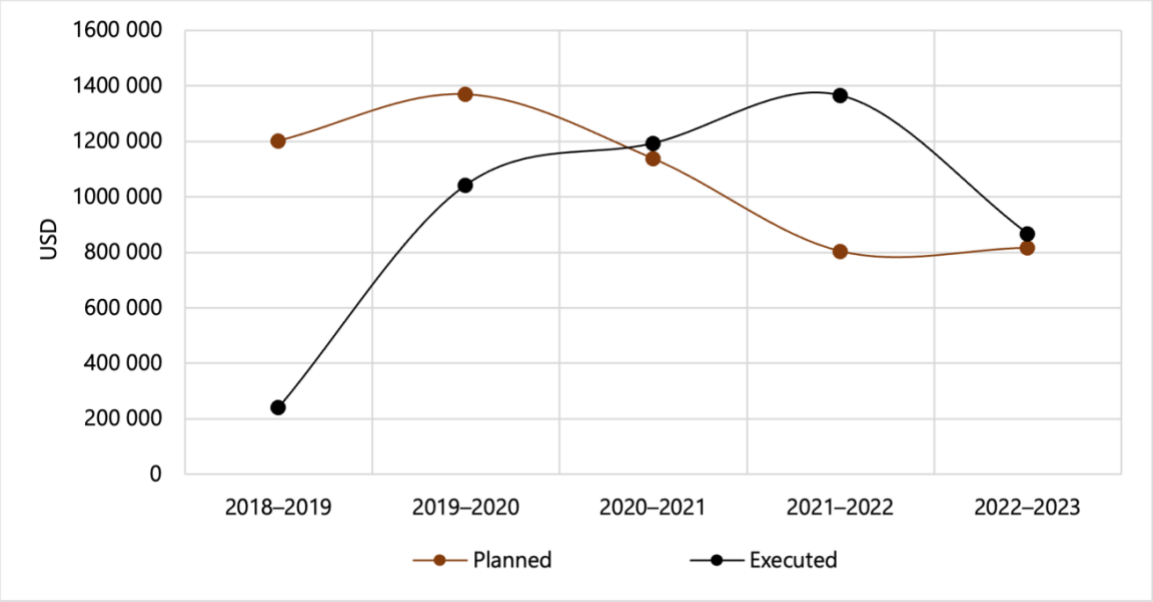
116. The execution arrangement under the OPIM modality facilitated the establishment of this decentralized design. The experience, knowledge, trajectory and prestige of CONABIO, as well as the pre-existing organizational structure, made it possible to quickly develop and strengthen agreements with various institutions to support the implementation of the

project. The connections established at the regional and local levels optimized the implementation period in the territories, while maximizing efficiency in the use of time and human resources available to execute the project. In addition, thanks to the presence of local co-executing actors that were able to maintain communications with producers, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of field activities was partially mitigated.

117. Regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as shown in the following figures, the pace of spending during the period of August 2020–July 2021 did not suffer a significant slowdown. On the contrary, it maintained the growth trend experienced since the second year of implementation (August 2019–July 2020), reaching the level originally planned.

118. This finding is also valid for component 2 separately. Although its activities required a face-to-face relationship with beneficiaries, the pandemic did not considerably affect its execution. In fact, it was the component that showed the most spending during 2020, which coincides with the number of activities implemented during that year (Figures 7 and 8).[8]

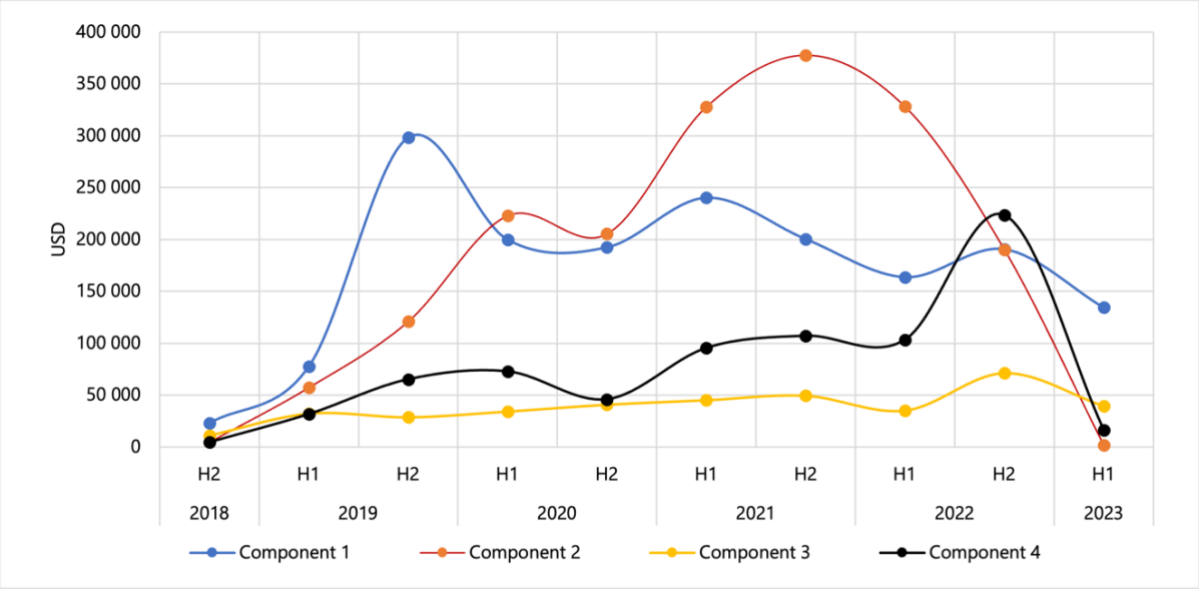
Figure 7. Planned expenditure vs executed expenditure per project year (August–July period)



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

[8] The evaluation considered April 2023 as the cut-off date to analyse the project's spending rate.

Figure 8. Expenditure executed per calendar year (January–December period)



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

Finding 15. The time invested in the execution of component 4 was insufficient, which negatively affected the obtaining of observable intermediate results during the project implementation period.

119. Of the total budget for component 4, 50 percent was materialized during 2022 and a large part of this during the second half of that year (Figure 7). The acceleration in the pace of spending coincides with the implementation of activities aimed at providing awareness-raising materials and strengthening the process of obtaining and using the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification.[9] The fact that these products were developed near the end of the project implementation period affected the ability to monitor the market reaction to the certification or the receptivity of consumers to the materials provided, which made it impossible to identify intermediate results within the time frame of the project.

Finding 16. The materialized and documented co-financing was higher than the amount committed, which facilitated the obtaining of good quality products and contributed to efficiency in achieving the project results.

120. Co-financing was key to the development of products and the achievement of results. In this regard, the amount of co-financing initially committed (USD 36 185 188) was exceeded by 30 percent, reaching a total of USD 47 792 234 (Appendix 5 Co-financing table).

121. The most notable contributions were in-kind, including specialized personnel from the different institutions who were actively involved in improving the quality of the products

[9] During 2022, the consulting company in charge of the activities linked to the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification executed 37 percent of the total budget, reaching 87 percent of the total contract. At the close of the evaluation (in July 2023), the financial execution of the remaining 13 percent has been reported but is not included in the figure.

obtained. An example is the CONABIO officials, including specialists in nutrition, computer science, systems and communications, among others, who were actively involved in the interinstitutional roundtables, the construction of SIAgroBD, the design of the monitoring and evaluation system, and the dietary guidelines, among other project outputs.

122. In addition to the co-financing reported as materialized at closing, the project leveraged other resources that are not necessarily documented, but that reduced implementation costs. The research initiatives of component 1, the co-execution work of regional and local partners within the framework of component 2 and other initiatives generated contributions in human and financial resources and infrastructure that facilitated the technical execution of project activities.

3.7 Implementation and execution

Finding 17. In general, FAO carried out the basic functions and fulfilled the standards required by GEF for implementing agencies.

123. According to the GEF Guidelines on the Project and Programme Cycle Policy (GEF, 2020), the functions of the implementing agency consist of managing and/or leading the identification of the project, the preparation of the concept on which it will be based, the development of the project document, the approval and initiation of the project, risk management and mitigation, supervision of execution, carrying out mid-term and terminal evaluations, and institutional functions of providing technical assistance to the executing agency and other stakeholders.

124. The functions linked to the design stage were carried out in accordance with the provisions of the GEF policy: FAO assisted the proposing organization to carry out the actions that allowed it to move from identification to approval and start of the project. As mentioned in section 1.2.1, the results matrix has some weaknesses. Given that the implementing agency is responsible for ensuring its quality, it would have been expected that, during the development and subsequent review process, FAO should have identified these inadequacies and proposed measures to correct them.

125. Risk assessments, identification and management were satisfactorily managed by FAO. Supervision, which involves ensuring the technical and financial execution of the project, was also carried out in accordance with the established agreements. The key stakeholders agreed that FAO's approach was rigorous in this area and that its demands, although at times at the limit of the response capacity of the project team, maximized the quality of monitoring and technical reports and also contributed to ensuring order, transparency and the appropriate use of financial resources.

126. The creation of a monitoring committee constitutes a good monitoring practice identified by the Evaluation Team. Depending on the availability of the members, the project coordination team met monthly or bimonthly with the FAO management team, creating a space to report on progress and possible setbacks, resolve doubts and exchange ideas regarding how to improve execution.

127. Although the technical visits by FAO specialists and an exchange with other agrobiodiversity projects in the region were important, the technical assistance and

capacity development provided by FAO were not optimal. FAO's knowledge transfer potential, based on its toolbox, knowledge and experiences accumulated at the global level, was not fully exploited.

Finding 18. CONABIO satisfactorily carried out the responsibilities described by GEF for executing entities.

128. In line with GEF guidelines, CONABIO adequately managed and administered the day-to-day activities of the project. The commission provided quality and timely information to FAO on technical and budgetary progress, and its financial accounts were transparent, orderly and accessible. The acquisition of goods and the contracting of services were carried out without major setbacks, and the development of activities and products was in accordance with the project document.

129. The high quality of the execution was not surprising. CONABIO is a solid institution, recognized internationally and nationally, with robust administrative processes, highly qualified officials and a wide network of collaborators who stand out in their respective professional and academic fields.

130. These qualities, as mentioned in the previous sections, contributed not only to satisfactorily carrying out the project execution functions, but were also used to support the establishment of collaboration networks, the implementation of actions in the intervention territories, the leveraging of additional co-financing, the hiring of consultants with recognized experience, and the quality assurance of the products, among other aspects that contributed to the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

131. Finally, it should be noted that FAO's deficiencies regarding the transfer of capacities are also understood as the consequence of a relationship that must be two-way, since a greater willingness and proactivity on the part of CONABIO and the project team to request and receive technical assistance would have facilitated the undertaking of actions aimed at materializing this function.

3.8 Stakeholder engagement

Finding 19. Project partners, especially at the regional level, participated in project activities, accessed information in a timely manner and maintained a fluid dialogue with other stakeholders.

132. The steering committee, the project's governance body at the national level, played a mainly informative and political supporting role. Although in general terms the body fulfilled its mission, some of its members stated that its meetings should have been more frequent and that their advisory functions on strategic issues were rather limited. This situation differed from the case of the regional committees, which are decentralized governance bodies that were used to coordinate interests and actions in the context of the implementation of the project. A key aspect was the integration of groups of beneficiaries in some of the regional committees (Chiapas, Mexico City, Oaxaca and Yucatán), thereby ensuring that their interests are represented in the decisions made by these bodies.

133. Although this aspect is discussed in depth in sections 3.10.2 on Indigenous Peoples and 3.10.3 on environmental and social safeguards, it is important to highlight the processes

of consultation, participation and integration of local populations in the definition and execution of the project's territorial strategies.

134. Even though the level of participation differed in each space, it is noted that, in line with the GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement (GEF, 2017a), stakeholders were able to freely express their points of view, without interference, coercion, discrimination or intimidation. In addition, they were informed about the participating institutions and the different activities developed, with timely access to the outputs and information generated by the project.

3.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Finding 20. A high-quality monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system was designed and implemented, which was adapted to the monitoring and reporting needs of the project.

135. The process of monitoring – understood as a standardized and periodic process of data collection and analysis to provide managers and stakeholders with information on progress in achieving project activities, outputs, outcomes and objectives (GEF, 2019a) – was carried out in a highly satisfactory manner by the project team. The criteria used by the Evaluation Team to reach this conclusion included the high quality of the system designed and implemented, its ability to systematize data with adequate levels of disaggregation, its access to timely and quality information, its usefulness for making timely and informed decisions and the technological innovations adopted.

136. The project monitoring system was made up of four components: planning instruments; tools for monitoring activities and beneficiaries; instruments for monitoring output and outcome indicators; and a platform for entry, storage, systematization and visualization of the information obtained from these instruments and from the verification sources associated with the technical execution of activities.

137. For this structure to function properly, capacities were developed in the project team in terms of understanding each component of the M&E system, its operation and the system's input mechanisms. In addition, an information recording manual was prepared and disseminated and, to ensure the homogeneous interpretation of results, concept notes for the indicators of the project results matrix were developed. The use of new technologies also made a difference, such as the KoboToolbox software[10] for data capture and collection and the R Shiny package for the visualization of the information,[11] which made it possible to access verification sources online and have clear and detailed information on the progress of outcome and output indicators disaggregated by region, thereby facilitating monitoring and decision-making.

138. Although the design and implementation of the system shows high quality standards, the deficiencies in the formulation of indicators negatively impacted the usefulness of the reported information for monitoring the effects of the project (not the products obtained). Finally, it is important to mention that the evaluation determined that the project's M&E system deserves to be shared with other projects. However, in the case of

[10] This is a tool for data collection that facilitates the application of questionnaires in challenging contexts.

[11] Shiny is an R package for building interactive web dashboards.

the eventual replication of the system in other locations, its complementarity and/or interoperability with FAO monitoring systems should be considered in order to maximize the benefits derived from its use.

3.10 Cross-cutting concerns

3.10.1 Gender

Finding 21. Although gender considerations were included during the execution of the project, thanks to the sensitivity, experience and capabilities of the professionals who carried out the activities in the field, this inclusion was not systematic.

139. The normative documents on gender valid at the time of formulation, initiation and much of the execution period of the project are the FAO Policy on Gender Equality (FAO, 2013)[12] and the GEF Policy on Gender Equality (GEF, 2017b).[13] Both instruments are aligned in the objectives they pursue, but the GEF policy is more precise in the description of mechanisms and procedures, providing concrete guidance to achieve the effective incorporation of the gender perspective during the management of the cycle of the projects it finances. For this reason, this policy was used as the main reference to evaluate the design, execution and results of the project.

140. In the design phase, the GEF establishes three obligations: i) the carrying out of a gender analysis, which identifies and describes impacts and risks differentiated by gender and opportunities to address the gaps found; ii) the development of an action plan to respond to the inequalities and opportunities identified; and iii) the inclusion of gender actions and indicators in the project results framework.

141. During the design of the project, the first two obligations were not considered, although the project document addressed the gender issue generally by describing the importance of considering this aspect during the execution of the initiative. For example, in the description of Output 2.1.1, the importance of moving towards gender equality is highlighted as follows: "Special efforts will be made to ensure that local technicians are young and, preferably, women to promote gender equality. These same principles will be applied for Outputs 2.1.2 and 2.1.3". Similarly, in the communication and visibility section, the project document indicates that the dissemination materials will adopt a gender and culturally sensitive perspective. However, this approach was insufficient for evaluation since it does not provide diagnostic information, nor does it contemplate the development of a plan aimed at reducing inequalities present in the intervention territory. The third obligation was covered by the project, since some participation indicators were formulated that established goals disaggregated by sex. However, the previous shortcomings had a negative impact on the quality of these indicators as they only measure the proportion of women who benefited from the actions and not the reductions in the gaps that could have been identified before the start of the project.

[12] In 2019, FAO prepared the FAO Regional Gender Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean 2019–2023 (FAO, 2019b), and in 2020 it developed an update of the FAO Gender Equality Policy for the period 2020–2030 (FAO, 2021b).

[13] The GEF Policy on Gender Equality is currently in force.

142. Although the design deficiencies identified had an impact on the possibility of budgeting, planning and systematically incorporating the gender approach, this did not prevent some achievements from being obtained and guaranteeing the minimum standards established in the GEF policy for the execution phase. The latest project implementation report highlights that, in the project team, "there are several women, both in the project coordination unit and in the execution regions, who have experience, training or show interest in gender equality issues". This condition helped to ensure a better performance of the inclusion of this perspective in the project execution. In this regard, as stated in the GEF Policy on Gender Equality (GEF, 2017b), it was ensured that the activities did not exacerbate gender inequalities, while equal opportunities were always promoted, efforts were made to ensure that the project benefited both women and men, and sex-disaggregated data and gender information were included in the monitoring reports.

143. The materialization of these standards in the execution was not coincidental. Considering the key role of women in family nutrition, seed conservation and sales of products from agrobiodiversity, the project took the necessary measures to ensure their inclusion in the training and exchange spaces developed. Among other actions, the following stand out: project activities and spaces exclusively for women; activities that considered hours of availability and family context to allow the participation of women, and efforts to form partnerships with organizations that had experience in promoting gender equality. These measures had positive results, such as: 41 percent of beneficiaries of the seed conservation and exchange initiatives were women; 47 percent of producers included in milpa and solar (small gardens normally managed by women) diversification projects were women; and 60 percent of participants in the capacity-building processes for marketing were women. These numbers show that the project came close to achieving equal participation and reaching the goals set out in its formulation.

3.10.2 Indigenous Peoples

Finding 22. The project respected the rights of Indigenous Peoples and promoted the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the intervention territories.

144. In accordance with the guidelines of FAO, GEF and the regulatory provisions of the Mexican State for the execution of initiatives that may affect Indigenous communities, the project implemented mechanisms and procedures to ensure the effective participation of people and communities belonging to the different Indigenous Peoples present in the intervention territories. In line with these guidelines, strategies were implemented to ensure the inclusion of these groups throughout the project cycle. The following are some measures taken by the project:

i. Implementation of 56 processes of free, prior and informed consent – two communities in Chiapas refused to work with the project.

ii. Design and implementation of training materials and methodologies taking into account the cultural particularities of the participating Indigenous communities.

iii. Preparation and dissemination of materials in Indigenous languages such as Nahuatl, Mixtec, Rarámuri and Purépecha.

iv. Formation of operational teams capable of communicating in local Indigenous languages.

145. These actions, which were ratified and highly appreciated by the key beneficiaries consulted, satisfy the criteria and indicators proposed by the Evaluation Team to assess the respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the project design, as well as their participation in decision-making and project implementation.

3.10.3 Environmental and social safeguards

Finding 23. In accordance with the GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards and the moderate risk rating of the project, the necessary measures were taken to avoid generating negative effects on the environment and local communities.

146. In line with the updated 2018 GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF, 2018) and the medium risk classification indicated in the project document and maintained during project execution, the executing and implementing agencies respected and followed the guidelines established in the nine standards described in the GEF policy.

147. In line with the above, the safeguards included: identifying, evaluating and addressing possible environmental and social risks; ensuring that the project would not generate harmful effects in the habitats to be intervened in and that it would not contravene international treaties; taking into account the importance of biological diversity for local communities and the need for its conservation; guaranteeing the respect and protection of cultural heritage; and taking into account the opinions of Indigenous communities and women and promoting their participation, among others. These safeguards made it possible to anticipate possible negative impacts of the project, thereby minimizing the possible adverse effects on the people and environment of the territories where the intervention was carried out.

3.10.4 Human rights

Finding 24. During implementation, the project respected the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights of the beneficiary groups.

148. As mentioned in the previous findings, the project acted in line with human rights principles. It promoted the participation and inclusion of historically excluded groups (women and Indigenous Peoples) and guaranteed that its actions would respect differences and would not reinforce patterns of discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, colour, disability, religion or language.

3.10.5 Sustainability

Finding 25. The processes promoted by the project, and the products and effects achieved, have a good possibility of being maintained after project closure.

149. The evaluation identified positive signals for the sustainability of the project. Some processes, products and effects have raised interest in maintaining and incorporating them in Mexican public institutions. In addition, there are indications of autonomous replication of the promoted practices by the beneficiaries, and a favourable political context exists in the country to achieve the aims of the project.

150. CONABIO, as part of its functions and institutional mission, will continue to generate information and knowledge for the SIAgroBD, which in turn will be linked to the National Biodiversity Information System that depends on the same institution.

151. Also, together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, CONABIO has signed a cooperation agreement for USD 1.5 million with the French Development Agency to implement a project with the main objective of "promoting the agroecological transition and agrobiodiversity in family farming in Mexico". This initiative will allow the replication, together with the Production for Well-being programme (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2022), of part of the project's experience in other territories of the country.

152. Government entities have expressed interest in institutionalizing the project's methodology, thereby ensuring its continuity and expanding the coverage of the "Biodiversity-friendly knowledge and flavours" certification developed within the framework of component 4. This would help to maximize the benefits of this project output and promote the achievement of intermediate results related to a greater appreciation of agrobiodiversity and the consequent improvement in the livelihoods of small-scale producers.

153. The Interinstitutional Group on Health, Food, the Environment and Competitiveness will continue to operate, at least during the current administration. The ability of the group to influence the approval of the Food Law that is currently before Congress, achieve the institutionalization of the National Food Strategy (Government of Mexico, 2020) and promote the linkage between the Regional Healthy Food Baskets (Mexican Biodiversity, 2023) and the Food Guides for the Mexican population (Government of Mexico, 2023a) makes this an important body for the sustainability of the project's effects and its progress towards impact.

154. At the community level, the high valuation of the project's seed banks, the good results in the farms and the reduction in production costs have generated adherence to the promoted practices by the beneficiaries, who are already replicating what they have learned and taking advantage of the capacities developed thanks to the project.

155. Furthermore, the networks generated by the project will continue to operate. The civil society organizations, state agencies and private entities that partnered with the project and benefited from the transfer of knowledge and skills, will continue their work in the territories, thereby ensuring, albeit with less intensity, the continuity of the technical support provided to beneficiaries.

156. The signs of sustainability previously mentioned are supported by a favourable political and institutional context. However, although this enabling environment increases the likelihood of maintaining the processes, results and effects of the project in the future, its potential variability represents a risk. In this regard, considering measures to mitigate the risks inherent to changes in the institutional context is also part of ensuring sustainability.

157. The signs of institutional, community and financial sustainability observed are related to the OPIM implementation modality. The direct execution of the project by a state entity led to a more robust integration of the individual and institutional capacities developed, thereby ensuring continuity in the support provided to producers through existing government programmes, as well as contributing to the institutionalization of the learning and knowledge generated.

4. Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

4.1.1 Conclusion 1. Outcomes

158. The high strategic relevance achieved ensured the interest of stakeholders in the project, thereby facilitating the establishment of collaborative networks, adherence to its processes and ownership of the results obtained.

159. The alignment of the project with global, national and local priorities regarding the conservation of agrobiodiversity made it possible to establish complementary relationships with institutions and processes that, at different territorial scales of action, shared similar objectives. These connections generated a scenario that facilitated the effective implementation of the project in the intervention territories through a programmatic approach that was well received by stakeholders.

160. The relevance and coherence of the project laid the foundations for its effective technical execution: thanks to the project, the availability and accessibility of knowledge has increased; the Indigenous and farmer beneficiaries are better prepared to protect, use and sustainably manage agrobiodiversity; and the capacity of Mexican public institutions to promote the use, management and conservation of agrobiodiversity has improved. These intermediate results were identified by the Evaluation Team as clear contributions to the project's expected long-term impact.

161. The project's execution could have been more effective if the development of methodologies and initiatives to promote consumption and economic valuation of agrobiodiversity products had generated intermediate results. However, given their good quality and positive reception in markets, the possibility exists that these products will generate the expected effects in the future.

162. The good performance of the project in the areas previously discussed (relevance, coherence and effectiveness) bodes well for the sustainability of its effects. There are indications that at least some of the effects achieved will be maintained once the project financing ends, including: the initiatives linked to the project will continue to operate in the territories and the country; there is an interest in maintaining and incorporating some key products and processes in Mexican public institutions; there are examples of autonomous replication of promoted practices by beneficiaries; and there is a favourable political context.

4.1.2 Conclusion 2. Conditioning factors of results, including moderators and multipliers

163. The technical execution of the project, and the results obtained, are a result of the management structure established, the programmatic support measures promoted, the operational and strategic decisions made, and the processes developed by the executing and implementing agencies.

164. Some of these actions acted as a multiplier of effectiveness and as a factor of efficiency and sustainability, while others, either by omission or due to deficiencies in their

implementation, limited the potential scope of the project. Examples of the former include: the constitution of a technically and numerically balanced team; the decentralized intervention model based on collaborative networks; a high level of co-financing; the development of a quality monitoring and evaluation system; the implementation of a communications strategy at the service of the desired results, and the materialization of consultation and participation processes with all stakeholders, particularly with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

165. As for the factors that limited the project's performance, these included: the failure to carry out a gender analysis and develop a gender-responsive strategy; a logical framework design that limited the possibilities of measuring and collecting evidence to support the project's intended effects, and the delays in the execution of component 4.

166. The exercise of the responsibilities and roles of the executing and implementing agencies, and the relationship established between the two, helps to explain the project's successes, deficiencies and omissions. In this regard, the evaluation identified an opportunity to review their respective missions, extract lessons learned and share them to improve future interventions in Mexico and other countries in the region.

4.1.3 Conclusion 3. Overall assessment of the project

167. The evaluation determined that the project performed satisfactorily. In general terms, it was relevant, coherent, efficient and effective. As a result of its execution, it generated enabling environments and strengthened individual and institutional capacities that promoted the revalorization of the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity, thereby making progress towards the overall environmental objective of the project.

168. Paying special attention to the intermediate results and assumptions, and proactively promoting actions to materialize them, will be essential to consolidate the progress made and continue on the pathway of change towards the intended long-term impact.

169. In addition to the outputs, outcomes and effects, the project generated important lessons learned; lessons that, if properly integrated and managed, can be used to ensure the continuity and replicability of the project, as well as to improve the design processes, technical assistance and reporting of future initiatives that are led and/or supported by FAO and CONABIO.

4.2 Lessons learned

170. The evaluation has been able to highlight the following lessons learned:

Lesson learned 1. The promotion of *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity is a process inseparable from the valuation and preservation of the cultural practices of the communities and farmers who protect, use and benefit from it.

Lesson learned 2. The consultation processes at the local level, and the multistakeholder dialogues in which the project participated, made it possible to respond to the needs, priorities and interests of the local communities that were not contemplated in the project's original design but that were equally important.

Lesson learned 3. Programmatically linking the project with ongoing processes led by national, regional and local institutions made it possible to enhance the effectiveness of the project, improve its efficiency and increase the prospects of sustainability.

Lesson learned 4. For FAO to successfully carry out its capacity development functions, it is key to generate an attractive and relevant knowledge transfer proposal, agreed upon between the parties, and formalized as a plan at the beginning of the project, which is included in the related partnership agreements.

Lesson learned 5. A high-quality results matrix design (vertically and horizontally coherent and with correctly written narrative summaries of the components) is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the project and for the generation of evidence of its intended effects.

Lesson learned 6. Ensuring linkages with health, nutrition and food issues is one of the keys to the sustainability of projects that seek to protect agrobiodiversity.

Lesson learned 7. Community seed banks are a tool that promotes *in situ* conservation, while contributing to ensuring genetic diversity in the territories where they are implemented, promoting food security and sovereignty, and improving the capacity for climate change adaptation in the communities where they are developed.

Lesson learned 8. An intervention model based on specific strategies adapted to the diverse realities in the field was a successful response to the social, cultural and organizational diversity of the communities where the project was implemented.

Lesson learned 9. Conducting an *ex ante* gender gap analysis, developing a strategy to reduce this gap and designing gender-responsive results frameworks maximizes the possibilities of achieving transformative changes.

4.3 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. For CONABIO and FAO on the sustainability of the results: Establish a joint working group aimed at developing a strategy to ensure the institutionalization of the project's achievements and design a roadmap for the continuity of technical cooperation.

Recommendation 2. For FAO Mexico on the quality of project design: Strengthen the review mechanisms of the logical framework matrices, include in the design products that generate counterfactual evidence, and consider objective indicators aimed at measuring progress in achieving medium- and long-term changes (effects and impacts).

Recommendation 3. For CONABIO on the use of the potential of the information generated by the project: Design a plan for the active management of the knowledge generated by the project, differentiating actions by target audiences (decision-makers, producers, consumers, etc.) and the objectives pursued (political influence, improving supply and demand for outputs, and strengthening capacities of farmers and Indigenous Peoples, among other possible objectives).

Recommendation 4. For the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean knowledge management area on the management of knowledge obtained from agrobiodiversity conservation projects in Latin America: Establish a mechanism aimed at exchanging and systematizing knowledge, experiences and lessons learned from the GEF agrobiodiversity conservation projects implemented by FAO in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico and eventually other countries where this topic has been addressed.

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Appendix 1. People interviewed

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
Ake Uicab	Hermelinda	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Álvarez	Astrid	FAO Official, Operations Assistant	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	F
Ángeles Carreño	Graciela	Local partner, LAM Project	Local partner	Interview	Oaxaca	F
Ángeles Carreño	Edgar	Local partner, LAM Project	Local partner	Interview	Oaxaca	M
Aparicio Cenobio	Alfonso	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Aragón	Flavio	Local strategic partner (Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias [INIFAP])	Local partner	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Arriaga	Vicente	Director of the Mexican Agrobiodiversity Project	Project team	Interview	CDMX	M
Barrera	Iván	Monitoring consultant	Consultant	Interview	CDMX	M
Bautista	María del Carmen	Beneficiary producer of the CAATT	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Bello Martínez	Diana María	Student of the Agri-Food Process Engineering degree	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	F
Benítez	Felimón	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Benitez Paulin	Eduardo	FAO Official, Programme Assistant	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	M
Burgeff	Caroline	Information Component Coordinator	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Bye	Robert	Chihuahua Implementation Group	Project team	Interview	Chihuahua	M
Caamal Uicab	Ramona	Beneficiary producer of Tiholop	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Cab May	Francisco	Beneficiary producer of Xbox	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Canché Ku	Bernalda	Beneficiary producer of Chacsinkin	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Cantón	Arturo	Yucatan Field Operational Assistant	Project team	Interview	Yucatán	M
Canul Noh	Tomasa	Beneficiary producer of Xocén	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Canul Tamay	Yenni	Beneficiary producer of Yaxmah	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Castro	Delia	Administrative support of the Chihuahua Implementation Group	Project team	Interview	Chihuahua	F
Cen Uicab	María Esther	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Cenobio	Elia	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
Cevera Arce	Gabriela	Beneficiary producer of Mérida	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Chablé Matus	Humberto	Beneficiary producer of Chacsumun	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Chablé Tun	Argelia	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Chay Albornoz	Ponciano	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Covantes Torres	Liza	CDMX Team, Regional Coordination	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Cox Ake	Donata	Beneficiary producer of Tiholop	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Cox Ojeda	Melquiades	Beneficiary producer of Tiholop	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Cruz	Mervin	Tekio Consulting, Market Linkage Component	Consultant	Interview	CDMX	M
Cruz Bacilio	Antonio	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Cruz Birrichaga	Jannet	Chinampera producer and cook San Gregorio Atlapulco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	F
Cruz Pedro	Iris Janeth	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Cruz Vicente	Jorge	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Diaz	Natividad	Production for well-being	Steering committee	Interview	CDMX	F
Díaz Dehesa	Jazmín	CDMX Team, Administrative Assistant	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Díaz Trejo	Lizbeth Ixchel	National Centre for Preventive Programmes and Disease Control (CENAPRESE)	Partner institution	Interview	CDMX	F
Domínguez Lazo	Matías	Local partner, LAM Project	Local partner	Interview	Oaxaca	M
Ek Chi	Martina	Beneficiary producer of Yaxmah	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Ek Cuvol	María Clara	Beneficiary producer of Huechen Balam	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Esteva de la Barrera	Luisa Daniela	Project communication strategy specialist	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Fernández Gonzales	Eloy	Mixteca Sustainable Project A. C.	Local partner	Interview	Oaxaca	M
García	Israel	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
García Suárez	Angel	Producer in San Juan Tepenahuac	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	M
Godoy Rojas	Hervin	Producer from the Cerril area of Xochimilco, San Luis Tlaxialtemalco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Gómez-Fuentes	Tania	CDMX Team, Operational Assistant	Project	Interview	CDMX	F

Appendix 1. People interviewed

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
Galindo			team			
González Kuk	Gilberto	Local strategic partner (Secretariat of Sustainable Development of the Government of the State of Yucatán)	Partner institution	Interview	Yucatán	M
González Martínez	Tanya	CDMX Team, Field Assistant	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
González Riggio	Valeria	Funding Liaison Officer (FLO)	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	F
Gordillo	Isabel	FAO Official, Administrative Assistant	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	F
Guzmán	Jesús	Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Rural Sustentable y la Soberanía Alimentaria (CEDRSSA) Researcher, Strategic Partner of the Public Policy Component	Partner institution	Interview	CDMX	M
Guzmán López	Anastasia	Producer and transformer in San Juan Tepenahuac, Milpa Alta	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	F
Hernández	Irma Angélica	CONABIO staff member who collaborated in the nutritional information component of agrobiodiversity	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Hernández	Irving	Head of the Las Ánimas project at the Autonomous University of Mexico, Xochimilco campus	Partner institution	Interview	CDMX	M
Hernández	Graciela	Beneficiary producer of the CAATT	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Hernández Cruz	Taurino	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Hernández Cruz	Dolores	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Larson	Jorge	Director of agrobiodiversity (CONABIO)	Partner institution	Interview	CDMX	M
Latournirie	Luis	Local strategic partner (IT Conkal)	Local partner	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Lendechy Grajales	Ángel	Local strategic partner Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY)	Local partner	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Leyva Tapia	Marisela	Producer and transformer in Santa Ana Tlacotenco	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	F
Linarez	Edelmira	Chihuahua Implementation Group	Project team	Interview	Chihuahua	F
López	Girmey	Oaxaca Regional Coordinator	Project team	Interview	Oaxaca	M
López	Adrián	Local strategic partner Secretaría de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural (SADER)	Local partner	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Lozada Aranda	Mahelet	CONABIO staff who collaborated in	Project	Interview	CDMX	F

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
		various components of the project	team			
Luna	Samuel Avelino	Chinampa producer San Gregorio Atlapulco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Mahay Moo	Aracely	Beneficiary producer of Tiholop	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Martínez	Emmanuel	Beneficiary producer of the CAATT	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Matus Tzab	Erik Rodrigo	Beneficiary producer of Tiholop	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
May Cab	Pepe Roger	Yucatán seed guardians	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
May May	Juan Diberto	Beneficiary producer of Xocén	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
May Noh	Crisanto	Beneficiary producer of Xocén	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Mex Albornoz	César	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Mex Uicab	Altrudis	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Meza Garcés	Armando	Producer in Tecomitl, Milpa Alta and founder of the local pantries project and Tiendita Momoxca	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	M
Moncayo	Diego Avelino	Chinampa producer San Gregorio Atlapulco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Munul Canché	Lizandra	Beneficiary producer of Chacsinkin	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Neyra González	Lucila	Market Linkage Component Coordinator	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Oliva Cervantes	Eliud	Field operational assistant in Oaxaca	Project team	Interview	Oaxaca	M
Oliveros	Oswaldo	CONABIO staff member who collaborated in the information component on agrobiodiversity	Project team	Interview	CDMX	M
Orozco	Quetzal	Local strategic partner Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Oaxaca	Local partner	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
Palomo Góngora	Felipe	Beneficiary producer of Xocén	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Pedro Garzón	Camelia	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Piña Can	Ricardo	Beneficiary producer of Xbox	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Pohl Alfaro	Lina	FAO Official, Representative	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	F
Ponce	Alejandro	Project Staff, responsible for systematizing indicators	Project team	Interview	CDMX	M
Poot Palomo	Nazario	Beneficiary producer of Xoy	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Poot Yah	Jesus Roberto	Yucatán seed guardians	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M

Appendix 1. People interviewed

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
Puente	Claudia	CONABIO Staff, Accountant	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Quintana	Marcela	Tekio Consulting, Market Linkage Component	Consultant	Interview	CDMX	F
Ramírez	Irene	Assistant to the Project Director, also legal and management specialist	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Ramírez	Jessica	Administrative specialist	Project team	Interview	CDMX	F
Ramos Suárez	David	Tecomitl transformer. Founder of the local pantries project and Tiendita Momoxca	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Rodríguez Gómez	Sayda	Local strategic partner (Secretariat of Sustainable Development of the Government of the State of Yucatán)	Partner institution	Interview	Yucatán	F
Rosales	Margarita	Local strategic partner Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) Yucatán	Local partner	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Salazar Calderón	Rigoberto	Producer in Santa Ana Tlacotenco	Beneficiary	Focal group	CDMX	M
Sánchez	Leticia	Local strategic partner	Local partner	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
Santacoloma	Pilar	Lead Technical Officer (LTO)	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	F
Santiago Cruz	Bertha	Beneficiary producer of San Isidro Yukuyoko	Beneficiary	Interview	Oaxaca	F
Santiago García	Flor de Nube	Beneficiary producer of San Isidro Yukuyoko	Beneficiary	Interview	Oaxaca	F
Serralde	Hugo Gómez	Chinampa producer San Gregorio Atlapulco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Serralde Osorio	María	Chinampera producer and cook San Gregorio Atlapulco	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	F
Simonit	Silvio	FAO Official, Project Supervision and Technical Support	FAO officer	Interview	CDMX	M
Suárez Melo	Isaac	Producer and transformer in Tecomitl. Founder of the local pantries project and Tiendita Momoxca	Beneficiary	Interview	CDMX	M
Tamay Canul	Noemí	Beneficiary producer of Yaxmah	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Tamay Ek	Fredy	Beneficiary producer of Huechen Balam	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
Tamay Koyoc	Aida	Beneficiary producer of Huechen Balam	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Torres	Elsa	Yucatan Regional Coordinator	Project team	Interview	Yucatán	F

Surname	First name	Position/institution/organization	Type of actor	Applied technique	Region	Sex
Ucan Mukul	Aisela	Beneficiary producer of Sabacché	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Uicab Pat	Fermina	Beneficiary producer of Kancabdzonot	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	F
Valiente Riveros	Elsa	Ecological Restoration and Development, A.C. Local partner	Local partner	Focal group	CDMX	F
Yah Alcocer	Idelfonso	Beneficiary producer of Chacsumun	Beneficiary	Focal group	Yucatán	M
	Avelina	Beneficiary producer of San Isidro Yukuyoko	Beneficiary	Interview	Oaxaca	F
	Fernando	Local strategic partner (Geo Conservación A. C.)	Local partner	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
	Hilda	Beneficiary producer of the CAATT	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
	Margaret	Local strategic partner (One Foundation Oaxaca)	Local partner	Focal group	Oaxaca	F
	Tolentino	Beneficiary producer of the Comunidad de Aprendizaje Agroecológico Teotitlán y Tlacochahuaya (CAATT)	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M
	Yonatan	Beneficiary producer from San Antonio, Santiago Tilantongo, Oaxaca	Beneficiary	Focal group	Oaxaca	M

Note: CDMX refers to Mexico City.

Appendix 2. GEF evaluation criteria rating table

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary comments
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE	HS	The design and implementation of the project was highly aligned with national and international priorities and remained relevant through changes in government. In addition, it responds to the interests and needs of the beneficiaries.
B. COHERENCE	HS	The project coordinated with more than 156 institutions and existing processes, thereby avoiding replicating efforts, enhancing effectiveness and improving efficiency.
C. EFFECTIVENESS	S	The execution of the project generated quality products and effects that contribute to achieving the desired impact.
D. EFFICIENCY	S	The organizational structure leveraged co-financing, and technical and administrative processes contributed to efficient execution of the project.
E. SUSTAINBILITY	L	There are positive signs and interest in institutionalization that are aimed at ensuring that the processes and effects of the project are sustained.
F. IMPLEMENTATION	S	In general, FAO fulfilled the basic functions and standards required by the GEF for implementing agencies.
G. EXECUTION	S	CONABIO satisfactorily carried out the responsibilities described by the GEF for the executing entities.
H. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	HS	A high-quality monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system was designed and implemented, which was adapted to the monitoring and reporting needs of the project.
H.1 Design	HS	
H.2 Implementation	HS	
OVERALL PROJECT RATING	S	In general terms, the project was relevant, coherent, efficient and effective. Thanks to its execution, it was possible to generate enabling environments and strengthen individual and institutional capacities that promote the use, sustainable management and conservation of agrobiodiversity, thereby making progress towards the overall environmental objective of the project.

Appendix 3. GEF rating scheme

Project results and outcomes

Rating	***Description***
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings.
Satisfactory (S)	Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

Project implementation and execution

Rating	***Description***
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of **implementation** or **execution** exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of **implementation** or **execution** meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of **implementation** or **execution** more or less meets expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of **implementation** or **execution** somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of **implementation** or **execution** substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of **implementation** or **execution**.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of **implementation** or **execution**.

Monitoring and evaluation

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There have been no shortcomings and the quality of the M&E design and implementation exceeds expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There have been no or minor shortcomings and the quality of M&E design/implementation meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There have been some shortcomings and the quality of M&E design/implementation more or less meets expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There have been significant shortcomings and the quality of M&E design/implementation is somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There have been major shortcomings and the quality of M&E design/implementation is substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There have been very serious shortcomings in the design/implementation of M&E.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The information available does not allow for an evaluation of the quality of the M&E design/implementation.

Sustainability

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	Either there is a negligible risk to continued benefits or there are some risks, but the magnitude of their effect is too small and/or the probability of their realization is too small. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to continue.
Moderately Likely (ML)	There are some risks to sustainability, and may have some effect on continued benefits if they materialize. However, the probability of these risks materializing is low. Net benefits are more likely to continue than decline.
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability. The effect on continued earnings would be substantial if these risks materialize and the likelihood of these risks materializing is significant. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to decline.
Unlikely (U)	There are serious risks to sustainability. These risks have already materialized and stopped the accrual of net benefits or have a high probability of materializing and will stop the accrual of net benefits when they materialize. Therefore, overall, it is unlikely that net benefits will continue to accrue and the project's intended long-term impacts will be achieved.
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of sustainability risks.

Appendix 4. Results matrix

Outcome 1.1				
Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
1.1.1	No. of hectares with genetic crop varieties of global importance **(Core Indicators 4.1)**	700 000	1 012 500	145%
1.1.2	No. of existing agrobiodiversity databases of species expanded	12	39	325%
1.1.3	No. of analyses and syntheses based on the Integrated Agrobiodiversity Information System (SIAgroBD) and the results of research projects to guide decision-making	3	12	400%
				Output indicators
1.1.1.1	No. of research projects completed	10	15	150%
1.1.1.2	Implementation areas with projects in development	6	6	100%
1.1.1.3	No. of publications	3	21	700%
1.1.2.1	Protocol designed, approved and adopted	Protocol adopted	Protocol adopted	100%
1.1.2.2	SIAgroBD adopted and used by key actors	System developed	System developed	100%
1.1.2.3	No. of key institutional actors that have adopted the SIAgroBD and are using it	40	213	533%
1.1.3.1	Protocol for the assessment (…) of agrobiodiversity services (…)	Protocol created	Protocol created	100%
1.1.3.2	Protocol for the economic valuation (…) of agrobiodiversity products	Protocol created	Protocol created	100%
1.1.3.3	No. of materials for communication and dissemination of the value of agrobiodiversity	30	61	203%
1.1.3.4	A communication strategy (…) is designed and made available (…)	Strategy implemented	Strategy implemented	100%

Outcome 2.1				
Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**
2.1.1	Area in hectares where knowledge, practices and/or management approaches derived from capacity building projects for agrobiodiversity conservation are implemented	2 180	4 549	209%
2.1.2	No. of producers who have strengthened their capacities to protect and manage their agrobiodiversity and have received multiple benefits for conserving and sustainably using	6 750	7 313	108%

	agrobiodiversity (improved productivity and self-subsistence, conservation and improvement of seeds and traditional practices) (**Core Indicators 11)**				
2.1.3	No. of globally important species (cultivated and wild) maintained in the agroecosystems described in the specific implementation areas	168	323	192%	
Output indicators					
2.1.1.1	No. of annual knowledge exchange events on agrobiodiversity	75	133	177%	
2.1.1.2	No. of annual publications for the dissemination of knowledge on agrobiodiversity	66	61	92%	
2.1.2.1	No. of projects for seed conservation	21	77	367%	
2.1.2.2	No. of localities included	54	66	122%	
2.1.2.3	No. of farmers involved in seed conservation activities	400	1 444	361%	
2.1.2.4	Percentage of women participating	50	41.13	82%	
2.1.2.5	Percentage of young participants (<30 years)	30	14.27	48%	
2.1.3.1	No. of projects, differentiated by project type	300	550	183%	
2.1.3.2	No. of localities where milpa and other agroforestry systems (MoAS) are improved	180	114	63%	
2.1.3.3	No. of farmers participating in MoAS improvement	4 100	4 387	107%	
2.1.3.4	Percentage of women participating in MoAS improvement	50	47	94%	
2.1.3.5	Percentage of young people (<30 years) participating in MoAS improvement	30	26.1	87%	

Outcome 3.1					
Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**	
3.1.1	The National Development Plan (PND) incorporates agrobiodiversity in one or more objectives, strategies or lines of action	Agrobiodiversity included in the PND	Yes	100%	
3.1.2	No. of sectoral programmes that incorporate agrobiodiversity in one or more of their objectives, strategies or lines of action	4	5	125%	
3.1.3	No. of budget programmes that incorporate in their operating rules, norms, criteria or incentives aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity	3	3	100%	
Output indicators					

3.1.1.1	Communication and awareness-raising strategy formulated and implemented	Strategy implemented	Strategy implemented	100%	
3.1.1.2	Awareness index of public officials measured by the Agrobiodiversity Awareness Index developed in Output 1.1.3	85	87.9	103%	
3.1.2.1	No. of prioritized policies (considering the PND, sectoral programmes and budget programmes and legal and regulatory instruments)	15	15	100%	
3.1.2.2	No. of public policies formulated	12	19	158%	

Outcome 4.1					
Outcome indicators		**Goal**	**Achieved**	**% of goal achieved**	
4.1.1	Strategy for promotional and marketing campaigns focused on agrobiodiversity products designed and implemented	Strategy implemented	Yes	100%	
4.1.2	Accessibility of agrobiodiversity products to local and regional markets (…)	58	52	90%	
Output indicators					
4.1.1.1	No. of market studies	6	6	100%	
4.1.1.2	No. of agrobiodiversity valorization and marketing campaigns	6	11	183%	
4.1.1.3	No. of social communication and promotion materials on the value of agrobiodiversity (…)	Not specified	217	-	
4.1.1.4	No. of market surveys with consumers on agrobiodiversity products	15	32	213%	
4.1.2.1	No. of stores and marketing stands in short supply chains	12	31	250%	
4.1.2.2	No. of agrobiodiversity fairs	20	35	205%	
4.1.2.3	No. of gastronomic fairs or meetings between traditional cooks and chefs	6	43	583%	
4.1.2.4	No. of agreements with a third party to market products of Biodiversity-Friendly Practices in Traditional Agroecosystems (ABAT, by its Spanish acronym) (…)	6	11	167%	
4.1.2.5	No. of companies formed	8	15	188%	
4.1.3.1	A collective trademark	Collective trademark	Collective trademark	100%	
4.1.3.2	No. of participatory guarantee systems	4	4	100%	
4.1.3.3	No. of webpages for the promotion and marketing of products	6	22	367%	
4.1.3.4	Agrobiodiversity gastronomy app	App functioning	App functioning	100%	

Appendix 5. Co-financing table

Type of institution	Institution	Type of co-financing	Committed co-financing (USD) in the formulation of the project	Materialized co-financing (USD) at time of evaluation (July 2023)
National government	CONABIO	In-kind	4 812 629	3 042 719
National government	Secretaría de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural (SADER)	In-kind	4 166 667	6 219 233
		In cash		15 641 001
National government	Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas (INPI)	In-kind	1 111 111	0
		In cash	833 333	0
National government	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT)	In-kind	1 688 200	124 213
National government	Sectretaría de Bienestar (SEDESOL)	In cash	1 500 000	0
National government	Instituto Nacional de la Economía Social (INAES)	In cash	1 500 000	1 039 637
National government	Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Médicas y Nutrición Salvador Zubirán (INCMNSZ)	In-kind	6 004 444	6 884 211
National government	Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias (INIFAP)	In-kind	565 754	0
Local government	Secretaría Estatal de Desarrollo Sustentable (SDS)	In-kind	1 363 638	3 065 416
		In cash	4 636 362	3 291 664
Local government	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente del Gobierno de la Ciudad de México (SEDEMA)	In-kind	427 500	1 054 491
		In cash	5 272 500	6 016 870
Local government	Sociedad de Ergonomistas de México (SEMAC)	In-kind	228 050	0
Civil society organization	Instituto para el Desarrollo Sustentable en Mesoamérica A. C. (IDESMAC)	In-kind	1 875 000	1 113 669
United Nations	FAO	In-kind	200 000	238 781
Local government	Secretaría Estatal de Medio Ambiente e Historia Natural (SEMAHN)	In-kind	0	60 329
		TOTAL	**36 185 188**	**47 792 234**

Appendix 6. Public/private institutions linked to the project

The categorization of different scales (international, national, regional and local) was determined according to the activities carried out and the institutional scope. This list of organizations involved in the project, representing the connections established during the execution of the project, is approximate and not exhaustive. It is a generalization that shows the various links created with different actors based on the information systematized by the regional teams.

No.	Institution linked to the project	Type of organization	Region	Level
1	Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM-Xochimilco)	Public institution	CDMX	Local
2	Red Alianza por Nuestra Tortilla	Private sector	CDMX	Regional
3	Bendito Maíz	Private sector	CDMX	Regional
4	Cal y Maíz	Private sector	CDMX	Regional
5	Coordinación de Programas y Proyectos de la Oficina de Cambio Climático y Sustentabilidad (Álvaro Obregón)	Public institution	CDMX	Local
6	Ecosentli	Private sector	CDMX	Regional
7	Dirección de Promoción a la Salud de la Oficina de Medicina Tradicional y Desarrollo Intercultural	Public institution	CDMX	Local
8	Instituto Mexicano de Seguridad Social (IMSS)	Public institution	CDMX	Local
9	Molino Pinto	Private sector	CDMX	Regional
10	Centro Nacional de Programas Preventivos y Control de Enfermedades (CENAPRECE)	Public institution	CDMX	Regional
11	Rainforest Alliance	Civil society or non-governmental organization (NGO)	CDMX	International
12	Red de redes alimentarias alternativas	Civil society or NGO	CDMX	Regional
13	Restauración Ecológica y Desarrollo (REDES A. C.)	Civil society or NGO	CDMX	Local
14	Coordinación de Políticas públicas y cultura ambiental (SEDEMA, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente del Gobierno de la Ciudad de México)	Public institution	CDMX	Regional
15	Semillas de Vida A. C.	Civil society or NGO	CDMX	Local
16	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)	Public institution	CDMX, Oaxaca	National
17	Comisión Intersectorial de Promoción de la Salud (CIPS)	Public institution	CDMX	Regional
18	Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas (UNACH)	Public institution	Chiapas	Regional
19	Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR)	Public institution	Chiapas	Regional
20	Cooperativa AMBIO	Civil society or NGO	Chiapas	Local
21	Instituto para el Desarrollo Sustentable en Mesoamérica A. C. (IDESMAC)	Civil society or NGO	Chiapas	Regional
22	Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas (UNICH)	Public institution	Chiapas	Local
23	Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas	Public institution	Chiapas,	National

Appendix 6. Public/private institutions linked to the project

No.	Institution linked to the project	Type of organization	Region	Level
	(CONANP)		Chihuahua, Oaxaca	
24	Red Mayense de Guardianes y Guardianas de Maíz y Biodiversidad (REGMABI)	Civil society or NGO	Chiapas, Yucatán, Campeche and Quintana Roo	Regional
25	Secretaría Estatal de Medio Ambiente e Historia Natural (SEMAHN)	Public institution	Chiapas	Local
26	The Nature Conservancy	Civil society or NGO	Chiapas	International
27	Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias, INIFAP	Public institution	Chiapas, Oaxaca	National
28	Consejo Nacional de Humanidades, Ciencia y Tecnología (CONAHCyT)	Public institution	Chiapas, Oaxaca	National
29	Escuela Primaria Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
30	Albergue Luis Torres Ordoñez	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
31	Acciones Colectivas para la Autonomía (ACA)	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
32	Fundación Tarahumara José A. Llaguno	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
33	Fundación UNAM A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
34	Clínica de Salud Gumisachi	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
35	Hotel "Parador del Alma"	Private sector	Chihuahua	Local
36	La troje de adobe, servicios de turismo y cultura sustentable	Private sector	Chihuahua	Local
37	Machi-ko A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Local
38	Gobierno municipal de Guachochi	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
39	Colegio Misión Santa Teresita	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
40	Napawika Tibupo Kawi A.C. (Natika)	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
41	Rakema A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
42	Experiencias Rarámuri	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
43	Red de Sistemas Agroalimentarios Localizados (Red SIAL-México)	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	Regional
44	REPA BE-Pinole Nutritivo	Private sector	Chihuahua	Local
45	Restaurante Los pinos	Private sector	Chihuahua	Local
46	Escuela "Casa de la niñez indígena Rebelión del Tarahumar"	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
47	Tienda de Abarrotes "Super rayo"	Private sector	Chihuahua	Local
48	Universidad Tecnológica Tarahumara (UTT)	Public institution	Chihuahua	Regional
49	World Wildlife Fund (WWF-México)	Civil society or NGO	Chihuahua	International
50	Instituto de Biología (UNAM)	Public institution	Chihuahua	Local
51	Escuela Primaria bilingüe Uandakua-Patsari de San Andrés Tzirondaro	Public institution	Michoacán	Local

No.	Institution linked to the project	Type of organization	Region	Level
52	Escuela Primaria Gertrudis Bocanegra	Public institution	Michoacán	Local
53	GIRA A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Michoacán	Regional
54	Universidad Indígena Intercultural de Michoacán	Public institution	Michoacán	Local
55	Cooperativa Marku anchekoren S. C.	Private sector	Michoacán	Local
56	Escuela Primaria Miguel Hidalgo	Public institution	Michoacán	Local
57	Red Cooperativa Tsiri Tsiri	Private sector	Michoacán	Local
58	Escuela Secundaria Vocacional	Public institution	Michoacán	Local
59	Centro de Investigación en Ciencias de Información Geoespacial, A. C. (GentroGeo)	Public institution	Yucatán	National
60	Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Médicas y Nutrición Salvador Zubirán (INCMNSZ)	Public institution	N/A	National
61	Asociación de Cocineras Tradicionales de Oaxaca A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Regional
62	Universidad del Bienestar Benito Juárez	Public institution	Oaxaca, Yucatán	Regional
63	Centro de Desarrollo Integral Campesino de la Mixteca "Hita Nuni" A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
64	Centro de Innovación Integral para el Desarrollo Rural KUKOJ S. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
65	Chocolahj	Private sector	Oaxaca	Local
66	Comité de Recursos Naturales de la Chinantla	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
67	Corazón de Cacao	Private sector	Oaxaca	Local
68	Ecosta Yutu Cuii S. S. S.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
69	EtnoFood	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
70	Fundación de Tortilla de Maíz Mexicana A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
71	Coordinación General del Comité Estatal de Planeación para el Desarrollo de Oaxaca	Public institution	Oaxaca	Regional
72	GEOCONSERVACION A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
73	Grupo Autónomo para la Investigación Ambiental A. C. (GAIA)	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
74	Proyecto LAM	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
75	Destilería Mezcal Real minero	Private sector	Oaxaca	Local
76	Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social	Public institution	Oaxaca	Local
77	Mujeres Milenarias A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
78	Oficina Estatal del Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas	Public institution	Oaxaca	Regional
79	Asociación Cooperativa Nuú ndito Tierra Viva	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
80	Secretaría Estatal de Cultura	Public institution	Oaxaca	Regional
81	Oaxacacao	Private sector	Oaxaca	Local

Appendix 6. Public/private institutions linked to the project

No.	Institution linked to the project	Type of organization	Region	Level
82	One Foundation Oaxaca	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
83	Proyecto Mixteca Sustentable A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
84	Centro Regional Universitario Sur de la Universidad Autónoma de Chapingo (CRUS)	Public institution	Oaxaca	Regional
85	Secretaría Estatal de Desarrollo Agrícola, Pesca y Agricultura (SEDAPA)	Public institution	Oaxaca	Regional
86	Sistema Comunitario para el Manejo y Resguardo de la Biodiversidad de Oaxaca	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Regional
87	Gobierno municipal de Villa de Mitla	Public institution	Oaxaca	Local
88	Bienes Comunales de la Unión de Zapata	Public institution	Oaxaca	Local
89	Ejido de la Unión de Zapata	Public institution	Oaxaca	Local
90	Comunidad de Aprendizaje Agroecológico Tetotitlan y Tlacochahuaya (CAATT)	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
91	Hijas de la Tierra	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
92	Tierra del Sol	Civil society or NGO	Oaxaca	Local
93	Secretaría de Bienestar	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
94	Aromas Orgánicos	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
95	Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY)	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
96	Consejo Cooperativo de la Milpa Comunidad Maya	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
97	Instituto Tecnológico Conkal	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
98	Secretaría de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural (SADER)	Public institution	Yucatán	National
99	Fundación Haciendas del Mundo Maya: Traspatio	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Regional
100	Fundación Heifer	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
101	La Huertita del Mayab	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
102	Cooperativa Los Guardianes de las Semillas	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
103	Gobierno municipal de Mérida	Public institution	Yucatán	Local
104	Misioneros A. C.	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
105	Cooperativa Muul Meyaj	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
106	Programa de Pequeñas Donaciones (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo)	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
107	Secretaría Estatal de Desarrollo Sustentable (SDS)	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
108	Cooperativa Semillas de los Dioses	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
109	Consejo Estatal de Nutrición	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
110	Secretaría Estatal de Desarrollo Rural	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
111	Junta Intermunicipal de la Reserva Biocultural de la región del Puuc (JIBIOPUUC)	Public institution	Yucatán	Local

No.	Institution linked to the project	Type of organization	Region	Level
112	Vida Sustentable	Private sector	Yucatán	Local
113	Puntos Verdes	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
114	Caja La Esperanza	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
115	Universidad Tecnológica el Mayab	Public institution	Yucatán	Local
116	Asociación de Egresados de la UNAM en Yucatán	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
117	Desarrollo Integral de la Familia del Estado de Yucatán	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
118	Secretaría de Educación Estatal	Public institution	Yucatán	Regional
119	Mercado Cero Basura	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
120	Agencias de Desarrollo Humano Local	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
121	Instituto de Investigación en Ecosistemas y Sustentabilidad	Public institution	CDMX	National
122	Coordinación Universitaria para la Sustentabilidad (CoUS) de la UNAM	Public institution	CDMX	Regional
123	Moojk Kaaky	Private sector	Oaxaca	Regional
124	Circulo 47	Civil society or NGO	Yucatán	Local
125	Instituto de Bio- y Geociencias, Departamento de Bioinformatica (IBG-4)	Public institution	N/A	International
126	Agencia Francesa de Desarrollo	Public institution	N/A	International
127	Alianza para la Soberanía Alimentaria de África	Civil society or NGO	N/A	International
128	Alianza Global para el Futuro de los Alimentos	Civil society or NGO	N/A	International
129	Universidad Estatal de Montana	Public institution	Oaxaca, Yucatán	International
130	Gobierno de Andhra Pradesh	Public institution	N/A	International
131	Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos (USFS)	Public institution	Yucatán	International

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