Part I: Project Information	Response	
GEF ID	10693	
Project Title	Combating land degradation through integrated and sustainable range and livestock management to promote resilient livelihoods in Northern Punjab	
Date of Screening	November 27, 2020	
STAP member screener	Graciela Metternicht	
STAP secretariat screener	Guadalupe Duron	
STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Minor issues to be considered during project design.** STAP acknowledges FAO's project "Combating land degradation through integrated and sustainable range and livestock management to promote resilient livelihoods in Northern Punjab". The project aims to address land degradation through sustainable landscape management approaches that include rangeland rehabilitation and restoration activities. STAP congratulates the team for promoting sustainable range management interventions that consider traditional grazing systems such as the *pargorh,* as well as the proposed reseeding with local grass/fodder species. The Northern Punjab region is expected to continue experiencing drought. To sustainably manage climate change risks, STAP recommends identifying explicitly such risks – including increased stress on feed and water resources, and risks to livestock health and community livelihoods. Identifying and addressing these risks in the theory of change, will assist in reaching the project objective. STAP recommend the theory of change and risk analysis to include the impact to the project and planned interventions that may arise from socio-political factors mentioned in the proposal (internally displaced persons and refugees). Additionally, STAP recommends defining one, or two, simple scenarios for mapping plausible futures. It is likely	

that the project may require developing and analyzing more than one plausible trajectory to deal with long-term changes, such as climate change, and population changes resulting from an influx of refugees and internally displaced persons.

As the project developers consider rehabilitation and restoration opportunities, STAP recommends pursuing a land potential assessment as part of the preparatory activities for achieving outcome 1.1; and that interventions designed for this project are articulated with existing land use planning strategies of the Region, so that it is clear what must be maintained or improved, and 'where' interventions can occur. Paying close attention to land tenure and governance arrangement will also be important to achieve LDN. Furthermore, it is recommended the identification of local indicators of LDN and associated metrics that can reflect locally relevant ecosystem services not covered by the SOC, NPP or land cover change indicators (in relation to output 1.1.4). Details of the assessment can be found in STAP's Land Degradation Neutrality Guidelines and UNCCD's Scientific Conceptual Framework on Land Degradation Neutrality.

STAP recommends early thinking on best practice and technologies for 'knowledge management and sharing' (outcome 3.1). Knowledge needs to be 'shared' and instruments (e.g. advisory services, peer to peer, use of ICT) that best suit local context deserve early attention to ensure success of this expected outcome.

Below, STAP offers recommendations on how to improve the project design.

Part I: Project Information B. Indicative Project Description Summary	**What STAP looks for**	**Response**
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes, the objective is defined clearly, and consistently linked to the problem statement.

Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project's objectives?	Yes, the activities support the project objective. Some recommendations on the components are:
		• Output 1.1.4: develop local indicators and associated metrics that can reflect locally relevant ecosystem services not covered by the SOC, NPP or land cover change indicators
		• 2.1.1 consider building capacity of communities through peer to peer, consider gender and cultural issues in designing tools for capacity building
		• Consider market instruments such as microfinance for women. Coppock etal 2011 highlight the success of building capacity in impoverished rangelands using collective action, microfinance, and participatory education. Do not under estimate the power of participatory processes to design training and capacity building interventions. A good synthesis is provided in Badstue et al 2018
		• Output 3.1: knowledge needs to be 'shared', not only managed. Search for novel ways of sharing knowledge that can be suitable to the intervention context (e.g. peer-to-peer as mentioned in Kiptot and Franzel 2015). Considering the target stakeholders a good analysis is needed of the 'various media' (pg 28) to be used to disseminate knowledge and build capacity. Dissemination alone is not enough, advisory services (see Kingiri 2020) and the guidance on 'how to' are equally important. Given COVID, what use of multimedia could be done that suits the stakeholders culture and social practices?
		• Some additional resources the project developers may find useful include: Badstue,

		Lone, Diana E. Lopez, Anja Umantseva, George Williams, Marlène Elias, Cathy R. Farnworth, Anne M. Rietveld et al. "What drives capacity to innovate? Insights from women and men small-scale farmers in Africa, Asia, and Latin America." (2018). Coppock, D. Layne, Solomon Desta, Seyoum Tezera, and Getachew Gebru. "Capacity building helps pastoral women transform impoverished communities in Ethiopia." Science 334, no. 6061 (2011): 1394-1398. Kiptot, E. and Franzel, S., 2015. Farmer-to-farmer extension: opportunities for enhancing performance of volunteer farmer trainers in Kenya. Development in Practice, 25(4), pp.503-517. Khaila, Stanley, Frank Tchuwa, Steven Franzel, and S. Simpson. The farmer-to-farmer extension approach in Malawi: a survey of lead farmers. No. 189. ICRAF Working Paper, 2015.N. Kingiri, A., 2020. Agricultural advisory and extension service approaches and inclusion in reaching out to Kenyan rural farmers. African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development, pp.1-10
Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits?	Yes, the outcomes focus on global environmental outcomes.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	Yes, potentially. The benefits are likely to be generated with a good theory of change, and careful monitoring of interventions. Additionally, the reasoning is not clear behind the 20 years for the duration of carbon accounting, neither the data or evidence used to argue that indicator 11 will benefit 10,000 women and 10,000

		men. The team could account for other beneficiaries like youth as well. It is not clear the origin of the 3000 ha of restored land (indicator 3).
Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes, the outputs are likely to contribute to the outcomes. It will be important to define a good theory of change, and monitoring system.
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project's logic, i.e. a theory of change.	
1. Project description. Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the problem is well-defined. There is significant degradation from overgrazing, climate stressors (e.g. drought), and a higher number of pastoralists which are increasing pressure on pastures. Furthermore, the PIF indicates that social norms and traditional grazing systems (e.g. communal herding, rotational herding) changed which often reduced grazing pressure. Invasive species have also increased in degraded areas.
	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	Yes, the barriers and threats are well-described (e.g. lack of policies, lack of coordination across government agencies, lack of data on rangeland capacities, lack of land degradation assessments, loss of traditional grazing systems, insufficient understanding, and knowledge of, sustainable rangeland management). STAP suggests identifying land tenure barriers and risks (e.g. land tenure insecurity) in the project document. It will be important to build-in these barriers and threats (e.g. climate change risks) to the outcomes to ensure the interventions are feasible. Additionally, consider enablers of, or opportunities for change. This includes opportunities, or motivations, for enabling actions that improve livelihoods while strengthening pro-environmental behaviors.

	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	Non-applicable.
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Partly. The PIF includes a narrative baseline, describing on-going and future initiatives primarily on afforestation. Recommend listing additional initiatives on sustainable land management, and rangeland management.
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project's benefits?	Yes, possibly. In addition to the GEF core indicators, suggest identifying indicators to monitor rangeland sustainability and the targeted livelihoods – that is, a combination of environmental and social indicators.
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes, the baseline is sufficiently robust at this stage. However, recommend identifying environmental and social indicators (when developing the theory of change) that complement the GEF's core indicators, and which track progress towards achieving sustainable rangeland management.
	For multiple focal area projects:	
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	Non-applicable.
	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	Yes, some complementary initiatives are described in the coordination section.
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	Lessons from past or on-going initiatives need to be described in the baseline section. This information appears missing in the PIF.
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The theory of change narrative is: "The Project Objective is to conserve and restore critically important rangelands and livestock production systems and strengthen the resilience and sustainability of rangeland-dependent livelihoods in vulnerable dryland regions of northern Punjab, Pakistan. The project objective will be realized by implementing a suite of interventions organized

		under three inter-connected components: 1) Government capacity to assess and plan for effective rangeland management; 2) Community led livestock management to reduce land degradation; and 3) Knowledge management and M&E, that together will address the identified barriers that are preventing the sustainable management and restoration of rangelands and livestock in the project area and are resulting in declining livelihoods and food security and out-migration to other parts of the country. The ToC can be improved by adding the 'stakeholders' and associated activities that are needed to deliver the set outputs. Thinking of activities is also important to anticipate whether the assumptions hold, and what external (refugees, IDP) and internal factors may act in support (or against) the set assumptions. A good example is activities associated with Barrier #2 (periodic closures and regulated grazing); that level of activity thinking is not evidence for Barrier #1 or Barrier #3.
	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	See above.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project's objectives?	See above.
	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	Yes, a very thorough theory of change is provided with the assumptions for each outcome, and barriers of change identified.
	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	No. Given the increased stress on water and agricultural (and feed) resources in the target area, STAP recommends building one, or two, simple scenarios for plausible futures. This process entails having stakeholders think through whether any long-term changes (e.g. climate change, population changes, such as increased number of refugees or internally displaced persons) pose risks to the project, and to its outcomes being enduring. Refer

		to STAP's theory of change primer (table 2) and RAPTA for guidance on developing pathways, and more than one scenario: https://www.stapgef.org/theory-change-primer https://www.stapgef.org/rapta-guidelines Additionally, the following paper may assist in describing further the project context in relation to the effects of land use and land cover changes on climate in the region of Punjab in Pakistan: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11356-020-08984-x
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Yes, with a good theory of change, careful monitoring, and identification of several causal pathways that are necessary and sufficient to reach the project objective.
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	Not applicable.
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes, the global environmental benefits are articulated clearly. Indicators will be provided in the final project document. During the project design, STAP recommends addressing the following issues: In component 1, project developers are encouraged to use STAP's LDN guidelines to develop SLM plans. https://www.stapgef.org/guidelines-land-degradation-neutrality Systems thinking should be used when characterizing the problem and its context. It also will be important to develop SLM plans based on stakeholders' values, norms, and other social attributes (culture, gender, power dynamics) influencing their motivations and

decisions. Land tenure also should be considered when designing the project, as individual, and collective, land tenure rights (and systems) are integral to pursuing LDN.

Additionally, it will be valuable to rely on stakeholder consultations to verify the monitoring information, and decision systems.

The following paper also may be valuable for establishing baseline information on soils and land productivity in the Chakwal project site: http://www.econ-environ-geol.org/index.php/ojs/article/view/443

In component 2, as written, the PIF assumes that capacity building on community rangeland management will contribute to outcome 2, and the project objective. To validate this assumption, STAP recommends identifying the behavioral change assumptions linked to this component/outcomes in the theory of change.

Given that drought is increasing in the target areas, STAP recommends planning for climate-resilient measures in the project design. This includes identifying drought risks in the theory of change, supporting these risks with data and references, and defining strategies to address these risks .The project developers may wish to refer to UNCCD's drought assessment toolbox: https://knowledge.unccd.int/drought-toolbox/page/monitoring-and-early-warning

Planning for climate risks is essential to achieving outcome 2 – focused on livestock health, fodder productivity, and improved livelihoods.

In addition to monitoring and evaluating progress, and generating knowledge, component 3 should also look to foster reflection and innovation for

		scaling and transformational change. Refer to STAP's primer (table 2) for guidance on addressing barriers and enablers of change, including scaling, and for guidance on learning. Also, the theory of change should be linked to the monitoring system described in component 3.
	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Possibly. Recommend developing a theory of change with various causal pathways to encourage adaptability to change, including long-term drivers such as drought, and population changes (e.g. increased influx of refugees and internally displaced persons). STAP recommends the PPG includes a clearer articulation on how upscaling could occur (mechanisms) is needed.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes, the global environmental benefits are defined.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?	In addition to the GEF's core indicators, STAP encourages the use of UNCCD's three land-based indicators and associated metrics, related to LDN: land cover (assessed as land cover change), land productivity (assessed as NPP) and carbon stocks (assessed as SOC). The monitoring process should include local monitoring systems. Additionally, identify indicators of success for each outcome in the theory of change.
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project's resilience to climate change?	The PIF states that communities' capacities on climate resilient measures will be strengthened. STAP recommends describing further these activities in the project document.
7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	Yes, the project will focus on several rangeland rehabilitation approaches. The project also will introduce landscape management approaches, inclusive of rangeland restoration.

	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Partially. There is an assumption that strengthening capacity on rangeland approaches (e.g. rotational grazing, bioengineering, water harvesting) will lead to innovation and scaling. Recommend defining the important assumptions behind the adopting of each approach – for example, will behavior change be required? If so, how does the project intend to shift behaviors based on stakeholders' social structures? (e.g. values, norms, culture, agency, power dynamics, among other) Additionally, STAP recommends relying on the theory of change, and its monitoring, to identifying opportunities for scaling and transformative change. The theory of change also should be used to address barriers, and enablers, of scaling.
	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	It is likely that incremental adaptation, and, or, transformational change may be needed due to climate stressors (e.g. drought), other long term drivers (population influx), and from COVID-19. Suggest developing several pathways to reach the project goal, testing their assumptions, and asking which pathway will be necessary and sufficient to address long-term changes resulting from climate, COVID-19 and other long-term drivers.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		Geo-referenced information was provided, along with a map. STAP recommends following its guidance on maps in its Earth Observation document as some key elements appear missing from the maps. STAP guidance can be found at: https://www.stapgef.org/earth-observation-and-gef
2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	The key stakeholders have been identified. Suggest reflecting whether there are other stakeholders that need to be involved during the project development, and implementation.

If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.		
	What are the stakeholders' roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?	Suggest elaborating further on stakeholders' roles, particularly at the outcome level.
3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision-making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project's results framework or logical	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	The PIF describes the gender differences of livestock and natural resource management in the project areas. The PIF also states that it will ensure that women form part of training activities and forums. STAP suggests conducting a gender analysis for the design of the project. STAP also suggests describing a gender strategy plan (inclusive of approaches, tools, and strategies) for implementing the project.

framework include gender-sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd		
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?	Gender mainstreaming is recognized as a risk. In Mitigation strategies are described in the PIF.
5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project's control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures: • How will the project's objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? • Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? • Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? • What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	The PIF describes a series of risks to the project, including: climate change risks, COVID-19 risks, conflict due to increased pressure on land, among other environmental and social risks which are detailed in a separate document. STAP recommends for these risks to be defined in the theory of change so they are explicitly dealt with and managed. Not acknowledging the risks will undermine the causal logic of the interventions. Risk analysis should be in place for increased migration and internal displacements in case of conflicts. For climate change, STAP recommends taking into account the questions to the left, and relying on its climate risk screening guidance: https://www.stapgef.org/stap-guidance-climate-risk-screening
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	Yes, the project will build on the knowledge of other GEF projects. Suggest identifying non-GEF initiatives in the target areas, and describing how they will contribute to this GEF project
	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	See above.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?	Partially. STAP recommends elaborating further on the lessons learned from other projects – GEF and non-GEF that are relevant to this project.
	How have these lessons informed the project's formulation?	See above.

	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?	Yes, component 3. Additionally, the theory of change should be linked to the monitoring system.
8. Knowledge management. Outline the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, and how it will contribute to the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	The PIF identifies several knowledge management efforts and approaches the project will rely on. As the project stakeholders develop the knowledge management plan, consider indicators of success. Additionally, suggest linking the theory of change to component 3 as both will be needed to manage knowledge and learning.
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?	The PIF states that the project will disseminate its knowledge on rangeland restoration. In the project document, suggest assigning indicators of success to knowledge management. Additionally, the project team may consider disseminating lessons to UNCCD's knowledge portal, WOCAT and other rangeland platforms.

Notes

STAP advisory response	Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed
1. **Concur**	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.
	* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that *"STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design."*
2. **Minor issues to be considered during project design**	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;
	(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.
	The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.

3. Major issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.