



Strengthening national-level institutional and professional capacities of country Parties towards enhanced UNCCD monitoring and reporting ? GEF 7 EA Umbrella 1

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

Project Type

EA

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT

CBIT No

Project Title

Strengthening national-level institutional and professional capacities of country Parties towards enhanced UNCCD monitoring and reporting ? GEF 7 EA Umbrella 1

Countries

Global

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

UNCCD National Focal Points; The Global Mechanism, UNCCD Secretariat

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Land Degradation

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Approach, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Drought Mitigation, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Community-Based

Natural Resource Management, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Land Cover and Land cover change, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Beneficiaries, Gender-sensitive indicators, Women groups

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 0

Type of Reports

Submission Date

Expected Implementation Start

Expected Completion Date

Expected Report Submission to Convention

Duration

24In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

185,662.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
LD-EA	GET	1,954,338.00	
Total Project Cost(\$)		1,954,338.00	0.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To enhance national-level institutional and technical capacities for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
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Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
<p>To enhance national-level institutional and technical capacities for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3</p>	<p>1.1. National level enabling conditions for reporting are established to advance UNCCD reporting obligations, as indicated by:</p> <p>a) The number of countries that have successfully established national teams and using reporting platforms to submit their 2021-2022 reports</p> <p>b) Number of Improved quality of convention reports (both timeliness and completeness)</p> <p>c) The number of countries reporting annual changes in degradation or desertification of arable land (% or ha)</p>	<p>Output 1.1.1 Trainings conducted at national level by GEF-eligible countries for the domestication of standardized tools for data collection and for quality assurance guidelines for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting cycle (including support in Trend.Earth tool and PRAIS reporting platform, integration of gender-disaggregated data, and CSO contribution to LDN implementation).</p> <p>Output 1.1.2 2021-2022 National Report to UNCCD compiled and validated with the participation of key stakeholders and submitted within deadline by GEF-eligible Parties</p>	<p>1,826,484.00</p>	

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
		Sub Total (\$)	1,826,484.00	0.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)				
			127,854.00	
		Sub Total(\$)	127,854.00	0.00
		Total Project Cost(\$)	1,954,338.00	0.00

C. Source of Co-Financing for the Project by Name and by Type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
				Total Co-Financing(\$)

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

D. GEF Financing Resources Requested by Agency, Country and Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Global	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	1,954,338	185,662	2,140,000.00
Total Gef Resources(\$)					1,954,338.00	185,662.00	2,140,000.00

Part II. Enabling Activity Justification

A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Provide brief information about projects implemented since a country became party to the convention and results achieved

The international community through the UN member states adopted, in September 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among these SDGs, Goal 15 is particularly relevant for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Through this goal, countries are urged to, "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss". Target 15.3 urges countries to "combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought, and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world" by 2030.

The twelfth session of the Conference of Parties (COP.12) of the UNCCD agreed in October 2015 to integrate the SDGs and related targets into the implementation of the Convention and decided that "striving to achieve SDG target 15.3 is a strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the UNCCD" (decision 3/COP.12). COP.12 also endorsed the definition of land degradation neutrality (LDN) and invited Parties to (i) formulate voluntary targets to achieve LDN, (ii) use the UNCCD monitoring and evaluation framework, including progress indicators, to monitor, evaluate and communicate progress towards achieving the LDN target, (iii) explore options on how to integrate the voluntary LDN targets in their UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs), and (iv) promote the use of LDN targets and projects and other SLM initiatives as an effective vehicle for mobilizing additional sustainable financing and investments to address issues related to desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD). LDN has therefore become a guiding principle for UNCCD implementation, while at the same time contributing to other SDGs, including those SDGs relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, food and water security, disaster risk reduction, and poverty reduction.

Decision 2/COP.12 invites affected country Parties to establish national baselines and national-level voluntary LDN targets within their National Action Plans (NAPs). The New 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention paves the way for an enhanced reporting and review process within the UNCCD that considers the SDG framework. As such, the UNCCD reporting and review system is based on (i) progress indicators to measure the progress against the future strategic framework of the UNCCD, and (ii) an implementation framework to assess actions at a national and sub-national level relevant for UNCCD implementation. The reporting and review system

addresses effective monitoring of financing for UNCCD implementation using refined methodologies in accordance with COP decisions.

Based on the UNCCD indicators, countries can report on land-based indicators on the SDG indicator 15.3.1. The Parties will be able to monitor land degradation status and trends and formulate plans and policies for SLM practices, to avoid land degradation. The baseline for this umbrella project to enhance national-level technical and institutional capacity for reporting and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3 is the Global Support Program III (GSP III). GSP III has focused on four components: facilitating UNCCD reporting through updated and improved tools; enhancing capacities of country Parties for reporting against UNCCD indicators baselines and improved versions of technical facilities; enabling Parties to monitor and develop integrated approaches to address Desertification, Land Degradation, and Drought (DLDD) and gender mainstreaming; and monitoring and evaluation. With the first three components, the GSP III has sought to offer at regional level technical assistance to enhance Parties' capacities to report in the context of the UNCCD strategic framework 2018-2030 for monitoring the progress of UNCCD implementation.

It should be noted that GSP III has been built on two previous GSPs. GSP I supported the simplification of the PRAIS reporting platform and provided technical assistance through capacity building workshops, the development of a user guide manual, online training, and the development of a data quality framework. This led to a 90% reporting rate. GSP II supported country Parties in establishing sound reporting and monitoring systems to report against the UNCCD strategy. With default data related to biophysical indicators provided by the UNCCD secretariat, GSP II helped country Parties in increasing the consistency and reliability of the data and information provided. This led to a 71% reporting rate. This rate, even though lesser than in GSP I, was considered successful by convention bodies because it was the first time the countries were requested to report on the Strategic objectives which require more technical work and use of default data provided during the framework of GSP II.

Relevant to this umbrella project, what has been achieved that serve as lessons from previous phases of GSPs include the following:

1. The 2017-2018 reporting process highlighted the need to include a solid and robust e-learning platform for any future support to the UNCCD reporting cycles which would enable designated reporting officers to study and learn online while also being able to get assistance from experts on stand-by regarding any difficulty that may emerge;

2. Capacity building on UNCCD reporting will always need technical and financial support since reporting requirements are shifting and evolving.
3. Due to the technical nature of UNCCD indicators, regular and specialized backstopping is required for Parties to comply with the reporting obligations. This support is to be provided through face-to-face workshops, webinars, online tutorials, etc.;
4. The enhanced coordination with national statistical offices can help increase data ownership and to create synergies between the UNCCD reporting and national SDG processes. Cost-effectiveness of funds would increase while additional participants (GIS experts and/or NSO officers could be more easily funded through GSP resources);
5. Strengthen collaboration and partnership with development data repositories like Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is required to develop a standardized and systematic approach to track financial flows for implementation of the Convention;
6. Monitoring overall financing for UNCCD implementation is challenging. Therefore, it is important to continue exploring methodologies and develop a systematic approach to track financial flows for the implementation of the Convention; and
7. Resource mobilization and partnership building are continued efforts that remain important in enhancing stakeholder involvement to support the implementation of the UNCCD in the context of the Convention's Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG 15.3

Building on the lessons from previous GSPs and taking into account the evolving reporting needs of the UNCCD to implement the Strategic Framework 2018-2030, the proposed umbrella project responds to the call for continued support for capacity building and establishment of an enabling implementation environment of activities in the GEF-eligible country Parties.

B. ENABLING ACTIVITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES

The proposal should briefly justify and describe the project framework. Identify also key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable. Describe also how the gender equality and women's empowerment are considered in project design and implementation

B.1. Enabling Activity Goals, Objectives and Activities

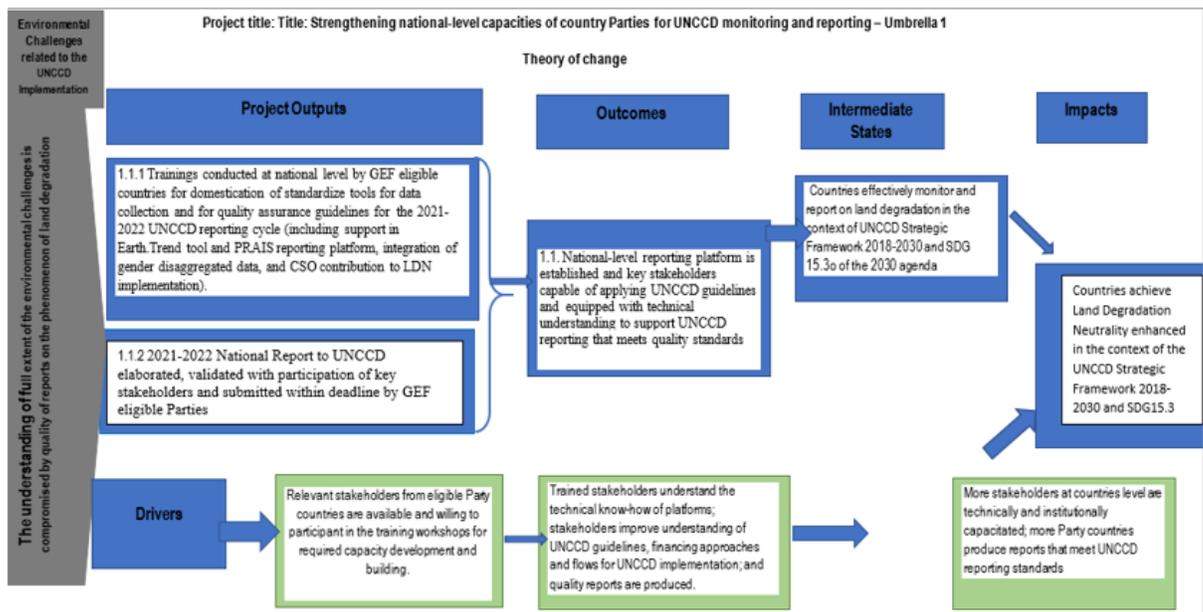
While the Global Support Programme III (GSP III) will provide capacity building and tools at regional levels through training and providing of reporting tools and platforms, the proposed umbrella project will provide technical assistance at the national level within the framework of GEF enabling activities. The project objective is to enhance national-level institutional and technical capacities for the 2021-

2022 UNCCD reporting process in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. It will focus on one major component based on the lessons learned and issues identified during previous reporting cycles. The project will build on previous phases of Umbrella and GSPs experiences and lessons in support of UNCCD reporting ? that is, supporting the creation of an enabling environment at national level of the GEF-eligible country Parties. The project's Theory of Change diagram is included below.

With the overarching project objective to enhance national-level technical and institutional capacity for reporting and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3, the project will seek to facilitate national-level UNCCD reporting broadly through firstly capacity building to master the updated and improved tools for UNCCD indicators developed by the GSP III. Secondly, the project will also seek to enhance the capacities of country Parties for reporting against UNCCD indicator baselines and monitoring of land degradation neutrality. Thirdly, the project will seek to support countries to consider LDN-related gender-disaggregated data through the guidelines developed by the GSP III and mainstream them in UNCCD national reports. The project will, therefore, contribute to removing country-level challenges identified in the previous reporting processes, related to limited national-level data and limited capacity to generate them; lack of national-level technical capacities to prepare quality national-level reports in the context of the UNCCD reporting process; limited capacity to monitor land degradation neutrality trends at the national level; and national-level inability to track financial flows for UNCCD implementation, including inadequate or complete lack of inclusion of LDN-related gender-disaggregated data. The project is conceived to support the GEF-eligible UNCCD country Parties that, at different levels, have compromised abilities to more effectively respond to the ever-increasing environmental problems related to land degradation. Due to the environmental problems that have affected the socioeconomic and environmental value of land, the countries experience livelihood challenges. This is because the vast majority of local populations in countries un-proportionately affected by land degradation, tend to depend on the exploitation of land-based resources for their livelihoods. This project, therefore, responds to the 74th United Nations General Assembly UNGA's[1] recall that in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community commits to combating desertification, restoring degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought, and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world by 2030.

The proposed project fully recognizes that environmental degradation has led to economic losses, increased social problems (such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, forced migration, etc.), and increased environmental problems (such as biodiversity loss, water scarcity, carbon emissions). It is within this vulnerable socioeconomic and environmental context of GEF-eligible countries that this project has been conceived to support the countries building their national-level capacities to overall improve their institutional and policy environments to implement the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG 15.3.

The project's theory of change: The 2017-2018 reporting process highlighted the need to include a solid and robust learning platform for any future support to the UNCCD reporting cycles which would enable designated reporting officers and national stakeholders to study and learn from capacity provided at the regional level and to get assistance from national experts on specific LDN issues. Capacity building on UNCCD reporting will always need technical and financial support for national stakeholders since reporting requirements are shifting and evolving. Due to the technical nature of UNCCD indicators, a regular and specialized backstopping at the national level is required for Parties to comply with the reporting obligations. To address these challenges, the project aims is to achieve a long-term vision that builds on the lessons from the previous umbrella and GSP projects and takes into account the evolving reporting needs of the UNCCD to implement the Strategic Framework 2018-2030. The proposed umbrella project responds therefore to the call for continued support for capacity building and establishment of an enabling implementation environment of activities in the GEF-eligible country Parties. Prior to achieving the desired changes, the intermediate outcomes (IO) will include IO 1: Countries effectively monitor and report on land degradation in the context of UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG 15.3o of the 2030 agenda. This intermediate Outcome will lead to the impact related to Countries achieving Land Degradation Neutrality enhanced in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. The project developmental objective will be achieved if the changes (Outcome) related to national-level enabling conditions for reporting are established to support UNCCD reporting that meets quality standards. However, this change will only happen after the removal of the barrier related to the limited capacities in eligible countries, which Parties have to surmount in order for them to combat desertification/land degradation and drought and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets. All the above will happen under the assumption that the (i) relevant national UNCCD stakeholders from eligible country Parties are available and willing to participate in the training workshops for required capacity development and building; (ii) Trained stakeholders understand the technical know-how of platforms; (iii) stakeholders improve understanding of UNCCD guidelines, financing approaches and flow for UNCCD implementation and reporting; and (iv) More stakeholders at countries level are technically and institutionally capacitated; more country Parties produce reports that meet UNCCD reporting standards.



Observations:

Where are the assumptions for the causal pathways?
 What is the meaning of the different sized arrows? A legend would be helpful here (i.e., green boxes = drivers, intermediate state(s) should also be colour coded.
 The impact seems much too static and linear... how are the outputs going to lead to a national-level reporting platform?
 There is no mention of private sector / scientific and research institutions that seem to play a role in this transformation.

B.2. EA Stakeholders[1]

Key project stakeholders will include:

National Government/Country Parties including Civil Society Organisations (CSO): At National level, the umbrella project will work together with UNCCD National Focal Points, who are in charge of the UNCCD reporting process at the national level. The project will provide methodological as well as technical guidance to key stakeholders at national level on the reporting process, reporting tools etc. This will include close cooperation between the UNCCD National Focal Points and the National Statistics Offices, in charge of the national SDG process. The UNCCD Focal Points will engage with CSOs throughout the reporting process, including during national-level data gathering and validation.

In the engagement of country-level parties/stakeholders that include CSOs, the proposed umbrella project recognises that the degradation of land and associated resources is caused by factors related to both climate change and anthropogenic activities. In the latter case, activities could be related to agriculture, infrastructure development, population growth and other factors. In the same way that the implementation of the LDN Initiative has multiple benefits to other SDGs, this proposed project recognises that addressing the multi-causal factors of land degradation requires an integrated multi-sectoral approach. In this regard and as noted above, this project will engage the GEF Operational and Political Focal Points of the three Rio Conventions, as well the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Focal Points. The project will also engage and forge collaboration with allied Ministries in all participating

countries in this umbrella project. The UNCCD Focal Points will engage with CSOs in all the required processes.

Scientific and research organizations: The umbrella project will further collaborate with national-level research institutions, scientific organisations particularly supporting in data extraction, providing updated data, tools, methodologies to guide the country Parties in developing quality reports and support relevant national-level actions, including the collection of data to inform the understanding of land degradation neutrality in GEF-eligible country Parties in the context of UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework and SDG 15.3. At national level, the UNCCD National Focal and the UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology (CST) National Correspondent will engage scientific and research organizations throughout the reporting process, including identification of possible national data sources and validation of results.

UNEP and the Convention's institutions: UNEP will fulfil its GEF Implementation Role of the project and will support parties in facilitating access to the reporting funding from GEF and on financial reporting of funds after utilisation by eligible countries. In doing so, UNEP will collaborate with the UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism that are key stakeholders in the reporting processes. UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism through the GSP III will provide national-level technical assistance and guidance to the Parties, ensuring availability and sound utilization of templates, guidelines and appropriate platform/system for reporting.

Private sector representatives will be engaged as appropriate by the National UNCCD Focal Points in the UNCCD reporting process at national level. The proposed umbrella project recognises the private sector as key stakeholders in the implementation of the LDN Initiative. They are a potential source of the much-needed funding, but also possess business-oriented experience that the implementation of the project's activities can leverage. The private sector provides an opportunity for achieving LDN through increased investments. The private sector is, therefore, a strategic partner for country Parties as they seek to improve their enabling capacities, policy and institutional frameworks to support their efforts to achieve their LDN targets. Thus, it is critical that the private sector be engaged in national-level processes meant to enable country Parties have in place enabling policy and institutional environments for the implementation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030.

B.3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Gender equality is a core cross-cutting objective of UNCCD recognized by the Parties. At COP 13, the Gender Action Plan (GAP) was adopted to support and enhance the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates. The Strategy acknowledges that gender equality is crucial in implementing the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and achieving the goal of the 2030 Agenda. The document ICCD/CRIC (17)/CRP.1 presented at CRIC 17, highlights the progress made in addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in the implementation of the UNCCD. It also acknowledges that the 2017-18 reporting process did not include any specific entry points for reporting the gender related matters due to the late development of the GAP. 57 (out of 140 reported) country reports provided information on experiences engaging women and youth in promoting alternative livelihood while 88 country reports provided information on practices implemented at the country level to promote alternative livelihood. The document ICCD/CRIC (17)/CRP.1 recommended to report on integrating GAP indicators into UNCCD reporting.

The umbrella project will follow the guidance outlined in the UNCCD Gender Action Plan, ensuring women's participation during the design, planning, implementation of the project activities at national level, particularly capacity building. Decision 24/COP14 reaffirms that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, will make an important contribution to the effective implementation of the Convention, including the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030, and to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including target 15.3. At national level, the proposed umbrella project will

further support the implementation of COP 14 decisions on integrating gender in reporting exercise at national level. In this regard, this umbrella project will be deliberate in its design to ensure that gender concerns are carefully considered, including deliberate efforts to account for the contributive differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men, as per COP14 guidance. This is based on the generally acknowledged role of women in the exploitation of natural resources for household-level livelihoods, and their potential contribution not only to resource degradation, but also in reversing the degradation. Thus, the umbrella project will be aligned to the guidance outlined in the UNCCD Gender Action Plan adopted by the Parties to the Convention in September 2017 to ensure women's participation during the design, planning, implementation of the proposed project activities, particularly capacity building and reporting exercise.

The gender dimension of the umbrella project will also be aligned with the UNGA's A/C.2/74/L.41/Rev.1 74th Second Committee Agenda 19 (e) that recognized that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls remain a crucial contribution to the effective implementation of the Convention, including its Strategic Framework 2018-2030, and to the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Therefore, consistent with this recognition, the proposed umbrella project will deliberately seek to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in desertification, land degradation and drought-related policies and activities. In this way, the proposed project will support participating countries in responding to the call to legally recognize rights to equal use and ownership of land for women and the enhancement of women's equal access to land and land tenure security, as well as the promotion of gender-sensitive measures to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality, taking into account the national contexts.

[1] UNGA Resolution: 74/220. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

[2] Countries specific Stakeholder's engagement plan using the guideline developed by Centre for Effective Services (2019). Introductory Guide to Implementation. <https://nirm.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirm.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Stakeholder%20Engagement%20Process%20Handout.pdf>

C. DESCRIBE THE ENABLING ACTIVITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Discuss the work intended to be undertaken and the output expected from each activity as outlined in Table A

The proposed GEF7 EA Umbrella I project will focus on national-level enabling environments of the GEF-eligible country Parties to implement the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 – 2030; providing technical assistance to the countries. The proposed umbrella project will focus on one component with associated expected outcomes and outputs as detailed below. Through the component, the proposed project largely falls within and contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda brings to the fore the commitment of the international community to combating desertification, restoring degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and striving to achieve a land degradation-neutral world by 2030.[1] More precisely, the project component will support the eligible country Parties to be and remain on course in terms of improving their ability to report on the Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 – 2030. Therefore, to various degrees, this proposed umbrella project will support eligible country Parties to build capacities to report on the following Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 – 2030[2]:

- ? Strategic Objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality;
- ? Strategic Objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations;
- ? Strategic Objective 3: To mitigate, adapt to, and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems;
- ? Strategic Objective 4: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD; and
- ? Strategic Objective 5: To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level.

The 2017-2018 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process marked the first time that Parties to the Convention followed a standardized methodology to provide information on land-based indicators for the strategic objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030. The project is broadly conceived within Decision 11/COP14 to support national-level efforts to improve the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports. Through this component, the proposed project seeks to establish and update national-level mechanisms to support the GEF-eligible country Parties to meet quality standard UNCCD reporting requirements. The component thus contributes to supporting relevant authorities to apply an efficient planning schedule for all aspects of the reporting process and to improve reporting tools. Thus, this component is guided by recommendations to request the UNCCD secretariat to encourage and support developing country Parties in the development of national data. The component also follows on recommendations for data harmonization, and that the LDN target-setting, implementation and monitoring at national level be a continuous process including regular stock takes of LDN targets and their implementation. In this regard, this component is consistent with the Decision 11/COP.14 clauses 7 and 144 that has requested the UNCCD secretariat to use the resources available to further improve methodological guidelines and tools for the next reporting process and address bottlenecks highlighted by Parties in the last reporting process, and to use the reporting quality assurance exercise as a part of national capacity-building processes, making in-depth technical reviews of the reports of selected countries per region with broad stakeholder engagement, respectively.

Based on previous experiences and COP 14 Decisions, the proposed umbrella project will suggest areas for updating national-level guidance notes, provide comments and need for improvement of the improved and updated tools and methodologies, online and on-site training on use of these tools. The umbrella project will also focus on establishing national-level targeted learning material to support the future reporting process by national-level key stakeholders. It will build on the previously established national-level reporting platforms in the eligible countries to ensure UNCCD reporting quality standards, including the gender-responsive indicators to fully capture the gender dimensions of land degradation activities.

Building on previous efforts such as the Trends-Earth toolbox, this proposed umbrella project through this component will seek to strengthen national-level capacities in the use of the tool in collaboration with other partners – as part of innovative ways of updating and improving reporting abilities of eligible country Parties with country specific and responsive tools. This umbrella project therefore envisions collaborations with Initiatives such as Trends.Earth to improve data collection at national level in eligible countries.

The proposed project is cognisant of limited capacities in eligible countries as one of the key barriers that Parties have to surmount in order for them to combat desertification/land degradation and drought and achieving their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets. Decision 11/COP.14 clause 20 has requested the UNCCD Secretariat and other partners to assist affected Parties in their capacity-building efforts for collecting and using national data to enable the use of the level 3 indicator to supplement the application of default data for monitoring and evaluation.

to ensure that Trends. Earth can support the preparation and analysis of data for reporting in a form that can be automatically transferred to the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) and that the functions of Trends. Earth are expanded to help generate reports to serve at the national level.

The umbrella project through GSP III will coordinate the updating the current Trends. Earth tool with additional functionalities, including to assess drought in the context of land degradation for future reporting. The umbrella project through the GSP III will encourage Parties to the use of tools and provide hands-on exercises during regional capacity building workshops.

Coordination with FAO and IUCN on LDN, Land Use Planning and Drought:

Following COP14 decisions, UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism will further strengthen its partnerships on capacity building for drought monitoring and mitigation activities. In this context, synergies will be developed with the enabling activity implemented by FAO, titled, Enabling Activities for Implementing UNCCD COP Drought Decisions. The objective of this EA is to enable the UNCCD parties to implement national drought plans according to the principles of Integrated Drought Management. IUCN is also working on developing an enabling activity which will focus on Integrating Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) into land use planning frameworks to strengthen national UNCCD enabling environments. The umbrella will build linkage with this activity with respect to integrating LDN into long-term national land use plans.

C5. Consistency with National Priorities

The Project is consistent with the following national strategies, reports and assessments:

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

UNCCD Reporting

UNCCD National Action Plans (NAPs)

Parties to the Convention are required to communicate, through the UNCCD secretariat and report on measures undertaken to implement the Convention as provisioned in article 26 of the convention and the decision 11/COP.1. The information communicated by Parties through reporting is valuable also for other stakeholders that work on the implementation of the UNCCD at national and local levels.

The GSP III is directly linked to UNCCD Reporting. The UNCCD reporting process monitors progress made in the implementation of the UNCCD [2018-2030 Strategic Framework](#) for implementing the Convention adopted at the thirteenth session of the COP ([decision 7/COP.13](#)). In line with this new strategic framework, national reporting involves two main types of information: data on the progress towards the five strategic objectives and narratives stories of cases on actual implementation efforts under Convention.

The project will also build on and create synergies with other national strategies including the national SDG process and relevant national policies developed in the context of the Rio convention, including national action related to the UNFCCC (e.g. National Communication, Biennial Update Report (BUR), National Determined Contribution (NDCs) and CBD (CBD National reports, NBSAPs, Cartagena Protocol National Report, Nagoya Protocol National Report).

C6: Enabling Activity Knowledge Management.

Knowledge management approach will be applied to all the component of the project. Data acquired from different sources are processed and made available to the Parties as default data. The reporting platform, reporting tools and guidelines for reporting will be made accessible to all Country Parties. Parties will also have access to UNCCD e-learning courses and online tutorial videos guiding the reporting process through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub.

The national reports submitted by the Parties will be made available online allowing access to final reports. In addition, a comprehensive analysis of the reports will be prepared by the convention secretariats for intersessional CRIC deliberations tentatively expected in 2022. The analysis report will be made available as official documents. The outreach material on UNCCD reports will be disseminated through different channels. The case study conducted by the UNCCD and Global Mechanism on the establishment of a national monitoring system and information document on financial monitoring framework will be disseminated in line with COP decisions.

B.2 Enabling Activity Risks

The conceptualization of the umbrella project recognizes potential risks associated with building capacities at national level in the context of UNCCD 2018-2030 and SDG 15.3

National-level Potential Risks	Level	Proposed measure (to be further developed during the project design)
Participants attending the capacity building workshop may not be involved in reporting	Low	Capacity building workshops will target relevant personnel in countries who are involved in UNCCD reporting processes. This will be determined with support from UNCCD National Focal Points
Lack of country-level capacity to produce quality reports	Moderate	Organization of capacity building workshop, availability of technical backstopping through helpdesk, online tutorial, guidelines for reporting. That is, this project will seek to build the very capacities that are lacking to ensure improved quality reporting
Untimely availability of updated national-level data	Low	The project will seek to sequentially prioritise the development and updating of tools to ensure the access, collection and analyses of data in a timely manner
Staff turnover	Moderate	Efforts will be done to work with relevant personnel, and with support from the UNCCD Focal Points, ensure stability in the staff whose capacities will be built for UNCCD reporting. Additionally, there will be technical backstopping.
COVID-19 (see additional information and a brief global overview in the section below this table.[1])	Moderate to High	The core activities of the proposed project will focus on capacity development at national-level to enhance technical and institutional capacity for land degradation monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. Depending on each country situation, the project will seek to organize trainings/workshops virtually to limit and minimize the potential of spreading the disease through physical contacts or face to face if the pandemic situations allows. The proposed project will adopt the "human resource first" approach to ensure that the health of stakeholders is not endangered. This means that the proposed project will develop strategies that will ensure and support the full participation of stakeholders in virtual trainings/workshops, including a platform for knowledge sharing among participants/stakeholders as necessary.
Climate Change (see additional information and a brief global overview in the section below this table.)	Low	The proposed project will focus on providing technical assistance at national level for GEF-eligible Parties to enhance their technical and institutional capacity for land degradation monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. Given this biased focus on "software interventions" that do not require on-the-ground direct responses to the six "life-supporting sectors" that are impacted by climate change (i.e. food, water, health, ecosystem services, habitat and infrastructure), the potential risk of climate change on the proposed project is low. Additionally, given the centrality of the health and socioeconomic value of land to food production; water resources; human and animal health, ecosystem services, human habitat and infrastructure, building and enhancing technical and institutional capacities for land degradation monitoring will

[1] More on Trends.Earth [here](#)

[3] Orr, B.J., A.L. Cowie, V.M. Castillo Sanchez, P. Chasek, N.D. Crossman, A. Erlewein, G. Louwagie, M. Maron, G.I. Metternicht, S. Minelli, A.E. Tengberg, S. Walter, and S. Welton. 2017. Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality. A Report of the Science-Policy Interface. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Bonn, Germany.

[4] Most activities finalised; still awaiting terminal evaluation.

D. DESCRIBE, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPECTED COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

The proposed umbrella project will build on the Global Support programme III as baseline project to support and enhance national-level technical and institutional capacity for reporting and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. The umbrella project will ensure national-level capacity building, technical support ? ensuring that eligible countries have the necessary reporting tools and data for their submission of reports. This will help the COP in providing adequate guidance for the implementation of UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. Besides improving national-level quality country reports, tools and standard methodologies, the umbrella project will also test the effectiveness of national-level efforts which establish in previous cycle required monitoring system on indicators and financing approach for UNCCD implementation.

Against this background, this proposed umbrella project will build on previous preparatory interventions to support the implementation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030. As noted above, the project will build on the GSP III, learning from its implementation and riding on its structures, political will and momentum and stakeholder engagement in the implementation of UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. The synergy between the two project ensure cost saving in the the regional and national levels as the regional level GSP III will develop tools, guidelines, capacity building of national focal points and updated reporting Platform (PRAIS Portal) while at the national level reports will be produced and submitted to the convention bodies for regional and global analysis and submission to guide Convention bodies decisions. By building on previous interventions including the PRAIS Platform, the national monitoring and data collecting system, the national network of institutions in charge of the data collection, the project will not only avoid ?reinventing the wheel? but also, this approach will prove cost-effective. It should be noted that the countries in the GSP III are also likely to be participate in the umbrella project, strengthening the case for cost-effectiveness of project.

The project will provide the support that country Parties need to ensure the required enabling environment for the actual implementation of activities to enhance national-level institutional and

technical capacities for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. building on the ongoing agreement and collaboration between UNCCD, NASA, CSIRO and other partners that developed the Trends.Earth tool. Without the requested support, country Parties will continue to have challenges related to capacity, misalignment of policies and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and will continue lacking opportunities that come from platforms and partnerships of wide arrays of actors. The platforms and partnerships from actors can contribute to the implementation of the UNCCD priority areas, specifically the Strategic Framework 2018-2030 of the UNCCD secretariat.

E. DESCRIBE, DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN

To enhance national-level technical and institutional capacity for reporting in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3, this project proposes a robust M&E which will seek to ensure that countries are on course regarding UNCCD reporting through updated and improved tools, for UNCCD indicators, and enhanced capacities for reporting against UNCCD.

To track the implementation of the project, including proposing appropriate adjustments to the project, the M&E plan will include systematic monitoring and reporting of project progress through reports (including mid-term and terminal evaluations) and technical visits to selected countries. The table below summarises the proposed budgeted M&E plan for the project at global level. The Terminal Evaluation cost will come as a top up from the Set Aside and not included in the \$100,000 earmarked for each eligible country.

Type of M&E Activity	Responsible parties	Budget from GEF	Time Frame
Launch of project/Inception workshop	Project Manager	Virtual	Within 3 months Trust commitment letter
Monitoring and reporting of project progress against annual workplan	Project Manager,	0	Progress/performance Indicators: every 6 months
Project Steering Committee Meetings (4 @ \$7,500 each)	Project Manager, UN Environment, GEF	-	Annual (and back to back with UNCCD meetings)
Semi-annual Progress Reports to UN Environment	Project Manager, supported by RA M&E Specialist	0	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July
Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Project Manager, supported by RA M&E Specialist	0	Annual. Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January or 31 July

Co-financing reports	Project Manager	0	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 January or 31 July
Project Final Report	Project Manager, supported by RA Director of M&E and Quality Assurance	0	Within 2 months of the project completion date
Mid-term and End of Project Stakeholder Workshops on the project's results and learning (2 @ 5,000 each)	Project Manager	0	At global level Within 2 months of the project completion date
External Terminal Evaluation	External consultant, supervised by UN Environment Task Manager	50,000	Global Umbrella projects: Within 6 months of the project completion date
Total M&E Plan Budget		50,000[1]¹	

**In-line with UN Environment Evaluation Policy and the GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy the project will be subject to a Terminal Evaluation which will cover all the UNCCD EA umbrella projects under GEF 7 cycle. The Evaluation Office will be responsible for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) and will liaise with the Task Manager and Executing Agency (ies) throughout the process. The TE will provide an independent assessment of project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of impact and sustainability. It will have two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, the GEF, executing partners and other stakeholders. The direct costs of the evaluation will be charged against the project evaluation budget. The TE will be initiated no earlier than six months prior to the operational completion of project activities and, if follow-on phase of the project is envisaged, should be completed prior to completion of the project and the submission of the follow-up proposal. TE must be initiated no later than six months after operational completion. The draft TE report will be sent by the Evaluation Office to project stakeholders for comments. Formal comments on the report will be shared by the Evaluation Office in an open and transparent manner. The project performance will be assessed against standard evaluation criteria using a six-point rating scheme. The final determination of project ratings will be made by the Evaluation Office when the report is finalized and further reviewed by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office upon submission. The evaluation report will be publicly disclosed and may be followed by a recommendation compliance process.

F. EXPLAIN THE DEVIATIONS FROM TYPICAL COST RANGES (WHERE APPLICABLE)

To support the more effective execution of this project, the project will have coordination support staff. The Staff will support countries in effective access to resources and reporting on use of financial resources.

Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

A. Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Ndaukila Muhinya Godefroid	Director, Directorate of Sustainable Development and GEF OFP	Ministry Of Environment And Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic Of The Congo	4/12/2021
Doudou Trawally	Executive Director, National Environmental Agency and GEF OFP	National Environment Agency	4/13/2021
Haman Unusa	Head of Unit for Studies and Prospection and GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development	4/15/2021
Bahodur Sheralizoda	Chairman, Committee of Environmental Protection Under the Republic of Tajikistan and GEF OFP	Committee of Environmental Protection Under the Republic of Tajikistan	4/16/2021
Youssouf Elamine Y. Mbechezi	Director General, Directorate of Environment and GEF OFP	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Environment and Forests, of the Union of the Comoros	4/20/2021
Kone Bakayoko Alimata	Permanent Secretary and GEF OFP	Ministry in Charge of Economy and Finances, Cote d'Ivoire	4/21/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Nino Tkhilava	Head of Environment and Climate Change Department, GEF OFP in Georgia	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia	4/23/2021
Yakoubou Mahaman Sani	Director General, Direction General de la Programmation du Developpement, and GEF OFP	Ministry of Planning, Niger	4/27/2021
Jonah Stanley	Director, Planning, Research and Statistics and GEF OFP	Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria	4/26/2021
Jasim Abdulazeez Humadi ALMOHAMADI	Deputy Minister of Health and Environment for Environmental Affairs and GEF OFP, Republic of Iraq	Ministry of Health and Environment, Republic of Iraq	4/28/2021
Antonio Michale Ondo Angue	National Institute for Environmental Conservation and GEF OFP	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment, Equatorial Guinea	4/27/2021
Romanos Petrosyan	Minister, GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment, Republic of Armenia	4/28/2021
Ivette Pengel Patterzon	Legal and Policy Advisor, GEF OFP/Convention Focal Point for UNCCD	Ministry Of Spatial Planning And Environment, Directorate For The Environment, Suriname	4/29/2021
Teofilus Nghitila	Executive Director, and GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Namibia	4/20/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Somanegre Nana	Technical Coordinator for Permanent Secretariat of the National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development and GEF OFP	Environment Protection Agency, Guyana	5/4/2021
Zaheer Fakir	GEF Operational Focal Point	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa	5/5/2021
Kasahun Wakoya Nikusa	GEF Operational Focal Point	Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission, Ethiopia	5/4/2021
Delphin AIDJI	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development, Republic of Benin	5/4/2021
Kibrom Asmerom Weldegebriel	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Land, Water and Environment, Republic of Eritrea	5/5/2021
Dr. Mohamed - Yahya LAFDAL CHAH	Cooperation and Technical Operations Advisor and GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Islamic Republic of Mauritania	5/6/2021

B. Convention Participation

Convention	Date of Ratification/Accession	National Focal Point
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ANNEX A: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

ANNEX F-1 - RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GEF ACTIVITY BASED BUDGET AND UNEP BUDGET LINE (GEF FUNDS ONLY US\$)

Project title:		Strengthening national-level capacities of country Parties for UNCCD monitoring and reporting (GEF 7 EA Umbrella)							
Project number:									
Project executing partner:		Government Ministries\							
Project implementation period:		Expenditure by project component/activity (provide				*Insert actual year			
From:	2022	Add additional components/activities as required				Add additional years as required			
To:	2023					Expenditure by calendar year			
UNEP Budget Line		1	2	3	Total	Year 1*	Year 2*	Year 3*	Total
10	PERSONNEL COMPONENT								
1100	Project personnel								
1101	Project Associate	-	-	66,500	66,500	33,250	33,250.00		66,500
1102	Finance Assistant	-	-	11,354	11,354	5,677	5,677.00		11,354
1199	Sub-total	-	-	77,854	77,854	38,927	38,927	-	77,854
1200	Consultants				-				
1201					-				-
1299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1300	Administrative Support				-				
1301					-				-
1399	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1600	Travel on official business				-				
1601	Travel				-				-
1699	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1999	Component total	-	-	77,854	77,854	38,927	38,927	-	77,854
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT								
2100	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)				-				
2101	Sub-contract with recipient Government with Gender equity consideration	1,826,484			1,826,484	1,369,863	456,621.00		1,826,484
2102					-				-
2199	Sub-total	1,826,484	-	-	1,826,484	1,369,863	456,621	-	1,826,484
2200	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for supporting organizations)				-				
2201					-				-
2299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2300	Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)				-				
2301					-				-
2399	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2999	Component total	1,826,484	-	-	1,826,484	1,369,863	456,621	-	1,826,484
30	TRAINING COMPONENT								
3200	Group training				-				
3201					-				-
3299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3300	Meetings/Conferences				-				
3301					-				-
3399	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3999	Component total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40	EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES COMPONENT								
4100	Expendable equipment				-				
4101					-				-
4199	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4200	Non-expendable equipment				-				
4201					-				-
4299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4999	Component total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
50	MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT								
5100	Operation and maintenance of equipment				-				
5101					-				-
5199	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5200	Reporting costs				-				
5201					-				-
5299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5300	Sundry				-				
5302					-				-
5399	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5400	Hospitality and entertainment				-				
5401					-				-
5499	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5500	Evaluation				-				
5501	Terminal Evaluation			50,000	50,000			50,000	50,000
5599	Sub-total	-	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000	50,000
5999	Component total	-	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000	50,000
99	GRAND TOTAL	1,826,484	-	127,854	1,954,338	1,408,790	495,548	50,000	1,954,338