Sustainable Management of Agricultural Biodiversity in Vulnerable Ecosystems and Rural Communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region in Georgia

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10829

Project Type
MSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
CBIT **No**
NGI **No**

Project Title
Sustainable Management of Agricultural Biodiversity in Vulnerable Ecosystems and Rural Communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region in Georgia

Countries
Georgia

Agency(ies)
UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), through the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus)

Executing Partner Type
Government

GEF Focal Area
Biodiversity

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Species, Plant Genetic Resources, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Productive Landscapes, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Community-based adaptation, Livelihoods, Climate resilience, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Income Generating Activities, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Sustainable Agriculture, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Food Security, Influencing models, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Demonstrate innovative approache, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries, Communications, Education, Public Campaigns, Awareness Raising, Local Communities, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Participation, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Access to benefits and services, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Integrated Programs, Commodity Supply Chains, Smallholder Farmers, Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration, Smallholder Farming, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Indicators to measure change, Theory of change, Adaptive management, Knowledge Exchange, Targeted Research, Innovation, Knowledge Generation

Sector

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Submission Date

6/7/2022

Expected Implementation Start

1/1/2023

Expected Completion Date

12/31/2026

Duration

48In Months

Agency Fee($)

168,765.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
BD-1-4	Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through Sustainable Use of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources	GET	1,776,485.00	11,600,000.00
		Total Project Cost($)	**1,776,485.00**	**11,600,000.00**

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To mainstream agro-biodiversity conservation into the agriculture sector of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
1. Improved national policy and legal frameworks to sustainably manage agricultural biodiversity and support livelihoods through adapted wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties) in agricultural production	Technical Assistance	**1.1.** Adoption of new policies integrating sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity with the focus on adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) *[Indicator: At least two policy documents addressing sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity (local or national) will be issued and where appropriate adopted]*	**1.1.1.** National and local agricultural biodiversity policy documents developed that take account of unique diversity, ecosystem function and mainstreaming of local agricultural biodiversity into agricultural and other sectoral policies, strategies and programs **1.1.2.** Regulatory framework in place to conserve and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism **1.1.3**. Sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization of local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for agriculture and tourism sectors are developed and their implementation is promoted	GET	290,000.00	1,660,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
2. Demonstration of diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products through adapted wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties)	Technical Assistance	**2.1.** Increased area devoted to sustainably managed agricultural biodiversity through mainstreaming of diversified practices and products in the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region enhancing resilience to climate change *[Indicator: Area of landscapes under sustainable management in production systems to benefit biodiversity will be increased in total up to 20,000 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) that comprise both: non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands for in-situ (CWRs) and agricultural lands for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization]*	**2.1.1.** Field-based surveys and mapping of the distribution of wild populations of the targeted crop (vine and wheat varieties) wild relatives (CWRs) in the wild and landraces at the farm level are conducted **2.1.2.** Two nurseries and field seed banks to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) established **2.1.3.** Participatory and sustainable management practices identified, planned and implemented on at least 6 pilot sites that will support traditional crop varieties of adapted wild edible plants to improve local diversity	GET	1,024,987.00	7,223,600.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
3. Increased awareness of the importance of agricultural biodiversity, capacity building of the key stakeholders and knowledge management	Technical Assistance	**3.1.** Stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity *[Indicator: Increased score in the Capacity Development Scorecard]* *[Indicator: At least 50% of key stakeholders under the component 3 are women, including female farmers, producers and homemakers]* *[Indicator: Content of awareness-raising campaigns is oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and reinforcing women?s image as change-makers]*	**3.1.1.** National capacity developed to mainstream and promote agricultural biodiversity and agrotourism **3.1.2**. In the selected Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, a significant number of large and small scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) representatives are capacitated to implement and monitor compliance with agro-biodiversity friendly products and services targeting both women and men **3.1.3.** Gender-sensitive information and awareness-raising campaigns conducted, fostering a greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development	GET	250,000.00	1,500,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Monitoring and Evaluation	Technical Assistance			GET	50,000.00	100,000.00
			Sub Total ($)		**1,614,987.00**	**10,483,600.00**

Project Management Cost (PMC)

	GET	161,498.00	1,116,400.00
Sub Total($)		**161,498.00**	**1,116,400.00**
Total Project Cost($)		**1,776,485.00**	**11,600,000.00**

Please provide justification

C. Sources 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($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,250,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Akhaltsikhe Municipality	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	750,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Aspindza Municipality	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	750,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Borjomi Municipality	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	750,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Adigeni Municipality	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	750,000.00
Donor Agency	GIZ	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	550,000.00
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,950,000.00
Civil Society Organization	REC Caucasus	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,850,000.00
			Total Co-Financing($)	**11,600,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will support project activities with a total of US$ 1,250,000 in in-kind co-financing. Recurrent expenditures from MEPA will be covered by the state budget allocations during the project life-cycle through annual state budget lines for operational and programming costs related to biodiversity protection, viticulture development and agricultural research and extension. Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza, Borjomi and Adigeni municipalities will allocate US$ 750,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) each during the project life-cycle through annual municipal state budget allocations for support of local agricultural development. GIZ (South Caucasus Office) will provide US$ 550,000 of recurrent expenditures (in-kind) through the GIZ Project "Supporting

climate-friendly forest management in Georgia (ECO Georgia) financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and other German public sector clients operating in Georgia in the following priority areas: support of legal framework for ecosystem-based sustainable forest resources management; support of legal framework for the sustainable use of non-timber forest products (NTFP); development of guidelines for sustainable wild collection of selected NTFP; consolidation of databases, especially on forests and biodiversity; development of methods for collecting data on ecosystem-based forest resource management; development of vulnerability studies and adaptation strategies for climate-resilient sustainable forest resource management; analysis of education and training needs for rural communities, etc. In addition, the executing agency, REC Caucasus, will support project activities with a total of US$ 6,800,000 USD co-financing. Out of the total amount of co-financing, in-kind contribution in the amount of 3,850,000 USD (Recurrent Expenditures) will be provided during the project implementation period in a form of voluntary labor, donation of meetings and office premises of the organization, free use of vehicles and equipment. Grants (Investment Expenditures) with the total amount of 2,950,000 USD will be provided throughout the following ongoing and planned projects: (a) AF/IFAD ?Climate Change Adaptation Service Provider of Development of pasture inventory in Samtskhe-Javakheti region?. The Dairy Modernisation and Market Access (DiMMA) Programme, co-funded by the Government of Georgia, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Adaptation Fund (AF), aims at regional economic development and poverty reduction by contributing to the modernization and emergence of a competitive, diversified, the resilient and sustainable agricultural industry in Georgia. The Programme is expected to enhance the livelihoods and resilience of smallholders, improve the management of the natural resources and reduce the vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. The two projects complement each other geographically and thematically and will be implemented in the Samtskhe- Javakheti region. Complementarities between the GEF project looking at mainstream agro-biodiversity conservation into agriculture sector and the focus of the IFAD project at climate resilience development are strong assets for both projects. REC Caucasus will allocate 1, 200 000 USD as part of co-financing for integrating methods and tools to improve the quality and quantity of agro-biodiversity within productive agriculture systems in Samtskhe-Javakheti region. (b) BMZ/GIZ Promoting Green Deal Readiness in the Eastern 'Partnership Countries (ProGRess). This program will be implemented under the BMZ?s International Climate Initiative via GIZ, and the execution of the project activities in Georgia will be provided by REC Caucasus. The 3-year project?s objective is to facilitate Climate-friendly economic development in Eastern Partnership countries and contribute to long-term mitigation consistent with the EU Green Deal objectives and 1.5?C pathways of the Paris Agreement. The project will establish close cooperation and make synergies with the GEF project with the following work: awareness-raising and communication activities for the local population and other stakeholders on climate-smart management of agro-biodiversity. Special attention will be given to supporting evidence-based policy-making to create enabling frameworks for climate-friendly economic development with a special focus on agriculture sector development. In the frame of the BMZ/GIZ project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 945,000 USD to train farmers in sustainable agricultural practices, anchor knowledge in the Samtskhe- Javakheti region and increase outreach. (c) ADB project ?TA-9740 GEO: Preparing Integrated Solutions for Livable Cities? The Livable Cities Investment Project for Balanced Development is a sector loan project of ADB for a total loan amount of USD 120 million that will improve livability and

inclusive economic growth in the regions in Georgia, including the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. The transaction technical assistance facility (TA facility) will support project preparation to ensuing sustainable development component and empowerment of the capacities of municipalities, Assist in the preparation of development and infrastructure projects, and coordinate with local stakeholders (CSOs, IFIs and local activists). In the frame of the ADB project REC Caucasus will provide the co-financing of 750,000 USD to undertake: (i) gender mainstreaming activities, (ii) the farmers need assessment and plan dedicated program with a specific focus on inclusive and climate-resilient regional development in support of agro-biodiversity conservation in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. (d) WB ?Preparation of watershed management and landscape restoration plan for areas upstream and downstream of Sioni irrigation water reservoir?. The overall goal of this project is to assist the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) in raising the ambition of Georgia?s NDC in relation to the country?s climate mitigation and adaptation goals. The outcome of these projects will: support the case for restoring landscapes and managing watersheds of valuable irrigation schemes throughout East Georgia and exploring intervention opportunities to increase water security in the region. In the frame of the WB project, REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of 55,000 USD to develop a visionary policy document informing governments, private and public donors and World Bank staff about the benefits of landscape restoration and watershed management, thus supporting agro-biodiversity conservation and climate-smart agriculture practice in the country.

D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,776,485	168,765	1,945,250.00
			Total Grant Resources($)		**1,776,485.00**	**168,765.00**	**1,945,250.00**

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount ($)

50,000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

4,750

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNEP	GET	Georgia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	50,000	4,750	**54,750.00**
				Total Project Costs($)	**50,000.00**	**4,750.00**	**54,750.00**

Core Indicators

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
20000.00	20000.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
20,000.00	20,000.00		

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title	Submitted

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO?e (direct)	613041	613041	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO?e (direct)	613,041	613,041		
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2023	2027		
Duration of accounting	20	20		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO?e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO?e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	28,600	2,600		
Male	26,400	2,400		
Total	55000	5000	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

The Project will contribute to Aichi Biodiversity Target 13, which aims to develop and implement strategies to minimize genetic erosion and safeguard genetic diversity. Consequently, this would contribute to accomplishing other Aichi Biodiversity Targets including sustainable production and consumption (Target 4), sustainably managed agriculture (including aquaculture and forestry) (Target 7), and fully integrated and respected traditional knowledge, innovations, practices, and customary use of biological resources (Target 18).

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

describe any changes in alignment with the project design with the original pif

? Work carried out during the PPG phase was aimed at complementing information and validating the assumptions underlying the Project Identification Form (PIF), as well as further engagement with project counterparts. PPG work started by the end of 2021 during the still ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Two workshops (Inception and Validation) to develop the problem tree and results framework were conducted consequently in the first half of 2022 with participation of key governmental counterparts. Meetings were held with municipal authorities from Samtskhe-Javakheti region and Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) to discuss activities to avoid overlaps and coordinate support for PPG work.

? Barriers noted at the PIF stage remain unchanged, but the statement of the problem, the project's theory of change have been further elaborated and made more context-specific, with direct linkages of root causes and barriers to proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes.

IN PIF	IN CEO ENDORSEMENT REQUEST	REASON FOR CHANGE
Output 1.1.2. Regulatory framework in place to conserve and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism	Output 1.1.2. Regulatory framework in place to conserve and **sustainably** use agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism	Technical: the word ?sustainable? has been modified to read as ?sustainably?.
Output 1.1.3. Sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for agriculture and tourism sectors are developed and implemented to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming	Output 1.1.3. Sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for agriculture and tourism sectors are developed and **their implementation is promoted** to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming	This is to ensure that results would be based on an integrated approach to promote and secure long-term benefits that will be disseminated to policy and decision makers at local, regional and national levels.

IN PIF	IN CEO ENDORSEMENT REQUEST	REASON FOR CHANGE
Indicator under Outcome 2.2: [*Indicator: Enhanced conservation security for the grape and wheat varieties/species important for agrobiodiversity / Baseline and targets will be established during the PPG phase*]	Indicator under Outcome 2.2: [Indicator: Increased proportion of agricultural biodiversity friendly products derived from target plants (local vine and wheat varieties) in total production of vine and wheat products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region]	Existing indicator on enhanced conservation security has been shifted to Outcome 2.1. Instead, new indicator has been inserted that directly matches Outcome 2.2. See in Annex A (Project Results Framework and Theory of Change) baseline and targets for this indicator that were established during the PPG phase.
Indicator under Outcome 3.1: [*Indicator: Increased score in the Capacity Development Scorecard / Baseline and targets will be established during the PPG phase*]	Indicator under Outcome 3.1: [Indicator: Increased score in the Capacity Development Scorecard]	See in Annex A (Project Results Framework and Theory of Change) baseline and targets that were established during the PPG phase.

IN PIF	IN CEO ENDORSEMENT REQUEST	REASON FOR CHANGE
Project Core Indicator 11 (Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment) under section ?E. Project?s Target Contributions to GEF 7 Core Indicators?: 55,000 *civilians, of which 28,600 women and 26,400 men*	Project Core Indicator 11 (Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment) under section ?E. Project?s Target Contributions to GEF 7 Core Indicators?: 5,000 *civilians, of which 2,600 (52%) women and 2,400 (48%) men*	This is to provide refined number of potential direct beneficiaries. Modified number (5,000 civilians) in CEO endorsement request represents 5.2% of whole rural population of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region[1][1], which is in total 151,100 residents, of which 96,000 (64%) rural and 54,200 (36%) urban population ? while number provided at PIF stage offered 55,000 civilians as direct beneficiaries that was more than 57% of whole rural population of the region. Based on GEF definition for direct beneficiaries[2][2] that specifies direct beneficiaries as ?*number of individual people who receive targeted support from a given GEF project/activity and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances. Support is defined as direct assistance from the project/activity. Direct beneficiaries are all individuals receiving targeted support from a given project. Targeted support is the intentional and direct assistance of a project to individuals or groups of individuals who are aware that they are receiving that support and/or who use the specific resources.*?, it has been decided to limit number of direct beneficiaries by the number of individuals who will directly participate in on-job trainings, training seminars, awareness raising campaigns and/or other project activities (*consultations, workshops, working meetings etc*.).

1a. Project Description. *Elaborate on: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description); 2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects; 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project; 4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies; 5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing; 6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 7) innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up. ?*

1) The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)

? Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity contributes significantly to agriculture. The Earth?s biodiversity is being lost at an alarming rate, putting in jeopardy the sustainability of agriculture and ecosystem services and their ability to adapt to changing conditions, threatening food and livelihoods security[3][3]. The major challenge for agriculture is to ensure food security, adequate nutrition and stable livelihoods for all, now and in the future, by increasing food production while adopting sustainable and efficient agriculture, sustainable consumption of resources, and landscape-level planning to ensure the preservation of biodiversity.

? A rapidly growing global human population, and therefore a rapidly growing world demand for food, coupled with changing production and consumption patterns have stimulated the evolution of agriculture from traditional to modern, intensive systems. However, while modern agriculture has enabled food production to increase, contributing much to improving food security and reducing poverty, it has also been responsible for considerable damage to biodiversity, primarily through land-use conversion which is expected to remain the largest driver of biodiversity loss beyond 2010 and at least to 2050[4][4], but also through overexploitation, intensification of agricultural production systems, excessive chemical and water use, nutrient loading, pollution and introduction of alien species.

? Many key components of biodiversity for food and agriculture at genetic, species and ecosystem levels are in decline. Evidence suggests that some crops and, in some areas, plant diversity in farmers? fields is decreasing and threats to diversity are increasing. Many species that contribute to vital ecosystem services, including pollinators, natural enemies of pests, soil organisms and wild food species, are in decline as a consequence of the destruction and degradation of habitats, overexploitation, pollution and other threats[5][5]. During the last decades, worldwide biodiversity has been lost at an unprecedented rate in all the ecosystems, including agro-ecosystems. Homogenization of agricultural production systems, mainly due to intensification of agricultural systems coupled with specialization by plant and animal breeders and the harmonizing effects of globalization, is one of the greatest causes of agricultural biodiversity loss, through genetic erosion and the increasing levels of

genetic vulnerability of specialized crops and livestock. According to the FAO[6][6], it is estimated that about three-quarters of the genetic diversity found in agricultural crops has been lost over the last century, and this genetic erosion continues. For example, today, 90% of our food energy and protein comes from only 15 plant and 8 animal species, with disturbing consequences for nutrition and food security. Wheat, rice and maize alone provide more than 50% of the global plant-based energy intake.

? In addition to agricultural biodiversity, modern agricultural practices can also impact biodiversity in other ecosystems through several ways such as unsustainable demands on water (for irrigation for example), overgrazing, as well as excessive use of nutrients and chemical inputs to control weeds, pests and diseases that result in problems of pollution and eutrophication. Furthermore, land and habitat conversion (in particular forests, wetlands, and marginal lands) to large-scale agricultural production also cause significant loss of biodiversity.

National Context

? Georgia is rich in biodiversity. It is one of the 34 ?biodiversity hotspots?. The Red List of Georgia contains 134 animal species and 56 plant species; 42 of the animal species and 18 of the plant species are categorized as endangered or critically endangered. Georgia?s biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and the provision of ecosystem services essential for human well-being. It includes the ecosystems and habitats which harbour animals and plants that are used for food and other purposes and which provide life-sustaining services.

? Wild flora of Georgia includes about 4,130 species of vascular plants, from which 120 species are trees, 240 ? shrubs and about 3,800 ? herbs. The 10 leading families, in terms of diversity and content of endemic species are *Compositae* (538 total, 51endemic), *Gramineae* (332 total, 15 endemic), *Leguminosae* (317 total, 34 endemic), *Rosacea* (238 total, 63 endemic), *Cruciferae* (183 total, 11 endemic), *Scrophulariacea* (179 total, 14 endemic), *Umbeliferae* (177 total, 21 endemic), *Labiatae* (149 total, 9 endemic), *Caryophyllacea* (135 total, 10 endemic) and *Liliacea* (129 total, 10 endemic). Out of all the vascular species distributed in Georgia, 380 (9,0%) are endemic to the country and 600 (14,2%) are endemic in the Caucasus region. The generic endemism of Georgia?s flora is also high. There are 16 endemic genera in the flora of Georgia, which are endemic to the Caucasus at the same time: *Alboviodoxa, Woronowia, Chymsydia*, *Trigonocaryum, Symphyoloma, Pseudobetckea, Charesia, Mandenovai, Sredinskaya*, *Cladocheta, Pseudovesicaria, Gadellia, Agasyllis, Paederotella,* and *Kemulariella.* Georgian flora is also characterized by high level of relicts, it contains the several ? geographic, climatic and age relics of plant species. More than 2,000 species of the Georgian flora have direct economic importance for food, timber, edible fruits and nuts, forage and fodder, medicine, colorants, industry and essential oil production.

? Agricultural land covers 43.5% of the country?s total area. The area of arable land is about 790 thousand ha (11.5%), while the permanent crops (permanent plantations) cover about 268 thousand ha (3.8%). Hay meadows spread over 142 thousand ha, while the pastures occupy 1,800 thousand ha. The forests cover almost 40% of the country area. All agricultural lands along with forests occupy as much as 83.5% of the total area of Georgia[7][7]. In addition, there are many traditional varieties and wild relatives of cultivated species. A variety of crops, such as cereals (wheat, barley, rye, sorghum, millet), legumes (fava bean, grass pea, chickpea, lentil, cowpea), also flax, onion, garlic, and various fruits (grape, apple, pear, quince, medlar, peach, apricot, plum, cherry, cornelian cherry, etc) have been cultivated here from ancient times. Flora of Georgia contains about 100 families and 350 species of grain crops and about 100 species of seed or stone fruit-trees, nuts and wild berries. There are about 500 local varieties of grape recorded in the country, however only 300 of them can be found in live collections, scientific research institutes and local farms recently. Georgia belongs to the West Asian center of origin of the cultural plants where barley, wheat, pea, lentil, vetch, grapevine and numerous fruit trees have originated.

? During the last century, biodiversity has been lost at an unprecedented rate in all the ecosystems of Georgia, including agro-ecosystems. Homogenization of agricultural production systems, mainly due to intensification of agricultural systems, is one of the greatest causes of agricultural biodiversity loss, through genetic erosion and the increasing levels of genetic vulnerability of specialized crops. After the collapse of the Soviet Union genetic resource conservation and maintenance, both in nature and off-site (in-situ and ex-situ), became disordered and disorganized. The Sukhumi Vavilov station in Georgia, was destroyed in the civil war. During last three decades the number of local endemic crops have been decreased predominantly because of increased level of uncontrolled introduction of cultivars from outside of Georgia.

? In addition to the human driven biodiversity loss, it is widely recognized that climate change can be viewed as one of the key factors contributing to biodiversity loss[8][8]. Climate change process is considerably activated in Georgia. The study of climate change in the recent period in Georgia has revealed a very pronounced picture of warming, which is mainly caused by the increase of summer and autumn temperatures throughout the country and by the increase of air temperature and wind speed. In 1986-2015, compared to 1956-1985, the mean annual ground air temperature in the country increased almost everywhere, depending on the regions - in the range of 0.25?0.58?C. The average increase in the territory of Georgia is 0.47?C. The most significant warming was observed in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Kakheti and Samtskhe-Javakheti, where the temperature increase was 0.4-0.7?C. During the same period, the annual precipitation in western Georgia has mainly increased, while it decreased in some eastern regions. Base of the study of climate change modelling, the average annual temperature

will increase from 1.6?C to 3.0?C throughout the country in the period of 2041-2070 compared to 1971-2000 years period. The average annual temperature continues to grow in the period of 2071-2100 and will rise to the range of 0.4?C-1.7?C. As a result, the temperature rise for this period is within the range of 2.1?C-3.7?C compared to the 1971-2000 average. According to the climate scenario for the second forecast period (2071?2100), the average annual temperature in Samtskhe-Javakheti will increase by 2.8?C and the average annual precipitation will decrease by 12%, making the biodiversity of the region more vulnerable to pests and fires[9][9].

? It has to be noted that COVID-19 pandemic has had its impact on biodiversity as well. Despite to the accruing positive effects of the pandemic (reduced air/water pollution, short-term disruption in wildlife trafficking and ecosystem restoration due to lockdowns) prevailing problems such as indiscriminate exploitation of wildlife resources, tourism revenue losses, staff absenteeism/poor performance, increased human dependence on natural resources, disruptions of field/research work, and species monitoring would continue. Consequently, the conservation community must be ready to respond appropriately[10][10]. When the COVID-19 crisis is under control, the Project will provide solutions to decision makers how to incorporate improvement of soil fertility, avoiding habitat loss and fragmentation, reversing the loss of biodiversity into COVID recovery plans.[11][11] Project based nature-based solutions will be promoted as part of the recovery efforts in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic[12][12].

? Georgia is primarily an agricultural country, and women are crucial participants and contributors to agricultural development. Nonetheless, the contribution of women to agricultural production remains under-recognized. According to the studies[13][13], the social status of women in rural areas remains low, gender stereotypes persist and there is low awareness on existing gender inequalities. This implies a rigid division of gender roles and decision making within the household and family farming that directly and negatively affects women?s economic opportunities. Significant gender pay gap and women?s overrepresentation as unpaid workers is also a barrier for their economic empowerment. Generally, there is a gender gap in technical and professional expertise in agriculture and rural development, as well as lack of access to information, innovation and knowledge. Women have limited access to new technologies, ownership of land and other property. With better agricultural knowledge rural women could enhance their farms? production and raise standard of living for their children and families.

? In line with the multi-year *work programme in the sphere of agricultural biodiversity*[14][14] of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was adopted in 2000, Georgia implemented[15][15] activities relating to the assessment of agricultural biodiversity component and collection of genetic materials. For example, National Report on Animal Genetic Resources was prepared with FAO?s support (*Georgian National Cattlemen Association, 2004-2005*) and animal genetic resource catalogue was issued. As a result of multi-year researches, the Botany Institute identified the systematic floral composition of cultivated plants, their endemic varieties and indigenous species. The collected data were assumed as a basis of floras and checklists of grain-crops, legumes and other groups of plants cultivated in Georgia. In order to promote local capacities for management and conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, Elkana NGO conducted consultations and workshops for local farmers within the framework of GEF/UNDP project ?Recovery, Conservation and Sustainable Use of Georgia?s Agricultural Biological Diversity?. Elkana?s training center conducted the biological agricultural industry course, focused on conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity. One of the aims of the Project was in advocacy and assistance for sustainable management of agricultural biological resources. On a whole the project implementation was assessed as successful; however, several shortcomings were identified[16][16] after the completion of the project, such as: no clear project definition of a land race; specific weaknesses in the in-situ conservation of CWR strategy and approach; no clear strategy to address the enabling environment to support agrobiodiversity conservation and weaknesses in the adaptive management approach to the conservation of in-situ CWR and on-farm resources; and lack of capacity to test the biological safety of seeds and related considerable research needs to be undertaken with respect to the rigorous scientific testing of land races for drought / frost resistance, pest tolerance etc and authentication of land races with respect to their genetic identities.

Policy and Regulatory Framework

? ***Territorial protection of biodiversity and in-situ conservation of agricultural biodiversity*. The Law of Georgia ?On the System of Protected Areas? deserves special mentioning in terms of conservation, in-situ conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.** Agricultural lands and farms on the territory of protected landscapes and multiple-use areas can be used for sustainable agricultural.

? Georgia?s Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP-2)[17][17] was adopted in 2014 for the period of 2014-2020. Agrobiodiversity related national target was formulated in NBSAP-2 in the following way: ?By 2020, the management of agricultural ecosystems and natural grasslands is improved?. Currently, preparation for development of Georgia?s Third National

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan ? NBSAP-3 (2021-2027) is underway, though it is not clear yet whether agrobiodiversity related national target/s will be integrated into new Strategy and Action Plan or not. NBSAP-2 defined the following strategic approach regarding agrobiodiversity: Inventories of wild edible plants need to be conducted; Red List of Genetic Resources Important for Food and Agriculture to be created; Representative sites of high wild edible plants richness to be identified and mapped; The conservation of endemic agricultural species (wild edible plants) and micro flora of traditional fermented products needs to be ensured through *on farm* conservation measures; Strategic documents related to the sustainable management of agricultural ecosystems and natural ecosystems to be developed and relevant activities to be incorporated in local action plans; To mitigate all factors that have a negative impact on agricultural ecosystems, biodiversity and natural grasslands; The legal and institutional framework to be improved to facilitate the conservation of agricultural ecosystems; The impact of climate change on agrarian biodiversity to be assessed; Public awareness activities to be conducted focusing on (i) the values of the country?s agricultural biodiversity and (ii) informing the public on the steps they can take to conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity. According to the latest assessment[18][18], practically none of the actions above had been implemented.

? In 2019 Georgia became a party to the **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)**[19][19]. The treaty aims at guaranteeing food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. The treaty?s objective is to protect genetic resources (genetic material) of crops and their wild relatives through creation of genetic resource banks (*ex-situ conservation*), their protection and conservation in agricultural fields (*in-situ conservation*) and through functioning of international genetic resource exchange mechanisms.

? In 2019 Georgian Government adopted **Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia for 2021-2027**[20][20] and its **Action Plan for 2021-2023**[21][21]. Agriculture and rural development have an important role to play in the country?s sustainable economic development and inclusive economic growth. One of the goals of the strategy is the sustainable use of natural resources, retaining the eco-system, adaptation to climate change. However, despite a fact that the Strategy is targeting sustainable use of natural resources, retaining the eco-system, adaptation to climate change by maintaining agrobiodiversity, its Action Plan for 2021-2023 does not cover any of the agrobiodiversity related activities. The strategy applies gender lens for sectoral analysis, underlying the importance for women?s engagement in lower-income activities in comparison to men. The strategy accentuates women?s role in agricultural development, while emphasizing existing gender disparities in agriculture and other spheres of economy.

? With the purpose of introducing a quality seed and plant materials on the market and introducing a certification system for seed and planting materials, national legislative basis was created that meet the international regulations and standards, and the mandatory certification system was enacted for crops (wheat, barley), together with the voluntary certification system for planting materials. However, this legal framework requires improvement in terms of integration of agrobiodiversity specific considerations. This legal framework consists of number of international conventions, national legal acts and technical regulations:

? International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) Convention[22][22]

? Act on New Breeds of Animals and Varieties of Plants[23][23]

? Registration Rules for Breeder?s Rights on New Breeds***[24]***[24]

? Distinctness, Uniformity and Stability (DUS) of New Varieties of Common Wheat (Bread Wheat) - Triticum aestivum L.***[25]***[25]

? Expert Board for Evaluation of Results of DUS of New Breeds***[26]***[26]

? Additional Requirements for Distribution of New Breeds[27][27]

? International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture - ITPGRFA[28][28]

? Act on Permission for Distribution of Agricultural Plant Species Subject to Mandatory Certification, and on Seed Production[29][29]

? List of Agricultural Plants Subject to Mandatory Certification***[30]***[30]

? Procedure for Certification of Seed and Planting Material of Agricultural Plant Species Subject to Mandatory Certification***[31]***[31]

? Procedure for Labelling of Seed and Planting Material of Agricultural Plant Species Subject to Mandatory Certification***[32]***[32]

? Organisational and Methodological Scheme for Testing/Assessment of Species Value for Cultivation and Use [VCU] [33][33]

? National Catalogue of Agricultural Plant Varieties and Guidelines for its Maintenance***[34]***[34]

? Regulation Determining Terms for Placing Seeds of Cereal Crops on the Internal Market ***[35]***[35]

? Agreement Establishing the International Organisation of Vine and Wine[36][36]

? Vines and Wine Act[37][37]

- *Production of Vine Grafting Materials and Vine Planting Materials****[38]***[38]
- *Viticulture Zones and Subzones in Georgia and Corresponding Recommended Range of Vine Species****[39]***[39]
- *Certification of Vine Grafting Materials and Vine Planting Materials****[40]***[40]
- *Marketing of Material for the Vegetative Propagation of the Vine****[41]***[41]

Area of Intervention: Samtskhe-Javakheti Region

? The project will be carried out on the territory of the Samstkhe-Javakheti region in all six municipalities of the region. The region has been selected based on extensive consultations with the MEPA Departments/Agencies, Government Agencies, Regional Administration of Samtskhe-Javakheti

and representatives of private sector in agribusiness, local farmers and based on the following technical criteria:

? Existence of globally important agrobiodiversity in the region (e.g., vine and wheat land races and their wild relatives);

? Existence of multiple typical problems regarding sustainable agrobiodiversity management in Georgia, such as loss and unsustainable use, complexity of terrain and geographic features, types of soil layers, patterns of the local agricultural activities and lack of regulatory mechanisms leading to effective agrobiodiversity-based agriculture and eco- tourism;

? The importance of the agriculture sector to the region (GDP share and share of the population employed);

? Dependence of rural population on agricultural lands as a source of livelihoods;

? Complementarities with biodiversity and agriculture national strategies.

? Samtskhe-Javakheti is a region in the South-East of Georgia. Its area is 6,421 km2. The total population of the region is about 151.1 thousand (2021 census), which is about 5% of Georgian population. Population density is 32 people per km2.

? Samtskhe-Javakheti region consists of 6 administrative-territorial units - municipalities: Adigeni, Aspindza, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda and Borjomi. Municipalities are independent, self-governing bodies which act on the basis of rights and responsibilities granted under the Local Self-Government Code of Georgia of 2014[42][42]. Head of each municipality is a ?Mayor? who is elected through universal vote by all residents of the municipality. Legislative body of a municipality is elected Municipal Council (?*Sakrebolo*?), while executive functions are performed by the Municipal Administration. The region comprises 353 settlements including five towns: Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Vale, Ninotsminda; and seven townlets: Bakuriani, Bakurianis Andeziti, Tsagveri, Akhaldaba, Adigeni, Abastumani, Aspindza; and 254 villages. 36% of the population (54,200) live in urban areas, and 64% (96,900) in the rural areas. Distribution of land resources by main land use categories and municipalities in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Main Land Use Categories in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region by Municipalities as of January 01, 2020 (ha)[43][43]

n/n	Main Land Use Categories	Adigeni Municipality	Aspindza Municipality	Akhaltsikhe Municipality	Akhalkalaki Municipality	Ninotsminda Municipality	Borjomi Municipality	Total for Samtskhe-Javakheti Region
1	Arable Lands	4,529	5,071	8,537	31,189	26,824	4,311	80,461
2	Permanent Plantations	886	375	1,996	116	152	160	3,685
3	Pastures	26,399	48,252	36,709	60,124	88,124	36,458	296,066
4	Rural Household Plots/Yards with complex cultivation pattern	1,880	825	2,024	3,102	2,017	911	10,759
5	**Agricultural Lands (1+2+3+4)**	**33,694**	**54,523**	**49,266**	**94,531**	**117,117**	**41,840**	**390,971**
6	Forest lands	40,784	15,029	42,868	6,908	2,984	72,242	**180,815**
7	Other Land Use (*built area, water bodies, industrial sites, infrastructure, non-used lands /e.g., wetlands/ etc.*)	5,482	12,948	8,896	22,061	15,299	4,818	69,504
8	**Non-Agricultural Lands (6+7)**	**46,266**	**27,977**	**51,764**	**28,969**	**18,283**	**77,060**	**250,319**
9	**Grand Total (5+8)**	**79,960**	**82,500**	**101,030**	**123,500**	**135,400**	**118,900**	**641,290**

? Out of all main land categories, pastures occupy 46% (296,066 ha) of the total land area (641,290 ha) of the region. The region is rich in water and mineral resources.

? Samtskhe-Javakheti is rich in natural forests. Forests occupy about 27.5% of the total land area of the region. Almost all the forests in this region have a significant role of regulating the climate,

protecting the soil, regulating water flow, which is why the region is so wealthy in mineral waters and resort areas. There are 17 endangered species of plants in the region protected by the Red List.

? Samtskhe-Javakheti is an agrarian region where the agriculture has the largest share of the total value added. Most of the human resources are employed in agriculture. The share of agriculture in the region?s total value added in recent decades was approximately 33%, higher than the same figure in other industries of the region and other regions of Georgia. The region?s agriculture is made up of family farms and commercial farms. Over 90% of production is accounted for by family farms. 73% of family farms produce agricultural products for own use, and for the remaining 27% agriculture is a source of income.

? When it comes to women?s participation, as studies indicate issues can be grouped in two main directions: economic factors and cultural dimension, which incorporates traditional mentality and stereotyping on women?s role primarily as caregivers[44][44]. In terms of economic decision-making in rural settlements, studies have shown that in 51% of cases decision on the price and quantity of the production to be sold is made by a man in Georgia[45][45].

? The level of commercialization of agriculture in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region is higher than in the country. About half of agricultural land is pasture. Second largest type of agricultural land is arable land. The remaining area consists of mowing lands, uncultivated land and perennial plants. The plants grown in the region are potato, cereals and vegetable. In the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, the area of annual crops has reduced for recent decades by 10%[46][46]. However, currently the reduction slowed down to half, and even lower, rate, both in the region and in the whole country. Samtskhe-Javakheti region traditionally is known as one of the richest areas of Georgia [47][47], [48][48], [49][49], [50][50], [51][51] with agrobiodiversity, especially with wild edible plants - endemic wheat and vine (grape) land races and their CWRs. However, currently only one vine (grape) race is cultivated in the region.

? Cereals ? the region?s contribution to production of barley is significant ? constituting on average 35% of planted area and 42% of Georgia?s total production. The average yield in the region is 18% higher than the country?s average. Both the planted area of cereals and the yield have a decreasing tendency. Production of perennial plants, unlike annual plants is characterized with less volatility and less noticeable decline. Because of unavailability of local varieties, seeding material is primarily imported from the European countries. In recent years, Ukrainian, Armenian and Turkish seeds were also imported but their quality is relatively low. Nearly all municipal centers have stores with a large assortment of plant protection products of both high and relatively low quality. Pesticides are used basically for potato growing. Most popular fertilizers are organic fertilizers and ammonium nitrate.

? *Wheat land races and CWRs*: Georgia is one of the most important centers of diversity of the domesticated wheat. Georgia is the only country in the world where all the genomes (AA, AABB, AAGG, AAGGAA, AABBDD) of the wheat can be found[52][52]. Despite the small territory Georgia is the only country in the world where 15 species (s. str.) of wheat (*Triticum boeoticum Boiss., T. monococcum L., T. dicoccum (Shrank) Sch?bl., T. palaeocolchicum Menabde, T. timopheevii (Zhuk.) Zhuk., T. durum Desf., T. turgidum L., T. carthlicum Nevski, T. macha Dekapr. & Menabde, T. zhukovskyi Menabde & Ericzjan, T. turanicum Jacubz., T. polonicum L., T. spelta L., T. compactum Host, T. aestivum L.*) are present. Among them 5 species (*T. macha, T. palaeocolchicum, T. timopheevii, T. zhukovskyi and T. carthlicum*) are endemics to Georgia. The same diversity is found in the material obtained from the archaeological excavations. Georgia is the only country in the world where all 7 species of hulled wheat are present (among them 4 endemic species). Georgian endemic, hulled wheat species play important role in the evolution of wheat. They represent ancient, relict taxa, showing all directions and transitional stages in wheat evolution from diploid to tetraploid and hexaploid species. In Georgia, relict tools used to collect hulled wheat spikes (with brittle rachis) have survived to present day. This is a woody tool, known as ?*Shnakvi*?, originally created for wheat, and a stone mortar for dehusking (peeling) of ears of hulled wheat - *makha*, *zanduri* and *asli*. None of the above species and/or land races are cultivated in Samtskhe-Javakheti region at present time.

? *Vine (grape) land races and CWRs*: In accordance with the natural conditions of Georgia, different grape varieties adaptable to the micro agro-climate regions are incubated. There are about 450-500 vine (grape) local varieties known in Georgia**[53]**[53]. The grapevine species of Samtskhe-Javakheti, by their morphological and agricultural features, are closer to the grapevine species of central part of Georgia (Kartli). These species are early ripening and more resistant to frost. According to the research and survey data[54][54], in ancient times in Samtskhe-Javakheti, the following species were distributed: Tetri Budeshuri, Tavtsetskhla, Tita, Tetri Tskhenisdzudzu, Melikuda, Kharistvala, Klertmagara, Arichuli, Andriuli, Bejana, Saperavi, Red Tskhenisdzudzu, and others. Based on

exploration of old literature sources, the following names were added: Tsiteli Budeshuri, Shavi Saghvine, Mtsvane and Tsvrilmartsvala. The majority of these species has not reached the present day. In 60?s of the Last century, in Samtskhe-Javakheti, one or two roots in vineyards could be found with the vines of Tetri Budeshuri, Chinuri, Gorian Mtsvane, Gorula, Tskhenisdzudzu, Tita of Kartli, Ganakharuli, Shavi Grape, Kharistvala, Rkatsiteli, and Tita. Instead, considerable number of species from central part of Georgia (Kartli) and other regions of the country were brought into Samtskhe-Javakheti by the Institute of the Viticulture and Enology. These species adapted well to Samtskhe-Javakheti and since then have become widely used in agricultural production, namely: Chinuri, Aligote, Gorian Mtsvane, Khikhvi, Shavkapito, Shasla Tetri, Pino Shavi, and Tita of Kartli. Currently, more reliable sources of vine (grape) land races and/or their CWRs native for Samtskhe-Javakheti region, are those which are included on the following international and European lists and catalogues for vine varieties:

? International List of Vine Varieties and their Synonyms[55][55]

? OIV Descriptor List for Grape Varieties and Vitis Species[56][56]

? Vitis International Variety Catalogue (VIVC) [57][57]

? The European Vitis Database - Genetic Resources of Grapes[58][58]

? The European Vitis Database[59][59]

? Samtskhe-Javakheti region is best suited as intervention area of the project for *in-situ* activities.

? Agrobiodiversity related pressures and drivers for Samtskhe-Javakheti region could be regarded as:

Inefficiencies in agrobiodiversity resource use and management: Absence of efficiency that refers to barriers preventing full adjustment of potential markets for agrobiodiversity resources, so that resources are either unused or misused.

Weak land tenure systems: Lack of clarity on land tenure rights leads to inefficient agriculture that, *inter alia*, prevents development of agrobiodiversity based alternative livelihoods (or improved sustainability of existing livelihoods) benefiting local communities. Secure access to enough land is an important means of achieving food security and investing in dietary diversity.

Climate change: Observed water availability and frequent and long-lasting droughts resulting in reduced productivity and flora change. Diversity in crop species and varieties is an essential component of adaptation to change, particularly climate change, and to improving resilience in agriculture. The continuing loss of traditional agrobiodiversity resources in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, and the consequent loss of crop and genetic diversity, is a major threat to the sustainability of production, to resilience in the face of climate change, to ecosystem function and to farmer and communities? livelihoods.

? *Poverty*: Lack of opportunities in rural areas and low levels of education lead to food insecurity, marginalization of the population, and migration of youth that in turn prevents local farmers and communities from enjoying alternative livelihood opportunities based on sustainable agrobiodiversity management. Adoption of agrobiodiversity-friendly farming approaches can enhance productivity and increase monetary returns.[60][60] Women, youth and people with disabilities can be considered as more vulnerable and less likely to participate in economic activities in rural areas, due to socio-economic and cultural barriers. Currently, there is lack of sex disaggregated up-to-date data by regions, however specific information on Samtskhe-Javakheti was obtained during the implementation process through various methods such as conducting field surveys and consultations with the gender experts, obtaining additional data from other reliable sources related to the project area, stakeholder consultations and staff of local authorities, and interviews in a project?s command area with local population and municipal government.

Weak governance and inter-institutional coordination on agrobiodiversity issues: Governance of agrobiodiversity?defined by a set of relationships that influences the access to and conservation, exchange, and commercialization of agrobiodiversity, have impact on sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Local governance and inter-institutional coordination system lacks clear criteria and coordination and collaboration across agrobiodiversity sector and is still limited and/or not effective.

? In addition, some sources[61][61],[62][62] also suggest that strive for higher productivity of the primary agricultural production may threaten agrobiodiversity in Samtskhe-Javakheti region if local varieties and breeds are increasingly substituted with newly bred foreign ones.

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Barriers to be addressed

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? The long-term solution sought by the project is to mainstream agro-biodiversity conservation into agriculture sector of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia. However, the following barriers are preventing this solution.

? *Barrier 1* - ***Weak agrobiodiversity policy framework to achieve sustainable use of agrobiodiversity resources:*** The lack of appropriate specific policies and regulatory framework is a

major obstacle for the conservation and sustainable use of the agricultural biodiversity in Georgia. Georgian legislation fails to define the values and conservation mechanisms of agricultural biodiversity. There is no legal definition for agricultural biodiversity in the environmental and other sectoral legislation. The legislation does not specifically address adapted wild edible plants, traditional agricultural landscapes, traditional products and associated traditional knowledge as part of the country?s cultural heritage. The roles and competences of specific governmental agencies and research institutions in respect of ex-situ and in-situ conservation of agricultural biodiversity are not defined. It is important to identify the actors involved, from local to global, to understand the power dynamics that influence the interactions among these various actors and their ability to influence or control the management of agrobiodiversity.[63][63] Strengthening of policy and regulatory framework will address the threat to agrobiodiversity through creating legal instruments for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

? *Barrier 2 -* ***Lack of examples of diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products:*** There is limited access to seed and planting materials; lack of specific knowledge on the cultivation of concrete local varieties of adapted wild edible plants; low recognition of adapted wild edible plants and their products on the market and lack of pilot sites that demonstrate sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. In addition, little knowledge or skills exist on linking sustainable agrobiodiversity and agrobiodiversity based agrotourism value chains. Generally, women, youth, and persons with disabilities tend to be marginalized or vulnerable in the rural setting in terms of access to resources and information. Therefore, the project will aim at ensuring their integration and broader access to relevant resources, services and information through focused targeting during the implementation phase.

? Tourism potential of agrobiodiversity is not known. Most households produce agriculture products mainly for self-consumption under poor financial, technical and infrastructure conditions. Past agrobiodiversity initiatives had limited access to seed and planting materials and knowledge on the cultivation of local varieties of adapted wild edible plants and their low recognition on the market. This is connected with poor breeding and production of seed and planting material of local varieties, as well as of the starter cultures of traditional foods. The current agricultural practice in the pilot region fails to promote best practices (e.g., sustainable use of chemicals, modern irrigation and land cultivation technologies), use of agroecological techniques such as landscape planning, windbreaks, crop rotation, soil filtering, etc. It also fails to facilitate the development of organic farming. Farmers can achieve in-situ conservation if they are supported with proper incentives. Agrotourism is a good way of improving the income of the local farmers for conserving agro-diversity. In order to strengthen the gender component, incentives will be tailored to specific needs of male and female farmers during the project implementation phase. Georgia is lacking good examples of agrotourism. There is a potential yet limited know-how in creation of new products and branding opportunities of agricultural biodiversity friendly products. Agrotourism has potential to generate demand for such products. However, agro-eco tourism attractions are limited in the regions.

? *Barrier 3 -* ***Limited data on agrobiodiversity resources for decision-making:*** There is limited national data on agrobiodiversity and limited understanding on agrobiodiversity. Comprehensive surveys and inventory do not exist for the targeted species (vine and wheat varieties). No inventory has been made for adapted wild edible plants. The general public is not aware of the importance of agro-biodiversity. There is limited coverage of agricultural biodiversity in the mass media, and these issues are not adequately reflected in school curricula and textbooks. Therefore, appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing is inadequate. There is a limited capacity and know-how on producing agro-biodiversity friendly products and services in tourism and agriculture sector in the selected Samtskhe-Javakheti Region. Dietary diversity based on local varieties is limited. Especially, new dietary recipes promoting eco-tourism needs improvement.

2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

National Baseline

? The Government of Georgia is committed to addressing agricultural challenges through a holistic approach that addresses food security, economic competitiveness, land reform, and sustainable land management, with gender as a crosscutting issue, as also mentioned by the National Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy 2021-2027. The approach focuses on reversing land degradation and sustainably increasing land productivity and efficiency and that is reflected in recently adopted Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia for 2021-2027[64][64] and its Action Plan for 2021-2023[65][65]. According to the Strategy agriculture and rural development has an important role to play in the country?s sustainable economic development and inclusive economic growth. However, despite a fact that the Strategy is targeting sustainable use of natural resources, retaining the eco-system, adaptation to climate change by maintaining agrobiodiversity, its Action Plan for 2021-2023 does not cover any of the agrobiodiversity related activities.

? Georgia?s Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP-2)[66][66] was adopted in 2014 for the period of 2014-2020. It contained agrobiodiversity related national target. Currently, preparation for development of Georgia?s Third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan - NBSAP (2021-2027) is underway, though it?s not clear yet whether agrobiodiversity related national target will be integrated into new Strategy and Action Plan or not. Moreover, the NBSAP (2014-2020) tackles various issues such as hunting and fishing, biodiversity monitoring, sustainable forestry, environmental education etc.; however gender related components, are not explored throughout the Strategy and Action Plan. Currently, there is lack of sex disaggregated

? The following internationally and nationally supported projects contribute to the proposed project?s baseline:

? ***The European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD)*** was launched in Georgia with the goal of reinvigorating the agricultural and rural sectors in the country by supporting the Government?s Agriculture Sector Strategy, strengthening small farmers? organizations, and enabling sustainable rural development. ENPARD is composed of a variety of aid modalities, from direct budget support to the Government to technical assistance and small grants to NGOs. The total budget for ENPARD in Georgia for 2021-2024 is estimated at US$ 40 million.

? ***The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA)*** will support project activities with a total of US$ 1,250,000 co-financing. Recurrent expenditures from MEPA will be covered by the state budget allocations during the project life-cycle through annual state budget lines for operational and programing costs related to biodiversity protection, viticulture development and agricultural research and extension. This co-financing will be partially covered by the following state programs:

? ***Preferential Agrocredit Program***[67][67]***:*** Preferential Agrocredit Program was initiated by the MEPA and is supported by the central state budget funds. The purpose of the Program is to improve the processes of primary agricultural production, processing, storage and sale by providing the legal and natural entities with cheap, affordable long-term and preferential funds. Estimated allocations[68][68] under the above *Preferential Agrocredit Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 12 million in total.

? ***Agroleasing Program***[69][69]***:*** Agroleasing Program is managed by the MEPA and is supported by the central state budget funds. The program serves for the development of the agricultural products? added value generating infrastructure. Preferential agroleasing are benefited by the companies, involved in creation of the agricultural products (modern farms, greenhouse, etc.) or engaged in any form of processing of agricultural products (storage, packaging, recycling), or producing packaging materials for the agricultural products, as well as the companies, which have approved the state co-financing within scopes of the co-financing Program. Estimated allocations[70][70] under the above *Agroleasing Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 5 million in total.

? ***Produce in Georgia Program***[71][71]***:*** The Agricultural component of the program ?Produce in Georgia? is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD) and the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and is supported by the central state budget funds. This includes co-financing of agricultural primary production and processing by the state, inter alia, for high-technology greenhouses of vegetables, berries, herbs and mushrooms; production of seedlings and saplings; gardens, vineyards, plantations of perennial crops; processing fruits, berries, vegetables, mushrooms, citrus etc. Estimated allocations[72][72] for agricultural part of the above *Produce in Georgia Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 40 million in total.

? ***Plant The Future Program***[73][73]***:*** Plant The Future Program is managed by the MEPA and is supported by the central state budget funds. Co-financing will be carried out in two separate components of the program: a) component of co-financing perennial gardens (hereinafter referred to as ?gardens? component?) and b) co-financing component of the nursery gardens. One of the objectives of the program is support of the local, high-quality, phytosanitary clean planting material (seedlings) production, which will make possible for individuals interested in creating modern, intensive cultivated gardens, offer cheap, local materials for planting compare to imported ones. Estimated allocations[74][74] under the above Plant The Future *Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 25 million in total.

? ***Young Entrepreneur Program***[75][75]***:*** Young Entrepreneur Program supports young entrepreneurs in rural area desiring to conduct a business activity in Georgia. The program is managed by the MEPA and is supported by the Denmark International Development Agency (DANIDA). Program aims at Promoting of development of young entrepreneurs; Investing in value chains of the agricultural products. Estimated allocations[76][76] under the above *Young Entrepreneur Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 15 million in total.

? ***The USAID-funded Zrda Activity in Georgia***[77][77]**:** ZRDA is a five-year program designed to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth in target regions by improving micro, small, and medium sized enterprise (MSME) growth; increase productivity of rural households; facilitate market linkages between producers and buyers; and promote local economic development by establishing and strengthening networks. Zrda targets communities in proximity to the administrative boundary lines and communities with ethnic minority popula?tions. The Zrda activity is working in 81 communities within five regions of Georgia to create at least 2,400 jobs, increase sales for at least 860 MSMEs,

boost incomes of 13,200 households, and generate measurable improvements in community resilience. ZRDA supports gender mainstreaming, in order for women, men, boys and girls to participate and benefit from development efforts.

? ***Agro Processing and Storage Enterprises Program***[78][78]***:*** Agro Processing and Storage Enterprises Program is initiated by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) with financial support from the state budget. The target area of the program covers all rural municipalities of Georgia. Estimated allocations[79][79] under the above *Agro Processing and Storage Enterprises Program* for 2021-2024 will be UD$ 16 million in total.

Baseline in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region

? Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Development Strategy for 2014-2021[80][80] did not set any specific goal and/or target for agrobiodiversity protection and management for the planned period. This strategy will be outdated by the end of 2021, however currently there is no clear plan for preparation of updated strategy for the next planning period of 2022-2029. The Municipalities in Georgia are the managers of the agricultural lands entrusted to them by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD). Each municipality allocates with a municipal budget which is distributed to municipal priorities. Furthermore, for priorities identified by a municipal council, various state funds might be available through various institutions such as the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI). Their contribution is expected in the form of personnel for implementation and monitoring of pilot activities, communication with and awareness raising of the concerned population, as well as in the and in the form of lobbying with the central government institutions. Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza, Borjomi and Adigeni municipalities will allocate US$ 750,000 each during the project life-cycle through annual municipal state budget allocations for support of local agricultural development. Furthermore, according to 2016 data, only 16% of municipal council members are women[81][81]. This hinders their engagement in the decision-making processes, which needs to be addressed in order to strengthen women?s role in good governance.

? GIZ (South Caucasus Office) will provide US$ 550,000 co-financing investments on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and other German public sector clients operating in Georgia in the following priority areas: sustainable economic development; democracy, civil society and public administration; and Environmental policy, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

? The executing agency, REC Caucasus, will support project activities with a total of grant US$ 2,950,000 and in-kind US$ 3,850,000 investments (in total US$ 6,800,000 USD co-financing) through its projects and programs related to biodiversity, agriculture and rural development. Baseline contribution from REC Caucasus will come in a form of the following projects: **(a)** ***AF/IFAD ?Climate Change Adaptation Service Provider of Development of pasture inventory in Samtskhe- Javakheti region****?*. The Dairy Modernisation and Market Access (DiMMA) Programme, co-funded by the Government of Georgia, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Adaptation Fund (AF), aims at regional economic development and poverty reduction by contributing to the modernization and emergence of a competitive, diversified, resilient and sustainable agricultural industry in Georgia. The Programme is expected to enhance the livelihoods and resilience of smallholders, improve the management of the natural resources and reduce the vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. The two projects complement each other geographically and thematically and will be implemented in the Samtskhe- Javakheti region. Complementarities between GEF project looking at mainstream agro-biodiversity conservation into agriculture sector and the focus of the IFAD project at climate resilience development are strong assets for both projects. REC Caucasus will allocate **1, 200 000 USD** as part of co-financing for integrating methods and tools to improve the quality and quantity of agro-biodiversity within productive agriculture systems in Samtskhe- Javakheti region. **(b)** ***BMZ/GIZ Promoting Green Deal Readiness in the Eastern 'Partnership Countries (ProGRess)***. This program will be implemented under the BMZ?s International Climate Initiative via GIZ , the execution of the project activities in Georgia will be provided by REC Caucasus. The 3 year project?s objective is to facilitate Climate-friendly economic development in Eastern Partnership countries contributes to long term mitigation consistent with the EU Green Deal objectives and 1.5?C pathways of the Paris Agreement. The project will establish close cooperation and make synergies with GEF project with the following work: awareness raising and communication activities for local population and other stakeholders on climate smart management of agro-biodiversity. Special attention will be given to support evidence-based policy making to create enabling frameworks for climate friendly economic development with the special focus on agriculture sector development. In the frame of BMZ/GIZ project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of **945,000 USD** to train farmers in sustainable agricultural practices, anchor knowledge in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region and increase outreach. **(c)** ***ADB project ?TA-9740 GEO: Preparing Integrated Solutions for Liveable Cities?*** The lovable Cities Investment Project for Balanced Development is sector loan project of ADB for a total loan amount of USD 120 million that will improve liveability and inclusive economic growth in the regions in Georgia, including the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. The transaction technical assistance facility (TA facility) will support project preparation to ensuing sustainable development component and empowerment of the capacities of municipalities, Assist in the preparation of Development and infrastructure projects, coordinate with local stakeholders (CSOs, IFIs and local activists). In the frame of ADB project REC Caucasus will provide the co-financing of **750,000 USD** to undertake: (i) gender mainstreaming activities, (ii) the farmers need assessment and plan dedicated program with the specific focus on inclusive and climate-resilient regional development in support of Agro-biodiversity conservation in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. **(d)** ***WB ?Preparation of watershed management and landscape restoration plan for areas upstream and downstream of Sioni irrigation water reservoir?***. The overall goal of this Project is to assist the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) in raising the ambition of Georgia?s NDC in relation to the country?s climate mitigation and adaptation goals. The outcome of these project

will: support the case for restoring landscapes and managing watersheds of valuable irrigation schemes throughout East Georgia and exploring intervention opportunities to increase water security in the region. In the frame of WB project REC Caucasus will be using the co-financing of **55,000 USD** to develop a visionary policy document informing governments, private and public donors and World Bank staff about the benefits of landscape restoration and watershed management, thus supporting agro-bodiversity conservation and climate smart agriculture practice in the country.

Other projects, strategies, plans and initiatives

? Results and outcomes to contribute to the project implementation will be used from: **(a)** EU-funded project ?Increasing Local Authorities (LAs) capacities in coordination between national and local levels of government to enhance their contribution to establishment of Vashlovani Biosphere Reserve in Kakheti region as model for inclusive and sustainable growth at local level? (2019-2022). The overall objective of the EU-funded action was to improve living conditions and quality of life of local communities in Kakheti region through inclusive and sustainable growth. The project addresses deforestation, biodiversity loss, land degradation, and desertification challenges of the region. The specific objective of the proposed action was fostering sustainable and agrobiodiversity-based traditional land use practices, defining new ways of understanding and demonstrating holistic approach to sustainable agricultural management in Kakheti region with co?financing of US$250,000 and **(b)** ?UNESCO biosphere reserve establishment in the climate?vulnerable regions: working towards the nomination? (2019-2022), funded under the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety through GIZ and Michael Succow Foundation. The project focused on application of several measures for ecosystem-based approaches (incl. sustainable and agrobiodiversity-based traditional land use approaches) to climate change adaptation, sustainable agricultural management and integrated land use planning. The project helped local governments to achieve transitional changes to more climate?resilient, sustainable agricultural management and green agriculture by providing them with essential information, tools, technical support and knowledge.

? EU funded project ?*Development of River Basin Management Plans for Alazani/Iori and Khrami /Debeda River Basins in Georgia*?. It addresses existing challenges in both development and implementation of efficient management of water and land resources. It specifically supports Georgia to move towards the approximation to EU acquis in the field of water management with a focus on EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). As part of River Basin Management planning process, elaboration of GIS maps on land use, data gap analysis, update data on drivers, pressures, impacts, conceptual model linking pressures to impacts, computer modelling/simulations of river pollution from point and/or non?point sources for the Kvemo Kartli, Mtskheta Mtianeti and Katkheti regions are envisaged The Project's outputs will complement the Complement 2 activities. The Project's duration is 2021?2023. The secured co?financing from this Project will be US$50,000.

? In addition, the project will coordinate with the activities and will build on the lessons-learned from the GEF-funded project ?*Generating Economic and Environmental Benefits from Sustainable*

Land Management for Vulnerable Rural Communities of Georgia? (GEF ID: 9730) and the ?Enhancing Resilience of Agricultural Sector in Georgia (ERASIG)? (GEF ID 5147) project. The project will also draw on lessons-learned from the ?Sustainable Agriculture in Adjara? project financed by the Government of the Adjara Autonomous Republic. The latter project focused on the strengthening of extension services, introduced Sustainable Land Management (SLM) to farmers, and carried out pilot activities on rehabilitation of agricultural lands and will serve as a technical foundation for the scaling out of modern technologies and approaches.

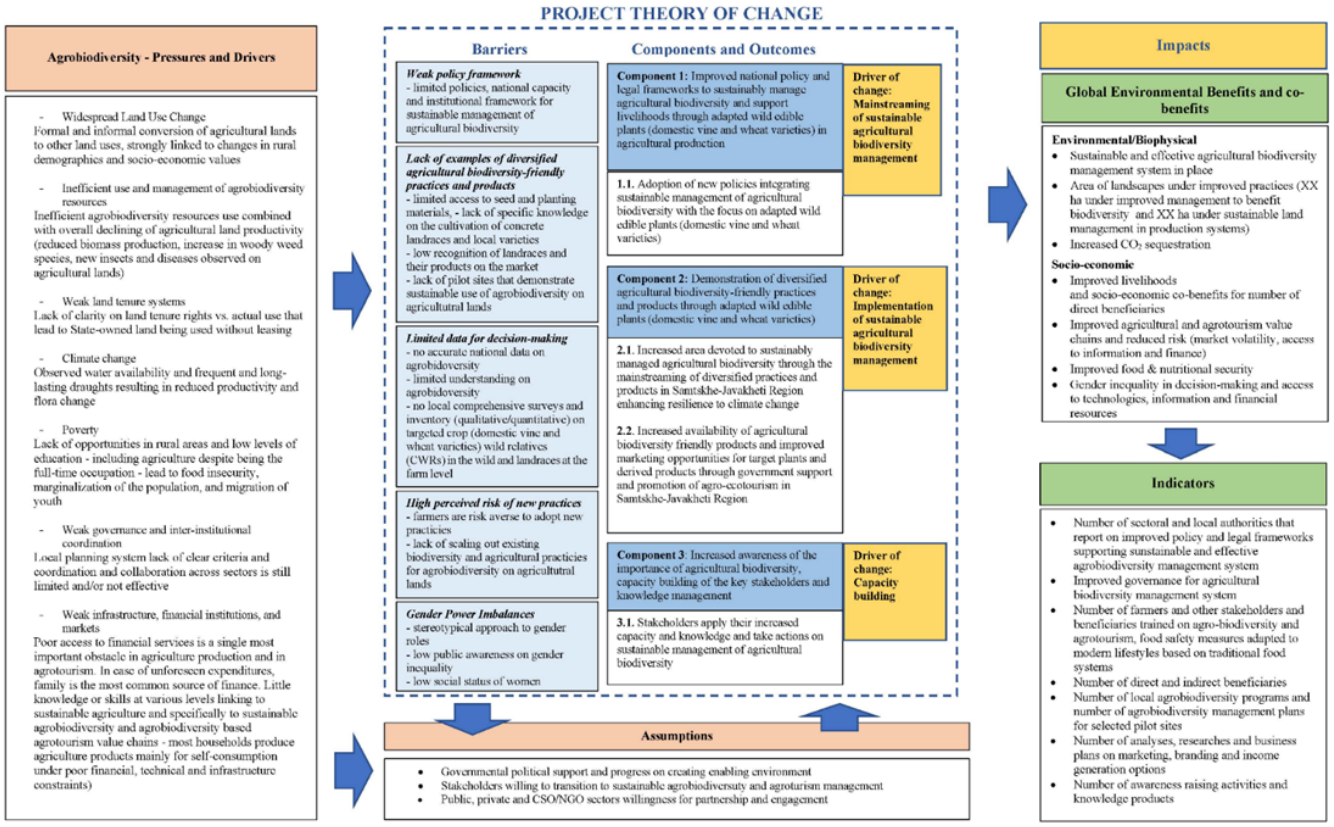
? *The European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD)**[82]*[82] was launched in Georgia in 2013 with the goal of reinvigorating the agricultural and rural sectors in the country by supporting the Government?s Agriculture Sector Strategy, strengthening small farmers? organizations, and enabling sustainable rural development. ENPARD is composed of a variety of aid modalities, from direct budget support to the Government to technical assistance and small grants to NGOs. The total budget for ENPARD in Georgia, covering the period of Phase III (2018-2022) was ?77.5 million (US$ 91.5 million) and for already started Phase IV (2022-2025) will be ?55 million (US$ 58 million).

? The baseline scenario thus includes a number of important elements to build upon and to implement the sustainable agrobiodiversity and agro-eco tourism management. However, under the business-as-usual scenario, agrobiodiversity of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region will continue to be unmanaged, undermaintained and underinvested; the gaps in the policy and regulatory framework that enables agrobiodiversity and agro-eco tourism management will remain, the farmers will practice inefficient management approaches, leading to further decrease in agrobiodiversity, loss of economic returns and decreased carbon stocks. Incremental GEF funding is required to pave the way for Georgia to implement sustainable agrobiodiversity management approach in combination with agro-eco tourism in a timely, coherent, and consistent way to ensure the scaling up.

3) The proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

? The project will follow the Theory of Change (ToC) provided below (*see a larger version of ToC in Annex D*). The project aims at mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture sector through sustainable management of agrobiodiversity in vulnerable ecosystems and rural communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia by strengthening larger-scale policy and regulatory frameworks, demonstrating and scaling-up investment in supporting in-situ conservation and use of plant genetic resources of ancient vine and wheat varieties throughout farmer management to improve livelihoods of local people, revitalize rural agrotourism and generate impacts necessary to advance progress at national level.

Figure 1. Project's Theory of Change



? To achieve this, the project will focus on three main inter-related components. Component 1 will strengthen policy and legal frameworks enabling sustainably management of agricultural biodiversity and support livelihoods in agricultural production in Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Component 2 will be facilitating technical assistance and investment in diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products and Component 3 will support capacity development, knowledge management and M&E for effective and sustainable agricultural biodiversity management.

Component 1: Improved national policy and legal frameworks to sustainably manage agricultural

biodiversity and support livelihoods through adapted wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties)

in agricultural production

? Component 1 will focus on development and adoption of new policies and plans integrating sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity and improving national capacity and institutional frameworks to sustainably manage agricultural biodiversity and support livelihoods through adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) in agricultural production. For conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity to be viable, policy and regulatory legislative adaptation will be required at the local and national levels to provide statutory instruments for practical implementation of policies and regulations. The project will assist the government in elaborating a clear national policy regarding agrobiodiversity, in order to provide a defined long term and multi-sectoral context for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use in Georgia, and to establish the various institutional responsibilities and roles for agrobiodiversity conservation to ensure cross-sector awareness and coordination of policy enactment. In addition, the project will address the creation of an effective legal framework for adapted wild edible plants conservation and sustainable use in the project area and whole country.

? The project strategy will be to identify and create new legislation needed to support in-situ conservation of adapted wild edible plants and to push through changes and adaptations to strengthen existing legislation, in particular through the development of secondary legislation (by-laws) needed for practical application and enforcement. Agricultural laws regulate some farming activities such as the uses of herbicides, pesticides, and the unsustainable monocultures of industrial agriculture affect agricultural biodiversity. The project will identify the actors involved, from local to national, to understand the power dynamics, which influence the interactions or control the management of agrobiodiversity. A gender analysis will also be performed in order to identify region specific gender inequalities during its implementation phase. The new legal framework will address the policy gaps such in protection of agrobiodiversity, gender equality, rules about farming techniques, mandatory labelling etc. Agricultural biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization will be made viable and attractive for the farmers through stewardship agreement programs with the private sector in agriculture and tourism sectors, which will reflect the needs of male and female farmers alike. This community-based agreement programs will support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming and contribute to the livelihoods of participating farmers. Finally, technical support will be provided for policy engagement, partnership formation and coordination mechanisms in a gender-sensitive manner. In this regard, Gender and Development (GAD) provisions will become an integral part of the project strategy, taking into consideration gender policies of the GEF, UNEP as well as those of the Government of Georgia (*e.g., Gender Equality Act of 2010*[83][83]).

Intended Outcome 1.1: Adoption of new policies integrating sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity with the focus on adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties)

? Outcome 1.1. is one of the main outcomes of this project intending to put in place agricultural biodiversity policy and regulatory framework that will foster development of sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for

agriculture and tourism sectors with the focus on adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) and further promotion of their implementation. This will be achieved in close cooperation with the central government line ministries and agencies and municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Local stakeholders will be involved through local community representatives, farmers, NGOs and CSOs and the private sector.

? Under this outcome, support will be provided to develop municipal policy documents (sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local municipal programs). As such, it is intended that at least 4 local (municipal) programs on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use and agrotourism will be developed and submitted to relevant municipal authorities for their further formal adoption and implementation (for more details *see also deliverables under Outcome 1.1 in Annex J - Key Deliverables and Benchmarks*).

Output	Activity
1.1.1. National and local agricultural biodiversity policy documents developed that takes account of unique diversity, ecosystem function and mainstreaming of local agricultural biodiversity into agricultural and other sectoral policies, strategies and programs	**Activity 1 [1.1.1.1].** Analyze existing relevant national and local policy documents and identify gaps in protection and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity (with the focus on vine and wheat varieties), ecosystem services provided by local agrobiodiversity, gender equality, rules about farming techniques, mandatory labeling, etc. **Activity 2 [1.1.1.2].** Based on the analyzes of existing relevant national and local policy documents and identified gaps, develop policy proposals on integrating local agrobiodiversity (with the focus on vine and wheat varieties) in existing national and local policies on agriculture and other relevant sectors ensuring their gender responsiveness, validate them at regional and national workshops (*with participation of local and national stakeholders*) and submit them to national and local authorities for their further formal review and approval. **Activity 3 [1.1.1.3].** Develop annual policy briefs on economic, social and environment benefits of local agrobiodiversity (with the focus on vine and wheat varieties).

Output	Activity
1.1.2. Regulatory framework in place to conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism	**Activity 1** [1.1.2.1]**.** Conduct study on existing local and national regulatory (legal and institutional) framework to identify gaps and the actors involved from local to national levels to understand the power dynamics, which influence the interactions or control the management of agrobiodiversity and agrotourism. **Activity 2** [1.1.2.2]**.** Develop legal proposals (*draft new legislation and/or draft amendments to existing legislation*) based on findings of the study on existing local and national regulatory framework. Legal proposals, inter alia, shall consider legal mechanisms for designation of central and local (municipal) level CWR sites on lands (excluding protected areas) that will comprise non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands for in-situ (CWR) conservation and utilization as a form of low intensity regime area managed for a variety of values (*e.g. agriculture, agroforestry, ecosystem services, wildlife, recreation*) with important CWR existing inside and subject to particular management attention. **Activity 3** [1.1.2.3]**.** Validate legal proposals (*draft new legislation and/or draft amendments to existing legislation*) at regional and national validation workshops (with participation of regional/local government agencies and non-governmental organizations, farmers, local communities, women?s and youth organizations working in agriculture, environment protection, rural development sectors with involvement of female representatives to discuss draft proposals). **Activity 4** [1.1.2.4]**.** Prepare final version of legal proposals (*draft new legislation and/or draft amendments to existing legislation*) and submit them to the central authorities for further formal review and adoption.

Output	Activity
1.1.3. Sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for agriculture and tourism sectors are developed and their implementation is promoted to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming	**Activity 1** [1.1.3.1]**.** Develop and agree on recommendations to promote in-situ and on-farm conservation and sustainable management of vine and wheat agrobiodiversity (landraces and CWRs) and agrotourism. These recommendations will be the basis for both: (a) local (municipal) programs on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use and agrotourism and (b) biodiversity stewardship agreements (BSAs). **Activity 2** [1.1.3.2]**.** Develop gender responsive municipal action plans on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use (vine and wheat landraces and CWRs) and agrotourism (*drafts, consultation with relevant stakeholders and agencies, finalization and submission to relevant municipal authorities*). **Activity 3** [1.1.3.3]**.** Develop local (municipal) programs on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use and agrotourism (*drafts*, *validation at municipal level, finalization and submission to relevant municipal authorities*). **Activity 4** [1.1.3.4]**.** Develop model biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming which reflect the needs of male and female farmers (*draft model volunteer BSA, consult with farmers, local communities and relevant government agencies and authorities, circulate the finalized version among local and central authorities for further implementation*). **Activity 5** [1.1.3.5]**.** Organize round tables with participation of farmers, local communities and relevant government agencies and authorities to increase their awareness and knowledge on biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) to support agrobiodiversity friendly farming (*with sharing international lessons*).

? Output 1.1.1 will provide with **(a)** proposals on integrating local agrobiodiversity (with the focus on vine and wheat varieties) in existing national and local policies on agriculture and other relevant sectors are developed according to national standards and guidelines for development of policy documents[84][84] that will be submitted to national and local authorities for further formal review and approval and **(b)** three series of 3 policy briefs each (*in total 9 policy briefs*) during first three consequent years of implementation on economic, social and environment benefits of local

agrobiodiversity (with the focus on vine and wheat varieties) to be delivered to decision-makers and made available for local population and wider public.

? Output 1.1.2 will involve legal proposals (at least one draft legal package consisting of a new legislation on agricultural biodiversity and/or number of amendments to existing legislation) to conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism from local to national levels - developed according to national requirements for drafting of legal documents, reviewed by local and national stakeholders and submitted to relevant national authorities (MEPA and/or Government of Georgia) for further formal adoption.

? Output 1.1.3 will involve: **(a**) at least 4 gender responsive municipal action plans on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use (vine and wheat landraces and CWRs) and agrotourism to be submitted to relevant municipal authorities for further formal adoption; **(b)** at least 4 local (municipal) programs on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use and agrotourism to be submitted to relevant municipal authorities for further formal adoption and **(c)** model biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming which reflect the needs of male and female farmers to be submitted to relevant local and central authorities for further implementation.

? At least 12 round table meetings will be organized under Output 1.1.3 with participation of farmers, local communities and relevant government agencies and authorities to increase their awareness and knowledge on biodiversity stewardship agreement (BSA) to support agrobiodiversity friendly farming (*with sharing international lessons*).

Component 2: Demonstration of diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products

through adapted wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties)

? The aim of the second component of the project is to demonstrate and scale-up investment in supporting in-situ conservation and use of plant genetic resources of local vine and wheat varieties throughout farmer management to improve livelihoods of local people, revitalize rural agrotourism and generate impacts necessary to advance progress at national level. Component 2 is structured through two consequent outcomes.

Intended Outcome 2.1: Increased area devoted to sustainably managed agricultural biodiversity through mainstreaming of diversified practices and products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region enhancing resilience to climate change

? Main outcome of the Component 2 - **Outcome 2.1** (Increased area devoted to sustainably managed agricultural biodiversity through the mainstreaming of diversified practices and products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region enhancing resilience to climate change) will be achieved through implementation of the five results based outputs 2.1.1- 2.1.5 aimed at conducting of: Field-based surveys and mapping of the distribution of wild populations of the targeted crop (vine and wheat varieties); Establishing of two nurseries and field seed banks to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) based on the results of the field-based surveys; Identification, planning and implementation of participatory and sustainable management practices on at least 6 pilot sites (in total on land area of 500 ha), including establishment of pilot nursery sites, that will support traditional crop varieties of adapted wild edible plants to improve local diversity for marginal environments in the project site pilot locations; Enhancing skills and capacities of farmers and local communities in the project pilot sites to undertake agricultural biodiversity friendly farming and other relevant agricultural biodiversity friendly practices, and community-based approaches through on-job trainings; Developing agro-eco tourism attractions as an alternative way of sustainable development in the selected communities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region (rural agrotourism, tourism and organic agriculture, activity tourism- grape harvesting and processing). There is a large and growing market in Georgia for the kind of high-cost, customized tourism where groups of interested people are guided by knowledgeable experts on extended educational visits to sites of ecological significance. Such tourism activities will be designed and managed in close partnership with local communities by agrotourism related private sector representatives. Tourism activities will involve such activities as farm and market visits, participation in agricultural activities and food preparation, tastings of local foods and beverages and attendance at specific feasts and celebrations. Some portion of the revenues from such tourism will be channelled back to local communities and used to promote biodiversity conservation. In addition, sustaining the Project results depends on a stronger land tenure system in the target region. One of the requirements for participating in pilot projects will be that the volunteering farmers should have registered their land plots in Cadaster. The Project activities will be used as an incentive to have the farmers register their lands.

Output	Activity

Output	Activity
2.1.1. Field-based surveys and mapping of the distribution of wild populations of the targeted crop (vine and wheat varieties) wild relatives (CWRs) in the wild and landraces at the farm level are conducted	**Activity 1** [2.1.1.1]**.** Conduct field-based survey in the project target region to assess distribution and in-situ and on-farm conservation status of vine and wheat landraces and CWRs (*including, but not limited to: mapping of occurrence and conservation status of in-situ and on-farm diversity of vine and wheat; agro-morphological and molecular characterization of the surveyed landraces and CWRs of vine and wheat and documented characterization data; selection of vine and wheat landraces and promising wild genotypes (CWR) based on their agro-morphological and molecular characterization for further multiplication and mainstreaming into production systems through established pilot nurseries and field seed banks*) and make available for wide range of stakeholders. **Activity 2** [2.1.1.2]**.** Develop Catalogue of surveyed vine and wheat landraces and CWRs - based on their agro-morphological and molecular characterization and make available for wide range of stakeholders through its publication and distribution.

Output	Activity
2.1.2. Two nurseries and field seed banks to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) established	**Activity 1** [2.1.2.1]**.** Develop criteria and select sites in consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders for establishment of at least one pilot vine nursery and one pilot wheat field seed bank. **Activity 2** [2.1.2.2]**.** Sign agreements with the selected site owners/managers (local farmers) on vine nursery and wheat seed bank management, ensuring equal opportunities for men and women to head them. **Activity 3** [2.1.2.3]**.** Develop detailed technical plans for select sites for establishment of at least one pilot vine nursery and one pilot wheat field seed bank using participatory planning approach. **Activity 4** [2.1.2.4]**.** Establish necessary infrastructure and equip two select sites for at least one pilot vine nursery and one pilot wheat field seed bank according to detailed plans for their establishment. **Activity 5** [2.1.2.5]**.** Develop protocols on operation and management of vine seedling nursery and wheat field seed bank and provide basic guidance to selected site managers (local farmers). **Activity 6** [2.1.2.6]**.** Supply pilot vine nursery and pilot field seed bank with germplasm (cuttings and seeds) of selected vine and wheat landraces and promising wild genotypes (CWR) for multiplication. **Activity 7** [2.1.2.7]**.** Operate and manage pilot vine nursery and pilot field seed bank to produce planting material (*seedlings and seeds*) of selected vine and wheat landraces. **Activity** 8 [2.1.2.8]. Conduct necessary steps and develop necessary documentation for certification of seedlings and seeds (*produced on pilot vine nursery and pilot field seed bank*) according to the requirements of national legislation and, where appropriate, for their inclusion into the National Catalogue of Agricultural Crops (List of agricultural crop species permitted for distribution in the territory of Georgia for their value for cultivation and use /VCU/).

Output	Activity
2.1.3. Participatory and sustainable management practices identified, planned and implemented on at least 6 pilot sites that will support traditional crop varieties of adapted wild edible plants to improve local diversity	**Activity 1** [2.1.3.1]**.** Develop criteria, select and establish at least 6 demonstration pilot sites (in total on land area up to 500 ha) for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization to implement participatory and sustainable management practices that support traditional crop varieties and adapted wild edible plants to improve local vine and wheat diversity. This activity will include signing of agreements with the selected site owners/managers (local farmers). **Activity 2** [2.1.3.2]**.** Identify and plan participatory and sustainable management practices measures for 6 demonstration pilot sites (in total on land area of 500 ha) for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization based on traditional knowledge, national research findings, international experience and field activities. If appropriate, facilitate registration of land plots of 6 demonstration pilot sites in the land title registry (land cadastre) by farmers. **Activity 3** [2.1.3.3]**.** Produce manuals on participatory and sustainable management practices for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization. **Activity 4** [2.1.3.4]**.** Implement planned measures of sustainable management practices on 6 demonstration pilot plots for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization to promote use of local agrobiodiversity (vine and wheat landraces) in participatory way with involvement of local stakeholders including farmers, local communities and researchers. **Activity 5** [2.1.3.5]. Identify and plan in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization measures for at least 19,500 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) that will comprise non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands and agree with relevant central and, if appropriate, with local municipal authorities on their formal designation for in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization under a form of low intensity management such as national or municipal level CWR site. This activity shall take into account findings of filed-based survey conducted under Activity 2.1.1.1. **Activity 6** [2.1.3.6]. Scale up the successful participatory and sustainable management practices by implementing selected priority measures of in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization on formally designated CWR sites with total area of at least 19,500 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) that will comprise non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands.

Output	Activity
2.1.4. Farmers and local communities in the project pilot sites have enhanced skills and capacity to undertake agricultural biodiversity friendly farming and other relevant agricultural biodiversity friendly practices, and community-based approaches through "on the job training" activities.	**Activity 1** [2.1.4.1]**.** Develop training manual on agrobiodiversity friendly management practices on local vine and wheat landraces for use by farmers and local communities. **Activity 2** [2.1.4.2]**.** Train farmers on vine seedling nursery and wheat field seed bank operation and management including monitoring aspects of the distributed seedlings and seeds and on multiplication and quality control of produced vine seedlings and wheat seeds (harvesting, cleaning, storage practices ensuring quality of vine seedlings and wheat seeds, etc.). **Activity 3** [2.1.4.3]**.** Conduct on-job trainings through municipal and inter-municipal exchange visits of farmers and local community representatives to demonstration pilot sites established by the project to share best practices in agrobiodiversity management ensuring equal participation of men and women.
2.1.5. Agro-eco tourism attractions developed as an alternative way of sustainable development in the selected communities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region (*rural agrotourism, tourism and organic agriculture, activity tourism- grape harvesting and processing*)	**Activity 1** [2.1.5.1]**.** Select at least 2 locations for agro-eco tourism attraction in consultation with stakeholders including farmers and local communities for initiating agro-eco tourism related activities with focus on local vine and wheat landraces. **Activity 2** [2.1.5.2]**.** Identify, plan and implement agro-eco tourism related activities in gender-responsive way (rural agrotourism, ecotourism, organic agriculture, activity tourism ? grape harvesting and processing) which are most applicable in the selected locations for agro-eco tourism attraction. **Activity 3** [2.1.5.3]**.** Train farmers and local communities on specific issues related to running agro-tourism business. **Activity 4** [2.1.5.4]**.** Develop jointly with tour agencies packages for agro-ecotourism, which include description of local vine and wheat biodiversity (landraces and CWRs), their value for nutrition, local diet and ecosystem services, visits to farm and local markets, harvesting, cooking traditional meals, participation in local celebrations and feasts.

? Output 2.1.1 will involve: **(a)** Field-based survey in the project target region to assess distribution and in-situ and on-farm conservation status of vine and wheat landraces and CWRs (*including, but not limited to: mapping of occurrence and conservation status of in-situ and on-farm diversity of vine and wheat; agro-morphological and molecular characterization of the surveyed landraces and CWRs of vine and wheat and documented characterization data; selection of vine and wheat landraces and promising wild genotypes /CWRs/ based on their agro-morphological and*

molecular characterization for further multiplication and mainstreaming into production systems through established pilot nurseries and field seed banks) and **(b)** development of Regional Catalogue of surveyed vine and wheat landraces and CWRs based on their agro-morphological and molecular characterization.

? Output 2.1.2 delivers established infrastructure and technical plans for operation and management of at least one pilot vine nursery and one pilot wheat field seed bank which will become fully operational (one pilot vine nursery and one pilot wheat field seed bank) during the implementation period.

? Output 2.1.3 provides a focus on establishment of 6 demonstration pilot sites (in total on land area up to 500 ha) for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization to implement participatory and sustainable management. practices.

? Under Output 2.1.3 it is intended that up to 19,500 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) for in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization will be designated for in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization under a form of low intensity management such as national or municipal level CWR site and selected priority measures of in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization will be planned and implemented.

? Output 2.1.4 will provide trainings for at least 250 farmers and local community representatives on (a) vine seedling nursery and wheat field seed bank operation and management and multiplication and quality control of produced planting material and (b) best practices in agrobiodiversity management.

? For Output 2.1.5, at least 2 agro-eco tourism attraction locations will be selected and made operational, where agro-eco tourism related activities will be implemented in gender-responsive way (*rural agrotourism, ecotourism, organic agriculture, activity tourism ? grape harvesting and processing*).

Intended Outcome 2.2: Increased availability of agricultural biodiversity friendly products and improved marketing opportunities for target plants and derived products through government support and promotion of agro-ecotourism in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region

? Second outcome of the Component 2 - **Outcome 2.2** (Increased availability of agricultural biodiversity friendly products and improved marketing opportunities for target plants and derived products through government support and promotion of agro-ecotourism in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region) will be achieved by putting in place five results based outputs, such as: Analyses on value addition and creation of new products and branding opportunities based on wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) for Samtskhe-Jvakheti region; Marketing research through a supply chain approach for agricultural biodiversity friendly products; Income generation options (bankable projects) through the

sustainable production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly foods with high nutritional value for low-income rural producers identified and supported with sound economic and financial analysis; Agrotechnical Guidelines for sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products and Farmer information system for agricultural biodiversity friendly farming.

Output	Activity
2.2.1. Analyses of value addition and creation of new products and branding opportunities of the wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) for Samtskhe-Jvakheti region is conducted	**Activity 1** [2.2.1.1]**.** Carry out study and identify opportunities for adding value and creation of new products of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties). **Activity 2** [2.2.1.2]**.** Plan and implement measures to **p**romote branding of wild edible plants (vine and wheat landraces) products using available opportunities for local and, where appropriate, international certification (geographic identification, organic, etc.).
2.2.2. Marketing research conducted through a supply chain approach for agricultural biodiversity friendly products	**Activity 1** [2.2.2.1]**.** Conduct rapid market appraisal (RMA) for vine and wheat biodiversity friendly products and validate the results with stakeholders ? including identification of consumers' (e.g., trade companies) preferences for agricultural biodiversity friendly products. **Activity 2** [2.2.2.2]**.** Produce demonstration materials on market incentives and consumer demand for agricultural biodiversity friendly products of high nutrition value and distribute them (social networks, dissemination of fliers, organization of information stand at agriculture products fairs, etc.).
2.2.3. Income generation options (bankable projects) through the sustainable production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly foods with high nutritional value for low-income rural producers identified and supported with sound economic and financial analysis	**Activity 1** [2.2.3.1]**.** In collaboration with farmers and local communities develop the options for income generation from production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly food products with high nutrition value and from agro-tourism. **Activity 2** [2.2.3.2]**.** Prepare model business plans (bankable projects) on production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly products and agro-tourism development with sound economic and financial analysis for low-income rural producers.

Output	Activity
2.2.4. Agrotechnical Guidelines for sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products developed and available in the project site locations The Guidelines will incorporate gender lens to analyze specific gender-related needs and roles within the family farms.	**Activity 1** [2.2.4.1]**.** Develop agrotechnical guidelines on sustainable management and harvesting of priority plant species and products that will incorporate gender lens to analyze specific gender-related needs and roles within the family farms. **Activity 2** [2.2.4.2]**.** Make available agrotechnical guidelines in the project pilot sites, to local communities and agricultural extension workers through its publication and distribution.
2.2.5. Farmer information system for agricultural biodiversity friendly farming developed and in place, accessible to both men and women	**Activity 1** [2.2.5.1]**.** Conduct analysis of existing information network and identify key sources of information for farmers on agrobiodiversity. **Activity 2** [2.2.5.2]**.** Based on conducted analysis design and create farmer information system on agricultural biodiversity friendly farming in a form of internet linked data base. **Activity 3** [2.2.5.3]**.** Make farmer information system on agricultural biodiversity friendly farming accessible to all stakeholders both men and women through the internet.

? For Output 2.2.1, study on opportunities for adding value and creation of new products of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) will be developed.

? Output 2.2.2 will deliver Rapid Market Appraisal (RMA) study for vine and wheat biodiversity friendly products which will be validated with stakeholders.

? For Output 2.2.3, at least 4 model business plans (bankable projects) on production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly products and agro-tourism will be prepared for low-income rural producers based on options for income generation from production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly food products.

? For Output 2.2.4, at least one Agrotechnical Guidelines for sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products will be developed and made available in the project pilot sites, to local communities and agricultural extension workers through its publication and distribution.

? Under Output 2.2.5 the Farmer Information System on agricultural biodiversity friendly farming will be developed in a form of database and made accessible to all stakeholders both men and women through internet.

Component 3: Increased awareness of the importance of agricultural biodiversity, capacity building of the key stakeholders and knowledge management

? Main focus of Component 3 will be development of capacities and awareness raising, knowledge sharing and dissemination.

Intended Outcome 3.1: Stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity

? The component 3 has only one outcome - **Outcome 3.1** (Stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity).

? It will be started by implementation of Output 3.1.1 (National capacity developed to mainstream and promote agricultural biodiversity and agritourism in agricultural production and agrotourism - including capacity development within Georgia?s agricultural extension service and government agencies to promote diversified agriculture that integrates the cultivation of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) with capacity needs assessment and preparation of capacity building plan for the stakeholders. The project will work with the stakeholders and other relevant partners to identify a number of tools that will be included as part of the various workshops and training, tailored to needs and roles of both male and female farmers. Output 3.1.1 will include also development of training modules and school curricula on agritourism and agro-biodiversity, food safety measures, and recipes adapted to modern lifestyles based on traditional food systems, organization of trainings and development of user-friendly knowledge management and awareness raising system under the project Web Site available for central and local decision makers and for the general public.

? Studies have shown rural women to be seen primarily as caregivers, with their main duties within families[85][85][86][86]. Lack of finances also hinder their productivity and activity beyond families. The percentage of the men?s participation to labor force (80%) is 30 percentage points more than women's participation rate (50%). So, awareness raising campaigns will integrate and be oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and support creating women?s image as change-makers, earners and actors for economic development.

Output	Activity

Output	Activity
3.1.1. National capacity developed to mainstream and promote agricultural biodiversity and agrotourism	**Activity 1** [3.1.1.1]**.** Assess capacity building needs of various target stakeholders groups (*policy makers, education and researchers, NGOs, farmers associations, agricultural extension service, etc.*) at national level in mainstreaming and promotion of agricultural biodiversity and agrotourism. **Activity 2** [3.1.1.2]**.** Design gender-responsive capacity building program and training tools tailored for needs and roles of each target stakeholders at national level. **Activity 3** [3.1.1.3]**.** Arrange capacity building events for various groups of national stakeholders according to the developed capacity building program.
3.1.2. In selected Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, significant number of large and small scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) representatives capacitated to implement and monitor compliance with agro-biodiversity friendly products and services targeting both women and men	**Activity 1** [3.1.2.1]**.** Develop training tool on implementation and monitoring of compliance with agro-biodiversity friendly products and services tailored for large and small scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) representatives targeting both women and men from Samtskhe-Javakheti Region. **Activity 2** [3.1.2.2]**.** Organize capacity-building events on agro-biodiversity friendly products and services for large and small-scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) representatives in Samtskhe-Javakheti region.
3.1.3. Gender-sensitive information and awareness raising campaigns conducted, fostering greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels	**Activity 1** [3.1.3.1]**.** Conduct study to collect social, economic and gender-related data to assess role of agrobiodiversity and agrotourism in wellbeing and environment sustainability in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region ? with identification of specific gender differences, including women and men?s different roles, needs, priorities, capacities and vulnerabilities. **Activity 2** [3.1.3.2]**.** Produce and disseminate gender-responsive awareness raising materials fostering greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels and positioning women as change-makers, earners and actors in economic development. **Activity 3** [3.1.3.3]**.** Conduct initial, mid-term and closing awareness raising events (*including media-tours to the project sites, television and radio interviews, fairs of agrobiodiversity-rich products, promotion of celebration of National Wine Day etc.*) on agrobiodiversity and its potential for agrotourism, creation of new jobs, healthy food.

Output	Activity
3.1.4. Best practices for mobilizing biodiversity to improve dietary diversity (new food recipes based on local varieties) documented and disseminated	**Activity 1** [3.1.4.1]**.** Collect and document information on best practices for mobilizing biodiversity ? including new food recipes based on local varieties for mobilizing biodiversity to improve dietary diversity and promote them through restaurants and food courts. **Activity 2** [3.1.4.2]**.** Disseminate information on best practices and experience through the web-page to make it available for broad audience, including central and local decision-makers.

? Under Output 3.1.1 at least 300 participants will be capacitated through capacity building events for various groups of national stakeholders (*policy makers, education and researchers, NGOs, farmers associations, agricultural extension service, etc.*) according to the developed capacity building program.

? Output 3.1.2 will involve at least 200 representatives of large and small-scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) in Samtskhe-Javakheti region trained and able to demonstrate increased knowledge and capacity through capacity building events on agro-biodiversity friendly products and services.

? Under Output 3.1.3 at least 4,250 participants will raise awareness on agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels (*agrobiodiversity and its potential for agrotourism, creation of new jobs, healthy food*) with positioning women as change-makers, earners and actors in economic development through initial, mid-term and closing awareness raising events (*including media-tours to the project sites, television and radio interviews, fairs of agrobiodiversity-rich products, promotion of celebration of National Wine Day etc.*).

? Output 3.1.4 will provide wide range of information on best practices for mobilizing biodiversity ? including new food recipes based on local varieties for mobilizing biodiversity to improve dietary diversity and promote them through restaurants and food courts.

? The above information will be documented and made available through the web-page for broad audience, including central and local decision-makers.

4) Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

? The GEF-7 programming aims at further advancing the GEF2020 vision that pursues greater impact per unit of investment by tackling the drivers of environmental degradation, promoting greater

sectoral and thematic integration, and contributing to systems change in key areas that impact the GEF mission. The GEF-7 Programming Directions are seeking maximum impact across its focal areas through integrated programming.

? The project?s intervention strategy is in compliance with the GEF-7 Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy, directly addressing program priorities such as:

? *Program priority I* - Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes

? *Program priority III* - Further develop biodiversity policy and institutional framework

? At the same time, the proposed project is in line with Focal Area Investments in Sustainable Use of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources Inclusive Conservation and Impact Program for Food Systems.

? Project proponents will be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities provided through the impact programs to mainstream biodiversity in the agriculture sector.

? Under GEF-7 targeted investment for Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources, the conservation and sustainable use of the genetic diversity of cultivated plants, of their wild relatives and of other socio-economically and culturally valuable species, including aquatic, forest, microbial and invertebrate genetic resources, is central to achieving food security and nutrition for a growing world population, improving rural livelihoods, developing more sustainable agriculture practices, and improving ecosystem function and the provision of ecosystem services in production landscapes.

? The project will also provide insight on public preferences and priorities on mentioned plants. As climates and production environments change, in often unpredictable ways, genetic diversity is also essential to providing the necessary adaptability and resilience.

? Under this targeted investment, the GEF focus is three-fold. First, GEF will provide support to establish protection for adapted wild edible plants in-situ through CWR Reserves. Second, the GEF will support in-situ conservation and sustainable use, through farmer management, of plant genetic resources in Vavilov Centers of Diversity. Third, the GEF will also support conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources and actions to conserve the wild relatives of domesticated livestock, not solely focusing on breeds. This focus will complement the thematic and geographic focus of the ?Sustainable Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program?.

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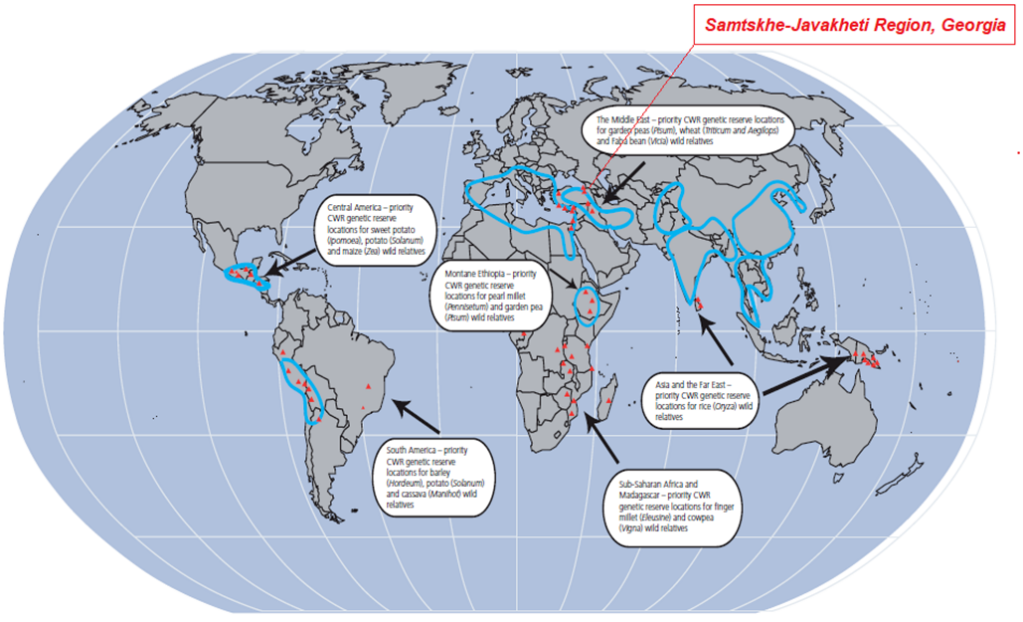
? Locations (*see figure 2 below*) for wild relatives of 14 major global food crops (including wheat) shows that pilot Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia is directly adjacent to the Middle East global priority genetic reserve location (*priority CWR genetic reserve for wheat /Triticum and Aegilops/ wild relatives*).

? The above centers of crop genetic diversity are likely to contain priority sites for other crop gene pools.

? GEF investment in CWR reserves would focus on these areas; however, support to managing priority CWR reserves mapped and identified at national level that complement global level assessments undertaken by FAO and others would also be eligible if the CWR in question were of global significance.

Figure 2. Global priority genetic reserve locations for wild relatives of 12 food crops[87] [87]
with indication of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia



? The GEF will also support in-situ conservation and sustainable use, through farmer management (focusing on Vavilov Centers of Diversity for plant genetic resources). This approach allows continuing evolution and adaptation of cultivated plants and domesticated animals and also meets the needs of rural communities, including local communities, especially women, who often depend on agricultural biodiversity for their livelihoods through its contribution to food security and nutrition, medicines, fodder, building materials and other provisioning services as well through support for ecosystem function.

? Women?s participation will be particularly critical, given the primary role that women play in agrobiodiversity management. In-situ conservation in production landscapes helps improve sustainability and resilience.

? Results from these investments may also generate important co-benefits for the ***International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*** (ITPGRFA).

5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing

? Samtskhe-Javakheti Region has been selected because of its rich biodiversity, its location (it is directly adjacent to the Middle East global priority genetic reserve location - priority CWR genetic reserve for wheat /Triticum and Aegilops/ wild relatives) and as a homeland for ancient local vine (*Vitis*) varieties.

? In the baseline situation, there will still be an absence of a more prescriptive guidance and policies for sustainable management of biodiversity and a lack of knowledge and awareness of benefits of conservation and use of plant genetic resources throughout in-situ farmer management to improve livelihoods of local people and revitalize rural agrotourism.

? Sustainable management of agrobiodiversity is a crucial issue for Georgia. About 50 percent of Georgia?s population lives in rural areas, out of which half is female and half male population[88][88]. Central and local authorities have yet to develop consistent policy and regulatory frameworks on agrobiodiversity which should integrate sustainable land use, agriculture and other relevant sectoral policies.

? This project has been designed as a package of technical, institutional capacity building and demonstrating measures at regional and local (municipal) levels leading to policies that will demonstrate and scaling-up investment in supporting improvement of livelihoods of local population, revitalize rural agrotourism and generate impacts necessary to advance progress at national level. The

proposed outputs of the project to be supported by the GEF are outputs that would unlikely occur otherwise under a business-as-usual scenario. The project will catalyze Georgia?s national efforts for achieving biodiversity national targets and GEF?s involvement in the implementation of the planned project will ensure sustainable management of agrobiodiversity at both national and regional/local levels.

? About $11.77 million of co-financing was confirmed from the Central Government, municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, Donor Agency (GIZ), Executive Agency (REC Caucasus) and Implementing Agency (UNEP) - (in a form of both recurrent and investment expenditures. Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will provide $1,250,000 in-kind contribution towards awareness raising activities, seminars, and workshops. REC Caucasus will contribute by $6.8 million.

6) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)

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? The project is expected to generate global environmental benefits of improved management of landscapes covering **20,000 ha**. This contributes towards the 320 million ha target for the GEF-7 Core Indicator 4, ?Area of landscapes under improved practices?. More specifically, the project is aligned with GEF-7 component sub-indicator 4.1, ?Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity? and sub-indicator 4.3 ?Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems?.

? Global Environmental Benefits associated with GEF-7 Core Indicator 6, ?Greenhouse gas emission mitigated? are estimated around **613,041 tCO2** over the lifetime of the project (4 years implementation and 16 years capitalization period). These estimates prepared in 2021 and are based on the EX-ACT tool's methodology.

? The project will generate socio-economic co-benefits for **5,000 direct beneficiaries**, including 2,600 women, or 52% of the total; these co-benefits contribute towards GEF-7 Core Indicator 7, ?Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment?.

? Maintaining wild agrobiodiversity germplasm *in-situ* is more cost-effective than *ex-situ* conservation and will allow for the continued evolution of resistances and adaptations. Global environmental benefits include significant option and insurance values, existence values, and direct-use values. For global agriculture, this genetic diversity preserves options to rebuild, preserve, or augment the genetic vitality of local varieties. It also serves as a global insurance policy against catastrophic decrease by providing the genetic potential to thrive in future environments. With this safety net in place, farmers and policymakers have additional time to uncover as yet unknown global benefits in a manner that is consistent with the precautionary principle.

? In the long run, the project will also support Georgia's efforts on achieving nationally determined SDGs[89][89] (*for more details on project support for SDGs see Annex D. Theory of Change*).

? As it was already mentioned under the section National Context, COVID-19 pandemic has its negative effects on biodiversity and nature-based solutions in promoting a green and resilient economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic is important. Nature-based solutions are actions that protect, sustainably manage, and restore ecosystems in ways that address societal challenges to provide both human well-being and biodiversity benefits. Nature based solutions include e.g., supporting and funding conservation programmes that helps to protect biodiversity and safeguard ecosystems. Other measures could include promoting environmentally sustainable practices in agriculture, so as to: reduce large-scale deforestation, habitat destruction and fragmentation; strengthen the functioning of ecosystems; and lower the risks of future infectious zoonotic disease outbreaks[90][90]. The project will incorporate green recovery approaches during demonstration projects related to the diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices of the project component 2.

7) Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up

? Innovativeness: The innovativeness of this project relates to the fact that project aims at integrating agrobiodiversity into wider agriculture and other sectoral policies and practices. The project promises development and adoption of agricultural biodiversity friendly policies, and legal framework. In addition, a clear definition of the responsibilities and roles of the various stakeholders and of the coordinating mechanisms will be established. Conservation agreement program will convene local communities, agriculture and tourism representatives for developing and implementing agricultural biodiversity friendly farming. The nurseries and seed banks will help to manage and multiply vine and wheat varieties. The project will help local authorities to look at the whole value chain and develop targeted production and marketing of biodiversity friendly products. A key innovative contribution of the project will be extensive analyses of market demand for agrobiodiversity and rural tourism (agro-eco tourism) products and services within the project area - in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.

? Sustainability: The development of alternative livelihoods is one component in an integrated approach to mitigating the threat posed by local communities to agrobiodiversity resources. The project will use baseline studies to assess existing resource use among local population, will undertake education on agrobiodiversity values and ecological systems for local communities, and will organize, when appropriate, resource user associations to guide outreach on environmental education, livelihoods activities, and agricultural micro-credit programs. The final, critical step will be to specifically target

the economic problems that underlie the over-dependence of local communities on natural resources and which result in agrobiodiversity loss on private agricultural lands. Focused planning on the strategic approaches and mechanisms needed to achieve appropriate natural resource use and socioeconomic development in the project area will be carried out in consultation with the local authorities, farmer associations, small business, vine and wheat producers and local wine and bakery industry sector representatives, tourism sector, local NGOs/CSOs, and academic institutions. To sustain the impact the project intends to achieve over a longer-term and beyond the project end it is recommended to develop an exit strategy. The MTR is an appropriate time to develop such a strategy and discuss elements and priority actions to enhance the lasting impact of the interventions of the project. Important elements to consider including in the exit strategy are securing and availability of resources, both financial resources in line budgets as well as human resources in key institutions.

? Scaling Up: The other regions of Georgia are also seeking to implement economically effective alternative livelihoods scenarios including agrotourism. Therefore, there is already a demand for scaling up. The project will ensure inclusion of the stakeholders from other regions and municipalities in the capacity development and knowledge management activities.

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[1] As of January 01, 2021, total number of population of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region equaled to 151,100 / Source: GeoStat (2022). Population of Georgia by regions and urban-rural settlements as of 01 January, 2021 / National Statistics Office of Georgia ? GeoStat, Tbilisi, 2022.
https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/41/population

[2] Section 11 (*Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment*) in GEF Gudelines on Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators. Guidelines: ME/GN/02, Approved on June 30, 2018, Updated on March 11, 2019.
https://wwfgeftracks.com/sites/default/files/2019-04/indicators_0.pdf

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http://www.fao.org/3/ca3129en/CA3129EN.pdf

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[7] Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, 2020.

[8] The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (2014). National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Georgia 2014 ? 2020.

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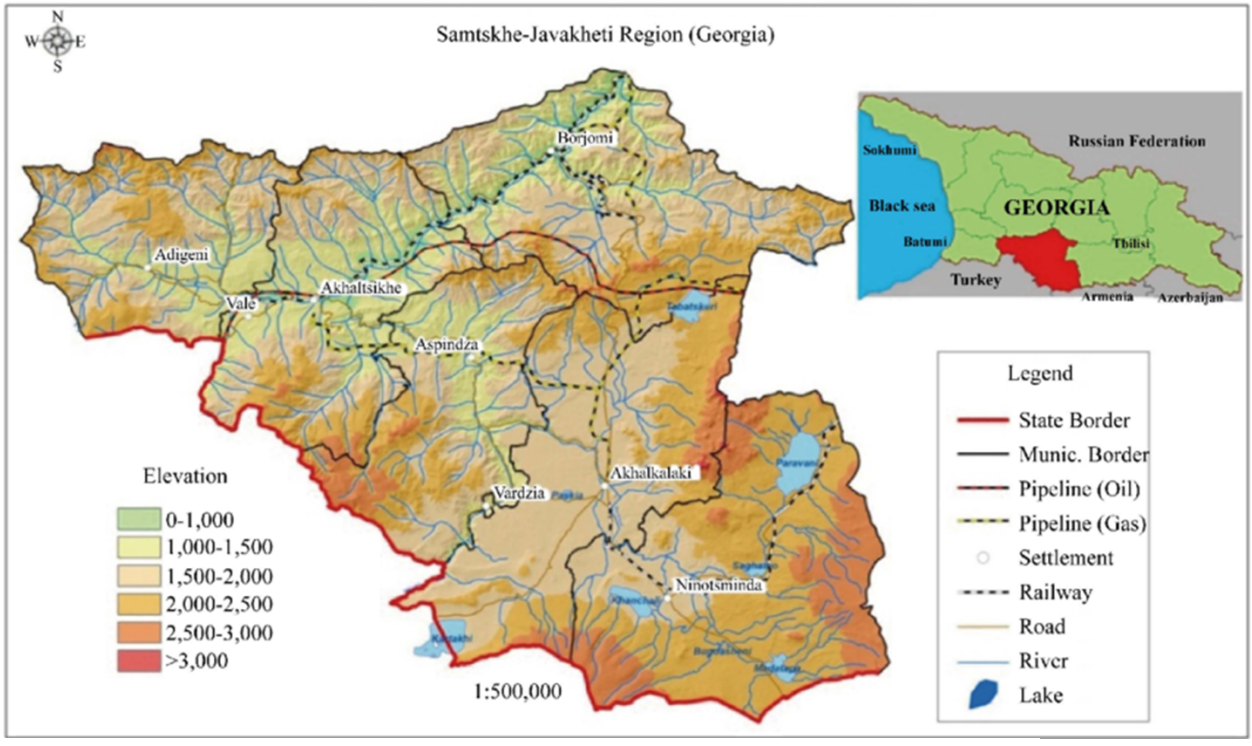
1b. Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

? Map showing location of the project intervention area is provided in Figure 9 below. For more details on programme maps and geographic coordinates, please see Annex E (Project Maps and Coordinates).

Figure 2. Map of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region



1c. Child Project?

If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

Stakeholders		Expected Responsibilities	Method(s) used	Location/frequency
PROJECT PROPONENTS	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)	The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will be the beneficiary of the project. MEPA is the Focal Point for both CBD and ITPGRFA. It is responsible for defining and elaborating directions and policies on environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources and agriculture. MEPA will play a crucial role in guiding the elaboration of policy and regulatory instruments under the planned project. Representatives of the relevant departments and units of MEPA will be involved in training sessions.	Public meetings, trainings/workshops, official letters, email, reporting. Online or in-person presentations as permitted, meeting minutes, agendas, participant list.	Project launch meetings in municipalities; Monthly meetings in affected municipalities and villages; Survey of PAPs in affected villages; Communication through mass/social media (as needed); Electronic, project office, at beneficiaries? site in Samtskhe-Javakheti region, training/ workshop venues (in-person and online) The PSC will hold meetings at least twice a year, but additional meetings can be held if necessary.
	Environment and Climate Change Department (ECCD)	The ECCD, as GEF focal point department of MEPA, is taking		

	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)	responsibility for general coordination of GEF funded projects and leading works to promote implementation of climate change mitigation/adaptation policies and measures and green economy.		
	United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)	GEF funded regional project for the South Caucasus countries ?Upscaling of Global Forest Watch in Caucasus Region? implemented by the UN Environment and executed by the World Resources Institute aims at empowering decision-makers in government, the private sector, and civil society with technology and information necessary to reduce deforestation and land degradation and conserve biodiversity in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. UNEP will be the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the project. A task manager will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the project, assisted by a support staff.		

	Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (RECC)	REC Caucasus has been designated by the Recipient Government (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - MEPA) as the Project Executing Agency. REC Caucasus will perform tasks of secretariat for the PSC. Along with the representatives of the MEPA, the PSC will be comprised of the representatives from relevant line ministries and agencies, regional administrations of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region and relevant 6 municipalities and other stakeholders. The PSC should make necessary decisions/recommendations in accordance with the rules and regulations of UN Environment and the GEF.		
PROJECT AFFECTED PARTIES (PAPs)	Biodiversity and Forest Policy Department (BFPD)	BFPD is responsible for coordination, managing and monitoring of policies and activities for the purposes of fulfilment of the CBD, preparation of legislative base / proposals to be submitted to the relevant parliamentary committees, monitoring of planned activities? implementation and reporting to CBD secretariat.	Formal channels: Communication to be done by persons authorized by the project to communicate with beneficiaries. Informal channels: public communication about the project implementation process that is	In accordance with government procedures for information exchange (As needed).

	Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD)	MESD is responsible for coordination of sustainable development policies. Though MESD is not directly involved in environmental and/or agricultural activities, it is in charge for overall coordination work with international multi-lateral and by-lateral donor organizations and countries.	received by direct beneficiaries. Meetings, online meetings, training, workshops, official letters, email, reporting.	
	Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI)	MRDI has the mandate for oversight of modification and modernization of the country's water supply and sanitation and road networks as well as coordination and monitoring of spatial planning in Georgia. MRDI also sets infrastructure development policies for Georgia. Through its involvement in the PPG phase, MRDI will contribute in development coherent concept and pilot projects on agrobiodiversity based agrotourism with view of integrated land-use approach to promote and secure long-term project benefits.		

	Municipal Development Fund of Georgia (MDF)	MDF operates with the objective of assisting to enhancement of institutional and financial capacities of local self-government bodies (municipalities), making investments in local infrastructure and services, and improvement of main economic and social conditions for the local population. MDF implements the significant infrastructural projects (incl. international donors financed projects) such as: arrangement of infrastructure at tourist and cultural heritage monuments, improvement of infrastructure aimed at preventing the natural disasters, arrangement of the cable ways, renovation of sports infrastructure, and enhancement of the component in support of State and Private Sector Investments (PPI). Involvement of MDF in planning activities under the project will be of particular importance for achieving project outcomes and outputs.		
	Akhaltsikhe Municipality Adigeni Municipality Aspindza Municipality Akhalkalaki Municipality Borjomi Municipality	Amongst other municipal services that are being provided, functions of the municipalities that are relevant to this project include the development and implementation of projects (including agricultural and environmental projects) of		In person visits to municipalities (at least twice a year). The PSC will hold meetings at least twice a year, but additional meetings

	Ninotsminda Municipality		local importance. Six municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region will be main partners and key decision makers in all stages of the project development. Javakheti Region will be main partners and key decision makers in all stages of the project development.		can be held if necessary.
	Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Administration		Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Administration is responsible for coordination between the Central Government (Cabinet of Ministers), line ministries and agencies on one hand, and local municipal authorities on other hand. Head of the Regional Administration is appointed and directly reports to the Prime-Minister of Georgia. Involvement of Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Administration in project planning will be of particular importance for the overall successful implementation of the project.		
	Local population	Local cooperatives	Local farmers and private sector play an important role in supporting agriculture, agrobiodiversity and agrotourism.	Face-to-face meetings; Trainings/workshops; Invitations to public/community meetings.	Electronic, Project office, at beneficiaries? site, training/ workshop venues (in-person and online).
		Individual farmers			

		Local communities	Local farmers and private sector entities will further participate in capacity development activities to obtain required knowledge and skills to identify and carry out such business opportunities. Also, local farmers and private sector will be engaged in the project through close consultations and direct implementation of in-situ conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity through farmer management to improve livelihoods of local people, revitalize rural agrotourism and generate impacts necessary to advance progress at national level.		
OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES (OIPs)	Scientific-Research Center of Agriculture (SRCA)		SRCA is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). It was established in 2014 in order to restore the scientific-research activities in agricultural sector. SCRA will be direct beneficiary and main counterpart of the project involved in all stages of project planning and implementation.	Direct meetings, online meetings, training, supervision, official letters, email, reporting, fora, workshops.	Electronic, project office, at beneficiaries? site in Samtskhe-Javakheti region, training/ workshop venues (in-person and online) (As needed).

	National Forest Agency (NFA)	NFA, designated as a central agency for forest management in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). NFA will take part in developing activities for forest areas within the targeted Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.		
	Protected Areas Agency (APA)	APA, designated as a central agency for protected areas management in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). APA will be involved through project planning and implementation activities.		
	Rural Development Agency (RDA)	RDA is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). RDA implements variety of projects initiated by the MEPA, managing subordinate agricultural companies and regional and municipal territorial bodies for agricultural extension. RDA will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project planning and implementation.		

	National Wine Agency (NWA)	NWA has been created under the Law of Georgia on Vine and Wine of 1998 and currently is operating under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). Main functions of the NWA are: Research and promotion of Georgian vine and wine culture; Creation of national registry of vineyards; Promotion of organized vintage conduction; Control and certification of wine production quality; Georgian wine promotion and progress of awareness; Promotion of the growth of export potential. The National Wine Agency carries out its activities through cooperation with stakeholders operating in the vine producing and wine industry. NWA will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project planning and implementation.		

	National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring (NASLM)	NASLM is working under the supervision of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). Main functions of the NASLM are: a) to draw up a balance sheet for land, to register agricultural land resources and to create an integrated database; b) to participate in the preparation and implementation of state policy and relevant state targeted programmes for the intended use and protection of agricultural land resources; c) to participate in the preparation and implementation of state policy on the sustainable management of agricultural land; d) to participate in the planning of activities in the fight against desertification and land degradation, and in the restoration of soil fertility; e) to participate in the planning and carrying out of activities related to the management of windbreak belts (shelter belts); f) to receive and review applications regarding investment plans related to privately owned plots of agricultural land, to prepare relevant documentation to be submitted to the MEPA, and to supervise the implementation of the investment plans; g) to prepare thematic maps related to land use; h) to participate in the establishment of administrative-territorial borders. The NASLM will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project planning and implementation.		

	Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA)	GNTA, designated as a central agency for tourism development in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD). Goals and objectives of the GNTA are formation and implementation of the Georgian tourism development state policy, promotion of the sustainable tourism development, promotion of a high export income growth and job creation in the country on the basis of the tourism development, attraction of the foreign tourists to Georgia and development of the tourism as well, promotion of human resources development in the field of tourism destinations, infrastructure and tourism. GNTA will be involved in project implementation through planning activities aimed at elaborating of sustainable agrotourism approaches for Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.		

	National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC)		NCDC is designated as a central agency for public health in Georgia operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoIDPOTLHSA). Early detection and prevention of diseases is NCDC?s core mandate. The Center has a significant role in development of country's health care system and improvement of public health. A precondition of implementation of the Center?s major objectives is a strong infrastructure, modern laboratories, and most significantly, highly trained human resources. Through its mandate covering, among other functions, development of state rules, standards and regulations for public health, biosecurity and laboratory activity; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and disasters, the NCDC will take part in advising taking into account specific health safety needs of women, children, disabled and other vulnerable groups with view of Novel Covid-19 considerations.		
	NGOs and CSOs	Biological Farming Association Elkana(Akhaltsikhe Regional Office)	Local NGOs/CSOs play a prominent role in informing public policy on agriculture, agrotourism and biodiversity. NGOs and CSOs will help to identify gaps and challenges related to the application of project approaches and most		
		Samtskhe-Javakheti Media Center			

		Union of Democratic Meskhetians Akhaltsikhe Youth Center Civic Initiatives Association	efficient mechanisms related to public participation in project related decision-making processes.		

	LEPL Samtskhe-Javakheti State University	LEPL Samtskhe-Javakheti State University aimed at extensive plans from the very beginning. Its establishment was based on the general public opinion initiated from the upcoming national movement. Development path and achievements of Samtskhe-Javakheti State University have been created within 30 years of its establishment as a higher education institution. Students, graduates, employees and the community of the University are proud of the achievements and results that evolved as a result of the higher education foundation in Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Today based on cooperation between different stakeholders the common space of scientific research, higher and vocational education and lifelong learning is created in the South of Georgia. Samtskhe-Javakheti State University is one of the growing and progress-oriented regional universities in Georgia. Public expectations and trust of multiethnic population residing in the region towards the University are high. Its aim is to promote social, cultural and economic well-being in the society. The University supports initiatives and activities of introducing European education and qualifications, actively participates in the Bologna process and is guided by the principles of the Great Charter on European Universities.		

	LEPL Community College "Opizari"	LEPL Community College "Opizari" is located in Akhaltsikhe. It was founded in 1977. For many years of its existence, the vocational school has successfully fulfilled its main mission - to train highly qualified specialists in accordance with the requirements of the labor market. There are the following project-related programmes in the Community College ?Opizari?: Vocational Education Programme Agro-Mechanization ? the objective of the programme is to provide competitive staff with the competence of technical equipment in the field of agriculture, diagnostics and services; Vocational Education Programme of Farming ? the objective of the programme is to ensure the introduction of vocational programs that will prepare both local and international labor markets to raise competitive personnel with relevant competencies in the field of agriculture.		

	Branches of the Scientific-Research Center of the Ministry of Agriculture in Samtskhe-Javakheti	On the basis of the Resolution # 162 of the Government of Georgia of February 13, 2014, the LEPL Agricultural Scientific-Research Center was established in order to restore scientific-research activities in the agrarian sector. Scientific-Research Center of the Ministry of Agriculture carries out pilot demonstration activities through two branches of Samtskhe-Javakheti region.		
VULNURABLE GROUPS	Youth/Children Covid-19 patients	As minor impacts from the project are to have high levels of influence over vulnerable people special assistance will be provided as needed to ensure these people will not suffer any reduction in their standard of living or income.	Following project communication procedures. Public meetings, trainings/workshops, separate meetings specifically for women and vulnerable.	Samtskhe-Javakheti region, training/ workshop venues (in-person and online).
	Local Women	Gender action plan will be developed during the PPG phase, which will provide in-depth gender analysis aiming to empower women as well as men and working towards achieving gender equitable outcomes. Gender action plan will provide gender indicators and targets so they?ll be part of the monitoring. Additionally, there will be dedicated financial and human resources dedicated to the corresponding gender activities.		

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

? During the PPG phase, 7 working meetings with more than 60 people were arranged with local civil society organizations, private sector entities and representatives of the local population (communities) of Samtskhe-Javakheti region which actively participated in the consultation process

with local municipal authorities, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA), other line ministries and their subordinated units and agencies.

? In addition, for ensuring effective engagement of stakeholders, following inception and validation workshops were held during the PPG phase: **(a)** Inception Workshop organized on December 19, 2021 aimed at introducing the overall project goal, components, and timeline to stakeholders and to present draft action plan for discussion. Inception Workshop gathered the participants from the Government of Georgia, Municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, NGOs, International Organizations, local farmers, experts, UNEP and REC Caucasus and **(b)** Final Validation Workshop organized on April 13, 2002 with participation of all interested stakeholders aimed at reviewing the whole PPG consultation process and outlining key findings, presenting and discussing the key elements of the project final design ? providing opportunity for stakeholders to discuss proposed implementation approach and provide feedback and to endorse the project document for follow-up submission to the GEF Secretariat.

? Detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan (*see in Annex V*) was prepared during the PPG phase in collaboration with all main stakeholders. Close consultations and information exchange took place with the following stakeholders: Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA); MEPA?s Biodiversity and Forest Policy Department (BFPD), Environment and Climate Change Department (ECCD), Scientific-Research Center of Agriculture (SRCA), National Wine Agency (NWA) and Rural Development Agency (RDA); Samtskhe-Javalheti Regional Administration, Municipalities of Samtskhe-Javalheti Region, local farmers etc.

? Stakeholder engagement will be a process in which the Project will build and maintain constructive and sustainable relationships with stakeholders impacted the life of a project. This will be part of a broader stakeholder engagement strategy, which also will encompass central and local governments, civil society and others with interest in the project.

? The population of the Project area does not include indigenous people[1].

? The satisfaction of stakeholders with the Project benefits will be considered an important aspect of the success of the Project. As such, Project stakeholder management was a core activity of project preparations and is expected to be a core activity during the implementation phase of the Project.

? The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) defines the technically appropriate approach to consultation and disclosure. The goal of this plan is to improve and facilitate decision making and create an environment that promotes active involvement of stakeholders.

? Table below describes main functions and role of key stakeholders in project execution, as well as in project implementation process.

Table 2. List of key stakeholders and their anticipated role according to the project components

Key stakeholders	**Stakeholder's anticipated role in the project implementation phase**	**Content engagement, contributions to the project (identified by Component)**
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) *Biodiversity and Forest Policy Department (BFPD)* *Environment and Climate Change Department (ECCD)*	MEPA is the Focal Point for both CBD and ITPGRFA. It is responsible for defining and elaborating directions and policies on environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources and agriculture. Within MEPA, the BFPD is responsible for coordination, managing and monitoring of policies and activities for the purposes of fulfilment of the CBD, preparation of legislative base / proposals to be submitted to the relevant parliamentary committees, monitoring of planned activities? implementation and reporting to CBD secretariat. The BFPD is directly responsible for coordination of development and implementation of national biodiversity strategy and action plan. The ECCD, as GEF focal point department of MEPA, is taking responsibility for general coordination of GEF funded projects and leading works to promote implementation of climate change mitigation/adaptation policies and measures and green economy principles along with SDGs. A representative of the BFPD/MEPA will lead the Project Steering Committee. MEPA will play a crucial role in guiding the elaboration of policy and regulatory instruments under the planned project. Representatives of the relevant departments and units of MEPA will be involved in training sessions.	Components 1,2 and 3

Scientific-Research Center of Agriculture (SRCA)	SRCA is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). It was established in 2014 in order to restore the scientific-research activities in agricultural sector. Within its current mandate, functions of the SRCA are: Explore-study, rehabilitate and develop local gene pool of the annual and perennial crops; Set up the genetic bank; Observe, evaluate and adapt the introduced species and varieties of crops in Georgia; Arrange the standardization and certification systems for planting and seedling materials; Study the land pool and restore the soil fertility of Georgia; Endorse the bio-agro (organic) production, promote the ecologically safe food and harmonize it with international standards; Measure the pests and diseases of plants and elaborate the integrated control systems; Explore, restore and improve the population of local breeds of agricultural and animals, poultry, fish and useful insects of Georgia; Research and adaptation of imported breeds; Set up of electronic information bank; Scientifically evaluate the risk probability, revealed in food and forage and work out the recommendations for the risk management bodies; Communicate with the public, international, donor and non-governmental organizations; Develop and promote the extension programs, spread the regional knowledge. SCRA will be direct beneficiary and main counterpart of the project involved in all stages of project activities? planning and implementation.	Components 2 and 3
National Forest Agency (NFA)	NFA, designated as a central agency for forest management in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). NFA will take part in developing activities for forest areas within the targeted Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.	Component 1
Protected Areas Agency (APA)	APA, designated as a central agency for protected areas management in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). APA will be involved through project implementation activities.	Component 1
Rural Development Agency (RDA)	RDA is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). RDA implements variety of projects initiated by the MEPA, managing subordinate agricultural companies and regional and municipal territorial bodies for agricultural extension. RDA will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project implementation.	Components 2 and 3

National Wine Agency (NWA)	NWA has been created under the Law of Georgia on Vine and Wine of 1998 and currently is operating under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). Main functions of the NWA are: Research and promotion of Georgian vine and wine culture; Creation of national registry of vineyards; Promotion of organized vintage conduction; Control and certification of wine production quality; Georgian wine promotion and progress of awareness; Promotion of the growth of export potential. The National Wine Agency carries out its activities through cooperation with stakeholders operating in the vine producing and wine industry. NWA will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project implementation.	Components 1, 2 and 3
National Agency for Sustainable Land Management and Land Use Monitoring (NASLM)	NASLM was established in 2019 and became fully operational in the first half of 2020. NASLM is working under the supervision of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA). Main functions of the NASLM are: a) to draw up a balance sheet for land, to register agricultural land resources and to create an integrated database; b) to participate in the preparation and implementation of state policy and relevant state targeted programmes for the intended use and protection of agricultural land resources; c) to participate in the preparation and implementation of state policy on the sustainable management of agricultural land; d) to participate in the planning of activities in the fight against desertification and land degradation, and in the restoration of soil fertility; e) to participate in the planning and carrying out of activities related to the management of windbreak belts (shelter belts); f) to receive and review applications regarding investment plans related to privately owned plots of agricultural land, to prepare relevant documentation to be submitted to the MEPA, and to supervise the implementation of the investment plans; g) to prepare thematic maps related to land use; h) to participate in the establishment of administrative-territorial borders. The NASLM will be one of the main counterparts of the project involved in all stages of project implementation.	Component 1
Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD)	MESD is responsible for coordination of sustainable development policies. Though MESD is not directly involved in environmental and/or agricultural activities, it is in charge for overall coordination work with international multi-lateral and by-lateral donor organizations and countries. By the involvement in the project formulation, MESD?s functional departments like Sustainable Development Department (SDD) will help to identify co-financing sources for the project and plan coherent concept and project pilot projects.	Components 1 and 2

Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA)	GNTA, designated as a central agency for tourism development in Georgia, is operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MESD). Goals and objectives of the GNTA are formation and implementation of the Georgian tourism development state policy, promotion of the sustainable tourism development, promotion of a high export income growth and job creation in the country on the basis of the tourism development, attraction of the foreign tourists to Georgia and development of the tourism as well, promotion of human resources development in the field of tourism destinations, infrastructure and tourism. GNTA will be involved in project implementation through planning activities aimed at elaborating of sustainable agrotourism approaches for Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.	Component 2
Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI)	MRDI has the mandate for oversight of modification and modernization of the country's water supply and sanitation and road networks as well as coordination and monitoring of spatial planning in Georgia. MRDI also sets infrastructure development policies for Georgia. Through its involvement in implementation phase, MRDI will contribute in development of coherent concept and pilot projects on agrobiodiversity based agrotourism with view of integrated land-use approach to promote and secure long-term project benefits.	Component 2
Municipal Development Fund of Georgia (MDF)	MDF was established in 1997 by the Government of Georgia. The Fund is cooperating with all large investment banks and financial institutions operating in Georgia. It is coordinated by the Supervisory Board approved by the Government of Georgia and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI). MDF operates with the objective of assisting to enhancement of institutional and financial capacities of local self-government bodies (*municipalities*), making investments in local infrastructure and services, and improvement of main economic and social conditions for the local population. MDF implements the significant infrastructural projects (*incl. international donors financed projects*) such as: arrangement of infrastructure at tourist and cultural heritage monuments, improvement of infrastructure aimed at preventing the natural disasters, arrangement of the cable ways, renovation of sports infrastructure, and enhancement of the component in support of State and Private Sector Investments (PPI). Involvement of MDF in planning activities under the project will be of particular importance for achieving project outcomes and outputs.	Component 2

National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC)	NCDC is designated as a central agency for public health in Georgia operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoIDPOTLHSA). Early detection and prevention of diseases is NCDC?s core mandate. The Center has a significant role in development of country's health care system and improvement of public health. A precondition of implementation of the Center?s major objectives is a strong infrastructure, modern laboratories, and most significantly, highly trained human resources. Through its mandate covering, among other functions, development of state rules, standards and regulations for public health, biosecurity and laboratory activity; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and disasters, the NCDC alongside UNEP Key Messages on Gender Equality and COVID-19, will take part in advising taking into account specific health safety needs of women, children, disabled and other vulnerable groups with view of Novel Coronavid-19 considerations.	Component 2
Samtskhe-Javalheti Regional Administration and 6 Municipalities of Samtskhe-Javalheti Region	Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Administration is responsible for coordination between the Central Government (*Cabinet of Ministers*), line ministries and agencies on one hand, and local municipal authorities on other hand. Head of the Regional Administration is appointed and directly reports to the Prime-Minister of Georgia. Involvement of Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Administration in project planning will be of particular importance for the overall successful implementation of the project. Six municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region are independent, self-governing bodies which act on the basis of rights and responsibilities granted under the Local Self-Government Code of Georgia of 2014[2]. Head of each municipality is the Mayor who is elected through universal vote by all residents of the municipality. Legislative body of a municipality is elected Municipal Council (?*Sakrebolo*?), while executive functions are performed by the Municipal Administration. Amongst other municipal services that are being provided, functions of the municipalities that are relevant to this project include the development and implementation of projects (*including agricultural and environmental projects)* of local importance. Six municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region will be main partners and key decision makers in all stages of the project development.	Components 1, 2 and 3

Ministry of Finance (MoF)	MoF is responsible for public finance, fiscal and budgetary management (*incl. allocation of state transfers from state budget to local-self-government /municipalities/ budgets*). MoF is central body in charge of budgetary planning at national level. MoF will contribute by providing recommendations and suggestions for financing of innovations especially regarding agrobiodiversity based agrotourism.	Component 2
Other regions and municipalities of Georgia	Representatives of other regions of Georgia rich in agrobiodiversity and known also as vine and wheat producers will be invited to participate in stakeholder engagement workshops in order to get their feedback for the design of the project activities. The project will also ensure inclusion of the stakeholders from other regions and municipalities in the capacity development and knowledge management activities.	Component 1
Academic organizations	Representatives of educational and research institutions (*universities, research centers, laboratories etc.*) will be closely involved in both planning and implementation stages of the project.	Components 1, 2 and 3
Local NGOs and CSOs (e.g. women initiative groups)	Local NGOs/CSOs play a prominent role in informing public policy on agriculture, agrotourism and biodiversity. NGOs and CSOs will help to identify gaps and challenges related to the application of project approaches and most efficient mechanisms related to public participation in project related decision-making processes. Project will closely cooperate with Gender Commissions established by each 6 target municipalities under Georgia?s *Gender Equality Act of 2010*[3]. Gender Commissions consist of Municipal Council members, Municipal Administration representatives and local NGO/CSO representatives. Main function of the Gender Commissions is to work on Gender equality annual action plans for respective municipalities.	Components 1, 2 and 3

NGO Elkana	The Biological Farming Association Elkana, a Georgian non-governmental organization, was founded in 1994. In parallel with promoting the development of organic farming, Elkana is also occupied with the problems of traditional agricultural diversity conservation (*In 2004-2009, Elkana implemented the GEF/UNDP-funded project ?Conservation and Sustainable Use of Georgia's Agrobiodiversity?, in the framework of which old Georgian cereal and leguminous crops have been recovered and cultivated on farms, including ancient and endemic wheat varieties*) and sustainable use and rural tourism development. Initial activities of Elkana were limited to advisory services of farmers; at present the organization?s scope of activity has widened. Elkana will be involved in planning stage and also in implementation stage of the project as potential partner organization (*sub-contractor*).	Components 1 and 2
Local Farmers and Private Sector Entities	Local farmers and private sector play an important role in supporting agriculture, agrobiodiversity and agrotourism. The private sector is a key recipient and beneficiary, not only contributing to upgrading existing and establishing new policies on agrobiodiversity, but also for facilitating innovative transfer and as knowledge and information multiplier. Local farmers and private sector entities will further participate in capacity development activities to obtain required knowledge and skills to identify and carry out such business opportunities. Also, local farmers and private sector will be engaged in the project through close consultations and direct implementation of *in-situ* conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity through farmer management to improve livelihoods of local people, revitalize rural agrotourism and generate impacts necessary to advance progress at national level.	Components 1, 2 and 3

? The purpose of the elaborated SEP is to clarify the details of Stakeholder Engagement performed throughout the progression of the project; as well as to outline the responsibilities of all participants and contractors in the implementation of Stakeholder Engagement activities.

? The project is not expected to cause any physical resettlement, however, the involvement of the local population is essential to the success of the project, to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and local communities and minimize and mitigate environmental and social risks related to the project.

? The SEP fully reflects provisions of Global Environment Facility (GEF) requirements for stakeholder engagement and public consultations, as specified in the GEF Stakeholder Engagement

Policy (SD/PL/01). The project stakeholder engagement activities will be robust and information disclosure should be sufficient to promote better awareness and understanding of the project?s strategies, policies, and operations.

? The objectives of the stakeholder engagement plan and its implementation are to: Identify the stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the project and the nature and scope of their interests; Summarize how and when to consult stakeholders in project implementation; Ensure that stakeholders have access to timely, relevant and understandable information about activities implemented within the project; Ensure that such stakeholders are appropriately engaged on project plans and progress and in particular of environmental and social issues that could potentially affect them, through a process of information disclosure and meaningful consultation; Maintain a constructive relationship with stakeholders on an on-going basis through meaningful engagement during project implementation; Effectively involve the public to enhance the social, environmental, and financial sustainability of the project; Ensure that direct beneficiaries and indirect beneficiaries are full participants in the implementation of the project; Establish clear procedures to request information; Establish accessible, transparent and responsive grievance mechanism for the project; and Ensure the appropriate allocation of resources, throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF-Financed Activities, to ensure sustained commitments and actions related to public involvement activities.

? The SEP was prepared in January-March 2022 and the methods used for the preparation of the SEP included the following steps: Review of relevant documents related to the project such as existing GAP for recent project, various legislation and national documents related to the project; Interviews with individuals and key stakeholder groups relevant to the project; and Meetings with individuals/groups partaking in the project.

? Under the SEP, the stakeholder engagement activities are envisioned in accordance with the expected responsibilities. Stakeholders were divided into four categories: Project Proponents, Project Affected Parties (PASPs), Other Interested Parties (OIPs), and Vulnerable Groups.

? Detailed explanation of the stakeholders and engagement methods and activities are provided in the SEP. At the same time, it has to be mentioned that Stakeholder Engagement Plan is written to communicate with the stakeholders and local stakeholders should be able to understand how, for what, when and where they can engage, manage, monitor, and be reported. Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be revised at the early phase of the project implementation to ensure that such action-oriented details are fully integrated into this plan.Information of future roles of stakeholders and proposed means of future engagement, as well as how the Project will keep engaging stakeholders through adequate means, are also identified in table below.

? Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex V) includes project-specific grievance submission form. However, detailed mechanism will be established at inception phase of the project implementation with

indication of contact person (focal point) at national level. In general, the project detailed grievance redress mechanism will be based on and benefit from UNEP's corporate grievance redress mechanism. Detailed, project specific grievance redress mechanism will provide opportunity at a field level to file complaints during project implementation. Contact information and information on the process to file a complaint will be disclosed through internet (web-page), in all meetings, workshops and other related events throughout the life of the project. In addition, it is expected that all awareness raising material to be distributed will include the necessary information regarding the contacts and the process for filing grievances. In addition, it is expected that all awareness raising material to be distributed will include the necessary information regarding the contacts and the process for filing grievances. Information will be also available at project pilot sites (once they are selected) and target municipal administrations.

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[1] There are no indigenous people in Georgia meeting internationally recognized criteria. This may be attributed to number of historical and socio-economic development factors. The Georgian nation is known to have been started to form as a pre-modern ethnic entity as early as 4th century by political, economic and religious synthesis of the East Georgia (ancient state of Kartli, known also as Iberia) and the West Georgia (ancient state of Colchis). Georgia had existed as historically independent state (or as a number of states for certain periods of history) long before it was annexed by Russian empire in the first half of XIX century ? with recognizable identities consisting of distinctive lingual, religious and territorial features. As a modern nation, Georgia emerged as a result of the industrial revolution and its alteration of social patterns (e.g., urbanization). During this period all ethnic/ethnographic subgroups of modern Georgia have been fully integrated in the Georgian society and are not considered as sub-ethnic/sub-ethnographic minorities. Therefore, ethnic/ethnographic subgroups (social and cultural groups) of Georgian ethnic origin are considered not indigenous people, but local communities, not distinct from the dominant population, fully integrated with it ? though, maintaining in some high-mountain regions, and to certain extant, their own traditions and some of the figurative signs of archaic forms of socioeconomic relations.

[2] **Local Self-Government Code of Georgia (2014)** // Organic Law of Georgia ?Local Self-Government Code? of 05 February, 2014 (*Official Gazette of Georgia ? Legislative Herald of Georgia (LHG), web-page: matsne.gov.ge, Ref.: 1958-IIs, Registration Code No. 010250000.04.001.016100 / Consolidated Version as of 29.05.2020 as modified by 50 amending Organic Laws*) - [*Unofficial Translation in English*]
https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2244429

[3] **Gender Equality Act (2010)** // Law of Georgia on Gender Equality of 26 March, 2010 (*Official Gazette of Georgia ? Legislative Herald of Georgia (LHG), web-page: matsne.gov.ge, Ref.: 2844-Is, Registration Code No.* 010.100.000.05.001.003.962/ *Consolidated Version as of 19.02.2019 as modified by 8 amending Laws*) - [*Unofficial Translation in English*]
https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/91624

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier; Yes

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body; Yes

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

? Achieving gender equality on the way to building a democratic state has always been challenging for Georgia. Although the Georgian government has made some positive attempts to elaborate and implement a gender equality strategy and has adopted international obligations, there is an overall consensus that it must make a greater commitment to ensure gender equality and combat all kinds of discrimination against women. According to the National Statistics Office of Georgia share of women is more than 52% out of total population[1]. A reduction in agrobiodiversity places rural women in an increasingly vulnerable position, as they are majority of rural households and they are not empowered enough to improve their livelihoods and to increased access to time-saving assets in technology and capital in order to reduce women's work and time burdens in agriculture. Studies have shown women in rural areas to have low-level access to rural finance, technologies, information and the decision-making[2]. Women also lack technical and professional expertise in agriculture with both vertical and horizontal segregation in employment, with more men in managerial positions and in technical subjects.

? For Georgia, agriculture remains a priority sector in terms of GDP contribution and economic growth. Gender differences in the sector show that women are more involved in low-income activities than men, such as subsistence agriculture. Women are actively engaged in both plant and animal production, especially in family farming. However, many of these women are involved in unpaid and informal work, and their role remains invisible and unrecognized. Non-paid female workers were 69 percent of total non-paid workers. The participation of women in agricultural activities is lower than that of men. The role of women in rural and agricultural development is important. However, the often-overlooked contribution of rural women to agriculture is that their work in vain is largely associated with family responsibilities and remains unpaid and women employed in all sectors of agriculture have less pay than men. On average, Georgian women make up 75 percent of men's income.

? The project activities will contribute directly and indirectly towards improving the condition of women by enhancing their capacity to participate in decision-making processes, and to engage in

project activities that have the potential to improve their economic situation. Women will benefit particularly from skill development (education/training) and improved access to knowledge on agrobiodiversity, which will contribute increasing both the incomes and social capital of women. A gender mainstreaming approach will be best undertaken towards integrated agrobiodiversity considerations into overall biodiversity, agriculture and agrotourism policies. Planning goals and their concrete application and implementation will be evaluated in terms of specific criteria and integrated into mediation and participation processes that will take into account the different needs of male and female populations. Expected gender study under the project will include gender-mainstreaming recommendations to ensure that gender considerations are properly taken into account with view of national gender equality legislation[3] and existing nationwide gender equality barriers and obstacles[4].

? The Project Gender Action Plan (*see in Annex S*) was developed during the PPG phase, which provides in-depth gender analysis aiming to empower women as well as men and working towards achieving gender equitable outcomes. The plan reflects the following points while offering relevant activities:

- ? Equal/appropriate participation or representation of women and men ? in decision-making as well as project implementation activities.
- ? Women?s and men?s different needs based on their concerns, experiences (including with regards to their roles and responsibilities) and constraints.
- ? Whether proposed activities/approaches will lead to gender-responsive results (and not unintendedly reinforce gender inequity).
- ? Collection of gender-disaggregated data.

? The Project Gender Action Plan (GAP) was designed in accordance with the GEF Policy on Gender Equality (*for more details see also Annex S*). The Project will ensure equal opportunities for women and men in Samtskhe-Javakheti region to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the Project, so that the all-planned activities will be implemented in an inclusive manner. GAP is written to communicate with the stakeholders and local stakeholders should be able to understand how, for what, when and where they can engage, manage, monitor, and be reported. GAP will be revised at the early phase of the project implementation to ensure that such action-oriented details are fully integrated into this plan.

Gender related Regional Factors and Trends

? In Georgia, mostly males function as household heads (63%) taking charge of financial situation, while women function under a caregiving role and household chores[5]. However, women generally have the primary responsibility of providing their families with food, water, fuel, medicines, fibres, and other products. Often, they need to rely on a healthy and diverse ecosystem for a cash income. As a result, rural women are the most knowledgeable about the patterns and uses of local biodiversity. Yet, these same women are often denied access to land and resources, mostly stemming from gender roles.

? Upon analysis (*conducted in Samtskhe-Javakheti region during GAP development*), it is found that women participate in production of agricultural products as well as various administrative tasks. Nevertheless, it was frequently mentioned during the interviews in Samtskhe-Javakheti that the agricultural work and farming activities performed by women are often not recognized by institutions, communities, or even by women themselves. At the local level, there are specific gender roles associated with certain agricultural activities. For example, livestock is accessed by both females and males, however, large livestock like cattle and in some regions, goats are controlled by men. Women control small stock, such goats, chickens, and rabbits. Additionally, the implications of such role division must be acknowledged, as it results in lack of physical asset build-up. The small stock (chickens and rabbits) easily disposed, to meet family daily food and income requirements.

? Additionally, in Samtskhe-Javakheti women?s economic participation often takes form of street vending, household-based goods production, cross-border trading, and subsistence agriculture. While men have had difficulty in adapting to their loss of social status in the face of widespread unemployment, women, along with young people of both sexes, have capitalized on emerging opportunities in the fields of small-scale trade and consumer services, and in many instances are the family breadwinners. Small-scale trade, making the great part of informal economy, is difficult to track, and is commonly overlooked in economic evaluations. Indeed, most informal economy employment is self-employment in trade, service, or agriculture.

Identified Gender Gaps

? The gender-gap analysis was influenced by the conceptual framework on social equity that was recognized at the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as well as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Policy on Gender Equality. The CBD conceptual framework ascertains that social equity has three dimensions: recognition, procedure, and distribution. In accordance with the Parties to the CBD, ?recognition? is the identification of the rights, identities, values, knowledge systems and stakeholders; ?procedure? signifies inclusiveness of rule- and decision-making; and ?distribution? indicates that costs and benefits occasioning from the management of natural resources must be justifiably distributed amongst distinctive actors[6]. Aforesaid dimensions served for a more comprehensive framework through considerations of gender inequalities against the background of any preceding disproportions created by political, economic, and social conditions.

? In case of Samtskhe-Javakheti region the following gaps were underlined regarding: (a) recognition of women?s role; (b) equal land ownership; (c) education; (d) participation in decision-making process and (e) distribution of household incomes.

? *Gender Gaps related to Recognition.* Women in environmental sectors are often disregarded regardless of their contributions. In Georgia, there are around 90,300 women in the field of agriculture, forestry, and fishing[7]. However, their work often goes unrecognized, many contributions such as domestic tasks are ignored. The interviews with local women confirmed the lack of recognition. The lack of recognition of the inputs made by women in the field is correspondingly because women play a greater role in the processing of by-products.

? Moreover, work performed by women in agriculture is often considered informal, thus unpaid. According to the Georgian National Statistics, in 2018 male earned 55% of monthly earnings, while female counterparts earned 45%. In 2019, the gap grew larger with males earning 85% of monthly earnings, while females made 15%[8]. During interviews, qualitative data confirmed that a large influence was due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020, males earn 70%, while women make 30% of average monthly earnings. The above data demonstrates national statistics, but in accordance with the qualitative data the gaps may be even larger for local women of Samtskhe-Javakheti.

? During the field visits, male and female contributors were requested to categorize the activities carried out by men and women. Women were identified as carrying out domestic work and caregiving, while men were more habitually linked with economic activities. However, by stimulating additional specified data from participants on agricultural activities, they noted that, in many cases, men and women completed analogous activities on farms, with the exception of physically demanding tasks. Rural women tend to combine domestic work with an excessive variability of other tasks, such as animal farming (cattle, poultry, goats), the production and sale of goods (cheese, bread, nuts), and the sowing and harvesting of basic grains.

? *Land ownership*. Although women represent between 60% and 79% of Georgia?s rural labor force, males are five times more likely to own land than females. In general, land ownership is very low among women, a factor that limits their ability to exploit land-based livelihood strategies. It affects their ability to access finance by using land as collateral property, which often delays investment decisions or reduces the earning potential of agriculture. Lack of land ownership has implications that rural women face in obtaining titles and owning property, rendering them ineligible to participate in certain projects, receive support, and benefit from environmental and agricultural incentive programs. Women?s access to land, a key productive asset, is limited by patrilineal inheritance (from father to son), traditional authority structures that tend to give men decision-making control over women in all spheres of life. Although the Georgia Land Administration Act is egalitarian on paper, further work is required to operationalize the Act to make it functional in practice.

? *Gender Gaps related to Procedures*. When it comes to participating in farm related activities, women face constraints as they have more caregiving responsibilities. During the interviews, women emphasized the struggles they face when it comes to participating in certain activities as they have children dependable on their care. As a result, in the course of the focus group discussions, many highlighted the necessity of monetary compensation concerning childcare. Nevertheless, the establishment of resources allocated explicitly for childcare has still not been formalized in the majority of environmental initiatives. The extra burden of domestic work and caregiving limits the economic autonomy of these women, who find themselves at a disadvantage in terms of access, management, and enjoyment of the resources of time, work, and income.

? *Education.* Many women do not participate in forest and conservation initiatives because of discriminatory stereotypes, especially in relation to strenuous activities. Due to the stereotypes, women are often transferred to administrative or support positions, involving food preparation or logistics.

? Moreover, often women lack the information to manage certain activities. In Samtskhe-Javakheti there are 206 schools containing 24,732 students, offering education from 1-12 grade. The schools are divided among 6 municipalities: Adigeni Municipality (25); Aspindza Municipality (18); Akhalkalaki Municipality (65); Akhaltsikhe Municipality (39); Borjomi Municipality (21); Ninotsminda Municipality (38)[9]. Although in general women outnumber men in the number of graduates, it was found that gender specialization continues to be widespread. For example, there are certain educational fields such as agriculture, forestry, and fishing, where few women are enrolled, women amount to 38%, while men total 62%.

? *Decision making processes*. Samtskhe-Javakheti region consists of 6 administrative-territorial units - municipalities: Adigeni, Aspindza, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda and Borjomi. Municipalities are independent, self-governing bodies which act based on rights and responsibilities granted under the Local Self-Government Code of Georgia of 2014[10]. Head of each municipality is the mayor who is elected through universal vote by all residents of the municipality. Legislative body of a municipality is elected Municipal Council (?Sakrebolo?), while executive functions are performed by the Municipal Administration.

? Many women are not able to participate fully and effectively in decision making, and this often makes it more difficult for them to benefit from many development projects or environmental incentives. In the course of the focus group discussions and interviews, the relative absence of women from the decision-making process was one of the most widely mentioned gender inequalities. This pattern was observed across various levels of governance, from government institutions dealing with the environment to development associations. To exemplify, the Sakrebulo functions as the main decision maker in the region, thus having a direct relation to gender related discrepancies, opportunities, and solutions. According to Georgian National Statistics, in 2017 the Sakrebulo was made up of 5 women and 23 men in Borjomi, 6 women and 27 men in Akhaltsikhe; 3 women and 27 men in Adigeni, 4 women and 23 men in Aspindza; 2 women and 26 men in Akhalkalaki, and 2 women and 24 men in Ninotsminda. Ratio of men and women in municipal administration is drastic causing women to feel like they are not able to participate in the decision-making processes.

? Women?s Rooms are operating in all six municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti to support women in their social and economic lives. The Women?s Rooms are a municipal service, a resource and consultancy space for facilitating open dialogue between local society and municipality officials, aiming at promoting women?s participation in the decision-making at the local level and increasing their access to municipal information and services including on health care and agricultural programmes. Women?s Rooms also offer a platform for trainings and meetings, supporting new initiatives and instilling women?s active participation.

? *Gender Gaps related to Distribution*. Poverty and inequality are linked to employment-related gender gaps, in terms of participation and income, especially in female-headed households. Based on research and interviews, poverty effects women?s daily lives the most. National Statistics Data on extreme poverty demonstrate that 20.9% of women are living under the absolute poverty. Interviews found that many women living in poverty cannot generate income because their time is devoted to caring for their children and other dependents. By comparison, the labor participation rate over the past 10 years stands at about 67% for men and 46% for women, indicating substantial gender variances in entering the labor market. Such statistical indicators, specifically, gender inequalities, can explain over 20% of women under the absolute poverty line[11].

? In Samtskhe-Javakheti few farms receive financial aid, even in terms of loans. As mentioned above, women and/or female-led households have even a harder time receiving loans as they are less likely to own property, have the ability to pay, or even own a bank account. However, women also represent the majority of beneficiaries of the Targeted Social Assistance programme as well as receive higher number of retirement pensions, this fact is explained by demographic factors, as the vulnerable elderly population includes more women. Moreover, often if they receive money, they usually have little to no control over it. This information reflects some of the main gender gaps that were mentioned during the field visits.

? GAP specifically provides for gender indicators and targets so they will be part of the monitoring and evaluation programme.

? In addition, during the PPG phase, a specific budget was allocated for gender related analyses, and where it was appropriate, gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data, as well as gender mainstreaming specific activities were included in the project?s action, monitoring and evaluation plans.

? GAP is founded on a holistic gender analysis that acknowledges the gender-differentiated roles, gaps, and opportunities in the Georgian territory of Samtskhe-Javakheti. The holistic nature of the gender analysis not only emphasizes discrepancies between men and women, in certain situations and contexts, but aids in the comprehension of the existing complex social environment.

? The goals and actions proposed in the GAP are more comprehensive in scope, therefore have the potential to link the identified gaps, as well as uncover new opportunities for women and men that depend on biodiversity, not only in Samtskhe-Javakheti, but the entirety of Georgia. Along with Action Plan, the GAP includes also: (a) plan by Project activities; (b) GAP quarterly monitoring report template and (c) sample TOR for Gender Expert. Expected outcomes of the GAP, as well as actions, indicators, existing gaps addressed and implementing timelines are provided in Table 4 (*for more details refer also to Annex S. Gender Action Plan*).

Table 4. Gender Action Plan

GOAL 1	***Equal/appropriate participation or representation of women and men during project implementation activities and decision-making***				
Expected Outcome	***Actions***	***Indicator***	***GAP addressed***	***Responsibility***	***Timeline***
1.1. Women participate fully and effectively in the conservation and use of biodiversity and natural resources	1.1 Analyze existing relevant national and local policies and identify gaps in protection and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity (landraces and CWR), ecosystem services provided by local agrobiodiversity, gender equality etc. 1.2. Develop policy proposals on integrating local agrobiodiversity (landraces and CWR) in existing national and local policies on agriculture and other relevant sectors ensuring their gender responsiveness.	At least two policy documents addressing sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity will include gender-specific needs and ways to address them Number of women participating in Municipal Council Percentage of women involved in committees and organized groups related to the protection and conservation of biodiversity and natural resources.	Uneven participation and decision making in environmental planning and governance at all levels	MEPA Project team and experts Municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti region	Year 4

1.2 Process for strengthening restoration programs to incorporate a gender perspective	1.3 Organize round tables with participation of regional/local government agencies and non-governmental organizations working in agriculture, environment protection, rural development sectors with participation of female representatives to discuss findings of regulatory framework study and gender analysis, drafted proposals on its improvement and agree on inter-sector collaboration in promoting agro-biodiversity and agrotourism.	Number of projects and training processes in which the network provided technical support to include a gender perspective.			
	1.4. Identify policy and legislation gaps to address them in a new legislation framework				
1.1 Projects that create sustainable economic opportunities for women and men and strengthen the conservation	1.5. Generate specific indicators of women?s participation in landscape restoration projects.				

and sustainable management of biodiversity within environmental institutions.	1.6. Conduct a national dialogue to ensure that future environmental policies, plans, and strategies address the issue using the same language and gender approach.				
GOAL 2	***Women?s and men?s different needs based on their concerns, experiences (including with regards to their roles and responsibilities) and constraints.***				
Expected Outcome	***Actions***	***Indicator***	***GAP addressed***	***Responsibility***	***Timeline***
2.1 Projects that create sustainable economic opportunities for women and men and strengthen the conservation and sustainable management of forests within environmental institutions	2.1 Develop methodology of study on agrobiodiversity management and harvesting practices of priority plant species in the project sites and ensure that it includes gender lens to analyze specific gender-related needs and roles in sustainable application of these practices.	At least 50% of farmers and local community representatives to participate in the capacity-development trainings are women; At least 50% of farmers and local stakeholders benefitting from increased resources and improved marketing opportunities are women	Unequal access to and control of natural resources	Project team and experts	Year 1 and Year 2

	2.2 Develop gender-responsive Guidelines on sustainable management and harvesting of priority plant species and products and make them available to local communities and extension workers.	Opportunities for include management of agro-ecotourism sites, communication with tourists and guiding them through the attractions			
	2.3 Establish a mechanism to improve relations between women and men, and break gender stereotypes through conflict resolution workshops.	Number of programs for women in farms established			
GOAL 3	***Collection of gender-disaggregated data***				
Expected Outcome	***Actions***	***Indicator***	***GAP addressed***	***Responsibility***	***Timeline***
3.1 Gender-sensitive information and awareness raising campaigns conducted, fostering greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity	3.1 Design gender-responsive capacity building program/strategy and training tools tailored for needs and roles of each target stakeholders at national level.	Farmer?s information system is created and it is used by local women farmers Percentage of women producers benefited by environmental	Imbalanced access to socio-economic services.	Project team and experts	Year 2 and Year 3

as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels	3.2 Conduct study to collect social, economic and gender-related data to assess role of agrobiodiversity in wellbeing and environment sustainability.	financing mechanisms. Percentage of women who receive information on funding. Notify the profile of female forest landowners and non-owners.			
	3.3 Identify specific gender differences, including women and men?s different roles, needs, priorities, capacities and vulnerabilities in promoting agricultural biodiversity and agrotourism.				
3.2 Increased availability of agricultural biodiversity friendly products and improved marketing opportunities for target plants and derived products through government support and promotion of agro-ecotourism in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region	3.4 Produce and disseminate gender-responsive information and awareness raising materials fostering greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels and positioning women as change-makers, earners and actors in economic development.				

	3.5 Systematize the gender-differentiated characteristics of farms and non-farm productive spaces that do not meet the criteria of current financing mechanisms, in order to create robust databases and build baselines.				
	3.6 Make farmer information system equally accessible for men and women. Ensure local population about the system and its benefits				
GOAL 4	***Lead to gender-responsive results (and not unintendedly reinforce gender inequity)***				
Expected Outcome	***Actions***	***Indicator***	***GAP addressed***	***Responsibility***	***Timeline***
4.1 Process for strengthening restoration programs to incorporate a gender perspective	4.1 Conduct systematic monitoring to ensure the benefits of the new policy is distributed equally between men and women in target areas.	Content of awareness raising campaigns are oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and reinforcing women?s image as change-makers Number of gender equality programs and projects that address environmental	Unequal access to and control of natural resources Imbalanced access to socio-economic services.	Project team and experts with municipal government	Year 3 and Year 4
	4.2 Teach the beneficiaries how to use and benefit from the information system. Encourage female farmers to participate in the process				

	4.3 Ensure equal participation of men and women in the ?on the job trainings? on agricultural biodiversity friendly farming and practices	issues			
	4.4 Ensure that content of the awareness-raising materials reflects women?s and men?s gender roles, gender stereotypes and their impact on the society				
	4.5 Implement the processes of induction and capacity building of internal and external bodies in a gender-responsive manner, in order to increase women?s accreditation				
	4.6 Reach small-scale women farmers in the region and disseminate awareness-raising materials, including the guidelines for agrobiodiversity practices				
	4.7 Mobilize and encourage local women to participate in the project activities, specifically in the capacity building trainings				

[1] GeoStat (2021): https://www.geostat.ge/en/modules/categories/41/population

[2] FAO (2018). Gender, Agriculture and Rural Development in Georgia: http://www.fao.org/3/ca0577en/CA0577EN.pdf

[3] **Gender Equality Act (2010)** // Law of Georgia on Gender Equality of 26 March, 2010 (*Official Gazette of Georgia ? Legislative Herald of Georgia (LHG), web-page: matsne.gov.ge, Ref.: 2844-Is, Registration Code No.* 010.100.000.05.001.003.962/ *Consolidated Version as of 19.02.2019 as modified by 8 amending Laws*) - [*Unofficial Translation in English*] https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/91624

[4] Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations (2018). Parliament of Georgia. http://www.ge.undp.org/content/georgia/en/home/library/democratic_governance/gender-equality-in-georgia.html

[5] National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat), 2022

[6] CBD, 2018. Decision CBD/COP/14/L.19.

[7] National Statistics Office Of Georgia (Geostat), 2022

[8] Same as previous reference.

[9] National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat), 2022.

[10] **Local Self-Government Code of Georgia (2014)** // Organic Law of Georgia ?Local Self-Government Code? of 05 February, 2014 *https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2244429*

[11] National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat), 2022

Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?

Yes

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women Yes

Does the project?s results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.

? There were conducted 7 working meetings (*see in Annex V - Stakeholder Engagement Plan*), including 4 working meetings in Samtskhe-Javakheti region, during PPG phase, where representatives from Samtskhe-Javakheti?s agro-business (*vine and wheat producers, producers of vine planting and wheat seed materials*) and agro-tourism sectors were involved among other stakeholders.

? Information exchange covered both policy and technical topics related to vineyard and wheat growing management, agrobiodiversity issues with view of local varieties of vine wheat landraces, agrobiodiversity based agro-tourism and food systems. The above representatives stated that it is important to raise local farmers and consumers awareness about benefits of using local biodiversity products: local communities and residents should be sure that agrobiodiversity has its own segment on a market and that it is reliable in terms of medium-term and long-term economic gains. All the above-mentioned will contribute to sustainable agrobiodiversity management and practice.

? Representatives of the above sectors welcomed the planned activities regarding establishment of 2 pilot agro-eco tourism attractions (***Activities 1-4 [2.1.5.1-2.1.5.4]***), study on opportunities for adding value and creation of new products of wild edible plants - vine and wheat varieties (***Activities 1-2 [2.2.1.1-2.2.1.2]***), market appraisal (RMA) for vine and wheat biodiversity friendly products (***Activities 1-2 [2.2.2.1-2.2.2.2]***), development training tool and capacity building events on implementation and monitoring of compliance with agro-biodiversity friendly products and services tailored for large and small scale private sector in tourism and agriculture (***Activities 1-2 [3.1.2.1-3.1.2.2]***) and collection, publication and dissemination of information on new food recipes based on local varieties for mobilizing biodiversity to improve dietary diversity and their promotion through restaurants and food courts (***Activity 1 [3.1.4.1]***).

? In the light of private sector?s engagement, role a potential of agrotourism have to be especially mentioned. Agrotourism is unique experience that combines traditional agriculture with tourism. For several years before COVID-19 Pandemic (2017-2019), agritourism has been growing rapidly looking for new opportunities to serve its customers.

? Agritourism is one of the most important sources of Georgia?s regional development as well as job creation and women?s economic empowerment. According to UNDP[1], the sector?s significance had grown even more in the process of reviving an economy devastated by COVID-19, a fact that had been reflected in the pandemic anti-crisis plans of the Government of Georgia in 2020 and 2021. Considering this context, it became relevant to pass even new legislation on agritourism - an initiative that emerged as a result of a study tour to Tuscany organized for women entrepreneurs by UN Women

and the Georgian Farmers? Association (GFA) in November 2018. Work supporting the legislative initiative had been led by the Agrarian Issues Committee of the Parliament of Georgia since 2020, with the engagement of UN Women and the GFA and supported by the Norwegian Government. The COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic-induced lockdown and difficulties in accessing the markets had clearly pointed out how important the local markets and the agritourism value chain are for agriculture.

? The draft legislation[2] was focused on regulating and supporting this sector. It aimed at developing agritourism, facilitating the sale of local products, increasing the access to finances for entrepreneurs in this field and promoting the agritourism image of the country. However, process of further formal review and approval has been delayed due to the election campaign period and election of new Parliament in November 2020.

? The project will contribute to restarting of formal review and approval process of the said draft law through the actions planned under the Output **1.1.2** (Regulatory framework in place to conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism).

? For agrobiodiversity-based agriculture and agrotourism businesses, the private sector is a key recipient and beneficiary in Samtskhe-Javakheti region, not only contributing to upgrading existing and establishing new approaches, but also for facilitating technology transfer and as knowledge and information multiplier.

? Based on the outcomes of the meetings and consultations with individual farmers, farmer associations, small business representatives, vine and wheat producers and local wine and bakery industry sector representatives, local tourism sector representatives and other stakeholders ? one of the key components of the project strategy will be extensive analyses of market demand for agrobiodiversity-based products and services within the project area - in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region.

? Private sector will be engaged in the project through continuous and intensive consultations during the project implementation processes. Private sector can play an important role in terms of investments mobilization potential. Also, private sector representatives will participate in capacity development activities to obtain required knowledge and skills to identify and carry out best and environmentally friendly business opportunities.

[1] UNDP. Agritourism development for the revival of pandemic-hit Georgian economy. June 08, 2020.
https://georgia.un.org/en/52789-agritourism-development-revival-pandemic-hit-georgian-economy
[2] ***Draft Law On Agrotourism***. Date of Official Registration of Bill: 24 September, 2020. Registration Number: 07-3/497/9. Official Web-Page of the Parliament of Georgia.
https://parliament.ge/legislation/20971

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

? Table 5 below indicates potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objective from being achieved or may be resulting from project implementation, and mitigation measures that address these risks.

Table 5. Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risks	Rating	Mitigation Measures
Lack of governmental and municipal co-financing to invest in sustainable management of agrobiodiversity	Medium	This risk is rated as medium due to the fact that the central government of Georgia always transfers funds according to the approved budget. The mitigation measure for this risk is to firstly ensure strong level of communication with the central government and municipal authorities during all and ensure reflection of the committed funds in the central and municipal budgets.

Lack of interest of local authorities, farmers and communities in agrobiodiversity and agrotourism	Low	For recent years Georgia has become international tourist hub destination. Local authorities, farmers and communities are less likely to want not to explore new marketing and business opportunities. An increased emphasis on tourism will mean that there is a very low risk that there will be a lack of local interest in agrobiodiversity and agri-business. This risk could be mitigated through public awareness campaigns (respective short snapshots will be prepared and broadcasted in the municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region) to be implemented from the early stage of project implementation. In addition to this the project will work closely with the MEPA, MESD and MRDI, agriculture and tourism related governmental agencies and international organizations to consider possibility to jointly organize agrobiodiversity promotion events.
Gender-related risks to accessing knowledge resources and specific communication channels	Low	The risks revolve gender roles attribute to gender inequality by limiting access of certain features, knowledge, and opportunities. As males are acknowledges as house leaders such pervades personal, family and social relationships and institutions, it affects men and boys as well, and requires the engagement of both sexes to make progress towards justice and equality. Shifts in gender equality require not only Mitigation
Low political priority	Low	Clearly defined work scope and performance monitoring by the project will mitigate the risk and create motivation for good performance of partner institutions. Also, the project document includes capacity building and awareness raising measures designed to create the necessary motivation.

Risks related to novel Coronavid-19 pandemic and post-pandemic restrictions	High (*in short term period*) Medium/Low (*in medium- and long-term periods*)	In medium- and long-term perspectives these risks will be mitigated through taking into account existing regulations and respond equally to the specific needs of women, children, disabled and other vulnerable groups. In addition, national and international public health safety standards and necessary measures regarding pandemic and post-pandemic prevention and avoidance of novel Coronavid-19 and other communicable diseases will be considered as well. Opportunity analysis: the COVID-19 crisis can provide opportunities to showcase the project's successes if its impact is successfully bundled with public health benefits. Project activities will include stakeholder engagement in implementation phase. In case in-person meetings are allowed, public health requirements will be followed. In cases when in-person meetings are not possible, online tools will be used to organize meetings. To reduce data transfer traffic, documents and presentations will be shared with participants before the meetings.

Climate change impacts	Medium/Low (*in medium-term period*)	*Assessment of climate change:* Based on the assessment of current changes in climate on the basis of existing statistical data (1955-2005), there is a trend in increase of both mean annual air temperature and annual precipitation in Samtskhe-Javakheti region. At the same time, air temperature absolute minima and absolute maxima were examined. The analysis indicates a warming trend in this region both in winter and summer seasons. *Hazard Assessment*: The predicted changes in climate elements to the end of the current century are considered to produce an impact on water resources, ecosystems, and the economy of the region. In the seasonal distribution of run-off, a significant decrease (by 41%) was derived for summer, with a moderate increase (by 11%) in spring, allowing the anticipation of some decline in the intensity of summer floods. *The increase in the frequency of disastrous events*: heavy precipitation, floods and landslides, will negatively affect the low-efficiency agricultural development of the region, which may increase migration from rural areas to city centers. The projected trends of climate change for the region, if they come about, may presumably further increase the vulnerability of agricultural and natural ecosystems. *Plans for mitigation:* During the project implementation, capacities of 6 municipalities will be strengthened to deal with extreme climate events in general. The project will also build capacity on climate risk assessment and mitigation in agriculture through training workshops. Project interventions will consider climate risks, and plans will include preventive measures against extreme events. The sustainable agrobiodiversity management concept will be considered during the implementation and feasibility studies will consider resilience while assessing the agrotechnical options.

? Project risks are low to medium/high and depend on how robust the assumptions prove to be. Assumptions related to natural factors have been carefully assessed during the PPG process and are based on best practices and best available knowledge. Assumptions regarding the willingness of other to cooperate with and support project objectives, and to assimilate and apply lessons from the project, is also considered robust based on consultations during the PPG and significant co-financing and participation envisioned during the project implementation phase.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

? The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus) has been designated by the Recipient Government (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - MEPA) as the Project Executing Agency. UNEP will be the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the project. A task manager will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the project, assisted by a support staff. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) will be the beneficiary of the project. REC Caucasus, with technical competence and administrative preparedness for entering into delivery-based contracts, will serve as the project Executing Agency (EA).

? A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established by the MEPA and chaired by the representative of the MEPA. REC Caucasus will perform tasks of secretariat for the PSC. Along with the representatives of the MEPA, the PSC will be comprised of the representatives from relevant line ministries and agencies, municipalities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, regional administration of Samtskhe-Javakheti and other stakeholders. The PSC will hold meetings at least twice a year, but additional meetings can be held if necessary. The PSC should make necessary decisions/recommendations in accordance with the rules and regulations of UN Environment and the GEF.

As may be required on specific issues, an advisory (ad hoc) group can be formed to offer any other guidance or expertise as required by the specific agenda of the PSC. Figure 3 presents the institutional structure with major stakeholders of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. The project will ensure good coordination with on-going GEF-financed and non-GEF initiatives being implemented by UN Environment and by other GEF international agencies.

? When appropriate, the project will also liaise closely with GEF-funded projects under the GEF-7 Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy to learn from and use similar methodologies and indicators as they evolve, including methodologies and indicators under program priorities: I. Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes; and III. Further develop biodiversity policy and institutional framework.

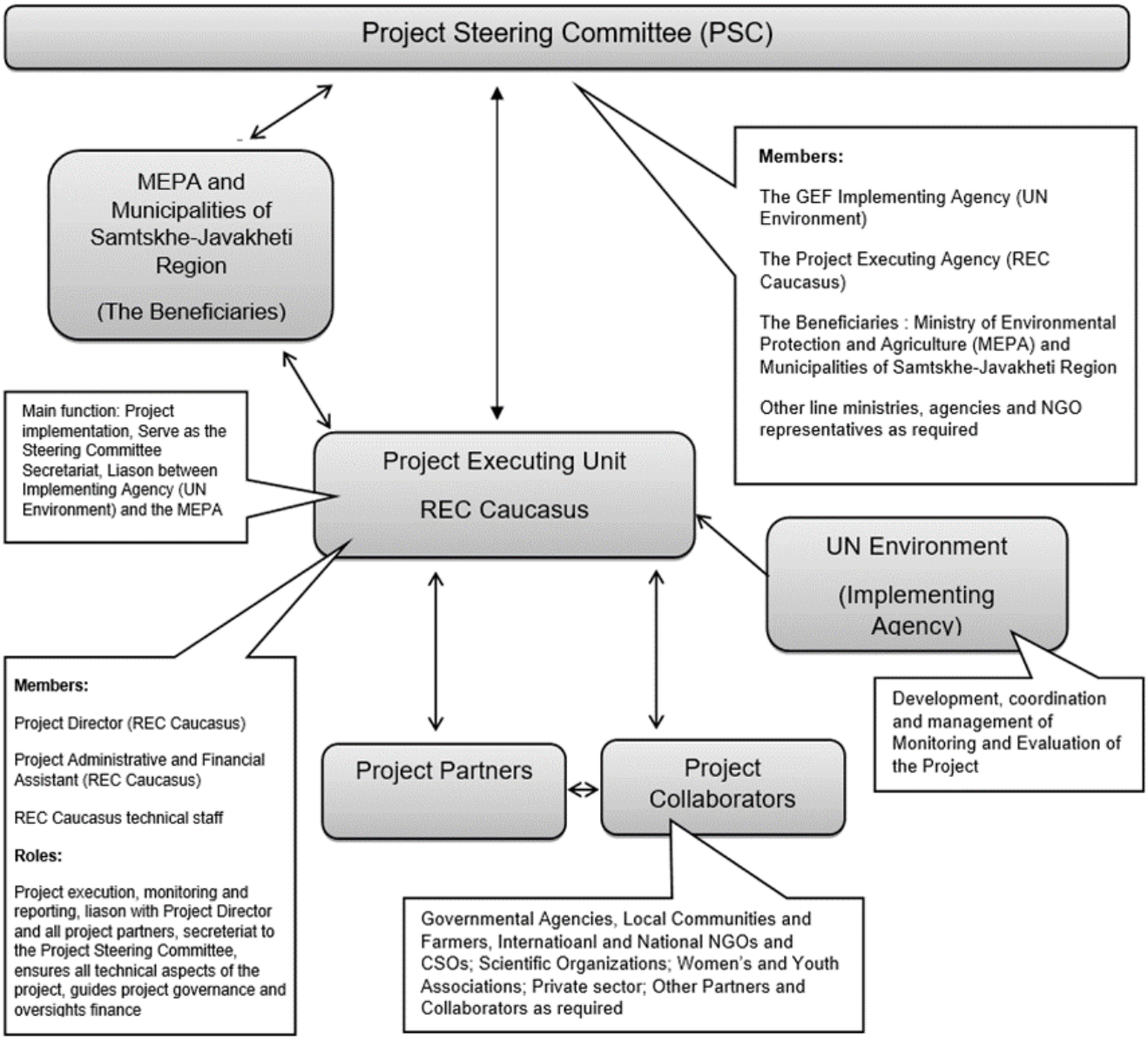
? At the same time, a number of ongoing projects and initiatives in Georgia contribute to the project outcomes and outputs. Opportunities for collaboration and alignment with the following projects and strategies were explored at PPG phase.

? Currently, the Regional Environmental Centre for Caucasus (RECC) is executing the UNEP implemented GEF funded projects: ?Applying Landscape and Sustainable Land Management (L-SLM) for

mitigating land degradation and contributing to poverty reduction in rural areas?; ?Generating economic and environmental benefits from sustainable land management for vulnerable rural communities of Georgia? (Activities under Components 2 and 3 of the proposed project will be designed based on the results of these ongoing project); and ?Georgia?s Integrated Transparency Framework for Implementation of the Paris Agreement?.

? GEF funded regional project for the South Caucasus countries ?Upscaling of Global Forest Watch in Caucasus Region? implemented by the UN Environment and executed by the World Resources Institute aims at empowering decision-makers in government, the private sector, and civil society with technology and information necessary to reduce deforestation and land degradation and conserve biodiversity in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Potential collaboration options with this project were discussed at PPG stage. In addition, regular information exchange and coordination will be ensured with other related initiatives managed by municipal authorities and/or initiatives funded by other donors.

Figure 3. Project Management Arrangements



? The project will collaborate with UNEP?s departments which support countries on biodiversity and agrobiodiversity issues.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

? The project components are aligned to number of national strategies, plans and conventions related to agrobiodiversity showing the sector development pathway.

? Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia (2021-2027) and Georgia?s Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy?s Action Plan (2021-2023): The project is in line with newly adopted Strategy and Action Plan and contributes to their implementation.

? **Georgia?s Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan - NBSAP (2014-2020)**[1] aimed at protection and rehabilitation of unique eco-systems, diversity of species and genetic resources of Georgia through sustainable use and management of biological resources and an equitable distribution of the benefits.

? In 2019, Government of Georgia approved **National Document for Sustainable Development Goals (2020-2030)**. The document depicts the priorities of UN SDGs at national level, aimed at promoting the implementation of SDGs and introducing evidence based national policy according to the 2030 agenda. The process of nationalization of goals was commenced in 2015. Following long consultations, considering the challenges and the national context of the country, internal priorities of the UN SDGs have been determined and a number of targets have been adjusted to Georgia. Given the comprehensive nature of the document, the achievement of each sector-specific target is prescribed in time and baseline (2015 data) and target indicators (for 2030) are established. The mentioned approach is a unique possibility for measuring progress and evaluating the achievement of goal, which is extremely important for planning sector specific policy supported by evidences and information. The project will build the locally relevant knowledge base and capacities of planners to integrate projections in agrobiodiversity policies and strategies in alignment with SDG relevant national targets to be achieved in Georgia by 2030 (*for more details see Annex D. Theory of Change*).

? **EU-Georgia Association Agreement:** Association with the European Union is the cornerstone of Georgia?s foreign and internal policy. Under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, Georgia recognizes the importance of ensuring the conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources to contribute to Georgia?s economic, environmental and social objectives.

? In December 2018 Georgia joined the **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources Important for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)**. Convention aims at the conservation and sustainable use of all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), for sustainable agriculture and food security.

? **Georgia's 2030 Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (Climate Strategy and Action Plan ? CSAP, Climate Action Plan ? CAP)**[2] are a planning and implementation mechanism for coordinated

effort towards meeting the nationally determined targets for climate change mitigation. Climate Strategy and Action Plan identify the ways for reaching Georgia's 2030 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets for climate change mitigation, as set in Georgia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)[3] to the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Climate Strategy and Action Plan identify a long-term vision of GHG emissions reduction by 2030 and specific planned actions. Through the approval of the Paris Agreement in 2017, Georgia joined 191 Parties and committed to contribute towards the goals of the Paris Agreement, among others, to hold the global average temperature increase well below 2 ?C, and pursuing efforts to limit to 1.5 ?C compared to the pre-industrial level. The NDC aims to reduce national GHG emissions to 35% below the emission levels in 1990 (excluding emissions from land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF), meaning GHG emissions should not exceed 29.25 MtCO2e in 2030. According to the Paris Agreement, Georgia has a commitment to formulate an Updated NDC at least every five years. In addition, Georgia is expected to show a progression with regards to emission reduction targets or policies and measures with each update insofar as possible, and to strive for net-zero GHG emissions in the second half of the century. In order to explore the options for adapting to the adverse effects of climate change and plan the appropriate measures, Georgia is preparing National Adaptation Plan (NAP) on the basis of updated Nationally Determined Contribution. Climate Strategy and Action Plan set out the national climate change mitigation policy, *inter alia*, in agriculture and forestry sectors.

? Climate change related National priorities and their implementation status are shown in Figure below:

Figure 4. Georgia?s Climate Change related National Priorities and their Implementation Status

? In 2016, Georgia joined the **Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN-TSP)**, committing to establish national voluntary targets for LDN and identifying transformative projects

to achieve these targets and defined national LDN targets, committing about 1,500 ha of degraded forests to be afforested and about 7500 ha to be reforested and 60% of forests to be managed sustainably by 2030.

? The proposed project may promote actions that indirectly will contribute to fulfilling the LDN national targets. Georgia has also shown clear drive to combat land degradation and improve land management systems by moving forward with a number of policy and strategy documents such as Georgia?s National Action Programme to Combat Desertification (NAP), a new agricultural strategy and a new national forest policy. Georgia?s NAP aims at integrating the aspects of the NAP into sectoral and investment planning and policy documents. This informs at least 40% of decision makers and 30% of the population about the issues of desertification and land degradation and drought, their relevance with biodiversity and climate change, and increasing awareness of community-based organizations and scientific institutions on the threats of desertification/land degradation/drought.

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[1] Currently preparation for development of Georgia?s Third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan - NBSAP (2021-2027) is underway.

[2] **Georgia?s 2030 Climate Change Strategy and its Action Plan for 2021-2023 (2021)** // Approved by the Decree of the Government of Georgia No.167 of April 8, 2021 / (*Official Gazette of Georgia ? Legislative Herald of Georgia (LHG), web-page: matsne.gov.ge, Registration Code No. 360110000.10.003.022723, Published on 13.04.2021*) - [*in Georgian*] https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5147380?publication=0

[3] **Georgia?s Updated Nationally Determined Contribution - NDC (2021)** // Approved by the Decree of the Government of Georgia No.167 of April 8, 2021.
https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Georgia%20First/NDC%20Georgia_ENG%20WEB-approved.pdf

8. Knowledge Management

Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.

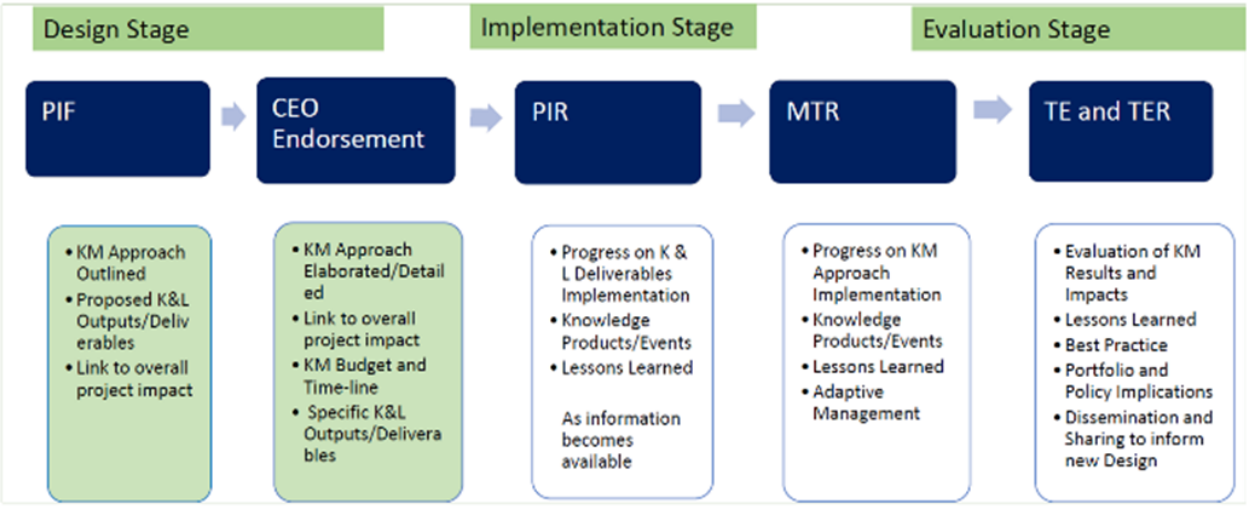
? Knowledge sharing and the dissemination of information is one of the principal activities to support the achievement of the project outcomes and interventions at local (municipal), regional and national levels. Through its project team members (*national and international experts*), the project will facilitate knowledge management that will bring together local communities and authorities, central government line ministries and agencies, scientific and civil society organizations that are engaged with agrobiodiversity, agriculture, agrotourism, sustainable land use to learn from ongoing initiatives, share experiences, and participate in the documentation of methods and decisions. Frequent multi-sectoral engagement including workshops, trainings, and regular meetings will help ensure that experiences and expertise is shared amongst a wide range of stakeholders. Information will be shared in the form of meeting notes, technical notes, blog posts, infographics and printed media. All documentation will be disseminated to stakeholders and will be freely available through the web-page in Georgian, and where appropriate in English,

languages. Project experience will be shared with neighbour countries and countries with similar conditions through biodiversity, agrobiodiversity and sustainable agriculture related regional, interregional and international knowledge exchange systems, forums and events.

? The proposed project will build upon and collaborate with the on-going projects and initiatives. Component 3 of the project will involve existing experience to support effective knowledge management related to agrobiodiversity (incl. agrobiodiversity based agro-tourism) management, which includes the GAP. For effective knowledge management of the GAP, the methodology combined a literature review and data analysis together with interviews, field visits, awareness- raising workshops, and a national multi-stakeholder consultation. By combining these activities, quantitative and qualitative data were obtained, undocumented information identified, including case studies throughout the country, and different recommendations received on local, national, and institutional factors, Lessons learned on best practices and integrated models of project implementation during trainings and public awareness activities, and reports will be elaborated and sent out with the conclusions and suggestions to relevant authorities and institutions, including gender mainstreaming practices including knowledge products and communication strategies.Web-based instruments will be developed to communicate and promote project outputs and deliverables. In addition, this project will link with other countries? GEF financed agrobiodiversity related projects and will exchange with countries participating in those projects.

? Knowledge Management Approach for the Project is based on the following steps throughout the Project Cycle shown in Figure 5 below. These requirements cover the 5 phases of the project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation - including implementation and evaluation phases.

Figure 5. GEF-7 Knowledge Management (KM) Requirements throughout the GEF Project Cycle[1]



? For the purposes to (a) foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations and (b) to contribute to the project?s overall impact and sustainability, at the inception phase,

the Project will develop internally-focused **Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy and Action Plan** in addition to existing GEF externally focused knowledge and innovation exchange mechanism.

? Development of the KM Strategy (KM) and Action Plan for the Project will be leaded by the Project Knowledge Management National Expert (*Knowledge Management Specialist*) who will be guided by Results-Focused Planning Principles for the GEF Partnership[2]. This, inter alia, will include (i) first, identification of needs for learning at the Project level, which covers standardization of creating, storing and accessing the project documentation and, (ii) second, the corporate-level learning needs, involving the ability of the GEF partnership to collate, analyze and share knowledge in a systematic manner.

? With the above regard, the following key elements of the Knowledge Management Approach (KM) will be taken into consideration to be in line with GEF requirements to foster learning and sharing from relevant projects/programs, initiatives and evaluations, and to contribute to the project?s overall impact and sustainability:

(1) Overview of existing lessons and best practice that inform the project concept

? Main existing lessons and the best practices that inform the Project concept will be overviewed from selected agrobiodiversity and agro-tourism related projects, programs and international initiatives and platforms in consultation with stakeholders and the project team members (*national and international experts*).

(2) Time-linked plan to learn from relevant projects, programs, initiatives & evaluations

? Time-linked Plan to Learn from Relevant Projects, Programs, Initiatives and Evaluations is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Time-linked Plan to Learn from Relevant Projects, Programs, Initiatives and Evaluations during the Project Implementation

Project Year	Step	Action
Identification and analyses of lessons and best practices that will inform the project proposal		
Y1	1	Lessons learned and best practice kick-off organizational meeting
Y1	2	Identification of a final list of relevant projects, programs, initiatives and evaluations
Y1	3	Document findings
Y1	4	Analyze and organize the lessons learned for application of results
Y1	5	Store lessons learned
Application of lessons learned and best practice to inform the project		
Y1-Y2	6	Creation of effective tool for storing and retrieving (e.g., shared drive) and the beginning of application of stored lessons learned
Y2-Y4	7	Lessons learned and best practice working meeting(s)
Y2-Y4	8	Integration of lessons learned and best practices into ongoing activities

? Implementation of the Time-linked Plan will support better incorporation innovation and exchange of evidence on policy solutions. It will technically focus on details for scaling-up of innovative technologies and educational models that have already demonstrated results in other projects and programmes and are ready to be shared at the Project?s scale.

? Learning from the relevant projects, programs, initiatives and evaluations will be conducted as the structured production and application of experience-based knowledge to develop and improve Knowledge Management (KM) strategy, organisation, training, materiel, leadership, personnel and facilities to achieve more efficient and effective results under the Project.

(3) Description of processes to capture, assess and document information, lessons, best practice & expertise generated during project implementation

? Processes to capture, assess and document information, lessons, best practice and expertise generated during Project implementation will be targeted to identify learning needs at the Project level, which will cover standardization of creating, storing and accessing the Project documentation and, the local and nationwide learning and information sharing needs, involving ability to collate, analyze and share knowledge in a systematic manner. The initial step of the process will be the identification of process and Project?s expert team through which the KM materials will be collected. It will be important to establish the specific need and purpose for lessons, the audience for the KM products. Initial engagement from all key players and stakeholders will be established during the inception phase of the project implementation. Project team members with specific expertise or knowledge of the project and other needed skills, such as communication and writing, will be selected. The team should then agree to KM product format (*length, style, and presentation*), data collection and analysis methodologies (*e.g., surveys, questionnaires, workshops*) and process, dissemination strategy, and other activities that will be needed.

? KM materials collection process will involve the capture of information through structured and unstructured processes such as project critiques, written forms, and meetings. The collection of KM materials may come from as many sources as the Project is willing to solicit. Lessons learned can be based both upon positive experiences that achieve the Project goals and on negative experiences that result in undesirable outcomes. For the Project, a collaborative lessons collection process can be as or more important as documenting the KM materials.

? Further, verification and synthesizing of information and KM materials will serve to verify the accuracy and applicability of KM materials submitted. Project international and national subject matter experts may be involved in coordinating and conducting reviews to determine whether or not the KM materials (incl. lessons) are relevant across other municipalities and rural areas in Georgia, are unique to this particular Project, or could be applied to the country as a whole.

? The storage aspect of the KM materials, including lessons learned, will involve incorporating lessons into an electronic database for future sharing and dissemination. Information will be stored in a manner that will allow potential users to identify search lessons by keyword.

? The final element, and the most important, will be the dissemination of the KM materials since they are of little benefit unless they are distributed and used by stakeholders and other users who will benefit from them. Dissemination can include the revision of the work process, training, and routine distribution via a variety of communication media. KM materials can be ?pushed,? or automatically delivered to a user, or ?pulled? in-situations where a user must manually search for them. Technically, this will be implemented through the web-based knowledge management system (in the form of a functional platform) that will be developed for information sharing, awareness-raising, dissemination and replication purposes.

? Dissemination through the website and web-based information management system (*e.g., Farmer Information System under* ***Output 2.2.5 of Outcome 2.2***) will be accompanied by the series of awareness-raising and demonstration meetings and events during the whole period of project implementation.

(4) Showing how to develop knowledge exchange, learning and collaboration among different stakeholders that have been selected for technology demonstrations. Consideration of knowledge platform and websites

? Knowledge exchange, learning and collaboration among different stakeholders selected for technology demonstrations will be implemented in a participatory manner with the engagement of central line ministries and agencies (MEPA, MESD, etc.) and local stakeholders (municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti region, Local NGOs and CSOs and private sector).

? Project web-site and web-based information management system will be developed for knowledge and information sharing, awareness-raising, dissemination and replication purposes.

? At least 20 stakeholder meetings and demonstration events will be organized to exhibit and validate pilot measures under Component 2 and to further discuss the obstacles and opportunities. In addition, the possibility to add content and share experiences online will increase the sense of ownership of the information system.

(5) Consideration of long-term plan for strategic communications and knowledge sharing all over the country

? Along with the development of Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy and Action Plan, long-term plan for strategic communications and knowledge sharing at the national level will be elaborated during the Project implementation period with the view of long-term sustainability and elements of cost recovery mainly through the web-based information management system.

? To enhance learning, cross-disciplinary syllabus, videos, links and background reading will be included in the long-term plan for strategic communications and knowledge sharing at both local and national levels. To increase learning impact, activities to help participants and potential users to apply the knowledge acquired to identify agrobiodiversity-based opportunities and conduct preliminary valuations will also be included.

? The long-term plan will be promoted across global networks and platforms and much wider. It will be updated annually using the outputs from Outcomes 1, 2 and 3. Events could be also be organised at key forums of the GEF, UN Environment (UNEP) and CBD to raise awareness of on the value of knowledge sharing on agrobiodiversity-based solutions for sustainable agrobiodiversity and agrotourism management with the focus on local vine and wheat varieties (landraces and CWRs).

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[1] Source: Knowledge Management Requirements: Enhancing Knowledge and Learning in GEF-7 Project Design and Implementation (2020). GEF Introduction Seminar 2020, Washington DC. *https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/events/Knowledge%20Management%20Requirements%20Jan-2020.pdf*

[2] *see in* Art of Knowledge Exchange: A Results-Focused Planning Guide for the GEF Partnership (GEF Secretariat, 2017).

https://www.thegef.org/publications/art-knowledge-exchange-results-focused-planning-guide-gef-partnership

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

? UNEP will be responsible for managing the mid-term review/evaluation and the terminal evaluation. The Project Task Manager and partners will participate actively in the process.

? The project will be reviewed or evaluated at mid-term. The purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to provide an independent assessment of project performance at mid-term, to analyze whether the Project is on track, what problems and challenges the Project is encountering, and which corrective actions are required so that the Project can achieve its intended outcomes by Project completion in the most efficient and sustainable way. In addition, it will verify information gathered through the GEF tracking tools.

? The project Steering Committee will participate in the MTR and develop a management response to the evaluation recommendations along with an implementation plan. It is the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager to monitor whether the agreed recommendations are being implemented. An MTR is managed by the UNEP Task Manager. An MTE is managed by the Evaluation Office (EO) of UNEP. The

EO will determine whether an MTR is required or if the yearly Project Implementation Review are sufficient because it is a 4-year project.

? An independent terminal evaluation (TE) will take place at the end of Project implementation. The Evaluation Office (EO) of UNEP will be responsible for the TE and liaise with the UNEP Task Manager 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:

? to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and
? to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and executing partners.

? While a TE should review use of Project funds against budget, it would be the role of a financial audit to assess probity (i.e., correctness, integrity etc.) of expenditure and transactions. The TE report will be sent to Project stakeholders for comments. Formal comments on the report will be shared by the EO in an open and transparent manner. The Project performance will be assessed against standard evaluation criteria using a 6-point rating scheme. The final determination of Project ratings will be made by the EO when the report is finalized. The evaluation report will be publicly disclosed and will be followed by a recommendation compliance process.

? The direct costs of reviews and evaluations will be charged against the Project evaluation budget. A summary of M&E activities envisaged is provided in Annex L (*Annex L: Costed M&E Plan*). The GEF contribution for M&E activities is USD **50,000**. The indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan is provided in the table below. The estimated total cost (GEF and co-finance) of M&E activities is USD **460,000**, fully integrated into the project budget, as shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7. Monitoring and Evaluation Costs

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF (USD)	Co-finance (USD)	Time Frame
Inception Meeting	Project Director (REC Caucasus), Project Team, Steering Committee, UNEP	0	8,000	Within 2 months of project start-up
Inception Report	Project Director (REC Caucasus)	0	5,600	1 month after project inception meeting

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF (USD)	Co-finance (USD)	Time Frame
Measurement of project indicators (outcome, progress and performance indicators, GEF tracking tools) at national and global level	Project Manager (UNEP) & Project Director (REC Caucasus), Project Team; Consultants	0	76,000	Outcome indicators: start, mid and end of project Progress/perform. Indicators: annually (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Semi-annual Progress/ Operational Reports to UNEP	Project Manager (UNEP) & Project Director (REC Caucasus)	0	68,000	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Project Steering Committee	Project Manager, UNEP (secretariat), A representative of UNEP Implementing Agency, REC Caucasus Executive Director, National GEF Focal Point for Georgia, MEPA (Member of SC)	0	20,000	At least once a year, and via electronic media per request and need
Reports of PSC meetings	Project Director (REC Caucasus)	0	12,000	Within 1 month after PSC meeting
Project Implementation Review (PIR)	Project Manager; UNEP	0	78,400	Annually, part of reporting routine (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Mid Term Review/ Evaluation	? Project Manager; UNEP ? Project Director (REC Caucasus) ? PMU ? External consultant(s) ? UNEP	20,000 (the cost is incorporated in Project Budget under Monitoring and Evaluation Cost)	8,000	At mid-point of project implementation (*Note: If a Mid-Term review is not required for this MSP, these resources will be applied to the Terminal Evaluation)

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF (USD)	Co-finance (USD)	Time Frame
Terminal Evaluation	UNEP EO	30,000 (the cost is incorporated in Project Budget under Monitoring and Evaluation Cost)	12,000	Within 6 months of end of project implementation
Audit	REC Caucasus	0	20,000	Annually
Project Final Report	Project Manager; UNEP	0	47,375	Within 2 months of the project completion date (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Co-financing report	Project Manager (UNEP) & Project Director (REC Caucasus), Financial Manager(s)	0	14,050	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Publication of Lessons Learnt and other project documents	Project Director (REC Caucasus); Consultants for lessons learnt evaluation	0	40,575	Annually, also part of Semi-annual reports & Project Final Report
Total M&E Plan Budget		**50,000**	**410,000**	

10. Benefits

Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

Economics

? The Project will deliver social, economic and environmental benefits as a result of the envisioned technical assistance activities and the demonstration pilots.

? There is not any feasibility study that demonstrates the long-term economic benefits of sustainable agrobiodiversity management with the focus on local vine and wheat varieties (landraces and CWRs). There is a lack of good practices and demonstrations of agrobiodiversity management on a whole. In order

to adopt sustainable agrobiodiversity management and practices, evidence from demonstrations will be needed.

? Moreover, a robust methodology for quantification of indicated socio-economic benefits in Georgia is currently not in place; aspects such as impact on public health and business and employment will expectedly be assessed as inputs for the economic and technical studies (*Study on opportunities for adding value and creation of new products of wild edible plants -vine and wheat varieties -* ***Activity 1*** *[2.2.1.1]; Market Appraisal /RMA/ for vine and wheat biodiversity friendly products* ***Activity 1*** *[2.2.2.1]; Model business plans /bankable projects/ on production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly products and agro-tourism* ***Activity 2*** *[2.2.3.2] and study to collect social, economic and gender-related data to assess role of agrobiodiversity and agrotourism in wellbeing and environment sustainability in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region* ***Activity 1*** *[3.1.3.1]*) that are envisaged to be elaborated under the **outputs 2.2.1**, **2.2.2**, **2.2.3** and **3.1.3** of this project.

Supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund)

? Area of landscapes under sustainable management in production systems to benefit biodiversity will be increased in total up to 20,000 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) that will be comprised both: non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands for in-situ (CWRs) and agricultural lands for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization, of which 6 demonstration pilot sites for on-farm (landraces) conservation of vine and wheat local varieties will cover in total at least 500 ha of agricultural lands.

? Implementation of the Project will contribute to estimated 613,041 metric tons CO_2 eq. mitigation over lifetime of investment (4 years implementation and 16 years capitalization period).

? The project will ensure the sustainability and replicability of global environmental benefits, 5,000 civilians, of which 2,600 (52%) women and 2,400 men (48%) will directly benefit from the GEF investment.

Social benefits and Gender

? To meet the requirements of the GEF Policy on Gender Equality (2017), the Project Gender Action Plan (GAP) will be implemented in accordance with the GEF Policy. The Project will ensure equal opportunities for women and men of Kutaisi municipality to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the Project. Project activities will be designed and implemented in an inclusive manner. Women's organizations based in target municipalities will be invited to the consultation meetings.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

The detailed Annex M Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) is attached for reference.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
Annex M - SRIF_Georgia_agrobiodiversity_Sept 2021_Revised_2022-05-27	CEO Endorsement ESS	
SRIF_Georgia_agrobiodiversity_updated	Project PIF ESS	

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Project Objective: To mainstream agro-biodiversity conservation into agriculture sector of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of Georgia				
Indicator 1: GEF Core Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)	None	Participatory and sustainable management practices on agrobiodiversity are applied at 20,000 ha of lands exluding protected areas	Project progress reports Field survey reports Statistical data of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)	Assumptions: Local rural population, communities and farmers, private sector representatives and local and central governments have continued interest in sustainable agriculture and agricultural biodiversity management with view of local vine and wheat landraces and CWRs. Risks: Risk of low private and public institutional support.

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Indicator 2: GEF Core Indicator 6 Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tones or carbon dioxide equivalent)	None	613,041 metric tons CO_2 eq. mitigated over lifetime of investment (4 years implementation and 16 years capitalization period)	Project progress reports Survey reports	Assumption: Capacity is available to assess contribution of practices on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity to reduction of GHG emission and its mitigation at municipal, regional and national levels Risks: Increasing unsustainable agricultural practices and management of agricultural biodiversity, resulting in increases in GHG emission higher than reductions achieved by the project

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Indicator 3: GEF Core Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment	None	5,000 *civilians**[1]**, of which 2,600 women and 2,400 men*	Project progress reports Report on socio-economic and gender study	Assumptions: Municipal and central government co-financing to invest in sustainable agriculture and management of agricultural biodiversity is available. Covid-19 pandemic is properly mitigated according to international and national standards and regulations. Risks: Lack of Municipal and central government co-financing to invest in sustainable agriculture. Risks related to novel strains of Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions.
Outcome 1.1: Adoption of new policies integrating sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity with the focus on adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties)				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
At least two policy documents addressing sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity (local or national) adopted by government authorities and municipalities.	Policy and institutional framework demonstrate limited awareness of the benefit and value of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem services as well as agro-eco tourism management, absence of prescriptive guidance and policies for sustainable management of biodiversity.	*Midterm* At least two policy documents (national and local) documents agreed by key stakeholders *Project End* At least two policy documents (national and local) documents plans and policies approved by government and local authorities	Project progress reports Government agriculture, land use and relevant sectors development strategy documents and plans Meetings reports of Inter-agency Coordination Committee/Council on Agrobiodiversity	Assumptions: Local and central governments have continued interest in sustainable agriculture and agricultural biodiversity management. Policy-makers, planners, private sector, farmer groups and others make use of and benefit from the available knowledge and integrate it into strategies, plans, and programmes targeting sustainable management of local agrobiodiversity. Risks: Risk of low political and institutional support.

Outputs

? National and local agricultural biodiversity policy documents developed that takes account of unique diversity, ecosystem function and mainstreaming of local agricultural biodiversity into agricultural and other sectoral policies, strategies and programs

? Regulatory framework in place to conserve and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity and promote agrotourism

? Sustainable agricultural biodiversity conservation and utilization local programs and biodiversity stewardship agreements for agriculture and tourism sectors are developed and their implementation is promoted to support agricultural biodiversity friendly farming

Outcome 2.1: Increased area devoted to sustainably managed agricultural biodiversity through mainstreaming of diversified practices and products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region enhancing resilience to climate change

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Area of landscapes under sustainable management in production systems to benefit biodiversity will be increased in total up to 20,000 ha of lands (excluding protected areas) that comprise both: non-agricultural (forest) lands and natural pasturelands for in-situ (CWRs) and agricultural lands for on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization	None	*Midterm* One pilot nursery or pilot field seed bank to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) established At least demonstration 3 pilot sites (*in total on land area up to 250 ha*) that will support wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties) established *Project End* One pilot nursery and one pilot field seed bank to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) established ? in total two 6 demonstration pilot sites (*in total on land area up to 500 ha*) that will support wild edible plants (local vine and wheat varieties) established Participatory and sustainable management practices applied at 20,000 ha of lands ? including (a) non-agricultural (forest) lands and (b) natural pasturelands for in-situ (CWRs) and (c)	Project progress reports Survey reports Decisions at central and/or local levels to establish formally designated CWR sites	Assumptions: Farmers see the benefit and value of local agro-biodiversity and hence are interested in managing it in a sustainable way. Stable and favourable political environment. Committed policy makers and partners at national and local levels. Risks: Lack of governmental and municipal co-financing to invest in sustainable management of agrobiodiversity.

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Number of farmers applying new sustainable technologies and practices disaggregated by gender	Farmers and local communities practice inefficient management approaches, leading to further decrease in agrobiodiversity, loss of economic returns and decreased carbon stocks	*Midterm* At least 100 farmers and local community representatives are trained on (a) vine seedling nursery and wheat field seed bank operation and management and multiplication and quality control of produced planting material and (b) best practices in agrobiodiversity management in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region - of which 40% are women *Project End* At least 250 farmers and local community representatives are trained on (a) vine seedling nursery and wheat field seed bank operation and management and multiplication and quality control of produced planting material and (b) best practices in agrobiodiversity management in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region - of which 40% are women	Project progress reports Reports on training events and activities Survey reports	Assumptions: Farmers and local community members are interested in improving their knowledge and skills in practices on sustainable management of agrobiodiversity. Farmers and local communities have time and opportunity to participate in capacity-development trainings. Risks: Restrictions for in-country travel and group gatherings caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains.

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
At least 2 agro-eco tourism attractions operating in collaboration with local stakeholders	None. No agro-eco tourism attractions (*with view of local vine and wheat varieties*) are in place Local stakeholders in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region do not have knowledge and skills in agro-eco tourism attractions	*Midterm* 2 options for agro-ecotourism attractions are identified and agro-eco tourism measures are planned in collaboration with local stakeholders *Project End* At least 2 agro-eco tourism attractions (*with view of local vine and wheat varieties*) developed in collaboration with local stakeholders	Project progress reports Reports on consultation with local stakeholders on agro-tourism attractions Proposals on developed agro-eco tourism attractions	Assumptions: Local stakeholders are interested in engagement with agro-tourism attractions. National and local policy and institutional environment support agrotourism development. Risks: Restrictions for group gatherings caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains.
% of new jobs created and employed by women by the newly established agro-eco tourism attractions.	Georgia adopted the Law on Gender Equality and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. Women in Georgia are actively engaged in both plant and animal production, especially in family farming. However, many of these women are involved in unpaid and informal work, and their role remains invisible and unrecognized	*Midterm* 50% of stakeholders participated in consultation on agrotourism attractions are women *Project End* At least 50% women employed through newly established agro-eco tourism attractions	Project progress reports Reports on consultation with local stakeholders on agro-toursim attractions Proposals on developed agro-eco tourism attractions	Assumptions: Female stakeholders are interested in their engagement with agro-tourism attractions. National and local stakeholders are interested in raising women?s socio-economic at community, regional and national levels. Risks: Restrictions for in-country travel and tourism caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains.

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Outputs ? Field-based surveys and mapping of the distribution of wild populations of the targeted crop (vine and wheat varieties) wild relatives (CWRs) in the wild and landraces at the farm level are conducted ? Two nurseries and field seed banks to manage and multiply seeds and seedlings of wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) established ? Participatory and sustainable management practices identified, planned and implemented on at least 6 pilot sites that will support traditional crop varieties of adapted wild edible plants to improve local diversity ? Farmers and local communities in the project pilot sites have enhanced skills and capacity to undertake agricultural biodiversity friendly farming and other relevant agricultural biodiversity friendly practices, and community-based approaches through "on the job training" activities. ? Agro-eco tourism attractions developed as an alternative way of sustainable development in the selected communities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region (*rural agrotourism, tourism and organic agriculture, activity tourism- grape harvesting and processing*) -				
Outcome 2.2: Increased availability of agricultural biodiversity friendly products and improved marketing opportunities for target plants and derived products through government support and promotion of agro-ecotourism in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Increased proportion of agricultural biodiversity friendly products derived from target plants (local vine and wheat varieties) in total production of vine and wheat products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region	None. -	*Midterm* Share of agricultural biodiversity friendly products derived from target plants (local vine and wheat varieties) in total production of vine and wheat products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region is more than 2% Agrotechnical practices on sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products (formal and traditional knowledge) gathered and systemized. Key actors and source of information identified and structure of farmer information system designed *Project End* Share of agricultural biodiversity friendly products derived from target plants (local vine and wheat varieties) in total production of vine and wheat products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region is more than 5% Gender-responsive Agrotechnical Guidelines for sustainably managing and harvesting grape and wheat varieties/species	Project progress reports Marketing Survey Gender-responsive Agrotechnical Guidelines Farmer information system accessible to both men and women	Assumptions: Sufficient and detailed information on practices on sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products is available. Farmers and local communities are interested in access to comprehensive knowledge and information supporting sustainable management of local agrobiodiversity. Risks: Stakeholders are not interested in sharing knowledge and information on sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products.

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
Number of farmers - disaggregated by gender - implementing business plans with accessible financial resources -	None. Farmers and local stakeholders lack knowledge and skills in opportunities on marketing biodiversity-rich products and services	*Midterm* Baseline studies to assess existing resource use among local population carried out. Extensive analyses of market demand for agrobiodiversity and rural tourism (agro-eco tourism) products and services in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region completed and opportunities identified *Project End* 20 farmers implementing business plans developed with the support of the project. Bankable projects on income generation options through the sustainable production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly foods and agro-tourism promotion for low-income rural producers (50% of them are women) developed and submitted to banks and other investment agencies for financial support	Report on assessment of existing resource use among local population Report on value addition and market study Project progress reports Submitted and approved business plans	Assumptions: Farmers, local communities and private sector are willing and able to engage in opportunities for value adding and marketing agrobiodiversity rich products and services and agro-tourism promotion. National and local policy makers commit support to initiatives on marketing agricultural biodiversity friendly products, services and promotion of agro-tourism. - Risks: Lack of funding opportunities of financial agencies due to financial crisis caused by Covid-19. Restrictions for travel and tourism caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains.

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Outputs ? Analyses of value addition and creation of new products and branding opportunities of the wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties) for Samtskhe-Jvakheti region is conducted ? Marketing research conducted through a supply chain approach for agricultural biodiversity friendly products ? Income generation options (bankable projects) through the sustainable production, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity friendly foods with high nutritional value for low-income rural producers identified and supported with sound economic and financial analysis ? Agrotechnical Guidelines for sustainably managing and harvesting priority plants and products developed and available in the project site locations ? The Guidelines will incorporate gender lens to analyze specific gender-related needs and roles within the family farms ? Farmer information system for agricultural biodiversity friendly farming developed and in place, accessible to both men and women -				
Outcome 3.1: Stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Increased score in the Capacity Development Scorecard	*10%*	*Midterm* 35% of stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity At least 100 participants are capacitated through capacity building events for various groups of national stakeholders (*policy makers, education and researchers, NGOs, farmers associations, agricultural extension service, etc.*) according to the developed capacity building program At least 50 representatives of large and small-scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) in Samtskhe-Javakheti region demonstrate increased knowledge and capacity through capacity building events on agro-biodiversity friendly products and services *Project End* 60% of stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of	Capacity Development Strategy of the Project Gender-responsive training manuals/modules Project progress reports Report on results of Capacity Assessment	Assumptions: Stakeholders have willingness to increase their capacity and knowledge on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity. Political and institutional framework is supportive for taking actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity by stakeholders. Risks: Risks related to spread of new strains of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdown measures.

Outcome Level Indicators	**Baseline**	**Targets and Monitoring Milestones**	**Means of Verification**	**Assumptions & Risks**
At least 50% of key stakeholders under the component 3 are women, including female farmers, producers and homemakers	None	*Midterm* At least 500 stakeholders, including farmers, producers and homemakers (40% of them are women) benefited from awareness raising activities on agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels and positioning women as change-makers, earners and actors in economic development through Initial, mid-term and closing awareness raising events *Project End* At least 4,250 stakeholders, including farmers, producers and homemakers (50% of them are women) benefited from awareness raising activities on agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels and positioning women as change-makers, earners and actors in economic development through Initial, mid-term and closing awareness raising events	Gender action plan of the project Project progress reports Project?s database on trainings and capacity building activities -	Assumptions: Stakeholders, including female farmers, producers and homemakers have willingness to increase their capacity and knowledge on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity. Stakeholders, including female farmers, producers and homemakers have time and opportunity to participate in capacity-development and knowledge increasing activities of the project. - Risks: Lack of interest of female stakeholders in new knowledge, skills and responsibilities Restrictions for group trainings caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains. -

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Content of awareness raising campaigns are oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and reinforcing women?s image as change-makers	None. *In Georgia there are legal mechanisms that establish the foundation for gender mainstreaming. However, studies have shown rural women to be seen primarily as caregivers, with their main duties within families*	*Midterm* 60% awareness raising materials oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and reinforcing women?s image as change-makers drafted and *Project End* 100% awareness raising materials oriented on breaking stereotypes on conventional gender roles and reinforcing women?s image as change-makers drafted and	Awareness raising materials Report on awareness raising campaigns Mass media publications about awareness raising campaigns	Assumptions: National and local stakeholders are interested in recognition of women as crucial participants and contributors to agricultural development at community, regional and national levels. Risks: Restrictions for travel and group gatherings caused by lockdown due to spread of new aggressive Covid-19 strains Cultural stereotypes on women?s role as care keepers

Outputs

? National capacity developed to mainstream and promote agricultural biodiversity and agrotourism

? In selected Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, significant number of large- and small-scale private sector (tourism and agriculture) representatives capacitated to implement and monitor compliance with agro-biodiversity friendly products and services targeting both women and men

? Gender-sensitive information and awareness raising campaigns conducted, fostering greater appreciation of agrotourism and agrobiodiversity as a resource for development and wellbeing at local and national levels

? Best practices for mobilizing biodiversity to improve dietary diversity (new food recipes based on local varieties) documented and disseminated

-

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) explains mechanisms of how, why, and in what context intervention under the project achieves or contributes to impact. A Theory of Change (ToC) has three main objectives: (i) to ***describe*** what the project intends to do; (ii) to ***explain*** why interventions will lead to outcomes and (iii) to ***reflect*** on the role of the intervention within a larger system. The project also uses

the ToC to anchor the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) work of the project.The evaluation questions of a project are generated by examining the hypotheses and assumptions embedded in in the ToC.

The project?s ToC is based on an interplay amongst its three components: Component 1 will strengthen policy and legal frameworks enabling sustainably management of agricultural biodiversity and support livelihoods in agricultural production in Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Component 2 will be facilitating technical assistance and investment in diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products and Component 3 will support capacity development, knowledge management and M&E for effective and sustainable agricultural biodiversity management.

Within the project life-cycle these components will create conducive conditions for fostering enabling prerequisites at the regional and national levels to accelerate sustainable agricultural biodiversity management and mainstreaming of agro-biodiversity conservation into agriculture sector of Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia. Components 2 and 3 will further support improvement of the sustainable agricultural biodiversity management and agro-eco tourism practices by pilot activities, building capacity, accumulating and sharing knowledge and demonstrating feasible options for vulnerable ecosystems and rural communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti region.

In the long run, the project will support Georgia's efforts on achieving nationally determined SDGs, which can be attributed to: (*i*) increase in the number of men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services [SDG target 1.4], (*ii*) growth in agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, family farmers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition [SDG target 2.3], (*iii*) ensuring sustainable food production systems and implementation of resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change [SDG target 2.4], (*iv*) maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national level, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge [SDG target 2.5], (*v*) increased investments, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity [SDG target 2.a], (*vi*) adoption of measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information [SDG target 2.c], (*vii*) integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning [SDG target 13.2], (*viii*) implementation of policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products [SDG target 8.9] and (*ix*) protection, restoration and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and halt of biodiversity loss [SDG 15].

Project *impacts* are broader changes displayed in terms of *Global Environmental Benefits and Co-benefits*, such as Environmental/Biophysical Benefits and Co-benefits (*Sustainable and effective agricultural biodiversity management system in place; Area of landscapes under improved practices - XX ha under improved management to benefit biodiversity and XX ha under sustainable land management in production systems; Increased CO_2 sequestration)* and Socio-economic Benefits and Co-benefits (*Improved livelihoods and socio-economic co-benefits for number of direct beneficiaries; Improved agricultural and agrotourism value chains and reduced risk - market volatility, access to information and finance; Improved food & nutritional security; Gender equality*).

Project *impacts* will be measured by the following indicators:

- ? Number of sectoral and local authorities that report on improved policy and legal frameworks supporting sustainable and effective agrobiodiversity management system
- ? Improved governance for agricultural biodiversity management system

- ? Number of farmers and other stakeholders and beneficiaries trained on agrobiodiversity and agrotourism, food safety measures adapted to modern lifestyles based on traditional food systems
- ? Number of direct and indirect beneficiaries
- ? Number of local agrobiodiversity programs and number of agrobiodiversity management plans for selected pilot sites
- ? Number of analyses, researches and business plans on marketing, branding and income generation options
- ? Number of awareness raising activities and knowledge products

Project *outcomes* are the results of the interventions, and there are chains and hierarchies of outcomes, intermixed with outputs (*tangible results or products of the activities that are under direct control of the project*). The project has 4 outcomes: Outcome 1.1 (*Adoption of new policies integrating sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity with the focus on adapted wild edible plants (vine and wheat varieties*); Outcome 2.1 (*Increased area devoted to sustainably managed agricultural biodiversity through the mainstreaming of diversified practices and products in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region enhancing resilience to climate change*); Outcome 2.2 (*Increased availability of agricultural biodiversity friendly products and improved marketing opportunities for target plants and derived products through government support and promotion of agro-eco tourism in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region*) and Outcome 3.1 (Stakeholders apply their increased capacity and knowledge and take actions on sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity).

Explicit mechanism of change implies the following *drivers of changes*:

? for Outcome 1.1 - Mainstreaming (Mainstreaming of sustainable agricultural biodiversity management)

? for Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 - Implementation (Implementation of sustainable agricultural biodiversity management)

? for Outcome 3.1 - Capacity building (Capacity building in sustainable agricultural biodiversity management)

In turn, the above implication is built on the project hypotheses based on local knowledge and previous experience, as well as globally established theories on environmental, social and economic effectiveness of the sustainable agrobiodiversity systems.

At the same time these hypotheses and project context, pressures and drivers, barriers, and assumptions provide important opportunity to reflect on the structural factors that affect the project, e.g., the political environment, and other social and environmental factors such as other programs, initiatives, and conditions of existing policy framework, diversified agricultural biodiversity-friendly practices and products, available data for decision-making and risks of new practices.

The project?s theory of change (graphically showing underlying causal mechanism and relationship between the project components, outcomes, pressures, drivers, barriers, assumptions, impacts and their indicators) is provided in the following diagram.

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[1] 5.2% of the whole rural population of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region[1] (Population of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region as of 2021: in total 151,100 residents, of which 96,000 (64%) rural and 54,200 (36%) urban population).

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

All comments were cleared at the PIF and PPG stages.

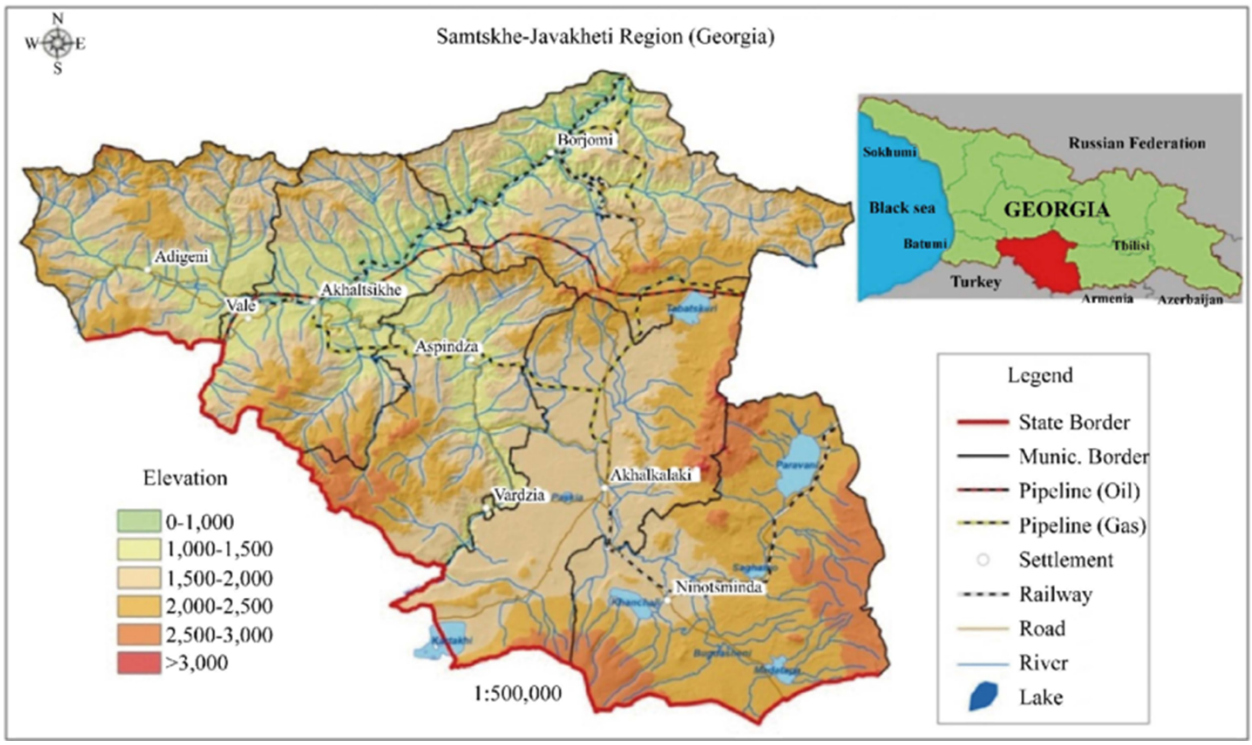
ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG). (Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: **50,000** ***($)***				
Project Preparation Activities Implemented		***GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)***		
		Budgeted Amount	***Amount Spent Todate***	***Amount Committed***
-	Interntional Consultant	11,800	7,600	*4,200*
	National Consultants	23,735	19,565	4,170
	Meetings and Stakeholders consultations at national, regional and local levels	10,400	7,500	2,900
	Travel	4,065	3,000	1,065
Total		*50,000*	*37,665*	*12,335*

If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent fund, Agencies can continue to undertake exclusively preparation activities up to one year of CEO Endorsement/approval date. No later than one year from CEO endorsement/approval date. Agencies should report closing of PPG to Trustee in its Quarterly Report.

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Project title: Sustainable Management of Agricultural Biodiversity in Vulnerable Ecosystems and Rural Communities of Samtskhe-Javakheti Region in Georgia

Project number: 10829

Project executing partner: REC Caucasus

Project implementation period: 2023-2024-2025-2026

From: 01/01/2023

UNEP Budget Line			Expenditure by project component/activity							Insert actual year				
			1	2	3	Total 3 Components without PMC and M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	Project Management Cost (PMC)	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
10	PERSONNEL COMPONENT													
	1100	Project personnel												
	1101	Project Director	0	0	0	0	0	48,000	48,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	48,00
	1102	Project Assistant	0	0	0	0	0	38,400	38,400	9,600	9,600	9,600	9,600	38,40
	1199	Sub-total	0	0	0	0	0	86,400	86,400	21,600	21,600	21,600	21,600	86,40
	1200	Consultants												
	1201	National Experts	[illegible]	[illegible]	35,080	379,080	0	0	379,080	94,770	94,770	94,770	94,770	379,08
		of which:												
		[1201-00] Agrobiodiversity Management Expert	52,120	39,480	4,400	96,000	0	0	96,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	96,00
		[1201-01] Agrobiodiversity Conservation Expert	0	25,000	0	25,000	0	0	25,000	6,250	6,250	6,250	6,250	25,00
		[1201-02] Crop Wild Relatives Expert	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	20,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,00
		[1201-03] Vine Landraces Expert	0	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	3,750	3,750	3,750	3,750	15,00
		[1201-04] Wheat Landraces Expert	0	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	3,750	3,750	3,750	3,750	15,00
		[1201-05] Socio-Economic Analyses Expert	0	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	3,750	3,750	3,750	3,750	15,00
		[1201-06] Biodiversity Market Research Expert	0	8,000	0	8,000	0	0	8,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,00
		[1201-07] Agrotourism Expert	0	8,000	0	8,000	0	0	8,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,00
		[1201-08] Food Systems Expert	0	8,000	0	8,000	0	0	8,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,00
		[1201-09] PR and Communications Expert	26,320	6,000	8,000	40,320	0	0	40,320	10,080	10,080	10,080	10,080	40,32
		[1201-10] Gender Expert	26,320	6,000	8,000	40,320	0	0	40,320	10,080	10,080	10,080	10,080	40,32
		[1201-11] GIS Expert	19,000	6,000	9,080	34,080	0	0	34,080	8,520	8,520	8,520	8,520	34,08
		[1201-12] Agrobiodiversity Policy and Law Expert	0	7,920	0	7,920	0	0	7,920	1,980	1,980	1,980	1,980	7,92
		[1201-13] Capacity Development Expert	20,400	0	3,600	24,000	0	0	24,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	24,00
		[1201-14] IT e-Governance Specialist	11,440	0	2,000	13,440	0	0	13,440	3,360	3,360	3,360	3,360	13,44
		[1201-15] Knowledge Management Specialist	0	9,000	0	9,000	0	0	9,000	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,250	9,00
	1202	International Experts	0	42,000	0	42,000	0	0	42,000	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	42,00
		of which:												
		[1202-01] Agrobiodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Expert	0	12,000	0	12,000	0	0	12,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,00
		[1202-02] Small Farm Agro-Business Expert	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	10,00
		[1202-03] Agro-Tourism Expert	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	10,00
		[1202-04] Agrobiodiversity Based Food	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	10,00
	1299	Sub-total	155,600	230,400	35,080	421,080	0	0	421,080	105,270	105,270	105,270	105,270	421,08
	1300	Administrative Support												
	1301	Financial Officer	0	0	0	0	0	51,360	51,360	12,840	12,840	12,840	12,840	51,36
	1302	Administration/Procurement Officer	0	0	0	0	0	14,640	14,640	3,660	3,660	3,660	3,660	14,64
	1399	Sub-total	0	0	0	0	0	66,000	66,000	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	66,00
	1600	Travel on official business												
	1601	Travel Local	29,000	3,000	8,000	40,000	0	0	40,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,00
	1602	International Travel/Air Fair	8,000	0	1,000	7,000	0	0	7,000	1,750	1,750	1,750	1,750	7,00
	1604	Per Diems, Accommodation	20,000	4,000	10,500	34,500	0	0	34,500	8,625	8,625	8,625	8,625	34,50
	1699	Sub-total	55,000	7,000	19,500	81,500	0	0	81,500	20,375	20,375	20,375	20,375	81,50
1999	Component		210,600	237,400	54,580	502,580	0	152,400	654,980	163,745	163,745	163,745	163,745	654,98
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT													
	2300	Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)												
	2301	Establishment of (a) one pilot vine nursery and one pilot field seed bank and produce planting material (seedlings and seeds) of selected vine and wheat local landraces; (b) 8 demonstration pilot sites (in total on land area up to 500 ha) and implement on-farm (landraces) conservation and utilization measures; and (c) implementation of selected priority measures of in-situ (CWRs) conservation/utilization on formally designated	0	530,000	0	530,000	0	0	530,000	132,500	132,500	132,500	132,500	530,00
	2302	Implementation of agro-eco tourism related activities on at least 2 selected locations for agro-eco tourism attraction for conducting agro-eco tourism related activities with focus on local	0	200,000	0	200,000	0	0	200,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,00
	2303	Publications, Awareness Raising and Communication Materials	16,000	5,187	35,000	56,187	0	0	56,187	13,797	13,797	13,797	13,797	55,18
	2304	Testing and Certification of Local Varieties of Vine and Wheat by Scientific-Research Centre of Agriculture (SRCA) and National Wine Agency	0	35,000	0	35,000	0	0	35,000	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,750	35,00
	2399	Sub-total	15,000	770,187	35,000	820,187	0	0	820,187	205,047	205,047	205,047	205,047	820,18
2999	Component		15,000	770,187	35,000	820,187	0	0	820,187	205,047	205,047	205,047	205,047	820,18
30	TRAINING COMPONENT													
	3300	Meetings/Conferences												
	3301	National Workshops/Conferences	5,000	0	15,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,00
	3302	Steering Committee Meetings	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000	0	0	6,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	6,00
	3303	Trainings	0	5,000	45,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	50,00
	3304	Municipal Workshops and Meetings	11,000	0	24,000	35,000	0	0	35,000	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,750	35,00
	3305	Awareness Raising, Media Events	0	0	55,000	55,000	0	0	55,000	13,750	13,750	13,750	13,750	55,00
	3399	Sub-total	18,000	7,000	141,000	166,000	0	0	166,000	41,500	41,500	41,500	41,500	166,00
3999	Component total		18,000	7,000	141,000	166,000	0	0	166,000	41,500	41,500	41,500	41,500	166,00
40	EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES COMPONENT													
	4100	Expendable equipment												
	4101	Office supply	3,500	0	3,020	6,520			6,520	1,630	1,630	1,630	1,630	6,52
	4199	Sub-total	3,500	0	3,020	6,520	0	0	6,520	1,630	1,630	1,630	1,630	6,52
	4200	Non-expendable equipment												
	4201	Photocamera 2 Units	4,100	0	0	4,100	0	0	4,100	4,100	0	0	0	4,10
	4202	Projector 3 Units	3,800	0	0	3,800	0	0	3,600	3,800	0	0	0	3,60
	4203	Set of Zoom Rooms systems appliance for large-size hybrid conference video room (includes: computer, software, camera, speaker,	8,800	0	0	8,800	0	0	8,800	8,800	0	0	0	8,80
	4299	Sub-total	16,500	0	0	16,500	0	0	16,500	16,500	0	0	0	16,50
	4300	Premises												
	4301	Office rent	15,400	10,400	5,400	31,200	0	0	31,200	7,800	7,800	7,800	7,800	31,20
	4399	Sub-total	15,400	10,400	5,400	31,200	0	0	31,200	7,800	7,800	7,800	7,800	31,20
4999	Component total		35,400	10,400	8,420	54,220	0	0	54,220	25,930	9,430	9,430	9,430	54,22
50	MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT													
	5100	Office costs												
	5101	Communication	4,000	0	4,000	8,000	0	0	8,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,00

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additionality as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agencys is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies? capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).