



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

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

Project Type

EA

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT

CBIT No

Project Title

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

Countries

Global, Algeria, Botswana, Colombia, Djibouti, Dominica, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia, Montenegro, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Turkey

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

UNCCD National Focal Points; The Global Mechanism, UNCCD Secretariat

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Land Degradation

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Land Degradation, Land Degradation Neutrality, Land Productivity, Land Cover and Land cover change, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Sustainable Land Management, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Ecosystem Approach, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Pasture Management, Drought Mitigation, Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Forest, Influencing models, Stakeholders, Local Communities, Indigenous Peoples, Awareness Raising, Communications, Behavior change, Education, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Academia, Community Based Organization, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Access and control over natural resources, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Beneficiaries, Women groups, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Enabling Activities, Knowledge Generation, Workshop, Seminar, Course, Training

Sector

Enabling Activity

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 0

Type of Reports	Submission Date	Expected Implementation Start	Expected Completion Date	Expected Report Submission to Convention
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Duration

24In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

173,500.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
LD-EA	GET	1,826,500.00	
Total Project Cost(\$)		1,826,500.00	0.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

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

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
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Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Facilitating enhanced national-level UNCCD reporting capabilities	<p>1.1. National level enabling conditions for reporting are established to advance UNCCD reporting obligations, as indicated by:</p> <p>a) The number of countries that have successfully established national teams and using reporting platforms to submit their 2021-2022 reports</p> <p>b) Number of Improved quality of convention reports (both timeliness and completeness)</p> <p>c) The number of countries reporting annual changes in degradation or desertification of arable land (% or ha)</p>	<p>Output 1.1.1 Trainings conducted at national level by GEF-eligible countries for the domestication of standardized tools for data collection and for quality assurance guidelines for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting cycle (including support in Trends.Earth tool and PRAIS reporting platform, integration of gender-disaggregated data, and CSO contribution to LDN implementation).</p> <p>Output 1.1.2 2021-2022 National Report to UNCCD compiled and validated with the participation of key stakeholders and submitted within deadline by GEF-eligible Parties</p>	1,826,500.00	

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
		Sub Total (\$)	1,826,500.00	0.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)				
		Sub Total(\$)	0.00	0.00
		Total Project Cost(\$)	1,826,500.00	0.00

Please provide justification

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

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

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Algeria	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Botswana	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Colombia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Djibouti	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Dominica	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Ghana	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Madagascar	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Malawi	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Maldives	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Marshall Islands	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Mauritius	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Micronesia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Montenegro	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Papua New Guinea	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Peru	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Rwanda	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Sri Lanka	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Sudan	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Tanzania	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Turkey	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,325	8,675	100,000.00
Total Gef Resources(\$)					1,826,500.00	173,500.00	2,000,000.00

Part II. Enabling Activity Justification

A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. The 2017-2018 reporting process highlighted the need to include a solid and robust e-learning platform for any future support to the UNCCD reporting cycles which would enable designated reporting officers to study and learn online while also being able to get assistance from experts on stand-by regarding any difficulty that may emerge;
2. Capacity building on UNCCD reporting will always need technical and financial support since reporting requirements are shifting and evolving.
3. Due to the technical nature of UNCCD indicators, a regular and specialized backstopping is required for Parties to comply with the reporting obligations. This support is to be provided through face-to-face workshops, webinars, online tutorials etc.;
4. The enhanced coordination with national statistical offices can help increasing data ownership and to create synergies between the UNCCD reporting and national SDG processes. Cost-effectiveness of funds would increase while additional participants (GIS experts and/or NSO officers could be more easily funded through GSP resources);
5. Strengthen collaboration and partnership with development data repositories like Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is required to develop a standardized and systematic approach to track financial flows for implementation of the Convention;

6. Monitoring overall financing for UNCCD implementation is challenging. Therefore, it is important to continue exploring methodologies and develop a systematic approach to track financial flows for the implementation of the Convention; and

7. Resource mobilization and partnership building are continued efforts that remain important in enhancing stakeholder involvement to support the implementation of the UNCCD in the context of the Convention's Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG 15.3

Lessons from past umbrellas experiences, indicated that national circumstances had a significant impact on the reporting process. These include: i) differing or complex national processes for consultation on, validation of, and submission of the report; ii) coordination mechanisms; iii) data availability and accessibility; iv) information management and monitoring systems; v) integration and harmonisation across the Rio Conventions. Other issues are related to time and financial constraints for submission of the report, with a few countries missing the official deadline due to national protocols requiring different levels of approval. Other major challenges to the reporting process were represented by dispersed responsibilities on DLDD and a lack of coordination at the national level; difficulties in accessing and sharing data, particularly on sensitive information such as financial flows; difficulties in convening all relevant stakeholders; and multiple demands and reporting requirements from different MEAs. In this respect, one of the most important lessons learned from previous umbrellas is that coordination mechanisms, such as the UNCCD National Coordinating Bodies, play a fundamental role in the success of the reporting process. Reporting is a national undertaking which requires many different stakeholders to pull together; therefore, a suitable forum where national stakeholders share responsibility for implementing the UNCCD is the natural space to facilitate reporting. In a number of cases, the reporting exercise contributed to reviving such bodies, while in the vast majority of cases, the Parties resorted to other existing mechanisms or ad-hoc committees/task forces. While cooperation at the national level was generally good, most national focal points (NFPs) reported that data collection was the most challenging task, particularly in terms of data availability. To ensure that the reporting period runs smoothly, it is important that all country Parties are informed as soon as possible about what information they need to collect, both in terms of additional requirements (i.e. impact indicators, best practices on financing).

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

B. ENABLING ACTIVITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES

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

The COP14 took decisions and released papers related to 1) the formulation of voluntary targets to achieve LDN, 2) the use of the UNCCD monitoring and evaluation framework, including progress

indicators, to monitor, evaluate and communicate progress towards achieving the LDN target, 3) explore options on how to integrate the voluntary LDN targets in their UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs), and 4) promote the use of LDN targets and projects and other SLM initiatives as an effective voluntary vehicle for mobilizing additional sustainable financing and investments to address issues related to desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD). The Global Support Program III (GSP III) and the Umbrella projects will help to address most of this guidance.

While the Global Support Programme III (GSP III) will contribute to achieve the above-mentioned principles by providing capacity building and tools at regional levels through training and providing of reporting tools and platforms, the proposed umbrella project will provide technical assistance at national level within the framework of GEF enabling activities. The project objective is to enhance national-level institutional and technical capacities for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. It will focus on one major component based on the lessons learned and issues identified during previous reporting cycles. The project will build on previous phases of Umbrella and GSPs experiences and lessons in support of UNCCD reporting – that is, supporting the creation of an enabling environment at national level of the GEF-eligible country Parties. The project's Theory of Change diagram is included below.

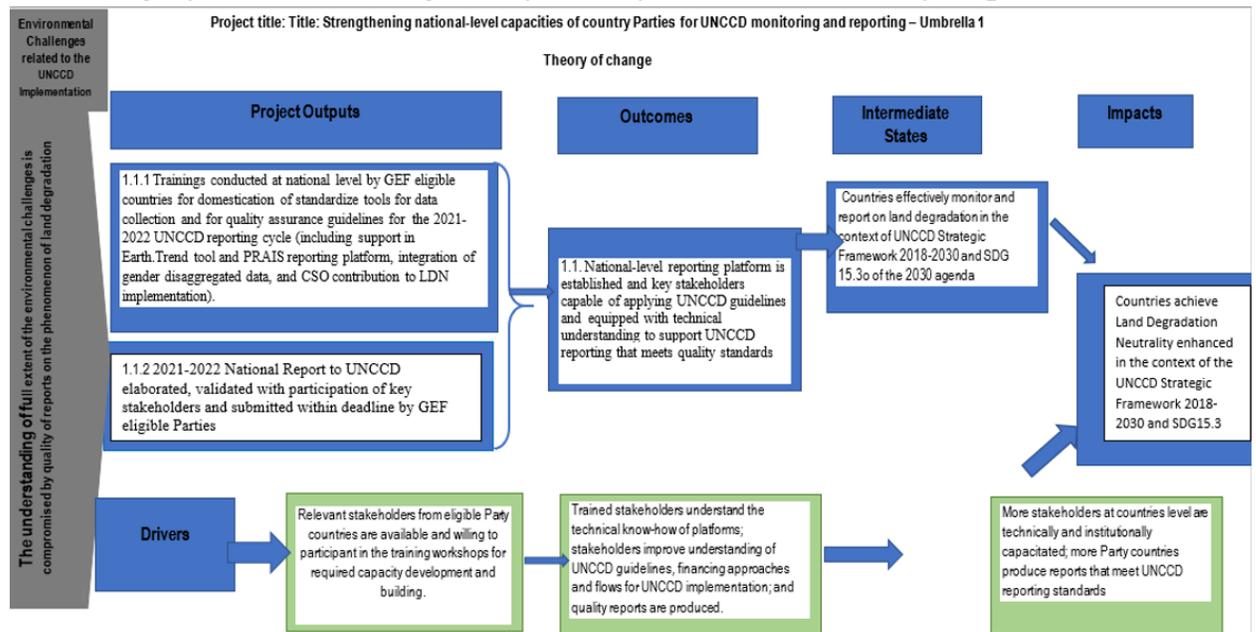
With the overarching project objective to enhance national-level technical and institutional capacity for reporting and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3, the project will seek to facilitate national-level UNCCD reporting broadly through firstly capacity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

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

Furthermore, it has been proven very effective in the previous umbrella projects that the establishment of a physical UNEP Umbrella project Team physical presence during the Convention bodies meetings, provide opportunity for the project coordination assistant to discuss execution issues and reporting requirements with Parties. The project will therefore support as necessary under M&E, the travel cost of the Project Coordination Support (Programme and Financial Assistants) as proven necessary by the Task Manager. As part of M&E activities, the project will also support the Terminal Evaluation, facilitating the assessment of project achievements and more importantly will draw lessons that will inform the future GEF and other partners investments and cooperation for UNCCD Enabling Activities.

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

improve understanding of UNCCD guidelines, financing approaches and flows for UNCCD implementation and reporting; and (iv) More stakeholders at countries level are technically and institutionally capacitated; more country Parties produce reports that meet UNCCD reporting standards.



B.2. EA Stakeholders[1]

Key project stakeholders will include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The umbrella project will follow the guidance outlined in the UNCCD Gender Action Plan, ensuring women's participation during the design, planning, implementation of the project activities at national level, particularly capacity building. Decision 24/COP14 reaffirms that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, will make an important contribution to the effective implementation of the Convention, including the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030, and to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including target 15.3. At national level, the proposed umbrella project will further support the implementation of COP 14 decisions on integrating gender in reporting exercise at national level. In this regard, this umbrella project will be deliberate in its design to ensure that gender concerns are carefully considered, including deliberate efforts to account for the contributive

differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men, as per COP14 guidance. This is based on the generally acknowledged role of women in the exploitation of natural resources for household-level livelihoods, and their potential contribution not only to resource degradation, but also in reversing the degradation. Thus, the umbrella project will be aligned to the guidance outlined in the UNCCD Gender Action Plan adopted by the Parties to the Convention in September 2017 to ensure women's participation during the design, planning, implementation of the proposed project activities, particularly capacity building and reporting exercise.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The project will respond to the COP14's request as well as to the national-level reporting needs following the recommendations as highlighted at CRIC 17. At CRIC 17, country Parties stressed the importance of establishing sustainable monitoring systems at the national level and requested the secretariat and the Global Mechanism and invited financial and technical partners to take actions to support the countries in the preparation of their national-level data, including the development of national monitoring systems and the improvement of national indicators. Consistent with recommendations expressed at CRIC 17, the proposed umbrella project will seek to provide national-level guidance and technical support to meet country Parties' reporting needs, among others. The proposed project is poised to ?take into account the role of land degradation neutrality as a potential accelerator to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals? consistent with the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2019 Second Committee Meeting. The umbrella project will devise mechanisms to technically equip national-level stakeholders with the capacity to report against UNCCD baseline indicators and monitoring of land degradation. Under the component, the project will seek to strengthen national-level capacity requirements for regular reporting under the Convention. Thus, capacity development mechanisms will be intended to:

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

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

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

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

The project will provide the support that country Parties need to ensure the required enabling environment for the actual implementation of activities to enhance national-level institutional and technical capacities for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process and LDN monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. building on the ongoing agreement and collaboration between UNCCD, NASA, CSIRO and other partners that developed the Trends.Earth tool. Without the requested support, country Parties will continue to have challenges related to capacity, misalignment of policies and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and will continue lacking opportunities that come from platforms and partnerships of wide arrays of actors. The platforms and partnerships from actors can

contribute to the implementation of the UNCCD priority areas, specifically the Strategic Framework 2018-2030 of the UNCCD secretariat.

E. DESCRIBE, DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN

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

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

Type of M&E Activity	Responsible parties	Budget from GEF	Time Frame
Launch of project/Inception workshop	Project Manager	Virtual	Within 3 months Trust commitment letter
Monitoring and reporting of project progress against annual workplan	Project Manager,	0	Progress/performance Indicators: every 6 months
Project Steering Committee Meetings (4 @ \$7,500 each)	Project Manager, UN Environment, GEF	-	Annual (and back to back with UNCCD meetings)
Semi-annual Progress Reports to UN Environment	Project Manager, supported by RA M&E Specialist	0	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July
Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Project Manager, supported by RA M&E Specialist	0	Annual. Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January or 31 July
Co-financing reports	Project Manager	0	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 January or 31 July
Project Final Report	Project Manager, supported by RA Director of M&E and Quality Assurance	0	Within 2 months of the project completion date
Mid-term and End of Project Stakeholder Workshops on the project's results and learning (2 @ 5,000 each)	Project Manager	0	At global level Within 2 months of the project completion date
External Terminal Evaluation	External consultant, supervised by UN Environment Task Manager	*	Global Umbrella projects: Within 6 months of the project completion date

**In-line with UN Environment Evaluation Policy and the GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy the project will be subject to a Terminal Evaluation which will cover all the UNCCD EA umbrella projects under GEF 7 cycle. The Evaluation Office will be responsible for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) and will liaise with the Task Manager and Executing Agency (ies) throughout the process. The TE will provide an independent assessment of project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of impact and sustainability. It will have two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, the GEF, executing partners and other stakeholders. The direct costs of the evaluation will be charged against the project evaluation budget. The TE will be initiated no earlier than six months prior to the operational completion of project activities and, if follow-on phase of the project is initiated, shall be completed prior to the start of the follow-on phase of the project.

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

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

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

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

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Kimisha Thomas	GEF Operational Focal Point, Senior Policy Advisor	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, RURAL MODERNIZATION AND KALINAGO UPLIFTMENT, Dominica	6/10/2021
Hery A. Rakotondravony	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Madagascar	7/21/2021
Botshabelo Othutiste	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism, Botswana	8/6/2021
Jovana Zaric	GEF Operational Focal Point, Ag. Director General for EU Integration, International Cooperation and Climate Change	Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism, Montenegro	8/3/2021
D.D Maranj	GEF Operational Focal Point, Financial Secretary	Ministry of finance Economic Planning and Development, Mauritius	8/16/2021
Gunther Joku	GEF Operational Focal Point, Managing Director	Conservation and Environment Protection Authority, Papua New Guinea	8/17/2021
C. Kapinga	GEF Operational Focal Point, Ag. Permanent Secretary	Vice President's Office, Tanzania	8/25/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Miruzza Mohamed	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Technology, Maldives	9/8/2021
Rashid Mekki Hassan	GEF Operational Focal Point, Secretary General	The Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources, Sudan	9/9/2021
M. Karim Baba	GEF Operational Focal Point	Environment Ministry, Algeria	9/16/2021
Anil Jasinghe	GEF Operational Focal Point, Secretary	Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka	9/21/2021
Akif Ozkaldi	GEF Operational Focal Point, Deputy Minister	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Turkey	9/24/2021
Issac Chares Aquah Jr	GEF Operational Focal Point	Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana	9/30/2021
Andrew Yatilman	GEF Operational Focal Point, Secretary	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management, Federated States of Micronesia	9/30/2021
Juliet Kabera	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director General	Rwanda Environment Management Authority, Rwanda	9/30/2021
Clarence Samuel	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Directorate, Marshall Islands	9/30/2021
Tanyaradzwa Mundonga	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Zimbabwe	9/30/2021
Dini Abdallah Omar	GEF Operational Focal Point, Secretary General	Environmental Management Authority, Djibouti	10/5/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Shamiso Najira	GEF Operational Focal Point, Deputy Director of Environmental Affairs	Ministry of Environment, Malawi	10/5/2021
Martha Carolina Cuba Villafuerte de Cronkleton	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director of the General Office for Cooperation and International Affairs	Ministry of Environment, Peru	10/7/2021

B. Convention Participation

Convention Date of Ratification/Accession National Focal Point

ANNEX A: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

ANNEX F-1 - RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GEF ACTIVITY BASED BUDGET AND UNEP BUDGET LINE (GEF FUNDS ONLY US\$)									
Project title:		Strengthening national-level capacities of country Parties for UNCCD monitoring and reporting(GEF 7 EA Umbrella IV)							
Project number:									
Project executing partner:		Government Ministries\National Executing Agencies							
Project implementation period:		Expenditure by project component/activity (provide					*Insert actual year		
From: 2022		Add additional components/activities as required					Add additional years as required		
To: 2023							Expenditure by calendar year		
UNEP Budget Line		1	M&E	PM	Total	Year 1*	Year 2*	Year 3*	Total
10	PERSONNEL COMPONENT								
1100	Project personnel								
1101	Project Associate	-			-	-	-	-	-
1102	Finance Assistant	-			-	-	-	-	-
1199	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1200	Consultants				-				-
1201					-				-
1299	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1300	Administrative Support				-				-
1301					-				-
1399	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1600	Travel on official business				-				-
1601	Travel				-	-	-	-	-
1699	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1999	Component total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT								
2100	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)				-				
2101	Sub-contract with recipient Governmet with Gender equity consideration	1,826,500			1,826,500	1,369,875	456,625.00		1,826,500
2102					-				-
2199	Sub-total	1,826,500		-	1,826,500	1,369,875	456,625	-	1,826,500
2200	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for supporting organizations)				-				
2201					-				-
2299	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
2300	Sub-contracts (for commercial purposes)				-				
2301					-				-
2399	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
2999	Component total	1,826,500		-	1,826,500	1,369,875	456,625	-	1,826,500

30	TRAINING COMPONENT					-				
	3200	Group training				-				
	3201					-				-
	3299	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	3300	Meetings/Conferences				-				
	3301					-				-
	3399	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
3999	Component total		-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
						-				
40	EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES COMPONENT					-				
	4100	Expendable equipment				-				
	4101					-				-
	4199	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	4200	Non-expendable equipment				-				
	4201					-				-
	4299	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
4999	Component total		-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
50	MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT					-				
	5100	Operation and maintenance of equipment				-				
	5101					-				-
	5199	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	5200	Reporting costs				-				
	5201					-				-
	5299	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	5300	Sundry				-				
	5302					-				-
	5399	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	5400	Hospitality and entertainment				-				
	5401					-				-
	5499	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	5500	Evaluation				-				
	5501	Terminal Evaluation				-			0	-
	5599	Sub-total	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
5999	Component total		-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
99	GRAND TOTAL		1,826,500	-	-	1,826,500	1,369,875	456,625	-	1,826,500