



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

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 III

Countries

Global, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Palau, Paraguay, Philippines, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Togo

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 Cover and Land cover change, Land Productivity, Carbon stocks above or below ground, Sustainable Land Management, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Sustainable Forest, Sustainable Fire Management, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Sustainable Agriculture, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Ecosystem Approach, Sustainable Pasture Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Drought Mitigation, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries, Indigenous Peoples, Type of Engagement, Participation, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Local Communities, Communications, Awareness Raising, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender results areas, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Capacity Development, Participation and leadership, Enabling Activities, Capacity, Knowledge and Research

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
UNCCD Reporting		4/1/2022	3/30/2024	12/31/2022

Duration

24In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

185,662.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

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

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

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

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
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Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Facilitating enhanced national-level UNCCD reporting capabilities	1.1. National level enabling conditions for reporting are established to advance UNCCD reporting obligations, as indicated by: a) The number of countries that have successfully established national teams and used reporting platforms to submit their 2021-2022 reports b) Number of Improved quality of convention reports (both timeliness and completeness) c) The number of countries reporting annual changes in degradation or desertification of arable land (% or ha)	Output 1.1.1 Trainings conducted at national level by GEF-eligible countries for domestication of standardize 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). 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	1,826,480.00	
Sub Total (\$)			1,826,480.00	0.00

Project Management Cost (PMC)

Project Management Cost (PMC)

127,858.00

Sub Total(\$)

127,858.00

0.00

Total Project Cost(\$)

1,954,338.00

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	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Cambodia	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Chad	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Chile	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Dominican Republic	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	El Salvador	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Eswatini	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Guyana	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Honduras	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Kenya	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Kyrgyz Republic	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Mali	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Mexico	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Moldova	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Morocco	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Palau	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Paraguay	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Philippines	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00
UNEP	GET	Togo	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	91,324	8,676	100,000.00

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GE T	Global	Land Degradation	LD Set-Aside	127,858	12,142	140,000.00
Total Gef Resources(\$)					1,954,338.00	185,662.00	2,140,000.00

Part II. Enabling Activity Justification

A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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

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 harmonization 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

B.1. Enabling Activity Goals, Objectives and Activities

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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]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.

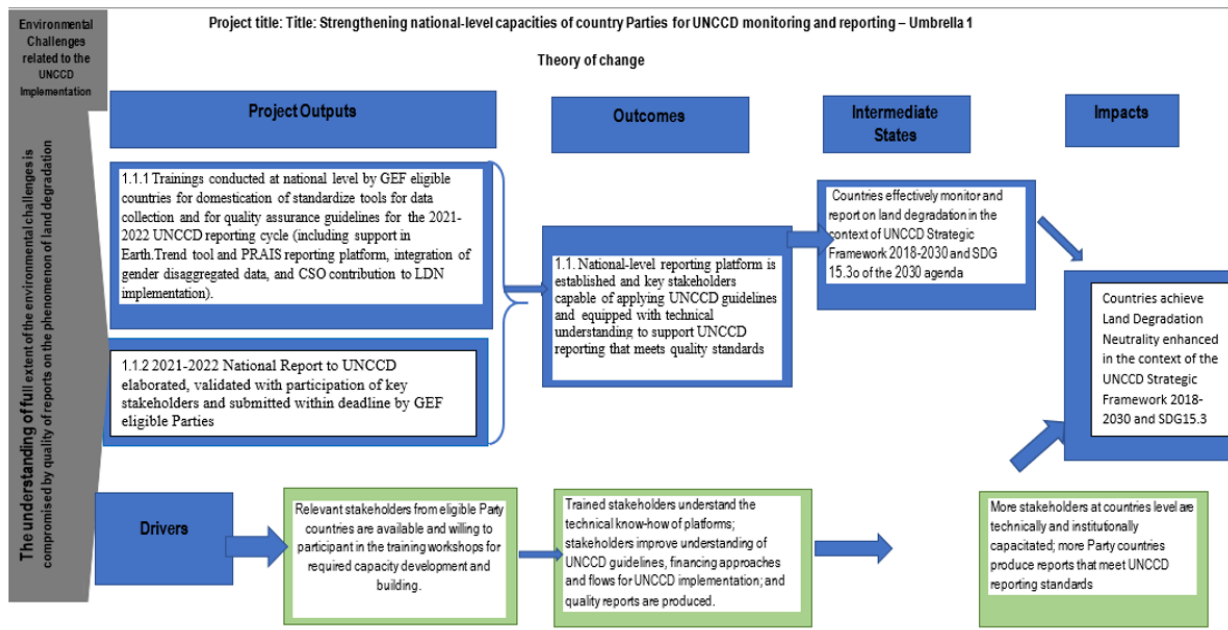
The proposed project fully recognises that environmental degradation has led to economic losses, increased social problems (such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, forced migration, etc.) and increased environmental problems (such as biodiversity loss, water scarcity, carbon emissions). 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.

[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



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://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Stakeholder%20Engagement%20Process%20Handout.pdf>

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

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

The proposed GEF7 EA Umbrella project will focus on national-level enabling environments of the GEF-eligible country Parties to implement the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 - 2030; providing technical assistance to the countries. The proposed umbrella project will focus on one component with associated expected outcomes and outputs as detailed below. Through the component, the proposed project largely falls within and contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This

agenda brings to the fore the commitment of the international community to combating desertification, restoring degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and striving to achieve a land degradation-neutral world by 2030. More precisely, the project component will support the eligible country Parties to be and remain on course in terms of improving their ability to report on the Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 ? 2030. Therefore, to various degrees, this proposed umbrella project will support eligible country Parties to build capacities to report on the following Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 ? 2030 :

? Strategic Objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality;

? Strategic Objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations;

? Strategic Objective 3: To mitigate, adapt to, and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems;

? Strategic Objective 4: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD; and

? Strategic Objective 5: To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level.

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

Based on previous experiences and COP 14 Decisions, the proposed umbrella project will suggest areas for updating national-level guidance notes, provide comments and need for improvement of the improved and updated tools and methodologies, online and on-site training on use of these tools. The umbrella project will also focus on establishing national-level targeted learning material to support the future reporting process by national-level key stakeholders. It will build on the previously established

national-level reporting platforms in the eligible countries to ensure UNCCD reporting quality standards, including the gender-responsive indicators to fully capture the gender dimensions of land degradation activities.

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

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

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 guidelines 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:

- i. Enable national-level key stakeholders to participate effectively in the UNCCD reporting process;
- ii. Inform national-level key stakeholders about the contribution of the UNCCD reporting to the reporting process of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, target 15.3 on LDN

Key outputs from the project will be: i) the Trainings conducted at national level by GEF-eligible countries for domestication of standardize tools for data collection and for quality assurance guidelines for the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting cycle. The training will include themes like support in use of Earth.Trend tool and PRAIS reporting platform, integration of gender disaggregated data, and CSO contribution to LDN implementation. (Output 1.1.1) and ii) the 2021-2022 National Report to UNCCD compiled and validated with participation of key stakeholders and submitted within deadline by GEF-eligible Parties (Output 1.1.2). In line with this output, public participation to the reporting will be

ensured by national focal point to raise the profile of the convention. These will include: (a) involvement of key stakeholders, including the Civil society, in the national reporting process; (b) organization of inclusive meetings during the processes and results validation meetings for consideration in the national reports; (c) special meetings with Government officials to address the issues of SLM and national development policies and strategies and their linkage to the convention implementation; and (d) targeted media involvement in the delivering key messages to the larger public particularly during the stakeholder's meetings.

Project Management Support: UNEP Division of Ecosystem Services will provide execution support to the countries. As done during previous GEF cycle under UNCCD EA, a Program Associate (P2) will liaise with financial staff of UNEP to support countries in development of the Small-Scale Financial Agreements (SSFA) with countries, access funds and support countries on questions related to financial reporting. The Agreement sets forth the terms and conditions of the cooperation between UNEP and countries for the execution of the Enabling Activity as set out in the EA document which will be appended as Annex to the agreement and approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the letter to UNEP. The main objective of the EA is to provide resources to Parties in order to support national reporting process and the National Report elaboration and submission to the UNCCD Convention bodies in line with the convention guidelines, approved EA document and the latest UNEP and GEF guidelines and templates. The EA document setting out the full details of the proposed EA will be appended as Annex to SSFA.

A dedicated UNCCD Enabling Activities financial assistant will be also recruited and placed in UNEP finance team in order to avoid delays in funds transfer to countries. Coordinating the project with many countries, responding to their different financial and technical concerns and needs will be a daunting task. Under the Project Management Cost, 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 Program Associate liaises with financial staff of UNEP to develop the 116 Small Scale Financial Agreements (SSFA) with countries, disburse funds and support countries on questions on funds. UNEP agrees to provide, in its role as GEF implementing agency, Enabling Activities (EA) oversight (through the Task Manager and Fund Management officer). Specifically, this will include:

- a) Timely feedback to countries on all substantive and financial issues.
- b) Review and approve any changes to the implementation plan and detailed timetable during the implementation of the EA;
- c) Facilitate communication with UNCCD and Global Mechanism on technical support and assistance to the reporting team where required.
- d) Process EA revisions if applicable for e.g changes to budget or workplan or activity etc.;
- e) Ensure communication and information exchange between the Executing Agency, UNEP, and all other relevant organizations, institutions, programs and projects in relation to EA implementation.
- f) Liaise with the GEF Secretariat for all matters related to the EA implementation.

The National Executing Agency will:

- a) Provide support to, and liaise with all key national and international project executing partners and stakeholders, based on guidance from UNEP Task Manager and in line with the approved Enabling Activities document;
- b) Deliver the outputs and demonstrate its best efforts in achieving the results/impacts stipulated in the EA implementation plan appended as Annex 4 of the SSFA;
- c) Notify UNEP in writing on the need for any deviations/modifications to the agreed Implementation Plan or Budget, for approval.
- d) Implement the EA activities in accordance with standard Executing Agency Rules and established business processes.
- e) Keep records and documentation pertaining to any cash and in-kind co-financing mobilized for inclusion in the final EA report;
- f) Report to UNEP in accordance with technical and financial reporting template and periodicity specify in the SSFA.

A 77% initial cash advance will be made upon signature of the Small Funding Agreement (SSFA) and is expected to be incurred by the NEA during main reporting process of the project implementation. Subsequent advances are to be made, subject to:

- (i) Confirmation by the UNCCD Secretariat that the National Report has been submitted in time; and
- (ii) the presentation of:
 - a satisfactory financial report showing expenditures incurred for the funds received, and
 - timely and satisfactory progress reports on project implementation.

Requests for subsequent cash advances should be made using the UNEP standard format.

In order to enable UNEP to track how consideration of socio-economic benefits and gender dimensions are addressed by Parties, the SSFA will include a provision that these considerations including Civil Society Organization (CSO) participation in national processes, should be reflected in the reporting process.

C2. Enabling Activity global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF);

The proposed umbrella project is in line with the GEF land degradation focal area, LD set-asides for supporting UNCCD Enabling activities with a view to mainstream SDGs. This project is in alignment with GEF's mandate to generate global benefits through enabling activities that contribute to address DLDD. The project will assist the Parties to meet their reporting obligations under the UNCCD as well as monitoring trends for SDG reporting in the context of LDN.

The project is aimed at supporting the UNCCD reporting against the Strategic Framework of the UNCCD aligned with SDGs especially SDG 15.3. This SDG supports several global and regional initiatives which promote sustainable land management and restoration/rehabilitation of land e.g. Bonn Challenge on Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR), the New York declaration on Forests and the 4 per 1000 Initiatives, Aichi Biodiversity Targets of CBD and regional initiatives such as Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR 100). The reports by country Parties will provide an overview of how countries are implementing UNCCD at the national level. The progress indicators used to monitor trends of LDN will reinforce the achievement of other SDGs related to food security, environmental protection and enhance resilience to global environmental change. The information on tracking financial flows for UNCCD

implementation will enable country Parties to mainstream LDN into their national policies and inform the designing of multi-focal area projects to generate multiple global environments and socio-economic benefits for local populations.

C3. Enabling Activity Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

Innovation: The project promotes innovative approach to support reporting of country Parties to the UNCCD coupled with the provision of incentives to boost UNCCD implementation at country level by providing financial resources for the national level reporting process in a more flexible manner to allow countries to put funding where critically resources are needed.. The project innovatively brings together the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework as well as the SDGs into a suite of development interventions to respond to socio-economic and environmental impacts of land degradation. The project makes a case for the embeddedness of the UNCCD strategic priorities within the global development agenda, particularly SDG 15.3. By focusing on supporting Parties to improve their abilities to report, to enhance their institutional capacities and monitoring, the project is posed to support countries to more effectively respond to the multiple challenges of the continued degradation of productive landscapes across the globe.

Sustainability: The long-term sustainability of this proposed umbrella project is underpinned on its aim to build the capacity of UNCCD country parties at national level to incorporate innovative tools and approaches to monitor, report, and integrate into long term planning DLDD indicators. The project has a significant element on capacity building of national entities to ensure long term monitoring of LDN indicators for SDG reporting. The long-term monitoring of UNCCD indicators will subsequently be integrated in the land use planning contributing to the sustainability of activity. It represents a sizeable opportunity for governments to create sustainable development leverage by using the multiple benefits of LDN as an accelerator for UNCCD implementation as well as for the achievement of other SDGs. The global UNCCD related financial flows have remained rather unclear because of cross-sectoral nature of interventions. The project will venture in developing a financial monitoring framework which will be step towards adequately estimating the global financing geared towards combating land degradation at national level. This will help the country Parties in making a case for increase in this funding. A strong focus on the potential use of the outcomes of the reporting for a better decision making on SLM during the technical support will ensure higher potential for incorporating Global Environmental Benefits into national and (sub-) regional development planning. The project includes significant national capacity building measures through training sessions and awareness raising activities that will ensure long-term monitoring of land degradation processes at national level which is additional element of project sustainability. The project will ensure effective and efficient reporting through timely availability of resources, is another important aspect of project sustainability as at the national level as it allows to mitigate team turnover and the system will help new people coming into system to continue managing national data to support the reporting processes.

Replication/Scaling up: Parties will use harmonised guidelines, formats and time schedules for reporting. Therefore, the project results can be replicated. Also, taking into consideration that the national reporting cycle will include the LDN voluntary targets, the tools and guidelines will facilitate reporting for SDGs as well. The project's replicability, therefore, will not only target the different reporting entities but also will address the issue of the reporting to other processes including SDGs implementation.

Public awareness, communications and mainstreaming strategy: Public awareness is one of the pillars of the implementation of the Convention at the national level. This will be achieved by this project both

in ensuring stakeholders' participation and communication and mainstreaming strategy. The public participation will include (i) involvement of key stakeholders, including the Civil society, in the national reporting process; (ii) organization of inclusive meetings during the processes and results validation meetings; (iii) special meetings with Government officials to address the issues of SLM and national development policies and strategies; and (iv) targeted media involvement in the delivering key messages to the larger public particularly during the stakeholder's meetings.

Parties at COP 9 adopted the new UNCCD communication strategy and, at COP 13 in Ordos (China), Parties adopted Decision 4/COP.13 in which they agreed to: (i) promote the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework and land degradation neutrality as tools for enhancing the effective implementation of the Convention; (ii) invite Parties, civil society organizations, the media, the private sector and all other relevant stakeholders to engage in various awareness-raising events and activities, including the World Day to Combat Desertification, UNDDD and the Land for Life program, to promote the implementation of the Convention and the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework.

The communication and mainstreaming activities of this project will be mainly the implementation of some activities at national level as part of the implementation of the short Communication Plan called for by the COP 13 Decision 4.

Environmental and social safeguards: This project is environmentally friendly, and no activities will be carried out on the ground that will harm the environment and/or communities. The project objectives involve building capacity for the assessment of land degradation at the national level, development of knowledge management systems and reporting systems based on the COP approved indicators contained in the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework adopted by Decision 7/COP.13. The project will avoid duplication of efforts by synergizing with other existing initiatives as much as possible particularly with GSP III. The project Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) indicating a Low Risk assessment is included in the project package as separate Annex M.

C4. Institutional structure of the project, including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level.

A. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

UNEP is the Implementing Agency for this GEF project. UNEP shall in its role as GEF Implementing Agency, provide project oversight to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. It shall also in partnership with the UNCCD Secretariat engage in promoting the project with a view to mobilize scientific expertise. The project is fully in line with the UNEP role of catalysing the development of scientific and technical analysis and advancing environmental management in GEF-financed activities. UNEP provides guidance on relating the GEF-financed activities to global, regional and national environmental assessments, policy frameworks and plans, and to international environmental agreements. UNEP signed and MOU with UNCCD secretariat implemented the UNCCD Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation project (PRAIS) project alongside the first leg of the 4th UNCCD reporting and review project, the piloting integrated processes and

approaches to facilitate national reporting to Rio Conventions project (FNR_Rio) and has implemented the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership project. UNEP also supported the UNCCD and countries parties to implement the Global Support Programs I, II, III and Umbrella projects in GEF 5 and GEF 6 which supported the new generation of reporting to the convention based on performance indicators. Together, these initiatives will provide GEF with a range of relevant experiences, proof of concept, testing of ideas and access to the best available science and knowledge. In relation to the land degradation focal area, the project is fully in line with UNEP comparative experience in reference with GEF/C 31/5 Annex H. UNEP will primarily focus on the areas of its mandate, will continue to provide scientific and technical advice to the Facility on its policies and programmes.

National UNCCD Focal Points (NFPs): At the national level, the project activities will be coordinated by the UNCCD National Focal Point. He/she will bear overall responsibility for the execution of the project activities under the supervision of the National Executing Agency, and act as national representative, facilitating inter-agency coordination and guide the execution of the project in each country. The National Execution Agency (NEA) will establish or rely on the existing UNCCD National coordinating mechanism to facilitate those national activities that will ensure the production of a national report. The NFP will ensure that capacity needed at national level for reporting process are provided to relevant stakeholders either through the use of national expertise or with the support of the Help Desks established by UNCCD Secretariat and GM Secretariats within the framework of UNEP/GEF/GSP II project.

UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism: The UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism within their mandates have been fully involved in the development of this project and have contributed in the technical design of the project and they have ensured that guidance from convention bodies have been duly been considered in the project design. The two convention secretariats will provide technical and political guidance on the reporting. Their regional coordination units established by COP 9 are additional support to the timely implementation of the project. Both institutions will provide conceptual and substantive input to the process and hence ensure that the project is fully embedded in a broader framework for monitoring implementation of not only UNCCD, but also other development partners. Information provided to the Secretariat by Parties will be analysed by the two institutions and processed for CRIC.

B. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

UNEP is the Implementing Agency for this GEF project. UNEP shall in its role as GEF Implementing Agency, provide project oversight to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner.

Project supervision is entrusted to the Director of UNEP Division of Ecosystems who discharges this responsibility through the assigned Task Manager who represents the Director of the Division of Ecosystems on the project steering committee. Project supervision missions by the Task Manager and/or Fund Management Officer shall constitute part of the project supervision plan. UNEP/GEF would perform the liaison function between UNEP and the GEF Secretariat and report on the progress against milestones outlined in the CEO approval letter to the GEF Secretariat. The UNEP/ Division of Ecosystems shall rate, on periodic basis, progress in meeting project objectives, project implementation progress, risk, and quality of project monitoring and evaluation. UNEP/ Division of Ecosystems will report to the GEF Secretariat through the Project Implementation Review (PIR) report prepared by the Project Coordination Assistant and ensures that the UNEP Evaluation Office arranges for an independent terminal evaluation and submits its report to the GEF Evaluation Office. In order to ensure

overall coherence with the Convention process and taking into consideration the fact that this project is meant to increase capacities of UNCCD Parties vis-a-vis the Convention, UNEP/ Division of Ecosystems through the Task Manager assisted by Project Coordination and Finance Assistants, will also work in close consultation with the UNCCD Secretariat and GM on all issues relating to deadlines and deliverables under the project.

The National institution/Department hosting the UNCCD Focal Points, serves as the National Executing Entity. The UNEP Project Coordination and Financial Assistants to be recruited with the top up from Set aside outside the \$100,000 earmarked for each eligible country, liaise with financial staff of UNEP to support countries in development and of Small-Scale Financial Agreements (SSFA) with countries, disburse funds and support countries on questions related to funds utilisation reporting. The countries will be providing their Work Plan in line with the project framework and to be executed within the Convention reporting deadlines.

As Project Partner, UNCCD Secretariat representing the depositary of the Convention is consulted in all aspects of the project through regular contacts. UNCCD primary responsibility is to advice on timely and effective coordination of the project activities as they relate to the overall reporting exercise. The Secretariat will be providing overall guidance as regards timelines and project implementation to ensure that CRIC receives input for the review of Convention implementation at all levels. It will ensure coherence in the approach across regions and reporting entities as well as provide an interface for reporting from civil society organizations (as requested by COP) through regional coordination units established by COP 9. Documentation resulting from reports will be jointly produced by the Secretariat and the GM for review of Parties at the level of the CRIC.

As project partner, the Global Mechanism (GM) is involved in the synthesis documents provided by the secretariat to CRIC. The GM will particularly participate in the Steering of the process and will advise through its Helpdesk on guidelines and tools for the Standard Financial Annexes and Programme and Project Sheet.

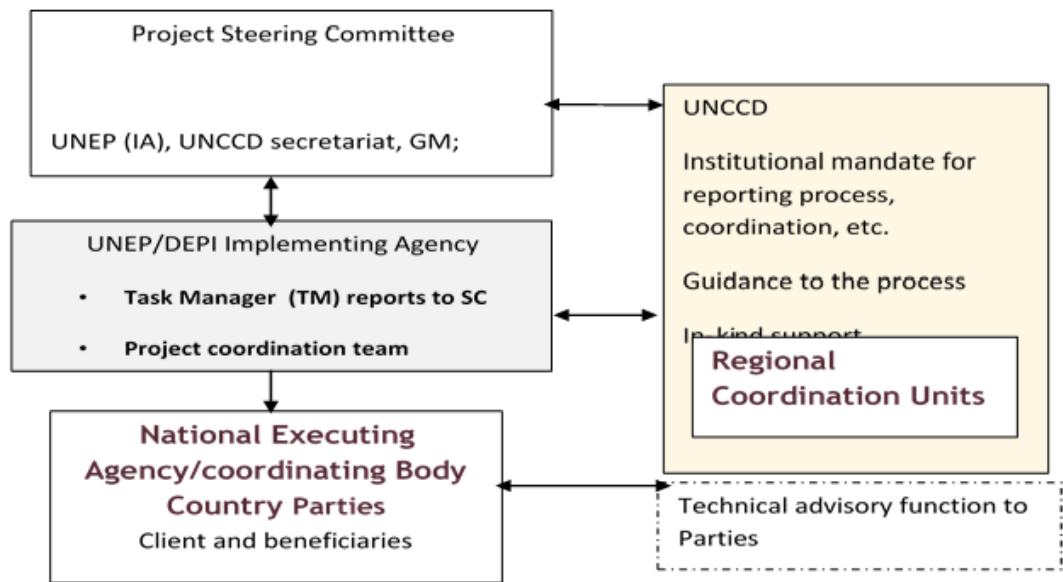
As Executing partner at country level, the National Executing Agencies (NEAs), will have overall responsibility at the national level. The NEAs will implement the project in collaboration with other national (e.g. Ministry in charge of planning), provincial and local government agencies, NGOs, private sector and local communities. In order to ensure joint programming of GEF interventions with related projects, formal and informal inter-agency links will be maintained. Each NEA will sign Small Funding Agreement (SSFA), receive funds from UNEP and international technical assistance through the GSP II.

The project approach of pulling the GEF resources at country level, aims at supporting countries to fulfil their obligations while at the same time put in place national mechanisms to ensure national capacity building and sustainable implementation of UNCCD.

National Coordinating Body (NCBs): the UNCCD National Coordinating Body, where established or any other existing committee dealing with sustainable management of natural resources will provide guidance to the project and monitor progress and performance. The UNCCD NCB will serve under its national mandate and will monitor and review progress on an annual basis. The NCB will be chaired by the Head of the NEA or his representative. The UNCCD NFP will act as the NCB's secretary. In line with the COP 9 recommendation, it will be an obligation to have at least one (1) Civil Society Organisation (CSO) active in the SLM activities, in the NCB. In order to avoid proliferation of national committees, the project will make use of existing national consultation structures in order to discharge the workload of the project and seek synergies at national level.

GEF funding will be provided to country Parties for implementation of national-level reporting activities that will be coordinated by the relevant UNCCD Focal Point. The disbursement of the funds to national governments will be in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration, relying as much as possible on existing national procedures in order to foster ownership and accountability. Where applicable, in the spirit of the UN reform, the project will also foster and rely on UN inter-agency cooperation at the national level, particularly through cooperation with UNDP country offices, as requested by Countries including for administration of project funds in accordance with standard inter-agency procedures (i.e. UPL).

Decision-making flowchart and organizational chart



The Umbrella project, due to its nature for supporting the reporting process, will have a link with other parallel and related initiative. The project will closely work with related initiative including the following:

Coordination with GSP III

While GSP III will provide an enabling environment for UNCCD reporting at the global and regional level, it will build operational level synergy with the Umbrella Project at the national level. The Umbrella projects will continue providing timely and coordinated support at the national level. Umbrella project will support the national-level implementation in accordance with countries obligation to the convention. The synergies between the two projects will be ensured through close coordination between the UNCCD Secretariat/Global Mechanism and UN Environment, a coordinated information exchange with countries, systematic cooperation between staff/consultants of both projects, and collaboration in the organization of capacity building events.

Coordination with Strengthening Land Degradation Neutrality and drought resilience data and decision-making (Trends.Earth)

The GEF-6 funded Land Degradation Monitoring Project (LDMP), which was implemented by Conservation International in cooperation with UNCCD, NASA, CSIRO and other partners, developed the Trends. Earth tool for monitoring land use change using earth observations in an innovative desktop and cloud-based system. In this context, Trends. Earth was introduced in the UNCCD

reporting process and was instrumental during the 2017-18 reporting process to harmonize methods, enhance the comparability of the data and facilitate the integration of national data based on specific national circumstances. Decision 11/ requests the secretariat to collaborate with Conservation International to ensure that Trends. Earth can support the preparation and analysis of data for reporting in a form that can be automatically transferred to the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) and that the functions of Trends. Earth are expanded to help generate reports to serve at the national level.

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

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

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

C5. Consistency with National Priorities

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

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

UNCCD Reporting

UNCCD National Action Plans (NAPs)

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

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

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

C6: Enabling Activity Knowledge Management.

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

The national reports submitted by the Parties will be made available online allowing access to final reports. In addition, a comprehensive analysis of the reports will be prepared by the convention secretariats for intersessional CRIC deliberations tentatively expected in 2022. The analysis report will be made available as official documents.

The outreach material on UNCCD reports will be disseminated through different channels. The case study conducted by the UNCCD and Global Mechanism on the establishment of a national monitoring system and information document on financial monitoring framework will be disseminated in line with COP decisions.

B.2 Enabling Activity Risks

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

National-level Potential Risks	Level	Proposed measure (to be further developed during the project design)
Participants attending the capacity building workshop may not be involved in reporting	Low	Capacity building workshops will target relevant personnel in countries who are involved in UNCCD reporting processes. This will be determined with support from UNCCD National Focal Points
Lack of country-level capacity to produce quality reports	Moderate	Organization of capacity building workshop, availability of technical backstopping through helpdesk, online tutorial, guidelines for reporting. That is, this project will seek to build the very capacities that are lacking to ensure improved quality reporting
Untimely availability of updated national-level data	Low	The project will seek to sequentially prioritise the development and updating of tools to ensure the access, collection and analyses of data in a timely manner
Staff turn over	Moderate	Efforts will be done to work with relevant personnel, and with support from the UNCCD Focal Points, ensure stability in the staff whose capacities will be built for UNCCD reporting. Additionally, there will be technical backstopping.
Risks related to late resources availability to support countries and not accessing the available funding by countries	Moderate	National-level capacity building is an expensive process and sufficient resources are needed to support it. It is important that national processes initiate early on during the reporting period to ensure adequate time available. The partnership with the UNCCD Secretariat and their Regional Liaison Offices and GEF Operational Focal Points at national levels are being very supportive in mobilizing countries to access resources and in time to ensure effective and timely reporting. UNEP with support from GEF has design adequate staffing to support countries in facilitating access to fundings.
COVID-19 (see additional information and a brief global overview in the section below this table.[1])	Moderate to High	The core activities of the proposed project will focus on capacity development at national-level to enhance technical and institutional capacity for land degradation monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. Depending on each country situation, the project will seek to organize trainings/workshops virtually to limit and minimize the potential of spreading the disease through physical contacts or face to face if the pandemic situations allows. The proposed project will adopt the 'human resource first' approach to ensure that the health of stakeholders is not endangered. This means that the proposed project will develop strategies that will ensure and support the full participation of stakeholders in virtual trainings/workshops, including a platform for knowledge sharing among participants/stakeholders as necessary.
Climate Change (see additional information and a brief global overview in the section below this table.[2])	Low	The proposed project will focus on providing technical assistance at national level for GEF-eligible Parties to enhance their technical and institutional capacity for land degradation monitoring in the context of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018-2030 and SDG15.3. Given this biased focus on 'software interventions' that do not require on-the-ground direct responses

[3] <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

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
Total M&E Plan Budget			

**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

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
Sharifah Razack	GEF Operational Focal Point and Ag. Executive Director, Environment Protection Agency	Environment Protection Agency, Guyana	4/29/2021
Mayra Lourdes Argueta de Ardon	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director of International Cooperation and Conventions	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, El Salvador	5/3/2021
Awougnon Comlan	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources, Togo	5/18/2021
Analiza Rebuelta - Teh	GEF Operational Focal Point, Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change	Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Republic of The Philippines	6/8/2021
Janeel Miller-Findlay	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director, Sustainable Development Unit	Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture, St. Vincent and the Grenadines	6/9/2021
Charlene Mersai	GEF Operational Focal Point, National Environment Coordinator	National Environmental Protection Council, Palau	6/21/2021
Graciela Soledad Miret Martinez	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director, Strategic Planning Directorate	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Paraguay	6/23/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Rachid Firadi	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation Secretariat of State in Charge of Sustainable Development	Secretariat of State in Charge of Sustainable Development, Morocco	6/23/2021
Tin Ponlok	GEF Operational Focal Point, Secretary General	National Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia	6/24/2021
Carmen Cartagena Gomez	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director of External Cooperation and Resource Mobilization	Secretariat of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mines, Honduras	6/28/2021
Brenda Janeth Pequeño Vargas	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director	Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, Mexico	6/30/2021
Oumar Gadjji Soumaila	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Studies, and IT	Ministry of Environment and Fisheries, Chad	7/5/2021
Amidou Goita	GEF Operational Focal Point, Chef Section Donnees sur l'Environnement	Agence de l'Environnement et du Developpment Durable, Mali	7/6/2021
Milagros de Camps	GEF Operational Focal Point, Viceministra de Cooperación Internacional	Ministry of Environment, Dominican Republic	7/6/2021
Angela Burlea	GEF Operational Focal Point, Head of the Environmental Projects Management Service	Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Moldova	7/7/2021
Hlobisile Sikhosana	GEF Operational Focal Point Chief Environmental Coordinator	Ministry of Tourism and Environment Affairs, Eswatini	7/12/2021

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Miguel Stutzin	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of the Environment, Chile	7/20/2021
Kutmanov a Dinara	GEF Operational Focal Point, Director and Chairperson	State Committee on Ecology and Climate, Kyrgyz Republic	7/24/2021
Senad Oprasic	GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina	7/26/2021
Chris Kiptoo	GEF Operational Focal Point, Principal Secretary	Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya	7/27/2021

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 III)							
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	-		66,500	66,500	33,250	33,250.00		66,500
1102	Finance Assistant	-		31,358	31,358	15,679	15,679.00		31,358
1199	Sub-total	-		97,858	97,858	48,929	48,929	-	97,858
1200	Consultants								
1201									
1299	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1300	Administrative Support								
1301									
1399	Sub-total	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
1600	Travel on official business								
1601	Travel			15,000	15,000	7,500	7,500.00		15,000
1699	Sub-total	-		15,000	15,000	7,500	7,500	-	15,000
1999	Component total	-		112,858	112,858	56,429	56,429	-	112,858
20	SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT								
2100	Sub-contracts (MOUs/LOAs for cooperating agencies)								
2101	Sub-contract with recipient Governmet with Gender equity consideration	1,826,480			1,826,480	1,369,860	456,620.00		1,826,480
2102									
2199	Sub-total	1,826,480		-	1,826,480	1,369,860	456,620	-	1,826,480
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	1,826,480		-	1,826,480	1,369,860	456,620	-	1,826,480

30	TRAINING COMPONENT									
	3200	Group training				-				
	3201					-				-
	3299	Sub-total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	3300	Meetings/Conferences				-				
	3301	Physical helpdesk and side event organization at COP		15,000	15,000	7,500	7,500.00			15,000
	3399	Sub-total	-	15,000	15,000	7,500	7,500	-	-	15,000
3999	Component total		-	15,000	15,000	7,500	7,500	-	-	15,000
						-				
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		-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
99	GRAND TOTAL		1,826,480	-	127,858	1,954,338	1,433,789	520,549	-	1,954,338