

“An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan”

PIMS No. 6219

**Mid-Term Review
Final Report**

December 2023

Country: Tajikistan
Region: Asia Pacific
Focal Area: Climate Change
AF Agency: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Executing Agency Committee for Environmental Protection

Opening Page

PROJECT DETAILS:

Project Name: An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan

Project ID: UNDP PIMS: 6219 AF Project ID: TJK/MIE/Rural/2018/1

Country: Tajikistan

Region: Asia Pacific

Focal Area: Climate Change

Focal Area Objectives: **LD-1:** Agriculture and Rangeland Systems: Maintain or improve flow of agroecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods; **Program 1:** Agroecological intensification; **Outcome 1.2:** Functionality and cover of agro-ecosystems maintained
BD-3: Sustainability use biodiversity; **Program 7:** Securing Agriculture’s Future: Sustainable Use of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources; **Outcome 7.1:** Increased genetic diversity of globally significant cultivated plants and domesticated animals that are sustainably used within production systems

Funding Source: Adaptation Fund

Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme

Implementation Modality: National Implementation

Executing Agency: Committee for Environmental Protection

FINANCIALS:

Project Preparation Grant: US\$ 156,625

AF Project Grant: US\$ 9,213,310

AF Agency Fees: US\$ 783,131

Total Cost: US\$ 10,153,066

PROJECT TIMELINE

AF Board Approval: 8 July 2019

LPAC Meeting: 30 December 2019

Project Document & Official start-up: 11 June 2020

Start date from inception Workshop: 28 August 2021

Closing Date (Planned): 28 August 2026

Closing Date (Actual): 28 August 2026

MIDTERM REVIEW DETAILS:

Midterm Review Timeframe: October–November 2023

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TE Reporting Language: English

Acknowledgements:

The Mid-Term Review Team is grateful for the assistance and cooperation of the Project Implementation Unit Team, National and International Consultants in providing logistics and support during the field mission, as well as valuable insight to the project. Further, to acknowledge with thanks, the information and feedback provided by interviewed project stakeholders, including the CEP, the UNDP Country Office, UNDP Regional Technical Advisor as well as the stakeholders interviewed during the field mission.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AF	Adaptation Fund
ALRI	Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAC	Central Asia and the Caucasus
CACAARI	Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
CA-CRM	Central Asian Multi-Country Programme on Climate Risk Management
CAFT	Climate adaptation through sustainable forestry in important river catchment areas in Tajikistan
CAREC	Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation
CBOs	Community-based organisations
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CDP	Combined Delivery Report
CEP	Committee for Environmental Protection
CSA	Climate-smart Agriculture
DDPs	District Development Plans
DoG	Department of Geology
DRMP	UNDP Disaster Risk Management Programme
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EIAs	Environmental Impact Assessments
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESP	March 2016 Revision of the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund
FFSs	Farmer Field Schools
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GLOFs	Glacial lake outburst floods
GoT	Government of Tajikistan
Hydromet	State Agency for Hydrometeorology
IEF	Impact Evaluation Framework
IMS	Information Management Systems
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
IW	Inception Workshop
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
KRB	Kofirnighan River Basin
KRBMP	Kofirnighan River Basin Plan and Management Plan
LSIS	Living Standards Improvement Strategy of Tajikistan for 2013–2015
LUP	Land-use planning
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
Masl	Metres above sea level
MEWR	Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
MHCRM	Multi-Hazard Climate Risk Model
MLRWR	Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources
MTDP	Mid-term Development Programme 2016–2020
MTR	Mid-term Review
NAPCC	National Action Plan of Tajikistan for Climate Change
NCCAS	National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Tajikistan: Building Capacity for Climate Resilience
NDRMS	National Strategy on Disaster Risk Management for 2010–2015
NDS	National Development Strategy
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPACD	National Programme of Actions to Combat Desertification
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Project Director
OCSE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PLAAS	Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies

PM	Programme Manager
PPCR	Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience
PPR	Project Progress Report
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PUUs	Pasture User Unions
Ramsar Convention	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat
RBCs	River Basin Councils
RBOs	River Basin Organisations
DRS	Districts of Republican Subordination
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SPCR	Strategic Program for Climate Resilience
TJS	Tajikistan Somoni
UCA	University of Central Asia
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Watershed	In this document, the smallest hydrological unit for management of land and water resources
WAPs	Watershed Action Plans
WRP	Water Sector Reforms Programme of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016–2025
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WUAs	Water User Associations

Executive Summary

Project Summary Table

Project Title	An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan		
AF Project ID:	TJK/MIE/Rural/2018/1	AF Concept Approval Date:	June 5, 2019
Quantum Project ID:	00111538	AF Board Approval:	July 8, 2019
Country:	Tajikistan	Date Project Manager hired:	August 2020
Region:	Asia Pacific	Inception Workshop date:	March 17, 2021
Focal Area:	Climate Change	Mid-term Review date:	18 September, 2023
AF Strategic Objective:	Increased resiliency at the community, national, and regional levels to climate variability and change.	Planned closing date:	August 28, 2025
AF Executing Partner (UNDP Implementing Partner)	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources		
Other Partners	State Agency on Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the CEP, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR), Open Centre under the Department of Geology (DoG), University of Central Asia (UCA)		
Project Financing	At Project Approval (US\$)		At Mid-term review (US\$)
(1) AF financing	9,213,310		2,242,054
(2) UNDP contribution	-		-
(3) Government	-		-
(4) Other partners	-		-
(5) Total co-financing (2+3+4)	-		-
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS (1+5)	9,213,310		2,242,054

Project description

- The objective of the proposed project is to enhance the livelihoods of the small-scale farmers and pastoralists living in the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB) under future climate change conditions. Three interrelated outcomes within the project will contribute to achieving this objective, namely:
 - Developing a catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at Raion and Jamoat levels in the KRB.
 - An integrated approach to building the climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level.
 - Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA).
- Four barriers to effective climate change adaptation were identified¹ in the Project Document.
 - A lack of coherent climate risk information coupled with limited knowledge sharing within the country.
 - Weak institutional structures for developing integrated catchment management strategies.
 - limited technical capacity of public services to promote climate change adaptation among communities.
 - Limited knowledge among communities of the benefits of Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA).
- Implementation is through National Implementation Modality (NIM). The National Implementing Partner is the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, which held the Project management Unit (PMU) and will oversee all aspects of project implementation².
- The UNDP Country Office (CO) responsibilities are set out in section VI of the Project Document and³ the Standard Letter of Agreement (LOA) dated 11/06/2020 and Annex 1 of the Project Document which describes NIM with the UNDP CO assuming a project oversight and project assurance role and the Government requesting additional services set out in Annex 6 of the Project Document (Letter of Agreement (LOA)).
- Other project partners listed in the Project Document include: The State Agency on Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the CEP, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR), Open Centre under the Department of Geology (DoG), Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) and the University of Central Asia (UCA).

¹ Project Document p. 33

² Project Document, Annex 1

³ Project Document, pp. 66-68

6. The project length was five years with the start date beginning on the date of the Inception Workshop which occurred on the March 17, 2021.

Project progress summary

7. The project has made slow progress and faced a number of significant challenges which has resulted by the Mid-Term Review (MTR) in very low budget execution and a chronic lack of tangible results, especially in Outcome 2.
8. A poor project design which, *inter alia*, did not match the intervention strategy with the situational analysis and therefore overlooked the national capacities, created unachievable expectations, overlooked the technical assistance and operational needs necessary to implement the project. The design approached a collective and adaptive challenge from only a technical solution viewpoint, resulting in a project design that any agency and project implementation unit (PMU) would have struggled to implement successfully.
9. A number of critical design factors relating to progress have been, *inter alia*:
 - Outputs which were not achievable such as, for example, developing a payment for ecosystem services (PES) system, and a river basin level catchment strategy (which was not supported by the water sector reforms).
 - Insufficient technical assistance and support during inception and initial implementation to adapt the project design to fit the on the ground realities.
 - Weak operational design resulting in unreasonable expectations regarding budget execution.
 - Challenges faced by UNDP CO, CEP and the PMU due to the first experience of an “advanced” NIM.
 - Inexperienced PMU.
 - An ongoing reorganization process in the UNDP CO.
10. Together, these factors have resulted in a slow delivery rate and poor performance so that at the MTR there are few tangible results according to the projects strategic results framework (SRF).
11. However, this must be measured against a number of positive developments within the project:
 - The Project (UNDP CO and CEP) has recognized the lack of technical assistance and an international Technical Adviser was engaged at the end of 2021.
 - The PMU and the UNDP CO are working together to reach solutions to operational barriers and a number of operational issues appear to have been overcome.
 - The project has developed and initiated the implementation of a credible technical “road map” which provides a degree of confidence that the project can achieve its outcomes and objectives.
 - The revised approach, the coalition of partners, collaborative problem solving and a higher likelihood of local community participation could generate a number of valuable lessons regarding project interventions to address adaptation challenges.
12. In summary, the project has produced a certain level of capital (experience, technical, problem solving, adaptive management, partnerships, etc...) and has the potential now to achieve results (in line with the project’s stated outcomes and objectives as well as generating considerable experience and scalable lessons for other interventions).

Summary of conclusions

13. The project has made slow progress and faced a number of significant challenges which has resulted in very low budget execution and a chronic lack of tangible results, especially in Outcome 2.
14. Overall, the MTR concludes that the Project Document was particularly poor. It had a number of fundamental weaknesses.
15. The intervention strategy also appears to make a systemic misunderstanding in relation to the intervention approach by developing a top-down and technocratic approach (a technological “fix”) to what is actually a collective adaptive challenge.
16. The design makes a number of unsupported assumptions about the KRB as a socio-ecosystem and ignores the complex socio-political and rural context which create the uncertainty and unpredictability within the cause and effect relationships in the system. The original project strategy, as expressed in the Project Document, was very unlikely to achieve the outcomes and objective.
17. The project design failed to allocate sufficient resources for technical support, despite the identification in background sections of a lack of in-country capacity.
18. The poor project design has had a fundamental impact on the performance, progress and likelihood of impact. A number of opportunities for adaptive management were missed during project approval and inception phases.
19. In addition to the strategic challenges, the project has faced a number of operational challenges including the reorganisation of the UNDP CO, an inexperienced PMU and the PMU and CEP encountering for the first

time, a NIM project with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) while support services are provided based on the LOA signed with CEP, and first AF project for the UNDP CO, and the PMU, which is relatively inexperienced.

20. As a result, the implementation has been characterised by delays in processing procurements and other administrative activities and slow decision-making processes, as well as delays in acting on decisions.
21. In response to the poor performance of the project and low delivery rate the CO recruited an ITA at the end of 2021. This had a profound effect on the project and was the first time that there was a critical analysis of the project’s implementation strategy and the operational challenges. A number of critical changes were made to the strategy and, despite some delay, decisive actions taken by the UNDP CO and PMU.
22. The MTR has a degree of confidence that the project partners are overcoming the initial challenges faced by the project and that the project is now better-positioned to deliver on the project’s original outcomes and objectives. A number of barriers have been addressed and the PMU has gained valuable experience. The initial hurdles, characterized by logistical complexities and coordination issues, have provided valuable learning opportunities that have since been leveraged to streamline processes and enhance project execution.
23. Providing the project partners continue to work together to find workable solutions in a timely manner, the recalibrated strategy has a reasonable chance to fulfil its mandate of reducing vulnerability and enhancing climate resilience among the target communities.
24. In 2023 the project applied for a one-year no-cost extension. Based upon the MTRs findings, and assuming that changes are embedded in the operational procedures, the MTR broadly supports the extension.
25. Going forward, it is imperative for the project partners to maintain this momentum and apply the lessons learned to solving problems as they arise as well as fine-tuning future initiatives. Adequate technical support will be critical in this regard.

Summary of project ratings

AF criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating	MTR Assessment
Strategic relevance		
Overall Strategic Relevance	S	
Alignment with AF and UNDP strategic priorities	S	The project outcomes and objectives are aligned with the UNDP Country Programme and UNDAF as well as the Adaptation Fund.
Relevance to national, regional and global beneficiary needs	S	The national policy framework is evolving in the same direction, but the water sector reforms had not taken place by the start of the project. The land-resilience issues that the project is now interacting with are highly relevant.
Complementarity with existing interventions	MS	The water sector reforms had not taken place by the start of the project. There are now possibilities for integration.
Effectiveness	MU	The project strategy was not an effective means to achieve the objective. The approach was top-down and technocratic and the MTR argues that it was necessary to address a collective adaptive challenge which would require much more technical assistance (than was provided in the design/ budget) for problem solving. However, since 2022 a number of critical changes have been made to the strategy (e.g. engaging technical assistance, cancelling unachievable outputs, etc.) as well as operational changes which the MTR considers are effective. These changes give the MTR a degree of confidence that the project can achieve a good result.
Overall assessment of project results	MU	Due to the challenges the project has faced during the first half it still has to deliver on the main results. However, the MTR has a degree of confidence that the project will be able to deliver good results on the basis of the changes made.
Delivery of project outputs	MU	Delivery has been poor. By midterm of a forecast expenditure of \$8,768,810 only \$2,242,000 has been expended, a variance of – 74%. The MTR has confidence that the delivery rate will speed up with the implementation of the Call for Proposals (CFPs) Contracts.
Progress towards outcomes and project objective	U	The MTR bases this assessment on the situation at the point of review and caveats the rating with the statement that the project is much better positioned to progress now, however, these results have yet to be realised.
- Outcome 1	MU	Design weaknesses have reduced the quality of this Outcome. One output (a catchment strategy) has been very sensibly cancelled and the PES system has been adjusted to a good ecosystem valuation. The capacities necessary

		for the hazard modelling were unrealistic and the project has made some reasonable adjustments to build capacity. Future adjustments which will lift the end of project rating to Satisfactory would include a focus on financial sustainability of water sector and adaptation interventions in the KRB.
- Outcome 2	MU	The MTR basis the rating on the delivery of results. However, if the rating was based on the adaptive management efforts to improve this Outcome the rating would be Satisfactory. These include, <i>inter alia</i> , engaging technical assistance, clarifying a delivery vehicle (CFPs and Service Providers), the development of the Jamoat WMPs, in particular the Action Plan component (WAPs) suggesting that the Outcome has a much higher likelihood of achieving a good result. The rating is given on the basis that the CFPs for WAP implementation had not been evaluated and contracted at the time of the MTR.
- Outcome 3	MS	Support has been provided to the CEP website including a page on EbAs. District Analysis and District Profiles re prepared and will be distributed to local governments of the six target districts. A GIS for impact monitoring initiated but still requires functional development.
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MU	Rating based on October 2023 status. Based upon the findings of the MTR (e.g. the improvements in outcome 2 operational and strategic approaches, increased technical assistance and more effective working between partners) this rating could rise by 2 points in the next 18 months as the CFPs are implemented.
Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	A number of substantial risks remain. However, with reasonable mitigation and an increased rate of delivery the MTR has some confidence in the project achieving impact.
Efficiency	MU	The project has suffered as a result of the design faults. It has been slow to resolve these and a number of critical points during the project management cycle where these very visible flaws could have been resolved were missed (e.g. Project Document reviews, inception phase). Furthermore, the inexperience of the PMU and CEP, re-organisation taking place in the UNDP CO, and challenges of implementing through NIM also decreased the efficient delivery of the project. The MTR has confidence that the project partners are now in a better position to improve efficiency.
Cross-cutting dimensions		
Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The Project Document does not make a convincing case for gender inclusiveness and a deep understanding of gender inequalities and their complexity and distorting effect on resource and land use (key climate change adaptation issues). Gender is a complex issue and requires transformational interventions, not just targeted inputs (e.g. number of women attending training). Gender issues should have been raised to a much higher prominence in a system where there are high levels of women-headed households, absentee male migrant workers and issues such as Covid lockdowns, exchange rates, etc. The project has gender technical capacity and this needs to be mainstreamed/ made better use of, in all the components and especially in Outcome 2 implementation.
Human rights issues	(n/a)	
Environmental and social safeguards	MS	The Project Document Social and Environmental Screening Process could have been better. The MTR is not convinced by many of the risks which are often poorly articulated and the mitigation measures inadequate. It would be important to review the SESP and better articulate the risks and mitigation measures so that they are less confusing and more easily tracked.
Factors affecting implementation		
Project design and readiness	U	The Project Document had a good situational analysis. However, there is a mismatch between the situation described in the KRB and the intervention strategy. There were a number of critical strategic and operational flaws in the project’s design, and unfounded assumptions. At the project’s start up there UNDP CO and CEP appear to have been poorly prepared. There was insufficient understanding of the challenges of

		NIM, adaptive management opportunities in the project cycle were missed, national capacities were over-estimated and a reorganisation process in the UNDP CO all militated against readiness and effective implementation. However, the MTR observes that changes have now been made (starting in 2022) and the project and partners are in a much better position to successfully achieve the outcomes and objectives despite these earlier challenges.
Quality of project implementation	MU	Overall the implementation has been slow, problematic and indecisive at critical points in the project cycle management. However, there are clear signs that this has improved since 2022, but the tangible impacts (e.g. Outcome 2) of that are still to materialise - based on the current rate of delivery this is the highest rating possible. The MTR is confident that following the MTR this rating can be raised by the end of project providing that current progress is maintained.
Quality of project implementation by UNDP	MU	The UNDP CO has seen a high turnover of senior staff throughout the lifetime of the project, it has undergone a significant re-organisation process and there was an unpreparedness for the challenges of NIM with a project of this size. Initial technical advice to the project was inadequate and the MTR is not convinced that the regional level (which arguably is where technical issues related to the design would need to be addressed) was fully aware of just how poor the Project Document was. The rating is based upon the evidence of delivery to date. However, the MTR also notes that the UNDP CO has made a number of changes and there is now a close attention to the project at all levels up to and including the Resident Representative. Based upon these changes there is a degree of confidence that this rating can, potentially, be raised by several points by the end of the project.
Project oversight (PSC)	MU	The role of the PSC has been unclear when it comes to identifying and resolving the critical challenges faced by the project. Very often this appears to have fallen to individuals to work together to find solutions (e.g. with the CFPs or engaging substantive technical advice). The positive changes, while agreed and approved by the PSC and provide the MTR with optimism and confidence have been very slow to formulate and even with the requested extension decisions will need to be made more rapidly in the future.
Quality of project execution (Implementing Partner in NIM)	MU	The Implementing Partner has been slow to respond at the beginning of the project. Basic implementation activities have been slow and have contributed to the delays. The inexperience with NIM and the lack of technical advice at the beginning of the project has been a contributing factor to this. The MTR also notes that the Implementing Partner has made a number of improvements of recent and there is a degree of confidence that this rating can be raised several points by the end of the project. Recommendations are made in this MTR to that effect.
Project execution and management (PMU, partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MU	The PMU is relatively large with a full-time staff of four on UNDP Contracts. The MTR is aware that there are time pressures on the PMU to carry out other CEP-related works which distracts from the core duties. The PMU has internal intellectual capacities; however, it was relatively inexperienced for the challenge of implementing such a large and complex project – a factor which has been compounded by the poor project design and a technical inexperience (the latter being rectified by engaging a substantive International TA) and the NIM approach which was new to Tajikistan. These factors have been a contributing factor (along with the other factors affecting the other partners) in the low delivery rate. The MTR does have a degree of confidence that the PMU will be able to increase this rating by several points by the end of the project.
Financial management	S	A Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) was carried out on the CEP, spot checks and an external audit have taken place. While some issues (e.g. updating the tax status, etc.) were raised in the audit, none were critical and these have been addressed transparently through a management response.
Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	MU	Stakeholder engagement is weak. The project design was top-down in its approach to stakeholders (for instance, the list of project stakeholders in

		the project document did not include any civil society or local government-level actors). The SC does not appear to be very effective and it would seem that it often falls to individuals to resolve strategic and operational challenges.
Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	MS	Support has been provided to the CEP website including a page on EbAs. District Analysis and District Profiles re prepared and will be distributed to local governments of the six target districts.
Overall quality of M&E	MS	M&E has been reasonable (2 PRRs and a third expected December 2023). The project has a full-time and well qualified M&E officer. PRR ratings have been unjustifiably higher than would be expected based upon the rate of delivery. The MTR is confident that the project’s M&E will be able to integrate into the field activities and provide some good adaptive/ experimental management experience.
M&E design	U	The M&E framework provided in the Project Document was inadequate and confusing (for instance, \$7,093,310 was to be spent in one outcome and to be measured by a single indicator). The entire project has only 5 very similar indicators which appear to be based upon the AF core indicators and not necessarily a reflection of the on the ground changes in circumstances of the expected outcomes.
M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MS	As above, the M&E plan has been adhered to, but it is hard for a PMU to challenge the Project Document SRF and there has been no direction from the Regional Technical Office with regards the SRF and indicators.
Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MU	Complex projects are inherently difficult to implement. However, a very poor project design combined with limited technical understanding at the outset, operational aspects, and other non-project related challenges to the project partners, have caused significant delays during the early part of the project. This appears to have caused a hiatus which the partners were unable to resolve until recently. Since 2022 there has been an improvement in the approach and the partners seem much better able to solve problems going forwards, indicating that the project now has a chance of success.
Sustainability of Project Outcomes		
Overall likelihood of or risks to sustainability	ML	The project is “in a better place” now. It has a reasonable strategy based upon the realities of the KRB, and the project partners are working more closely together. Many of the operational issues have been addressed or are being addressed.
Financial risks	MU	The ecosystem valuation approach is an important first step in introducing environmental economics. If this is followed up using the opportunity of sound and experienced technical advice to look at ways of building financial resilience into the KRB socio-ecosystem then there is a high degree of sustainability going forwards. However, these need to be mainstreamed into the CEP policy framework and operational culture as well as being useful tools at the local level.
Socio-political risks	ML	The WAPs and the process of implementing the EbAs through them, if supported by appropriate technical assistance, is likely to build social capital through engaging local resource users and managers, including the Water Users Associations and the Pasture Users Associations.
Institutional and governance risks	MU	As above, however there are concerns regarding the higher-level institutional sustainability given the MTR observations (see section 3.7.9) and the PMU will need to work hard to integrate the project’s outcomes and approaches (e.g. ecosystem valuations, local-level participation in planning and implementation, etc.) into the institutional culture and approaches of the CEP.
Environmental risks	ML	The EbAs can be implemented using the WAPs and the Service Providers as a vehicle for implementation then there is a high likelihood of the project introducing land use practices and other EbAs which will have a lasting effect and increase the resilience of the system overall.
Catalyst and replication	ML	The revised project strategy is arguably more likely to be catalytic and capable of being replicated and adapted in other river catchments. The modular approach and use of Service Providers lends itself to upscaling.

Recommendations summary table

Recommendation	Responsibility	Time/dates for actions
<p>Recommendation 1: Urgently Strengthen the technical Capacity of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recruitment / re-contacting of part-time International Technical Adviser:</i> Urgently ensure that there is an ITA in place to provide continued overall oversight and direction to the project. • <i>Recruit a full-time national Technical Manager:</i> Urgently prepare a TOR and undertake recruitment of a full-time National Project Technical Manager with <u>sufficient experience and technical background</u> to ensure continuity of technical oversight and management of WAP/other contractors and consultants. This should be a UNDP contract. 	<p>To be implemented by: UNDP CO & CEP.</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High/ Critical.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: Revision/updating of the project’s Strategic Results Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review and update the SRF</i> to reflect the revised project strategic approach and strengthen the meaningful measurement of progress towards Objective, Outcome and output indicators and targets. • <i>Ensure that the revised SRF is operationalized</i> and that changes are clearly communicated in the PPR and SRF indicators. • <i>Establish a direct correlation between SRF indicators and the results tracker data</i> to allow for seamless tracking and reporting. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU. Revision should be led by ITA & NTA and advised by other subject matter specialists. Revised SRF to be approved by SC & RTA and submitted with 2023 PPR</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High/ Critical.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Improve continuity and efficiency of oversight and support services by the of UNDP CO to the Project and CEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure improved continuity and effectiveness of UNDP CO cluster manager oversight and support to the project and ensure not less than weekly progress review meetings. • Ensure more efficient and timely operational support for those services specified in Annex 6 of Project Document/ LOA (i.e. Issues highlighted at monthly meetings to be referred to and addressed, if necessary, by senior management). • Prepare a comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation plan for the delivery and management of UNDP services covered by Annex 2 of the Project Document (particularly procurement of services such as the WAP CFPs that exceed USD150,000). 	<p>To be implemented by: UNDP CO</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Develop a Critical Path Plan for each WAP implementation contract (CFP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a <u>critical path plan</u> (CPP) for the WAP Implementation contracts and other major service procurements, identifying key milestones and dependencies. • Implement a <i>traffic light</i> monitoring system, based on the above CPP (green for on track, amber for at risk, red for off track) to provide visual, at-a-glance status reports that can be monitored by senior management in CEP and UNDP 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU & CO</p> <p>UNDP Operations Manager to agree plan. Deputy Resident Representative to approve and monitor (quarterly) plan.</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate / prior to CFP signing. Priority: High.</p> <p>To be agreed before signing Contracts with CFP Responsible Parties.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Ensure the Project Staff workload is focused on project related tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that NIM rules and regulations regarding AF project staff are clearly defined and communicated to all parties. 	<p>To be implemented by:</p> <p>UNDP CO (clarification of NIM rules) CEP, UNDP CO</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate Priority: High.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that any additional tasks undertaken by project staff are only with prior approval of the National Project Director and UNDP Cluster manager 		
<p>Recommendation 6: Development of effective mechanism (GIS) to support effective monitoring and impact evaluation/lessons learned from WAP implementation (and other initiatives).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit an international specialist to advise on setting up of an effective GIS for WAP/other initiatives impact monitoring (and other functions such as field implementation planning by Responsible parties etc). • Recruit a national project GIS support consultant to assist in the GIS set up and meaningful operation and train project staff (M&E officer NTM, etc.) on further use and application of GIS. • Ensure data and skills transfer to CEP during project implementation 	<p><i>To be implemented by:</i> PMU</p>	<p><i>Timeline:</i> GIS IC and NC by December 2023</p> <p><i>Priority:</i> high</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: Establish a sustainable financing framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity for sustainable finance more generally, and developing a strategic planning process and roadmap which will integrate more directly with the WAPs, and with the institutional and governance structures these are setting in place under the project. • Imbed these capacities within CEP and with the District and Jamoat authorities. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by National & International ESAV Consultants.</p>	<p>Priority: High. Within the next 18 months to coincide with the WAP experience.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: Mainstream the work of the Gender Officer to play a more integrated role in project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the NTA & ITA with the Service Providers and the CFPs. • Generate knowledge products on the role of gender in the management of natural resources. • Work closely with the M&E Officer to develop robust monitoring framework for gender. • Support with training if necessary. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA.</p>	<p><i>Timeline:</i> Within the next quarter.</p> <p><i>Priority:</i> High.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: Review the project risk assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that operational risks are correctly identified and included. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA.</p>	<p><i>Timeline:</i> Within the next quarter.</p> <p><i>Priority:</i> High.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: Review and revise the SESP. Review and revise the project’s Grievance Procedure and make Service Providers aware of their responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary focus should be on mitigation through the WAP/ EbAs implementation process 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA and Gender Specialist. Approved by SC and RTA.</p>	<p>Priority: High. Within the next quarter.</p>

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Objectives of the MTR

1. The Mid Term Review (MTR) is primarily a monitoring and adaptive management tool to identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track at the mid-term of the project cycle to achieve maximum results by its completion⁴. Implementing Entities (IE) are required to conduct MTRs of any project with four or more years of implementation.
2. The primary output/deliverable of this process is the MTR report. The MTR report will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful and is intended to be used by the IE, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the national Implementing Partner (IP)/ Executing Entity⁵ (EE), the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (GRT) and other project partners in order to make practical adjustments to the project’s implementation framework, operational management, activities and internal budget allocations wherever necessary in order to achieve its stated objective. Once accepted by the IE, the MTR Report becomes an integral part of the overall adaptive project cycle management.

1.2 Scope of the MTR:

3. The MTR team reviewed all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. Project Document, etc.). Project reports including annual Project Progress Reports (PPR), annual workplans, project budget and revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review.
4. The MTR team reviewed and assessed the following four categories of project progress towards results as outlined in the project’s results framework and according to the Guide for Planning and Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-GEF Projects and Programmes⁶ and information available for monitoring and evaluating Adaptation Fund projects:
 - **Project strategy** including the project’s design and the results framework (log frame).
 - **Progress towards results** using the indicators selected during the project’s design (reported through the Project Preparation Reports (PPR)) and observations made during the field mission and desk work.
 - **Project implementation and adaptive management** including the management arrangements, work planning, finance and budgeting project-level monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, social and environmental standards (safeguards), reporting and, communication and knowledge management.
 - **Sustainability of the project’s outputs and outcomes** including an assessment of the financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional frameworks and governance, and the environmental risks to sustainability.
5. Additionally, the MTR reviewed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the overall project management, implementation and results (including on indicators and targets) and assessed the project’s response including and not limited to responses related to stakeholder engagement, management arrangements, work planning and adaptive management actions.

1.3 Methodology and Approach

26. The MTR was carried out by a two-person team consisting of a National and International Consultant between September 18th – 25th December 2023. Including a country mission between 11th – 21st October 2023, an itinerary and list of key informants interviewed is provided in Annexes 6 and 7.
27. The MTR utilized three sources of primary data and information:
28. **Desk review:** the documentation covering project design, implementation progress, monitoring and review studies, local and national development plans, policies and regulatory instruments. Particular attention was given to the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), which was developed during the projects design. This covered, and elaborated, on the documents listed in the UNDP TOR, a working list of which is presented in Annex 5.
29. **Interviews, stakeholder consultations and field missions:** additional information collection and validation took place through remote and (where possible) face-to-face consultations with a range of stakeholders

⁴ P. 15, AF-TERG, 2022. Evaluation policy of the Adaptation Fund. Document no. AFB/EFC.29/6/Rev.1. AF-TERG, Washington, DC.

⁵ Executing Agency in the AF terminology. The MTR will use the AF terminology throughout this report.

⁶ https://erc.undp.org/pdf/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf

(see Annex 6), using “semi-structured interviews” with a key set of questions in a conversational format. The questions asked aimed to provide answers to the points listed in the evaluation matrix in Annex 3. Interviews were confidential and the information is used discreetly without attribution. Information from interviews was triangulated and validated, where necessary, before inclusion in the analysis and reporting. Interviews started with an introduction about the aims and nature of the review and informing the interviewee that they have the right not to respond if they so wish.

30. Interviews and the information collected has been disaggregated to reflect the different stakeholders (e.g. IE, EE, implementing partners, beneficiaries). Information from the interviews was collated and analyzed to provide evidence-based conclusions on the overall performance and impact of the project.
31. **Direct observations of project results and activities:** wherever possible from the project area including consultations with local government and local agencies, local community representatives, project partners, CSOs and participants in field activities.
32. Gender equality and women’s empowerment were assessed through collecting gender-disaggregated results arising from project activities, inclusion of women participants and relevant women’s groups in the MTR interviews and specific questions regarding the extent to which they were included in project implementation and/or benefited from the project. Specific attention was given to analysing examples, best practices and lessons learned regarding women’s empowerment arising through the project’s scope of activities.
33. Following the data collection phase, the MTR team analyzed the information according to the MTR guidelines and the Terms of Reference (ToR) in order to draw conclusions and propose any recommendations. A draft MTR Report was subsequently circulated to key stakeholders for comment and feedback. The final MTR Report is submitted including an audit trail documenting the feedback from stakeholders as a separate Annex.

1.4 Ethics

6. The evaluation was conducted following the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators (Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement - attached Annex 7).
7. The rights and dignity of all stakeholders were respected, including interviewees, project participants (project, UNDP, Government staff), beneficiaries (beneficiary institutions and communities) and other evaluation stakeholders. The Evaluators explained and preserved the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants so that those who participate in the evaluation are free from external pressure and that their involvement in no way disadvantages them.
8. The final report of the evaluation does not indicate a specific source of citations or qualitative data to preserve this confidentiality. The confidentiality of stakeholders was ensured throughout and consultation processes were appropriately contextualised and culturally sensitive, with attention given to issues such as gender empowerment and fair representation for vulnerable groups, wherever possible.
9. Whilst every effort was made to reflect the inputs of stakeholders fairly and accurately in the report, the evaluation ratings, conclusions and key recommendations are those of the evaluators, they do not necessarily reflect the opinions and views of the Implementing and IE, EE or other project partners. As such they are not binding on any individual or institutional stakeholder.

1.6 Audit trail

10. The final draft of the TE report is accompanied by an “audit trail” of the evaluation process, the review comments to the draft report compiled along with responses from the MTR team and documented in an annex separate from the main report.

1.7 Limitations to the evaluation

11. The reported active cases of Covid-19 were very low during the evaluation mission and interviews with stakeholders were possible with minimal restrictions (e.g. social distancing, etc.) therefore, there were no specific limitations to the evaluation. An independent interpreter accompanied the International Consultant during the country mission and field visits and the majority of the project’s documentation is written in English. As such there were no significant limitations to the evaluation process.

1.8 Structure of the Terminal Evaluation report

12. This report is structured in line with the guidance given on conducting MTRs of UNDP-GEF and AF projects and in accordance with the TE ToR provided in Annex 1:

Section 1 provides an executive summary which gives basic information on the project, a brief description of the project and its progress to date, the TE ratings and achievement table, summary of conclusions and recommendations.

Section 2 provides a description of the review process and methodology.

Section 3 describes the background and context of the “An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan” project including the problems that the project sought to address, the objectives, outcomes and means of monitoring and evaluation, the implementation arrangements, a timeline and key milestones as well as a summary of project stakeholders.

Section 4 presents the main findings of the MTR on all aspects including the project’s strategy, its progress towards results, the performance of its implementation and efficiency of adaptive management as well as assessing the sustainability of the project outcomes.

Section 5 presents the MTR conclusions, recommendations and main lessons learned.

Table 1 Terminal Evaluation Ratings Scales

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings	4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability
5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings	3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings	2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings	1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability
2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings	Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings	
Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment	

2. Project Description and Background Context

2.1 Development context

34. According to the Project Document, “the Republic of Tajikistan (hereafter Tajikistan) is a small, landlocked country bordered by China to the east, the Kyrgyz Republic to the north, Afghanistan to the south and Uzbekistan to the north-west. The total land area of the country is 142,600 km², making it the smallest of all the Central Asian countries^{7,8}. Over 90% of the land is mountainous terrain, with approximately half the country being more than 3,000 metres above sea level (masl). The topography of the country is extremely steep, with elevations ranging from 300 – 7,495 masl. This elevation range has resulted in a significant inter-seasonally and regionally variable climate. Elevation also influences the mean annual temperature, which ranges from -20°C – 30°C, depending on the region. Similarly, mean annual precipitation varies geographically, ranging from 30 – 1,800 mm per annum, and occurring mostly during a unimodal rain season that lasts 7 months.

35. The mountainous regions of Tajikistan are of global importance as a glacial area. Approximately, 60% of the total number of glaciers in Central Asia are located within the country. Together, these glaciers make up 6% of Tajikistan’s land area and are important water reserves, storing 406 km³ of water and contributing to

⁷ Third National Communication 2014.

⁸ The total land surface areas of the remaining four Central Asia countries, in order of increasing size, are: i) Kyrgyzstan at 199,900 km²; ii) Uzbekistan at 448,978 km²; iii) Turkmenistan at 491,210 km²; and iv) Kazakhstan at 2,725,000 km².

- between 40 and 60% of the national renewable freshwater resources⁹. Two principle mountain ranges in Tajikistan – namely, the Pamir and Alay – give rise to several glacial-fed streams and rivers that are used to irrigate large areas of farmlands. Increased intensity of glacier melting is likely to lead to significant changes in the hydrological system and a greater risk of water-related natural disasters, such as floods and mudflows¹⁰. Over the last decade, water-related natural disasters have cost the Government of Tajikistan (GoT) more than US\$1 billion and have resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives¹¹.
36. Tajikistan is the most climate-vulnerable country in Central Asia. Extreme rainfall events have become more frequent and intense, the rainfall season has shortened in many parts of the country, air temperatures have risen markedly, and glacial melting is accelerating¹². As a result, hydrometeorological disasters such as droughts, floods, mudflows and landslides are more frequent and rates of soil erosion across the country are increasing. The socio-economic impacts of these changes are considerable: livelihoods, agricultural productivity, water availability and hydroelectricity production are all compromised¹³. Natural hazards, most of which are linked to climate change (e.g. droughts and landslides), result in annual losses equivalent to 20% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)¹⁴.
 37. The vulnerability of Tajikistan to climate change is exacerbated by a low adaptive capacity as a result of ageing infrastructure, the disproportionate number of women in poverty compared with men¹⁵, and limited institutional capacity. This vulnerability is expected to intensify in the future, and consequently the building of climate resilience across the country is of paramount importance¹⁶.
 38. Inappropriate land management such as the unsustainable use of forests and pastures, and the conversion of steep slopes for use in agriculture have contributed to the degradation of landscapes¹⁷. The effects of the harsh climatic processes coupled with the mismanagement of land are magnified by climate change factors.
 39. Tajikistan's water resources are an integral contributor to the local economy, specifically for the agricultural and energy sector. Irrigation agriculture and livestock farming account for over 90% of annual water withdrawals, primarily from surface water sources. Despite this disproportionate water resource allocation to the agricultural sector, Tajikistan only develops 700 – 1,200 ha of land for irrigation annually. This amount is ten times less than what was planned in the Water Sector Development Strategy for 2010 – 2025¹⁸. The slow progress in irrigating agricultural land is attributed to insufficient investment into the agricultural sector and has resulted in the country needing to import 50% of most of its staple foods.
 40. The project focuses its activities within the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB) stating: i) the KRB has received limited international support for the implementation of integrated catchment management; ii) a large number of communities within the basin are highly vulnerable to a wide range of climate risks; iii) the basin's variable topographic and climatic conditions are highly representative of the conditions in Tajikistan; and iv) there are no transboundary disputes along the river¹⁹.
 41. Situated in the south-western and western parts of the country, the KRB occupies a total area of 11,600 km², with the mountain catchment making up 8,070 km² of this (equating to 70% of the total basin area)²⁰. The basin is divided into two regions, namely the north and the central/south regions²¹. The Gissar Valley encompasses the north region, which includes the city of Dushanbe, while the Kofirnighan and Beshkent

⁹ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). 2017. Environmental Performance Review: Tajikistan, Third Review.

¹⁰ Pathways to Resilience in Semi-Arid Countries (PRISE). 8 September 2018. “COMMENT: Tajikistan's glaciers melting – far more than just a loss of ice”. Available at: <http://prise.odi.org/comment-tajikistans-glaciers-melting-far-more-than-just-a-loss-of-ice/> [accessed 03.07.2018].

¹¹ PRISE 2018 “Tajikistan's glaciers melting”.

¹² Third National Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. 2014. Committee on Environmental Protection, State Administration for Hydrometeorology, Government of The Republic of Tajikistan.

¹³ World Bank (WB). 2013. Tajikistan: Overview of climate change activities.

¹⁴ WB 2013 Tajikistan: Overview.

¹⁵ This phenomenon is referred to as the ‘feminisation of poverty’, where women bear the burden of poverty – particularly in developing countries – as a result of lack of income and gender biases.

¹⁶ Source: Project Document

¹⁷ Third National Communication 2014.

¹⁸ Water Sector Development Strategy for 2010–2025. 2009. Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources (MLRWR) & Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OCSE), Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

¹⁹ reducing the project partners and stakeholders to within the country

²⁰ Tahirov IG & Kupayi GD. 1994. Water resources of Tajikistan of the Republic of Tajikistan. Dushanbe 1:181.

²¹ Fergana Valley WRM 2018 KRBMP Unpublished.

valley depressions make up the south region. The Gissar Ridge forms the highland areas, extending for 250 km to elevations of 4,500 masl and is home to 343 glaciers, covering a total area of 115 km²²². The river of Kofirnighan, at 387 km long, is one of the major contributing inflows of Tajikistan’s largest river, the Amu Darya River²³. It flows through different mountain ranges and zones within the basin including high mountains, intermediate foothills and low and flat zones. The basin’s groundwater reserves are economically important and are used to irrigate crops (98,000 ha) and pastures (56,000 ha). Most of the irrigated land is in the arid southern sub-basin, while cultivated land in the northern sub-basin is largely rain-fed.

42. Administratively, the KRB is made up of 10 administrative districts, 4 cities including Dushanbe, 10 villages and 77 jamoats (rural self-governance bodies). As of January 2017, the total KRB population was 2.8 million people and an annual growth rate of 2.5%, with 62% living in rural areas and 38% in towns.
43. Many of the households located in the six most vulnerable districts of the BKR are located in hazardous areas and experience a number of climate-related threats and disaster events including: i) floods; ii) mudflows; iii) landslides; iv) rockfalls; and v) avalanches²⁴. In addition to increased exposure to climate-related threats, these are all rural communities with limited adaptive capacity because of their dependence on agriculture for livelihoods, and limited opportunities for alternative income. About one-third of the agricultural losses in Tajikistan are currently attributable to climate change and variability²⁵, meaning that communities in the KRB who rely on agriculture for income are extremely vulnerable to the current and future impacts of climate change.
44. The impacts of climate change are different in the northern sub-basin of the KRB to those in the southern sub-basin. Rural communities in the Vakhdat, Faizobod and Varzob districts are expected to become increasingly exposed to hydrometeorological hazards such as increased flooding, landslides and GLOFs. In particular, the steep terrain in these areas increase the likelihood of sudden onset multi-hazard risks, such as landslides occurring directly after a GLOF or similar flooding event. Concomitantly, watersheds in the northern sub-basin are frequently degraded as a result of unsustainable land-use practices that increase the likelihood and impact of the above-mentioned risks. Unsustainable practices also increase the rate of erosion and soil loss, which compromises agricultural productivity in these regions and increases flood risk in downstream areas.
45. Communities in the Nosiri Khusrav, Kabodiyon and Shaartuz districts, conversely, are increasingly exposed to slow onset hazards such as drought and river bank erosion. In these areas, water availability is the greatest threat to livelihoods. Water availability is limited by poorly functioning irrigation supply infrastructure. This infrastructure is being damaged by: i) high levels of sedimentation from water-borne and wind-borne sediment; and ii) floods in the Kofirnighan River that damage irrigation dams and canals. Floods in the Kofirnighan River also cause riverbank erosion that results in the loss of arable land.

2.2 Problems that the project sought to address

46. At the time of the project design, there were several gaps that hindered the effective implementation of climate change adaptation in Tajikistan. Many of these gaps related to limited institutional and technical capacity for the implementation of adaptation projects to develop the climate-resilience of Tajikistan communities and are underlined below.
47. *The National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Tajikistan (NCCAS)*²⁶ was issued in October 2019 with a focus on building capacity within the country for climate resilience. The NCCAS strategy preliminarily highlights the following as focal points²⁷:
 - existing laws, regulations, and codes on environmental protection, energy, drinking water supply, construction, and disaster risk management do not incorporate climate change; and
 - policy, strategy, and legislative environments do not incentivise governments to reduce vulnerability and pursue adaptation measures.
48. There is little acknowledgement of climate change challenges in other sectoral policies, including water and health. This limited mainstreaming is compounded by a lack of clear, institutional responsibilities and governance for land and water management at a catchment level. The absence of a cross-sectoral approach to climate change adaptation poses a significant barrier to integrated, landscape-level, adaptive planning.

²² Ibid.

²³ Tahirov & Kupayi 1994 Water resources of Tajikistan.

²⁴ Further information concerning district-specific vulnerability to extreme climate events is presented under district descriptions.

²⁵ NHDR 2012 Tajikistan: Poverty in the Context of Climate Change.

²⁶ NCCAS 2016.

²⁷ Ibid.

49. While the Water Reform Programme is likely to modernise water management in Tajikistan, it does not adequately consider the impacts of climate change on the water sector. While climate change impacts are acknowledged to impact water resources, the extent of these impacts is not well understood – particularly at the river basin level. Furthermore, the focus of the Water Reform Programme is restricted largely to water resources management and does not adequately consider the impacts of multiple hazards at the river basin and watershed level. While flood management will be the responsibility of RBOs, other climate-linked hazards such as erosion and landslides are not addressed through the programme²⁸.
50. Climate change expertise currently only exists within a limited number of institutions in Tajikistan, most notably the State Agency for Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP). Within these institutions, specialists have either specific skills (e.g. meteorologists, hydrologists) or broader knowledge (e.g. environment, water management) related to climate change and its impacts. As a result, the staff employed by these institutions do not have the technical capacity to recognise the need for climate change adaptation and implementing necessary measures for it.
51. Since the early 1990s, climate and agricultural research in Tajikistan has been critically underfunded which has resulted in limited scientific capacity. Financial resources are limited and researchers are poorly remunerated²⁹. The former capacity building and reward systems that functioned under the Soviet Regime are no longer in place, while the existing culture of centralised decision-making limits initiative and innovation³⁰.
52. The Project Document provides a “problem statement”:
*“The problem to be addressed by the proposed project is that the livelihoods of small-scale rural farmers and pastoralists in the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB) of Tajikistan are being negatively affected by climate change. Rising temperatures and extreme climate events, including floods and droughts, are resulting in: i) damages to crops; ii) increased rates of soil erosion and concomitant declines in agricultural productivity; and iii) damages to properties and infrastructure. These effects are greatly exacerbated by a baseline situation of unsustainable management of land and water resources in the KRB. Future prospects for rural communities in this river basin are limited, with their livelihoods expected to be further threatened as climate change impacts intensify, making sustainable management of their natural resources increasingly challenging*³¹.
53. Four barriers to effective climate change adaptation were identified³²
- v. a lack of coherent climate risk information coupled with limited knowledge sharing within the country;
 - vi. weak institutional structures for developing integrated catchment management strategies;
 - vii. limited technical capacity of public services to promote climate change adaptation among communities;
 - viii. limited knowledge among communities of the benefits of Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA).

2.3 Project strategy

54. According to the Project Document, the strategy appears to have been to enhance the livelihoods of the small-scale farmers and pastoralists living in the KRB under future climate change conditions by:
- ix. developing a catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at Raion and Jamoat levels in the KRB;
 - x. an integrated approach to building the climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level; and
 - xi. existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA.

²⁸ Water Reform Programme 2015.

²⁹ Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management Multi-Country Support Project (CACILM). 2009. Research Prospectus: A Vision for Sustainable Land Management Research in Central Asia. Sustainable Agriculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Regional Office of ICARDA for Central Asia and the Caucasus.

³⁰ This account from the Project Document is abridged here because it provides an important context to the findings of the MTR.

³¹ Project Document p. 33

³² Project Document p. 33

Table 1 Project Objective, Outcomes and Outputs

Objective	Indicators
Reduce vulnerability and enhance climate-resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan to respond to the impacts of climate change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change. 2. Percentage population of the KRB benefitting from project interventions.
Outcome 1	Indicators 1 indicators
Outcome 1: Catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at raion (district) and jamoat (sub-district) levels in Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Number of staffs trained to respond to impacts of climate-related events (gender disaggregated).
Outcome 1 outputs	
Output 1.1. Multi-hazard climate risk models (MHCRCMs) developed for target watersheds in the KRB. Output 1.2 Providing support for establishing automated weather stations in KRB sub catchments to provide data for refining the multi-hazard climate models [developed under [sic] Output 1.3 Integrated catchment management strategy developed for the KRB. Output 1.4 Strengthened coordination and training mechanisms for integrated climate-resilient catchment management. Output 1.5 Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) models to support the long-term financing of integrated catchment management strategy implementation.	
Outcome 2	
Outcome 2: An integrated approach to building climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Number of people practicing climate change adaptation technologies (gender disaggregated). 5. Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change.
Outcome 2 outputs	
Output 2.1 Agro-ecological extension services supported at the jamoat level to provide technical support for EbA implementation. Output 2.2 Watershed Action Plans (WAPs) developed that promote climate resilience and enhance economic productivity for target communities. Output 2.3 EbA interventions implemented in target watersheds by local communities.	
Outcome 3	
Outcome 3: Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Knowledge management centre strengthened through the support of project activities.
Outcome 3 outputs	
Output 3.1. Existing knowledge management platforms supported for collating information on the planning, implementation and financing of EbA interventions. Output 3.2. An impact evaluation framework (IEF) to enable effective adaptive management of EbA activities.	

2.3 Implementation arrangements

55. Implementation is through National Implementation Modality³³ (NIM). The National Implementing Partner is the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) which held the Project management Unit (PMU) under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan will oversee all aspects of project implementation³⁴.
56. The UNDP Country Office (CO) responsibilities are set out in the Project Document³⁵ and the Standard Letter of Agreement (LOA) dated 11/06/2020 and Annex 1 of the Project Document. In addition to *provide support services for assistance with direct payments. In providing such support services, the UNDP Country Office shall ensure that the capacity of the CEP is strengthened to enable it to carry out such activities directly*”, the LOA further states that “*UNDP will join CEP in managing the project and providing quality assurance, in accordance with plans approved by the Project Steering Committee. Most of UNDP’s work for the project will be based in its Country Office (CO) in Dushanbe, under the supervision of the Team Leader for Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, Environment and Energy and other senior programme staff, including the UNDP Resident Representative and UNDP Deputy Resident Representative as warranted. UNDP will also engage contractors to carry out Midterm and Final Evaluations of the project. The UNDP Regional Technical Advisor, based in the UNDP Regional Service Centre in Istanbul, will provide technical support, assistance with coordination, and overall project monitoring to ensure consistency with expectations from UNDP and Adaptation Fund*”.
57. This describes NIM with the UNDP CO assuming a project oversight and assurance role and additional assistance as set out in the LOA³⁶.
58. Other project partners include: The State Agency on Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the CEP, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR), Open Centre under the Department of Geology (DoG), and the University of Central Asia (UCA).

³³ The Project Document (pp. 64 – 70) provides an account of the implementation arrangements and Annex 6 of the Project Document sets out additional assistance from the CO as requested by the Government.

³⁴ Project Document, Annex 1

³⁵ Section VI, pp. 66-68

³⁶ Project Document, Annex 6.

Figure 1 Project implementation arrangements

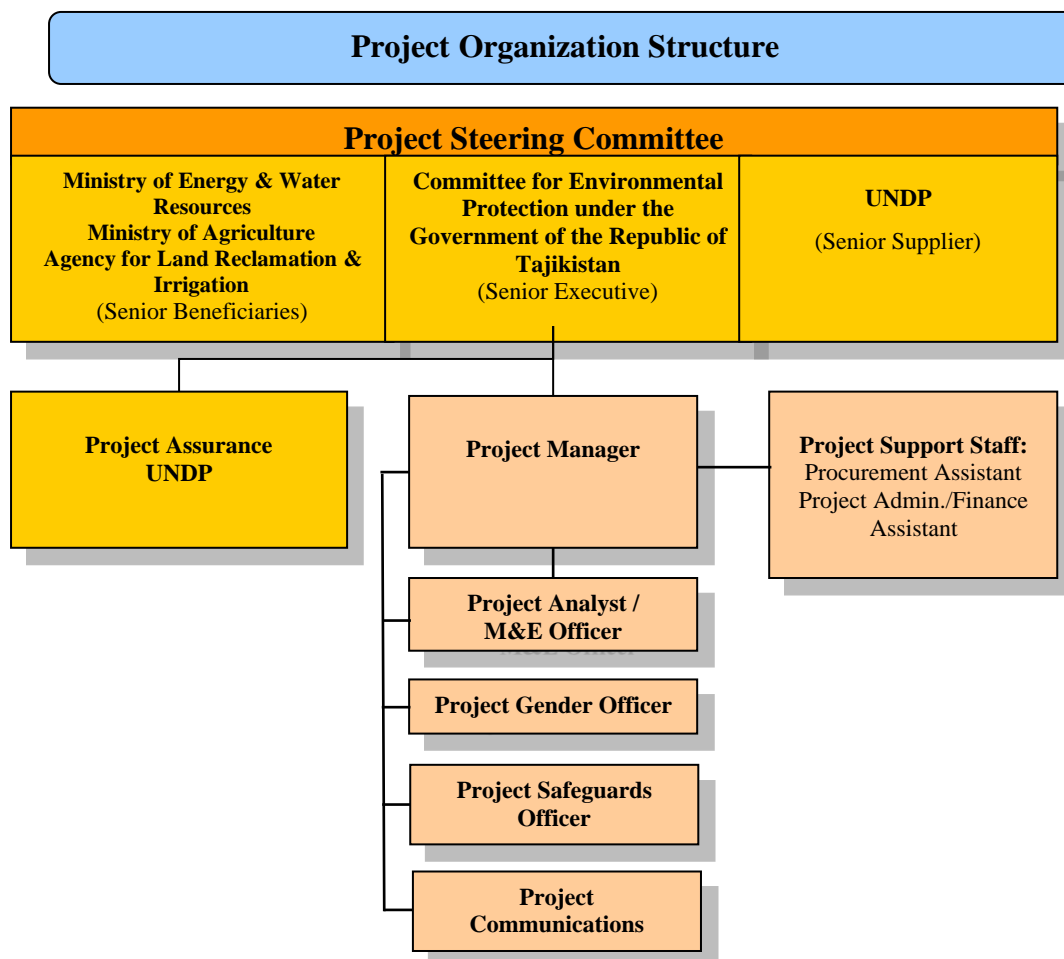


Table 2 Project timing and milestones

Preparation	
Adaptation Fund Board Project and Programme Review Committee	June 5, 2019
AF Board Approval	August 27, 2019
Implementation	
LPAC Meeting	December 30, 2019
Project Document signature & official start-up	June 11, 2020
Appointment of Project Manager	August, 2020
Procurement Assistant Appointment	September, 2020
M&E Officer and AFA Appointment	May, 2021
Inception workshop	March 17, 2021
COVID pandemic lockdown	Early 2020-approx end of 2021
ITA appointed	October 19, 2021
Midterm Review	September 17, 2023
Terminal Evaluation (planned)	December 17, 2026
Planned project end	March 17, 2027

Table 3 Main stakeholders

Stakeholder	Brief description
Committee of Environmental Protection (CEP)	The CEP is the main specialised governmental body responsible for implementation of the state policy on environmental protection in Tajikistan.
State Agency on Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the CEP	The Hydromet is responsible for environment-, climate- and hydro-meteorological-related monitoring. It is the agency responsible to formulate and inform the GoT and local authorities on short-term weather forecasts.
Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR)	The MEWR is tasked with the formulation and implementation of national energy- and water-related policies.
Open Centre under the Department of Geology (DoG)	The Central Asian Countries Geoportal is an outcome of cooperation between Geological Survey of Finland and the national geo-institutions in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The geo-sector in Tajikistan is managed by the Head Department of Geology under the GoT as a public property to be the central organ of executive power, state policy management and coordination of work. This falls within the sector of: i) mineral exploration; ii) reproduction of mineral resources; and iii) provision of geological information about natural resources of the Republic of Tajikistan.
University of Central Asia (UCA)	The UCA is an internationally chartered, not-for-profit secular institution. It was formed as a partnership between the governments of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan under the sponsorship of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

3. Findings

3.1 Project formulation and design

59. The Project Document, provides the project’s intervention strategy, operational guidelines, budget, governance framework, risk management strategy and means for monitoring and evaluating performance and progress towards results. In the instance of the Tajikistan AF project, the Project Document is poor with a number of very considerable weaknesses. It is important to analyse these weaknesses in order to support various MTR recommendations and provide the basis for any lessons learned and corrective measures for the project. The MTR does not postulate on the reasons for the poor quality of the design, however, it will examine the chain of decision-making because these weaknesses and inefficiencies have had a profound impact on the implementation of the project. The most significant weaknesses in the Project Document are:
60. **A mismatch between the situational context and the intervention strategy:** The environmental, economic, social, and policy framework description of the KRB system³⁷ provides a very clear, knowledgeable, and concise description which is abridged in section 2 of this report of this report. However, this is not translated into a coherent strategy and in some instances, issues raised in the situational analysis appear to have been wholly ignored in the intervention design. The situational analysis describes a highly complex socio-ecosystem overlaid by policy, regulatory, institutional, and management inefficiencies and inequalities which would arguably need to be addressed before resources could be interjected into the system (e.g. through the EbA interventions). The project intervention³⁸ appears to ignore the very serious capacity constraints identified in the situational analysis as well as the inherent complexity and unpredictability of the system and incautiously prescribes a basin-wide strategy, which would have been beyond the project’s capabilities, resources and contra to the proposed water sector reforms. This apparent lack of understanding is further evidenced by the inclusion of output 1.5 “*Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) models to support the long-term financing of integrated catchment management strategy implementation*” with a corresponding target of “*Number of payments for ecosystem services (PES) models developed for the KRB*”. PES systems are extremely challenging to develop, even in the most sophisticated and advanced environmental governance systems. Critically, PES require pre-conditions, *inter alia*, very specific existing governance, policy and regulatory, tenurial, and national accounting system in order to be successful. This is not to say that PES cannot work in project area, but it would have required considerably more thought, resources and time, than was given to it in the Project Document.
61. While any project designs will likely include assumptions, this project’s strategy contains a significant number of similar contradictions which cannot be explained away as assumptions.
62. **Top-down and technocratic approach:** The strategy and approach described in the Project Document is, by a number of measures, a top-down approach with a dependency on the introduction of technical interventions. There is very little in the Project Document to suggest that the project intervention, as described in the Project Document, expected to interact with the local administration and non-state actor

³⁷ Project Document pp. 8 - 32

³⁸ Project Document pp. 33 - 52

beneficiaries as receivers of project support. For instance, the “Partnerships and stakeholder engagement” in the Project Document states:

“During inception phase, the project will prepare a detailed stakeholder engagement plan, and carry out vulnerability assessment of target communities in a participatory manner holding focused consultations in designing specific tailor-made activities suitable for vulnerable and marginalized groups. Where feasible such groups will be prioritized for concrete adaptation interventions. The stakeholder engagement plan will guide such consultations inclusively during preparation phases, assuring broad representation of existing relevant community-based organizations and groups. These involve, farming associations and cooperatives, women’s committees, intervention related initiative groups, pasture development associations, Water User Associations (WUA), forestry cooperatives and communal health promoters. The project will monitor and assess the extent of involvement of vulnerable and marginalized people within such groups and associations”³⁹.

63. However, two un-numbered tables termed “primary stakeholders to be involved in project implementation” and “list of the stakeholders consulted to date and those that will continue to be consulted with during project inception and implementation” as well as the main stakeholders listed (see Table 4 this report) do not list a single community-based organisation, collective of land users or similar. By any measure, this was a top-down intervention and any participation was only likely to be at an institutional and technocratic level.
64. **Un-supported assumptions:** Project intervention strategies are by nature based on a number of assumptions. However, it is important that there is a clear basis for any assumptions. The Project Document made a number of un-substantiated assumptions such as a supporting enabling environment created by the ongoing water sector reforms or having the presence of private extension services in the project area. More broadly, it is reasonable to state that the Project Document made assumptions about national capacities, governance and the institutional environment which were not supported by its own situational analysis.
65. It is not clear if the inclusion of output 1.3 “Integrated catchment management strategy developed for the KRB” was an assumption or, that the designers were failing to comprehend the scale and complexity of what they were dealing with. A catchment strategy would have been an enormous and complex undertaking which was unsupported by the reforms taking place in the water sector.
66. **Weaknesses in the strategic approach:** Given the situational analysis in the Project Document, a reasonable strategic intervention response would normally have two or three components addressing the enabling (institutional, policy, governance framework) environment including stakeholder capacities and it would likely have a direct investment component in the catchment areas in the form of the EbAs. A third outcome or component would seek to capture the experience and knowledge generated.
67. To some extent the Project Document does follow this approach with three outcomes. However, it settles on a narrow component of the system, the water sector, it greatly underestimates the complexity and scale of the challenge. As such, there is a disconnection between outcome 1 and 2 as well as a need to sequence outputs with much of outcome 1 needing to be in place before outcome 2 could proceed. Amongst other critical weaknesses resulting from this, the bulk of the project’s finances were dependent upon a number of glaringly false assumptions and an absence of any existing structured vehicle or mechanism to implement the EbAs. There was nothing in place to identify EbA opportunities, create a planning framework for their allocation and responsibly disperse the funds at a scale necessary to meet the project’s stated expectations.
68. Lastly, from an intervention strategy perspective, the MTR considers the design did not understand the nature of the challenge. The project’s strategy, noting that it is somewhat challenging to understand the strategy in the Project Document, does not reflect the complex adaptive challenges⁴⁰ necessary to effect change in a socio-ecosystem. Instead of taking an adaptive change approach the project’s strategy, as described in the Project Document, it prescribes a number of technical interventions. This oversight manifests itself as project implementation rolls out as an overestimation of the national capacities of water sector reforms, institutions on the ground, (e.g. RBOs, level of community capacities, etc.) and an un-targeted approach to implementing the EbAs. Conceptually, the project needed to build capacities, social capital⁴¹ at the community level rather than transfer technology to this level.
69. **Weak operational design:** There are unusual, significant and critical weaknesses in the operational design of the project as set out in the Project Document. The practical implication, as referred to above, was not clearly defined (e.g. Budget note 39: Inputs for 100 villages to implement EbA – assume US\$ 60,000 per

³⁹ Project Document, p. 54

⁴⁰ For a comparison of adaptive and technical challenges see Annex 4.

⁴¹ For instance, the capacity for self-organisation at the community level.

village – US\$ 5,814,000⁴²) and it lacks a broader understanding of the implications of scale and numbers of beneficiaries, apparently trying to match these to the size of the fund and not the practical management and logistic implications of achieving these numbers (e.g. Outcome 2 targets such as “at least 46,000 people in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefiting from reduced vulnerability to climate change”⁴³, etc.).

70. This apparent inexperience in project implementation (in the design) manifests itself in other areas such as the budgeting (e.g. US\$ 4,106,810 expenditure⁴⁴ in year 2), the absence of any vehicle or mechanism to spend the money through, and the apparent reluctance to engage technical assistance (e.g. 75% of the budget equivalent to US\$ 6,908,000 to be spent with less than 7% technical assistance support).
71. **Poor risk assessment:** Given the significant issues with the Project Document the risk identification and management strategy is confusing and inadequate (see section 3.2.1).

3.2 Results framework and indicators

72. The projects SRF is poor and lacks functional efficiency as the primary monitoring and evaluation tool for the project. The SRF should provide a description of the logical hierarchy - activities, outputs, outcomes – that should demonstrate a rational pathway to achieving the objective. It does not. It is important to note that AF M&E is based upon the Outcome indicators and not the Output indicators. There are numerous problematic issues with the project’s SRF, for instance:
- There are only 3 Outcome indicators.
 - A gross budget amount of US\$ 9,213,310 was to be monitored and evaluated using only 2 very similar objective-level indicators and 3 Outcome indicators.
 - In the case of Outcome 2, one indicator (sub-divided into two very similar parts) would be used to monitor the results of (US\$ 7,093,310) of budget execution.
 - Indicators do not reflect the complexity of the Outcomes (e.g. Outcome 1 indicator relates to the number of staff trained whereas the outcome includes elements of establishing weather stations, hazard mapping, an integrated strategy, PES).
 - Outcomes are poorly phrased and in the case of Outcome 3 the wording is identical to Output 3.1⁴⁵.
 - It lacks any specific gender-targeted indicators. Gender is essentially a subset of other indicators.
73. The SRF is the primary M&E tool by which the MTR, and indeed the project as a whole, assesses performance and progress towards its expected end results. It is not possible for the MTR to use these indicators to provide any meaningful assessment of performance and progress and it is hard to see how the project was using this to any effect to measure progress. In the absence of meaningful indicators, the project would have to fall back on budget execution as a very coarse measure of performance.
74. It is important not to underestimate the importance of the SRF in a complex intervention project. If the project’s intervention strategy cannot be logically explained in the SRF then it is very likely that the strategy is incoherent. It is remarkable that the project’s SRF did not “raise a red flag” during the several review processes which the Project Document should have undergone.

⁴² Project Document p. 77

⁴³ Project Document SRF

⁴⁴ In the MTR’s experience of evaluating over 40 complex environmental projects in more than 30 countries this is, by an approximate magnitude of six, the most money to be spent in a single year. This is especially striking when one considers that the majority of the funds (over US\$ 3,500,000) were to be spent in just one outcome (Outcome 2).

⁴⁵ **Outcome 3.** Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA and **Output 3.1.** Existing knowledge management platforms supported for collating information on the planning, implementation and financing of EbA interventions.

Table 4 indicator analysis

Indicator	Baseline	MTR	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR comments
				S	M	A	R	T	
Objective: Reduce vulnerability and enhance climate-resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan to respond to the impacts of climate change.									
Objective indicator 1: Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change	0	By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women	At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change (i.e. constituting 5% of population in the Kofirnighan river basin)	x	x	x	Q	Y	Indicator lacks utility for measurement. “Reduced vulnerability to climate change” in both indicator and EOP target is ambiguous. MTR target is a project and not an impact target as well as being vague (i.e. what kind of support and project support is project time-bound). Unlikely to be achievable given the weak strategic approach – the simply were not the measures in the project design to reach this many people. The relevance, similar to the specificity, is ambiguous because the issues are not just related to vulnerabilities of climate change but also involve elements of cause and effect, for instance activities in higher reach pastures will cause vulnerabilities in the lower reaches of the river basin, climate change extremes simply exacerbates these and the urgency of action, the indicator is not a clear measure. It is timebound only in the sense of the project ending and the MTR and EOP targets are not necessarily the same.
Objective indicator 2: Percentage population of the KRB benefitting from project interventions ⁴⁶ .	0		In total, 828,000 indirect project beneficiaries, including 409,612 women, are expected to benefit from the project	x	Q	x	x	Y	The indicator is largely redundant because benefitting from the project interventions is not the same as the project bringing about a reasonable situational change. From a sustainability perspective the question would be – do the benefits end when the project stops? Wording is confusing “benefitting from project interventions” vs “indirect project beneficiaries”. “benefit from the project” lacks the assurance that benefits will be sustainable and continue to flow post project. The gender markers are not convincing and individual gender markers should be included to reflect the disparities in power and inequalities in access to resources and services experienced by women. Assuming that there are women-headed households in the project area an approximately 50:50 split does not provide the confidence that the indicator reflects gender inequalities which the project should be addressing.
Outcome 1: Catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at raion (district) and jamoat (sub-district) levels in Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).									
Indicator 3: Number of staffs trained to respond to impacts of climate-related events (gender disaggregated).	0	At least 15 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment	By the mid of the project, at least 30 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.	Y	Y	Q	Q	Y	Given what Outcome 1 was trying to achieve the indicator is inadequate to <u>measure the performance and impact of the outcome effort</u> . It focuses on a single issue of much more complex outcome strategy (e.g. hazard mapping, PES, weather stations, etc.). It is questionable whether the project could achieve this given the lack of technical assistance. Who was going to provide the technical training and who was going to embed this into the organisations operational procedures?

⁴⁶ The Project Document variously combines both parts of this objective indicator in one indicator and separates it into 2 indicators suggesting that the design phase did not pay attention to consistency.

		management by the mid of the project. At least 50 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.							The gender markers are arbitrary and unlikely to be based upon an assessment of current staffing ratios.
Outcome 2: An integrated approach to building climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level.										
Indicator 4: Number of people practicing climate change adaptation technologies (gender disaggregated). Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change.	0	By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women.	At least 600 people (100 per district), of which at least 30% will be women, are implementing EbA interventions for climate risk management. At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change.	x	x	x	x	x	x	This indicator is essentially re-stating the objective indicator(s). Relevance is also ambiguous because at this scale and given this time frame very few of the high impact changes would be detectable in terms of reducing vulnerability. It questions how quickly did the designers anticipate any form of recovery or rebound of the system in a five-year project when implementation of the EbAs would be in Y2. This would have entailed setting up the infrastructure and site preparation to spend in excess of US\$ 6,000,000. Even the most optimistic estimation would be challenging to have implementation in Y3 and to expect any measurable impact by Y5 would be widely optimistic. Issues also relate to the use of “direct” and “indirect” beneficiaries and the gender specific issues remain with this indicator.
Outcome 3: Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA.										
Indicator 5: Knowledge management centre strengthened through the support of project activities	0	By year 3 of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.	By the end of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	This indicator is problematic. It is very similar to the indicator for Output 3.1 and Output 3.2 An impact evaluation framework (IEF) to enable effective adaptive management of EbA activities which would be a critical component of any adaptive management system necessary for building resilience in a highly unpredictable and dynamic system is not reflected in the indicator. At best this indicator is an output, but more properly it is a single deliverable.
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria										
Q Questionable		x Not SMART				✓ SMART				

3.2.1 Assumptions and risks

75. All complex socio-ecological projects are based on a large number of assumptions. However, in this case many of the assumptions (e.g. water sector reforms) did not have a basis in reality and were not identified as critical risks. Based upon the disconnection between the project’s intervention strategy and situational analysis in the Project Document, it is reasonable to state that unsubstantiated assumptions were made regarding all manner of aspects of the project. In the case of private extension service providers these seem to have been assumed into existence to enable the project’s operational approach.
76. The Project Document provides a Standard Basic Assistance Agreement Risk Management⁴⁷. This is a standard agreement included in all Project Documents in accordance with the agreements signed between UNDP and a national government. As such, it is not a risk assessment for the intervention *per se*. A Social and Environmental Screening Process (SESP) is also provided⁴⁸ alongside some sort of hybrid table of largely process-related risks and mitigation measures. The MTR notes that the mitigation measures, when compared with the quality of the rest of the Project Document strategy, provide reasonable mitigation measures except for the fact that they would have required support from technical assistance many magnitudes greater than that which is provided for in the budget.
77. A third risk log appears as Annex 5⁴⁹. These risks again do not relate to the obvious operational challenges any project might face, let alone, one which expected to spend half of its budget in the second year. Of the 20 risks identified between Annexes 4 and 5, amounting to fourteen pages of risk log (including the SESP); there is only one operational risk identified relating to the high turnover of staff in the Implementing and Executing Partners⁵⁰. The risk identification in the Project Document lacks credibility, even where risks were identified; the mitigation measures did not match the deployment of resources. As a result, a number of significant risks were missed, for example:
- Status of the water sector reforms and the sequencing of the project activities.
 - Private extension service providers form a critical component of the intervention strategy but there is no mention of any government or private extension service in the situational analysis⁵¹.
 - This was the first project implemented by both UNDP and CEP under a NIM with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) while support services are provided based on the LOA signed with CEP, and first AF project for the UNDP CO, and the PMU, which is relatively inexperienced.
 - The size of the project budget compared with the CO experience in implementing complex environmental projects.
 - The CO at the time of design and subsequently during the early implementation was undergoing a significant re-organisation process.
 - Approximately 81% of the entire budget (US\$ 7,093,310) was in just one component and 71% (of the total budget) was to be spent in just one output (Output 2.3, US\$ 6,908,500). Dispersing this budget should have been a critical risk and addressed through the project design, not left for the project implementation to work out.
 - The National Implementing Partner did not have the technical expertise (cf. Project Document, pp. 8 – 32), therefore the ratio of budget to technical assistance was highly unusual.
 - The scale of the intervention and the very different conditions, and intervention approach required, between the upper and lower reaches of the KRB.
78. In summary, the Project Document has a confusing risk management framework. It is reasonable to assume that there was a lack of understanding regarding the importance of risk identification and mitigation in complex project interventions. In particular, the operational risks which the project would arguably have had the greatest control and ability to mitigate; were not identified (see Annex 9 for further analysis of the project risk factors).
79. Four risks were added following the start-up of the project. Covid-19 was added to the 2021 PPR. During 2022 it appears that the CO identified the technical assistance deficit within the project and an International

⁴⁷ Annex X, pp 79 - 81

⁴⁸ Project Document, Annex 4 pp. 88 - 100

⁴⁹ Project Document, pp. 101 - 102

⁵⁰ Annex 5, p. 101, Risk 2 “High turnover of staff members in executing and implementing agencies may negatively impact on project deliverables”.

⁵¹ In fact, there are no credible extension services in the project area and this fact was well known and a feature identified by previous projects.

Technical Assistant was engaged. Following their appointment three more operational risks were added: high turnover of UNDP CO staff, limited availability technical experience in the Implementing Partner and the slow processing of administrative procedures.

Table 5 Project risk ratings added since project inception

Description of risk	Category	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
Covid-19 pandemic (added in 1 st PPR)	Operational	L	L	Conduction of virtual meetings, preliminary mapping of the target areas. Reaching out to the local authorities to send preliminary data via email. Visits to the project sites shall be conducted maintaining social distancing and use of PPE.	Not given in PPR MTR - PMU	Low but Critical – any future restrictions on movement will be critical for field activities.
High turnover of staff in UNDP CO	Operational	L	L	The project experience intermittent and support during 2021 due to the departure of the UNDP Cluster Manager and a restructuring process. This was addressed in 2022.	Not given in PPR MTR – UNDP CO & Regional Office	HIGH – there have been 11 changes in senior UNDP CO staff and the incumbent TRA changed in the days prior to the MTR field mission. Mitigation might include developing an easily transferable project memory to ensure continuity.
Limited availability of technically experienced national consultants on EbA, ESVAL, etc.	Strategic	H	H	Addressed through recruitment of an international technical adviser, wider advertizing/networking	Not given in PPR MTR – CEP & UNDP CO. PMU to draft ToR	HIGH (Critical) – Though this risk was mitigated 1.5 years after project initiation through the recruitment of an ITA, this position expired during the MTR field mission. Any significant period without such overall TA input is considered highly likely to negatively impact implementation. There is an urgent need for a full time national Technical Adviser with sufficient experience and capacity for the role, to cover the “day to day” technical needs of project implementation (guided periodically by the ITA). In the latter case the MTR is aware that national Consultants of the experience required are reluctant to sign Contracts directly with CEP for various reasons. Both these technical support issues urgently need to be addressed if the project is to have any chance of success as the current PMU technical capacity has not been sufficient (evidenced by the inception phase and dominance of the ITA’s role in driving technical implementation since recruitment).

Description of risk	Category	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
Slow processing of administrative procedures by project	Operational	H	H	Increased engagement and support by UNDP Cluster manager and UNDP senior management	UNDP CO & PMU	<p>HIGH – There is clear evidence that the UNDP CO has acted with admirable effectiveness regarding the processing of the CFPs. However, prior to this the continuity of support has been patchy, at least in part, due to the high staff turnover and process of CO reorganization. The ongoing continuity of such support is a continued risk given the foreseen further changes in senior staff (temporary secondments, etc.). There is still an apparent lack of awareness within the project and national implementation agency of how critical and tenuous the project’s position is. Evidence also suggests that project key staff are required to devote considerable time to activities not directly related to project implementation.</p> <p>There continues to be evidence of many basic procedures and processes being very slow (payment of consultants, procurement of services, etc.).</p> <p>Further risk mitigation:</p> <p>There have been improvements, however, these need to be consolidated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PMU should only engage in project-related activities – in this context NIM rules in this regard needs to be clarified by UNDP CO with CEP. • PMU & CO to be prepared, and recognize risks and risk mitigation strategy options, to oversee implementation of large contracts (i.e the CFPs). • PMU & CO to develop a critical path plan for CFP and other procurement of services. Use the traffic light system, to be monitored by senior management. • Jointly develop systems for close supervision and monitoring for effective implementation of large service contract (CFPs) • Technical capacity balance in the project (ITA and NTA) should be addressed. • Formalize the new adaptive strategic approach for implementing the project needs to be reflected in the SRF. To be reflected in Project Progress Report and SRF indicators. • Cancel outputs which are irrelevant or unachievable and report in PRR with justification. Focus on core activities. • NIM - review challenges and incorporate lessons learnt in operational procedures.

3.3 Lessons from other projects

80. Notwithstanding the good situational analysis, there is no evidence in the Project Document to indicate that the lessons from other projects were being integrated into the project’s design and even appears to have been developed *ex situ* of the situational analysis provided by the Project Document itself. If the lessons from other projects were considered during the design phase they were not incorporated into the strategy and operational approach because the operational challenges the project faced should have been avoided and the design would have produced a “bottom-up” approach as opposed to the “top down” intervention which emerges from the Project Document. It is not unreasonable to state that the mismatch between the situational analysis and the intervention strategy suggest that very little experience from previous interventions was used to shape the project’s design.

3.4 Planned stakeholder participation

81. The⁵² stakeholder participation in the Project Document describes a top-down approach towards project governance and implementation. Table 4 (this report) describes five main project stakeholders, three state organisations, one academic institution and one project supported organisation listed in the Project Document. A further table of stakeholders that were “*consulted to date and those that will continue to be consulted with during project inception and implementation*”⁵³ does not include a single community-level stakeholder, not local government (jamoat, district, etc.) stakeholder. This cannot be described as participatory or inclusive and it is notable that not a single women’s organisation was consulted during the project’s design.

3.5 Linkages between other interventions in the sector

82. The MTR can find little evidence of linkage to other projects. If there were meant to be linkages with the water sector reform it is not evident how these would be developed. The Project Document framed Outcome 1 of the intervention within the water sector reforms. However, there is little evidence of this and the MEWR has expressed that the catchment strategy is not appropriate and much of the water sector issues of outcome 1 should wait for upcoming developments in the water sector including pipeline projects.

3.6 Progress Towards Results

3.6.1 Relevance/ coherence

AF criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
STRATEGIC RELEVANCE	
Overall Strategic Relevance	S
Alignment with AF and UNDP strategic priorities	S
Relevance to national, regional and global beneficiary needs	S
Complementarity with existing interventions	MS

83. While the outcomes and objective of the project are clearly relevant given the strong case for climate change adaptation, nationally the policy framework is still being developed and does not completely reflect the urgency and relevance in terms of policy statements and instruments.

84. According to the Project Document, the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Tajikistan (NCCAS), 2019, has a focus on building capacity within the country for climate resilience. The Agricultural Reform Programme for 2012–2020⁵⁴ lists ‘developing agricultural technologies for climate-change adaptation and resilience’ as one of 22 specific objectives in Tajikistan. The Water Sector Reforms Programme of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016–2025 (Water Reform Programme) aims to promote the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the basin level.

85. The Living Standards Improvement Strategy of Tajikistan for 2013–2015’ (LSIS)⁵⁵, was one of the first non-ecological strategy documents to acknowledge climate change as a threat to development in the country in response to the reliance on agricultural productivity and disaster risk information from previous hydrometeorological events, including glacial melt. The most recent National Development Strategy, for the period 2016–2030⁵⁶, reflects the significance of climate change as a barrier to achieving the desired

⁵² Project Document, pp. 54 - 56

⁵³ Project Document, p. 56

⁵⁴ Agricultural Reform Programme for 2012–2020 of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2012. Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Tajikistan.

⁵⁵ Living Standards Improvement Strategy for the Republic of Tajikistan for 2013–2015 (LSIS). 2013. Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe.

⁵⁶ NDS 2016.

development goals for the country by 2030 suggesting that the policy and planning environment in relation to climate change adaptation is still developing and can be reflected in the UNDP Country Programme which is a joint declaration of intentions and probably represents a more up to date statement of intent with regards climate change and adaptation.

86. The project outcomes closely align with the present UNDP Country Programme framework - Country programme document for Tajikistan (2023-2026)⁵⁷ with which the project outcomes are well-aligned.

87. Country Programme Outcome: Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type.

Output 2.1.: Sustainable management of ecosystems enhanced through conservation management policies and action on environmentally sound waste management.

Indicator 2.1.1.: Number of protected areas and ecosystems under sustainable management and conservation. Baseline (2016)

88. Country Programme Outcome: Proportion of District Development Plans (DDPs) incorporating sustainable and inclusive natural resources management and climate change adaptation (CCA).

Output 2.2: Innovative, sustainable and inclusive NRM, IWRM (integrated water resource management), climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) solutions designed and implemented

Indicator 2.2.1.: Number of sectoral/regional/national gender responsive NRM, IWRM, CCA and DRR initiatives implemented.

Indicator 2.2.2.: Number of people directly benefitting from initiatives to protect nature and promote sustainable use of resources.

Output 2.3.: Institutions have strengthened capacities to develop, manage and deliver policies, strategies, and actions for climate resilient, disaster responsive and green/low carbon development.

Indicator 2.3.1.: Number of policies, strategies, plans, regulations and mechanisms developed to promote climate and disaster resilient, risk informed and green/low carbon development.

Indicator 2.3.2.: Number of institutions with strengthened capacities on climate resilience, disaster response and green/low carbon development.

89. Based upon the AF results Tracker Guidance Document it is reasonable to state that the project’s objectives and outcomes, based on the revisions made in 2022-2023 is aligned with the following AF results:

Outcome 1: Reduced exposure to climate-related hazards and threats.

Indicator: 1. Relevant threat and hazard information generated and disseminated to stakeholders on a timely basis.

Output 1.1: Risk and vulnerability assessments conducted and updated.

Indicator 1.1. No. of projects/programmes that conduct and update risk and vulnerability assessments (by sector and scale).

Output 1.2: Targeted population groups covered by adequate risk reduction systems.

1.2.1. Percentage of target population covered by adequate risk-reduction systems.

Outcome 2: Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses.

Indicator: 2.1. Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased.

Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of national and sub-national centers and networks to respond rapidly to extreme weather events.

2.1.1. No. of staff trained to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events (by gender).

2.1.2 No. of targeted institutions with increased capacity to minimize exposure to climate variability risks (by type, sector and scale).

Output 2.2: Increased readiness and capacity of national and sub-national entities to directly access and program adaptation finance⁵⁸.

2.2.1 No. of targeted institutions benefitting from the direct access and enhanced direct access modality.

Outcome 3: Strengthened awareness and ownership of adaptation and climate risk reduction processes at local level.

⁵⁷ https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-08/CPD_2023-2026_English.pdf

⁵⁸ This will align if the project goes ahead and uses the EVAL process to develop improved financial planning for the system or parts of the system.

Indicator: 3.1. Percentage of targeted population aware of predicted adverse impacts of climate change, and of appropriate responses.

Indicator: 3.2. Percentage of targeted population applying appropriate adaptation responses.

Output 3.2: Strengthened capacity of national and subnational stakeholders and entities to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning.

3.2.1 No. of technical committees/associations formed to ensure transfer of knowledge.

3.2.2 No. of tools and guidelines developed (thematic, sectoral, institutional) and shared with relevant stakeholders.

Outcome 4: Increased adaptive capacity within relevant development sector services and infrastructure assets.

Indicator: 4.1. Responsiveness of development sector services to evolving needs from changing and variable climate.

Output 4: Vulnerable development sector services and infrastructure assets strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability⁵⁹.

Outcome 5: Increased ecosystem resilience in response to climate change and variability-induced stress.

Indicator: 5. Ecosystem services and natural resource assets maintained or improved under climate change and variability-induced stress.

Output 5: Vulnerable ecosystem services and natural resource assets strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability

5.1. No. of natural resource assets created, maintained or improved to withstand conditions resulting from climate variability and change (by type and scale).

3.6.2 Effectiveness

AF criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
Effectiveness	
Overall assessment of project results	MU
Delivery of project outputs	MU
Progress towards outcomes and project objective	U
- Outcome 1	MU
- Outcome 2	MU
- Outcome 3	MS
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MU
Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR

90. It is important to view this project in two phases. The first phase being the design, inception and first year of implementation. The second phase begins around the end of 2021 when there is a recognition and jointly agreed corrective action by CEP and the UNDP CO and an International Technical Adviser is appointed (October 2021) resulting in a critical analysis of the project strategy and operational modalities bringing about a significant change in the project’s strategic approach to achieve the same outcomes and objective.
91. The MTR argues that the very serious design weaknesses in the Project Document (sections 3.1 – 3.5 this report) were not effective means to achieve the project’s stated outcomes and objectives. The top-down approach, lack of local community and local government-level participation in the design and implementation coupled with insufficient technical experience to solve problems as they arose was the least effective means to achieve the objective. The introduction of a catchment strategy at the level of the river basin alongside a failure to grasp the capacity constraints, the expectation that approximately 50% of the budget could be executed in the second year of the project and within one working year suggests that there was little consideration regarding the effectiveness of the implementation.
92. Lastly and possibly the most serious issue related to the effectiveness of the planned intervention is the fundamental misunderstanding in the Project Document that it was facing a technical challenge in building resilience into the socio-ecosystems in the KRB when in fact it needed to address an adaptive and collective challenge. While technology (farming techniques, infrastructure, capital investment, etc.) might play a part, building local capacities at a local level, identifying functionally efficient catchment-levels of collective decision-making and conflict resolution and strengthening local-level governance and social capital was a prerequisite.

⁵⁹ This can include the Jamoat-level services and Water and Pasture Users Associations

93. Other aspects of the project which indicate that the original project design was ineffective are evident in the integrated catchment management strategy which appears to be an artefact of the project design and there was no evidence in the past or proposed future water sector reforms to indicate that this was a) a requirement or, b) wanted by the lead institutions.
94. The second phase of the project, which appears to start in early 2022 when the newly-appointed International Technical Adviser reviewed the project design and highlighted for the first time many of the issues previously discussed above, and subsequently proposing a strategic and implementation approach to address them. The acceptance by the CEP and CO of these recommendations arguably created a more viable and potentially efficient means by which to build climate change resilience within the KBR socio-ecosystem.
95. The revised approach recognises the issues of scale at play in the project area and uses the Watershed Action Plans as a basis for any intervention, it provides a modular and scalable approach, recognising that the delivery of support will need to first support social organisation at a functionally efficient scale, geographically, administratively, socially and ecologically. The new approach has been confident enough to cancel and replace outputs such as the PES system and the integrated catchment management strategy which simply would not have been possible, or indeed, even useful at this point in time. Furthermore, it links the intervention with an effective operational vehicle through the Request for Proposals (RFP) and through the use of sub-contractors/ responsible parties (with relevant on-ground experience/capacity). Therefore, a much more viable and effective strategy emerges from the project’s 2022 review which should be recognized as a constructive adaption to the realities of the national context and needs, and viable implementation opportunities. These adaptations in implementation strategic approach may yet succeed in changing the course of the project (but are still in line with its objective).

3.6.2.1 Progress towards outcomes

96. Progress up until the middle of 2022 had been very poor. Partly due to the poor design features, but also in part due to operational issues resulting from the challenges of NIM, the inexperience of the PMU and the reorganisation taking place within the UNDP CO.
97. However, since mid-2022 there has been a considerable improvement, principally due to the project having a strategic pathway (WAP pathway for EbAs, vehicle to implement EbAs through qualified service providers and a means to engage them through the RFPs) as well as addressing some of the impossible tasks (e.g. developing a PES system) through a realistic and adaptive management approach and reducing the expectations of what the project can actually deliver.
98. While the project still faces considerable challenges and is not without risk, the MTR has a degree of confidence that it can go on to achieve its outcomes.

3.6.2.2 Adaptation Fund Strategic Results Framework Indicators

99. The AF SRF indicators were not reported on by the MTR and it is understood that they will be included in the 2023 PPR due in December 2023. However, it does not appear that they were updated during the inception Phase and therefore they do not make much sense.

Table 6 AF core indicators

Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator “Number of Beneficiaries”				
	Baseline (Absolute number)	Target at Project Approval (absolute number)	Adjusted target first year of implementation (absolute number)	Actual at completion (absolute number)
Direct beneficiaries supported by the project	0	46,000	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Female direct beneficiaries	0	25,000	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Male direct beneficiaries	0	Unknown	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Indirect beneficiaries supported by the project	0	828,000	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Female indirect beneficiaries	0	409,612	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Male indirect beneficiaries	0	Unknown	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Adaptation Fund Impact Indicator “Increased income, or avoided decrease in income”				
	Baseline	Target at approval	Adjusted target first year of implementation	Actual at completion

Income source (name)	Livestock, crops (fodder, food), fuelwood	Livestock, crops (fodder, food), fuelwood		
Income source				
Income level (USD)	Unknown	Unknown	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Number of households (total number in the project area (report for each project component))	Unknown	600 (component 2.0)	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator “Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated”				
	Baseline	Target at approval	Adjusted target first year of implementation	Actual at completion
Natural asset or ecosystem (type)	Degraded ecosystems (forest, rangeland, river and drainage line)	Conserved or rehabilitated ecosystems (forest, rangeland, river and drainage line)		
Change in state Ha or km Protected/rehabilitated, or Effectiveness of protection/rehabilitation - Scale (1-5)	0 ha Scale 1 (not improved)	At least 1,500 ha Scale 3 (moderately improved)	Not given	Not provided at MTR
Total number of natural assets or ecosystems protected/rehabilitated	0	At least 1,500 ha	Not given	Not provided at MTR

Table 7 Outcomes progress towards results

Green= Achieved		Yellow= On target to be achieved		Red= Not on target to be achieved			
Objective/ Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	MTR Target	EOP Target	MTR Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Project Objective: Reduce vulnerability and enhance climate-resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan to respond to the impacts of climate change	Indicator (s): Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change Percentage population of the KRB benefitting from project interventions.	0	By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women	At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change (i.e. constituting ~5% of population in the Kofirnighan river basin) In total, 828,000 indirect project beneficiaries, including 409,612 women, are expected to benefit from the project	No evidence available equivalent to the indicator.	Unsatisfactory	The indicator is insufficient to provide the sort of detail needed for the MTR to make a judgement at the mid-term. There are too many ambiguities in the indicator. The MTR bases its assessment on the progress to date. A number of investments have been made in the project area. However, they were not developed or coordinated in a way that they will meaningfully contribute towards an overall strategic approach to reducing vulnerabilities. Thus, these hardly equate to the indicator. However, with the changes made to the project’s strategy and the signs that operational issues are being addressed it is possible that the project can achieve its objective.

<p>Project Outcome 1: Catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at raion (district) and jamoat (sub-district) levels in Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).</p>	<p>Indicator 1. Number of staffs trained to respond to impacts of climate-related events (gender disaggregated).</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>At least 15 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management by the mid of the project.</p> <p>At least 50 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.</p>	<p>By the mid of the project, at least 30 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.</p> <p>By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.</p>	<p>The Multi-Hazard Risk Management (MHRM) model has proven very challenging and was probably poorly thought through in the original design. A report on the current status of RBO/RBC, basin plan, etc., did not clarify the overall picture of WSR in KRB nor identify opportunities for synergistic inputs/support by the project based on actual situation. There appears to have been a great deal of confusion relating to this and the NC technical assistance does not seem to have been able to provide sufficient clarity. The NCs identified HEC-HMS software model as suitable and viable to pilot in KRB – but it seems that it would also need ARC GIS biophysical data inputs to work.</p> <p>The automated weather stations are not yet in place and the process of procurement appears to be delayed. The automated weather stations proved to be much more complex than was envisaged in the Project Document.</p> <p>The integrated catchment management strategy for the KRB was abandoned in 2022.</p> <p>Strengthening coordination and training mechanisms for integrated climate-resilient catchment management appears to have encountered the similar confusion regarding the water sector reforms which the Project Document failed to clarify. Workshops and trainings have</p>	<p>Moderately Unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Project now plans to prepare pilots for simple MHRM models for the Elok and Varzob rivers and some training has been carried out by the ITA for Hazard mapping.</p> <p>Automatic weather stations procurement delayed. Some training has been done however, still need to collect and collate data from improved automated weather stations which includes: an assessment to identify the critical information required from Hydro met system and support Hyrdomet and other key stakeholders to collect and collate relevant data.</p> <p>Abandoning the integrated catchment management strategy was a reasonable course of action given that there was no practical benefit in adding an additional “planning document” i.e. a basin strategy and such a strategy document is not envisaged by any of the reform process and stakeholders.</p> <p>The ITA has clarified the KRB reform situation and there appears to be a general conclusion that there is no practical benefit at this point in adding an additional “planning document” (the basin strategy). A basin strategy is not envisaged by any of the reform process and stakeholders. It will be more important to focus on support the “re-energizing” of the existing WSF plans in the KRB and in particular strengthening the draft KRB management plan and capacity of RBO/RBC and other stakeholders (ARLI’s etc) to practically implement. This would be more likely to be supported by other donors in much larger scale and coordinated way and the MEWM expressed preference to await such support. The project will now coordinate with the UNDP Water Sector Reform project to identify 1 or 2 concrete contributions which the project could make that support their objectives while meeting the broad aims of this project.</p> <p>The ESVAL is of a high quality, largely due to the very high quality of both the National and International TA to understand the context of the project and rapidly adapt their work to provide a meaningful output. In terms of project implementation, the decision to abandon developing a PES scheme should be seen in a positive light. Conversely, to have persisted with trying to develop a PES system in the KRB would have been a very bad idea.</p>
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Objective/ Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	MTR Target	EOP Target	MTR Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
					<p>taken place but in the absence of any action from the water sector reforms meetings with the RBOs.</p> <p>The PES should never have been included in the project’s design. However, the project has very wisely abandoned the idea of developing a PES(s) system and conducted, through very experienced and adaptable technical assistance, an ecosystem services valuation assessment as an introduction to including resilience, ecosystem goods and services into the national accounting process as a very positive first step to sustainable financing.</p>		<p>Some small activities have taken place in this outcome but due to the confusion surrounding the water sector reforms these are generally piecemeal and while they are in line with the project’s outputs, they do not together add up to significant progress towards the outcome.</p>

<p>Outcome 2. An integrated approach to building climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level.</p>	<p>Indicator 2. Number of people practicing climate change adaptation technologies (gender disaggregated). Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women.</p>	<p>At least 600 people (100 per district), of which at least 30% will be women, are implementing EbA interventions for climate risk management.</p> <p>At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change</p>	<p>In the absence of existing agro-extension service providers part of this this output/budget lines was used to implement isolated priority interventions based on feedback/request of local authorities to initiate on ground actions and build good relations with target communities and local authorities.</p> <p>All 14 Jamoats now have an i) Overall Jamoat 10-year Watershed “Management” Plan developed (JWMP). ii) A shorter term (3.5 year) Watershed Action Plan (WAP) to be supported by the project (set of integrated programs to support local authority and community application of EBA best practices).</p> <p>An initial procurement of heavy machinery - 14 excavator/bulldozers to target Jamoats – was announced. However, this has been put on hold until the completion of the CFPs (see below). In order to implement WAPs the ITA proposed in early 2022 the use of service providers (large contracts to a limited number of experienced service providers) as the only feasible way to deliver results and budget. This was agreed by CEP and UNDP CO and the RFP was modality specified. The ITA developed the RFPs required which were cleared by the Cluster Manager forwarded for further action. Following an extended period of review the implementation modality was changed from Request for</p>	<p>Moderately Unsatisfactory</p>	<p>These interventions were initiated in the early stage of the project (prior to the ITA recruitment). The MTR recognises the reasoning behind implementation of these requested interventions but considers that these investments were more expedient as opposed to an adaptive management response.</p> <p><i>Immediate Impact / Requested Interventions</i> North- Varzob: bridge and well done Vaadat: well is done Romit: bridge done Faizobod: bridge and well, gabion – done South Shaartuz: x 2 bridges, fisheries canal construction. Kabodiyon: well for irrigation x 2 NK (Firuz) – in kind excavator (see equipment) as part of joint activity with ACTED.</p> <p>The decision to develop the WAPs in this manner in 2022 marked an important turning point in the project’s implementation and a point where it begins to take control and improve the dysfunctional nature of the project’s design. The important points of the WAPs are that they follow a basic planning hierarchy with a broad longer-term strategic vision or direction, a root-cause analysis, a number of strategic objectives and a second, shorter term, tactical action plan. The importance of this is that it gives focus to the large investment fund for EbAs in Output 2.3 and it brings planning to a functionally efficient and effective scale. The MTR notes that prior to engaging an International TA, the project did not have the technical experience to design and carry out the WAP planning process.</p> <p>At the time of the MTR the WAP implementation bids were under review: <u>CfP for north (8 WAPS)</u> – bids under review currently. <u>CfP south (6 WAPS)</u> – Documents for process drafted by project – go ahead by UNDP CO pending result of CfP north result.</p> <p>The purchase of equipment for the EbAs appears to have been an attempt to meet the confused needs of Output 2.3 prior to the development of the WAP approach for EbA implementation and suggests that there was a lack of experience within the project to develop practical implementation approaches and therefore, until the</p>
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Objective/ Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	MTR Target	EOP Target	MTR Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
					<p>Proposals (RFP) to Call for Proposals (CFP) as it is a more programmatic mechanism. The initial CFP for implementation of northern KRB WAPs were pending evaluation during the MTR.</p> <p>The project also plans to develop a GIS – an initial national contract has failed to establish this adequately and needs to be further followed up with additional technical assistance.</p>		<p>arrival of the ITA, the project was unable to overcome the flaws in the Project Document.</p> <p>A set of additional interventions planned to support Outcome 2 which the MTR considers are important because they are in line with the project’s outcomes and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Limited infrastructure support to add value to WAPs (MTR – a more structured way to responding to some of the conventional development needs of the communities and will build relations at this level supporting the introduction of EbAs). b. Tugai inventory/community management (MTR – b & c - filling an important gap in the project design to support relatively intact natural ecosystem components for dynamic adaptation). c. Romit Biosphere Reserve support <p><u>Project GIS</u>: Initiated but needs much more training and development (MTR – unforeseen in the Project Document but needed at the jamoat-project interface level for both planning and impact monitoring purposes).</p>
Outcome 3. Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA.	Indicator 3. Knowledge management centre strengthened through the support of project activities	0	By year 3 of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.	By the end of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.	Currently there is no demonstrated best practices from the project. These should become apparent as the WAP/EbAs are implemented.	Moderately Satisfactory	The project has produced a Knowledge Platform as an interactive page on the CEP web platform. However, it would be useful to provide wider best practices and an easy option might be the translation and addition of WOCAT best practices and other best practices from other projects.

3.6.3 Efficiency

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
Efficiency	
Efficiency	MU

100. The design flaws in the Project Document do not provide an efficient pathway to achieve the objective. It failed to match the strategy with the very clear and concise situational analysis. As a result, there were project commitments which were beyond the existing capacities of the various implementing partners and stakeholders, it made commitments (e.g. the catchment strategy and PES) which were either not planned for or required considerable preconditions in order to be effective and, it does not appear to have included Jamoat and other community-level stakeholders in the planning and implementation nor does it appear to have considered addressing issues of governance and resource tenure which would be necessary to build resilience into land use in the project areas.
101. Operationally, the project set up was also inefficient. The unusual project budget “burn rate” clearly underestimated how difficult it is to spend project funds responsibly and efficiently. The very low levels of technical expertise militated against problem solving of the day to day challenges which any complex project will face and crucially, there was no vehicle or mechanism to spend the considerable funds which were to be dispersed in Outcome 2.
102. This situation appears to have persisted until late 2021 when the CO and CEP instigated the contracting of an experienced ITA. During 2022, working closely with the CEP, PMU and the CO a number of changes are made to the project’s strategy (cancelling those outputs which were unachievable such as the basin strategy and adjusting the PES to an ecosystems services valuation) and the operational means (e.g. *inter alia*, to engage qualified and experienced service providers through a RFP, resolving the procurement challenges through an Call for Proposals (CFPs), etc.). This evidential change provides the MTR with a degree of confidence that the present strategic and operational approach have a greater efficiency and means to achieve the objective. However, a number of critical issues remain (see section 3.6.8) below.

3.6.4 Country ownership

103. While the project objective is well aligned with the national objectives the strength of country ownership of the project outcomes and objective are not very well demonstrated. This may be in part due to the confusing and dysfunctional design and it may also be in part due to the governance approach within which the project is set being very centralised. The original design did not include District, Jamoat and community-level stakeholders in the implementation and it will be important going forwards that there is greater participation in the project decision-making at these levels if the project results are to be embedded and sustainable.

3.7 Crosscutting issues

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
Cross-cutting concerns	
Gender and other equity dimensions	MS
Human rights issues	(n/a)
Environmental and social safeguards	MS

3.7.1 Gender

104. While the project’s design made numerous references to gender the copy of the Project Document provided to the MTR states that the UNDP gender marker is “TBD”⁶⁰ (to be decided) suggesting that there may have been good intentions but these did not seem to be integrated into the project strategy. Arguably, the project may have been gender aware but it was not gender responsive, that is regarding gender inequalities as an integral part of the problem of adapting to climate change. For instance, there are gender targeted indicators and targets in the project’s SRF, but nothing to suggest that the project would bring about the situational changes in the status of women vis a vis the governance and management of resources affected by and affecting climate change resilience. This resulted in the project starting with a “business as usual” gender risk / strategy without a meaningful identification of the genuine gender issues relevant in the natural resource use context at community level.

⁶⁰ Project Document, p. 1

105. This has been partially mitigated in the Jamoat Watershed Management/Action Plans development process that a). provides an assessment of the key gender issues at the Jamoat/community level, b). includes gender sensitive data and, c). programs/actions with gender emphasis.

106. The project has produced a gender strategy and there is a part time Gender Officer providing credible technical advice on gender issues and gender is now integrated into the Watershed Management Action Plans. This needs to become much more integral to the project’s activities going forwards and the gender TA should be allowed to integrate further into the planned activities in order to mainstream and critical address gender related inequalities which contribute to climate vulnerabilities.

3.7.2 Social and Environmental Screening Procedures (SESP)

107. A SESP took place during the development of the Project Document. A detailed comment on the SESP risk mitigation is provided in Annex 8. In general, the risk mitigation measures proposed by the Project Document required actions that the project could not fulfil due to its initial design and structure. In other words, the project aimed to undertake activities for which it was not adequately prepared or resourced. The descriptions of the risk in the SESP are often too long and incoherent without relevance to the complex cause and effect pathways which affect rural communities, that contribute to the complexity of these socio-ecosystems and determine their resilience in the face of change.

108. The project does have a Grievance Procedure process. It would be prudent to review this in relation to the CFPs to ensure that there are clear pathways with regards the Service Providers and their Clients.

3.7.3 Scaling up and replication (scalability)

109. The weaknesses in the project’s design, in particular the poor linkages with the water sector reforms, the mismatch between the project’s intervention and the situation in the catchment/ project areas and the national capacities mitigated against outcomes which could have been scaled up and replicated.

110. The revised strategy, due to its modular approach, mechanism for implementation and attention to scale provides a much greater chance of scaling up.

3.8 Remaining barriers

111. Although the project now has a much clearer and pragmatic strategy and approach there are still a number of formidable barriers remaining to the project achieving its outcomes and objective. These are presented below and corresponding recommendations are provided in (section 4.2) in order to address them:

Barrier 1: PMU time and personnel – there are 21 core and support staff on the PMU which is high given the rate of delivery. Feedback from key informant interviews⁶¹ also indicate that PMU core staff have additional CEP duties to carry out which has reduced the efficiency of the project. This appears to have resulted in slow or no feedback on ITA technical and mission reports (ITA, ESVAL), slow decision-making and poor communications.

Barrier 2: UNDP NIM – the project is being implemented through NIM, the conditions of which are set out in the Standard Letter of Agreement (LOA)⁶². The level of assistance needs to be clarified and the project treated as a joint endeavour if it is to achieve greater efficiencies in the remaining time available.

Barrier 3: National Consultants Contracts – National Technical Consultants generally appear to be unwilling to work on CEP Contracts⁶³.

Barrier 4: An internal CO re-organisation and high turnover of senior positions in the UNDP CO⁶⁴ - During the early years of the project the UNDP CO was undergoing a re-organisation which has taken time to embed as well as a high number of staff turnovers⁶⁵. It may be outside the project’s influence to address the turnover of senior positions; however, it is not unreasonable for this to be flagged as a risk and measures put in place to ensure continuity.

Barrier 5: Processing speed – the project has a considerable amount of work to get through. Despite the measures taken in 2022/23 there is now a real urgency if the project is to capitalise on these

⁶¹ Including ITA 3rd Mission Report – December 2022 & ITA 4th Q report to UNDP CO DRR

⁶² Standard Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the CEP under the Government of Tajikistan for the provision of support services, 11/06/2020

⁶³ The MTR was not given reasons for this reluctance; however, it was raised repeatedly during key informant interviews.

⁶⁴ Since it’s conceptualisation the project has experienced 2 Resident Representatives, 4 Deputy Resident Representatives, 5 Team Leaders and 1 Regional Technical Adviser and it is understood that in the next quarter there will be an additional change taking place.

⁶⁵ There have been 10 changes of senior staff including DRR, Cluster Manager(s) and an Operations Manager during the lifetime of the project. From the issue with the RFPs being identified it was 9 months before a new Operations Manager and DRR arrived and proposed the CFP solution that resolved the problem.

improvements. All partners within the project will need to increase the speed at which activities take place. In particular the speed of bureaucratic and administrative processes and decision-making, will need to be increased.

3.9 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

AF criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
Factors affecting performance	
Project design and readiness	U
Quality of project implementation	MU
Quality of project implementation by UNDP	MU
Project oversight (PSC)	MU
Quality of project execution	MU
Project execution and management (PMU, partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MU
Financial management	MS
Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	MU
Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	MS
Overall quality of M&E	MS
M&E design	U
M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MS
Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MU

3.9.1 Adaptive management

112. The issues related to the project’s SRF, insufficient technical advice, strained relationships between the project partners and an inexperienced and largely unsupported PMU resulted in number of opportunities to adapt and improve the project were missed. Clearly there were missed opportunities during the design phase and there should be a collective responsibility for the Project Document. It must have been reviewed on a number of occasions and the weaknesses in the document were very clear. For instance, the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC)⁶⁶ “*unanimously approved*” the Project Document with only minor and generic comments regarding gender and the SESP.
113. Once the project started the Inception Phase is a critical point in the project cycle management where fundamental changes can be made to a project in order to make it more effective. In this case the Inception Phase simply appears to have put in place the PMU and arranged for the project’s administration and bureaucratic procedures. The MTR also notes that there was no support from the UNDP Regional Office during the Inception Phase and the project’s design passed into implementation without any significant or meaningful changes. In the MTR’s experience of over forty UNDP-GEF evaluations (which are similar in their design and complexity to UNDP-AF funded projects), support to an inexperienced PMU during the Inception Phase is critical to a successful project outcome.
114. While the Inception Phase is an opportunity to address design shortcomings or changes in circumstances, there should be a collective responsibility for the Project Document. The weaknesses in it were very clear – the mismatch between the situational analysis and the strategy, unrealistic ambition, failure to address community context for EbA interventions, the very low technical assistance, the imbalance in the budget, the problems with the SRF, etc. - and should have been flagged. It would be very unusual for a PMU to be able to challenge the Project Document at this stage without support from higher up in the process and no technical adviser, after all the Project Document had already been cleared by the AF, the UNDP Regional Office, the CO and the CEP.
115. In 2021 the UNDP CO responds to the challenges that the project is facing, largely indicated by the poor delivery rate, and suggests that the project would benefit from more technical advice. An International Technical Adviser is engaged and there is a review of the project’s strategy and the operational issues are identified and adaptive measures are put in place.
116. The project has requested a one-year (no cost) extension⁶⁷ in August 2023. The MTR is surprised that this occurred prior to the MTR taking place in October 2023. The extension justification cites, *inter alia*, the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, challenges with the NIM approach. In the MTR’s experience, most projects have requested extensions following Covid-19 due to the severity of impact of the lockdown measures. However, the challenges that have fundamentally impacted this project are, to a very large extent, internal

⁶⁶ Minutes of the LPAC meeting held on 30/12/2019

⁶⁷ Extension Proposal 30/08/2023

and the importance of addressing these internal weaknesses (*inter alia*, lack of technical support, operational weaknesses and slow processing of operational issues, absence of any functionally efficient SRF, high turnover of UNDP CO senior personnel, etc...) should be paramount in any decision to extend the project.

3.9.2 Management arrangements including UNDP oversight and Implementing Partner Execution

117. The NIM approach has been challenging⁶⁸. This was the first NIM project with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) while support services are provided based on the LOA signed with CEP. Furthermore, it was a significantly larger sized project than the CO had previous experience with and even the briefest analysis of the project’s budget, or any other parts of the Project Document, should have raised concerns that this project was going to be challenging. Regardless of the specifics of the LOA, a more collaborative approach to problem solving needs to be developed in order to speed up administration, procurement and post procurement issues⁶⁹.

118. Amongst the issues related to NIM the level of support from the UNDP Regional Office has not been sufficient. The LOA states that “*the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor, based in the UNDP Regional Service Centre in Istanbul, will provide technical support, assistance with coordination, and overall project monitoring to ensure consistency with expectations from UNDP and Adaptation Fund*”⁷⁰. As far as the MTR is aware, apart from email communications the Regional Technical Adviser (RTA) has attended one Zoom meeting with the PMU and ITA in 2021⁷¹. However, there were significant project cycle events (e.g. the Inception Phase) where the PMU would have benefited from technical guidance. The MTR understands that the decision to engage a substantive ITA came from the CO.

119. As noted already in this report, the UNDP CO was undergoing a substantive reorganisation. This seems to have been disruptive, with a high turnover of senior personnel⁷² and a loss of the CO project memory. It is likely that this has been a contributing factor in not identifying the risks to the project at a much earlier stage. However, regardless of the reorganisation challenges in the CO it is not unreasonable to expect the Regional Office to have flagged some of these issues, for instance:

- The unrealistic expectation on delivery (example: project doc spending second year US\$ 4,106,810).
- The practical implementation was not defined and underestimated difficulties (example budget note 39 Inputs for 100 villages to implement EbA - assume US\$ 60,000 per village - US\$ 5,814,000)
- That it lacked a broader understanding of scale, number of beneficiaries, etc... (e.g. Outcome 2. *At least 46,000 people in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefiting from reduced vulnerability to climate change; river basin scale*).
- There are only 5 indicators in the project’s SRF - 2 Objective indicators and 3 Outcome indicators.
- US\$ 7,282,810 of project funds are measured by a single indicator (Indicator 2. Number of people practicing climate change adaptation technologies (gender disaggregated). Total number of men and women benefiting from reduced vulnerability to climate change).
- 75% of the budget was to be spent through Contractual Services – Companies. However, the NIM constrained CEP procurement to under US\$50,000 and UNDP CO to US\$ 50,000 – US\$ 150,000 which would have been extremely challenging to implement Contractual Services through companies with these budget ceilings⁷³.

120. The main point being that these were very obvious design issues which needed to be addressed by the project partners and this did not happen for approximately two years despite the obvious poor delivery rate as measured by budget execution.

121. In 2022 there is a noticeable change in the UNDP oversight role (for instance the appointment of an ITA) and practical support to the PMU with the procurement challenges (for instance with the CFPs/ RFPs).

⁶⁸ Extension Proposal 30/08/2023

⁶⁹ Key informant respondents indicated assistance with Visas, feedback on reports, and other critical issues raised was often slow or non-existent and that payments (e.g. for technical services) were often delayed (as long as five months in one instance).

⁷⁰ Standard Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the CEP under the Government of Tajikistan for the provision of support services, 11/06/2020, Attachment 2, p. 4

⁷¹ Key informants, pers. comm.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ In the event, the CO settled on a pragmatic solution of using a Request for Proposals procurement procedure which allows greater flexibility by design in Contractor submissions allowing the CO to overcome their budget ceiling within the procurement rules.

122. The Implementing Partner has also struggled to perform its role in implementing the project. The PMU has considerable intellectual and technical capacities. However, these technical capacities are not necessarily suitable for the activities which will form the bulk of the project’s expenditure (Outcome 2 and in particular, Output 2.3). This has been partly addressed through engaging the ITA and the MTR provides a recommendation to address this deficit within the PMU. Furthermore, the MTR is aware that at the senior level the PMU carrying out other non-project related activities on behalf of CEP⁷⁴ which has also impacted the project’s performance.

123. This has resulted in an absence of critical feedback on technical reports, slow processing of payments, contradictory terms of reference (ToR) for technical tasks, late requests for payments (resulting in a hiatus of project activities on one occasion at the end of 2022⁷⁵) and, insufficient supervision and follow up of tasks.

3.9.3 Work planning

124. 3 annual workplans (2021, 2022, 2023) have been prepared by the PMU and approved through the Steering Committee. An analysis of the project budget execution shows that there has been considerable variance between the planned (Project Document) budget and workplan, and the actual annual expenditure (variance -79.72%). As with most other factors relating to this project this relates back to the original project design which was unrealistic. For instance, the forecast expenditure of US\$ 659,000 in the first year and US\$ 4,160,810 was wholly unrealistic on the basis that the project infrastructure, processes and procedures that would need to be put in place for this level of expenditure were unrealistic (see Table 9).

125. The 2023 budget and work plan are more realistic although this depends heavily on the successful outcome of the CFPs in Outcome 2 and if the project is to be successful it will need the PMU and CO full attention in ensuring that procedures are carried out in a timely fashion and any factors that may cause delays are identified early and either avoided or resolved rapidly. It is important to stress that this project cannot survive any further delays.

3.9.4 Finance

126. The CEP underwent a Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) in 2018⁷⁶ which indicated a Low risk rating and an additional HACT micro assessment for CEP in August 2021 that also resulted in the overall Low risk. A SPOT Check⁷⁷ found no significant issues with the Implementing Partner and an audit was carried out in 2022⁷⁸ which identified two Medium Risk issues (Under-utilization of individual budget lines and a Mismatch between FACE forms and book of accounts) the latter issue being resolved⁷⁹. However, the underutilisation of budget lines remains a concerning issue although the FRP approach should help to resolve this.

127. The MTR argues that the size of the budget and the time available for implementation may have been suitable for addressing a technical challenge that can be addressed with existing expertise, protocols, and operations. However, it was wholly unrealistic to expect this amount of investment in this short space of time when it was clear from the outset that this project would be encountering situations for which solutions lie outside the current way of operation, and possibly, thinking and applying existing procedures and understanding would not provide the solution needed.

128. This has been reflected in the level of budget execution (-79.72%) to date, as noted in the last section. Ordinarily, it would have been extremely challenging to spend this amount project funds in the timeframe available.

⁷⁴ ITA Report January 2023 also Key Respondent interviews.

⁷⁵ The MTR notes that this was resolved expediently by the UNDP CO use of its own TRAC funds as a “loan” to the project.

⁷⁶ Micro Assessment of the CEP, 24/12/2018

⁷⁷ SPOT Check of CEP of the Government of the Republic Tajikistan Commissioned by the UNDP, 23/09/2022

⁷⁸ Audit Report, 29/03/2023

⁷⁹ Key informant responses PMU and UNDP CO

Table 8 Project budget expenditure

Component 1	Project expenditure	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
	Project document	81,500	321,000	404,704	674,543	1,481,747
	Actual	12,245	97,495	244,900	168,002	522,642
	Variance	69,255	223,505	159,804	506,541	959,105
	% variance	-84.98%	-69.63%	-39.49%	-75.09%	-64.73%
Component 2	Project document	15,000	56,000	2,834,052	1,493,411	4,398,463
	Actual		13,848	536,037	793,337	1,343,222
	Variance		42,152	2,298,014	700,074	3,055,240
	% variance	-100.00%	-75.27%	-81.09%	-46.88%	-69.46%
Component 3	Project document	15,000	52,500	46,500	85,100	199,100
	Actual		6,706	40,035	0	46,741
	Variance		45,794	6,465	85,100	152,359
	% variance	-100.00%	-87.23%	-13.90%	-100.00%	-76.52%
Component 4	Project document	107,500	78,000	154,264	159,646	499,410
	Actual	16,649	160,451	128,238	88,823	394,161
	Variance	90,851	-82,451	26,026	70,823	105,249
	% variance	-84.51%	105.71%	-16.87%	-44.36%	-21.07%
All	AWP	219,000	507,500	3,439,520	2,412,700	6,578,720
	Actual	28,894	278,500	949,212	1,050,161	2,306,767
	Variance	190,106	229,000	2,490,308	1,362,539	4,271,952
	% variance	-86.81%	-45.12%	-72.40%	-56.47%	-64.94%

3.9.5 Project level monitoring and evaluation systems

129. Project level monitoring and evaluation systems are inadequate (see section 3.2, Table 5, section 3.2.1). The adequacy and utility of the five indicators in the project’s SRF are insufficient for the purpose of project monitoring and evaluation. Several opportunities to address this (LPAC, Inception Phase, PPRs) have been missed. Monitoring and evaluation and reporting is unrealistic, for instance the 2021 Implementation Stage Quality Assurance Report stated that Management and Monitoring was Highly Satisfactory which would indicate that the assessment was un-necessarily optimistic even at that early stage of the project.
130. PPRs have been produced in 2021 and 2022 and the third PPR will be submitted in December 2023. Based on the 2022 PPR the Outcome ratings (outcome 1 MS, Outcome 2 MS and Outcome 3 S with an overall rating of MS) are too high in the opinion of the MTR and based upon the findings of the MTR. There is a risk that by “over-reporting” the outcomes the seriousness of the issues that the project faces will not be realised across the full range of the project partners.
131. The MTR agrees that very positive steps have been put in place by the project, *“in 2022, the Project has initiated considerable advances both in terms of its technical focus and clarity of direction and it’s on ground impact”*. However, *“technical focus”* and *“clarity of direction”* are not the same as delivery of quality outcomes. The MTR is necessarily harsh on this issue because it is important that the project’s M&E is realistic and feeds back into strategic management decisions as well as influencing the operational challenges which the project still faces. It is noticeable that both the Executing and Implementing partner sections of the 2022 PPR ratings are identical in the rating value and the narrative text which suggest that there was insufficient project oversight and assurance taking place.
132. Going forwards it will be important to develop new or additional SRF Outcome indicators to reflect what the project is actually doing. The data necessary to monitor these indicators should be easy and inexpensive to collect and provide a good indication of both progress and performance to ensure that the project management, and communication of issues related to impact and performance, is agile and adaptive.

3.9.6 Stakeholder engagement

133. The MTR has already noted that this project has a “top down” approach. The Project SC includes CEP, other national agencies including the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, Ministry Agriculture and Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation, local Khukumat representatives and UNDP⁸⁰. As has been noted already, local community and local government-level organisations are not listed amongst the main stakeholders (see table 4).
134. There has been some engagement with Jamoats and District representatives, particularly in regards to the early stage disbursement of project benefits under Outcome 2. However, there will need to be a more substantive stakeholder engagement plan developed to support the upcoming Outcome 2 WAP implementation contracts (CFPs) because the project will need to interact on a more organised and formal basis with local communities, Water User Associations, Pasture Users Associations, etc.

3.9.7 Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

135. Four risks were added following the start-up of the project. Covid-19 was added to the 2021 PPR. During 2022 it appears that the CO identified the technical assistance deficit within the project and an International Technical Assistant was engaged. Following their appointment three more operational risks were added: high turnover of UNDP CO staff, limited availability technical experience in the Implementing Partner and the slow processing of administrative procedures.
136. The PMU and UNDP CO has been slow to identify these operational risks and the MTR surmises that this was due to the re-organisation of the UNDP CO and frequent changes of senior personnel, the relative inexperience of the PMU and over-optimistic reporting in the PPR. However, it should still be noted that the poor rate of budget execution should have raised concerns at some point within the overall system much sooner than it did. Furthermore, when the ITA identified the operational risks in late 2022 there still appeared to be a degree of inertia in responding to these risks which does not yet appear to have been fully addressed.
137. The Social and Environmental Screening Framework risks are presented in a tabular form with mitigation measures⁸¹. It is hard to see where these risks are being monitored and it would be important to review the SESP either prior to or as part of the RFPs and ensure that the social and environmental risks are correctly identified and phrased with reasonable, and practicable, mitigation measures put in place as part of

⁸⁰ Project Document, p. 107

⁸¹ Project Document, Annex 4 pp. 88 - 100

Outcome 2. Annex 8 provides an MTR analysis of the SESP risks. Arguably, the changes made to Outcome 2 and the future engagement of Service Providers supported by technical advisers will have reduced the social and environmental risks that were present in the original project design’s approach of loosely directed and unaltered EbAs.

3.9.8 Reporting

138. The project has been reporting, the most critical reports being the PRRs (2021 and 2022 with the 2023 report due in December 2023⁸²). The MTR has already noted that the reporting was unjustifiably optimistic, however, of greater concern to the MTR is the near-absence of comment and feedback on reporting. This is particularly relevant with regards to technical reports. This has manifest itself in technical reports (international and national inputs) going un-commented, unchallenged and un-owned by the project⁸³. There is a very real danger that this apparent unwillingness to “own” a technical report⁸⁴ demonstrates a diffusive responsibility for the project outcomes which needs to be addressed. All of these factors create a drag on the project implementation. It is very typical of a complex project such as this, made considerably worse by the issues in the project’s design. This can only be resolved through a very clear reporting pathway and protocols which allows the inevitable mistakes to be made safely, because there is a clear record of the decision-making process; but it avoids the inertia of not knowing what decision to make or the avoidance of the responsibility of deciding. In complex projects such as this, mistakes are going to be made, it is inevitable. The measure by which the project should be judged is to why the decision was made and the assumptions it was based upon.

3.9.9 Communications

139. Internally within the project, it is very likely that weak communication between the key implementing partners has contributed to the challenges that the project has encountered and more open channels for communication need to be established. This is the first NIM project with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) while support services are provided based on the LOA signed with CEP, and first AF project for the UNDP CO, and the PMU, which is relatively inexperienced. It is reasonable to expect the project to encounter problems and these need to be communicated more clearly so that solutions can be quickly found while remaining within the rules and protocols.

140. As far as the MTR can determine, much of the communication, in relation to the problems which the project was facing (e.g. design issues, outcome 2 challenges, lack of technical assistance, etc..), it fell to the newly appointed ITA to communicate these issues between the UNDP CO, UNDP Regional Office and the PMU⁸⁵.

141. It was noted by the ITA, and the MTR would concur, that *“the water sector is one in which many donors are involved - it is clear that WB projects, USAID, Swiss development entities, OECD, and others are all deeply involved in the water sector reform activities relevant to the project. However, interactions and coordination with them seems limited at present. Additionally, various donors have been active in testing and applying relevant agro-ecological /EbA approaches within watersheds (IFAD, GIS, ACTED, Agha Khan, and UNDP itself, etc)”*⁸⁶.

142. While Outcome 1 did not embed itself sufficiently in the water sector reforms it could still serve an important service in bringing these different sector players together with a focus on studying the Outcome 2 intervention and learning valuable lessons.

3.10 Sustainability

AF criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
Sustainability of Project Outcomes	
Overall likelihood of or risks to sustainability	ML
Financial risks	MU
Socio-political risks	ML
Institutional and governance risks	MU
Environmental risks	ML

⁸² Theoretically there should be 3 PRRs plus the 2023 PRR, however, the MTR recognises that projects often rely on the Inception Report as a *de facto* PRR. This is reasonable, as long as the Inception Report is sufficiently challenging.

⁸³ The MTR has seen draft reports but very few that have been finalised.

⁸⁴ By “ownership” the MTR means that the report’s findings and conclusions should either be challenged or accepted, however, once accepted then they need to be acted upon and reported in the PRR.

⁸⁵ ITA Reports: 21/12/2021, 13/10/2022, 26/04/2022, 08/04/2023, 01/2023

⁸⁶ ITA 3rd Q Summary Report, 13/10/2022

Catalyst and replication

ML

143. The MTR caveats the findings on project’s sustainability based on the conditions and situation present during the MTR. That is, notwithstanding the many early challenges that the project has encountered and the inherent weaknesses as a result of the poor design, there have been a number of developments (e.g. strengthened technical assistance, procurement pathways through the RFPs, cancelling of outputs unlikely to yield results – PES, catchment strategy, etc..) and the development of good quality WAPs which, if consolidated in the management response will immediately increase the sustainability ratings by at least one level.

3.10.1 Financial risks to sustainability

144. Moderately Unlikely. The initial plan to develop PES was ill-informed and required pre-conditions which are simply not present. The change in the output and activities to carry out an economic valuation of ecosystem services is an important first step in the introducing environmental economic principles to local and national-level planning and may well establish a culture of environmental economic approaches within CEP. It may even increase awareness in the cost-effectiveness of EbAs in reducing the economic impact of increased energy levels in environmental processes. However, the recovery of these socio-ecosystems to levels where they may be considered resilient to climate change events and impacts, in the broadest possible terms, will require greater financial planning and building the capacity for financial planning at the local (Jamoat and District) levels.

3.10.2 Socio-political sustainability

145. Moderately Likely. The WAPs and the process of implementing the EbAs through the Action Plans, if supported by appropriate technical assistance, is likely to build social capital through engaging local resource users and managers, including the Water Users Associations and the Pasture Users Associations. Using the process of identifying EbAs has the potential to strengthen the internal governance and accountability at the community level enabling collective decision-making and conflict resolution mechanisms in relation to common pool resources and management issues.

146. This approach could generate valuable lessons.

3.10.3 Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

147. Moderately Unlikely. As above, however there are concerns regarding the higher-level institutional sustainability given the MTR observations (see section 3.7.9) and the PMU will need to work hard to integrate the project’s outcomes and approaches (e.g. ecosystem valuations, local-level participation in planning and implementation, etc..) into the institutional culture and approaches of the CEP.

3.10.4 Environmental risks to sustainability

148. Moderately Likely. If the EbAs can be implemented using the Action Plans in the WAPs and the Service Providers as a vehicle for implementation then there is a high likelihood of the project introducing land use practices and other EbAs which will have a lasting effect and increase the resilience of the system overall.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

149. Any agency(s) and PMU would have struggled to implement this project once it had been approved.
150. The project has made slow progress and faced a number of significant challenges which has resulted in very low budget execution and a chronic lack of tangible results, especially in Outcome 2.
151. Overall, the MTR concludes that the Project Document was particularly poor. It had a number of fundamental weaknesses such as, *inter alia*: a mismatch between the situational analysis and the project’s intervention strategy, very low technical assistance support for complex socio-ecological interventions, over-estimation of local capacities, impractical work planning in terms of budget dispersal, unachievable outputs, etc.
152. The intervention strategy also appears to make a systemic misunderstanding in relation to the intervention approach by developing a top-down and technocratic approach, a technological “fix” to a collective adaptive challenge. The design makes a number of unsupported assumptions about the KRB as a socio-ecosystem and ignores the complex, socio-political, rural, relationships which create the uncertainty and unpredictability within the cause and effect relationships in the system. For the avoidance of doubt, the original project strategy, as expressed in the Project Document, was very unlikely to achieve the outcomes and objective.
153. In addition to the strategic challenges, the project has faced a number of operational challenges including the reorganisation of the UNDP CO, an inexperienced PMU and both PMU and CO encountering NIM for the first time.
154. As a result, the implementation has been characterised by delays in processing procurements and other administrative activities and slow decision-making processes, as well as delays in acting on decisions.
155. The poor project design has had a fundamental impact on the performance, progress and likelihood of impact. A number of opportunities for adaptive management (AF review of Project Document, UNDP CO, Regional Office, national Partner review, Inception Phase) were missed. This can be attributed to the inexperienced PMU, the disruptive effect of the CO reorganisation process, the unfamiliarity of, and unpreparedness for NIM, a lack of technical advice and an apparent lack of technical and procedural support from the RTA.
156. In response to the poor performance of the project and low delivery rate the CO recruited an ITA at the end of 2021. This had a profound effect on the project and was the first time that there is a critical analysis of the project’s implementation strategy and the operational challenges. A number of critical changes were made to the strategy (e.g. cancelling outputs which were un-necessary or unachievable, identifying operational pathways for implementation, etc...) and decisive actions taken by the UNDP CO and PMU.
157. The MTR has a degree of confidence that the project partners are overcoming the initial challenges faced by the project, the PMU is gaining experience and that the project is now better-positioned to deliver on the project’s original outcomes and objectives. The initial hurdles, characterized by logistical complexities and coordination issues, have provided valuable learning opportunities that have since been leveraged to streamline processes and enhance project execution.
158. Providing the project partners continue to work together to find workable solutions in a timely manner, the recalibrated strategy has a reasonable chance to fulfil its mandate of reducing vulnerability and enhancing climate resilience among the target communities.
159. In 2023 the project applied for a one-year no-cost extension. Based upon the MTRs findings and assuming that changes are imbedded in the operational procedures, the MTR broadly supports the extension.
160. Going forward, it is imperative for the project partners to maintain this momentum and apply the lessons learned to solving problems as they arise as well as future initiatives. Continued vigilance in monitoring, coupled with an agile approach to problem-solving, will be key to overcoming any forthcoming challenges. The MTR’s insights serve as a robust foundation for the project’s next phases, ensuring that the goals of reducing vulnerability and bolstering climate resilience remain within reach.

4.2 Recommendations

Table 9 Recommendations

Recommendation	Responsibility	Time/dates for actions	Rationale for recommendation
Effectiveness (strategic relevance)			
<p>Recommendation 1: Urgently Strengthen the technical Capacity of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Recruitment / re-contracting of part-time International Technical Adviser:</i> Urgently ensure that there is an ITA in place to provide continued overall oversight and direction to the project. <i>Recruit a full-time national Technical Manager:</i> Urgently prepare a TOR and undertake recruitment of a full-time National Project Technical Manager with <u>sufficient experience and technical background</u> to ensure continuity of technical oversight and management of WAP/other contractors and consultants. This should be a UNDP contract. 	To be implemented by: UNDP CO & CEP.	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High/Critical.</p>	<p>The limited technical capacity within the project is one of the key factors hampering early implementation and capacity to transition the original project document into practical implementation during its inception phase / initial implementation. The UNDP CO understood this barrier and recruited an ITA by 2nd year of the project with significant impacts on its subsequent viability and impact. However, his contract has been allowed to expire at a critical “make or break” point in implementation. It is thus essential to urgently re-recruit the previous ITA (if still available) or to initiate the recruitment of a replacement.</p> <p>Furthermore, as previously discussed in the report, the PMU management / technical balance (those under UNDP contracts) is greatly imbalanced towards management and administrative positions (there are no national technical positions under such contracts). For the project to have adequate “in-house” technical capacity and ownership of the WAPs, and other technical activities of the project, it is essential to recruit a full time National Project Technical Manager. He/she can ensure that continuity of technical oversight is provided, and over time reduce the current high reliance on the ITA to drive the technical implementation and achievement of results.</p> <p>Based on feedback received during the MTR mission (see previously in the report) the recruiting of an NTM of sufficient experience and technical capacity is only realistic under a UNDP contract.</p> <p>The NTM should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide overall technical guidance above and beyond the specific WAP implementation aspects covered by the CFPs. Design and implement the WAP support programmes (waste management, infrastructure support, equipment, etc.). Support the planned wider basin management initiatives (e.g. Tugai forest conservation, Romit Biosphere Reserve management in the upper Kofirnighan catchment, etc.). Provide “real-time” and “on the ground” technical support on developing and applying the hazard/ catchment modelling and ecosystem service

			valuation and, the development of the GIS for project impact monitoring and implementation.
<p>Recommendation 2: Revision/updating of the project’s Strategic Results Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the SRF to reflect the revised project strategic approach and strengthen the meaningful measurement of progress towards Objective, Outcome and output indicators and targets. Ensure that the revised SRF is operationalized and that changes are clearly communicated in the PPR and SRF indicators. Establish a direct correlation between SRF indicators and the results tracker data to allow for seamless tracking and reporting. 	To be implemented by: PMU. Revision should be led by ITA & NTA and advised by other subject matter specialists. Revised SRF to be approved by SC & RTA and submitted with 2023 PPR	<p>Timeline: Immediate.</p> <p>Priority: High/ Critical.</p>	<p>The project’s SRF is not fit for purpose because it only contains 2 Objective indicators and 3 Outcome indicators. The indicators lack utility in measuring progress and impact. Neither do they and the targets reflect the actual achievements of the project. The Objective and Outcomes can remain unchanged, however, there is a need for additional indicators and realistic targets to:</p> <p>a) reflect the actual changes made by the project, b) to reflect the changes in the project’s strategy and outputs and, c) remove some of the unachievable expectations that were included in the original SRF.</p> <p>Revising the SRF in a rational and transparent manner is a legitimate exercise and reasonable adaptive management exercise.</p>
Efficiency (operational performance)			
<p>Recommendation 3: Improve continuity and efficiency of oversight and support services by the of UNDP CO to the Project and CEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure improved continuity and effectiveness of UNDP CO cluster manager oversight and support to the project and ensure not less than monthly progress review meetings. Ensure more efficient and timely operational support for those services specified in Annex 2 of Project Document/ LOA (i.e. Issues highlighted at monthly meetings to be referred to and addressed, if necessary, by senior management). Prepare a comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation plan for the delivery and management of UNDP services covered by Annex 2 of the Project Document (particularly procurement of services such as the WAP CFPs that exceed USD150,000). 	To be implemented by: UNDP CO	<p>Timeline: Immediate.</p> <p>Priority: High.</p>	<p>The UNDP CO has demonstrated that it can come up with innovative solutions and the UNDP rules are such that solutions can generally be found to fit the specificity of the procurement challenges.</p> <p>However, due to continuity of oversight / support in the past years during the CO reorganization (refer to report discussion on staff turnover) such processes have been challenging and delayed on numerous occasions. At this stage in the project implementation such delays are no longer feasible.</p> <p>The scope and nature of the WAP implementation Contracts (CFPs) would be challenging to almost any UNDP CO and thus require significant CO commitment to both reach signature quickly and to manage during implementation (payment, reporting, etc). It will require agility and adaptive management and a collaborative approach between all parties (CO, Project, contractors and CEP) to solving problems as they arise relating to all aspects of these Contracts from mobilisation to differentiating between adaptive management and expedience when meeting the TOR.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Develop a Critical Path Plan for each WAP implementation contract (CFP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a <u>critical path plan</u> (CPP) for the WAP Implementation contracts and other major service procurements, identifying key milestones and dependencies. 	To be implemented by: PMU & CO UNDP Operations	<p>Timeline: Immediate / prior to CFP signing.</p> <p>Priority: High.</p>	<p>Implementing the Watershed Action Plan (thereby achieving integrated EbA intervention in a socio-ecological framework) via the Responsible Parties (CFPs) will be challenging.</p> <p>It is likely that the Responsible Parties / Service Providers will need to work closely with the NTA/ ITA and be highly adaptive in their implementation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a <i>traffic light</i> monitoring system, based on the above CPP (green for on track, amber for at risk, red for off track) to provide visual, at-a-glance status reports that can be monitored by senior management in CEP and UNDP 	<p>Manager to agree plan. Deputy Resident Representative to approve and monitor (quarterly) plan.</p>	<p>To be agreed before signing Contracts with CFP Responsible Parties.</p>	<p>Communication between the project partners and between project management, technical advisers, service providers and procurement officers will be critical. Time is critical in their implementations as many of the activities will likely have a seasonal aspect. Therefore, these Contracts will need to be efficiently managed and all parties will need to be prepared to be adaptive.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Ensure the Project Staff workload is focused on project related tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that NIM rules and regulations regarding AF project staff are clearly defined and communicated to all parties. Ensure that any additional tasks undertaken by project staff are only with prior approval of the National Project Director and UNDP Cluster manager 	<p><i>To be implemented by:</i> UNDP CO (clarification of NIM rules) CEP, UNDP CO</p>	<p><i>Timeline:</i> Immediate <i>Priority:</i> High.</p>	<p>As one of the first NIM project with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) and support services provided based on the LOA signed with CEP, and first AF project for the UNDP CO, and the PMU. in Tajikistan, there are inevitably some issues and unclarities regarding rules and procedures both in CEP and UNDP CO. The MTR has noted that the already considerable workload of project staff has been substantially added to in the past with non-project related tasks. This, the MTR believes, is contrary to NIM rules and the expectation of AF. Clarification is therefore required so that project staff workload is focused appropriately.</p>
Sustainability and replicability			
<p>Recommendation 6: Development of effective mechanism (GIS) to support effective monitoring and impact evaluation/lessons learned from WAP implementation (and other initiatives).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit an international specialist to advise on setting up of an effective GIS for WAP/other initiatives impact monitoring (and other functions such as field implementation planning by Responsible parties etc). Recruit a national project GIS support consultant to assist in the GIS set up and meaningful operation and train project staff (M&E officer NTM, etc.) on further use and application of GIS. Ensure data and skills transfer to CEP during project implementation 	<p><i>To be implemented by:</i> PMU</p>	<p><i>Timeline:</i> GIS IC and NC by December 2023 <i>Priority:</i> high</p>	<p>The project currently has no effective basis for storing, processing and analysis large quantities of various data (cartographic, land use, social, etc). It has no easily utilizable mechanism for storage of baseline situation or subsequent event and impact data. Without this there will be challenges to effectively monitor and store/process/analyse data.</p> <p>In addition to its impact monitoring application the GIS can be invaluable to projects and contractors/consultants in planning and implementing their tasks and reporting effectively on them.</p> <p>An initial effort to develop a project GIS using national capacity (a national contractor) has failed to generate an adequate design/initial GIS or to train project staff on how to utilize and develop it further. This needs to be address with a greater effort.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: Establish a sustainable financing framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the capacity for sustainable finance more generally, and developing a strategic planning process and roadmap which will integrate more directly with the WAPs, and with the institutional and governance structures these are setting in place under the project. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by National & International</p>	<p>Priority: High. Within the next 18 months to coincide with the</p>	<p>The ESAV is an important first step in providing an economic framework for ecosystem goods and services which forms an important component of the decision-making process. Economic or market approaches to climate change adaptation are an important component of building resilience and creating an equitable framework which reflects the costs and benefits of climate resilience adaptive changes to management practices.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imbed these capacities within CEP and with the District and Jamoat authorities. 	ESAV Consultants.	WAP experience.	
Cross-cutting			
<p>Recommendation 8: Mainstream the work of the Gender Officer to play a more integrated role in project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the NTA & ITA with the Service Providers and the CFPs. Generate knowledge products on the role of gender in the management of natural resources. Work closely with the M&E Officer to develop robust monitoring framework for gender. Support with training if necessary. 	To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA.	<p><i>Timeline:</i> Within the next quarter.</p> <p><i>Priority:</i> High.</p>	The Project Document underplayed the issue of women and gender in the design of the project. It is reasonable to assume that gender inequalities play a considerable role in the way resources are used in the project areas and that inequalities and imbalances in the authority, responsibility and rights of access and decision-making contribute to the resilience of the system. Understanding these dynamics and using the project processes to address inequalities should be mainstreamed in the project. The project has made the important step of inserting real gender issues into the WAPs but this needs to be further followed up during WAP implementation to ensure cross-cutting/ mainstreaming.
<p>Recommendation 9: Review the project risk assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that operational risks are correctly identified and included. 	To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA.	<p><i>Timeline:</i> Within the next quarter.</p> <p><i>Priority:</i> High.</p>	Most of the risks identified in the Project Document do not relate to the obvious operational challenges any project might face, let alone, one which expected to spend half of its budget in the second year. Of the 20 risks identified between Annexes 4 and 5, amounting to fourteen pages of risk log (including the SESP); there is only one operational risk identified relating to the high turnover of staff in the Implementing and Executing Partners ⁸⁷ . The risk identification in the Project Document lacks credibility, even where risks were identified; the mitigation measures did not match the deployment of resources. As a result, a number of significant risks were missed.
<p>Recommendation 10: Review and revise the SESP. Review and revise the project’s Grievance Procedure and make Service Providers aware of their responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary focus should be on mitigation through the WAP/ EbAs implementation process 	To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA and Gender Specialist. Approved by SC and RTA.	<p><i>Priority:</i> High. Within the next quarter.</p>	The SESP carried out during the project development stage has numerous weaknesses (see Annex 8). Some of the mitigation measures presented a social or environmental risk in themselves. Gender was addressed in targeted fashion with a do-no-harm approach whereas the project should have a more transformative approach to gender equality. The project does have a Grievance Procedure process. However, it would be prudent to review this in relation to the CFPs to ensure that there are clear pathways with regards the Service Providers and their Clients.

Non-critical recommendations				
Rec. no.	Rationale for recommendation	Recommendation	Responsibility	Time/dates for actions
1.	This is the first NIM project with “cash-advance” modality (i.e. transfers advances based on FACE forms) project by UNDP CO and by	National Implementation Modality (NIM) Review:	To be implemented by:	Priority: Medium. Within

⁸⁷ Annex 5, p. 101, Risk 2 “High turnover of staff members in executing and implementing agencies may negatively impact on project deliverables”.

	<p>the CEP. The AF now requires the NIM for most future projects, as does the GEF. There are similarities in AF and GEF projects in as much as the reporting, M&E and the complexity of issues which they are dealing with. The MTR has experience of other UNDP Country Offices and Executing/ Implementing Partners who have found NIM challenging. NIM requires considerable collaboration, harmonization of protocols and procedures, institutional cultures and operational approaches as well as a good degree of trust. Trust is important because it reduces the costs and increases the speed of transactions between partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of the National Implementation Modality (NIM) to identify challenges faced during project execution. • Incorporate lessons learned into operational procedures to enhance efficiency and address previous bottlenecks. 	<p>UNDP CO in collaboration with CEP.</p>	<p>next two Quarters.</p>
2.	<p>The highest value will come from better understanding the socio-ecosystem. Building the M&E capacity within the CEP will have a lasting impact on the organisation. M&E is critical for an adaptive management approach by asking i) how will we measure success? ii) have we done what we said we would do? iii) has it worked? iv) if it hasn't worked what do we not understand about the system and what should we change (or did we not do what we said we would)? Adaptive management and M&E have to be imbedded in an institutional culture which is prepared to challenge assumptions and work within a multi-disciplinary framework. The PMU and its strong M&E capacities offers a very good opportunity to establish a M&E culture.</p>	<p>Enhance the role of M&E Officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage monitoring and evaluation specialist ITA for training and capacity building of M&E officer and strengthening of M&E in regard to real CC resilience impact 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU and assisted by ITA & NTA. Approved by SC.</p>	<p>Priority: High. Within the next quarter.</p>
3.	<p>The challenges facing the project should not be underestimated, they are considerable and meeting these challenges successfully are inevitably going to test the project partners relationship. Good internal communications is key to ensuring that when these challenges arise the project partners are able to work together effectively, whether through scheduled meeting or simply knowing that someone can pick up the phone to get help. These channels need to be built.</p> <p>The project also has the potential, due to the PMUs internal capacities and the very good technical assistance it has received to generate good experience, especially in relation to working with communities at scale. With a robust adaptive management approach, lessons can focus not just on the successes, but also on what has not worked, why it has not worked and what was done to improve it.</p>	<p>Enhance Internal and External Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular internal monthly briefings to ensure to check actual budget vs. planned and accomplishment of the indicators. This ensures that team members are informed of project updates, changes in procedures, and strategic decisions. • Develop an external communication plan that further must be approved by UNDP for implementation. (highlights of project successes and mistakes, learning opportunities, and maintains transparency with stakeholders.) • More effort must be given increase presence of project activities in CEP website and to leverage digital tools and platforms to streamline communication channels and ensure timely dissemination of information. 	<p>To be implemented by: CEP & UNDP CO.</p>	<p>Priority: High. Within the next quarter.</p>

4.	<p>Much of the project area is extremely rugged and hard to access. The PMU and TA are going to need good access to the these generally hard-to-access areas. The current deployment of vehicles is inappropriate for these conditions⁸⁸. A vehicle which can take some punishment is necessary for the project to have a credible presence where much of the EbAs will take place.</p>	<p>Purchase a basic 4X4 vehicle capable of travelling off road and carrying equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider buying a second-hand vehicle if procurement rules will allow. 	<p>To be implemented by: PMU.</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High (see recommendation 6). SC to approve (by email communication).</p>
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⁸⁸ In order for the MTR to visit the high pasture areas it was necessary to hire a 1988 Lada Niva from a farmer and leave the project vehicle at the base of the mountain.

4.3 Lessons and experience

161. The MTR draws 4 lessons from the review process and project experience at the midpoint of implementation:
162. **Lesson 1: Critical review of project designs is of paramount importance.** Projects such as “An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan” are complex and difficult to design because they are dealing with unpredictable and highly dynamic socio-ecosystems. Predicting the outcomes of interventions is extremely difficult. However, this cannot explain away the remarkably poor design of the project and it would appear that something went very wrong at a number of crucial stages in the project’s lifecycle. There are a number of stages in the project development when the design flaws which have dogged the project’s performance and impact, should have been raised and addressed.
163. Initially, the design should have been reviewed at the regional level, following that it was reviewed by the Adaptation Fund Board Review Committee⁸⁹. It was further approved⁹⁰ by the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) with a notable absence of any critical review. Once approved the Inception Phase is probably the most important phase in the project where significant changes can be made. However, in the MTR’s experience this rarely happens and inception phases are generally wasted opportunities which only put in place the PMU and set out the reporting procedures (this Inception Report makes no comment on the veracity of the SRF nor any of the very obvious issues related to the project’s design⁹¹). After this it becomes increasingly difficult to make changes to the project until the MTR, by which time half of the project has passed.
164. In reality, it is often very difficult for a newly appointed PMU to critically assess a Project Document as the previous reviews and approvals can provide it with a spurious authority, which a newly appointed and less experienced PMU would find hard to challenge. The challenges of NIM make this even more critical because the inception phase is the first point at which the PMU takes ownership of the project.
165. **Lesson 2: Technical assistance is important.** Two key informant interviews indicated that the AF prefers projects to spend the money in the field and is less keen on technical advice and policy work. The MTR cannot find any AF policy statements which support this as an approach, however, the distribution of the project’s budget would and the lack of any substantive technical advice in the Project Document would certainly support such a policy.
166. Given the complexity and unpredictability of the KRB system any project design will invariably be based on a multiplicity of assumptions some of which may be found to be baseless once the project is underway. At this point, experienced technical assistance is critical for an adaptive management response. It is this mix of expert thinking necessary for solving problems which may lie outside the normal rules of operation and institutional thinking and the experience to look at basic architecture of a project and say... “well that can’t be right” (e.g. the expectations of Outcome 2 in the second year of the project).
167. **Lesson 3: The Inception Phase is critical to a project’s outcomes:** The Inception Phase is one of the most important stages in the project cycle management where the PMU takes on the ownership of the project. The PMU will be responsible for ensuring the outcomes and yet they have had very little, if any, input into the design. It is a point in the project cycle where the project can take stock of the current and situation, assess any changes in circumstances. It is an opportunity to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of the project’s design against the realities of implementation. It is an opportunity to make critical adaptive changes to the project’s strategy, assess the veracity and utility of the M&E framework and take ownership of the project during its lifetime. Critically, the Inception Phases needs support as a newly appointed project team come to grips with a complex design which is invariably based on a multitude of assumptions. Having technical assistance to help the project team at this critical point is highly desirable.
168. **Lesson 4: If things are not working it is important to stop and work out why it is not working.** There is a tendency to keep going in projects and to just try harder when things are not working. In fact, this is when the project should pause, take a deep breath and ask questions. This is the time when internal communications between the partners is absolutely critical as each party will feel most vulnerable and it is important to remember that projects are essentially the sum of their human resources.

⁸⁹ 05/06/2019

⁹⁰ LPAC Report, 30/12/2019

⁹¹ AN INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE APPROACH TO ENHANCING THE CLIMATE RESILIENCE OF SMALL-SCALE FARMERS AND PASTORALISTS IN TAJIKISTAN, Dushanbe, 28 August 2021.

169. There are many pressures on all of the project partners, most particularly on the PMU. The increasing use of NIM is only likely to make this more frequent and more intense and it is important that the inception phase is used to build the partnerships not just for things to go right, but for when they inevitably go wrong, because this is when these partnerships will be most tested. Arguably, there is no such thing as an “expert” in project. There is merely the sum of all the individuals involved and their greater or lesser experiences and abilities to figure things out when they go wrong. A good project is one in which mistakes will be made but they are transparent, examined and quickly resolved.

Annexes

Annex 1 MTR TOR

TERMS OF REFERENCE
MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE PROJECT
“An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan” (PIMS # 6219.)

INTRODUCTION

These terms of reference (TOR) set out the expectations for a Mid-Term Review of the “An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan” (PIMS # 6219.)

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

1. Project Summary Table

Project Title:	An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan			
AF Project ID:	TJK/MIE/Rural/2018/1		<u>at endorsement (Million US\$)</u>	<u>at mid-term (Million US\$)</u>
UNDP Project ID:	Quantum 00111538 PIMS 6219	AF Financing	9,213,310	1,756,605.97
Country:	Tajikistan	IA/EA own:	-	-
Region:	RBEC	Government:	-	-
Focal Area:	Climate Change	Other:	-	
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):		Total co-financing:	-	
AF Implementing Entity:	UNDP	Total Project Cost:	9,213,310	-
AF Executing Entity (UNDP Implementing Partner):	CEP	Prodoc Signature: June 11, 2020,	Date project began:	March 17, 2021
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: December 31, 2025	Actual: March 17, 2026

2. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Tajikistan (hereafter Tajikistan) is the most climate-vulnerable country in Central Asia. Extreme rainfall events have become more frequent and intense, the rainfall season has shortened in many parts of the country, air temperatures have risen markedly, and glacial melting is accelerating⁹². As a result, hydrometeorological disasters such as droughts, floods, mudflows and landslides are more frequent and rates of soil erosion across the country are increasing. The socio-economic impacts of these changes are considerable: livelihoods, agricultural productivity, water availability and hydroelectricity production are all compromised⁹³. Indeed, natural hazards, most of which are linked to climate change (e.g. droughts and landslides), result in annual losses equivalent to ~20% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP)⁹⁴.

The vulnerability of Tajikistan to climate change is exacerbated by a low adaptive capacity as a result of ageing infrastructure, the disproportionate number of women in poverty compared with men⁹⁵, and limited institutional capacity. This vulnerability

⁹² Third National Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. 2014. Committee on Environmental Protection, State Administration for Hydrometeorology, Government of The Republic of Tajikistan.

⁹³ World Bank (WB). 2013. Tajikistan: Overview of climate change activities.

⁹⁴ WB 2013 Tajikistan: Overview.

⁹⁵ This phenomenon is referred to as the ‘feminisation of poverty’, where women bear the burden of poverty – particularly in developing countries – as a result of lack of income and gender biases.

is expected to intensify in the future, and consequently the building of climate resilience across the country is of paramount importance⁹⁶.

Given the above context, the proposed Adaptation Fund (AF) project is intended to introduce an integrated approach to landscape management to develop the climate resilience of rural communities in Tajikistan. The project’s activities focus within one of the most climate-vulnerable river basins, namely the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).

Problem statement: The problem to be addressed by the project is that the livelihoods of small-scale rural farmers and pastoralists in the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB) of Tajikistan are being negatively affected by climate change. Rising temperatures and extreme climate events, including floods and droughts, are resulting in: i) damages to crops; ii) increased rates of soil erosion and concomitant declines in agricultural productivity; and iii) damages to properties and infrastructure. These effects are greatly exacerbated by a baseline situation of unsustainable management of land and water resources in the KRB. Future prospects for rural communities in this river basin are limited, with their livelihoods expected to be further threatened as climate change impacts intensify, making sustainable management of their natural resources increasingly challenging.

In 2019, the CEP and UNDP signed and agreed to jointly *implement* “An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan”, a project that is being funded by the Adaptation Fund and is one of the projects prioritized in Tajikistan through the agency of UNDP. Annual reviews and monitoring and evaluation were undertaken in the initial two and half years of implementing the project. This MTR aims to assess the projects’ progress in terms of outcomes, relevance, efficiency and sustainability and to come up with recommendations in regard to its ongoing implementation and impact. The project is a five-year climate adaptation programme that integrates water and agriculture implemented at the Kofarnighan River Basin.

To achieve its objective of enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan, the project focuses on strengthening the integrated management of the KRB and implementing concrete on-the-ground EbA interventions. The project is organized across three outcomes and 10 outputs with a budget of \$9.2 million, and aims to directly benefitting 46,000 people, (including 25,000 women and girls), and with wider impact on 828,000 people (including 409,612 women and girls).

The three components of the project are:

- i) integrated catchment management to build climate resilience;
- ii) Ecosystem-based Adaptation, including Climate-smart Agriculture and Sustainable Land Management, in agro-ecological landscapes;
- iii) knowledge management on building climate resilience through integrated catchment management and EbA in the Kofirnighan River Basin. The first component will strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of government and local communities to manage climate risks. The second component will support local communities to implement interventions that reduce climate risks by enhancing the ecosystem functionality of degraded watersheds. The last component will compile and disseminate lessons learned for future national and regional upscaling and replication.

Key project indicators and targets are elaborated in the table below:

Objective, Outcome	Indicators	MT Targets	EoP Targets
Objective: Reduce vulnerability and enhance climate-resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan to respond to the impacts of climate change.	Indicator (s): Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change Percentage population of the KRB benefitting from project interventions.	By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women	At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change (i.e. constituting ~5% of population in the Kofirnighan river basin) In total, 828,000 indirect project beneficiaries, including 409,612 women, are expected to benefit from the project

⁹⁶ WB 2013 Tajikistan: Overview.

Outcome 1: Catchment management strategy to manage climate risks operationalised at raion (district) and jamoat (sub-district) levels in Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).	Indicator 1. Number of staffs trained to respond to impacts of climate-related events (gender disaggregated).	At least 15 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management by the mid of the project. At least 50 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.	By the mid of the project, at least 30 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management. By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from local government at raion and jamoat levels (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management.
Outcome 2: An integrated approach to building climate resilience of agro-ecological landscapes operationalised at a village level.	Indicator 2. Number of people practicing climate change adaptation technologies (gender disaggregated). Total number of men and women benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change	By year 3 of the project, 23,000 direct beneficiaries are to be supported by the project, including 12,500 of women.	At least 600 people (100 per district), of which at least 30% will be women, are implementing EbA interventions for climate risk management. At least 46,000 people, including 25,000 of women, in ~100 villages across 6 districts benefitting from reduced vulnerability to climate change
Outcome 3. Existing knowledge management platforms supported for integrated catchment management and EbA.	Indicator 3. Knowledge management centre strengthened through the support of project activities	By year 3 of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.	By the end of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.

Project total budget is USD 9,213,310 of which all is provided by the Adaption Fund. Project budget is divided between Components/Outcomes and Outputs in the following manner (see below).

Project Outcome	USD	%
Outcome 1: Integrated catchment management (strategy, multi hazard risk mapping, PES, capacity development)	1,012,000	11
Outcome 2: Village level EbA, CC resilience (WAP's, implementation in 100 villages)	7,282,810	79
Outcome 3: Knowledge management platforms	142,000	2
Outcome 4: Project management	776,000	8
total	9,213,310	100

The UNDP Implementing Partner (AF Executing Entity) for this project is the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan⁹⁷.

The CEP is responsible for executing this five-year project with the support of the UNDP under UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM). At the request of the Government of Tajikistan, UNDP is the Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE).

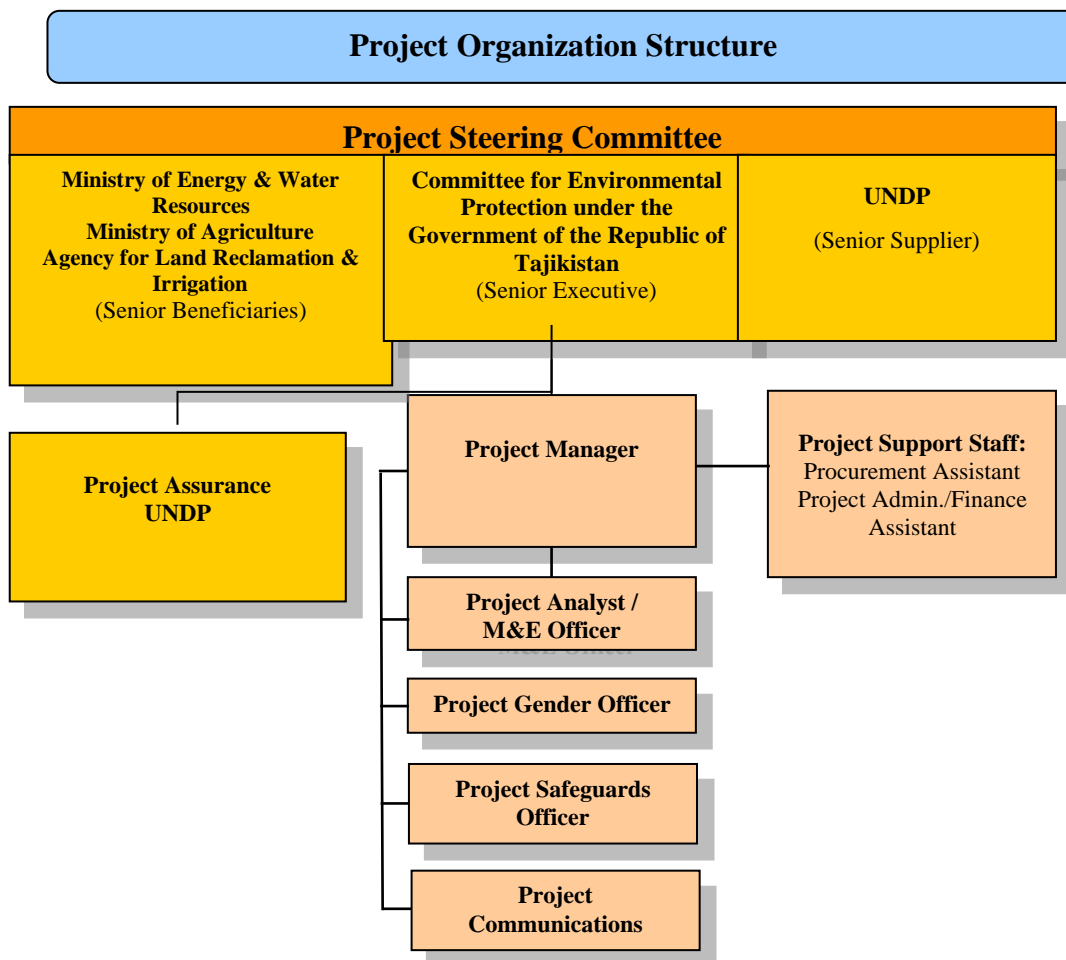
As the Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE), UNDP is responsible for providing a number of key general management and specialized technical support services. These services are provided through UNDP's global network of country, regional and headquarters offices and units.

⁹⁷ The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in this signed project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document.

UNDP retains ultimate accountability for the effective implementation of the project.

As Implementing Partner, the CEP is fully accountable to UNDP for successfully managing and delivering project outputs. The CEP assumes responsibility for the implementation, and the timely and verifiable attainment of project objectives and outcomes. It provides support to the management unit, and inputs for, the implementation of all activities. The CEP nominated a high-level official (the Chairman of the CEP) who serves as the National Project Director (NPD) for project implementation. The NPD chairs the Project Steering Committee and is responsible for providing government oversight and guidance to the implementation. The NPD is not paid from project funds but represents the Government in kind contribution.

Project organisation structure:



Key stakeholders include:

The table below presents primary stakeholders described in the project document to be involved in project implementation.

Stakeholder	Brief description
Committee of Environmental Protection (CEP)	The CEP is the main specialised governmental body responsible for implementation of the state policy on environmental protection in Tajikistan.
State Agency on Hydrometeorology (Hydromet) of the CEP	The Hydromet is responsible for environment-, climate- and hydro-meteorological-related monitoring. It is the agency responsible to formulate and inform the GoT and local authorities on short-term weather forecasts.
Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR)	The MEWR is tasked with the formulation and implementation of national energy- and water-related policies.

Stakeholder	Brief description
Open Centre under the Department of Geology (DoG)	The Central Asian Countries Geoportal is an outcome of cooperation between Geological Survey of Finland and the national geo-institutions in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The geo-sector in Tajikistan is managed by the Head Department of Geology under the GoT as a public property to be the central organ of executive power, state policy management and coordination of work. This falls within the sector of: i) mineral exploration; ii) reproduction of mineral resources; and iii) provision of geological information about natural resources of the Republic of Tajikistan. ^{98,99}
University of Central Asia (UCA)	The UCA is an internationally chartered, not-for-profit secular institution. It was formed as a partnership between the governments of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan under the sponsorship of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). Founded in 2000, its first campus opened in 2016 in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan, offering five-year undergraduate programmes in Computer Science (BSc) and Communications and Media (BA). In 2017 the Khorog Campus in Tajikistan was opened, offering five-year undergraduate programmes in Earth and Environmental Sciences (BSc) and Economics (BA).

3. Evaluation approach and method

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. Concept/Proposal, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual Project Performance Reports, Chief Technical Adviser’s reports and advisory documents, other international and national technical consultant reports, project technical products and plans, project monitoring materials, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Nature, Climate and Energy (NCE) Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to executing agency, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders (including all or sample of 6 project target districts authorities in KRB, 14 Jamoat Watershed Action plan stakeholders including land user groups/associations), etc.

Data collection and analysis methods should be rigorously selected to produce reasonable empirical evidence to ensure credibility, relevance, and validity of the MTR. It is expected to include a mix of methods to gather information. Suggested methodological tools and approaches may include Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups discussion as well non-participant observation.

The MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to the Kofirnighan river basin (KRB) territory, including the following project sites: at least one of the 3 northern KRB project target districts (i.e. Varzob, Vahdat, or Faizobod districts) and at least 2 of the Jamoat Watershed Action Plan locations within them; and at least one of the 3 southern KRB project target districts (Shaartuz, Kabodiyon, Nosiri Khusrav districts) and at least 2 of the Jamoat Watershed Action Plan locations within them. Specific sites to be visited will be proposed by the MTR team leader based on consultation with the project PM and CTA but will remain flexible for adjustment during MTR in-country mission based on practical accessibility and MTR team preference.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The MTR team must, however, use gender-responsive

⁹⁸ The Committee of Geology and Resources Exploitation, Ministry of Industry and New Technology of the Republic of Kazakhstan carries out of special executive and regulatory functions in the area of geological studies, rational and complex usage of natural resources and state administration of subsoil use. The State Agency of Geology and Mineral Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic is a central institution working under the government of Kyrgyzstan for collecting, storing and distributing of geo-scientific information and providing authorized policy to the legal exploitation of mineral resources.

⁹⁹ Central Asian Counties: Geoportal. 2018. Available at: <http://www.cac-geoportal.org/en/index.php/about-us> [accessed 23.07.2018].

methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the MTR team. The Inception Report should outline how various forms of evidence will be employed vis-à-vis each other to triangulate the information collected.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

4. objectives of the MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability.

The most important outcome of the MTR will be constructive recommendations for the project team, UNDP and CEP on how to improve the effectiveness of implementation towards the overall project objectives, including any adaptations / adjustments necessary to the project Strategic Framework and implementation approaches, effectiveness of implementation support, adjustments to project duration to pragmatically reflect project implementation realities in the context of Tajikistan, etc.

Additionally, given the newness of the NIM in Tajikistan, recommendations of value to both the UNDP and GoT on strengthening future application of this modality will be important. Similarly, as this is the first AF project to be supported in Tajikistan, recommendations to AF, and GoT on lessons learned on the design, implementation arrangements, and expectations of such projects in the Tajikistan context, will be a key result.

5. Scope of the MTR

The following aspects will need to be addressed by the MTR team:

i. Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines.
- Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women’s groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Log frame:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators, as necessary.
- Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

- Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ log frame as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

ii. Progress Towards Results

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project Strategy	Indicator ¹⁰⁰	Baseline Level ¹⁰¹	Level in 1 st PPR (self-reported)	Midterm Target ¹⁰²	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment ¹⁰³	Achievement Rating ¹⁰⁴	Justification for Rating
Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):							
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
Outcome 2:	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the Results Tracker (within the PPR) at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project. By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

Relevance

- the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, and global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change. Relevance also refers to the intervention’s consistency with country-driven priorities. To encourage utilization, each evaluation should optimize relevance by ensuring (i) that the primary intended users of the evaluation and their intended uses are clearly identified and engaged at the beginning of the evaluation process; (ii) that “intended users” include funding, implementing, and beneficiary stakeholders; and (iii) that evaluators ensure these intended users contribute to decisions about the evaluation process.

Coherence

- the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.

Effectiveness

- the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups (considering the extent to which the evaluand has accomplished SRF indicator targets).

Efficiency

- the extent that the intervention is cost effective and timely, and does not consume unnecessary time and resources. This includes value for money, which encompasses spending wisely, spending less, spending well, and spending fairly.

Impact

¹⁰⁰ Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

¹⁰¹ Populate with data from the Project Document

¹⁰² If available

¹⁰³ Colour code this column only

¹⁰⁴ Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

- the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Equity

- consistent with the Adaptation Fund’s Environment and Social Policy (ESP) and GP, the extent to which the design and implementation includes input of the designated authority (DA) and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, persons with disability, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, and other potentially marginalized groups or locations. It also encompasses the degree to which the intervention reduced or perpetuated inequalities, and how equitably benefits were accrued to vulnerable groups.

Scalability

- the extent to which the intervention demonstrates that CCA can be increased or replicated at a broader scale, as well as in other contexts.

Sustainability

- the extent to which the intervention is likely to generate continued positive or negative, intended and unintended impacts beyond its lifetime, taking into consideration, social, institutional, economic, and environmental systems. Is the intervention sensitive to conflict and fragility, i.e., to what extent does it consider the political context and the sharing of natural resources? Is it contributing towards targeted communities’ livelihoods and to the health or well-being of the ecosystems on which they depend?
- Financial risks to sustainability:
 - What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the AF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)?
- Socio-economic risks to sustainability:
 - Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?
 - Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:
 - Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.
 - Environmental risks to sustainability:
 - Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Adaptive Management

- the extent to which the project adapted during implementation in response to lessons and reflections during implementation; and the extent to which the project supports the use, development, or diffusion of innovative practices, tools, or technologies to improve or accelerate CCA.

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by UNDP and recommend areas for improvement.
- Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
- What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Assess any impacts the COVID19 pandemic had on the effectiveness of project implementation and steps taken to mitigate.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project’s results framework/logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. See Annex 9 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?
- How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women’s participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?

Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PPRs and the Quantum Risk Register are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why
- Validate the risks identified in the project’s most current SESP, and those risks’ ratings; are any revisions needed?
- Summarize and assess the revisions made since Approval (if any) to:
 - The project’s overall safeguards risk categorization.
 - The identified types of risks (in the SESP).
 - The individual risk ratings (in the SESP).

- Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project’s social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at AF Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project’s design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.
- A given project should be assessed against the version of UNDP’s safeguards policy that was in effect at the time of the project’s approval.

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil AF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PPRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications & Knowledge Management:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project’s progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.
- List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

iv. Sustainability

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF/AF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section in the MTR report for evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the MTR consultant/team is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should also be put in the report’s executive summary.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

6. Ratings

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project’s results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for ‘An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan’

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

7. MTR TimeFRAME

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	COMPLETION DATE
Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report (MTR Inception Report due no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission)	4 days	21 September 2023
MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits	10 days	10 – 20 October 2023
Presentation of initial findings- last day of the MTR mission	1 day	21 October 2023
Preparing draft report (due within 3 weeks of the MTR mission)	15 days	5 November 2023
Finalization of MTR report/ Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report (<i>note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report</i>)	4 days	30 November 2023
Total	34 days	

8. MTR deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	MTR Inception Report	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later 2 weeks before the MTR mission	Submitted by MTR team to Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	Presented by MTR team to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	Draft MTR Report	Full draft report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission	Sent to Commissioning Unit by MTR team, reviewed by RTA, project management

4	Final Report* + completed Audit Trail	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP and other stakeholder (CEP, etc.) comments on draft	Sent to Commissioning Unit by MTR team
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9. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project’s MTR is UNDP Country Office in Tajikistan.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team and will provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email). The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

10. MTR Team Composition

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR – one **international team leader** (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally), and one **national team expert** with national level experience of the project implementation context. The team leader will have overall responsibility for the preparation of the specified deliverables (MTR Inception report including design of the methodology and conducting of the field mission, initial presentation of findings, draft MTR and final MTR). The team expert will provide in-country support (document and background data collection) and Tajikistan contextual guidance / information to the MTR team leader, and both translation and logistical advice/support during the field mission.

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

The selection of the MTR Team Leader consultant will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

Experience (Total Weighting score 200)

I. Academic Qualifications: A Bachelor’s Degree or high (Master’s degree) in environmental management, or other closely related field - weighting 40

II. Years of experience: Experience in relevant technical areas for at least 5 years of experience

III. Language: Fluency in written and spoken English is a prerequisite, Tajik or Russian an asset

IV. Competencies:

- Experience in evaluating AF or similar CC adaption, SLM and sustainable natural resources management projects (i.e., GEF financed SLM, CC adaption, biodiversity projects, etc.);
- Experience of practical implementation of thematically / technically similar projects in comparable regions/countries or environments.
- Experience working in Central Asian region, particularly experience in Tajikistan.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and natural resources / CC adaption context; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Demonstrable analytical skills and excellent communication skills (evidence based i.e., prior work)
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system.

11. Evaluator Ethics

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEP 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#). The MTR team must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The MTR team must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

12. Remuneration and Payment modalities and specifications

The financial proposal of costs must be expressed in **Lump Sum Amount** and “**all-inclusive**”¹⁰⁵. Payments are based upon output, i.e. upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR. To assist the requesting unit in the comparison of financial proposals, the financial proposal will include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including professional fees, travel—air tickets, and per diems/DSA). Transport facilities for fieldwork and workshops shall be supported and organized by UNDP.

¹⁰⁵ The term “all inclusive” implies that all costs (professional fees, travel costs/air tickets, DSA/living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred by the Contractor are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal.

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 34 working days over a time period of 12 weeks.

The payment schedule will be as follows:

%	Milestone
20%	Upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
40%	Upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit
40%	Upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the MTR Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed MTR Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%¹⁰⁶:

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).

The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

Annex 2 Evaluation Criteria and Ratings

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)

6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)

6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)

4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

¹⁰⁶ The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the MTR team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit’s senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters.

Annex 3 Evaluation Questions Matrix

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
How does the project addresses country priorities?	Alignment of projects strategy and theory of change (if included) with country situation and national priorities, alignment of project objective and outcomes with other national programmes and projects	Project Document, UNDP Country Programme, sector policies and regulatory frameworks, regional agreements and programmes	Document review, interviews with government agency stakeholders and project partners, analysis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How strong is the country ownership? Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country? 			
How does the project address the AF priorities?	Alignment of projects strategy and theory of change (if included) with AF priorities and objectives. Alignment with AF themes. Project outputs and outcomes. Selection and applicability of indicators (AF)	Project Document, AF programme documents, UNDP RTA, TOC	Document review, interviews RTA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well aligned with the AF objectives? Is the project monitoring the AF indicators? How is the project staying on track to meet the AF objectives? How were the objectives of the AF and national (RT) priorities and objectives aligned? How has the project participated in lesson-sharing platforms managed by the AF? 			
To what extent were decision-making processes during the project’s design phase reflecting national priorities and needs?	Effectiveness of partnerships arrangements since inception	Project Document, Inception Report, PPRs, minutes of SC meetings, TOC.	Document review, interviews with government agency stakeholders and project partners, analysis.
How relevant is the project strategy to the situation in the project area?	Coherence between project design and implementation – what changes have had to be made. Level of project resources assigned to tasks.	Project Document, Inception Report, Consultant’s studies and reports, minutes of Steering Committee and Technical Advice	Document review, interviews with government agency stakeholders and project partners, analysis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it provide the most effective route towards expected/intended results? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design? 			
What was/is the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions?	Suitability of specific components of the project to address issues and achieve results areas. Changes to the strategy, changes to the interventions. Completeness of interventions by mid-term.	Project Document, Inception Report, Work Plans, PPR, minutes of meetings, Consultants reports.	Documents, interviews with stakeholders, project implementing partners, PMU and project Consultants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has been the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document. Was the problem correctly identified? 	Gender disaggregated data, level of co-financing commitment/expenditure, workshop and meeting attendance, degree of ownership of project community-based initiatives	Project reports, PPR, workshop reports, co-financing records	Documents, interviews with stakeholders, project implementing partners.
To what degree is the project’s implementation a participatory and country-driven processes:			

- Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project?
- Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation? If so, how is this achieved?

Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits?	National policy priorities and strategies, as stated in official documents. Approved policy and legislation related to agriculture, land use and land use planning, budgets, etc.	National policy and regulatory framework documents	Document review, interviews with high-level project partners.
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Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?

What progress has the project made in each component against the start of project baselines?	Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets	Logframe, PPRs, Annual Work Plans, budget execution	Analysis, interviews with partners and stakeholders
What barriers, if any, have delayed progress towards results?	Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets	Logframe, PPRs, Annual Work Plans, budget execution, Inception Report	Analysis, interviews with partners and stakeholders
What changes in implementation approaches and outputs will increase the rate of delivery against results?	Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets	Logframe, PPRs, Annual Work Plans, budget execution	Analysis, interviews with partners and stakeholders

Cross Cutting issues: to what extent has the project address the UN cross cutting issues such as SDGs, gender and women’s economic empowerment, youth, partnerships, innovations etc.

How did the project contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment?	Level of progress of gender action plan and gender indicators in results framework	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, field visits
In what ways are the project’s gender results advance or contribute to the effectiveness of the project’s outcomes?	Existence of linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts development	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, field visits, analysis
What assessments of climate change vulnerability were used to inform project plans and activities?	Mention of climate change adaptation in project plans, reports and deliverables	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, field visits
In what ways was climate change adaptation integrated into project plans, activities and deliverables?	Inclusion of climate change adaptation in project plans, reports and deliverables	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, field visits
In what ways was climate change adaptation used to inform the design and implementation of SLM and NRM activities involving local communities	Inclusion of climate-smart agriculture practices/ Ecosystem-based adaptation, climate-resilient development practices for local communities	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders	Desk review, interviews, field visits, analysis
To what extent has the project increased local capacity for community-based NRM and SLM?	Numbers of local community members provided with training in CBNRM and SLM practices	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders, local agency records	Desk review, interviews, field visits, analysis
In what ways and to what extent has the project contributed towards poverty reduction in the targeted areas?	Numbers/proportion of local community members continuing to practice these methods Tangible improvements to socio-economic status of beneficiaries (e.g. improved livelihoods, food security, income)	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders, local government records	Desk review, interviews, field visits, analysis
Have the project’s strategies for EbA and SLM been mainstreamed, replicated or upscaled in ways that will contribute towards poverty reduction beyond immediate project beneficiaries?	Project related EbA and SLM practices incorporated into new sector policies and plans for agriculture, rural development, environment, etc.	Project documents, project staff, project stakeholders, local government records, local service providers/extension officer’s records	Desk review, interviews, field visits, analysis

Replication or upscaling of project related EbA and SLM to other areas

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?			
How has the project managed risks? What changes to the projects risk have been made since the project started? Are there new and emergent risks? Have these been added to the ATLAS Risk Management Log/Register? What has been done to mitigate the risk? What specific actions have been taken to reduce specific risks?	Project monitoring or risks, adaptive actions to address risks, correct recording protocols for adaptive actions	Project Document risk analysis, ATLAS risk register, PPRs, UNDP & PMU staff including CTA, SC minutes & records, feedback from NC field mission	Desk review, interviews
Have changes been made to the project's management (as described in the Project Document) and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner?	Management structure	Inception Report, Quarterly Reports, AWP, PPRs, SC meeting minutes, internal memoranda	Review, interviews with project partners
Has the CEP provided support, facilitation, personnel, financial and material support in a timely manner and according to the Project Document, the LOA and ProDoc agreements?	Implementation of components and sub-components, government inputs, outputs	PPRs, SC minutes of meetings, project reports, stakeholder responses	Review, interviews, analysis
Have the other partners involved in implementation (Hydromet, MEWR, DoG and UCA) provided support, facilitation, personnel, financial and material support in a timely manner and according to the Project Document?	Implementation of components and sub-components, co-financing, outputs	PPRs, SC minutes of meetings, project reports, stakeholder responses, feedback from NC field mission	Desk review, interviews
Has the UNDP CO provided support, facilitation, personnel, financial and material support in a timely manner and according to the Project Document those set out in the Project Document?	Budgets execution, AWP, risk management, adaptive management	Budgets, AWP, PPRs, M&E mission reports, PIRs, SC minutes	Review, interviews, analysis
Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Agency and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women?	Gender balance of project staff, steps taken to ensure gender balance in project staff, gender balance of the Project Board/SC, steps taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board/SC	Project's Gender Inclusion Strategy, M&E mission reports, gender disaggregated data	Review, interviews, analysis
What changes have been made to the budget set out in the Project Document? Have there been any budget revisions? Where the components accurately costed?	Budget revisions, changes to activities on a cost basis, efficiency in budget execution, value of works carried out	Project Document budget and notes, CDR, TBWPs	Document review, Interviews with PMU and UNDP, analysis
Have there been unforeseen additional costs? Why?			
How efficient are partnership arrangements for the project?	Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners, examples of supported partnerships evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained, types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized	Project reports, Consultants reports, PPRs, SC minutes, NC findings from field mission, interviews with participating organization and agencies, TBWPs	Interviews with PMU, interviews with participating organisations, analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent were partnerships / linkages between organizations encouraged and supported? Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which ones can be considered sustainable? What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? Which methods were successful or not and in which way? 			
Did the project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation? Did the project consider local capacity in design and implementation of the project?	Quality of analysis to assess local capacities,	Project Document (and budget notes)	Document analysis and interviews with PMU

<p>What lessons can be learnt from the project regarding efficiency? Could the project have more efficiently carried out implementation (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements)? What changes could be made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency? Where there delays in the project start-up and implementation? What caused them and have they been resolved?</p>	<p>Attitudes towards efficiency, M&E, budget revisions, works not carried out, delays in implementation</p> <p>PMU in place, budget execution, reporting, timeliness</p>	<p>Project Document (and budget notes), TBWP, budget revisions, PRRs, reports</p> <p>Inception report, budgets, AWP, PRRS, M&E mission reports, SC minutes</p>	<p>Document analysis and interviews with CEP, UNDP and PMU</p> <p>Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, how can work planning be re-orientated to focus on results?</p>	<p>PMU, Contracts, reporting, timeliness, budget execution, monitoring of results and adaptive management</p>	<p>Inception report, budgets, AWP, PRRS, M&E mission reports, SC minutes</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>How has the project’s results framework/ logframe been used as a management tool and what changes have been made to it since project started? Is work planning timely, effective and towards achieving results? Is work planning realistic?</p>	<p>Use of the project’s results framework/ logframe as a management tool. Changes made to the log frame since project start. Reporting to RTA Delays and causes of delays in project start-up and implementation Use of the project’s results framework/ logframe as a management tool Changes made to the log frame since project start</p>	<p>Inception report, log frame, budgets, AWP, PRRS, M&E mission reports, SC minutes Inception report, budgets, AWP, PRRS, M&E mission reports, SC minutes</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>Does the project have appropriate financial controls, planning and reporting that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds? How useful are the project monitoring and evaluation tools in tracking progress towards results and informing adaptive management?</p>	<p>Changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.</p> <p>Use of the log frame. Information being monitored. Alignment with national systems. Use of existing information, efficiency and cost effectiveness of data and data collection. Participation in M&E and sufficiency of tools. Financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget, gender issues</p>	<p>AWPs, budget execution, financial reporting</p> <p>Log frame. Project’s Gender Inclusion Strategy, M&E mission reports, gender disaggregated data. PRRs, SC minutes minutes and reports.</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>To what extent are stakeholders engaged in the project? How inclusive it this?</p>	<p>Inclusion of stakeholders in project management and decision making. Stakeholder partnerships. Support of local and national stakeholders for the project. Stakeholder roles in project decision making</p>	<p>PRRs, SC minutes and reports. Responses to interviews</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>Are adequate and appropriate social and environmental standards and safeguards applied to the project implementation and outcomes?</p>	<p>Public awareness. Women’s engagement in project decision making. Constraints to stakeholder inclusion and in particular women’s inclusion in project decision making Risks identified in the project’s most current SESP Revisions made since project endorsement/Approval (if any) to project’s overall safeguards risk categorization and types of risks in the SESP</p>	<p>SESP, responses to interviews</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis</p>
<p>Has the project’s reporting been clear, concise and timely according to the project’s overall M&E plan?</p>	<p>Progress made in the implementation of the project’s social and environmental management measures Adaptive management changes that have been reported by the project management and shared with the SC.</p>	<p>Project Document M&E plan, log frame, PRRs, SESP</p>	<p>Review, interviews, analysis</p>

	Fulfilling AF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PRRs, if applicable?)		
How effective is internal project communication	Lessons derived from the adaptive management process and sharing with partners and stakeholders Internal project communication with stakeholders including regularity of communication, feedback mechanisms Stakeholder awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results	Outreach and public awareness campaigns, other visibility mechanisms Knowledge activities/products developed	Review, interviews, analysis
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
How are risks monitored and managed?	Project risk log in ATLAS and management responses, communication with partners and stakeholders	Project Document, Annual Project Review/PRRs and the ATLAS Risk Register, project communications strategy	Review, interviews, analysis
What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the AF assistance ends?	Public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)	National policies and plans, local policies and plans, NGO feedback, private sector feedback, project exit arrangements. Consultants and service providers reports	Review, interviews, analysis
What are the socio-political risks to the outcomes of the project mid-term and long term?	Partner and stakeholder ownership, public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives, sharing of information on risks, adjustments to interventions to address specific risks	National policies and plans, local policies and plans, NGO feedback, private sector feedback, project exit arrangements. Consultants and service providers reports	Review, interviews, analysis
What are the environmental risks to the sustainability of the project’s outcomes? How are these managed and mitigated?	Climate data and forecasts. National disaster risk reduction strategies and plans	National data, policies and plans	Review and analysis

Annex 4 Technical vs adaptive challenge

Technical and adaptive challenges

Technical challenges:

- A technical challenge is a challenge that can be addressed with existing expertise, protocols, and operations.
- Implementing solutions to technical challenges often falls to someone with the authority to address them.
- Technical training (i.e. using a manual and new equipment) can resolve the problem.

Adaptive challenges:

- Encounter situations for which solutions lie outside the current way of operation, and possibly, thinking.
- Applying existing procedures and understanding does not provide the solution needed.
- Stakeholders must be involved in developing and implementing solutions.
- Solutions lie not in the application of expertise, but rather from a process of learning and adapting.
- Addressing adaptive challenges requires trying solutions that are new and maybe quite different.
- Inherent in addressing adaptive challenges are the need to become comfortable with not knowing what the next move might be, dealing with uncertainty.
- It is necessary to think (institutionally, individually, collectively...) what we should continue to do, what we should start to do and, critically, what we might need to stop doing...
- Addressing adaptive challenges may require the transfer of power (the ability to make decisions and to influence future events) from one party to another.
- Normally require expert thinking, which is the ability to solve non-rule-based problems.
- Adaptive challenges require time for adaptive solutions to have an effect and stakeholders cannot expect to react too quickly because of the discomfort that comes with not knowing.

Adapted from: Heifetz, Ronald A.; Leadership Without Easy Answers (Belknap/Harvard University Press, 1994)

Annex 5 Documents reviewed

1. UNDP / AF project document
2. UNDP Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Report prior to the project
3. Inception Report
4. Project Performance Reports (PPRs)
5. Annual work plan of the project between 2020 and 2023
6. The annual activity reports of the project from 2020 to 2023
7. Budget and budget revisions of the project
8. Country national strategy paper
9. UNDP Country Programme
10. CTA reports
11. National Consultant reports
12. Project monitoring and evaluation reports
13. Project monitoring reports by UNDP
14. Minutes of the Project Steering Committee
15. Reports of the training workshops in the framework of the project
16. HACT
17. Audit Reports between 2020-2023
18. Financial Reports 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 (September) (UNDP CDR)
19. Adaptation Fund Results Tracker Guidance <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Results-Tracker-Guidance-Documents-Updated-July-2019.docx>
20. Local Partner Assessment Committee Appraisal
- 21.

Annex 6 MTR field trip itinerary & persons interviewed

Arrival to Dushanbe on Tuesday, 10 October and hotel check-in	
Day 1: Thursday, 12 October, 2023	
01:00 (Midnight)	Pick-up at the airport and drive to the hotel
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	Meeting with Project team to review and finalize mission program and planned meetings/field trip logistics

	Venue: UNDP CO meeting hall (MA, GN, FS, KI)
15:00 - 16:00	Meeting at UNDP Country Office DRR UNDP TJK CO, Programme Management Analyst, AF Project Manager (briefing on MTR process, mission agenda, etc), TA Venue: UNDP RR office
16:00 - 17:00	Review of Project Progress and plans with Project Team Venue: AF Office - presentation (MA, GN, FS, KI)
Day 2: Friday, 13 October, 2023	
09:00 – 09:30	Pick-up at the hotel and drive to the AF Project Office
09:30 – 11:00	Discussion Component 2 Presentations of Component 2 and meeting with WAP national consultants: Hukumatsho Sharipov, Kamoliddin Abdulloev, and Murodjon Ergashev. Venue: AF Office (CEP)
11:00 – 12:00	Meet with Alla Kuvvatova - IWRM trainings Venue: AF Office
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:30	Meeting with the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources or Technical Taskforce for Tajikistan Water Sector Reform, UNDP/GIZ; Kai Wegerich PM (get overview) Venue: MEWR
14:30 – 15:30	Meeting with Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation (member of steering committee) Venue: ALRI
14:30 – 15:30	Open to MTR priority (follow up discussions, consolidation of Day 2 data etc.)
15:30 – 16:30	
Day 3: Saturday, October 14, 2023	
08:00-17:00	Visit Varzob (or Faizabad?) - Meet: 1. Authorities; 2. WUA/PUU
Day 4: Sunday, October 15, 2023- MTR team review and consolidation of data and initial findings	
Day 5: Monday, October 16, 2023	
09:00- 9:30	Pick-up at the hotel and drive to the AF Project Office
09:30 - 11:00	Meeting with ESVAL consultant - Umed Vahobov national consultant Venue: AF Project office
11:00 – 12:30	Meeting with the MHCRM team - Nasriddin Minikulov and Hamidov Vokhid Venue: AF Project office
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:15 – 15:15	Meeting with Veronique Gerrard and Vladimir Lekarkin Venue: UNDP CO CH
16:00 - 17:00	Meeting with Muhibullo Junaidov, Head of the Project Implementation Unit, CEP Venue: CEP
17:00	Drive to the Hotel and wrap-up Venue: Hotel lobby/Cafe space
Day 6: Tuesday, 17 October, 2023	
09:00 - 10:00	Meeting with State Institution: Specially Protected Areas - Suhrob Kholzoda director Venue: SPA office
10:00 – 17:00	Field trip north - JWMP /WAP model site - D. Aliev Jamoat
Day 7: Wednesday, 18 October, 2023	
08:00 - 17:00	Follow up meetings and consolidation Meeting with Agency on Hydrometeorology - weather stations, hazard modelling, info. dissemination (Jamilya B.) Venue: Hydromet Meet with Alla Kuvvatova - IWRM trainings Venue: AF Office
Day 8: Thursday, 19 October, 2023	
09:00 – 12:00	As per MTR request follow up meetings and discussions
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 17:00	Consolidation of all the data and finalizing findings Preparation for presentation of MTR initial conclusions and findings/recommendations
Day 9: Friday, 20 October, 2023	
09:00 – 09:30	Pick-up at the hotel
09:30 – 12:00	MTR Team Review and consolidation of data and initial findings
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:30	Presentation of initial findings at the UNDP CO (RR) and CEP (Center for Projects)
15:30 – 16:30	Follow up and wrap-up
Day 10: Saturday, 21 October, 2023	
MTR Lead Consultant Departure	

Annex 7 Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people’s right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people’s right to provide information in confidence and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders’ dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings, and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing, or advising on the project being evaluated.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: Francis Hurst

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): N/A

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at *Moncarapacho, Portugal (Place)* on *6th October 2023 (Date)*

Signature:



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8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing, or advising on the project being evaluated.

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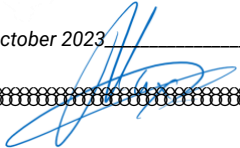
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ҶАВОБИ ҶАМЪА 9 October 2023 (Place) Dushanbe, Tajikistan (Date)

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Annex 8 MTR comment risk log and SESP

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
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<p>Changes in pasture and livestock management practices and reforestation measures (grazing control, rotational grazing, livestock exclusion zones, rehabilitation and restoration of forest ecosystems). Project activities could potentially restrict availability, quality of and access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups.</p>		<p>The project will support grazing control measures (rotational grazing), establish livestock exclusion zones and reforestation measures sites in consultation with target benefiting communities. Cost-effectiveness analysis with mid- to long-term impacts will be carried out to inform communities of anticipated benefits, but to address short-term limitations concerning access to pasture lands and forests, the project will promote alternative business solutions and community enterprise developments that will help communities generate compensating incomes. To further support sustainability of given measures, the project will implement site-appropriate interventions, for example, reducing extensive livestock grazing through enhanced fodder production techniques (within exclusion zones, rotational grazing, on-site production, demonstration plots, etc), increasing productivity of on-site animal husbandry, and establishing watering sites at mid-stream levels of catchment/watershed areas (saving livestock energy in search of water sources in the upstream).</p> <p>To alleviate such a limitation, the project will target degraded forests and pasturelands, and once rotational grazing is put in place and target deforested lands are planted with fast-growing woodlots, the communities will soon begin to benefit more already during the project period, the benefits they would not have been otherwise able to have from degraded assets at the time.</p> <p>The project will engage widely with relevant stakeholders at regional, sub-regional and community levels to agree on rotational routes for transit of larger herds, and eliminate potential compromising of implemented grazing control measures applied locally by large herd owners from other communities, districts and/or regions. Jamoat level monitoring and control mechanisms will be introduced to enforce agreed measures for elimination of land degradation and improving vegetation growth in target pasture lands, and ensure that target communities effectively benefit from project interventions.</p> <p>The project will also introduce energy-efficient stoves into target communities to compensate for limited access to forest resources. While such experience already exists in other regions of Tajikistan applied by partner development agencies/projects, the outcomes vary across projects with different degrees of efficiency needs. The project will assess the best practices and lessons learned and apply enhanced techniques in Kofirnighan river basin.</p> <p>The project will also support the implementation long-term financing of integrated catchment management strategy through PES models that will be developed for each target district. These models will further enable the financing to undertake initiatives that strengthen ecosystem services and build climate resilience with each target district and community. The PES models will be designed based on a combination of regional, international and local best practices. The design will also be informed by the results of existing PES models made use of in Tajikistan. Such models will be accessed through the knowledge hubs that proposed project is supporting (under Outcome 3).</p>	<p>Mid-term review, project monitoring missions.</p>	<p>Mitigation actions do not fit the risk identified. With the risk of sounding dismissive – the mitigation measures appear to have been prepared without experience of the complex challenge of working with common pool resource management systems at this level, neither does it appear to have had any concept of the time involved, seasonality or the real on-ground realities of current land use systems and community freedom of choice / capacity in Tajikistan (e.g. <i>To alleviate such a limitation, the project will target degraded forests and pasturelands, and once rotational grazing is put in place and target deforested lands are planted with fast-growing woodlots, the communities will soon begin to benefit more already during the project period, the benefits they would not have been otherwise able to have from degraded assets at the time</i></p> <p>MTR status - this risk is unlikely because the local communities, land users will simply not participate unless they can see that activities will work.</p> <p>Project document mitigation actions are, in any case, not grounded in the real country / or technical implementation reality context.</p> <p>Adaption of the project approach since 2022 has gone some distance to re-orientate implementation towards more emphasis on addressing the underlying resilience needs in terms of addressing the common pool / community aspects.</p> <p>Critique of mitigation actions provided in Project documents:</p> <p>1) Rotational Grazing Adaptation: Traditional herding practices may conflict with new rotational grazing, causing resistance among communities accustomed to long-established grazing routes.</p> <p>2) Alternative Business Viability: Targeted areas of the project lack the infrastructure and market access necessary for alternative business solutions to be successful, discouraging adoption.</p> <p>2) Energy-Efficient Stoves: Cultural preferences for traditional cooking methods and the harsh Tajik winter may limit the adoption of energy-efficient stoves.</p>
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				<p>3) Stakeholder Engagement: Diverse and competing interests, especially in resource-scarce areas in project targeted area will lead to conflicts and hinder compliance with new grazing controls. <i>An example of our visit is where grazing areas are bought by a businessman from a different region of Tajikistan and these businessmen bring their livestock to the targeted area for grazing while limiting access to the local community's livestock.</i></p> <p>PES Model Stability: Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) models in Tajikistan depend on external funding and a solid regulatory framework, which may not be reliably in place. In short, it is a dead approach for this stage of the project implementation</p> <p>MTR Status Alternative practical risk mitigation measures:</p> <p>Inclusive Community Planning: Engage local communities, including marginalized groups, from the outset in planning and decision-making processes. This ensures that their concerns and needs are heard and addressed, and that they have a stake in the success of the project.</p> <p>Phased Implementation: Introduce changes gradually, in phases, to allow communities to adapt. This approach respects the timing and labor involved in shifting to new practices. It also provides a buffer period to address any unforeseen impacts on resource availability and access.</p> <p>Alternative Resource Provision: Before restricting access to resources, ensure alternative sources or means of livelihood are in place and accessible to those affected. This might involve setting up community funds or providing training in alternative income-generating activities.</p> <p>Flexibility in Grazing Practices: Adapt rotational grazing schedules to align with local seasonal patterns and livestock needs. This might involve creating a flexible schedule that can be adjusted annually or seasonally based on community feedback and ecological monitoring.</p> <p>Targeted Support for Marginalized Groups: Provide specific support to marginalized individuals or groups to ensure they are not disproportionately affected by the changes. This</p>
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Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
					<p>could take the form of subsidies, additional training, or prioritized access to new services.</p> <p><i>Monitoring and Evaluation: Regularly monitor the effects of project activities on resource availability and quality. This should involve both scientific monitoring and local knowledge, with the findings used to make ongoing adjustments to project activities.</i></p> <p>Capacity Building: Invest in local capacity building to enable community members to manage their resources effectively. This should include both technical training in sustainable practices and leadership training to help local leaders manage the transition.</p> <p>Participatory Monitoring: Involve community members in the monitoring of resources to ensure that changes in quality or availability are quickly identified and addressed.</p>
<p>Planting of more resilient species, using native varieties, for reforestation activities. There is a risk of potential use of alien and invasive species.</p>			<p>The project will promote the use of native and more resilient varieties as a priority, and if needed alien species may be introduced. Certain species may be used for complementary planting (climate resilient crops seed varieties) in reforestation areas to increase vegetation and biological biodiversity, forest protection and restoration. Prior to such introduction, the project will consult relevant experts at CEP, among development partner agencies, and local dehkan and corporate farms on successful examples across the regions. Necessary national environmental standards, norms and procedures of adaptation of intended alien species will be followed and assessed before introduction takes place.</p> <p>While restoration needs are many in each target district within Kofirnighan river basin, the project will consult municipalities and communities to define restoration areas with particular focus on priority areas most vulnerable to water related adverse climatic events.</p> <p>The Project will also support the setting up of a procedure for tracking, monitoring and registration of restoration actions implemented. During the last year of the project an ecological and land use assessment will be carried out to evaluate the rate of success of the restoration.</p>	<p>MTR?</p>	<p>Risk mitigation is inconsistent with project’s design. The mitigation measures were committing the project to activities it was not able to perform due to the way it had been set up. Project experience would suggest that the propagation and multiplication of native species would need specialist knowledge and significantly more time than was available to the project.</p> <p>MTR comment – the MTR saw some planting using <i>Pinus spp.</i> Which are not native. Mitigating this risk will require significantly more technical assistance otherwise Service Providers are likely to revert to conventional afforestation methods using planting material that is readily available. The cost effectiveness of afforestation measures should be tested against simple exclusion and natural regeneration approaches.</p> <p>More detailed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mitigation Inconsistency: The risk mitigation measures proposed by the project require actions that the project cannot fulfil due to its initial design and structure. In other words, the project aimed to undertake activities for which it was not adequately prepared or resourced.

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
					<p>2) Experience and Time Constraints: Based on prior experience, the cultivation and expansion of native species—which is a preferred environmental action—requires specialized knowledge. Furthermore, it is a time-intensive process. The project, as designed, does not have the time resources or possibly the expertise to effectively carry out these actions.</p> <p>3) Observation of Non-native Species Planting: The Mid-Term Review (MTR) observed the use of non-native species (<i>Pinus</i> spp.) in the project's planting activities. This directly contradicts the project's aim to propagate native species and indicates a fall-back to readily available, non-native planting material.</p> <p>4) Need for Technical Assistance: To mitigate the risk of using non-native species, the project would require more technical assistance. Without such expertise, Service Providers might default to conventional afforestation methods, which are not in line with the project's environmental goals.</p> <p>5) Evaluation of Cost-Effectiveness: It is suggested that the project should evaluate the cost-effectiveness of its afforestation measures compared to other approaches, such as allowing areas to exclude human interference and letting natural regeneration take place. This is to assess whether the intended active intervention is indeed the most efficient use of resources and effort in achieving reforestation and restoration objectives.</p>

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
<p>Sowing of indigenous grass seeds in degraded rangelands.</p> <p>There is a risk of using unproductive and harmful grass seeds.</p> <p>There may be unavailable qualifications for fodder and animal feed species adapted to local conditions and target ecological zones.</p>			<p>In order to address risks of using unproductive and harmful grass seeds, the project will engage with technical specialists institutions (national) and local communities, and jointly carry out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geo-botanical survey of summer pasturelands; • Study productivity dynamics of fodder producing summer pasturelands; • Development of recommendations for improvement of summer pasturelands in mountainous areas through sowing effective fodder plans. 	MTR	<p>MTR comment - it is not clear when and how these would be undertaken in the time available is not clear. It suggests a very poor understanding of project implementation.</p> <p>These activities mentioned in mitigation actions are not in WAP that will be carried out under CFP. In short, no resources and funds were allocated for: Geo-botanical survey of summer pasturelands or Study of productivity dynamics of fodder producing summer pasturelands</p>
<p>Establishment of pasture use groups. Unregulated pasture use, rotational grazing and pasture transit routes may affect achievement of less than optimum project results in target pasturelands.</p>			<p>The project will support pasture use groups with necessary information and knowledge building on the stock of pasturelands in target areas, and their level of degradation and help them develop pasture improvement plans. The project will involve local authorities in order to agree on alternative transit routes for livestock owners from other communities to address over-grazing of degraded pastures.</p> <p>Supporting pasture use groups will ensure livestock owners bear responsibility in effective implementation of agreed pasture use plans that foresees payment mechanisms to contribute in sustainability of the interventions.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>The risk is non-sensical. The mitigation measures are unrealistic with the Project Document design. The MTR considers that with the CFPs and adequate technical assistance support the Pasture Users Associations could be strengthened, but within the project timeframe this remains very challenging.</p> <p>MTR analyses: Nothing related to this mitigation measure is mentioned in project documents. It may be implied but not mentioned “black and white”.</p>
<p>Harvesting of forest resources by local communities.</p> <p>Unsustainable community harvesting of forest resources may adversely affect project forest areas.</p>			<p>The project will aim to prevent and mitigate aggressive harvesting practices through a wider awareness campaign among communities at Jamoat and district levels, and introduce concrete measures to contain harvesting practices only from healthy forest ecosystems (‘sustainable’ harvesting). The project will actively engage communities in joint forest management activities, in planting woodlots for fuelwood and timber, implement agroforestry actions to alongside alternative business support (bee-keeping, fodder production, etc), and promote commercial plantations in salinized and degraded lands. The project will provide training for communities concerning suitable fuelwood plantations, fast growing tree species, and share best practices in sustainable use of forest resources. The communities will be supported with commercial plantation of fruit trees and will be introduced with energy-efficient eco-stoves to further reduce the use of wood material in vulnerable communities.</p> <p>Aforementioned EbA measures and techniques will be incorporated into the forestry and integrated catchment management strategies to be developed by the Project.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>As above comments. The mitigation measures indicate a poor understanding of resource tenure regimes and in particular common pool resource management and the inefficiencies and inequalities which can degrade them and create open access systems.</p>

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
Some of the expected outcomes of the project, particularly the forest restoration component, are sensitive to potential impacts of climate change. The project is directly addressing climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation capacities in the Kofirnighan river basin, and while it directly promotes adaptation measures, adverse impacts of extreme climatic events (particularly flooding, water run-off) can affect forest and agricultural areas and related livelihoods.			<p>The project will aim to build climate resilience through development of catchment management strategy to manage and operationalize climate risks at district and Jamoat levels in Kofirnighan river basin.</p> <p>Current and predicted climatic variability has been taken into account during project design. Throughout the inception and implementation phase, any changes in the climate will be taken into account in planning for the implementation of EbA activities. Drought- and flood-resilient species will be used, as well as indigenous species wherever possible. Techniques to assist plant growth particularly in the seedling/sapling phases and to reduce risk of damage from extreme climate events will be used. Species will be planted in appropriate seasons to reduce the risk of this impact occurring.</p> <p>As part of Early Warning Systems, the project will develop multi-hazard climate risk models (MHCRM) for vulnerable watersheds in KRB and provide technical support for the modernization of automated weather stations in the most vulnerable districts of KRB. These will help authorities and communities adequately assess risks, climate related projections and incorporate these risks in the Kofirnighan River Basin Management Plans to make informed decisions on EbA activities.</p>	Use of climate risk management tools and assessments; Mid-term reviews; Project monitoring missions.	<p>Even if based on the premise that there would be a catchment management strategy, the mitigation measures are immediately flawed. The mitigation measures appear to “kick the can down the road” to the inception and implementation. However, it is not clear where the capacities within the project would come from given the paucity of technical assistance incorporated into the design.</p> <p>This put a huge technical burden on the PMU. It would be extraordinary if the finance cycle and planting cycle could be synchronised by YR2 and further mitigations were unrealistic with the conditions on the ground.</p> <p>Mitigation action like - climatic variations are considered in the project design and will be monitored throughout its phases IS NOT viable by default.</p> <p>Example: Output 1.2 “Upgrade equipment of Hydromet and get information for decision-making of farmers” Indicator 1.2 “Relevant threat and hazard information generated and disseminated to stakeholders on a timely basis.”</p> <p>This activity is late and information generated for decision making will be late due to time constrains of the project.</p>
Construction of small-scale water infrastructure and irrigation systems. Project may involve community safety risks from small-scale construction activities			<p>The Project will follow related environmental impact assessment procedures and ensure compliance with national construction standards and norms, sanitary norms and regulations, and other national laws and regulations (forestry, water, environment, and health). The project will also follow technical guidance and best practices regarding rain-water harvesting systems, drip-irrigation techniques, and micro-reservoirs that are not adequately institutionalized across the country.</p> <p>Other activities may include construction of gabions, terracing, bank enforcement and small dams, the project will assess best practices and lessons learned to address community safety risks from such construction.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	As above.
Pest control measures and agricultural support may involve potential use of pesticides. There may be a risk of application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the			<p>The project will promote safe and healthy agro-ecological practices, and communities will be trained on these through support of agro-ecological extension services at the Jamoat level to provide technical support for EbA implementation.</p> <p>Though not foreseen, but if potentially harmful pesticides are needed and/or will be used, they will be properly managed, stored, used, following national and international standard regulation and procedures.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>Unlikely.</p> <p>The more pertinent risk that should have been highlighted here is the actual existence / feasibility of the private technical extension service providers in the project area / country (an assumption in the project document not borne out by reality).</p>

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
environment or human health.					
<p>Duty-bearing ministries/agencies and local authorities do not have sufficient expertise and technical/material resources to meet their obligations in the Project. Capacities of national institutions, district authorities and governance mechanisms are not sufficient to provide effective (governance) solutions to climate problems that are complex and multi-sectoral.</p> <p>There is a risk that duty-bearing organizations will tend to focus more on mitigation response on consequences of adverse climatic and environmental hazards, rather than on prevention through EbA actions.</p>			<p>Focal institutions will be strengthened through participatory development of integrated catchment management strategy and Watershed Action Plans for the Kofirnighan river basin. Coordination and training mechanisms will be strengthened within target Jamoats (sub-district government level), which includes capacity building on mainstreaming integrated catchment management (with EbA integrated) into planning and budgetary processes. Trainings target relevant government institutions involved in catchment/watershed management, including CEP and Ministry of Energy and Water Resources.</p> <p>In the framework of implementing the water sector reform programme and development of Kofirnighan River Basin Plan under the leadership of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, the project will contribute in the river basin development and planning processes through integrating catchment management strategies and watershed action plans with EbA related interventions as necessary.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>The risk is a Critical Risk and very relevant. The mitigation measures are wholly unrealistic within the project’s design and technical resources, and within the actual context of water sector reforms / institutions in Tajikistan currently.</p> <p>The project document failed to incorporate sufficient emphasis on the technical capacity needs as reflected by the lack of any overall international technical support in the project design/budget.</p> <p>The pertinence of this risk was evident from the poor technical understanding of the PMU and CEP of the project and failure during the inception phase to practically address either the project design limitations or the actual on ground situation in the country (in regard to water sector reforms, community capacity, existence of technical extension service providers, etc.).</p> <p>The risk was belatedly addressed to some extent been partially mitigated by the engagement of an International technical Adviser.</p> <p>However, that Contract has now expired and the project currently does not have any substantive technical advice. This remains a substantive risk and needs urgent attention. Mitigation measures would need full-time technical advice to guide the process, including the continuation of a long term (part time) overall CTA and recruitment, on a competitive salary, of an experienced full time national technical coordinator.</p> <p>MTR analyses: In reality the risk was there from the beginning and appropriate actions were not taken. Example: Measure to mitigate risk: Institutional Strengthening Action to be taken: Focal institutions to be enhanced via the participatory development of integrated catchment</p>

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
					management strategies and Watershed Action Plans for the Kofirnighan river basin
<p>Potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups, could potentially be excluded from fully participating in decisions that may affect them. Limitations may exist in the capacities of local stakeholders, in particular poor and vulnerable groups, to participate effectively in decision making that can affect them. Marginalized groups in project area of Kafernigan river basin can be considered poor and vulnerable population that potentially include those living in places with increased impacts of climate change, food insecure households, households with limited or no productive assets (limited resilience), livestock and/or agricultural land plots. Given the relatively higher rates of labor migration among men (to Russian Federation and else), households without manpower, female-headed households, and those with small children</p>			<p>Prior to project implementation, during inception phase, the project will carry out vulnerability assessment of target communities in participatory manner holding focused consultations in designing specific tailor-made activities suitable for vulnerable and marginalized groups. Where feasible such groups will be prioritized for concrete adaptation interventions. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will guide such consultations inclusively during preparation phases, assuring broad representation of existing relevant community-based organizations and groups. These involve, farming associations and cooperatives, women’s committees, intervention related initiative groups, pasture development associations, Water User Associations (WUA), forestry cooperatives and communal health promoters. The project will monitor and assess the extent of involvement of vulnerable and marginalized within such groups and associations.</p> <p>Among targeted actions that may be prioritized and suitable for vulnerable groups may include on-farm adaptation interventions, household plots productivity measures, selection of demonstration plots with farmer field school support. Certain enterprise development and income generating activities (bee keeping, fodder production, livestock productivity support, etc) may also be suitable for the given groups to ensure benefits are distributed inclusively and in equitable manner.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>As above.</p> <p>Risk description is very long and incoherent.</p>

Description of risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation actions	Responsible party	MTR analysis
and elderly may also be considered vulnerable. Often, as experience shows, such vulnerable groups have limited mobility to participate during key stages of project design and implementation.					
<p>Women may be excluded from decision-making or not adequately participate in the design/implementation of the project.</p> <p>As a result, they may have unequal access to resources and/ or access to opportunities and benefits. Due to high level of male labor outmigration from rural communities, women are overburdened with household management and maintenance of nearby land assets. This may potentially limit women’s participation in project consultation and planning processes, but if necessary measures are taken, the increased role of women in agriculture and livestock management at household level may result advantageous to women in the first place.</p>			<p>Designed project activities will be implemented so that all genders are: (a) able to participate fully and equitably, (b) receive comparable social and economic benefits, (c) do not suffer disproportionate adverse effects as per UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.</p> <p>A more detailed gender analysis will be undertaken in the inception phase of the project to assess divisions of labor and women’s role and access to resources and to develop recommendations on how project will promote women’s equality and empowerment, including participation in project decision-making, as outlined in the ESMF.</p> <p>For this purpose, based on a detailed gender analysis, and in consultation with target communities that have prioritized their sub-projects, a comprehensive Gender Action Plan will be developed that will state out requirements to ensure that SES are met. The requirements and measures will ensure that women receive an equitable share of benefits and that their status and interests are not marginalized. Participatory processes will include specially designed methodologies that enhance the participation of women and therefore enhance the inclusion of their views into the activities of the project, using existing mechanisms for representing women’s views.</p> <p>For monitoring, disaggregated and measurable data related to gender equality and empowerment of women will be incorporated. Furthermore, when possible, measures and techniques that can have a positive impact by closing the gap of inequality between men and women will be promoted.</p>	MTR, project monitoring missions	<p>The project has initially undertaken a “business as usual” gender risk / strategy without a meaningful identification of the genuine gender issues relevant in the natural resource use context at community level.</p> <p>This has been partially mitigated in the Jamoat Watershed Management/Action Plans development process that a). provides an assessment of the key gender issues at the Jamoat/community level. b). include gender sensitive data, c). programs/actions with gender emphasis.</p> <p>The practical impact of these efforts needs to be closely followed up with the Responsible Parties ((CfP contractors) if/when they are operationalised.</p> <p>The gender risk should remain high and the National Technical Adviser on gender should work closely with other TA (e.g. National and International TA) to ensure this risk is mitigated during further implementation.</p>

Annex 9 Outputs progress

Output	Indicator	Baseline	MTR Target	EOP Target	MTR Comments
Output 1.1. Multi-hazard climate risk models (MHCRMs) developed for target watersheds in the KRB.	Indicator 1.1 Number of risk models developed.	0	Gap analysis conducted for KRB that details climate risks for all watersheds.	By the end of the project, at least one MHCRM developed for each watershed in the KRB (and each of six target district).	Poor progress. Gap analysis conducted for KRB that details climate risks for all watersheds. The project plans to prepare pilots for Elok and Varzob rivers. The ITA has conducted some training and support and the NCs are preparing with above support. Recommendations have been made for possible next steps.
Output 1.2 Providing support for establishing automated weather stations in KRB sub catchments to provide data for refining the multi-hazard climate models [developed under [sic]...	Indicator 1.2 Relevant threat and hazard information generated and disseminated to stakeholders on a timely basis.	Currently, weather stations do not provide up-to-date and relevant information in a timely manner to inform climate risks. There is limited delivery of climate information to local communities.	Policy- and decision-makers in KRB receive forecasts from Hydromet.	By the end of the project, policy- and decision-makers in KRB receive forecasts and downscaled national climate information every quarter from Hydromet. By the end of the project, local communities in the project interventions sites receive tailored climate information packages.	Poor progress. Policy- and decisionmakers in KRB receive forecasts from Hydromet. Process ongoing and has faced many complications with regard the procurement of the equipment. Challenges in matching technical aspects of equipment with national capacities. Current result:
Output 1.3 Integrated catchment management strategy developed for the KRB.	Indicator 1.3 Integrated catchment management strategy developed. Number of staffs trained (gender disaggregated). Number of community members trained (gender disaggregated).	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 30 staff from RBOs and RBCs, along with relevant staff from CEP, Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management across all target departments. At least 50 community members in each district (of which 30% are	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from RBOs and RBCs, along with relevant staff from CEP, Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) (of which at least 30% are women) trained on integrated catchment management across all target departments.	Integrated Catchment Management strategy: Cancelled. Based on slightly more clarity of the KRB reform situation - there is no practical benefit at this point in adding an additional “planning document” i.e. a basin strategy. <u>Such a strategy document is not envisaged by any of the reform process and</u>

			women) trained on identification of suitable EbA interventions (600 people in total).	At least 100 community members in each district (of which 30% are women) trained on identification of suitable EbA interventions (600 people in total).	<p><u>stakeholders</u>. It will be more important to focus on support the “re-energizing” of the existing WSF plans in the KRB and in particular (i.e. it proves viable) strengthening the draft KRB management plan and capacity of RBO/RBC and other stakeholders (ARLI’s etc) to practically implement.</p> <p>This is likely to be aligned with and supported by, other donors in much larger scale and coordinated way. MEWM expressed preference to await such support.</p> <p>Project should now coordinate with UNDP Water sector reform project (new international PM) to identify 1 or 2 concrete contributions project could make that support their objectives.</p>
Output 1.4 Strengthened coordination and training mechanisms for integrated climate-resilient catchment management.	Indicator 1.4 Number of interactions between relevant stakeholders	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 2 meetings are held per year between different government sectors, RBOs, district authorities etc.	By the end of the project, at least 2 meetings are held per year between different government sectors, RBOs, district authorities etc.	Training delivered. However, it is not clear how the RBO etc coordination meetings organized because the Water Sector Reform process stalled).
Output 1.5 Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) models to support the long-term financing of integrated catchment management strategy implementation.	Indicator 1.5 Number of PES models developed for the KRB	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 1 PES model developed and at least one policy brief submitted to government detailing the model.	By the end of the project, at least 1 PES model developed and at least one policy brief submitted to government detailing the model.	PES cancelled. Revised Output on track. Plan to introduce Ecosystem service concept/approach and use demonstration study in Varzob basin as basis for


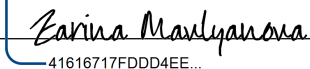
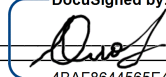
					potentially moving to actual valuation. Good quality ESVAL report produced. Workshop in held in November. Result: Basis for decision on any further steps to create groundwork in future for PES. Output should now focus on financial viability of KRB or catchment demonstration.
Outcome 2 outputs					
Output 2.1 Agro-ecological extension services supported at the jamoat level to provide technical support for EbA implementation.	Indicator 2.1 Number of extension service provider developed.	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 1 private extension service provider in each target KRB district supported	At least 1 private extension service provider in each target KRB district supported	In the absence of existing agro-extension service providers this output/budget lines were used to implement isolated priority interventions based on feedback/request of local authorities. The purpose was to initiate on ground actions and build good with target communities and local authorities. For full list of completed initiatives see Annex XX
Output 2.2 Watershed Action Plans (WAPs) developed that promote climate resilience and enhance economic productivity for target communities.	Indicator 2.2 Number of WAPs developed.	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 1 WAP developed in at least 7 of the 14 target jamoats	By the end of the project, at least 1 WAP developed in each of the 14 target jamoats.	All 14 Jamoats. a). Overall Jamoat 10-year watershed “Management” Plan developed. b). A shorter term (3.5 year) Watershed Action Plan to be supported by the project (set of integrated programs to support local authority

					and community application of EbA best practices). This provides the vehicle to rationally introduce the EbAs at the local level and has been a very significant and intelligent adaptation of the original Project Document and represents a considerable workload undertaken.
Output 2.3 EbA interventions implemented in target watersheds by local communities.	Indicator 2.3 Number of hectares of land with EbA activities implemented at project sites in each district	0	By year 3 of the project, at least 125 ha of land in each district undergoing EbA implementation (750 ha in total).	At least 250 ha of land in each district undergoing EbA implementation (1,500 ha in total).	<p><u>Now getting on track but very vulnerable to any further delays.</u></p> <p>Some equipment, heavy machinery was procured but is now on hold due to RR putting on hold. Equipment currently held in storage until CFP process complete and WAPs under implementation (to ensure equipment provided to specific partners at local level).</p> <p>WAP implementation: <i>Cfp for north (8 WAPS)</i> – bids under review currently. <i>Cfp south (6 WAPS)</i> – Documents for process drafted by project – go ahead by UNDP CO pending result of Cfp north result Set of additional interventions planned: a. Limited infrastructure support to add value to WAPs</p>

					<p>b. Tugai inventory/community management</p> <p>c. Romit Biosphere Reserve support</p> <p>Project GIS: Initiated but needs much more training and development</p>
Outcome 3 outputs					
<p>Output 3.1. Existing knowledge management platforms supported for collating information on the planning, implementation and financing of EbA interventions.</p>	<p>Indicator 3.1 Existing knowledge centre/ platforms/ hubs in Tajikistan are supported and include information and data on KRB and specifically climate risk information.</p>	<p>Climate change research is not coordinated within the KRB and across Tajikistan. Knowledge generated through projects is not collated, shared or disseminated.</p>	<p>By year 3 of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.</p>	<p>By the end of the project at least 1 knowledge centre has been strengthened.</p>	<p>The project has produced a Knowledge Platform as an interactive page on the CEP web platform. However, it would be useful to provide wider best practices and an easy option might be the translation and addition of WOCAT best practices and other best practices from other projects.</p>
<p>Output 3.2. An impact evaluation framework (IEF) to enable effective adaptive management of EbA activities.</p>	<p>Indicator 3.2 Evaluation of EbA interventions in target sites conducted.</p>	<p>Several projects have undertaken activities on climate change adaptation within Tajikistan. However, none of these activities have been evaluated according to their impacts for communities.</p>	<p>Bi-annually, regular monitoring of EbA interventions in target sites conducted.</p>	<p>By the end of the project, an IEF will be developed that details the process of evaluating the impact of implemented EbA measures on communities.</p>	<p>Project plans for the GIS being the basis for an effective impact evaluation tool but still much to be done on.</p>

MTR Report Clearance Form

(to be completed and signed by the Commissioning Unit and RTA and included in the final document)

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:		
UNDP Country Office Environment, Climate Change and DRR Cluster Team Leader		
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