

MID-TERM REVIEW

Project ID:	10187
Project Name:	Climate Smart Agriculture alternatives for upland production systems in Lao PDR
Countr(ies):	Lao PDR
Implementing Agency:	FAO

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name

Climate Smart Agriculture alternatives for upland production systems in Lao PDR

Country

Lao PDR

GEF ID

10187

Implementing Agency

FAO

Executing Entity

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)

Trust Fund

LDCF

Project Type

FSP

Objective

To enhance resilience of vulnerable upland communities to climate change impacts through climate-smart agricultural practices in upland production systems.

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval

5/28/2021

Agency Approval

6/10/2021

Implementation Start

7/1/2021

First Disbursement

7/16/2024

Expected MTR

MTR Submission

9/17/2025

Actual MTR

5/28/2025

Expected Completion

6/30/2026

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main MTR Findings

Introduction - Purpose and Scope of MTR

1. The purpose of this Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to assess the progress, performance, and relevance of the project “*Climate Smart Agriculture Alternatives for Upland Production Systems in Lao PDR*” at its implementation midpoint. The MTR aims to generate evidence-based findings and actionable recommendations to inform project adjustments for improved delivery, sustainability, and achievement of intended outcomes. It serves both accountability and learning functions for the Government of Lao

People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

2. The MTR addresses key evaluation questions aligned with GEF and FAO criteria, focusing on the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and likelihood of sustainability. It also explores the theory of change, stakeholder engagement, risk management, and progress toward enhancing the resilience of upland communities through climate-smart agriculture.
3. The scope of the MTR includes assessing the entire project implementation period to date (from July 2021 to April 2025), covering strategic design, institutional arrangements, implementation processes, field-level interventions, and results across both target provinces—Luang Prabang and Houaphanh.
4. Primary users of the evaluation include the Government of Lao PDR [Department of Agricultural Land Management (DALAM) / Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)], government departments, FAO, GEF, provincial and district agriculture offices, local communities, and development partners. Findings are intended to inform project adjustments, support strategic decision-making, and guide future climate-resilient investments in upland agriculture.
5. The evaluation was undertaken from May to July 2025, with a field mission conducted from 21st to 30th May.

Evaluation Methods

6. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) applied a participatory evaluation framework. Data sources included a review of project documents, progress reports, financial data, and planning tools. Primary data were collected through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations across all four districts of the two provinces. In total, 47 individuals were consulted—33 project stakeholders and 15 community members—along with two focus group discussions (9 men and 6 women) held at the community level.
7. Analytical tools included a theory of change review, implementation gap analysis, and participatory assessments to identify drivers and barriers to results. Findings were triangulated to ensure credibility.
8. Some limitations, such as challenging field conditions and data gaps, were addressed through sampling, stakeholder consultations, local support, and rigorous methods to enhance data reliability and minimize bias.

Findings

Strategic Relevance

9. The project is strongly aligned with the strategic priorities of the GEF/Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), particularly in addressing climate change adaptation and land degradation in vulnerable upland systems. It supports FAO's strategic framework for resilience and sustainable agriculture.
10. At the national level, the project is consistent with the Lao PDR's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), agriculture sector strategy, and climate adaptation priorities. While complementarity with other development agency programs is evident, coordination mechanisms remain limited.
11. Overall, the project maintains high strategic relevance, though stronger synergies with similar initiatives and sub-national climate actions could further enhance coherence and impact. Strategic relevance is rated '**Highly Satisfactory**'.

Effectiveness

12. Progress across the four project outcomes is rated **Moderately Satisfactory** at midterm, considering the recent momentum gained in the project implementation. Outcome 1 (policy) has made initial progress through a workshop mapping land-use investment networks and governance structures. Outcome 2 (climate-adaptive land use planning and climate risk assessments) has advanced through

pilot implementation of p-FALUPAM, participatory climate risk assessments, and early FFS engagement, although progress remains slow due to delays in partner mobilization and LoA finalization.

13. Outcome 3 (scaling up of Climate Smart Agriculture Farmer Field School -CSA FFS) shows limited progress, as field piloting based on Outcome 2 results has yet to advance. Outcome 4 also faces delays, with few activities implemented in communication, knowledge management, learning, and adaptive improvement.
14. Several planned outputs are behind schedule, particularly those dependent on NGO/CSO engagement and sub-national LoAs. Nonetheless, encouraging local-level interest in land use and CSA demonstration activities, as well as initial community engagement, signal positive ownership.
15. The likelihood of achieving impact remains plausible but hinges on timely scaling, improved delivery mechanisms, and stronger knowledge integration. If addressed promptly, current bottlenecks may still allow the project to meet its intended outcomes by completion.

Efficiency

16. Implementation efficiency has been constrained by delays in project start-up, slow processing of Letters of Agreement (LoAs), and weak coordination and collaboration among key partners. The Operational Partner Implementation Modality (OPIM) promotes national ownership but has added procedural complexity. Sub-national engagement and field-level delivery remain limited to date. No detailed financial information is available, and fund disbursements are lagging behind planned timelines, affecting the timely achievement of outputs and reducing the project's adaptive capacity. The efficiency at mid-term is rated '**Moderately Unsatisfactory**'.

Sustainability of the project results

17. The overall sustainability of results is rated **Moderately Likely**. Financial sustainability is uncertain at this point, as there has been limited progress on securing future resources or planning post-project continuity. Socio-economic sustainability appears promising, driven by growing local demand for climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and participatory land use planning tools.
18. Institutional sustainability is moderate and depends on stronger collaboration at the national level and improved capacity at sub-national levels. Environmental sustainability is potentially strong due to the ecosystem-based adaptation focus. However, its long-term sustainability will depend on how well these approaches are mainstreamed and sustained through policy integration. Improved planning for transition and institutional integration is critical for lasting impact.

Stakeholder engagement

19. A stakeholder engagement structure has been formed, including a Project Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by the Deputy Minister, a Technical Advisory Group, and a Coordination Committee with representation from key stakeholders. While sub-national stakeholders have limited formal roles, they have actively participated in project operations.
20. Despite this structure, the project faced significant engagement challenges. The late onboarding of the Operational Partner (OP) delayed project mobilization. Stakeholder engagement has been uneven, with weak collaboration and sustained mistrust between the national coordinating agency and the OP. This undermined effective implementation.
21. Within the OPIM framework, FAO facilitated periodic dialogues and meetings to resolve coordination issues. While FAO's technical support has been valuable, the support from the country office in addressing operational bottlenecks has been insufficient.
22. Nonetheless, stakeholder engagement has led to some progress, such as increased awareness of climate-adaptive land use planning and CSA practices, and early-stage intersectoral coordination at the local level. For broader impact and sustainability, deeper and more systematic engagement across all levels is essential.

Progress in gender responsiveness

23. While gender considerations were integrated into project design, they have not been fully operationalized and systematically monitored yet. Gender indicators in the results framework are primarily limited to women's participation in activities. Although some gender-disaggregated data are being collected, delays in field-level implementation have limited the generation of evidence on gender-related barriers to participation, decision-making, and equitable benefit-sharing.

Knowledge management

24. The project's knowledge management (KM) component remains underdeveloped. While some knowledge products have been produced, progress has been limited. There is no formal KM strategy or operational plan to guide implementation. Moreover, structured learning loops that support adaptive management or policy engagement have not yet been established. A more systematic approach to KM, focused on documentation, learning, and exchange, will be crucial as community-level implementation expands.

Overall assessment

25. The project maintains strong strategic relevance and potential for impact. However, effectiveness has been constrained by delayed implementation, coordination challenges, and capacity gaps at various levels. Corrective actions, improved stakeholder collaboration, and stronger sub-national delivery mechanisms are urgently needed to meet objectives. While early signs of progress are noticeable, achieving transformative and sustainable outcomes will require intensified efforts in the remaining implementation period. The overall project performance is rated '**Moderately Satisfactory**' (see Table 1).

Conclusion

26. At midterm, the project demonstrates strong strategic relevance and alignment with national priorities, as well as with GEF/LDCF and FAO frameworks. However, progress has been constrained by delays in finalizing Letters of Agreement (LoAs), weak collaborative action among partners, inadequate field-level delivery, and limited engagement of NGOs/CSOs, among other factors.
27. While outcome-level achievements are yet to be visible, there is potential for good results if delivery mechanisms are strengthened and support systems are better aligned with local needs. OPIM modality provides ownership benefits but has also revealed coordination and efficiency gaps.
28. Encouragingly, there is growing interest and increased awareness among communities and sub-national stakeholders to engage in project interventions. Strengthening decentralized implementation, ensuring timely and coordinated delivery, and leveraging lessons learned are critical for achieving the project's intended objectives.
29. The sustainability of results will depend on enhanced institutional coordination, increased sub-national capacity, effective knowledge transfer, and realistic financial planning to extend and embed gains beyond the life of the project.

Recommendations

30. **Recommendation 1: Adjust the project start timeline and consider a no-cost extension, for at least one and a half years from GEF/LDCF to reflect a realistic implementation period (Responsibility – FAO/GEF and PSC).**
FAO and GEF in coordination with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) should consider shifting the End of Disbursement date to align with the actual date of the first disbursement rather than the approval

date and seek a no-cost extension for one and a half years to complete field activities, generate results, and allow space for learning and sustainability planning.

31. **Recommendation 2: Further strengthen FAO's facilitative and implementation role to accelerate project implementation and decide the implementation modality of the activities within the scope of FAO (*Responsibility - FAO*).**
FAO should consider enhancing coordination among stakeholders and regularly streamlining processes. The role of the focal point of FAOLA should be expanded throughout the project period, or an expert should be hired for fast-track delivery. Besides, FAO, in consultation with other stakeholders, should also provide guidance on the implementation of activities related to value chain piloting and investment (under 2.2.3, 3.1.1, and 3.1.2) to maintain technical quality, improve service delivery, and ensure efficient implementation.
32. **Recommendation 3: Strengthen decentralised implementation through targeted field delivery and strengthen technical and financial monitoring systems (*Responsibility - Government, PMU, FAO & OP*).**
Enhance decentralized implementation via participatory planning, prioritizing field delivery through deployment of technical staff at the sub-national level, adaptive management, and systematic knowledge generation to foster ownership, coordination, and learning. Develop strong monitoring, learning, and financial tracking systems to improve transparency, support evidence-based decisions and enable timely assessment of project benefits.
33. **Recommendation 4: Further strengthen strategic oversight and coordination through more engaged PSC, functional technical groups, and integrated risk management (*Responsibility - Government, OP and FAO*).**
Reinforce the PSC and technical groups to ensure stronger strategic oversight, coordination, and adaptive risk management, facilitating timely decisions, stakeholder alignment, and effective implementation.
34. **Recommendation 5: Strengthen operational efficiency through timely finalization and implementation of LoAs and review the project targets (*Responsibility - FAO, PMU, including OP*).**
Establish a fast-track approval mechanism for LoAs, clarify partner roles and timelines, and review project targets based on the current implementation context. The project should also review its targets considering the emerging context and resource availability.
35. **Recommendation 6: Prepare a sustainability plan by promoting partnerships and institutional alignment to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the results delivered by the project (*Responsibility - Government entities and OP*).**
Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan by fostering partnerships with ongoing initiatives and aligning with development priorities. Embed project practices within DAFOs and PAFOs to ensure institutional continuity post-project.
36. **Recommendation 7: Carry out a realistic assessment of partners' ability for co-financing and strengthen GEF's co-financing accountability (*Responsibility - FAO/GEF*).**
Conduct a realistic assessment of partners' readiness to co-finance during project design. Further strengthen guidance for projects to collect evidence and report, and a co-financing monitoring tool to track commitments, detect shortfalls early, and ensure co-financing materializes during implementation.

Table 1. Project assessment and rating according to GEF criteria

GEF criteria and sub-criteria	Rating	Reference to relevant sections
A. Strategic relevance		

A1. Alignment with GEF and FAO Strategic Priorities	HS	3.1.1
A2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities	HS	3.1.2
A3. Complementarity with existing interventions	S	3.1.3
A4. Overall strategic relevance	HS	3.1
B. Effectiveness		
B1. Overall evaluation of project outcomes	MS	3.2.1
B1.1 Output delivery	MS	3.2.1
B1.2 Overall progress towards project outcomes and objectives	MS	3.2.2
B1.3 Probability of impact	N/A	3.2.3
C. Efficiency		
C1. Efficiency	MU	3.3
D. Sustainability of project outcomes		
D1. Overall probability of sustainability	ML	3.4.1
D2. Sustainability in relation to financial risks	ML	3.4.2
D3. Sustainability in relation to socio-economic risks	ML	3.4.3
D4. Sustainability in relation to institutional and governance risks	ML	3.4.4
D5. Sustainability in relation to environmental risks	L	3.4.5
D6. Catalysis and replication	ML	3.4.6
E. Factors affecting performance		
E1. Project design and preparation	S	3.5.1
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	3.5.2
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO	MS	3.5.2.1
E2.2 Project oversight by PSC	MS	3.5.2.2
E3. Quality of project execution and risk assessment	MS	3.5.3
E3.1 Project execution and management	MS	3.5.3.1
E3.2 Project risk assessment	MS	3.5.3.2
E4. Co-financing of the project	MS	3.5.4
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MU	3.5.5
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	MU	3.5.6
E7. Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	MS	3.5.7
E7.1 Design of the M&E system	MS	3.5.7.1
E7.2 Implementation of the M&E plan (including financial and human resources)	MS	3.5.7.2
E8. Overall evaluation of factors affecting performance	MS	3.5.8
F. Cross-cutting concerns		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	3.6.1
F2. Human rights issues	UR	
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	S	3.6.2
Overall project evaluation	MS	

Notes: Rating (Strategic Relevance; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Factors affecting performance; Cross-cutting issues): Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to rate (UR)

B. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement

1. A stakeholder engagement structure has been formed, including a Project Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by the Deputy Minister, a Technical Advisory Group, and a Coordination Committee with representation from key stakeholders. While sub-national stakeholders have limited formal roles, they have actively participated in project operations.
2. Despite this structure, the project faced significant engagement challenges. The late onboarding of the Operational Partner (OP) delayed project mobilization. Stakeholder engagement has been uneven, with weak collaboration and sustained mistrust between the national coordinating agency and the OP. This undermined effective implementation.
3. Within the OPIM framework, FAO facilitated periodic dialogues and meetings to resolve coordination issues. While FAO's technical support has been valuable, the support from the country office in addressing operational bottlenecks has been insufficient.
4. Nonetheless, stakeholder engagement has led to some progress, such as increased awareness of climate-adaptive land use planning and CSA practices, and early-stage intersectoral coordination at the local level. For broader impact and sustainability, deeper and more systematic engagement across all levels is essential.

C. Gender Equality

Progress in gender responsiveness

While gender considerations were integrated into project design, they have not been fully operationalized and systematically monitored yet. Gender indicators in the results framework are primarily limited to women's participation in activities. Although some gender-disaggregated data are being collected, delays in field-level implementation have limited the generation of evidence on gender-related barriers to participation, decision-making, and equitable benefit-sharing.

3.6.1 Gender and other equity dimensions

Evaluation question: To what extent are gender and other equity dimensions adequately reflected in design and translated in the implementation of project activities?

Finding 32: The project incorporated gender and other equity considerations into design, but the depth of analysis and strategic tailoring was limited.

The project integrated gender concerns during the design phase by conducting a gender analysis aligned with GEF and FAO guidance. The project design acknowledged the vulnerability of upland communities to climate change, poverty, and social exclusion. A gender action plan was developed covering institutional, technical, and capacity development dimensions. Gender-responsive indicators were incorporated into the results framework, and activities across several outputs addressed gender issues, such as climate-resilient livelihoods, gender-responsive supply chains, and a gender-sensitive M&E system.

The project also considered contextual factors like local literacy levels and gender roles in NTFP management. However, the gender analysis remained relatively high-level and lacked detailed strategies to address the distinct needs of women and ethnic minorities, particularly in remote upland communities.

While gender mainstreaming was embedded structurally, more nuanced planning would have strengthened its potential impact. No explicit strategies were in place to address accessibility barriers (e.g., language, geography, institutional bias) or to further explore traditional knowledge systems and customary land rights issues.

Finding 33: Initial gender-responsive activities have begun, but women's involvement in decision-making and access to project benefits remain limited by mid-term.

Project implementation has included gender-sensitization training for staff and stakeholders, supported by a gender and socio-economic expert. Gender-disaggregated data (e.g., 38% of event participants were women) are being collected and used to inform M&E. However, field observations indicate that women's voices are still underrepresented in local decision-making processes, and they are not consistently informed about project activities.

Implementation of gender-sensitive measures shows some progress, yet consistent application to enhance women's roles—not only in participation but also in decision-making on natural resources and services—across all project sites remain a challenge.

While efforts to promote women's participation are evident, such as planned support for livelihoods and input access, these interventions have yet to fully materialize in the field. Additionally, no targeted measures were observed to address cultural or logistical barriers that restrict women's participation. Without such tailored approaches, women and marginalized groups risk remaining peripheral to the project's benefits.

In brief, the project made a solid start in gender integration by embedding gender-responsive design elements and initiating sensitization activities. However, both the analytical depth at design and the consistency of field-level implementation falls short of ensuring equitable participation and benefit-sharing. More deliberate and locally adapted strategies are needed to translate this commitment into meaningful outcomes for women and minority groups across all sites. Hence, gender integration in the project is rated **'Moderately Satisfactory'**

D. Knowledge Management

Knowledge management

1. The project's knowledge management (KM) component remains underdeveloped. While some knowledge products have been produced, progress has been limited. There is no formal KM strategy or operational plan to guide implementation. Moreover, structured learning loops that support adaptive management or policy engagement have not yet been established. A more systematic approach to KM, focused on documentation, learning, and exchange, will be crucial as community-level implementation expands.

3.5.6. Communication, awareness and Knowledge Management

Evaluation question: Has the project been effective in consolidating, communicating and promoting its key messages and outcomes to partners, stakeholders and the general public? How could this be improved?

Finding 27: The project has developed some knowledge products, but in general, limited progress has been noted in communication, awareness, and knowledge management, missing key opportunities to strategically engage stakeholders and showcase outcomes.

The project was designed with a strong emphasis on knowledge management and communication, aiming to inform decision-making and engage stakeholders through timely dissemination of information and project outcomes. It aligned with FAO's knowledge strategy principles and allocated specific resources for this purpose. A communication strategy was developed at the project design stage to ensure that

project-generated materials would be produced with end users in mind and reach a wide audience, including stakeholders at different levels.

The project further elaborated the communication plan in 2025 which identified the target groups, communication tools and methods for sharing information. However, the project has yet to meaningfully implement these communication and knowledge-sharing components. Some knowledge products, such as a CSA toolkit developed by NAFRI, have been prepared, but there is little evidence of strategic dissemination or awareness campaigns that could bridge the gap between project objectives and community-level understanding or engagement. While the project conducted some awareness activities, these were limited in scope and lacked an overarching strategy or consistent visibility. Stakeholders indicated that knowledge-sharing activities were delayed, largely due to broader implementation delays in other components.

The evaluators view this as a missed opportunity, as the project's results and innovations could have been more widely shown to improve visibility, foster replication, and strengthen stakeholder buy-in. Even early results could have been shared to sustain interest and momentum, particularly at the local level, where greater engagement is critical.

The evaluation team noted that the lack of communication and outreach has created an information gap between the project and its intended beneficiaries and stakeholders. If not corrected, this could diminish the project's long-term influence and visibility. The overall rating for communication and knowledge management is '**Moderately Unsatisfactory**'.

III. Core Indicators

LDCF INDICATOR

Please provide the culminative total achieved from the inception, if available in the implementation document.

Core Indicator				
CORE INDICATOR 1				
Total number of direct beneficiaries	Total 0	Male 0	Female 0	% for Women 0.00%
CORE INDICATOR 2				
Area of land managed for climate resilience(ha)	0.00			
CORE INDICATOR 3				
Total No. of policies/plans that will mainstream climate resilience	0			
CORE INDICATOR 4				
Total number of people trained	502	356	146	29.08%

OBJECTIVE 2 Mainstream climate change adaption and resilience for systemic impact							
OUTCOME 2.1 Strengthened cross-sectoral mechanisms to mainstream climate adaptation and resilience							
OUTPUT 2.1.1 Cross-sectorial policies and plans incorporate adaptation							
Will mainstream climate resilience 0	Of Which no of regional policies/plans 0	Of Which no of national policies/plans 0	Of Which no of reginal sub-national policies/plans 0				
Sectors							
Agriculture false	Fishery false	Industry false	Urban false				
Rural false	Health false	Water false					
Others (Specify below) false	Comments						
OUTPUT 2.1.2 Cross-sectoral institutional partnerships established or expanded							
No of institutional partnerships established or strengthened 0	Comment						
OUTPUT 2.1.3 Systems and frameworks established for continuous monitoring, reporting and review of adaptation							
No. of systems and frameworks 0	Comment						
OUTPUT 2.1.4 Vulnerability assessments conducted							
No. of assessments conducted 4						Comment	
OUTCOME 2.2 Adaptation considerations mainstreamed into investments							
OUTPUT 2.2.1 No. of institutions with increased ability to access and/or manage climate finance							
No. of institution(s) 0						Comment	

OUTPUT 2.2.2

Institutional coordination mechanism created or strengthened to access and/or manage climate finance

No. of mechanism(s)
3

Comment

OUTPUT 2.2.3

Global/regional/national initiatives demonstrated and tested early concepts with high adaptation potential

No. of initiative(s) or technology(ies)
0

Comment

OUTPUT 2.2.4

Public investment mobilized

Amount of investment (US\$)
0

Comment

OUTPUT 2.2.5

Private investment mobilized

Amount of investment (US\$)
0

Comment

OUTCOME 2.3

Institutional and human capacities strengthened to identify and implement adaptation measures

OUTPUT : 2.3.1

Number of people trained regarding climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses

Total no. of people trained	Total 251	Male 178	Female 73
Of which total no. of people at line ministries	251	178	73
Of which total no. of community /association members	0	0	0
Of which total no. of extension service officers	0	0	0
Of which total no. of hydromet and disaster risk management agency staff	0	0	0
Of which total no. of small private business owners	0	0	0
Of which total no. of schoolchildren, university students or teachers	0	0	0

Other (specify)		Comments	
OUTPUT : 2.3.2 Number of people made aware of climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses			
no. of people raised awareness	10,363	Male 5,389	Female 4,974
Please describe how their awareness was raised			
OUTCOME 3.3 Institutional and human capacities strengthened to identify and implement adaptation measures, as a support to NAP process and/or for enabling activities in response to COP guidance			
OUTPUT : 3.3.1 Number of people trained regarding climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses			
Total no. of people trained	Total 251	Male 178	Female 73
Of which total no. of people at line ministries	251	178	73
Of which total no. of community /association members	0	0	0
Of which total no. of extension service officers	0	0	0
Of which total no. of hydromet and disaster risk management agency staff	0	0	0
Of which total no. of small private business owners	0	0	0
Of which total no. of schoolchildren, university students or teachers	0	0	0
Other (specify)		Comments	
OUTPUT : 3.3.2 Number of people made aware of climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation responses			

Total no. of people raised awareness	0	Male 0	Female 0
Please describe how their awareness was raised			

IV: Co Financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Anticipated at CEO(\$)	Materialized at MTR(\$)
Donor Agency	IFAD	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,000,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	14,000,000.00	5,828,854.63
Total Co-financing				15,000,000.00	5,828,854.63

Comments

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

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

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

During the design phase, the project adhered to FAO's Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) requirements, addressing key elements such as Indigenous Peoples, cultural heritage, and the potential social impacts on vulnerable groups. It incorporated an Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan and committed to addressing potential grievances in the project areas with Indigenous Peoples, as outlined under Output 4.1.2 and required by FAO and GEF.

Environmental risks were proactively addressed through integrated measures such as climate vulnerability and risk assessments (CVRA), sustainable land management interventions, forest conservation, soil erosion control, and planned climate-smart agriculture activities. These were complemented by awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts targeting local communities and institutions, contributing positively to long-term environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

Despite these strengths, the implementation of social safeguards has not been fully realized. Specifically, mechanisms for grievance redress have not been initiated, and field consultations revealed limited awareness of this requirement among implementing partners, government officials, and communities. There is no evidence of a structured or documented redress process being considered in field activities. This gap in implementation undermines the otherwise strong design intent and raises concerns about the effectiveness of safeguard commitments in practice. Hence, the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) are rated as '**Satisfactory**'. Based on the review done, the MTR team considers that the risk at CEO Endorsement should be maintained as Moderate.

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category M and E Document	Title GEFID10187- CCA Indicators at MTR_FAO_LAO PDR
Document Category M and E Document	Title GEDIF10187_MTR_FAO_LAO PDR