

PROJECT QA ASSESSMENT: DESIGN AND APPRAISAL

OVERALL PROJECT

| EXEMPLARY (5) ●●●●● | HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (4) ●●●●○ | SATISFACTORY (3) ●●●○○ | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (2) ●●○○○ | INADEQUATE (1) ●○○○○ |
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| At least four criteria are rated Exemplary, and all criteria are rated High or Exemplary. | All criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least four criteria are rated High or Exemplary. | At least six criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only one may be rated Needs Improvement. The SES criterion must be rated Satisfactory or above. | At least three criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only four criteria may be rated Needs Improvement. | One or more criteria are rated Inadequate, or five or more criteria are rated Needs Improvement. |

DECISION

- **APPROVE** – the project is of sufficient quality to continue as planned. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.
- **APPROVE WITH QUALIFICATIONS** – the project has issues that must be addressed before the project document can be approved. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.
- **DISAPPROVE** – the project has significant issues that should prevent the project from being approved as drafted.

RATING CRITERIA

STRATEGIC

| 1. Does the project's Theory of Change specify how it will contribute to higher level change? (Select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project): | 3 | 2 |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project has a theory of change with explicit assumptions and clear change pathway describing how the project will contribute to outcome level change as specified in the programme/CPD, backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context. The project document clearly describes why the project's strategy is the best approach at this point in time. • 2: The project has a theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project intends to contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy is the best approach at this point in time, but is backed by limited evidence. • 1: The project does not have a theory of change, but the project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without specifying the key assumptions. It does not make an explicit link to the programme/CPD's theory of change. <p>*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</p> | <p>Evidence</p> <p>Yes. The project is underpinned by a robust theory of change. The Theory of Change underscores the importance of addressing the four core and interlinked problems (limited access to financing, limited technical and business skills, and poor links to markets, and lack of enabling policies particularly land rights for women) in order to empower WSMEs and WVSEs through effective engagement in sustainable rice value chains in West Africa. The project document details how the different activities and outputs will contribute to the expected change, identifying opportunities as well as challenges that the project will be facing throughout its implementing process.</p> <p>The evidence and outcomes are directly tied to the UNDP Regional Programme RRF Outputs 2.4 - private sector development across diverse country settings, including in Africa's borderlands and 2.5 - Informal sector enterprises enabled to engage on a path of sustainable and resilient growth.</p> <p>The ToC and project strategy are supported by various studies, reports, workshop activities, and practical experiences that highlight the need for supporting women-</p> | |

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| | owned or led businesses in the post-harvest stages of the rice value chain. | |
| 2. Is the project aligned with the thematic focus of the UNDP Strategic Plan? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project responds to one of the three areas of development work¹ as specified in the Strategic Plan; it addresses at least one of the proposed new and emerging areas²; an issues-based analysis has been incorporated into the project design; and the project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. <i>(all must be true to select this option)</i> • 2: The project responds to one of the three areas of development work¹ as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. <i>(both must be true to select this option)</i> • 1: While the project may respond to one of the three areas of development work¹ as specified in the Strategic Plan, it is based on a sectoral approach without addressing the complexity of the development issue. None of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF. This answer is also selected if the project does not respond to any of the three areas of development work in the Strategic Plan. | 3 | 2 |
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| | Evidence | |
| | Yes – The project is fully aligned with the UNDP corporate Strategic Plan at all levels. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is guided by the 3 directions of change LNOB, and more specifically Structural transformation: including green, inclusive and digital transitions: working with countries to effect change in systems and structures that shape a country's sustainable development, and Building Resilience by strengthening countries and institutions to prevent, mitigate and respond to crisis, conflict, natural disasters, climate and social and economic shocks; 2. It's contributing directly to 3 signature solutions: (i) Poverty and inequality, (ii) Gender equality, and (iii) Resilience to diverse shocks and crises; 3. It applies the 3 enablers identified by the strategic plan, especially the one on Strategic innovation: Empowering governments and communities to enhance the performance of entire systems, making them adaptive and resilient; 4. It relies on key strategic partners, especially the Islamic Development Bank. | |
| RELEVANT | | |
| 3. Does the project have strategies to effectively identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of targeted groups/geographic areas with a priority focus on the excluded and marginalized? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects this project): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The target groups/geographic areas are appropriately specified, prioritising the excluded and/or marginalised. Beneficiaries will be identified through a rigorous process based on evidence (if applicable.) The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage, and ensure the meaningful participation of specified target groups/geographic areas throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (such as representation on the project board) <i>(all must be true to select this option)</i> • 2: The target groups/geographic areas are appropriately specified, prioritising the excluded and/or marginalised. The project document states how beneficiaries will be identified, engaged and how meaningful participation will be ensured throughout the project. <i>(both must be true to select this option)</i> | 3 | 2 |
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| | <i>Select (all) targeted groups: (drop-down)</i> | |
| | Evidence The project conducted in-country consultations, including national workshops and field visits in potential target areas to ensure that the target groups and geographic areas targeted are appropriate. As a result, the project target locations have been refined and prioritized in the four countries. In addition, the target beneficiaries were refined and instead of being broad WSMEs and VSEs will be Small Enterprises and Women Groups. The proportion of each group has been reviewed to reflect more the reality and ensure that a sufficient number of women groups can benefit for the project. The support package proposed (financial and capacity building) for the target groups was therefore reviewed to be bigger and therefore more impactful, less risky, and more inclusive. Additional strategies identified to | |

¹ 1. Sustainable development pathways; 2. Inclusive and effective democratic governance; 3. Resilience building
² sustainable production technologies, access to modern energy services and energy efficiency, natural resources management, extractive industries, urbanization, citizen security, social protection, and risk management for resilience

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- **1:** The target groups/geographic areas are not specified, or do not prioritize excluded and/or marginalised populations. The project does not have a written strategy to identify or engage or ensure the meaningful participation of the target groups/geographic areas throughout the project.

*Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1, or select not applicable.

ensure that the selection of beneficiaries is inclusive is to have important community engagement and communication campaign in target communities during the selection of beneficiaries and to include community leaders as one of the communication channels.

4. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects this project):

- **3:** Knowledge and lessons learned (gained e.g. through peer assist sessions) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to develop the project's theory of change and justify the approach used by the project over alternatives.
- **2:** The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources, which inform the project's theory of change but have not been used/are not sufficient to justify the approach selected over alternatives.
- **1:** There is only scant or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references that are made are not backed by evidence.

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

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Evidence

Yes. The project design benefitted from the experience and past lessons from 4 major categories of actors:

- **RRVCP:** Designed by the IsDB with the aim to complement a bigger 90 million regional rice value chain program (RRVCP), EWASME will benefit from the experiences and lessons that RRVCP bring forth. Indeed, the RRVCP is already being implemented in the 4 four countries in the EWASME target areas. The RRVCP was engaged during the design phase of EWASME in the 4 countries.
- **IsDB:** Prior to the design of the RRVCP, extensive consultations with experts and stakeholders were conducted to determine critical entry points in the rice value chain to ensure success. To this end, an Experts Convening was held at the Islamic Development Bank in July 2018. A consensus was reached among the experts that empowering women and promoting entrepreneurship activities within the value chain is critical to success, given their critical role in the rice value chains, from production to marketing. Furthermore, the process of selection and qualification of each WSME and WVSE and the modality of grant deployment and utilization will be clearly outlined in the Operational Manual that will be developed. This is deemed effective and is based on IsDB's previous microfinance support programs for women and youth in many countries in Africa including Senegal, Nigeria, Burkina Faso Egypt, and Tunisia, as well as the grants matching model of the We-Fi financed Business Resilience for Value Added Enterprises (BRAVE) Women Program.
- **UNDP:** The UNDP's experience developing producer associations and agribusinesses through the Growth Accelerator program in Malawi, Liberia, and Sierra Leone was also leveraged. Lessons learned such as the emphasis on capacity building and in particular on-site adaptive learning, the funding size were leveraged for the design of EWASME.
- **Government, other projects, donors, and private sector:** thanks to in-country consultations in the for countries, EWASME design integrates insights,

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| | <p>suggestions, and lessons learned from various perspectives, expertise, and experience. For example, the emphasis on supporting VSE only through women groups and on financial capacity building to reduce the risk of the grants being used for other purposes.</p> | | | | |
| <p>5. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design and does the project respond to this gender analysis with concrete measures to address gender inequities and empower women? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: A <u>participatory</u> gender analysis on the project has been conducted. This analysis reflects on the different needs, roles and access to/control over resources of women and men, and it is fully integrated into the project document. The project establishes concrete priorities to address gender inequalities in its strategy. The results framework includes outputs and activities that specifically respond to this gender analysis, with indicators that measure and monitor results contributing to gender equality. <i>(all must be true to select this option)</i> • 2: A gender analysis on the project has been conducted. This analysis reflects on the different needs, roles and access to/control over resources of women and men. Gender concerns are integrated in the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework includes outputs and activities that specifically respond to this gender analysis, with indicators that measure and monitor results contributing to gender equality. <i>(all must be true to select this option)</i> • 1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women and men, but the constraints have not been clearly identified and interventions have not been considered. <p><small>*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</small></p> | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 0;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes. The project targets <u>only</u> women. Women constitute the majority (more than 80%) of stakeholders engaged as part of stakeholders consultation.</p> <p>In addition, the project baseline study is conducting a gendered rice value chain analysis in the four countries to refine to project design.</p> | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| | 3 | 2 | | | |
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| | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 0;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes. The UNDP is uniquely positioned to be the implementing partner of the program due to its operational footprint in the 4 countries where EWASME is involved, as well as its programmatic experience in the areas of value chain development and SME support, and its ability to integrate key partners to ensure program sustainability.</p> <p>In 2020, UNDP provided over USD 80 million in programmatic resources across the 4 countries in areas such as climate change, governance and poverty reduction, placing women and youth at the center of their interventions.</p> <p>Besides, the UNDP co-finances the project to the tune of 1 million dollars.</p> | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 3 | 2 | | | | |
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| <p>6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national partners, other development partners, and other actors? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project. It is clear how results achieved by relevant partners will contribute to outcome level change complementing the project's intended results. If relevant, options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. <i>(all must be true to select this option)</i> • 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation | | | | | |

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may not have not been fully developed during project design, even if relevant opportunities have been identified.

- **1:** No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners' interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance.

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

7. Does the project seek to further the realization of human rights using a human rights based approach? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):

- **3:** Credible evidence that the project aims to further the realization of human rights, upholding the relevant international and national laws and standards in the area of the project. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. *(all must be true to select this option)*
- **2:** Some evidence that the project aims to further the realization of human rights. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget.
- **1:** No evidence that the project aims to further the realization of human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered.

*Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

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| | Evidence | |
| | <p>Yes. By strengthening women-owned or led businesses, the project EWASME will further women's rights in rural areas. First, the project aims to support women's economic empowerment, and therefore their Economic, social, and cultural rights. To do so, the project will provide business and technical training, as well as access to findings and adequate equipment that will contribute to the right to work in just and favorable conditions, the right to education, and the right to an adequate standard of living and to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental well-being. With a greater economic and social power, women will be better equipped to acquire and protect political and civil rights such as the freedom of movement; equality before the law; the right to a fair trial and presumption of innocence; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; freedom of opinion and expression; peaceful assembly; freedom of association; participation in public affairs and elections; and protection of minority rights.</p> <p>Furthermore, pieces of evidence from studies suggest a strong correlation between mothers' education, physical and psychological well-being, and their children's health, education, and safety in developing countries. Therefore, the project EWASME, by improving the living conditions of women, is expected to contribute also to the economic, social, and cultural rights of their children, and to the advancement of the whole society.</p> <p>Finally, particular attention will be given to the selection of beneficiaries of EWASME to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. will also made through a public, open, and transparent call for application and selection process and adequate communication activities will be conducted to ensure that the process.</p> | |
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| <p>8. Did the project consider potential environmental opportunities and adverse impacts, applying a precautionary approach? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: Credible evidence that opportunities to enhance environmental sustainability and integrate poverty-environment linkages were fully considered as relevant, and integrated in project strategy and design. Credible evidence that potential adverse environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (<i>all must be true to select this option</i>). • 2: No evidence that opportunities to strengthen environmental sustainability and poverty-environment linkages were considered. Credible evidence that potential adverse environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, if relevant, and appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. • 1: No evidence that opportunities to strengthen environmental sustainability and poverty-environment linkages were considered. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse environmental impacts were adequately considered. <p><small>*Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</small></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes. The Project EWASME offers opportunities to reduce human impact on the nature in the target areas. Currently, women use wood to process their rice in a traditional manner. This impacts negatively the forests and natural habitats around them. In addition, they rely on mills fueled by oil and therefore with GHG emissions. The project EWASME provides an opportunity to reduce this impact by providing access to green energy-fueled (in particular solar) equipment to the beneficiaries that will help them increase their productivity while reducing their impact on the environment.</p> <p>Besides, all the potential adverse environmental impacts of the project were rigorously assessed through interviews in the target communities.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>9. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]</p> | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; background-color: #c6e0b4;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; background-color: #c6e0b4;">No</td> </tr> </table> <p>An SESP has been conducted to identify the social and environmental impacts and risks of the project. This has been done using desk research and field interviews with local authorities and women groups in the target locations</p> | Yes | No | | | | |
| Yes | No | | | | | | |
| MANAGEMENT & MONITORING | | | | | | | |
| <p>10. Does the project have a strong results framework? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level and relate in a clear way to the project's theory of change. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure all of the key expected changes identified in the theory of change, each with credible data sources, and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (<i>all must be true to select this option</i>) • 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level, but may not cover all aspects of the project's theory of change. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of gender sensitive, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (<i>all must be true to select this option</i>) | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center; background-color: #c6e0b4;">3</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center; background-color: #c6e0b4;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center; background-color: #c6e0b4;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>The project has a robust results framework with results-oriented indicators, baselines and targets, rooted in data and analysis for all outputs, which include sex-disaggregated indicators and clear gender sensitive targets.</p> | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | |
| 3 | 2 | | | | | | |
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- **1:** The results framework does not meet all of the conditions specified in selection “2” above. This includes: the project’s selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level and do not relate in a clear way to the project’s theory of change; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change, and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators.

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

11. Is there a comprehensive and costed M&E plan in place with specified data collection sources and methods to support evidence-based management, monitoring and evaluation of the project?

Yes (3)

During the Project Initiation Period, a consulting firm was selected to produce a Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework and plan. The firm will propose a Monitoring System with processes, responsibilities and tools to ensure regular data collection, analysis and dissemination in each target country. The study is on-going and the results will be added to the Prodoc.

No (1)

12. Is the project’s governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including planned composition of the project board? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):

- **3:** The project’s governance mechanism is fully defined in the project composition. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. *(all must be true to select this option).*
- **2:** The project’s governance mechanism is defined in the project document; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The prodoc lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. *(all must be true to select this option)*
- **1:** The project’s governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided.

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

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| Yes – The project has a board with the different functions of each type of actor clearly defined. However, it is expected that more partners/donors will join the project. Therefore, if the governance mechanism is well defined, it remains to be endorsed by the main stakeholders once onboard and slight modifications are not excluded. | |

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13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risks? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):

- **3:** Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk. *(both must be true to select this option)*
- **2:** Project risks related to the achievement of results identified in the initial project risk log with mitigation measures identified for each risk.
- **1:** Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified and no initial risk log is included with the project document.

*Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1

1
Evidence

A detailed risk log is attached and will be reviewed annually as part of the annual monitoring reporting process, and programme risk levels and appropriate mitigation measures may be assessed and updated. This review and monitoring of risks is particularly important in the context of West Africa where political instability can affect the implementation process of the project.

EFFICIENT

14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include: i) using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available; ii) using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions; iii) through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners.

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| Yes (3) | The project is using a portfolio management approach and synergies will be taking place in particular with IsDB's Regional Rice Value Chain Project(RRVCP). Synergies with various other projects both regional and local, are being explored in each target country to maximise the use of the resources. The project will also benefit from the wide range of experts from the UNDP Country offices in Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Niger, as well as the expert teams who are based in the WCA sub-regional hub in Dakar. | No (1) |
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15. Are explicit plans in place to ensure the project links up with other relevant on-going projects and initiatives, whether led by UNDP, national or other partners, to achieve more efficient results (including, for example, through sharing resources or coordinating delivery?)

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| Yes (3) | | No (1) |
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| <p>16. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. • 2: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates. • 1: The project's budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget. | <p style="margin: 0;">1</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Evidence</p> <p style="margin: 0;">A multi-annual workplan, which includes a budget has been developed, estimations have been done using experience from similar type of activities in the region. However, the implication of the growing instability on global the global and continental economies such as the inflation rate due to COVID19 and the war in Ukraine has not been taken into consideration yet as the trends are still recent and remain uncertain.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>17. Is the Regional/Country Office fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL.) • 2: The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant. • 1: The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project. <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">*Note: Management Action must be given for a score of 1. The budget must be revised to fully reflect the costs of implementation before the project commences.</p> | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Evidence</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;"> Yes, the budget fully covers all project costs at UNDP proforma rates. This includes, rent, common services charges, equipment, travel, programme management and administrative fee which are clearly reflected in the budget. </td> </tr> </table> | 3 | 2 | 1 | | Evidence | | Yes, the budget fully covers all project costs at UNDP proforma rates. This includes, rent, common services charges, equipment, travel, programme management and administrative fee which are clearly reflected in the budget. | |
| 3 | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Evidence | | | | | | | | | |
| Yes, the budget fully covers all project costs at UNDP proforma rates. This includes, rent, common services charges, equipment, travel, programme management and administrative fee which are clearly reflected in the budget. | | | | | | | | | |
| EFFECTIVE | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>18. Is the chosen implementation modality most appropriate? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The required implementing partner assessments (capacity assessment, HACT micro assessment) have been conducted, and there is evidence that options for implementation modalities have been thoroughly considered. There is a strong justification for choosing the selected modality, based on the development context. <i>(both must be true to select this option)</i> • 2: The required implementing partner assessments (capacity assessment, HACT micro assessment) have been conducted and the implementation modality chosen is consistent with the results of the assessments. • 1: The required assessments have not been conducted, but there may be evidence that options for implementation modalities have been considered. | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Evidence</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;"> The chosen modality is DIM. It is the preferred modality given that the project targets directly farmers associations and SMEs. The project was designed by IsDB and the RRVCP is being implemented by the beneficiary countries directly. A direct implementation by UNDP ensures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The regional aspect of the project is well implemented with opportunities for cross-learning exchange of experience for beneficiaries. - The businesses supported to benefit from the UNDP's unique experience and resources in terms of SME development, as well as synergies with other SMEs supported by the UNDP as part of a portfolio approach </td> </tr> </table> | 3 | 2 | 1 | | Evidence | | The chosen modality is DIM. It is the preferred modality given that the project targets directly farmers associations and SMEs. The project was designed by IsDB and the RRVCP is being implemented by the beneficiary countries directly. A direct implementation by UNDP ensures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The regional aspect of the project is well implemented with opportunities for cross-learning exchange of experience for beneficiaries. - The businesses supported to benefit from the UNDP's unique experience and resources in terms of SME development, as well as synergies with other SMEs supported by the UNDP as part of a portfolio approach | |
| 3 | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Evidence | | | | | | | | | |
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PROJECT QA ASSESSMENT: DESIGN AND APPRAISAL

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|---|---|---------------|
| <p>*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">- A quality and timely implementation of the project activities given the UNDP standards and ability to attract the best human resources.</p> | |
| <p>19. Have targeted groups, prioritizing marginalized and excluded populations that will be affected by the project, been engaged in the design of the project in a way that addresses any underlying causes of exclusion and discrimination?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising marginalized and excluded populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. Their views, rights and any constraints have been analysed and incorporated into the root cause analysis of the theory of change which seeks to address any underlying causes of exclusion and discrimination and the selection of project interventions. • 2: Some evidence that key targeted groups, prioritising marginalized and excluded populations that will be involved in the project, have been engaged in the design of the project. Some evidence that their views, rights and any constraints have been analysed and incorporated into the root cause analysis of the theory of change and the selection of project interventions. • 1: No evidence of engagement with marginalized and excluded populations that will be involved in the project during project design. No evidence that the views, rights and constraints of populations have been incorporated into the project. | 3 | 2 |
| | 1 | |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes. Women groups in the target locations were engaged during in-country consultations in the four countries. During the sessions, they reflected on the best ways to ensure that the project is inclusive, fair, and transparent. They shared their thoughts on how to ensure that the most vulnerable are included.</p> | |
| <p>20. Does the project conduct regular monitoring activities, have explicit plans for evaluation, and include other lesson learning (e.g. through After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops), timed to inform course corrections if needed during project implementation?</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Yes (3)</p> <p>During the Project Initiation Period, a consulting firm was selected to produce a Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework and plan. The firm will propose a Monitoring System with processes, responsibilities and tools to ensure regular data collection, analysis and dissemination in each target country. The study is on-going and the results will be added to the Prodoc.</p> | <p>No (1)</p> |
| <p>21. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum.</p> <p>*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of "no"</p> | <p>Yes (3)</p> | <p>No (1)</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes – Gender has been fully mainstreamed throughout the project, and indicators have been designed to reflect the gender dimension of the project. The project only targets women.</p> | | |
| | 3 | 2 |
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PROJECT QA ASSESSMENT: DESIGN AND APPRAISAL

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| <p>22. Is there a realistic multi-year work plan and budget to ensure outputs are delivered on time and within allotted resources? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project has a realistic work plan & budget covering the duration of the project <i>at the activity</i> level to ensure outputs are delivered on time and within the allotted resources. • 2: The project has a work plan & budget covering the duration of the project at the output level. • 1: The project does not yet have a work plan & budget covering the duration of the project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>Yes. The project has 4 realistic work plans & budget covering the duration of the project <i>at the activity</i> level, one per country, to ensure outputs are delivered on time and within the allotted resources.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>SUSTAINABILITY & NATIONAL OWNERSHIP</p> | | | | | | | |
| <p>23. Have national partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project? (select from options 1-3 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: National partners have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP. • 2: The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national partners. • 1: The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners. | <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>The project was designed by the Islamic Development Bank. Extensive consultations with experts and stakeholders were conducted to determine critical entry points in the proposed value chain to ensure success. To this end, an Experts Convening was held at IsDB in May 2018 that brought key researchers and development experts in the rice sector from Africa and other parts of the world. The convening provided valuable insights that informed the design of additional consultation workshops with various stakeholders in Group 1 countries in July 2018.</p> <p>The UNDP later engaged ~480 stakeholders across the four countries from July to end September 2023 to raise awareness, collect feedback, and ensure national ownership of the project.</p> | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | |
| 3 | 2 | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | |
| <p>24. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific/ comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted? (select from options 0-4 that best reflects this project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: The project has a comprehensive strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions based on a systematic and detailed capacity assessment that has been completed. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection, and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly. • 2.5: A capacity assessment has been completed. The project document has identified activities that will be undertaken to strengthen capacity of national institutions, but these activities are not part of a comprehensive strategy to monitor and strengthen national capacities. • 2: A capacity assessment is planned after the start of the project. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions based on the results of the capacity assessment. • 1.5: There is mention in the project document of capacities of national institutions to be strengthened through the project, | <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">2.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">1.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence</p> <p>The project doesn't have a component to strengthen the capacity of national institutions. It is a project targeting directly women farmer organizations and SMEs.</p> | 3 | 2.5 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 | |
| 3 | 2.5 | | | | | | |
| 2 | 1.5 | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | |

PROJECT QA ASSESSMENT: DESIGN AND APPRAISAL

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| <p>but no capacity assessments or specific strategy development are planned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out and are not foreseen. There is no strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions. | | |
| <p>25. Is there a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc.) to the extent possible?</p> | Yes (3) | <p style="text-align: center;">No (1)</p> <p>Because of the nature of its activities, the project is not expected to use national systems.</p> |
| <p>26. Is there a clear transition arrangement/ phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation strategy)?</p> | Yes (3) | <p style="text-align: center;">No (1)</p> <p>Resources mobilization activities are being conducted in order to raise additional funding and/or ensure a transfer of the project to national counterparts in each country by its end.</p> |