

Design & Appraisal Stage Quality Assurance Report

Form Status: Approved

Overall Rating:	Satisfactory
Decision:	Approve: The project is of sufficient quality to continue as planned. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.
Portfolio/Project Number:	00112865
Portfolio/Project Title:	Fortaleciendo la resiliencia climática -Ahuachapán
Portfolio/Project Date:	2020-08-24 / 2025-08-24

Strategic**Quality Rating: Exemplary**

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?

- *3: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks.*
- 2: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change.
- 1: The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the programme's theory of change.

Evidence:

The project aims at reducing the vulnerability of communities and productive ecosystems in the Municipality of San Francisco Menendez to drought risk, soil erosion, and flash floods due to climate change and climate variability. The project clearly defines a strategy structured around four components: 1. Ecosystem-based adaptation for enhanced resilience at a territorial level; 2. Alternative and adapted livelihoods identified and made viable for resilient livelihoods; 3. Regional Climate and Hydrological Monitoring for Enhanced Adaptation Planning; 4. Strengthening of inter-institutional coordination and local governance for landscape management in the face of climate variability and change. The strategy is backed by a thorough context and risk analysis that takes into consideration barriers and stakeholder consultation. The project document includes a diagram that states the theory of change and explicitly links the project's intervention and strategies to the expected outcomes and results.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	QA1TOC_5807_101 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/QA1TOC_5807_101.docx)	nancy.argueta@undp.org	8/19/2020 11:56:00 PM

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?

- 3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the [Strategic Plan¹](#) and adapts at least one [Signature Solution²](#). The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)
- 2: *The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan⁴. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)*
- 1: The project responds to a partner's identified need, but this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence:

The project responds to one of the development settings specified in the Strategic Plan (Build resilience to shocks and crises) and adapts at least two Signature Solutions (Enhance national prevention and recovery capacities for resilient societies, Promote nature based solutions for a sustainable planet). However, the project's RRF doesn't explicitly include relevant SP indicators.

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#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a programme)

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

The project is linked to the following UNDAF's cooperation area 4, Resilience: The most vulnerable and excluded populations and people have increased their resilience to disasters, environmental degradation and the negative effects of climate change; and is also linked to CPD's effect 4, under the same title (indicative output 4.4: Selected institutions/entities have access to quality information to make decisions regarding climate change, DRR and local development).

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No documents available.			

Relevant

Quality Rating: **Satisfactory**

4. Do the project target groups leave furthest behind?

- 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated, and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence.
- 2: *The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind.*
- 1: The target groups are not clearly specified.

Evidence:

The project targets rural households and communities in San Francisco Menendez, a municipality in the southern area of the Department of Ahuachapan, that has been largely affected by climate change. The project seeks to directly benefit an estimated 6,396 households who are especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in this region.

In addition, the project seeks to identify and integrate the different needs and priorities of women and has included throughout its components activities to strengthen women empowerment, their leadership role in land management, and meaningful participation, seeking to support the diversification of women livelihoods to strengthen resilience to climate change, as well as active participation of women in the implementation of the restoration activities. Furthermore, component 4 considers the strengthening of local organizations and associations, including women's and youth organizations, to promote transparent and inclusive decision-making processes.

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No documents available.

5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?

- 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project.
- 2: *The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources but have not been used to justify the approach selected.*
- 1: There is little, or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence.

Evidence:

The project mentions knowledge and lessons learned, but does not refer to specific sources of evidence, such as evaluations. However, the project bases its selection of partners (responsible party) such as FIAES, on previous project experiences on community restoration plans implementation. The project will aim at capturing lessons learned from its interventions.

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No documents available.

6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national / regional / global partners and other actors?

- 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, including identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project's intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- 2: *Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area 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, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans.*
- 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. 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.

Evidence:

As part of Annex 7, the project considers an Environmental and Social Management Plan that includes, among others, a detailed stakeholder analysis and a stakeholder engagement plan. Analysis has been conducted on the role of several actors in the targeted region, with detailed information regarding communications, roles and responsibilities, capacity development and training. There are, however, no references to additional funding partners for this project, or south-south or triangular cooperation.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	QA2_Stakeholderanalysis_5807_106 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/QA2_Stakeholderanalysis_5807_106.docx)	nancy.argueta@undp.org	8/20/2020 2:21:00 AM

Principled

Quality Rating: **Highly Satisfactory**

7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach?

- 3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project's strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. 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)
- 2: *The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. 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. (both must be true)*
- 1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered.

Evidence:

The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. The SESP identified moderate risks on human rights in terms of potential restrictions to availability, quality of and access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups; likelihood to exclude any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups, from fully participating in decisions that may affect them; potential exclusion of women from decision-making or adequate participation in the implementation of the project; potential exclusion from project benefits and activities of indigenous peoples that are not self-identified. Mitigation and management measures have been incorporated in the project design and budget.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design?

- 3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. (all must be true)
- 2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. (all must be true)
- 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 gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document.

Evidence:

The project incorporates a gender analysis based on participatory consultations with several stakeholders and defines a strategy that seeks to promote gender equality and women empowerment through the strengthening of associative processes, as well as the development of new leaderships in communities. All of the project's components incorporate gender responsive or sensitive measures in order to ensure women's participation in the restoration activities (component 1), develop capacities in 16 women productive cooperatives (component 2), includes training to local women's associations so that they become active participants in the climate monitoring process (component 3), and promote women participation and representation with at least 30% of its members being women in the dialogue councils. RRF incorporates some sex-disaggregated indicators for all components. The Environmental and Social Management Plan includes a Gender Action Plan that defines some of the general strategies and highlights the specific gender targets.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	QA5_GenderActionPlan_5807_108 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/QA5_GenderActionPlan_5807_108.docx)	nancy.argueta@undp.org	8/20/2020 4:53:00 PM

9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?

- 3: *Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (both must be true)
- 1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered.

Evidence:

The project directly addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. As stated before, the project aims at reducing the vulnerability of communities and productive ecosystems to drought risk, soil erosion, and flash floods due to climate change and climate variability. The project integrates forest landscape restoration as a climate change adaptation strategy targeted towards increasing forest cover, improving the hydrological cycle, increasing the amount of available water, and regulating surface and groundwater flows, while maintaining and improving water supply and quality.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

10. 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.]

- Yes
- No
- SESP not required because project consists solely of (Select all exemption criteria that apply)
 - 1: Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials
 - 2: Organization of an event, workshop, training
 - 3: Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences
 - 4: Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks

 - 5: Global/regional projects with no country level activities (e.g. knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)
 - 6: UNDP acting as Administrative Agent

Evidence:

A SESP has been conducted. It identifies potential social and environmental impacts in all three principles: Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and Environmental Sustainability.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Risk Category	Risk Requirements	Document Status	Modified By	Modified On
1	QA_SESP_5807_110 (http://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QA/QAFormDocuments/QA_SESP_5807_10.docx)	Moderate	Human Rights; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management; Indigenous Peoples	Final	nancy.argueta@undp.org	8/20/2020 2:47:00 AM

Management & Monitoring

Quality Rating: **Highly Satisfactory**

11. Does the project have a strong results framework?

- *3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- 1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; 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. (if any is true)

Evidence:

The project has a strong results framework, with SMART indicators and clearly defined end of project targets, some of which are sex-disaggregated. Baselines are defined for all indicators and verification mechanisms are clearly specified.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board?

- 3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. 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)
- *2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. (all must be true)*
- 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.

Evidence:

The project document Section VII: Governance and Management Arrangements presents the project structure and governance mechanisms. Specific institutions that integrate the Project Board are identified and general responsibilities of the Project Board, Project Manager and Quality Assurance are listed. However, individuals within the structure have not been specified and some details are missing regarding the PMU.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	QA4_Structureandgovernance_5807_112 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAF/ormDocuments/QA4_Structureandgovernance_5807_112.docx)	nancy.argueta@undp.org	8/20/2020 3:01:00 AM

13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk?

- 3: *Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders, including consultation with the UNDP Security Office as required. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, including security risks, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true)*
- 2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk.
- 1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified, no initial risk log is included with the project document and/or no security risk management process has taken place for the project.

Evidence:

The project clearly identifies and describes political, institutional, operational and financial risks and state s mitigation and management measures to address them. SESP further identifies other social and environmental impacts, which have been thoroughly analyzed and also include mitigation and management responses. Capacity assessments are available for both FIAES and MARN. Consultative processes have been part of program design in order to feed risk analysis and management responses.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

Efficient**Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory**

14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example:

- 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.
- iv) Sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects.
- v) Using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions.

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

The project considers, to some degree, measures such as coordination with other on going initiatives in order to maximize impact and ensure cost-efficiency. In addition, UNDP EI Salvador is implementing several projects with MARN and other partners on related development challenges, which will allow for synergies with other interventions, as well as the use of a portfolio management approach.

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No documents available.			

15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?

- 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. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. 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. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications and security have been incorporated.*
- 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, but no funding plan is in place. 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.

Evidence:

The project is fully funded and the budget is at the activity level for all the duration of the project.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

16. Is the Country Office / Regional Hub / Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?

- 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.

Evidence:

The budget partly covers project costs.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

Effective

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project?

- 3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.)
- 2: *Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project.*
- 1: No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

Project design considered a two phase consultative process. The first phase consisted of initial consultations with key stakeholder groups to better understand the challenges posed by climate change in the region and its effects in local livelihoods; consolidate the stakeholder analysis; define the intervention areas; and gather inputs from international and national organizations working in environmental, development, or climate change initiatives in the region. The second phase was developed during the preparation of the complete project and included several activities with a wide range of stakeholders.

Stakeholders are varied and range from municipal authorities, government institutions, community organizations, private sector, local farmers and producers. No specific priorities for discriminated and marginalized populations are identified.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lesson learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

The project aims at capturing lessons learned and includes monitoring and evaluation activities (mid term and final evaluations).

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No documents available.

19. 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.

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

GEN2

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No documents available.

Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: Needs Improvement

20. Have national / regional / global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project?

- 3: National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) 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 / regional / global partners.*
- 1: The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.

Evidence:

The project was jointly developed by UNDP El Salvador, Regional Technical Advisors and other regional partners, with a significant level of coordination and communication with national partners and institutions. However, recent institutional changes and other circumstances have made it necessary to reintroduce some of the project's rationale to new or alternative counterparts.

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No documents available.			

21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific / comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?

- 3: The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. 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: *A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment.*
- 1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out.
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

Capacity assessments (HACT) are available for both FIAES and MARN.
The project has specific components linked to capacity

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No documents available.

22. Is there is 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?

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

The project will be implemented under the National Implementation (NIM) modality.

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No documents available.

23. Is there a clear transition arrangement / phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)?

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

There is no evidence of a transition arrangement or phase out plan at this stage of project design.

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No documents available.

QA Summary/LPAC Comments