



## MID-TERM REVIEW

of the UNDP-GEF-LDCF-Government of Lao PDR Project  
***“Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate”***

(PIMS 4710)



## Final Report

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMAT	Adaptation and Monitoring Tool
APR	Annual Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CDR	Combined Delivery Report
CNA	Capacity Needs Assessment
CO	Country Office
CRVA	Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DDF	District Development Fund
DDP	District Development Plan
DDSC	District Development Support Committee
DDST	District Development Support Team
DFRM	Department of Forest Resources Management
DLPD	Department of Land Planning and Development
DNDMCC	Department of National Disaster Management and Climate Change
DOHA	District Office of Home Affairs
DVI	District Vulnerability Index
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EEPSEA	Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Green House Gas
GPAR	Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme
IDCRM	Integrated Disaster Risk and Climate Management (Project)
INC	Initial National Communication
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IP	Implementing Partner
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
LoCAL	Local Climate Adaptive Living
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NES	National Ecosystem Specialist
NIS	National Infrastructure Specialist
NGPAR	National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPD	National Project Director
NRES	National Resources and Environment Strategy
PB	Project Board
PBCRG	Performance-Based Climate Resilient Grant (system)
PIP	Public Investment Project
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PM	Project Manager
POHA	Provincial Office of Home Affairs
PONRE	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment
PPG	Project Preparation Grant

PPSU	Provincial Project Support Unit
PSU	Project Support Unit
SCSD	Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery (of Local Administrations)
SGP	Small Grant Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollar
V&A	Vulnerability and Assessment

## Acknowledgements

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## DISCLAIMER

*This report is the work of an independent reviewing team and does not necessarily represent the views, or policies, or intentions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and/or of the Government of Lao PDR.*

# 1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1. Background - Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the UNDP-supported-GEF-LDCF-Financed-Government of Lao PDR Project “*Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*”. This mid-term review was performed by an Independent Evaluation Team composed of Mr. Jean-Joseph Bellamy and Dr. Thongdeuane Nanthanavone on behalf of the UNDP.

The provinces of Sekong and Saravane in the South of Lao PDR are heavily affected by climate-related events. During recent years, changing rainfall and temperature patterns have caused regular storms leading to flash flooding and landslides, as well as more frequent and persistent dry periods and droughts. These climate threats have differing impacts on physical infrastructure and ecosystems, depending on location and topography. Amongst the most severe are the regular destruction of rural roads and small-scale irrigation schemes, as well as water scarcity for household and agricultural consumption. These climate-induced threats are further affected by slow-onset disappearance of the protective and water storage functions of ecosystems, caused by drivers such as slash and burn agriculture, monoculture, mining and hydropower investments. The combination of climate change related pressures and these other drivers mean that village water supply systems dry out more often, and that baseline physical infrastructure, which is not protected from irregular and intense water flows, is degrading more rapidly.

The underlying causes contributing to this situation include basic geographical factors, poor application of infrastructure construction standards and maintenance practices, and a social and ethnic context that increases the vulnerability of certain groups to climate risks. In order to address these issues, there are critical barriers to remove. They include (i) weaknesses in climate change analysis and planning at sub-national level; (ii) financial constraints in resourcing the additional costs of building greater redundancy into rural infrastructure; (iii) a silo approach to local planning whereby ecosystem functions and services are not taken into account, and (iv) the limited incentives that exist to encourage local officials and decision makers to address climate related risks.

In order to remove these barriers, the government of Lao PDR through MONRE with the support of UNDP and financial resources from the GEF-LDCF formulated this project to “*improve local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*”. It sought to reflect the needs of communities vulnerable to climate variability in local planning and budget processes, so that the development prospects of these communities are secured in face of increasing climate risks.

The objective of the project is “*Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*”. This objective will be achieved through three outcomes (and 9 outputs):

1. Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision;
2. Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces;
3. Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces.

The project is implemented in Sekong and Saravane provinces in southern Lao PDR; including all 12

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusions and Recommendations are in Chapter 1 with a brief background section. It is structured as an Executive Summary but also a stand-alone section presenting the highlights of this final evaluation. When finalizing the document, if there is translation available, it is proposed to translate this chapter and include it in the report.

districts in these 2 provinces. It is a project supported by UNDP, the GEF-LDCF, and the Government of Lao PDR. It is funded by a grant from the GEF-LDCF of USD 4,700,000, a cash contribution from UNDP-TRAC of USD 280,000 and an in-kind contribution of USD 375,000 from the Government of Lao PDR. It started in January 2013 and will end at the end of December 2017 (5 years), including an already approved one-year extension. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is the Implementing Partner and has overall responsibility for the management of the project. A national Project Support Unit was set-up at MONRE housing a staff of 10. A Project Board oversee the implementation of the project.

This mid-term review report documents the achievements of the project and includes four chapters. Chapter 1 presents the main conclusions and recommendations; chapter 2 presents an overview of the project; chapter 3 briefly describes the objective, scope, methodology, evaluation users and limitations of the evaluation; chapter 4 presents the findings of the evaluation and relevant annexes are found at the back end of the report.

## 1.2. Conclusions

### *Project Strategy*

#### **a) The project has been very relevant for Lao PDR.**

The LDCF project is well aligned with the national strategies and programmes. It is a direct response to national priorities and needs, particularly for priorities in the water and forestry sectors as well as strengthening local development processes. It supports the government to address climate risks, particularly flooding and drought risks. It is part of national priorities to adapt to climate change and it is executed by the national department mandated by the government to tackle climate change. The design of the project was done in Lao PDR with a good participation of stakeholders. It ensured that the project was a response to national priorities and needs and it also developed a good country ownership from the outset of this project. The initial aim of this project was to integrate climate resilience into the reformed local development planning processes supported by the GPAR-SCSD project. It is a well justified project. In the meantime, this project has been a pioneer in its approach using Community Risk and Vulnerability Analyses (CRVAs) as a basis to identify climate change adaptation activities to be implemented/supported by the project.

#### **b) It is a complex project strategy, which renders the implementation difficult, including the “division” of the implementation into two lines: (i) small-scale infrastructure projects and (ii) Ecosystem-based adaptation measures.**

The design (*Project Results Framework*) is complicated and did not provide a clear project strategy with a clear “blue print” to be implemented. The lack of clarity of the project strategy has been subjected to different interpretations and ended up pulling project resources in too many directions: addressing NAPA water related priorities, implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects, implementation of ecosystem management and action plans, developing the planning capacity of local administrations, etc. This is compounded by the fact that the implementation is much divided into 2 lines: (i) small-scale infrastructure projects and (ii) Ecosystem-based adaptation measures. After 42 months of implementation, there is still a weak vision of where the project should go; particularly to link the ecosystem management activities planned under outcome 3 with the small scale infrastructure projects under outcome 2 and to ensure the sustainability of project achievements. It is a barrier that needs to be overcome for the remaining implementation period of the project.

### *Progress Towards Results*

#### **c) The progress made by the project is moderately satisfactory.**

Progress has been made, including the completion of 24 Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs), the revision of the DDF guidelines and the implementation of 16 small-scale infrastructure projects. However, overall, the progress of the project at this point in time is moderately satisfactory; including questions about the long term sustainability of some project achievements. So far, the project expended about 51% of the GEF-LDCF budget (USD 2.4M) and used 65% of its timeline (39 out of 60 months). Yet, the project targets include an additional implementation of 12 other small-scale infrastructure projects and a series of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures under outcome 3 as well as securing the

long-term sustainability of these achievements. It is doable within the remaining budget (49%) but with only 35% of the timeline left (21 months), it is a tight schedule. In the meantime, the project is pulled into multiple directions. It is trying to address NAPA water related priorities, implement small-scale infrastructure projects, implement ecosystem management and action plans, and develop the planning capacity of local administrations. These “lines of implementation” are not in opposite directions; however, they indicate very wide strategic areas within which the project is to be effective and when considering the project resources and timeframe, it is doubtful that this project can do it all.

Nevertheless, with the time extension, the reduction of targets and the link of the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures with the infrastructure projects, all three requests approved in December 2015, the project has still time and resources to focus and deliver its expected results that is “*to improve the capacity of local administrative systems responsible for the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through the improvement of the participatory decision making process that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*”.

**d) The scheduling of project activities should have initially focused more on stakeholder engagement including community mobilization.**

The process to identify and plan project interventions did not include enough stakeholder engagement activities, particularly at the early stage of development of these interventions. It was found that in some cases, questions were raised by beneficiaries about the small-scale infrastructure projects being a priority; indicating that these beneficiaries were not involved early enough in the process. The field visits conducted during this review indicate generally a low engagement of beneficiaries (villagers) at the early stage of project initiatives; hampering more participation of local stakeholders in the implementation process and potentially affecting the ownership and sustainability of these small-scale projects over the long-term.

***Project Implementation and Adaptive Management***

**e) The management arrangements, though somewhat complex are adequate but do not provide enough coordination.**

Management arrangements are somewhat complex with “multiple layers” at national, provincial and district levels but in the context of Lao PDR, these are adequate. However, these arrangements do not seem to lead to an effective coordination mechanism among stakeholders – including beneficiaries - and develop a clear vision on where the project wants to go. One coordinating instrument is the Project Board (PB); however, it only met twice since the beginning of the project. More coordination activities are needed and the PB should be more in the “driver seat” when it comes to guiding the implementation of the project. At least two meetings of the PB should take place each year with at least one PB meeting per year open to a larger group of stakeholders. These meetings should be used to communicate the progress/results of the project and the plans for the period ahead; but also to obtain feedback from stakeholders/beneficiaries of these small-scale projects and discuss the possible changes needed to make the project better.

**f) Despite a good engagement of stakeholders during the design phase as described in the project document, the implementation does not benefit from a strong participation/engagement of stakeholders.**

According to the project document, a good engagement of stakeholders took place at the outset of the project and ensured that this project respond to national priorities. However, throughout the implementation, the engagement of stakeholders has not been as good and there seem to be a lack of interest to participate in project activities, particularly at the national level and to some extent at the beneficiary level (villages). There are not enough activities to promote/increase stakeholder engagement and it is also compounded by a complex project strategy that is difficult to promote.

**g) The LDCF grant (USD 4.7M) should be completely expended by the end of December 2017.**

The financial management of the project is good with a good alignment between annual project expenditures and annual budgets contained in annual work plans. The project management costs have been kept so far at a

relatively low rate of about 5.4%. The co-financing from UNDP (cash) and the government (In-kind) has been happening including the secondment by the government of 3 full time staff: programme manager and 2 provincial coordinators. Based on the actual figures as of March 2016, the LDCF grant of USD 4.7M should be fully expended by the end of the project (December 31, 2017).

#### **h) The M&E plan to monitor the project is moderately satisfactory.**

The set of indicators to measure the performance of the project is not fully SMART. Most indicators are specific, easily measurable, attainable and time-bound; however, they are not totally relevant for measuring progress at the outcome and objective levels of the project. They do not measure enough how effective the project is in developing the capacity of local administrations. These indicators are mostly quantitative indicators; that is monitoring a quantity of deliverables as opposed to more quality-based indicators. These indicators give a very clear measure of things and are numerically comparable; they also provide an easy comparison of a project progress over time and are easy to monitor and do not require much resources to collect data. However, quantitative indicators do not depict the status of something in more qualitative terms. Degree of capacity developed are often better captured by qualitative indicators. In the case of capacity development initiatives such as this project, using a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators would allow the project team to better measure its performance. It would be more suited for the measurement of the performance of this project offering quantitative and qualitative information about project achievements.

In addition, these numerical targets alone tend to provide a monitoring system whereby delivering activities/products such as small-scale infrastructure projects, training activities, plans, etc. are the ultimate results of the project. Once there are delivered, project monitors can “tick all the boxes”; done! However, despite delivering all planned activities/products, the project could still be short of delivering the expected results as per the expected objective and outcomes. The M&E system in place needs to also monitor the effectiveness of the project at this level and respond to the main question: Is the project developing sustainable capacities to improve local administrative systems in providing and maintaining small-scale rural infrastructure that are reflecting genuine needs of communities and natural systems’ vulnerabilities to climate risk.

#### **i) Communication is not part of the project strategy and as a consequence not enough activities in this area are supported by the project.**

Central to the project strategy is the complex relationship between climate change and climate risks, local livelihoods, management of local natural resources and local development needs, which needs to be better understood. Outcome 3 is about raising climate change awareness and the need to link the small-scale infrastructure projects with a better management of local ecosystems. Not enough efforts are made to communicate climate change risks to stakeholders but also to beneficiaries, which is also affecting a better engagement of stakeholders and beneficiaries in project activities.

### ***Sustainability***

#### **j) The prospect for the long-term sustainability is moderately likely.**

The prospects of project achievements to be sustainable over the long term are not as positive as stated in the project document. There is evidence that this project is a direct response to national priorities and the government has been contributing its own resources to this project. The project has delivered some key deliverables such as 24 CRVAs, 16 small-scale infrastructure projects and the revised DDF guidelines that now include a climate resilient planning mechanism. However, key questions about the sustainability of some of these project achievements are raised. Will these small-scale infrastructure projects be sustainable over the long-term? Who will provide and pay the required maintenance for some of these projects? Will the district-based capacity in mainstreaming climate resilient in development planning – including the use of the revised DDF guidelines - be sufficient and self-sustained after the closure of the project? When considering the limited capacity of the government to fund local development initiatives, how will these small-scale infrastructure projects be replicated in other parts of the Saravane and Sekong provinces and also nationwide? Will the CRVAs and its methodology/approach be used after the project end in other areas in the two provinces but also in other provinces?

Due partly to the fact that the sustainability strategy set in the project document is weak, there is not enough emphasis put on the sustainability of project activities. The financial sustainability of some project achievements is uncertain, particularly for the small-scale infrastructure projects. Provincial and district authorities stated that there was no ‘special’ commitment from the government side in relation to making maintenance fund available for these small-scale infrastructure projects. The relevant sectors (health for water supply and irrigation for water management) reported that their financial capacity was very limited and only cover about 10-15 per cent of annual maintenance cost needed. Despite the implementation of capacity development activities to strengthen the institutional framework and governance at the sub-national level, concerns were raised about the sustainability of the set-up of sub-national multi-disciplinary teams. These teams are composed of sub-national departments and each one belongs to a line ministry. This approach may face difficulties to be sustainable at this point in time. More coordination at the national level for a better inter-ministerial approach is needed for sustaining this multi-disciplinary approach at the local level.

### 1.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this mid-term review, the following recommendations are suggested.

**Recommendation 1: It is recommended to revise the AWP 2016 and integrate activities under outcome 2 and 3 as one set of activities “forcing” a more integrated approach to link these 2 outcomes.**

#### *Issue to Address*

The original design has been leading to the splitting up of the project into 2 separate “lines of implementation”: the implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects (under outcome 2) and the implementation of large-scale ecosystem management plans (under outcome 3). This issue has been impeding the progress of this project since its inception. It was flagged early on in 2014 by the project management team and a decision was taken by the Project Board in December 2015 to link the EbA measures (outcome 3) to the surroundings and micro-watershed of each infrastructure project (outcome 2); shifting from a focus on areas of ecosystems towards micro-watersheds and local EbA measures to support the resilience of the small-scale infrastructure projects. The recommendation is to contribute to improving this linkage by reviewing the AWP 2016 and revise it by integrating activities under outcome 2 & 3 into one set of activities - linking the EbA measures to the surroundings and micro-watershed of each infrastructure project - following the EbA guidelines of the government and the approach developed during the PPG phase and documented in Annex 8 of the project document.

**Recommendation 2: It is recommended to increase the engagement of stakeholders from the outset of any project activities, particularly communities.**

#### *Issue to Address*

The engagement of stakeholders in project activities has not been as good as anticipated at the outset of the project. There is a limited participation of stakeholders in project activities, particularly at the national level and to some extent at the beneficiary level (villages). In some cases, it also includes questions about these projects being a priority for the beneficiaries. There are not enough activities to promote/increase stakeholder engagement, which is also compounded by a complex project strategy that is difficult to promote. Overall, more participation of stakeholders is needed, particularly during the identification/design phase of the small-scale projects and EbA measures to ensure a greater local ownership of these activities and provide opportunities for replication through national institutions. It is recommended to conduct more activities seeking to make stakeholders more aware about the project and engage them in participating in project activities such as more Town Hall meetings, a more participative approach including stronger involvement of beneficiaries in identification of activities to be supported by the project, and more PB meetings/workshops to keep stakeholders engaged in the project, including at the national level.

This recommendation also includes the possibility of developing “community engagement agreements” – particularly for implementing EbA measures – whereby communities are consulted on, and can meaningfully participate in the management of their surrounding natural resources. Communities should play a key role in identifying issues and defining management and mitigation actions which may be needed to minimize first,

and if not avoidable, address these issues. This approach is already used in Lao PDR including by projects implemented under the Environment Protection Fund of Lao PDR.

**Recommendation 3: It is recommended to produce an “aggressive” work plan to complete most activities – particularly the 12 remaining small-scale infrastructure projects and the EbA measures - by August 2017.**

***Issue to Address***

When considering the complexity of funding project activities, particularly the small-scale infrastructure projects through UNCDF and the DDFs, it is crucial to speed up the implementation of the remaining 12 small-scale projects and also the implementation of EbA measures. As of June 2016, there are 18 months remaining before closing the project. The implementation of these activities should be completed by August 2017 (in 14 months) to leave enough time to process and close all administrative tasks before the closing of the project in December 2017.

**Recommendation 4: It is recommended to assess the impacts of small-scale infrastructure projects, particularly after at least one full yearly cycle.**

***Issue to Address***

So far, there is little information available about these small-scale infrastructure projects, including their respective plans, budgets. Additionally, no information about their impacts is yet available as most of these projects were recently completed. It is recommended to develop an assessment to be conducted over the remaining period of implementation to assess the impacts (positive and negative), lessons learned, best practices, possible some cost-benefit analysis, etc. It is an important assessment, which should be part of body of information that will be used to conduct the final evaluation of the project.

**Recommendation 5: It is recommended that the Project Board meet at least twice a year and be more in the “driver seat” when it comes to guiding the implementation of the project.**

***Issue to Address***

Though management arrangements as planned at the outset of the project were complex but adequate, they do not seem to lead to an effective coordination mechanism among stakeholders and develop a clear vision on where the project wants to go. The Project Board is one coordinating instrument. However, it only met twice since the beginning of the project. More coordination activities are needed and the PB should be more in the “driver seat” when it comes to guiding the implementation of the project. At least two meetings of the PB should take place each year with at least one PB meeting per year open to a larger group of stakeholders. These meetings should be used to communicate the progress/results of the project and the plans for the period ahead; but also to obtain feedback from stakeholders/beneficiaries of these small-scale projects and discuss the possible changes needed to make the project better.

**Recommendation 6: It is recommended to make changes to the *Project Results Framework* in the PIR 2015-2016 to reflect the changes to the project strategy approved in December 2015.**

***Issue to Address***

The target of implementing 48 small-scale infrastructure projects was revised in December 2015 and reduced from 48 to 28 small-scale projects. This revision was based on a more realistic assessment of how many of this climate-proofed infrastructure projects can be implemented within the timeframe of this project. This change was endorsed by the PB but no change has been made yet to the *Project Results Framework*. The quarterly progress report for the first quarter of 2016 was drafted with the same set of targets as those on the project document. It is recommended to make the necessary changes in the PIR 2015-2016 in order to properly document the approved change.

**Recommendation 7: It is recommended to review the indicators used to measure the performance of the project and add a few capacity-based indicators.**

***Issue to Address***

The set of indicators to measure the performance of the project do not measure enough how effective the project is in developing the capacity of local administrations. These indicators are mostly quantitative indicators; that is monitoring a quantity of deliverables as opposed to more quality-based indicators. These indicators give a very clear measure of things and are numerically comparable but they do not depict the status of something in more qualitative terms. In the case of capacity development initiatives such as this project, using a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators would allow the project team to better measure its performance. It is not enough to measure the delivery of all planned activities/products. The project could still be short of delivering its expected results as per the expected objective and outcomes that is to improve the capacity of local administrative systems reflecting the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risks. It is recommended to add a few capacity-based indicators to measure the development of these capacities using the criteria developed in the GEF “*Adaptation Tracking Tool (2014)*”.

**Recommendation 8: It is recommended to increase communication activities to better explained to stakeholders the complex relationship between climate change, local livelihoods, management of local natural resources and local development.**

*Issue to Address*

Due to this complex relationship between climate change and climate risks, local livelihoods, management of local natural resources and local development needs, there are huge needs to communicate and make stakeholders aware about this complex relationship. Yet, not enough efforts are made to communicate climate change risks and how it can affect natural resources and by extension the livelihood of communities. As a result, stakeholders, including beneficiaries, are not aware enough to be fully engaged in project activities and fully understand the link between the small-scale infrastructure projects and the need for a better management of local ecosystems. It is recommended to increase communication on climate change risks to stakeholders, including communities benefitting from small-scale infrastructure projects and EbA measures. A particular attention is needed to communicate this information to traditional leaders, including the possibility to organize study tours to successful related practices.

**Recommendation 9: It is recommended to review the current project achievements and develop a sustainability strategy.**

*Issue to Address*

Despite the fact that there is strong evidence that this project is a direct response to national priorities; that the government has been contributing its own resources to this project; and that the project has delivered some key deliverables such as 24 CRVAs, 16 small-scale infrastructure projects and revised DDF guidelines that include a climate resilient planning mechanism; key questions are raised about the sustainability of some of these project achievements. The sustainability strategy set in the project document is weak and currently there is limited emphasis on the long term sustainability of activities implemented by the project. It is recommended to focus on this as soon as possible and to develop a sustainability strategy, including an exit strategy after the project end<sup>2</sup>. It should include the review of all achievements and further activities to be conducted between now and the end of 2017 and explore what is needed to maximize the prospects for the long-term sustainability of these achievements; particularly the small-scale infrastructure projects, the EbA measures and the capacities needed to be in place at the district administration level to implement climate resilient development planning activities. This strategy should also include specific activities to upscale and replicate the DDF guidelines to other provinces in Lao PDR.

**Recommendation 10: It is recommended to conduct a capacity assessment of the 12 District Development Support Teams (DDSTs).**

*Issue to Address*

Through project activities at the sub-national level, on-the-job training has been conducted in climate risk analysis and planning. Additionally, the recently completed CRVAs should have also raised skills and competencies of Provincial and District Officers. However, at this point it is unknown if the capacities

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<sup>2</sup> It was noted that the Project Team has the plan to develop an “Exit” Strategy. This recommendation is to support this plan but also focus much of this strategy on the long term sustainability of project achievements and less on the “hand-over” strategy at the end of the project; hence call a sustainability strategy instead of an exist strategy.

developed with the support of the project are sufficient for these sub-national administrative offices to meet the required competence level to identify specific climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation options at the village level. It is recommended to conduct a capacity assessment to assess these new skills and competencies and possibly identify some remaining capacity needs and institutional bottlenecks.

#### 1.4. MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary Table

Below is the rating table as requested in the TORs. It includes all the required performance criteria rated as per the rating scales presented in the TORs. Supportive information is also provided throughout this report in the respective sections.

**Table 1: MRT Ratings and Achievement Summary Table**

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	Moderately Satisfactory	The design (Project Results Framework) is complicated and did not provide a clear project strategy with a clear “ <i>blue print</i> ” to be implemented. The lack of clarity of the project strategy has been subjected to different interpretations and ended up pulling project resources in too many directions.
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>		
Objective Achievement:	Moderately Satisfactory	Progress has been made, including the completion of 24 Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs), the revision of the DDF guidelines and the implementation of 16 small-scale infrastructure projects. Yet, the project targets include an additional implementation of 12 other small-scale infrastructure projects and a series of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures under outcome 3 as well as securing the long-term sustainability of these achievements. Considering the remaining budget (49%) and time (35% - 21 months) but also the time extension, the reduction of targets and the link of the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures with the infrastructure projects - all three requests approved in December 2015 - the project has still time and resources to focus and deliver its expected results.
Outcome 1 Achievement:	Satisfactory	
Outcome 2 Achievement:	Satisfactory	
Outcome 3 Achievement:	Moderately Satisfactory	
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	Moderately Satisfactory	Management arrangements are somewhat complex with “multiple layers” at national, provincial and district levels but in the context of Lao PDR, there are adequate. However, these arrangements do not seem to lead to an effective coordination mechanism among stakeholders – including beneficiaries - and develop a clear vision on where the project wants to go.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Moderately Likely	The prospects of project achievements to be sustainable over the long term are not as positive as anticipated in the project document. Despite the progress made to date, key questions about the sustainability of some of project achievements are raised.

Overall, the progress of the project as of June 2016 is rated as “*moderately satisfactory*”. It reflects the delivery of key deliverables but also the constant issue of a project divided in 2 lines of implementation, preventing the implementation of an integrated approach to better manage natural resources while at the same time responding to the needs of communities to adapt to climate change. Nevertheless, the findings from this review also indicates that the project has the potential to end up successfully.

## 2. CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

1. Lao PDR is one of the poorest countries in the world and according to IPCC findings particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Low productive agriculture, poor infrastructure development and low-levels of service delivery jointly contribute to low adaptive capacity of livelihood systems, which are already affected by impacts deriving from existing climate variability. Stresses on livelihoods will further increase due to expected climate change. Recent vulnerability and adaptation analysis indicates that there has been an increase in the number of climate hazard related events (such as floods) over the past 20 years as opposed to the preceding 30 years. Annual precipitation for the Mekong region as a whole is projected to increase by 13.5% by 2030, with most of this occurring during the wet season (May to September).

2. The provinces of Sekong and Saravane in the South of Lao PDR will be heavily affected by these changes. During recent years, changing rainfall and temperature patterns have caused regular storms leading to flash flooding and landslides, as well as more frequent and persistent dry periods and droughts. These climate threats have differing impacts on physical infrastructure and ecosystems, depending on location and topography. Amongst the most severe are the regular destruction of rural roads and small-scale irrigation schemes, as well as water scarcity for household and agricultural consumption. These climate-induced threats are further affected by slow-onset disappearance of the protective and water storage functions of ecosystems, caused by drivers such as slash and burn agriculture, monoculture, mining and hydropower investments. The combination of climate change related pressures and these other drivers mean that village water supply systems dry out more often, and that baseline physical infrastructure, which is not protected from irregular and intense water flows, is degrading more rapidly.

3. The underlying causes contributing to this situation include basic geographical factors (soil type, topography and land use practices), poor application of infrastructure construction standards and maintenance practices, and a social and ethnic context that increases the vulnerability of certain groups to climate risks. In order to address these issues, there are critical barriers to remove. They include (i) weaknesses in climate change analysis and planning at sub-national level; (ii) financial constraints in resourcing the additional costs of building greater redundancy into rural infrastructure; (iii) a silo approach to local planning whereby ecosystem functions and services are not taken into account, and (iv) the limited incentives that exist to encourage local officials and decision makers to address climate related risks.

4. The rationale of this project is to address these barriers, seeking to reflect the needs of communities vulnerable to climate variability in local planning and budget processes, so that the development prospects of these communities are secured in face of increasing climate risks. It will be done through a 'three-pronged' approach: (i) strengthening the national, provincial and district capacities for planning for rural infrastructure that incorporates climate considerations; (ii) direct financing for infrastructure projects to vulnerable districts through the existing District Development Fund (DDF) mechanism; and (iii) implementing ecosystem-based adaptation measures that provide additional climate resilience at the watershed level of project infrastructure intervention.

5. The project is implemented in Sekong and Saravane provinces in southern Lao PDR; including all 12 districts in these 2 provinces. It is a project supported by UNDP, the GEF-LDCF, and the Government of Lao PDR. It is funded by a grant from the GEF-LDCF of USD 4,700,000, a cash contribution from UNDP of USD 280,000 and an in-kind contribution of USD 375,000 from the Government of Lao PDR. In addition, parallel co-financing was identified during the PPG phase with \$4,210,000 from the Government, \$4,150,000 from IUCN and \$21,857,896 from UNDP. The project started in May 2013 and will end at the end of December 2017 (5 years) following a decision to extend the project by one year (from December 2016 to December 2017).

6. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is the Implementing Partner (IP) and has overall responsibility for the project and reporting to UNDP Lao PDR according to NIM procedures. The Department of National Disaster Management and Climate Change (DNMCC) of MONRE is responsible for the day-to day implementation of activities supported by the project in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs. The DNMCC set up a National Project Support Unit (PSU) based in Vientiane. Provincial Support Teams are set up in each Province (2) and these are co-chaired by the Heads of the Provincial Office of Home Affairs (POHA) and the Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment (PONRE).

MONRE also established Provincial Project Support Units (PPSUs) within the PONREs of Sekong and Saravane to support the administration and delivery of the project. The district offices of Home Affairs (DOHA) and Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE) act as project focal points at the district level. Finally, a Project Board (PB) was set up to oversee the implementation of the project. The PB is responsible for making management decisions, review the M&E information, monitoring the allocation of project resources and address issues hampering the progress of the project.

7. The objective of the project will be achieved through three expected outcomes (*see also Annex 1*):
- **Outcome 1:** Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision;
  - **Outcome 2:** Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces;
  - **Outcome 3:** Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces

### 3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

8. This Mid-Term Review (MTR) - a requirement of UNDP & GEF procedures - has been initiated by UNDP Lao PDR Country Office, which is the Commissioning Unit and Implementing Entity for this project. This review provides an in-depth assessment of project achievements and progress towards its objectives and outcomes.

#### 3.1. Objectives

9. As per the TORs (*see Annex 2*), the objective of this MTR was to assess progress towards the achievement of project objectives and outcomes as specified in the project document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR also reviewed the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

#### 3.2. Scope

10. As indicated in the TORs, the scope of this evaluation covered four categories of project progress, in accordance with the *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*. A summary of the scope of this MTR is presented below:

##### A. Project Strategy:

###### ***Project Design***

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions;
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results;
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership;
- Review decision-making processes;
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design;

###### ***Results Framework/Log-frame:***

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's log-frame indicators and targets;
- Review the project's objectives and outcomes or components and how feasible they can be reached within the project's time frame;
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis;
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively.

## **B. Progress Towards Results**

### ***Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:***

- Review the log-frame indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix presented in the TORs and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*;
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the MTR;
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.

## **C. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

### ***Management Arrangements:***

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document;
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement;
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

### ***Work Planning:***

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation;
- Review how Results-Based Management is being implemented;
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ log-frame as a management tool.

### ***Finance and co-finance:***

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

### ***Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:***

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used;
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget.

### ***Stakeholder Engagement:***

- Review project partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders;
- Review stakeholder participation and country-driven project implementation processes;
- Review public awareness.

### ***Reporting:***

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess the project progress reporting function and how well it fulfils GEF reporting requirements;
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

### ***Communications:***

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders;
- Review external project communication;

## **D. Sustainability**

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date;

- Assess risks to sustainability in term of financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks.

### 3.3. Methodology

11. The methodology that was used to conduct this mid-term review complies with international criteria and professional norms and standards; including the norms and standards adopted by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG).

#### 3.3.1. Overall Approach

12. The review was conducted in accordance with the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects<sup>3</sup>, and the UNEG Standards and Norms for Evaluation in the UN System. The evaluation was undertaken in-line with GEF principles which are: *independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, partnership, competencies/capacities, credibility* and *utility*. The process promoted accountability for the achievement of project objectives and promoted learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the project’s partners and beyond.

13. The Evaluation Team developed review tools in accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and guidelines to ensure an effective project review. The review was conducted and findings were structured around the GEF five major evaluation criteria; which are also the five internationally accepted evaluation criteria set out by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. There are:

- *Relevance* relates to an overall assessment of whether the project is in keeping with donors and partner policies, with national and local needs and priorities as well as with its design.
- *Effectiveness* is a measure of the extent to which formally agreed expected project results (outcomes) have been achieved, or can be expected to be achieved.
- *Efficiency* is a measure of the productivity of the project intervention process, i.e. to what degree the outcomes achieved derive from efficient use of financial, human and material resources. In principle, it means comparing outcomes and outputs against inputs.
- *Impacts* are the long-term results of the project and include both positive and negative consequences, whether these are foreseen and expected, or not.
- *Sustainability* is an indication of whether the outcomes (end of project results) and the positive impacts (long term results) are likely to continue after the project ends.

14. In addition to the UNDP and GEF guidance for project review, the Evaluation Team applied to this mandate their knowledge of review methodologies and approaches and their expertise in climate change adaptation and more generally in environmental management issues. They also applied several methodological principles such as (i) *Validity of information*: multiple measures and sources were sought out to ensure that results are accurate and valid; (ii) *Integrity*: Any issue with respect to conflict of interest, lack of professional conduct or misrepresentation were immediately referred to the client if needed; and (iii) *Respect and anonymity*: All participants had the right to provide information in confidence.

15. The evaluation was conducted following a set of steps presented in the table below:

**Table 2: Steps Used to Conduct the Evaluation**

<p><b>I. Review Documents and Prepare Mission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start-up teleconference/finalize assignment work plan</li> <li>▪ Collect and review project documents</li> <li>▪ Elaborate and submit <b>Inception Report</b></li> <li>▪ Prepare mission: agenda and logistic</li> </ul>	<p><b>III. Analyze Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected</li> <li>▪ Follow-up interviews (where necessary)</li> <li>▪ Draft and submit <b>draft evaluation report</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>II. Mission / Collect Information</b></p>	<p><b>IV. Finalize Evaluation Report</b></p>

<sup>3</sup> UNDP Evaluation Office, 2012, *Project-Level Evaluation – Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fact-findings mission to Lao PDR</li> <li>▪ Interview key Stakeholders and conduct field visits</li> <li>▪ Further collect project related documents</li> <li>▪ Mission debriefings / <b>Presentation of key findings</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Circulate draft report to UNDP-GEF and relevant stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Integrate comments and submit <b>final evaluation report</b></li> </ul>
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16. Finally, the Evaluation Team signed and applied the “*Code of Conduct*” for Evaluation Consultant (see Annex 3). The Evaluation Team conducts review activities, which are independent, impartial and rigorous. This MTR clearly contributed to learning and accountability and the Evaluation Team has personal and professional integrity and was guided by propriety in the conduct of their business.

### 3.3.2. Review Instruments

17. The evaluation will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. Findings will be triangulated through the concept of “*multiple lines of evidence*” using several evaluation tools and gathering information from different types of stakeholders and different levels of management. To conduct this review, the following review instruments will be used:

**Review Matrix:** A review matrix was developed based on the evaluation scope presented in the TOR, the project log-frame and the review of key project documents (see Annex 4). This matrix is structured along the five evaluation criteria and includes all review questions; including the scope presented in the guidance. The matrix provided overall directions for the review and was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents.

**Documentation Review:** The Evaluation Team conducted a documentation review in Canada and in Lao PDR (see Annex 5). In addition to being a main source of information, documents were also used to prepare the fact-findings mission in Lao PDR. A list of documents was identified during the start-up phase and further searches were done through the web and contacts. The list of documents was completed during the fact-findings mission.

**Interview Guide:** Based on the review matrix, an interview guide was developed (see Annex 6) to solicit information from stakeholders. As part of the participatory approach, the Evaluation Team ensured that all parties viewed this tool as balanced, unbiased, and structured.

**Mission Agenda:** An agenda for the fact-findings mission of the Evaluation Team in Lao PDR was developed during the preparatory phase (see Annex 7). The list of Stakeholders to be interviewed was reviewed, ensuring it represents all project Stakeholders. Then, interviews were planned in advance of the mission with the objective to have a well-organized and planned mission to ensure a broad scan of Stakeholders’ views during the limited time allocated to the fact-findings mission.

**Interviews:** Stakeholders were interviewed (see Annex 8). The semi-structured interviews were conducted using the interview guide adapted for each interview. All interviews were conducted in person with some follow up using emails when needed. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the interviewees and the findings were incorporated in the final report.

**Field Visits:** As per the TORs, project site visits were conducted during the fact-findings mission in Lao PDR; it ensured that the Evaluation Team had direct primary sources of information from the provincial, district and local level partners as well as from project beneficiaries. It gave opportunities to the Evaluation Team to observe project achievements at the provincial, district and local levels and obtain views from stakeholders at these levels.

**Achievement Rating:** The Evaluation Team rated project achievements according to the guidance provided in the TORs. It included a six-point rating scale to measure progress towards results and project implementation and adaptive management and a four-point rating scale for sustainability.

### 3.4. Limitations and Constraints

18. The approach for this mid-term review is based on 2 consultants with a planned level of effort of 24

days each (one international Evaluator and one national Evaluator). It comprises a 10-day mission to Lao PDR to interview key stakeholders and collect evaluative evidence; including visits to project sites in the two Provinces where the project support activities. It is a complex project and available information on project activities is limited. Nevertheless, within this context, the independent Evaluation Team was able to conduct a detailed assessment of actual results against expected results and successfully ascertained whether the project will meet its main objective - as laid down in the project document - and whether the project initiatives are, or are likely to be, sustainable after completion of the project. The Evaluation Team also made recommendations for any necessary corrections and adjustments to the overall project work plan and timetable and also for reinforcing the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

## 4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

19. This section presents the findings of this mid-term review adhering to the basic structure proposed in the TOR and as reflected in the UNDP project review guidance.

### 4.1. Project Strategy

20. This section discusses the assessment of the project strategy – including its relevance - and its overall design in the context of Lao PDR.

#### 4.1.1. Project Design

21. As presented in chapter 2, according to the IPCC findings, Lao PDR is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Low productive agriculture, poor infrastructure development and low-levels of service delivery jointly contribute to low adaptive capacity of livelihood systems, which are already affected by impacts deriving from existing climate variability. It is anticipated that stresses on livelihoods will further increase due to expected climate change. Climate hazard related events (such as floods) have increased over the past 20 years and annual precipitation for the Mekong region as a whole is projected to increase by 13.5% by 2030, with most of this occurring during the wet season (May to September).

22. The change of rainfall and temperature patterns have caused more flash flooding and landslides, as well as more frequent and persistent dry periods and droughts. These climate threats have various impacts on physical infrastructure and ecosystems, including the regular destruction of rural roads and small-scale irrigation schemes, as well as water scarcity for household and agricultural consumption. They also contribute to the slow-onset disappearance of the protective and water storage functions of ecosystems which is compounded by other drivers such as slash and burn agriculture, monoculture, mining and hydropower investments.

23. In the meantime, in order for Lao PDR to address these climate threats and adapt to these climate changes, there are critical barriers to be removed. They include (i) weaknesses in climate change analysis and planning at sub-national level; (ii) financial constraints in resourcing the additional costs of building greater redundancy into rural infrastructure; (iii) a silo approach to local planning whereby ecosystem functions and services are not taken into account, and (iv) the limited incentives that exist to encourage local officials and decision makers to address climate related risks.

24. The project was designed by the Gov. of Lao PDR through MONRE and UNDP with the financial support of the LDCF to address these barriers, seeking to reflect the needs of communities vulnerable to climate variability in local planning and budget processes, so that the development prospects of these communities are secured in the face of increasing climate risks. It was also decided to focus on 2 Southern provinces (Sekong and Saravane) which are particularly vulnerable to drought and, according to the NAPA findings, a highly likely increase of the severity and frequency of drought due to climate change.

25. The review confirms that the project is a direct response to these challenges. Indeed, it seeks to develop capacities for an “*Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*”. It is focusing on the removal of barriers through a ‘three-pronged’ approach: (i) by strengthening the national, provincial and district capacities for planning for rural infrastructure that incorporates climate considerations; (ii) by providing direct financing for infrastructure projects to vulnerable districts through the existing District Development Fund (DDF) mechanism; and (iii) by implementing ecosystem-based adaptation measures that provide additional climate resilience at the watershed level of project infrastructure intervention.

26. Overall, the project is fully relevant in the context of the policy, planning and institutional frameworks in place in Lao PDR. It is part of the development strategy for Lao PDR, which includes the alignment of the project with the following relevant parts:

#### ***Sam Sang Initiative (“3 Builds”)***

27. The Sam Sang initiative also called the “3 Builds” initiative, was proclaimed by the Prime Minister

Order 16/2012 with the objective to improve the delivery of public services. It involves the further transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts. It covers all provinces, 51 pilot districts, 109 villages, and 15 ministries of the Government. Its aim is to improve transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services, including the clarification of roles and responsibilities at each level of government.

28. Complementing the Sam Sang pilot, the Government has been systematically developing the capacity of district administrations to deliver local public services under the DDF since 2006. The DDF provides both capacity development and direct budget support (capital and operational expenditure grants) to Districts. Within this context, the LDCF project is, indeed, reinforcing the implementation of the Sam Sang initiative in the provinces of Saravane and Sekong. By contributing to the development of capacities at both the provincial and district levels, the LDCF project is strengthening the capacity to deliver public services to rural communities.

#### ***Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan VIII (2016-2020) – (8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP)***

29. The previous plan (2011-2015) has four overall targets including “*ensuring sustainable development by emphasizing economic development alongside cultural and social progress, preserving natural resources and protecting the environment, and reducing risks from natural disasters and adoption to climate change*”. During the period of the 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), the government focused on improving the legislation for the natural resource and environmental sector as well as actions focusing on the protection of water resources, improving the measuring tools in meteorology and hydrology, improving waste management. It is also during this period that Lao PDR developed its National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) (2009) and its National Strategy on Climate Change (2010). However, the review of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP conducted in the context of preparing the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP also concluded that “*acceleration of economic growth relies mainly on natural resources. However, management and use of natural resources in many cases is still carried out in an unsustainable, wasteful and not in an environmentally friendly manner. This has resulted in harmful impacts on the local people and has impacted greatly on the environment of the country*”. Furthermore, it stated “*improvement and development of infrastructure in rural areas are essential for improving livelihoods and creating equal access to public and private services on gender equal basis*”.

30. On the basis of the progress made and lessons learned from the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2016-2020) established key directions that include “*Ensure sustainable development with harmonized economic and socio-cultural development, and environmental protection. Natural disasters are to be handled in a timely manner and strong links between integrated rural development and poverty reduction are to be ensured*”. The third outcome of this 8<sup>th</sup> plan is “*Natural resources and the environment are effectively protected and utilized according to green-growth and sustainable principles; there is readiness to coping with natural disasters and the effects of climate change and for reconstruction following natural disasters*”. This outcome is to be implemented through 3 outputs including “*Output 3 - Reducing the Instability of Agricultural Production*”. Under this output, activities are to encourage sustainable development and stable and continued economic growth and to reduce agriculture production instability; considering the need to prepare and anticipate the impacts of climate change and the change of environmental conditions.

31. The LDCF project is fully aligned with the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, the overarching socio-economic development plan for Lao PDR. It is focused on preserving natural resources and protecting the environment while strengthening the adaptation to climate change of rural communities.

#### ***MONRE Vision toward 2030 (Natural Resources and Environment Strategy (NRES), 10 Years - 2016-2025)***

32. The Vision toward 2030 and the National Natural Resources and Environmental Strategy to 2025 provide a vision and strategic direction for the development and management of natural resources and environment, and build capacity for climate change adaptation and mitigate the risks of natural disaster in Lao PDR. The vision is “*Making Lao PDR Green, Clean and Beautiful, based on Green Economic Growth, to ensure Sustainable Resilient Development and Climate Change*”. The 10-year strategy sets five objectives including the third objective that is “*to ensure Lao PDR is informed and prepared for adapting climate change, responding to the Climate Change impacts (Natural Disaster) and contributing to global greenhouse gas emission reduction*”. Under this objective, one strategy is to “*mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster management into relevant sector policies, program and action*”.

plans". This 10-year strategy is implemented through five-year Action Plans detailing projects, activities, budget and implementing sectors. The LDCF project, implemented by MONRE, is well aligned with the implementation of this 10-year strategy. One of its aim is to mainstream adaptation to climate change into the development plans and programmes at the district level.

#### ***National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change (NAPA - 2009)***

33. The NAPA – completed in 2009 - was the first attempt in Lao PDR to predict the potential changes in climate conditions and resulting adverse impacts such as an increase of floods and droughts, which would impact livelihoods, specially livelihoods of the poor and most vulnerable groups. The main objective of the NAPA was to develop a country-driven program to address immediate and urgent needs related to current and projected adverse effects of climate change in key sectors, which were identified as agriculture, forestry, water and water resources, and human health. The formulation of this programme of action was also strongly linked with several national strategies and programmes such as the National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Drought and Desertification, the Eight National Priority Programmes, the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (2004), and the 5th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) 2006-2010. It was also well aligned with the MEAs to which Lao PDR is a signatory.

34. The NAPA Working Group identified needs and priority activities for climate change adaptation in these four main sectors. It identified 45 priorities and 45 priority project proposals to address the needs of climate change adaptation in these key sectors in Lao PDR (Agriculture: 13; Forestry: 14; Water and Water Resources: 10; and Public Health: 8). The LDCF project was designed with the aim of addressing NAPA priorities linked to water and water resources.

#### ***The Strategy on Climate Change of the Lao PDR (2010)***

35. The Government of Lao PDR aims to reinforce its vision for sustainable development by promoting actions that are responsive to a low-carbon growth and development model. It used its 7th National Socioeconomic Development Plan (NSEDP) as a unique opportunity to gradually mainstream the model into its development thinking. The country completed its first greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory as part of the Initial National Communication (INC) to the UNFCCC in 2000 for 4 out of 6 areas identified in the IPCC Greenhouse Gas Inventory Guideline (agriculture, energy, land use change and forestry and waste). The 1990 level inventory concluded that Lao PDR was a net sink of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) with the net CO<sub>2</sub> annual removal of 121,641 Gg (121.6 million tons) compared to 24.18 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e) emitted in all over the country.

36. Nevertheless, despite that Lao PDR is not a major contributor to climate change, it is likely to be disproportionately affected (NAPA 2009). The Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA) ranked Lao PDR as one of the most vulnerable countries in the region with serious possible consequences of climate change to its economic development, human capacity, poverty reduction and environment sustainability, which could reverse several years of development gains. As a government response, the government of Lao PDR developed its strategy on climate change in 2010 to outline the country's vision, goals and guiding principles, and detail the key strategic priorities for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The strategy also identified adaptation and mitigation measures to be implemented in key sectors such as agriculture and food security; forestry and land use change; water resources; energy and transport; industry; urban development; and public health.

37. The LDCF project is well aligned with this strategy on climate change. It can be considered as one instrument (among others) implemented by MONRE to fulfill the goals of this strategy such as "*increasing the resilience of key sectors of the national economy and natural resources to climate change and its impacts*" and "*improve public awareness and understanding of various stakeholders about climate change, vulnerabilities and impacts, ... .., and of how climate change will impact the country's economy, in order to increase stakeholder willingness to take actions*". The project is particularly well aligned with the strategic priorities on water resources and forestry.

#### ***National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGPAR)***

38. Since 1997 Lao PDR has invested in a comprehensive reform program for better governance. The program aims to build a state administration capable of managing the development goals of the country; that is, to navigate Lao PDR out of the ranks of the least developed countries by the year 2020. The programme

intervenes in 6 different areas: central government reforms; local administration reforms; role of government reforms; personnel management reforms; financial management reforms; and public sector legal reforms.

39. GPAR activities relate primarily to the “*Strategic Plan on Governance 2011-15*”, through two pillars: Public Service Improvement and People’s Participation. Supported activities cover four broad areas: Formulation of policy initiatives to strengthen public administration including civil service; Preparation of strategies, methodologies and implementation plans for the above; training and capacity building to support implementation; and Implementation support, including equipment and infrastructure. GPAR is well aligned with the focal areas of work of MOHA, including the area on decentralized administration and local service delivery.

40. Following 2 phases funded by donors, the GPAR programme is now fully owned by the government of Lao PDR and is now called the National GPAR Programme (NGPAR). It is designed to assist the newly established Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) to address a comprehensive package of reforms in public administration ranging from: strengthening the institutional and legal environment of public administration and local administration; organizational improvement in government; strengthening MDG-focused service delivery at district level; building capacity for human resource development and training in the civil service; and strengthening civil society engagement in governance. The NGPAR Programme is based on 8 clusters, including 2 with a direct link with the LDCF project: Organizational development in the local administration (cluster 3); and Capacity and service delivery of local administrations (cluster 4).

41. Under this NGPAR, UNDP and UNCDF support and monitor a programme titled “*Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations (GPAR SCSD)*” that is implemented by MOHA, the provinces and districts. This programme focuses on implementing activities under clusters 3 & 4 presented above. The overall objective of this Joint Programme is to ensure increased capacity in the local administration leading to better delivery of services which improve the lives of the poor, especially in rural areas of Lao PDR. Through the establishment of district level Performance Based Block Grants (capital and recurrent) which provide incentives for improved overall performance linked to the local administration mandate, the Joint Programme seeks to improve local MDG-targeted service delivery through increased capacity and long term reform.

42. Using the expertise of UNCDF, the GPAR-SCSD project supports the Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfers and the overall fiscal decentralization processes in Lao PDR, including the development and delivery of performance based grant systems to local government Institutions. This project supports the DDF, a government funds transfer mechanism where regular block grants are transferred from the central level to the district level to finance development activities. DDFs have supported decentralized planning and financing of local infrastructure and services since 2006 in Lao PDR. They include both Basic Block Grants and Operational Expenditure Block Grants. The main objective of the DDFs is to improve public service delivery through demonstrating and strengthening the capacity of district administrations and testing improved financial management procedures. The DDF in Sekong province was created in 2006 and in 2008 in Saravane province.

43. This is an important project to be considered where reviewing the design of this LDCF project. Initially, the strategy at the outset of the design of this project was to develop the LDCF project as a tool to integrate climate change risks and climate change adaptation into local development planning processes and make it climate change resilient. It included the integration of climate change resilience in the functioning of the DDFs, the District Development Support Teams (DDSTs) and the District Development Support Committees (DDSCs); and in the formulation of District Development Plans (DDPs). As one interviewee said, it was envisioned as a “*climate change governance tool available to the government of Lao PDR*”.

#### ***Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change (DDMCC)***

44. This newly established department within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) was designated as the entity responsible for the implementation of all project components, in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA). It has been responsible for the day-to-day implementation of activities supported by the project. The Director General of DDMCC serves as the National Project Director of this project.

### ***Gender considerations***

45. The review also found that gender considerations and ethnic group issues were included in the design of the project, recognizing the importance of inclusiveness and their role in the sustainability of project achievements. It particularly considered the specific access patterns to infrastructure and ecosystem services and roles and responsibilities in the use and maintenance of village and household level infrastructure. From the outset, the project intended to address gender equality and minority group issues at district and village level. These considerations were especially to be taken into account when designing and implementing Community Risk and Vulnerability Analyses (CRVAs) at project site level, to ensure gender equal access to project resources that address the vulnerabilities and adaptation needs of all ethnic groups.

46. These specific concerns and needs of women and ethnic groups were to be addressed initially through the use of existing participatory project identification and formulation procedures introduced with the support from the GPAR/DDF initiative. It includes the use of gender sensitive survey techniques such as interviewing females separately without the presence of men who could bias the process; disaggregate male and female's information from each household; collect an inventory of family assets, data on main sources of income and other socio-economic information in order to analyze patterns of socially differentiated access to infrastructure and other livelihood assets; and conduct focus interviews with all ethnic minority groups and other organizations active in villages to identify those climate risks and vulnerabilities most affecting their lives.

47. In conclusion, the LDCF project is well aligned with the national strategies and programmes. It is a direct response to national priorities and needs, particularly for priorities in the water and forestry sectors as well as strengthening local development processes. It supports the government to address climate risks, particularly flooding and drought risks. It is part of the national priorities to adapt to climate change and it is executed by the national department mandated by the government to tackle climate change. The design of the project was done in Lao PDR with a good participation of stakeholders, including two national and two provincial stakeholders' workshops, numerous donor stakeholder meetings and various interviews with local, district and provincial officials in Sekong and Saravane provinces. It ensured that the project was a response to national priorities and needs and it also developed a good country ownership from the outset of this project. It was also envisioned as a project to integrate climate resilience into the reformed local development planning processes supported by the GPAR-SCSD project. It is a well justified project. In the meantime, this project has been a pioneer in its approach using Community Risk and Vulnerability Analyses (CRVAs) as a basis to identify climate change adaptation activities to be implemented/supported by the project<sup>4</sup>.

#### **4.1.2. Results Framework / Log-frame**

48. The Strategic Results Framework identified during the design phase of this project presents a good set of expected results. No changes were made to the *Project Results Framework* during the inception phase. The review of the objective and outcomes indicates a satisfactory and logical "chain of results" – Activities → Outcomes → Objective. Project resources have been used to implement planned activities to reach a set of expected outputs (9), which would contribute in achieving a set of expected outcomes (3), which together should contribute to achieve the overall objective of the project. This framework also includes - for each outcome - a set of indicators and targets to be achieved at the end of the project and that are used to monitor the performance of the project.

49. The aim of the project is to finance additional costs for enhancing the resilience of small rural

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4 The Reviewers noted the excellent "*Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Options Report*" done in the Sekong and Saravane provinces and districts in 2012 as part of the Project Preparation Phase (PPG) and documented as Annex 8 of the project document. This assessment conducted:

- An inventory of assets in the areas of rural infrastructures and natural systems related to the water sector.
- A Vulnerability and Assessment (V&A) analysis of the rural infrastructure systems and of natural systems, which were divided into upper catchment zone, mid-catchment zone and lower catchment zone.
- Adaptation options were identified in both rural infrastructure and natural systems.
- A set of proposed future project activities in both rural infrastructure and natural systems.

This assessment done during the PPG phase was much instrumental in putting the project together. Much information about the natural systems remain valid today and could be used to fast-track the implementation of the EbA measures (outcome 3).

infrastructure and ecosystem services to climate risks, within the context of inclusive local planning and investments in some of the poorest districts of Lao PDR. It is assumed that the impacts of climate change will affect small scale rural infrastructure through the increased risks associated with more frequent and severe droughts and dry periods, floods, landslides and extreme weather events, as well as more fundamental shifts in the hydrological regime undermining the ecosystem services that provide a buffer between the climate and the built infrastructure. The review of this Strategic Results Framework indicates that this project is well aligned with national priorities and its logic is appropriate to address clear national needs.

50. The logic model of the project presented in the *Strategic Results Framework* is summarized in table 3 below. It includes one objective, three outcomes and nine outputs. For each expected outcome, targets to be achieved at the end of the project were identified.

**Table 3: Project Logic Model**

Expected Results	Targets at End of Project
<p><b>Project Objective:</b> Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of district development plans in the project area include at least 3 specific CCA actions by mid project and at least 5 CCA actions by end of project.</li> <li>● 60% of District Development Support Committees in the target districts and provinces record specific climate related concerns emerging from community level annual planning consultations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> - Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 1.1:</b> Technical capacity in climate resilient planning and managing climate risks, focusing on links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure, enhanced for at least 250 national, province, district and village officials, including watsan committee members and disaster management committee members.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.2:</b> Village level water harvesting, storage and distribution infrastructure adaptation solutions and related ecosystem management options identified, prioritized and integrated into district development plans.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.3:</b> Climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) carried out at 48 project sites in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces and proposed climate resilient investments adjusted to take account of site specific adaptation concerns.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.4:</b> Detailed climate resilient project investments and tender documents finalized as well as associated dialogues to facilitate implementation of annual investment plans in 12 districts.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.5:</b> Guidelines, codes and best practices for climate resilient construction developed, applied and revised for small-scale rural infrastructure sectors (irrigation, water supply, rural roads, education, and health), including technical training in climate resilient design for local engineers and contractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of sub-national officials and 10% of national officials are able to analyze climate risks for their districts on a macro level (V&amp;A analysis) and are able to identify specific vulnerabilities and adaptation options at village level (CRVA).</li> <li>● All 12 target districts are applying a climate resilient planning mechanism including project identification, site assessment, approval, execution and M&amp;E.</li> <li>● All annual district investment plans include evidence of incremental CCA costings for water sector projects by year 4 and at least 4 provide this evidence by Year 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> – Incentives in place for small scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 2.1:</b> An incentive mechanism, rewarding districts performing well in planning, budgeting and implementation of climate resilient, ecosystem based small-scale water infrastructure is developed, tested and under operation.</li> <li>● <b>Output 2.2:</b> At least 48 small-scale infrastructure investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By the end of the project all target districts are investing at least 2 projects per year in village level climate resilient water harvesting, storage and distribution systems, which are informed by CRVA.</li> <li>● At least 50,000 people across 12 districts are benefitting from climate change resilient small-scale irrigation infrastructure, which has been informed by CRVA.</li> <li>● At least 25% in additional CCA funds (annual average) expended over and above baseline</li> </ul>

Expected Results	Targets at End of Project
<p>projects (1 per district and year), including components of water harvesting, storage, distribution and/ or irrigation of the priority lists that have been CRVA assessed are implemented.</p>	<p>District Development Funding in at least 12 districts, based on a system that rewards districts that perform well against predetermined criteria.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> – Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) over at least 60,000 ha are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 3.1:</b> Up to 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (including physical measures to increase natural water retention and storage, as well as increase ground water infiltration and recharge) are designed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness.</li> <li>● <b>Output 3.2:</b> Awareness-raising activities implemented, learning materials developed and disseminated and regular dialogues established between communities and all local administrative tiers on linkages between ecosystems management and small-scale infrastructure solutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 6 management and action plans covering at least 48 climate resilience small-scale infrastructure investments under implementation across both Sekong and Saravane provinces.</li> <li>● At least 250 national, provincial and district planners have received knowledge and learning approaches and materials produced by the project on ecosystem based management linkages to infrastructure provision.</li> </ul>

51. At first glance, this model appears coherent with clear targets that were developed to “*improve local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*” (see a more detailed list of outcomes and their indicative activities in Annex I). However, the detailed analysis of the project document reveals that it is a complicated document. The project rationale also says that the “*LDCF resources will be used to address NAPA priorities linked to water and water resources ...*”. It is not easy to grasp the intend of the project. Most stakeholders met during this review indicated their difficulties to understand the project strategy; including few comments that the Laotian version of the project document is even more complicated to understand than the English version.

52. The project rationale says that the “*LDCF resources will be used to address NAPA priorities linked to water and water resources ...*”, which was to include NAPA priorities such as underground water sources in drought prone areas; mapping flood prone areas; early warning system for flood prone areas; multiuse reservoirs in drought prone areas; and conservation and development of major watersheds. However, when reviewing the project strategy, it is less obvious to establish the link between the project and NAPA priorities. The project is more about developing the planning capacity of local administrations. As the project objective says, the project is to improve local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure vulnerable to climate risks.

53. In addition to the focus on improving local administrative systems, the strategy of the project revolves much around the implementation of 48 (reduced later to 28) small scale infrastructure investment projects. Output 1.3 is about conducting climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) at 48 project sites; output 2.2 is about implementing 48 small-scale infrastructure investment projects; and output 3.1 is about designing and implementing 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects. It was a very ambitious target for the project to identify, design, implement and monitor 48 small scale infrastructure investment projects. The review conducted for this MTR reveals that too much focus was on the implementation of these small-scale projects and on complying with the corresponding expected targets as opposed to focus more on the higher level expected results to achieve the expected outcomes and objective.

### **Changes to the Project Strategy**

54. It is also important to note that in December 2015, the project management team requested 3 major changes:

- To extend the project implementation by one year to December 31, 2017;
- Reduce the number of climate-proofed infrastructure projects from 48 to 28;

- Link the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures (outcome 3) with the infrastructure projects (outcome 2).

55. A full justification was provided for each of these changes and a document was submitted to the Project Board. These were reviewed and approved by the project board at the project board meeting of December 24, 2015 and approved by UNDP on January 20, 2016.

56. The request to extend the project by one year was justified by three main points:

- Delays in project initiation;
- Delays in recruiting project personnel, which also means that no additional staff cost is envisaged with this time extension due to late starts of most project personnel positions;
- Need to improve monitoring and evaluation by strengthening the monitoring of project impacts on local communities and communicate these results.

57. The request to reduce the number of climate-proofed infrastructure projects from 48 to 28 was based on a more realistic assessment of how many of these climate-proofed infrastructure projects can be implemented within the timeframe of this project. The original assumption was 1 project per each of the 12 districts per year for four years giving a total number of 48 projects to be implemented. Considering that the project uses the existing District Development Fund mechanism, which was developed through the GPAR project and using the UNCDF-supported financing mechanism (performance-based climate resilient grant system (PBCRG)), the project has become part of the so-called “LoCAL” mechanism under UNCDF (“*Local Climate Adaptive Living*”). This mechanism has been piloted in two countries (Cambodia and Bhutan) and is currently being rolled out to a number of other countries in Asia and Africa. This mechanism applies a three-phase approach: (i) Phase 1: Piloting (testing in 2-4 local governments, develop baseline, introduce the PBCRG over 1-2 financial years); (ii) Phase 2: The Learning Phase (pilot in 5-10 % of local governments in a country, collect lessons, assess results, preparation of national roll-out over 2 financial years); and (iii) Phase 3: Scaling-up (full national roll-out, gradual expansion, access international climate financing). Within this context, the project will only support phase 1 and phase 2 and it was assessed that it can only support 28 of these small scale projects. Near the end, the project may facilitate the formulation of a phase 3 national roll-out as part of its exit strategy.

58. Finally, the last request to link the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures (outcome 3) with the infrastructure projects (outcome 2) was justified by the fact that the original design has been leading to the splitting up of the project into 2 separate “lines of implementation”: the implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects (under outcome 2) and the implementation of large-scale ecosystem management plans (under outcome 3). It was recommended to link the EbA measures to the surroundings and micro-watershed of each infrastructure project; shifting from a focus on areas of ecosystems towards micro-watersheds and local EbA measures to support the resilience of the small-scale infrastructure projects.

59. In conclusion the review of the project strategy and the national context for this project indicates that this strategy is a direct response to national priorities and needs. It contributes to the effort of the government to address climate risks. However, its complicated design did not provide a clear project strategy with a clear “*blue print*” (project results framework) to be implemented. The lack of clarity of the project strategy has been subjected to different interpretations and ended up pulling project resources in too many directions: addressing NAPA water related priorities, implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects, implementation of ecosystem management and action plans, developing the planning capacity of local administrations. After 42 months of implementation, there is still a weak vision of where the project should go; particularly to link the ecosystem management activities planned under outcome 3 with the small scale infrastructure projects under outcome 2 and to ensure the sustainability of project achievements.

## 4.2. Progress Towards Results

60. This section discusses the assessment of project results; how effective the project is to deliver its expected results and what are the remaining barriers limiting the effectiveness of the project.

### 4.2.1. Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis

61. As presented in Sections 4.1, the project has been implemented through three (3) outcomes. The implementation progress is measured through a set of 10 indicators and 10 targets. On the next page is a table listing key deliverables achieved so far by the project against each outcome and their corresponding targets. Additionally, a color “*traffic light system*” code was used to represent the level of progress achieved so far by the project, as well as a justification for the given rating (color code)<sup>5</sup>.

	Target achieved
	On target to be achieved
	Not on target to be achieved

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<sup>5</sup> The analysis and ratings presented in this Section have been conducted with the assumption that the project will terminate in December 2017 as per its official ending date.

**Table 4: List of Delivered Results**

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
<p><b>Project Objective:</b> Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of district development plans in the project area include at least 3 specific CCA actions by mid project and at least 5 CCA actions by end of project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The signing of the MOU between MONRE, UNDP and UNCDF</li> <li>● Four districts have already implemented their first climate resilient infrastructure based on the DDF mechanism (Lakhonpheng, Saravane, Kaleum and Lamarm districts).</li> <li>● All 12 districts have prioritized climate resilience projects into their district development plans for 2015. Through a consultation with all the districts in March 2015, 14 projects were prioritized for funding and implementation in 2015. All these 14 project sites were visited in June 2015 with the aim to assess their suitability for funding.</li> <li>● The DDF Guidelines<sup>6</sup> have been revised with the aim to include climate resilience as a parameter for fund allocation to districts. The revised DDF Guidelines, including the fund allocation formula with the interim DVI, will be applied in full to guide the district fund allocation for the climate resilience grants from the 2016 fund allocation (3rd round of funds).</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The project is progressing toward its objective that is to improve local administrative systems in 12 districts.</li> <li>● Through “on-the-job training” and also “learning-by-doing”, capacities are being developed at both provincial and district level to plan the provision to communities of climate resilient small-scale rural infrastructure projects.</li> <li>● Planning processes in the 12 districts are evolving to include a more climate resilient planning mechanism. District development plans are also becoming more climate resilient over time.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At 60% of District Development Support Committees in the target districts and provinces record specific climate related concerns emerging from community level annual planning consultations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The District Development Support Committees of all 12 districts (100%) have been actively involved in the prioritizing projects. 14 projects have been prioritized through district consultations (January, March 2015) and verified through site visits together with DDSC and DDST members (June 2015). Through this 'on-the-job' process, local capacity for inclusion of climate resilience into district planning processes has been developed.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As part of the planning process, community consultation is the weakest component. Observations and meetings with communities indicate a still poor planning consultation process, which should be the basis for identifying community-based climate related issues.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> At the time of this review, an assessment of the Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grant System (PBCRGS) was ongoing, including the identification of pathways to improve the system and to enhance the understanding by stakeholders of the GBCRGS and its related climate resilient guidelines.

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> - Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 1.1:</b> Technical capacity in climate resilient planning and managing climate risks, focusing on links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure, enhanced for at least 250 national, province, district and village officials, including watsan committee members and disaster management committee members.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.2:</b> Village level water harvesting, storage and distribution infrastructure adaptation solutions and related ecosystem management options identified, prioritized and integrated into district development plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of sub-national officials are able to analyze climate risks for their districts on a macro level (V&amp;A analysis) and are able to identify specific vulnerabilities and adaptation options at village level (CRVA).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Members of the DDST in 12 districts (60 technical staff), Provincial Officers (8 Officers), and DNDMCC Officers (2 Officers) for a total of 70 Officers received on-the-job training in climate risk planning. They are expected to fully be able to analyze climate risks by Q1 of 2016 following the implementation of CRVAs.</li> <li>● A Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) for local departments at provincial and district levels was conducted from September to October 2014, and a capacity development plan was developed based on the CNA. Capacity development has been mainly done through 'on-the-job' activities and associated training events, such as identification and prioritization of climate resilient infrastructure projects and ecosystem management plan development.</li> <li>● CRVAs for 12 infrastructure projects are completed as well as CRVA baselines completed for an additional 12 potential projects. CRVAs contributed to raise the capacity for integrating climate resilience into local planning processes.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Initial on-the-job training has been done in climate risk planning.</li> <li>● Additionally, the recently completed CRVAs should have also raised skills and competencies of Provincial and District Officers.</li> <li>● In order to fully achieve this target, a capacity assessment is needed to assess these new skills and competencies and determine if these sub-national administrative offices meet the required competence level to identify specific vulnerabilities and adaptation options at the village level.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All 12 target districts are applying a climate resilient planning mechanism including project identification, site assessment, approval, execution and M&amp;E.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● With the approved revised DDF Guidelines<sup>7</sup>, the procedures for integrating climate resilience into district planning and investments for rural water infrastructure is underway.</li> <li>● It is expected that the selected CRVA service provider contributed to the development of capacity of local authorities to integrate a climate resilient planning mechanism in their planning processes.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on interviews and observations conducted during this review, the application of a climate resilient planning mechanism in all 12 targeted districts is not fully achieved yet. More capacity development is needed including learning lessons from the completed 16 small-scale infrastructure projects in term of project identification, site assessment, approval, execution and M&amp;E.</li> </ul>

7 These DDF Guidelines were recently endorsed by the government of Lao PDR through a Ministerial Agreement (ref. 4654/MONRE) dated September 8, 2016 (see Annex 9).

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 1.3:</b> Climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) carried out at 48 project sites in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces and proposed climate resilient investments adjusted to take account of site specific adaptation concerns.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.4:</b> Detailed climate resilient project investments and tender documents finalized as well as associated dialogues to facilitate implementation of annual investment plans in 12 districts.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.5:</b> Guidelines, codes and best practices for climate resilient construction developed, applied and revised for small-scale rural infrastructure sectors (irrigation, water supply, rural roads, education, and health), including technical training in climate resilient design for local engineers and contractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All annual district investment plans include evidence of incremental CCA costings for water sector projects by year 4 and at least 4 provide this evidence by Year 2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 11 out of 12 DDPs will include CCA projects, including their costing.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Not completed yet and still limited evidence of incremental CCA costings in small-scale infrastructure projects. As the project move to the implementation of the other 12 small-scale infrastructure projects and also the EbA measures, it is anticipated that these district investment plans will reflect incremental CCA cost better.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> – Incentives in place for small scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By the end of the project all target districts are investing at least 2 projects per year in village level climate resilient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The revised DDF Guidelines includes a climate resilience criterion that provides the incentive for integrating climate resilience into the planning process in the short-term. In the</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first target for the project under this outcome is to implement 28 small-scale infrastructure projects. In the</li> </ul>

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
<p>against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 2.1:</b> An incentive mechanism, rewarding districts performing well in planning, budgeting and implementation of climate resilient, ecosystem based small-scale water infrastructure is developed, tested and under operation.</li> <li>● <b>Output 2.2:</b> At least 48 small-scale infrastructure investment projects (1 per district and year), including components of water harvesting, storage, distribution and/ or irrigation of the priority lists that have been CRVA assessed are implemented.</li> </ul>	<p>water harvesting, storage and distribution systems, which are informed by CRVA.</p>	<p>long-term, the construction of climate-resilient projects will provide further incentives as the benefits of doing so are documented and experienced at the local level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A first phase of four (4) pilot projects were completed (2015): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Saravane Province</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improvement of Irrigation System at Ban Nongdeng, Saravane District</li> <li>○ Water Harvesting at Naphabangyai Village, Lakhonepheng District</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>Sekong Province</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upgrading Village Irrigation Scheme at Mo Village, Lamam District</li> <li>○ Upgrading Existing Irrigation Scheme and Headwork and Canals at Songkhone Village, Kaleum District</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● A second phase of 12 infrastructure projects completed (2016): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Saravane Province</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Construction Wooden Bridge from Lao Ngam to Donluang Village, Lao Ngam District</li> <li>○ Construction of Community Bridge Crossing Houy Keung Village, Vapi District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Irrigation Scheme at Hang Heng Village, Khongsedone District</li> <li>○ Construction of Dike for Wetland Reservoir Beung Sa O, Ban Bang Hen, Khongsedone District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Check Dam, Reservoir Water Supply at Ban Vangkhane - Houytae Village, Lakhonepheng District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Irrigation at Pi Hai Village, Samouy District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Irrigation in Nonhdeng Village, Saravane District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Irrigation Scheme at Pha Tem Village, Ta Oy District</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>Sekong Province</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upgrade Irrigation scheme at Naver Village, Lamam District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Village Water Supply and Sanitation at Kamkok-Aling Village, Thateng District</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p>meantime, capacity of local administrative systems is being developed to apply a climate resilient planning mechanism. It is expected that by the end of the project, the 12 district administrative offices have the capacity to invest into village-based climate resilient projects.</p>

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upgrade existing Village Water Supply at Loi, Kum 2 Village, Kaleun District</li> <li>○ Upgrade Village Water Supply and Sanitation at Dak Touan Village, Dak Cheung District</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 50,000 people across 12 districts are benefitting from climate change resilient small-scale irrigation infrastructure, which has been informed by CRVA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first four pilot projects benefitted over 4,300 villagers from the four districts of Kaleun and Lamarm in Sekong Province, and Lakhonpheng and Saravane in Saravane Province.</li> <li>● The 12 new projects should benefit approximately 17,000 local people</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As the project is progressing toward the implementation of 28 small-scale infrastructure projects, it should reach 50,000 people who should benefit from these water related climate change resilient infrastructure projects.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 25% in additional CCA funds (annual average) expended over and above baseline District Development Funding in at least 12 districts, based on a system that rewards districts that perform well against predetermined criteria.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on lessons learned from the first 4 pilot projects, a new version of the Manual for the Assessment of Districts “<i>Performance under the SCSD Program – District Development Fund (DDF) - MOHA-SCSD Guidelines No. 07/2012</i>” was completed and approved as part of the DDF Guidelines. It includes criteria for climate resilience. This should result in a more effective allocation of climate resilience grants, i.e. with priority given to most climate vulnerable and best-performing districts.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New climate resilient guidelines were completed and approved and sub-national administrative offices have started to use them. It should provide these offices with the necessary guidelines to allocate more effectively climate resilient development grants.</li> <li>● As the planning cycles progress over time, these revised guidelines and new skills and competencies to apply a climate resilient planning mechanism should result in an increase of CCA funding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3 – Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) over at least 60,000 ha are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 6 management and action plans covering at least 48 climate resilience small-scale infrastructure investments under implementation across both Sekong and Saravane provinces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Two road maps for development management plans for two selected areas (both within the Sedone watershed) have been developed through extensive consultations with districts and provinces.</li> <li>● Participatory land-use planning in the areas through collaboration with Department of Land Planning and Development (DLPD) under MONRE, and their provincial and district units has started. DLPD has a national process of parallel "macro-level" and "micro-level" land-use planning processes going on, and has already undertaken macro-level land-use planning in Sekong (Thateng district, where the Phu Ta Yeune ecosystem is situated). They still</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When considering the timeline, this outcome is almost “<i>Not on Target to be Achieved</i>”. Nevertheless, the project management team is working hard on this part of the project and based on the recommendations of this MTR, activities under this outcome should speed-up drastically over the coming year, once there is an agreement on how to proceed forward.</li> </ul>

Expected Results	Project Targets	Results (Deliverables)	MTE Assess.	Justification for rating
<p>Sekong and Saravane provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 3.1:</b> Up to 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (including physical measures to increase natural water retention and storage, as well as increase ground water infiltration and recharge) are designed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness.</li> <li>● <b>Output 3.2:</b> Awareness-raising activities implemented, learning materials developed and disseminated and regular dialogues established between communities and all local administrative tiers on linkages between ecosystems management and small-scale infrastructure solutions.</li> </ul>		<p>need to implement micro-level (i.e. village-based) land-use planning, so this offer a good opportunity for the project to link up to the existing national process, and insert climate change issues, including ecosystem-based adaptation as elements of the land-use planning process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consultations with villages in and around the two ecosystem areas of Phu Ta Yeuane in Thateng district in Sekong Province (13,000 ha) and Sa O Wetlands in Khongsedone District in Saravane Province (100 ha) was carried out with the aim to identify specific areas for ecosystem rehabilitation and EbA measures. Experts from Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Department of Forest Resources Management (DFRM) were invited for the consultations.</li> <li>● In terms of any additional ecosystem areas, these will be selected based on the needs of existing and new infrastructure projects in order to increase integration between Project Outcome 2 and 3. It includes areas in the other major watershed of the project - upper Sekong – which already includes a number of infrastructure projects in Kaleum, Dakchung and Lamarm districts.</li> </ul>	<p style="background-color: yellow;"></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 250 national, provincial and district planners have received knowledge and learning approaches and materials produced by the project on ecosystem based management linkages to infrastructure provision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Capacity Needs Assessment was carried out at local level (provinces and districts) in October 2015, based on which a capacity development plan was developed. This plan emphasizes 'on-the-job' activities, i.e. capacity development activities that are linked to project implementation. this ensures a better 'uptake' compared with conventional training sessions.</li> <li>● Approximately 150 local government staff have been involved with capacity development events, including members of DDST and DDSCs, as well as PONRE and DONRE officers.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Progress has been made to meet this target due to its strong link with output 2.1. The design has split the 2 main lines of implementation of this project – infrastructure projects and ecosystem-based adaptation measures – however the project team is aware of this split and is trying to “push” it as one approach linking both together.</li> <li>● A more integrated awareness raising/training approach supported by the project should contribute to greater linkages between these 2 lines.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from project progress reports

62. Overall, progress has been made, particularly in the implementation of 16 small-scale infrastructure projects under outcome 2 that are listed in table 4 above. A summary of key achievements is presented below:

- A capacity needs assessment and a capacity development plan focusing at the provincial and district levels
- 24 Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs), also including the identification of EbA measures
- Revised DDF guidelines including a climate resilient planning mechanism
- 16 small-scale infrastructure projects located in Sekong and Saravane provinces
- 2 road-maps for ecosystem management plans (EbA) in 2 selected areas located in the Sedone watershed
- On-the-job training for local development officers in the 2 provinces and 12 districts

63. The Lao CRVA was a project-supported assessment using a methodology for small-scale rural water infrastructure that would secure the performance and integrity of rural infrastructure of Sekong and Saravane provinces under the extreme variable and changing climate conditions, building resilience to climate change and incorporating ecosystem-based adaptation measures. It focused on three main types of water infrastructure: (1) bridges, roads and culvert infrastructure; (2) water supply infrastructure; and (3) irrigation infrastructure and wetland management. For each type, the assessment reviewed the sector; its risks and impact of climate change; an identification of priority adaptation responses; and an integration of adaptation options into an adaptation plan.

64. The entire CRVA process covered 11 assessments of selected water infrastructure and an additional 13 baseline assessments of the surrounding environmental and infrastructure conditions of 13 new sites.

#### **Assessments of selected water infrastructure**

##### ***Saravane Province***

- Beungxai flood culvert project, Saravane District
- Beung Sa O wetland and irrigation project, Khongsedone District
- Polong-Nong Deun Village Bridge Improvement, Laongam District
- Houay Trom Irrigation Improvement, Patem Village, Ta Oy District
- Huay Keung Bridge, Kengnoy Village, Vapi District
- Koudlamphong Wetland Conservation Project, Lakhonphen District
- Huay Tapeng Irrigation Improvement, Samuay District
- Huay Tapua 3 Bridge, Toumlane District

##### ***Sekong Province***

- Huay Ped Irrigation Improvement, Naver Village, Lamam District
- Dark Treub Clean Water System, Dark Treub Village, Darkchueng District
- Kamkok village water supply, Xekong District

#### **Baseline assessments of surrounding environmental and infrastructure conditions**

##### ***Saravane Province***

- Beung Ae Reservoir-wetland project, Vapi District
- Houay Houne Neua Bridge, Hokong Villgae, Lao Ngam District
- Chohao Irrigation Improvement, Chohai Village, Ta Oy District
- Huay Men Bridge, Toumlane District
- Huay Kathone Bridge, Toumlane District
- Huay Chaluy Irrigation Improvement, Naphanuan Village, Saravane District
- Nong Phek Irrigation Improvement, Nong Phek Village, Saravane District
- Huay Lapong Bridge, Lakhonphen District

##### ***Sekong Province***

- Huay Dam Irrigation Improvement, Nongkan Village, Thateng District
- Huay Koung Irrigation Improvement, Beng Village, Lamam District
- Dark Leun Clean Water Supply System, Dark Leun Village, Darkchung District
- Kungtasting Clean Water Supply System, Kungtasting Village, Kaluem District
- Loy Anquad Clean Water Supply System, Loy Anquad Village, Kalum District

65. In 2012, the Government of Lao approved a set of guidelines for Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) as an effective resilience building measure for rural communities<sup>8</sup>. It defines EbA as the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. EbA uses sustainable management, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems to provide services to facilitate human adaptation to the adverse impacts of multiple pressures, including climate change. These guidelines emphasize the importance of community participation. They consist of four steps: *Step 1*: Vulnerability assessment of Social ecological system; *Step 2*: Identification and Prioritization of EbA measures; *Step 3*: Implementation of EbA measures; and *Step 4*: Mainstreaming EbA.

66. Within this EbA context in Lao PDR, the project is to implement 9 ecosystem management and action plans. So far, the project team has developed a master plan called “*Road Map for EbA of Wetland and Forest Management*”. This roadmap lists 9 actions to undertake: village consultation, participatory land use planning, socio-economic baseline data collection, training workshops for provincial and district officers and villagers on EbA, participatory EbA management rule development and dissemination, pilot project implementation by testing EbA measures on the ground, public awareness raising on integrated EbA and rural infrastructures at community level, participatory monitoring and evaluation, success story publication, and exist strategy.

67. However, in term of implementation of these EbA measures, little progress has been made so far. Some progress has only been made on the So O wetland ecosystem site; the other eight ecosystem management sites have not progressed so far. Public awareness raising has not been implemented while it should have been done before the infrastructure component. Experience shows that community awareness raising takes time and need a lot of on-going encouragement and follow up support. Thus it should be introduced upfront and be continued in parallel to the work such as construction of infrastructure.

68. Meanwhile, the review team found that the EbA integration into rural infrastructure was welcome by the communities visited. For example, utilization of Bio-engineering in the protection of the earth-dike at So O Wetland Ecosystem site seem to work well. Community planted grass on the slopes and the grass started to grow. However, this technique was not new to the community either. The only thing that is new is the scale of the dike. It is a large earth-dike needing lot of labor to plant the grass. This is an example of when community organization/mobilization should be initiated by the project and should be done well in advance of the dike construction. Otherwise, if the community was not mobilized in advance of the construction of the earth-dike, there will be a weak community ownership and it will be prone to erosion.

69. Despite the progress made, assessing the overall progress of the project hasn't been easy. The Reviewers found it difficult to measure the progress made and to assess if the project will meet its targets. So far, the project expended about 51% of the GEF-LDCF budget (USD 2.4M) and used 65% of its timeline (39 out of 60 months)<sup>9</sup>. Yet, the project targets include an additional implementation of 12 other small-scale infrastructure projects and a series of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures under outcome 3 as well as securing the long-term sustainability of these achievements. It is doable within the remaining budget of the project (49%) but with only 35% of the timeline left (21 months), it is a tight schedule.

70. Another concern about the progress of the project is the effectiveness of activities supported by the project. The review of the first set of 16 small-scale projects indicate that there are scattered throughout the provinces of Sekong and Saravane with limited linkages among each other. Furthermore, the ‘ecological’ connection between these small-scale infrastructure projects and the EbA measures under outcome 3 is weak. The project team is aware about it and is trying to address this concern; however, when considering the design of the project – two different outcomes - it is difficult to address it.

71. These small scale infrastructure projects are mostly ad-hoc projects addressing local (village) issues. However, in some cases, questions about these projects being a priority for the beneficiaries were also raised. For instance, discussions with villagers at Bung Sa O in the Khongsedone District where a dyke for water preservation was constructed with the support of the project revealed that this project don't seem to be an

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8 MONRE, 2013, *Guidelines on Ecosystem-Based Adaptation Practices in Lao PDR*

9 At the end of March 2016 and a project end date of December 2017.

idea from the villagers; they had no idea it can be done and also what will be the impact of the project on their livelihood. The field visits conducted during this review indicate overall a low engagement of beneficiaries (villagers); more participation of local stakeholders is needed, particularly during the identification/design phase of these small-scale projects to ensure a greater ownership over the long-term.

72. These projects are certainly part of local development needs and the funds have been contributing to the local development in these 12 districts. The volume of funding fits within the management of the Public Investment Projects (PIP)<sup>10</sup> at the district level thus contributing to improving public services delivery and to the training (on-the-job) of DDSC members. However, from a project perspective it is difficult to draw the “big picture” about what the project is trying to accomplish; including in some cases the link with climate change adaptation. Currently it is seen as a set of ad-hoc small-scale infrastructure projects – responding to local development needs - scattered throughout the 12 districts without a “big picture” emerging about a common thread for all these projects. If we consider that these projects are a response to local development needs, it raises the question of efficiency: is it the best mechanism to deliver this kind of project? Taking the current budget expended and dividing it by the number of small-scale infrastructure projects, it represents \$150,000 per project. A rather high cost per project when the direct costs for each small-scale project is about \$50,000. A mechanism such as the Small Grant Programme (SGP) funded by GEF would provide better value for money.

73. Nevertheless, the project is not only about providing grants for small-scale infrastructure projects. It is about improving the capacity of local administrative systems responsible for the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure, with a focus on improving participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk (objective of the project). It is, therefore, important to keep this objective at the center of project activities. Overall, the project needs to go over the step of being mostly a grant system to finance small-scale infrastructure projects. It particularly needs to link these projects with the vulnerability to climate risks of local natural systems.

74. In conclusion, the review conducted for this evaluation indicates that the progress of the project at this point in time is moderately satisfactory. With the time extension, the reduction of targets and the link of the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures with the infrastructure projects, all three requests approved in December 2015, the project has still time and resources to deliver its expected results that is “*to improve the capacity of local administrative systems responsible for the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through the improvement of the participatory decision making process that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*”. It is recommended that the 12 remaining small-scale infrastructure projects be strongly linked with EbA measures to demonstrate how to address the vulnerability of natural systems to climate change and develop the capacity of local administration offices to address climate change risks.

#### **4.2.2. Remaining Barriers to Achieve the Project Objective**

75. The project started in January 2013 and will end in December 2017; at the time of this review, the project is in its 42<sup>nd</sup> month of implementation with 18 more months to go before it ends. At this point, the critical barrier limiting its implementation/effectiveness is the lack of focus; project resources are too much dispersed. The project intervenes in 12 districts within 2 provinces in the south of Lao PDR. Small-scale infrastructure projects and ecosystem management plans supported by the LCDF project are geographically scattered throughout this project area. The access from the capital Vientiane is time consuming. Additionally, the project has to work with many different local administration offices at the province, district and local levels (and also at national level), as well as the need for a strong participation of beneficiaries (villagers) in the process (identification, planning and implementation). Finally, by design as discussed in section 4.1.2, the project is somewhat divided into 2 lines of implementation: the implementation of small-scale infrastructure projects and the implementation of large-scale ecosystem management plans. The result is a complex project to implement and despite a good implementation team, it is “*spread too thin*” to be fully effective and ensure the achievement of the project objective by December 2017.

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10 Investment project of up to 5 Billion LAK are managed by the District; from 5 Billion to 50 Billion LAK there are managed by the Province; and over 50 Billion by the Central government.

76. More focus is needed for the remaining implementation period (18 months) and the request to link the EbA measures (outcome 3) with the infrastructure projects (outcome 2) submitted to the Project Board in December 2015 (*see section 4.1.2*) is an excellent first step for the project to focus more on its objective and emphasize the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

77. At a more strategic level, part of the rationale of the project to address climate change risks was to remove critical barriers, which included (i) weaknesses in climate change analysis and planning at sub-national level; (ii) financial constraints in resourcing the additional costs of building greater redundancy into rural infrastructure; (iii) a silo approach to local planning whereby ecosystem functions and services are not taken into account, and (iv) the limited incentives that exist to encourage local officials and decision makers to address climate related risks. Despite some progress made by the project, there is still a long way before the project can claim that some of these barriers are now removed following the implementation of project activities. These barriers are still much valid today and will necessitate great efforts from the project and also from the government to be fully addressed.

78. In the meantime, when assessing these barriers and following the assessment of the project strategy (*section 4.1.2*), the lack of clarity of the project may prevent an effective implementation of activities addressing these barriers. As discussed in this previous section, the project is pulled into multiple directions and so far it prevents the project to have a clear/focused path addressing these barriers. The analysis shows that the project is trying to address NAPA water related priorities, implement small-scale infrastructure projects, implement ecosystem management and action plans, and develop the planning capacity of local administrations. These “lines of implementation” are not in opposite directions; however, they indicate very wide strategic areas within which the project is to be effective and when considering the project resources and timeframe, it is doubtful that this project can do it all. It needs to be more focus.

### **4.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

79. This section discusses the assessment of how the project has been implemented. It assessed how efficient the management of the project has been and how conducive it is to contribute to a successful project implementation.

#### **4.3.1. Management Arrangements**

80. The management arrangements of the LDCF project is as follows:

- The *GEF Agency* for this project is the *UNDP*;
- The *Implementing Partner* of the project is *MONRE* (previously the Water Resources and Environment Administration). It acts as Implementing Partner (IP) with overall responsibility for the project and reporting to UNDP Lao PDR according to standard NIM procedures.
- MONRE assigned the “*Department of National Disaster Management and Climate Change (DNDMCC)*” to undertake day-to day implementation activities including responsibility for the implementation of all project components
- UNCDF is the responsible party for the investment component in small-scale rural infrastructure focusing on water resources. Its contribution to the project is defined in an MOU signed in November 2013 between MONRE and UNCDF and witnessed by MOHA and UNDP. UNCDF’s main role has been to establish and implement a mechanism to channel, monitor and report on LDCF grant-based climate finance through the Lao PDR intergovernmental fiscal transfer system, linked to the existing District Development Fund mechanism (DDF). The total value to be transferred from the LDCF grant (USD 4.7M) through this channel was identified as USD 2M plus USD 145,000 for the contractual services rendered by UNCDF.
- The project is guided by a *Project Board (PB)* that is chaired by the Vice Minister of MONRE. The PB was created officially in May 2014. It is responsible for making management decisions for the project in particular when guidance is required by the Project Manager (PM). It fulfils a role of quality assurance, ensuring an effective implementation of the project. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the project or negotiates a solution

to any problems with external bodies. The PB also approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Manager (PM), the Annual Work Plans and Budgets and any essential deviations from the original plans. Decisions made by the PM are made in accordance to UNDP standards, ensuring UNDP's ultimate accountability for project results. The Board contains three distinct roles, including:

- An *Executive*: MONRE with the Vice Minister as focal point and representing the project ownership. Her role is to ensure that the project is focused throughout its life cycle on achieving its objectives and delivering outputs that will contribute to higher level outcomes. The Executive has to ensure that the project gives value for money, ensuring a cost-conscious approach to the project, and balancing the demands of beneficiary and supplier;
  - *Senior Supplier*: A representative of UNDP representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding for specific cost sharing projects and/or technical expertise to the project. Its primary function within the Board is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project and it that is held accountable for fiduciary oversight of LDCF resources in this project. A representative of UNCDF is also a senior supplier with respect to the provision of their resources to the project;
  - *Senior Beneficiaries*: Individuals representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiaries' primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. This group includes a representative from MOHA to ensure that the two processes of local governance and public administration reform are actively linked. In addition to MONRE, other ministries/agencies are also represented as Senior Beneficiaries; they include representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).
- A *National Project Director (NPD)* was appointed by MONRE; and this is the Director General of DDMCC, MONRE. The NPD is responsible for overseeing overall project implementation and ensuring that the project objective and outcomes are achieved. The NPD, assisted by the National Project Manager, reports to the PB on project progress. (*This function is funded by the government*).
  - The *National Project Manager (PM)* was appointed by MONRE and is a Director, DDMCC, MONRE and was confirmed by the Project Board. The PM has the authority to run the project on behalf of the Implementing Partner within the constraints laid down by the Project Board. The PM's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. (*This function is funded by the government*).
  - A *Project Support Unit (PSU)* was established in August 2013 by DDMCC at the national level based at MONRE, Vientiane. It provides project administration, management and technical support to the PM as required by the needs of the day-to-day operations or by the PM. The unit is composed of the following staff (*all funded by the LDCF funds*):
    - Assistant Project Manager
    - Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
    - Senior Finance & Administration Officer
    - Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
    - National Infrastructure Specialist (part time)
    - National Ecosystem Specialist
    - Public Financial Management Coordinator
    - Assistant Finance & Administration Officer
    - Senior Project Driver

It was noted by the Reviewers a rather high staff turnover, which is hampering somewhat the implementation of the project. The project was finally fully staffed by end of 2014. However, the National Infrastructure Specialist resigned in June 2015 (the 2nd resignation for this position within

a year) and the M&E specialist resigned in October 2015. These facts were reported in the 2015 annual progress report saying that they “*caused some set-backs in terms of implementation*” but no reason for this turnover was found during this review. A new M&E Specialist was hired in November 2015.

- Two *Provincial Project Support Units (PPSUs)* with office spaces have been provided by PONRE in both provinces (Sekong and Saravane). These PPSUs are headed by Provincial Coordinators who are the Heads of PONRE, Saravane and PONRE, Sekong (*these two positions are funded by the government*). Each office has also a Finance and Administration Assistant, one in the Saravane office and one in the Sekong office, as well as a Senior Project Driver in Saravane office and in Sekong office (*these positions are funded by the LDCF funds*).
- At the provincial level, the project work through the Provincial Support Teams that are chaired by the Provincial Cabinet Chiefs and the Heads of the Provincial Office of Home Affairs (POHA) and the PONRE are Vice Chairs. They act as focal points for their respective components.
- At the District level, the District Offices of Home Affairs (DOHA) and DONRE act as project focal points at this administrative level. At this level, the project works through the District Development Support Committees (DDSCs), chaired by the District Vice Governors. These Committees bring together all key agencies to facilitate local planning, budgeting and budget execution. They play a central role in these processes, identifying community needs and integrating their findings in annual and five-year action plans.

81. The implementation modality of the project to allocate, administer and report on project resources is the “*UNDP Country Office Support to NIM*” approach; that is project activities are carried out by the Project Team in partnership with MONRE and reporting to UNDP as per the guidelines. Overall, roles and responsibilities were clearly identified and accepted, including the need to follow administrative procedures from UNDP and the Government of Lao PDR. On the instruction of MONRE – the Implementing Partner - UNDP channels LDCF resources in two ways. For Components 1 and 3 and for the project management component resources are channeled directly to MONRE in line with standard UNDP budget implementation procedures. For Component 2 UNDP channels funds directly to UNCDF to go to the District Development Funds (DDFs) following the existing District Development Fund procedures and resources and also the NIM guidelines and the agreed AWP.

82. The Project Board (PB) met twice since the inception of the project: January 16, 2015 and December 24, 2015. The January 2015 meeting was a joint meeting of the IDCRM and LDCF2 projects as they are both implemented by DDMCC and share the same NPD and Vice Minister as chair of the Project Board. The main objectives of this meeting were mostly to update the participants on the progress of the project and also reflect on the objectives of each project. No issues were discussed at this meeting. The December 2015 meeting had several objectives: (1) to review the progress made during the year 2015; (2) to review and approve the annual work plan for 2016; (3) to approve the DDF Guidelines; (4) to approve the project extension request for submission to the GEF; and (5) to review and amend the project targets (*see also Section 4.1.2*). Finally, considering that this PB meeting took place only a few months prior to this review, the Reviewers noted that discussions took place on three topics of particular interest for this review:

- “*Awareness (raising) activities on climate change in the districts are still limited and the population do not understand the real factors of climate change and related impacts*”;
- The approach of one project per district per year was too small to have significant impacts and discussion took place to have instead larger projects seeking higher climate resilience through adaptation;
- Following the implementation of these small-scale infrastructure projects, there is a need for a strong monitoring and evaluation approach to monitor the operations and maintenance of these projects and also to document the results achieved and the lessons learned by these projects, which should be used as a feedback mechanism for the implementing partners at the provincial, district, and village levels.

83. The review indicates that the management arrangements as planned at the outset of the project – though somewhat complex - were adequate in the context of Lao PDR for the implementation of the project.

However, the overall coordination mechanism is not working at its fullest; it is not fully effective in providing a good coordination among stakeholders and develop a clear vision on where the project wants to go. The PB only met twice since the outset of the project; it is not enough for ensuring a good coordination of a project and guide its implementation, particularly when multiple levels of government are involved. As discussed in section 4.1.2, this is a complex project. Additionally, the Reviewers found that the small-scale projects implemented under outcome 2 are somewhat “scattered” through the 12 districts and the participation of stakeholders into project activities is weak, particularly the beneficiaries (villagers) (*see section 4.2.1*). More coordination activities would be needed to compensate for these constraints and one mechanism to use would be the Project Board; the PB should be more in the “driver seat” when it comes to guiding the implementation of the project. At least two meetings of the PB should take place each year with at least one PB meeting per year open to a larger group of stakeholders. These meetings should be used to communicate the progress/results of the project and the plans for the period ahead; but also to obtain feedback from stakeholders/beneficiaries of these small-scale projects and discuss the possible changes needed to make the project better.

### 4.3.2. Stakeholder Engagement

84. As discussed in section 4.1.1, the project is highly relevant to national priorities. According to the project document, it was developed through extensive stakeholders’ consultations including two national and two provincial stakeholders’ workshops, numerous donor stakeholder meetings and various interviews with local, district and provincial officials in the Sekong and Saravane provinces. At this stage, it was envisaged that a wide range of government institutions and partners will be involved, particularly for their organizational, scientific and technical inputs as well as for project outreach. The table below is a summary of the plan to involve stakeholders drawn at the outset of the project.

**Table 5: Initial Stakeholders Involvement Plan**

Stakeholder	Role in Project
MONRE, National Disaster Management and Climate Change Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Agency components 1 and 3 Executive member in Board Appoints National Project Director Appoints National Project Manager</li> <li>• Organizes awareness raising and training events</li> </ul>
MOHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead government agency component 2 with implementation support provided by UNCDF</li> <li>• Executive Member in Board</li> <li>• Lead agency with responsibility for local governance reform in Lao PDR</li> </ul>
MAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Member of Project Board</li> <li>• Review recommendations on climate change resilient construction standards in their sectors</li> </ul>
MPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Member of Project Board</li> <li>• Provides recommendations on planning procedures.</li> </ul>
PONREs and DONREs, POHAs and DOHAs of target provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Target Group of capacity development activities</li> <li>• Implementation of contracted activities (CRVA assessments, trainings)</li> </ul>
District Development Support Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Target Group of capacity development activities Approves EbA infrastructure projects and determines budgets Develops annual climate-resilient investment plans</li> </ul>
River Basin Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Target Group of capacity development activities on linking CCA and IWRM to address upstream downstream district transboundary issues in the target area</li> </ul>
Local decision makers (village heads, deputy heads, head of local mass organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitates project identification and CRVAs</li> <li>• Facilitate the development of ecosystems management and action plans</li> </ul>

Stakeholder	Role in Project
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target Group of trainings and awareness raising on infrastructure maintenance and ecosystem management</li> </ul>
Development Partners (WB, ADB, UNDP, UNCDF, GIZ, Government of Finland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-financing</li> <li>• Exchange of data, methodologies and tools</li> <li>• Co-organization of capacity development activities</li> </ul>
Lao Women's Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation of stakeholder consultations with women's groups Refinement of CRVA methods</li> <li>• Capacity development and awareness raising on climate change and women.</li> <li>• National outreach on implications of climate change for lives and livelihoods of rural women</li> </ul>
INGO's, NGOs, Consulting Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of contracted services (Development of training and awareness raising materials, give inputs to training and awareness raising events, development of CRVA tool, provide on the job coaching on CRVA, develop ecosystems management and action plans)</li> </ul>
Construction Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement infrastructure components of projects</li> <li>• Target group of trainings on construction standards of climate resilient rural infrastructure</li> </ul>

Source: project document

85. The review indicates that, as per the project document, a good engagement of stakeholders happened at the outset of the project; during the design/formulation of this project<sup>11</sup>. The process ensured that this project respond to national priorities (*see also Section 4.1.1*). However, when reviewing these consultations that took place before the start of this project and the level of stakeholder engagement today, there seem to be a difference in the level of interest to participate in project activities. As discussed in Section 4.1, the project was and still is very relevant for Lao PDR, however, the various interviews conducted during this review indicate a relatively low level of stakeholder awareness and engagement about the overall project, particularly its objective and its achievements. This is particularly true for national organizations such as the department of water resources, department of forest resources management and even other department within MONRE. Additionally, most people met during this review have a certain view about the project but it is often a view of a project providing grants for small-scale infrastructure projects responding to local development needs. As discussed in section 4.2.1, the project details are contained in a complex project document and very few people have a clear vision about the project objective. Though the evaluation team noted that the project management team has been aware of this low engagement of stakeholders and is trying to address it, it is recommended to increase the engagement of provincial and local government stakeholders through more “enlarged” PB meetings and possibly more coordination activities at the provincial and district levels, including more communications on project achievements.

### 4.3.3. Work Planning

86. Annual Work Plans (AWPs) were produced every year from 2013. These AWP were developed following UNDP project management guidelines. Once finalized, these AWP were reviewed and endorsed by the PB and approved by UNDP. These AWP details the list of main activities to be conducted during the coming year following the structure of the log frame (objective, outcomes, and outputs) of the project. For each activity, they include a tentative schedule (per quarter) when each activity will be implemented and a corresponding budget, including LDCF funds and co-sponsor funds from the government.

87. As presented in the table below, the review of AWP budgets against the actual expenditures indicate a good financial management; actual expenditures are well in line with the approved annual budgets.

<sup>11</sup> This “good” engagement of stakeholders during the design phase could not be verified by the Review Team.

**Table 6: Annual Work Plans versus Actual Expenditures (LDCF grant)**

Years	AWP Budgets	Actual Expenditures	% Spent
2013	72,675	114,356	157%
2014	499,847	473,969	95%
2015	1,784,438	1,734,785	97%
2016	1,694,065	n/a	n/a

Sources: Project Inception Report, AWP and UNDP-Atlas CDR Reports

88. However, despite that the expenditures are well aligned with the annual budgets, the Reviewers also noted that as of March 2016, only 51% of the overall LDCF project budget has been expended (*see next section 4.3.4*) versus 65% of its timeline that is already taking into account the one-year time extension. Nevertheless, if the annual budget for 2016 will be expended, the total amount expended as of December 31, 2016 will be over 85% versus 80% of the timeline. The review indicates that the LDCF project budget of USD 4.7M should be spent by the end of the project in December 2017.

#### 4.3.4. Finance and Co-finance

89. As discuss in Section 4.3.1, the implementation modality of the project to allocate, administer and report on project resources is the *UNDP Country Office Support to NIM* approach; that is project activities have been carried out by the Project Team led by DNDMCC following UNDP project implementation guidelines.

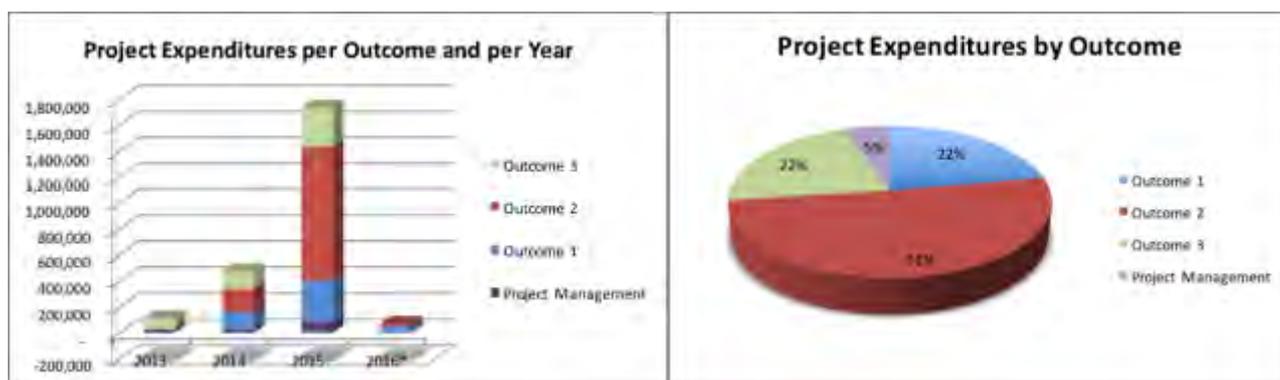
90. At the time of this evaluation, the review of financial records as recorded in the UNDP Atlas system indicates that the actual expenditures allocated against the LDCF project grant for the years 2013 to March 2016 represent about 51% of the approved budget of USD 4,700,000 (USD 2,391,961) versus an elapsed time of 65%<sup>12</sup> (39 months out of 60). The breakdown of project expenditures by outcome and by year is presented in the table below.

**Table 7: UNDP-LDCF Project Funds Disbursement Status (in USD)**

Component	Budget (USD)	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total (USD)	Total/Budget
Outcome 1	799,716	13,525	141,820	319,938	54,568	529,850	66.3%
Outcome 2	2,145,000	-	172,216	1,027,988	14,568	1,214,772	56.6%
Outcome 3	1,381,764	80,627	136,750	300,528	-29	517,876	37.5%
Project Management	373,520	20,204	23,184	86,330	-255	129,463	34.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,700,000</b>	114,356	473,969	1,734,785	68,851	<b>2,391,961</b>	<b>50.9%</b>

Sources: UNDP Atlas Financial Reports (Combined Delivery Reports to March 2016 (CDRs)) and information collected from the Project Team.

<sup>12</sup> The calculation of the elapsed time takes into account the already approved one-year time extension to December 2017 (*see section 4.1.2*).



91. These financial figures show a slow start during the year 2013 and to some extent in 2014 too; only USD 114,356 was spent in 2013 and USD 473,969 in 2014. This is due to some delays to start the project: the project was to start in January 2013 but it was only signed/approved in May 2013; and the technical staff was hired only in 2014 (the National Infrastructure Specialist and the National Ecosystem Specialist started in April 2014 and the International Technical Advisor started in June 2014). However, as soon as the team was complete, project disbursements happened and met the work plan for 2015 with total expenditures for this year of USD 1,734,785, representing 37% of the total LDCF project budget.

92. As of April 2016, the project has 21 months of implementation remaining (to December 2017). The approved budget for 2016 is USD 1,694,065 (see section 4.3.3). If this budget is entirely spent this year, USD 682,825 will remain for the last year of project implementation. Overall, the review indicates that the LDCF project funds should be spent by the end of the project in December 2017.

93. When reviewing the actual expenditures per outcome versus their respective budgets (see third diagram), it indicates some minor differences with over 66% of the outcome 1 budget expended, 57% for outcome 2 and just over 37% for outcome 3. This is consistent with the review of progress (see section 4.2.1), which indicated that outcome 3 is the area of the project where less progress has been made so far.



94. Furthermore, when looking at the remaining budgets for each outcome, most funds to be expended this year and next year should be under outcome 2 (small-scale infrastructure projects) and 3 (ecosystem-based adaptation measures).

95. Finally, the review of the project management costs indicates that they represented almost 8% of the LDCF project grant at the outset of the project but the actual project management expenditures represents only 5.4% of the total LDCF grant expenditures expended so far up to March 2016. The Reviewers noted that an audit was conducted for fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015. The opinions of the Auditors were that the Combined Delivery Reports for both years presented fairly, in all material respects, the expenses reported for both years.

### Co-financing

96. The co-financing commitments at the outset of the project totaled the amount of USD 30,872,896 (see table below). However, it is important to note that most of this amount is not co-financing as per the GEF definition<sup>13</sup> but rather “parallel” financing, that is financing of other projects that have similar objectives. That is the case for the Government of Lao PDR/ADB-IWRM, UNDP-GPAR and IUCN funding indicated in the table below and which represent the financing of their respective projects. Using the co-financing

13 The GEF defines co-financing as the resources that are additional to the GEF grant and that are provided by the GEF Partner Agency itself and/or by other non-GEF sources that support the implementation of the GEF-financed project and the achievement of its objectives.

definition of the GEF, the co-financing amount committed at the outset of the project is USD 655,000, which represents just over 12% of the total budgeted amount in the project document of USD 5,355,000 (LDCF grant + co-financing).

**Table 8: Co-financing Status**

Partner	Type	Commitments (USD)	Actuals (USD)
Government of Lao PDR	In-kind	375,000	
UNDP-TRAC	Cash	280,000	163,073
Government of Lao PDR/ADB-IWRM	Parallel	4,210,000	
UNDP-GPAR	Parallel	21,857,896	
IUCN	Parallel	4,150,000	
<b>Total (USD)</b>		<b>30,872,896</b>	

Source: Project Document and UNDP CDRs to March 2016

97. As of end of March 2016, UNDP-TRAC contributed a total sum of USD 163,073 to this project or just over 58% of the total committed. No figures were available for the in-kind contribution from the Government of Lao PDR at the time of the review. However, despite that no reporting on the government co-financing commitment was available, the Reviewers confirmed that the government – through MONRE and other government institutions at national, provincial and district levels – has definitely contributed resources to the implementation of this project. It includes: a National Project Director (part time), a National Project Manager (full time), two Provincial Coordinators (full time) and offices for the PSU (see section 4.3.1).

#### **4.3.5. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems**

98. A comprehensive M&E plan was developed during the formulation of the project in accordance with standard UNDP and GEF procedures, including the UNDP monitoring and evaluation practices for NIM projects. A budget of USD 75,000 was allocated to M&E, representing only about 1.6% of the LDCF grant. This budget was revised upward during the inception phase and it is now USD 88,500 with the inclusion of a budget for publication of lessons learned (USD 4,375 per year).

99. This plan listed monitoring and evaluation activities that were to be implemented during the lifetime of the project, including a mid-term evaluation and a terminal evaluation. For each M&E activity, the responsible party(ies) was/were identified, as well as a budget and schedule. The plan was based on the logical framework matrix that included a set of performance monitoring indicators along with their corresponding targets and means of verification.

100. The M&E plan was reviewed during the inception phase and beside the revised M&E budget no other changes were made to the plan. A summary of the operating modalities of the M&E plan are as follows:

- **Performance indicators:** A set of 10 indicators with their respective baselines and targets at the end of the project were identified and documented in the *Project Results Framework*.
- **Inception workshop:** It was conducted over 2 days on November 22-23, 2013: one day with the project team focusing on increasing the understanding of the project team on: (1) project rationale, (2) objective & project results, (3) outcomes & targets, (4) overview, (5) project progress update, (6) annual work plan for 2013, and (7) UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation requirements. The second day was with stakeholders. It was attended by 81 key relevant stakeholders from the MONRE, MAF, MPI, MRC, NAFRI, MOHA, GPAR, UNCDF, MOHA, UNDP CO, UNDP Regional, WWF, EU, NA, IRAS, representatives from the 12 target districts of Saravane (8) and Sekong (4) provinces. The focus of this second day was on: the *Project Results Framework*; the overview of the GEF-LDCF Project implementation and tracking requirements; the LDCF Finance delivery mechanism for strengthening institutional capacities and local adaptation and a general discussion on the project, areas for coordination and other important issues concluded this second day of the inception workshop.

- Inception Report: It summarized the inception phase (May to October 2013), including the inception workshop and the revisions made to the LDCF project. This report concluded the inception phase.
- Quarterly Assessments: Quality assessments record progress towards the completion of key results, based on indicators and targets identified in the *Project Results Framework*. Quarterly reports have been regularly produced only since January 2015.
- Annual Progress Review/Project Implementation Review (APR/PIR): These annual progress reports, combining both UNDP and GEF annual reporting requirements, are submitted by the Project Manager to the PB, using the UNDP standards for project progress reporting, including a summary of results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level documented in the annual work plans.
- Periodic Monitoring through Site Visits: UNDP Country Office and the UNDP GEF region based staff have been conducting visits to project sites to assess first hand project progress. A Field Visit Report/BTOR is prepared and circulated to the project team and Project Board members.
- External mid-term and final project evaluations: The mid-term evaluation is underway (this report); a terminal evaluation is planned following UNDP and GEF practice and evaluation guidelines.
- Learning and Knowledge Sharing: The plan was to disseminate results of the project within and beyond the project intervention zone through existing information sharing networks and forums. It was also planned to identify, analyze, and share lessons learned that might be beneficial in the design and implementation of similar future projects.
- Audits: Audits are conducted in accordance with UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules and applicable audit policies on UNDP projects by a legally recognized auditor of the Government, or by a commercial auditor engaged by the Government.

101. The set of indicators presented in the *Project Results Framework* was reviewed during this review. It includes a set of 10 indicators – each one with a baseline and a target by the end of the project - to monitor the performance of the project at the objective and outcome level. As documented in the project document, these indicators rely largely on UNDP’s “*Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Climate Change Adaptation*”, and are aligned also with the LDCF Adaptation and Monitoring Tool (AMAT). The list of indicators and targets is presented in the table below:

**Table 9:** List of Performance Indicators

Project Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
<b>Objective</b> - Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk	1. Percentage change in number of district development plans including specific climate change adaptation actions in the target provinces and districts	• 50% of district development plans in the project area include at least 3 specific CCA actions by mid project and at least 5 CCA actions by end of project.
	2. Percentage change in the level of active local community participation in climate risk related planning in target provinces and districts.	• 60% of District Development Support Committees in the target districts and provinces record specific climate related concerns emerging from community level annual planning consultations.

Project Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> - Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 1.1:</b> Technical capacity in climate resilient planning and managing climate risks, focusing on links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure, enhanced for at least 250 national, province, district and village officials, including watsan committee members and disaster management committee members.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.2:</b> Village level water harvesting, storage and distribution infrastructure adaptation solutions and related ecosystem management options identified, prioritized and integrated into district development plans.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.3:</b> Climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) carried out at 48 project sites in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces and proposed climate resilient investments adjusted to take account of site specific adaptation concerns.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.4:</b> Detailed climate resilient project investments and tender documents finalized as well as associated dialogues to facilitate implementation of annual investment plans in 12 districts.</li> <li>● <b>Output 1.5:</b> Guidelines, codes and best practices for climate resilient construction developed, applied and revised for small-scale rural infrastructure sectors (irrigation, water supply, rural roads, education, and health), including technical training in climate resilient design for local engineers and contractors.</li> </ul>	<p>3. Percentage change in the ability of local and some national officials to apply methodologies to analyze climate risks and identify climate change vulnerabilities in 12 districts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of sub-national officials are able to analyze climate risks for their districts on a macro level (V&amp;A analysis) and are able to identify specific vulnerabilities and adaptation options at village level (CRVA).</li> </ul>
	<p>4. Procedures are in place to integrate climate change resilient advice and investment for small scale rural water infrastructure into district planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All 12 target districts are applying a climate resilient planning mechanism including project identification, site assessment, approval, execution and M&amp;E.</li> </ul>
	<p>5. Number of district development plans available, reflecting costs for adaptation in the water sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All annual district investment plans include evidence of incremental CCA costings for water sector projects by year 4 and at least 4 provide this evidence by Year 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> – Incentives in place for small scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Output 2.1:</b> An incentive mechanism, rewarding districts performing well in planning, budgeting and implementation of climate resilient, ecosystem based small-scale water infrastructure is developed, tested and under operation.</li> <li>● <b>Output 2.2:</b> At least 48 small-scale infrastructure investment projects (1 per district and year), including components of water harvesting, storage, distribution and/ or irrigation of the priority lists that have been CRVA assessed are implemented.</li> </ul>	<p>6. Number of districts routinely investing in climate resilient measures to improve village level water harvesting, storage and distribution systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By the end of the project all target districts are investing at least 2 projects per year in village level climate resilient water harvesting, storage and distribution systems, which are informed by CRVA.</li> </ul>
	<p>7. Number of people benefitting from investments in small-scale irrigation systems to increase their resilience against climate change risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 50,000 people across 12 districts are benefitting from climate change resilient small-scale irrigation infrastructure, which has been informed by CRVA.</li> </ul>
	<p>8. District level fiscal and administrative incentives are introduced that incorporate climate resilient measures for small scale rural infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 25% in additional CCA funds (annual average) expended over and above baseline District Development Funding in at least 12 districts, based on a system that rewards districts that perform well against predetermined criteria.</li> </ul>

Project Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> – Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) over at least 60,000 ha are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Output 3.1:</b> Up to 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (including physical measures to increase natural water retention and storage, as well as increase ground water infiltration and recharge) are designed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness.</li> <li>• <b>Output 3.2:</b> Awareness-raising activities implemented, learning materials developed and disseminated and regular dialogues established between communities and all local administrative tiers on linkages between ecosystems management and small-scale infrastructure solutions.</li> </ul>	9. Number of management /action plans developed and under implementation, which protect natural assets through local scale ecosystems based adaptation measures to improve the resilience of small-scale rural infrastructure against floods and drought.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 6 management and action plans covering at least 48 climate resilience small-scale infrastructure investments under implementation across both Sekong and Saravane provinces.</li> </ul>
	10. Number of key project stakeholders aware of links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 250 national, provincial and district planners have received knowledge and learning approaches and materials produced by the project on ecosystem based management linkages to infrastructure provision.</li> </ul>

Source: Project Document and quarterly/annual progress reports

102. This set of 10 key indicators and their respective targets did not change during the inception phase. However, as discussed in section 4.1.2, the target of 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (Output 2.2) was revised in December 2015 and reduced from 48 to 28 projects. This revision was based on a more realistic assessment of how many of this climate-proofed infrastructure projects can be implemented within the timeframe of this project. However, considering that this change was endorsed by the PB, the change to the *Project Results Framework* has not taken place yet. The quarterly progress report for the first quarter of 2016 was drafted with the same set of targets as those on the project document. In order to properly document the change, it is recommended to make the appropriate changes to the *Project Results Framework* reflecting these approved changes.

103. These indicators and their respective targets have been used quarterly and yearly to report progress made, including annual PIRs for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

104. The review of these indicators and their respective targets reveals that they are mostly quantitative indicators; that is monitoring a quantity of deliverables - such as “*Number of district development plans available, reflecting costs for adaptation in the water sector*” - as opposed to more quality-based indicators. Quantitative indicators give a very clear measure of things and are numerically comparable. They also provide an easy comparison of a project progress over time and are easy to monitor and do not require too much resources to collect data.

105. However, quantitative indicators also do not depict the status of something in more qualitative terms. Degree of capacity developed are often better captured by qualitative indicators. For example, how much a community is able to adapt to climate change-driven hazards may not be measurable in strict quantitative terms, but they can be graded based on qualitative findings. In the case of capacity development initiatives such as this project that is “*to improve local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk*”, using a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators would allow the project team to better measure its performance. A mix of both types of indicators would be more suited for the measurement of the performance of this project offering quantity and quality information about project achievements.

106. Additionally, when reviewing the expected results and the related targets (*see table 9 above*), it is somewhat confusing to read the targets for this project. Most outputs include already some targets such as **output 1.3**: “*Climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) carried out at 48 project sites in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces and proposed climate resilient investments adjusted to take*

account of site specific adaptation concerns; **output 2.2:** “At least 48 small-scale infrastructure investment projects (1 per district and year), including components of water harvesting, storage, distribution and/ or irrigation of the priority lists that have been CRVA assessed are implemented”; and **output 3.1:** “Up to 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (including physical measures to increase natural water retention and storage, as well as increase ground water infiltration and recharge) are designed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness”. Yet, additional targets were added for these respective outputs.

107. Despite that overall the targets are consistent; they also tend to provide a monitoring system whereby delivering activities/products such as small-scale infrastructure projects, training activities, plans, etc. are the ultimate results of the project. Once there are delivered, project monitors can “tick all the boxes”; done! However, the project could deliver its 28 CRVAs, 28 small-scale infrastructure projects reaching 50,000, 250 Officers trained, 9 ecosystem management and action plans covering 60,000ha, but still being short of delivering the expected results as per the objective and outcomes statements. It is true that there is a certain link between the delivery of these services and products and the project’s objective that is to improve the local administrative systems. However, in order to better measure how the project is progressing toward its outcomes and objective, few capacity-based indicators would be needed to assess how effective and sustainable the capacities developed with the support of the project are.

108. In addition to the quantitative information collected through the current M&E system, few capacity-based indicators would help to better measure the capacity change due to the intervention of the project. From a developmental perspective, what is key for this project is to improve the local administrative systems which should integrate climate change risks in local development planning. Currently, the set of indicators do not measure these aspects very well; they measure “how many ....” but not really “how capable ....” which is also a key aspect for the long term sustainability of project achievements.

109. Using the GEF “Adaptation Tracking Tool (2014)”, criteria are proposed to capture (score) evidence of capacities being developed. They could be used to identify few capacity-based indicators. These criteria include:

- To capture evidence of the capacity of regional, national and sub-national institutions to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate adaptation strategies and measures:
  - Does the institution have access to and does it make use of climate information in decision-making?
  - Are climate change risks as well as appropriate adaptation strategies and measures integrated into relevant institutional policies, processes and procedures?
  - Does the institution have adequate resources to implement such policies, processes and procedures?
  - Are there clear roles and responsibilities within the institution, and effective partnerships outside the institution to address adaptation?
  - Is the institution equipped to monitor, evaluate and learn from its adaptation actions?
- To capture evidence of the degree to which relevant institutional arrangements are in place and effective to lead, coordinate and support the integration of climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes:
  - Are there institutional arrangements in place to coordinate the integration of climate change adaptation into relevant policies, plans and associated processes?
  - Are those arrangements based on (a) clear and strong mandate(s) and supported by adequate budget allocations?
  - Do those arrangements include authority over fiscal policy?
  - Do those arrangements include broad stakeholder participation across relevant, climate-sensitive sectors?
  - Are those arrangements effective, i.e. is climate change adaptation coordinated across key national and sectoral decision-making processes?
- To capture evidence of the degree to which policies, plans and processes are strengthened and/or developed to identify, prioritize and integrate adaptation strategies and measures:
  - Does the policy/ plan identify climate change risks and appropriate adaptation strategies and measures?

- Are adaptation strategies and measures prioritized and specified with budget allocations and targets?
- Does the policy/ plan assign clear roles and responsibilities for the coordination and implementation of adaptation strategies and measures?
- Does the policy/ plan provide for the continuous monitoring, evaluation, learning and review of adaptation strategies and measures?
- Is there evidence of the effective implementation of the policy/ plan?

110. Based on this review of the M&E function of the project<sup>14</sup>, it is rated as *moderately satisfactory*. It found that the set of indicators is not fully SMART<sup>15</sup>. Most indicators are specific, easily measurable, attainable and time-bound. However, they are not totally relevant for measuring progress at the outcome and objective levels of the project. They do not measure enough how effective the project is in developing the capacity of local administrations. It is recommended to add a few qualitative (capacity-based) indicators to measure the development of these capacities.

#### **4.3.6. Reporting**

111. Management reports have been produced according to UNDP project management guidelines. They include AWP that when finalized are endorsed by the PB; quarterly progress reports since 2014; annual APRs and PIRs. The Reviewers noted that quarterly progress reports were only produced since the beginning of 2015 but annual progress reports were produced since 2014, including the PIR 2013-2014.

112. Overall, progress made by the project is being satisfactorily reported, following UNDP project progress reporting guidelines. The quarterly reports document the progress made during the past quarters and the APRs/PIRs document the progress made against the project objective and outcomes on a yearly basis. These annual reports include also a review and update of the risks identified at the outset of the project and the steps taken to mitigate these risks.

113. The ratings given in PIRs (no ratings are given in quarterly progress reports and APRs) were assessed. The overall development objective rating and the implementation progress rating given for 2014-2015 were both “*Satisfactory*” as opposed to “*Moderately Satisfactory*” for both ratings the previous year 2013-2014.

114. Following this review, these ratings are justified and illustrate the fact that 2013-2014 was the first year of implementation with the well-known typical project start-up issues such as staffing the project, getting equipment, etc. The implementation of project activities took off during the second year 2014-2015, which is corroborated by the project expenditures expended in 2015 alone (USD over 1.7M or 37% of the LDCF budget).

#### **4.3.7. Communications**

115. Communication is not “embedded” in the project design (*Project Results Framework*); it is not part of the expected results/deliverables. As a result, it is not part of the performance monitoring of the project; no indicators are tracking communication activities. It is mostly a “side” activity to communicate information about project achievements with, on one hand, communications to key stakeholders to keep them informed about what the project has been doing and, on the other hand, communications to the general public to disseminate lessons learned identified from the implementation of the project. No communication strategy nor plan has been drafted and since it is not part of the *Project Results Framework*, the 2016 annual work plan does not really provide much budget for communicating project information.

116. It is true that up to now, the project did not have much to communicate about. Most small-scale infrastructure projects have only been completed recently and most of them did not have a chance yet to cycle through a rainy season. Considering that most of these projects are related to water management such as flooding prevention and irrigation, it is crucial for these projects and their beneficiaries to experience at

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14 The Reviewers noted that a new M&E Specialist was hired in November 2015 to replace the previous Specialist who left the project in October 2015.

15 SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.

least one rainy season before any information on these projects can be put together and communicated. Nevertheless, the project management team plans to increase communication activities between now and the end of the project in December 2017.

117. The findings from this review indicate that there is not enough communication done. There are also not enough feedback mechanisms among stakeholders, particularly at the provincial, district and local levels. Moreover, beneficiaries are somewhat removed from the project, its activities and its progress. Outcome 3 is about raising climate change awareness and the need to link the small-scale infrastructure projects with a better management of local ecosystems. More efforts are needed to communicate climate change risks to stakeholders but also to beneficiaries. The complex relationship between climate change, local livelihoods, management of local natural resources and local development needs to be better understood.

#### 4.4. Sustainability

118. This section discusses how sustainable project achievements should be over the long-term. It includes a review of the management of risks and specific risks such as financial risk, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks.

119. Project risks were identified at the formulation stage and documented in the project document; including the risk mitigation strategy for each identified risk. It is a list of eight anticipated risks, which are presented in the table below as well as their respective management responses.

**Table 10:** List of Risks and Mitigation Measures Identified at the Formulation Phase

Project Risks	Rating (Probability=P Impact=I)	Mitigation Measures
1. Other risk areas may emerge as more important than climate related risks in some localities.	P= low I= high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is increasing awareness amongst government officials, that these investments contribute to macroeconomic benefits, while livelihood improvements are barely achieved. As part of their mandate officials are in search of programs that contribute to livelihood security, such as the proposed project. There is also an increasing awareness on existing and emerging of climate threats in the districts and provinces and how climate change trends are interlinked with other ongoing land use change processes. As an example, some districts do not allow the establishment of plantation concessions any more, since they do not see the benefit for their districts and fear the long-term environmental effects.</li> </ul>
2. Overall quality of consultations associated with district planning may not be sufficiently high to ensure key issues emerge.	P= low I= high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The effects of climate change are occurring on the ground and affect people's livelihoods even within the range of current climate variabilities. The consultations will focus on the fact that the proposed adaptation measures have led to immediate benefits, while also counter measuring longer term impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>
3. Insufficient engagement and understanding of climate risks among key stakeholders at district and sub-district planning levels.	P= low I= medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The capacity development activities will provide officials with those data sets. Demonstration projects will show that CCA is not an additional burden, but a vehicle for rural development and an additional funding source to fulfil the government agencies' mandates better than under business as usual conditions.</li> </ul>
4. The 12 districts of two provinces replicate the conventional non climate resilient planning procedures, since they are cheaper and thus a larger part of the population can be claimed to be addressed.	P= low I= medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project objective as agreed with the government states that there is no other opportunity to spend the project budget as for CCA.</li> <li>There is a huge discontentment amongst officials that business as usual built infrastructure and ecosystem management fails. This is the entry point for CCA measures, which in the long term are more cost efficient and contribute to more credibility of the involved agencies amongst the population.</li> </ul>
5. Existing government decentralization policies and approaches are significantly	P= low I= low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is currently no indication that recentralization efforts are planned, negatively affecting decentralized delivery mechanisms such as DDF.</li> </ul>

Project Risks	Rating (Probability=P Impact=I)	Mitigation Measures
delayed during the project period.		
6. Design of suitable infrastructure is not based on sufficient local consultations and is not valued and used as a consequence.	P= low I= low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project is informed by the locally informed V&amp;A analysis and the detailed local consultations of the CRVA analysis</li> </ul>
7. Local resistance occurs to the introduction of new water management techniques on socio-cultural grounds.	P= high I= high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The resistance of some groups is due to the fact, that they do not benefit from new water management techniques introduced in the past, while they were asked to financially or in-kind contribute to the construction and maintenance of those innovations. The CRVA assessment at each project site will clarify differentiated rights, roles and responsibilities of local stakeholders to ensure that new management techniques will benefit the community as a whole and will be sustained.</li> </ul>
8. Land ownership issues in the vicinity of built infrastructure restrict possibilities in introducing new ecosystem based land management approaches.	P= high I= high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CRVA analysis at each project site will give an indication whom to involve. Subsequent management contracts with the communities as a prerequisite for further support will ensure sustainability.</li> </ul>

Source: Project Document.

120. The review of these risks reveals that there are comprehensive covering most aspects of a project where management issues can arise. The project management team has been monitoring these risks and has been reporting them in the annual progress reports. In term of mitigating these risks, the project management team has been reporting that most of these risks have been managed through two main activities: (1) the development of a capacity building plan based on needs assessments; and (2) the CRVA process which was completed in the first half of 2016.

121. In addition to this list of risks, the management team also identified a risk since the beginning of the implementation of this project that is: “*The two areas of rural infrastructure implementation and ecosystem management are seen as two separate areas of intervention. This risk is reinforced by the split into two different outcomes of the project (outcome 2 and 3, respectively)*”. The identified measures to mitigate this risk since 2014 have been:

- Designing the CRVA process to specifically cover the linkages between infrastructure and ecosystems;
- Ensuring that the selected pilot projects integrate ecosystem-based adaptation options during the implementation process;
- Ensuring that the National Ecosystems Specialist (NES) and National Infrastructure Specialist (NIS) have a complete understanding of this issue and work closely together throughout project implementation. This will be done through ‘on-the-job’ coaching and training by the CTA, joint site visits with specific, inter-linked tasks for NES and NIS, as well as a results-based M&E system that integrate infrastructure projects and ecosystem areas within watersheds.

122. The review observed these two “silos” within the project (*see section 4.1.2 and 4.2.2*) and confirms that this risk is the most critical one. It is interesting to note that despite that it was flagged since 2014, the situation has not improved much. Today, the project is still very much divided into 2 lines of implementation: on one hand the 28 small-scale infrastructure projects and on the other hand the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) measures. It is recommended to follow up on the decision made in December 2015 (*see section 4.1.2*) to link the EbA measures to the surroundings and micro-watershed of each infrastructure project; shifting from a focus on areas of ecosystems towards micro-watersheds and local EbA measures to support the resilience of the small-scale infrastructure projects.

123. Following the risk analysis, the long-term sustainability of project achievements was viewed as likely

at the outset of the project; mostly justified by the completion during the PPG phase of a thorough baseline assessment of climate vulnerability and adaptation options within the two target Provinces (*see Annex 8 of the project document*). The approach taken for this baseline was based on a methodology developed by the International Centre for Environmental Management, which assessed geographical scope, baseline conditions, vulnerability, and proposed response measures in an eleven step process. From an environmental perspective, the approach recognizes that differences in the natural environment affect climate vulnerability and the types of adaptation options to be considered. Therefore, the target area was divided into three distinct zones: the lower catchment (floodplains), the mid catchment (sloping hills) and upper catchment (hilly and mountainous terrain). From a social perspective, different poverty levels across the 12 targeted districts were recognized as well as other key criteria, such as ethnicity, gender and institutional conditions. According to the project document, the data collected through this assessment – including the use of an impact matrix tool - provided critical baseline information from which the overall impact of the project would be measured and the sustainability ensured.

124. However, based on the assessment conducted for this review, the prospects of project achievements to be sustainable over the long term are not as positive as stated in the project document; it is rated as *moderately likely sustainable*. As discussed in section 4.1 and 4.2, there is evidence that this project is a direct response to national priorities, and as discussed in section 4.3.4, the government has been contributing its own resources to this project. So far, the project has delivered some key deliverables such as 24 CRVAs, 16 small-scale infrastructure projects and the revised DDF guidelines that now include a climate resilient planning mechanism. It is anticipated that the government will continue to use these deliverables in the foreseeable future, particularly the CRVAs, which should be used as a basis to plan more development activities in these areas and also to use the now climate resilient DDF guidelines. As for the beneficiaries (mostly villagers) of the small-scale infrastructure projects, they should benefit from these water management related micro-development projects after the project end.

125. Nevertheless, the interviews and observations conducted during this review raised key questions about the sustainability of some of these project achievements. Will these small-scale infrastructure projects be sustainable over the long-term? Who will provide and pay the required maintenance for some of these projects? Will the district-based capacity in mainstreaming climate resilient in development planning – including the use of the revised DDF guidelines - be sufficient and self-sustained after the closure of the project? When considering the limited capacity of the government to fund local development initiatives, how will these small-scale infrastructure projects be replicated in other parts of the Saravane and Sekong provinces and also nationwide? Will the CRVAs and its methodology/approach be used after the project end in other areas in the two provinces but also in other provinces?

126. These are key questions when reviewing the prospects for the long-term sustainability of the achievements of this project. It is not to say that currently the sustainability of project achievements is unlikely. However, when considering the weak sustainability strategy set in the project document and based on interviews and observations conducted during this review, there is not enough emphasis put on the sustainability of project achievements; it is not part of the project strategy (*Project Results Framework*). It is recommended to focus on this as soon as possible to review all the achievements and further activities to be conducted between now and end of 2017 and explore what is needed to maximize the prospects for the long-term sustainability of these achievements; particularly the small-scale infrastructure projects, the EbA measures and the capacities needed to be in place at the district administration level to implement climate resilient development activities<sup>16</sup>.

#### **4.4.1. Financial risk to Sustainability**

127. The assumptions made for the financial dimension of sustainability were based on the project producing high (investment) returns; hence being financially sustainable. It is true that this project when compare with macro-level mainstream development trends, such as mining, hydropower, or plantations, the direct impact of the project on national income should be low, but the project benefits at the household level

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16 It was noted that the Project Team has the plan to develop an Exit Strategy and the Reviewers support this but also emphasize the need to focus on the sustainability of project achievements as opposed to “hand-over” of project achievements and call it a sustainability strategy instead of an exit strategy.

should exceed those that may be produced by such mainstream investments and should directly contribute to the achievement of MDG objectives (e.g., health and nutrition) in the target areas. However, as discussed in section 4.2.1 if the project is just about delivering these small-scale infrastructure projects there may be other cheaper delivery mechanisms such as the SGP.

128. Nevertheless, as discussed above, the financial sustainability of some project achievements is uncertain. In the financial/economic area, two key questions need to be addressed: Who will provide and pay the required maintenance for some of these small-scale infrastructure projects? When considering the limited capacity of the government to fund local development initiatives, how will these small-scale infrastructure projects be replicated in other parts of the Saravane and Sekong provinces and also nationwide?

129. At the time of the review, provincial and district authorities confirmed that there was no 'special' commitment from the government side in relation to making maintenance fund available including for these project supported small-infrastructure projects. Broadly speaking, these infrastructures fall within two lines of government agencies to be held responsible for their maintenance. For subprojects that provide water supply such as the community water supply projects and household water storage, the responsibility for maintenance is with the health sector. For wetland, earth dyke and small irrigation scheme, the responsibility for maintenance is with the irrigation sector. Both sectors were interviewed during this review and reported that their financial capacity was very limited and only cover about 10-15 per cent of annual maintenance cost needed. The small-scale infrastructure projects supported by the LDCF project will not receive any special consideration in terms of funding for maintenance. It is important for the project to review these aspects and ensure a greater financial sustainability of project activities.

#### **4.4.2. Socio-economic risk to Sustainability**

130. Through mostly the small-scale infrastructure projects, the project should have positive socio-economic impacts on beneficiaries (villagers). The provision of water management related measures such as water supply systems, dyke for water preservation, upgrade of irrigation systems and flood prevention, will bring benefits to these communities. Women should particularly benefit from improved water supply schemes for domestic consumption and sanitation, given their major role in water provision of families. The time saving effect of better water supply systems should contribute to enhanced income generating activities of those women. The same holds true for ethnic groups, which currently are disproportionately affected from shortages in water supply for domestic and agricultural use. Within this context, the review indicates that there are no socio-economic risks that could threaten the sustainability of project achievements.

#### **4.4.3. Institutional framework and governance risk to Sustainability**

131. When considering the objective of this project that is to improve local administrative systems, the long-term sustainability, scaling-up and replicability of project activities to strengthen the institutional and governance capacity for climate resilient development planning is a critical area for the success of this project. The project has been supporting on-going government efforts to strengthen sub-national (provincial and district) capacities in planning, budgeting and implementation such as strengthening the capacity to address climate risks of provincial and district offices of ministry such as MONRE, MOHA and MAF as well as the district planning committees. The project supported training activities for these sub-national offices, conducted a capacity needs assessment and developed a capacity development plan. The project also supported the revision of the DDF guidelines by introducing climate risks and climate resilience guidelines.

132. At this point in time, the project supported some building blocks to increase the institutional and governance capacities at the sub-national level. However, these capacity development activities may be not enough to ensure a *sustainable* capacity increase over time. During the interviews with provincial authorities in both provinces, concerns were raised about the effectiveness of multi-disciplinary teams which was made up of several sub-national government departments. Each of these sub-national departments belongs to a line ministry at the national level. Sometimes an instruction from one national-level ministry could not be applied across their respective line departments at the sub-national level. Usually, it could be applied but it takes a long time. A multi-disciplinary team approach set up for this project might not be sustainable at this point in time. More coordination at the national level for a better inter-ministerial approach is needed for sustaining a multi-disciplinary team approach at the local level. The sustainability of the institutional capacity developed

with the support of the project should be part of the recommendation to focus more on the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

#### **4.4.4. Environmental risk to Sustainability**

133. From an environmental perspective, it was anticipated at the outset of the project that the sustainability of achievements would be ensured through the links between the areas of intervention of the project such as local governance, infrastructure development and ecosystem management. Furthermore, the project was to be guided by the emerging field of ecosystem based adaptation with strong linkages to community based adaptation. The underlying idea was that ecosystem services used by communities must be sustained through sound management practices in order to ensure livelihood security. The associated project activities would counteract the prevailing land use change trends which are driven by investments in monocultures, mining and hydropower. The project would demonstrate over an area covering at least 60,000ha that investments in ecosystems pay off in the long-term, since they protect important livelihood assets and infrastructures which are important for rural service delivery.

134. However, the above assumptions made at the outset of the project may not have happened. Based on the current set of small-scale infrastructure projects and particularly the scheduling of project activities with EbA measures being implemented after these small projects and without clear links between them, it is not obvious to see how the project will demonstrate that ecosystem services used by communities must be sustained through sound management practices in order to ensure livelihood security.

135. At the small-scale project sites level there are no particular risks affecting the environmental dimension of sustainability. The visits to some of these projects indicate that communities should benefit from these small-scale projects such as better irrigation systems, which should impact positively their crop yields, flood prevention measures should avoid flooding of these communities, etc. The benefits surrounding these small-scale infrastructure projects should be drivers in sustaining these projects over the long term. Nevertheless, the review did not find any particular environmental risks to the sustainability of project outcomes.

## Annex 1: Project Expected Results and Planned Activities

The table below was compiled from the list of expected results and planned activities as anticipated in the project document. It is a succinct summary of what is expected from this project.

***Project Objective:*** Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk.

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
<b>Outcome 1 -</b> Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision	<b>Output 1.1:</b> Technical capacity in climate resilient planning and managing climate risks, focusing on links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure, enhanced for at least 250 national, province, district and village officials, including watsan committee members and disaster management committee members.	<b>LDCF: \$799,716</b> <b>UNDP: \$88,000</b>	1.1.1. Develop training materials based on the initial capacity assessment 1.1.2. Develop a 4 year detailed climate change capacity development plan for District Development Support Committees based on the findings of the initial capacity assessment carried out during the PPG phase 1.1.3. Conduct initial and follow-up training and awareness raising workshops at province and district level in all 12 districts 1.1.4. Provide on the job coaching of target institutions in conducting CRVA assessments. 1.1.5. Engage GIS database specialists to develop a simple climate change adaptation information databank at PONREs in Sekong and Saravane
	<b>Output 1.2:</b> Village level water harvesting, storage and distribution infrastructure adaptation solutions and related ecosystem management options identified, prioritized and integrated into district development plans.		1.2.1. Develop a priority list of at least 4 projects per district including at least one initial investment project per district, with a priority focus on the water sector and climate change adaptation. 1.2.2. Develop indicative budgets for each project with the District Development Support Committees 1.2.3. Approval of priority list of climate resilient investments by the respective District Development Support Committee.
	<b>Output 1.3:</b> Climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments (CRVA) carried out at 48 project sites in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces and proposed climate resilient investments adjusted to take account of site specific adaptation concerns.		1.3.1. Develop and field test the CRVA tool. 1.3.2. Carry out CRVA analysis for at least 48 potential project sites and provide final recommendations to the District Development Support Committees on feasibility and relevance to CCA. 1.3.3. Integrate information gathered from CRVA into awareness-raising and training materials. 1.3.4. Integrate CRVA findings into CCA information databank.
	<b>Output 1.4:</b> Detailed climate resilient project investments and tender documents finalized as well as		1.4.1. Integrate the CRVA tested projects as an agenda item for regular meetings of the province planning and investment departments, the District Development Support Committees and the village-level planning consultations.

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
	<p>associated dialogues to facilitate implementation of annual investment plans in 12 districts.</p>		<p><b>1.4.2.</b> According to CRVA findings, support district officials to develop detailed budgets for each selected climate resilient investment project, including in-kind community contributions.</p> <p><b>1.4.3.</b> Provide technical support and advice to District Development Support Committees in reviewing and approving climate resilient infrastructure investments.</p> <p><b>1.4.4.</b> Support development of tender documentation and procedures for climate resilient infrastructure investments and oversight of construction company selection processes.</p> <p><b>1.4.5.</b> Organize two day excursions (4 per year) to best practice project sites for district and provincial officials as well as community representatives to promote learning and facilitate climate resilient planning.</p>
	<p><b>Output 1.5:</b> Guidelines, codes and best practices for climate resilient construction developed, applied and revised for small-scale rural infrastructure sectors (irrigation, water supply, rural roads, education, and health), including technical training in climate resilient design for local engineers and contractors.</p>		<p><b>1.5.1.</b> Develop climate resilient construction guidelines for each sector of small-scale rural infrastructure development.</p> <p><b>1.5.2.</b> Conduct trainings for local construction companies in the area of climate resilient construction.</p> <p><b>1.5.3.</b> Presentations and discussion of guidelines to national and provincial levels of the Ministry of Infrastructure and other relevant ministries as an input to wider discussions on necessary revisions to national standards and guidelines.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2 –</b> Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces</p>	<p><b>Output 2.1:</b> An incentive mechanism, rewarding districts performing well in planning, budgeting and implementation of climate resilient, ecosystem based small-scale water infrastructure is developed, tested and under operation.</p> <p><b>Output 2.2:</b> At least 48 small-scale infrastructure investment projects (1 per district and year), including components of water harvesting, storage, distribution and/ or irrigation of the priority lists that</p>	<p><b>LDCF: \$2,145,000</b> <b>UNDP: \$82,944</b></p>	<p><b>2.1.1.</b> Establish an incentive mechanism based on the principle of an additional 25% increment to baseline development budgets to fund climate resilient investments.</p> <p><b>2.1.2.</b> Develop an audit methodology to annually track district performance in the area of climate resilient, ecosystem based small-scale water infrastructure.</p> <p><b>2.1.3.</b> Adjust annual budgetary envelopes for district investment plans to include CCA grants according to measured district performance.</p> <p><b>2.1.4.</b> Amend standard local development funding operating manuals, instructions and regulations to include climate resilient infrastructure, in order to fully mainstream climate financing into existing systems.</p> <p><b>2.1.5.</b> Codify lessons learned from a climate finance and public expenditure management perspective.</p> <p><b>2.2.1.</b> Support and ensure establishment of district level bank accounts in line with Ministry of Finance rules.</p> <p><b>2.2.2.</b> Deliver climate resilient infrastructure grants to district accounts, aligned with existing local development funding.</p>

Intended Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Budget per Outcome	Indicative Activities
	have been CRVA assessed are implemented.		<p><b>2.2.3.</b> Track, monitor and report on fiscal transfers for climate resilient infrastructure.</p> <p><b>2.2.4.</b> Evaluate and report on climate resilient grant performance against relevant MCs standards on an annual basis.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> – Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces</p>	<p><b>Output 3.1:</b> Up to 9 ecosystem management and action plans to protect the 48 small-scale infrastructure projects (including physical measures to increase natural water retention and storage, as well as increase ground water infiltration and recharge) are designed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Output 3.2:</b> Awareness-raising activities implemented, learning materials developed and disseminated and regular dialogues established between communities and all local administrative tiers on linkages between ecosystems management and small-scale infrastructure solutions.</p>	<p><b>LDCF: \$1,381,764</b> <b>UNDP: \$88,000</b></p>	<p><b>3.1.1.</b> Prepare tender documentation for the delivery of up to nine climate resilient ecosystem management and action plans.</p> <p><b>3.1.2.</b> Develop ecosystem management and action plans that support climate-resilience of rural infrastructure in up to nine locations building on the existing ADB-IWRM approach for Sekong, as well as the location specific interventions and capacities provided under the IUCN baseline projects.</p> <p><b>3.1.3.</b> Implementation of up to nine ecosystem management and action plans through community driven measures with contractual service support.</p> <p><b>3.1.4.</b> Apply the ecosystem management monitoring and evaluation system on a regular basis.</p> <p><b>3.2.1.</b> Develop and disseminate best practice guidelines based on M&amp;E reports provided under output 3.1.</p> <p><b>3.2.2.</b> Organize site visits for district, provincial and national officials.</p> <p><b>3.2.3.</b> Organize roundtable meetings to share experiences on EbA infrastructure solutions building on existing networks and capabilities provided by the IUCN baseline projects.</p>

Source: Project Document

## Annex 2: Terms of Reference

### UNDP-GEF

#### Mid-Term Review

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT

##### 1. Introduction

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full-sized* project titled *Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate* (PIMS 4710) in Lao PDR, implemented through the *Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)/Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change (DDMCC)*, which is to be undertaken in 2016. The project started on the *8<sup>th</sup> May 2013* and is in its *third* year of implementation. This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* ([http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance\\_Midterm%20Review%20\\_EN\\_2014.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf)).

##### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lao PDR is one of the poorest countries in Asia and according to IPCC findings particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Low productive agriculture, poor infrastructure development and limited levels of service delivery jointly contribute to low adaptive capacity of livelihood systems, which are already affected by impacts of climate variability. Stresses on livelihoods will further increase due to expected climate change.

The project target area is the two provinces of Sekong and Saravane in southern Lao PDR, including all their 12 districts. Those two provinces have been heavily affected by climate change in recent years. Changing rainfall and temperature patterns have caused an increased frequency and intensity of storms leading to flash-floods, flooding and landslides, as well more frequent and persistent dry periods and droughts.

The project was designed to increase climate resilience of rural small-scale water infrastructure, and the communities using them, through participatory planning processes that ensures full considerations of the genuine needs of communities vulnerable to climate variability and change, so that the development prospects of these communities are secured in face of increasing climate risks.

In order to achieve this, the project applies a ‘three-pronged’ approach: (i) strengthening of the national, provincial and district capacities for planning for rural infrastructure that incorporates climate considerations; (ii) direct financing for infrastructure projects to vulnerable districts through an existing District Development Fund (DDF) mechanism; (iii) implementing ecosystem-based adaptation measures that provide additional climate resilience at the watershed level of project infrastructure intervention.

The District Development Fund (DDF) mechanism has been applied in Lao PDR over the past 10 years through the National Governance and Administration Reform Project (NGPAR), implemented with support from UNDP/UNCDF by Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA). The project uses this mechanism through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MONRE/UNDP and MOHA/UNCDF.

The overall Project Objective is to “improve local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk”.

Three outcomes will contribute to this objective; the progress toward the objective and outcomes is measured through the following indicators.

Objective / Outcomes	Indicators	Target by end of project, relative to the baseline (unless specified otherwise)
<p>Project Objective: Local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage change in number of district development plans including specific climate change adaptation actions in the target provinces and districts</li> <li>- Percentage change in the level of active local community participation in climate risk related planning in target provinces and districts</li> </ul>	<p>50% of district development plans in the project area include at least 3 specific CCA actions by mid project and at least 5 CCA actions by end of project</p> <p>60% of District Development Support Committees in the target districts and provinces record specific climate related concerns emerging from community level annual planning consultations</p>
<p>Outcome 1: Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision</p>	<p>1.1 Percentage change in the ability of local and some national officials to apply methodologies to analyse climate risks and identify CC vulnerabilities in 12 districts</p> <p>1.2 Procedures are in place to integrate climate change resilient advice and investment for small scale rural water infrastructure into district planning</p> <p>1.3 Number of district development plans available, reflecting costs for adaptation in the water sector.</p>	<p>50% of sub-national officials and 10% of national officials are able to analyse climate risks for their districts on a macro level (V&amp;A analysis) and are able to identify specific vulnerabilities and adaptation options at village level (CRVA)</p> <p>All 12 target districts are applying a climate resilient planning mechanism including project identification, site assessment, approval, execution and M&amp;E</p> <p>All annual district investment plans include evidence of incremental CCA costings for water sector projects by year 4 and at least 4 provide this evidence by Year 2.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces</p>	<p>2.1 Number of districts routinely investing in climate resilient measures to improve village level water harvesting, storage and distribution systems</p> <p>2.2 Number of people benefitting from investments in small-scale irrigation systems to increase their resilience against climate change risks</p> <p>2.3 District level fiscal and administrative incentives are introduced that incorporate climate resilient measures for small scale rural infrastructure</p>	<p>By the end of the project all target districts are investing at least 2 projects per year in village level climate resilient water harvesting, storage and distribution systems, which are informed by CRVA</p> <p>At least 50,000 people across 12 districts are benefitting from climate change resilient small-scale irrigation infrastructure, which has been informed by CRVA</p> <p>At least 25% in additional CCA funds (annual average) expended over and above</p>

Objective / Outcomes	Indicators	Target by end of project, relative to the baseline (unless specified otherwise)
		baseline District Development Funding in at least 12 districts, based on a system that rewards districts that perform well against predetermined criteria
Outcome 3: Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces	3.1 Number of management /action plans developed and under implementation, which protect natural assets through local scale ecosystems based adaptation measures to improve the resilience of small-scale rural infrastructure against floods and drought  3.2 Number of key project stakeholders aware of links between improved ecosystem management and sustainability of investments in small scale rural water infrastructure.	At least 6 management and action plans covering project-targeted climate resilience small-scale infrastructure investments under implementation across both Sekong and Saravane provinces  At least 250 national, provincial and district planners have received knowledge and learning approaches and materials produced by the project on ecosystem based management linkages to infrastructure provision

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

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

### 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach<sup>17</sup> ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR<sup>18</sup>. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- UNDP staff who have project responsibilities
- Implementing Partner – National
- The Chair of Project Board

17 For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

18 For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

- The National Project Director (NPD) and Project Manager (PM)
- Component leaders and key experts
- Other project stakeholders, to be discussed at the MTR inception meeting

Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to different government agencies in Vientiane capital, Saravane and Sekong provinces, including project sites in Lamarm, Thateng, Saravane and Khongsedone districts.

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

## 5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

### i. Project Strategy

#### Project design:

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

#### Results Framework/Logframe:

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

### ii. Progress Towards Results

#### Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the

level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

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

Project Strategy	Indicator <sup>19</sup>	Baseline Level <sup>20</sup>	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target <sup>21</sup>	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment <sup>22</sup>	Achievement Rating <sup>23</sup>	Justification for Rating
<b>Objective:</b>	Indicator (if applicable):							
<b>Outcome 1:</b>	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
<b>Outcome 2:</b>	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
<b>Outcome 3:</b>								
<b>Etc.</b>								

**Indicator Assessment Key**

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

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

**iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

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

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow

19 Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

20 Populate with data from the Project Document

21 If available

22 Colour code this column only

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

management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?

- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

#### Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

#### Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

#### Reporting:

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

#### Communications:

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

#### **iv. Sustainability**

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

##### Financial risks to sustainability:

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

##### Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there

sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

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

Environmental risks to sustainability:

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

**Conclusions & Recommendations**

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR’s evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings<sup>24</sup>.

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report’s executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

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

**Ratings**

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

**Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for *Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate***

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

**6. TIMEFRAME**

The total duration of the MTR will be 24 working days over a time period of approximately 11 weeks starting in March 2016, and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

<sup>24</sup> Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.

<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
04 March 2016	Application closure
10 days after application closure	Select MTR Team
14 March 2016	Contract signing
14-18 March 2016	Preparation of the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
18 March 2016	<i>Inception Meeting with UNDP via Skype</i>
Within first two weeks of contract	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
25 March 2016	Submission of Inception Report
28 March – 08 April	MTR mission (12 days): stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
07 April 2016	Presentation of initial findings to stakeholders
29 April 2016	Submission of Draft MTR Report
20 May 2016	Finalization of MTR report including incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/
31 May 2016	Submission of Final MTR Report

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

## 7. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

<b>#</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
1	<b>MTR Inception Report</b>	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	<b>Presentation</b>	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	<b>Draft Final Report</b>	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
4	<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

## 8. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Country Office of Lao PDR.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within Lao PDR for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

## 9. TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will consist of 1 international and 1 national evaluators. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. (The international evaluator will be designated as the team leader and will be responsible for finalizing the report). The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The International Team leader must present the following qualifications:

**Education:**

- Technical knowledge/recognized advanced (Masters of higher) degree in the targeted focal area(s): natural resource management, environmental engineering, hydrology and water resource management.

**Experience:**

- 10 years technical experience with climate change adaptation analysis and the socio-economic impact assessment related to infrastructure, hydrological disaster risk management, water resource management, climate change adaptation and ecosystem based adaptation
- Experience in project reviewing or evaluating within United Nations system
- Experience in reviewing or evaluation of similar climate change adaptation in the water resource management sector projects with UNDP-GEF supported projects
- Experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies
- 3 years of working experience in the Mekong region (South East Asia)

**Other Knowledge and Skills:**

- Capability to lead and guide the works of the national consultant into joint working results and evaluation reports
- Demonstrated analytical and presentation skills
- Excellent English communication and report writing skills

**10. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS**

%	Milestone
10%	On submission of Inception Report
30%	On completion of Mission to Lao PDR and presentation of initial findings to stakeholders
40%	On submission and acceptance (by UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the 1 <sup>st</sup> draft mid-term review report
20%	On submission and acceptance (by UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the final mid-term review report

**11. APPLICATION PROCESS<sup>25</sup>**

**Recommended Presentation of Proposal:**

- Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template<sup>26</sup>](#) provided by UNDP;
- CV** in English (with indication of e-mail and phone contact) and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form<sup>27</sup>](#));
- Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related

<sup>25</sup> Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>26</sup> <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psd/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11\\_Personal\\_history\\_form.doc](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc)

costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Applicants are requested to submit an application letter with a technical and financial proposal by 04 March 2016. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

**Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal:** Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

### **ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team**

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIR's)
7. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
8. Audit reports
9. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm
10. Oversight mission reports
11. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
12. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team

The following documents will also be available:

13. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
14. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
15. Minutes of the GIDCC Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
16. Project site location maps

### **ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report<sup>28</sup>**

- i. Basic Report Information (*for opening page or title page*)
  - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
  - UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
  - MTR time frame and date of MTR report
  - Region and countries included in the project
  - GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
  - Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and other project partners
  - MTR team members
  - Acknowledgements
- ii. Table of Contents
- iii. Acronyms and Abbreviations
1. Executive Summary (*3-5 pages*)
  - Project Information Table
  - Project Description (brief)
  - Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
  - MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
  - Concise summary of conclusions
  - Recommendation Summary Table

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<sup>28</sup> The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

2. Introduction (2-3 pages)
  - Purpose of the MTR and objectives
  - Scope & Methodology: principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR
  - Structure of the MTR report
3. Project Description and Background Context (3-5 pages)
  - Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
  - Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted
  - Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites (if any)
  - Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.
  - Project timing and milestones
  - Main stakeholders: summary list
4. Findings (12-14 pages)
  - 4.1 Project Strategy
    - Project Design
    - Results Framework/Logframe
  - 4.2 Progress Towards Results
    - Progress towards outcomes analysis
    - Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective
  - 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
    - Management Arrangements
    - Work planning
    - Finance and co-finance
    - Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
    - Stakeholder engagement
    - Reporting
    - Communications
  - 4.4 Sustainability
    - Financial risks to sustainability
    - Socio-economic to sustainability
    - Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
    - Environmental risks to sustainability
5. Conclusions and Recommendations (4-6 pages)
  - 5.1 Conclusions
    - Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project
  - 5.2 Recommendations
    - Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
    - Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
    - Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
6. Annexes
  - MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
  - MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
  - Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection
  - Ratings Scales
  - MTR mission itinerary
  - List of persons interviewed
  - List of documents reviewed
  - Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)
  - Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
  - Signed MTR final report clearance form
  - *Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report
  - *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools

## ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template

This Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix must be fully completed/amended by the consultant and included in the MTR inception report and as an Annex to the MTR report.

valuative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?</b>			
(include evaluative	(i.e. relationships established, level of	(i.e. project documents, national policies or	(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews
	coherence between project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)	strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.)	with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)
<b>Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?</b>			
<b>Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?</b>			
<b>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>			

## ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants<sup>29</sup>

### Evaluators/Consultants:

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

<sup>29</sup> [www.undp.org/uneqcodeofconduct](http://www.undp.org/uneqcodeofconduct)

fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.  
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

### MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ (Place) on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings

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

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

<b>Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)</b>		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review

2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

## ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form

*(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)*

<b>Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>Commissioning Unit</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____
<b>UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

### Annex 3: Code of Conduct for Evaluators and Agreement Form

***Evaluators / Consultants:***

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

**Mid-Term Review Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Consultant: ***Mr. Jean-Joseph Bellamy, International Evaluator***

Name of Consultant: ***Dr. Thongdeuane Nanthanavone, National Evaluator***

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

Signed in Ottawa on May 26, 2016

Signed in Vientiane on June 05, 2016



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Annex 4: Review Matrix

The evaluation matrix below served as a general guide for the review. It provided directions for the review; particularly for the collection of relevant data. It was used as a basis for interviewing people and reviewing project documents. It also provided a basis for structuring the review report as a whole.

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<b>Evaluation criteria: Relevance</b> - <i>How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF-LDCF, UNDP, UNCDF and to the adaptation to climate change priorities at the local, provincial and national levels in Lao PDR?</i>				
<i>Is the Project relevant to GEF-LDCF objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the Project support the related strategic priorities of the GEF-LDCF?</li> <li>▪ Were GEF-LDCF criteria for project identification adequate in view of actual needs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Level of coherence between project objectives and those of the GEF-LDCF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents</li> <li>▪ GEF-LDCF policies and strategies</li> <li>▪ GEF web site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documents analyses</li> <li>▪ Interviews with government officials and other partners</li> </ul>
<i>Is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the project support the objectives of UNDP and UNCDF in this sector?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Existence of a clear relationship between project objectives and country programme objectives of UNDP and UNCDF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents</li> <li>▪ UNDP and UNCDF strategies and programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documents analyses</li> <li>▪ Interviews with government officials and other partners</li> </ul>
<i>Is the Project relevant to Lao's climate change adaptation and development objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the project follow the government's stated priorities?</li> <li>▪ How does the Project support the climate change adaptation and development priorities/objectives of Lao PDR?</li> <li>▪ Does the project address the identified problem?</li> <li>▪ How country-driven is the Project?</li> <li>▪ Does the Project adequately take into account national realities, both in terms of institutional framework and programming, in its design and its implementation?</li> <li>▪ To what extent were national partners involved in the design of the Project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Degree to which the project support national climate change adaptation and development priorities/objectives</li> <li>▪ Degree of coherence between the project and national priorities, policies and strategies; particularly related to climate change adaptation</li> <li>▪ Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities?</li> <li>▪ Level of involvement of Government officials and other partners into the project</li> <li>▪ Coherence between needs expressed by national stakeholders and UNDP/UNCDF criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents</li> <li>▪ National policies, strategies and programmes</li> <li>▪ Key government officials and other partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documents analyses</li> <li>▪ Interviews with government officials and other partners</li> </ul>
<i>Does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the project support the needs of target beneficiaries?</li> <li>▪ Is the implementation of the project been inclusive of all relevant Stakeholders?</li> <li>▪ Are local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project formulation and implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strength of the link between project expected results and the needs of target beneficiaries</li> <li>▪ Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of beneficiaries and stakeholders in project design and implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beneficiaries and stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Needs assessment studies</li> <li>▪ Project documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders</li> </ul>
<i>Is the Project internally</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach?</li> <li>▪ Is there a direct and strong link between project expected results (Result and Resources Framework) and the project design (in terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Level of coherence between project expected results and internal project design logic</li> <li>▪ Level of coherence between project design and project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program and project documents</li> <li>▪ Key project stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Key Interviews</li> </ul>

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<i>coherent in its design?</i>	of project components, choice of partners, structure, delivery mechanism, scope, budget, use of resources etc.)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the length of the project conducive to achieve project outcomes?</li> </ul>	implementation approach		
<i>How is the Project relevant in light of other donors?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With regards to Lao PDR, does the project remain relevant in terms of areas of focus and targeting of key activities?</li> <li>How does GEF-LDCF help to fill gaps (or give additional stimulus) that are crucial but are not covered by other donors?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree to which the project was coherent and complementary to other donor programming in Lao PDR</li> <li>List of programs and funds in which future developments, ideas and partnerships of the project are eligible?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Donors' policies and programming documents</li> <li>Other Donor representatives</li> <li>Project documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents analyses</li> <li>Interviews with other Donors</li> </ul>
<b>Future directions for similar Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners' priorities and areas of focus?</li> <li>How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected throughout evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness – To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?</b>				
<i>How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the project being effective in achieving its expected outcomes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision</li> <li>Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces</li> <li>Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New methodologies, skills and knowledge</li> <li>Change in capacity for information management: knowledge acquisition and sharing; effective data gathering, methods and procedures for reporting.</li> <li>Change in capacity for awareness raising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder involvement and government awareness</li> <li>Change in local stakeholder behavior</li> </ul> </li> <li>Change in capacity in policy making and planning to improve adaptation to climate change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy reform</li> <li>Legislation/regulation change</li> <li>Development of national and local strategies and plans</li> </ul> </li> <li>Change in capacity in implementation and enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and implementation of risk assessments</li> <li>Implementation of national and local strategies and action plans through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance</li> <li>Monitoring, evaluation and promotion of pilots</li> </ul> </li> <li>Change in capacity in mobilizing resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage of resources</li> <li>Human resources</li> <li>Appropriate practices</li> <li>Mobilization of advisory services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents</li> <li>Key stakeholders including UNDP and UNCDF, Project Team, Representatives of Gov. and other Partners</li> <li>Research findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents analysis</li> <li>Meetings with main Project Partners</li> <li>Interviews with project beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<i>How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well are risks and assumptions being managed?</li> <li>What is the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Are they sufficient?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning</li> <li>Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, Project Staff and Project Partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul>

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with long-term sustainability of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed</li> </ul>		
<b>Future directions for similar Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes?</li> <li>What changes could have been made (if any) to the formulation of the project in order to improve the achievement of project's expected results?</li> <li>How could the project be more effective in achieving its results?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected throughout evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation criteria: <i>Efficiency - Was the project implemented efficiently, cost-effectively and in-line with international and national norms and standards?</i></b>				
<i>Is Project support channeled in an efficient way?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?</li> <li>Does the project <i>Result and Resources Framework</i> and work plans and any changes made to them used as management tools during implementation?</li> <li>Are the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?</li> <li>How adequate is the M&amp;E framework (indicators &amp; targets)?</li> <li>Are progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?</li> <li>Is project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)</li> <li>Is the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happened as planned?</li> <li>Are financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?</li> <li>How is RBM used during project implementation?</li> <li>Is the project decision-making effective?</li> <li>Does the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project's formulation and implementation?</li> <li>Have these directions provided by the government guided the activities and outcomes of the project?</li> <li>Are there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanisms to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to project formulation and implementation effectiveness were shared among project stakeholders, UNDP and UNCDF staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing project adjustment and improvement?</li> <li>Does the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability and quality of financial and progress reports</li> <li>Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided</li> <li>Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures</li> <li>Planned vs. actual funds leveraged</li> <li>Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations</li> <li>Adequacy of project choices in view of existing context, infrastructure and cost</li> <li>Quality of RBM reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation)</li> <li>Occurrence of change in project formulation/ implementation approach (i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency</li> <li>Existence, quality and use of M&amp;E, feedback and dissemination mechanism to share findings, lessons learned and recommendation on effectiveness of project design.</li> <li>Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives</li> <li>Gender disaggregated data in project documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, Representatives of Gov. and Project Staff</li> <li>Beneficiaries and Project partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>How efficient are</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the government engaged?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific activities conducted to support the development of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> </ul>

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<i>partnership arrangements for the Project?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects?</li> <li>▪ Did the government provide a counterpart to the project?</li> <li>▪ To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations are encouraged and supported?</li> <li>▪ Which partnerships/linkages are facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?</li> <li>▪ What is the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP, UNCDF and relevant government entities)</li> <li>▪ Which methods were successful or not and why?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cooperative arrangements between partners,</li> <li>▪ Examples of supported partnerships</li> <li>▪ Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained</li> <li>▪ Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluations</li> <li>▪ Project Partners</li> <li>▪ UNDP, UNCDF, Representatives of Gov. and Project Staff</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>Does the Project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity?</li> <li>▪ Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer among developing countries?</li> <li>▪ Did the Project take into account local capacity in formulation and implementation of the project?</li> <li>▪ Was there an effective collaboration with scientific institutions with competence in adaptation to climate change?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proportion of total expertise utilized taken from Lao PDR</li> <li>▪ Number/quality of analyses done to assess local capacity potential and absorptive capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>▪ UNDP, UNCDF, Project Team and Project partners</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Future directions for similar Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency?</li> <li>▪ How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc....)?</li> <li>▪ What changes could have been made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data collected throughout evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation criteria: <i>Impacts</i> - Are there indications that the project has contributed to adaptation to climate change in Lao PDR?</b>				
<i>How is the Project effective in achieving its long-term objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will the project achieve its objective that is local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes in capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To pool/mobilize resources</li> <li>○ To provide an enabling environment,</li> <li>○ For implementation of related strategies and programmes through adequate institutional frameworks and their maintenance,</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Changes in use and implementation of sustainable alternatives</li> <li>▪ Changes to the quantity and strength of barriers such as change in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Weaknesses in climate change analysis and planning at sub-national level;</li> <li>○ Financial constraints in resourcing the additional costs of building greater redundancy into rural infrastructure;</li> <li>○ A silo approach to local planning whereby ecosystem functions and services are not taken into account; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents</li> <li>▪ Key Stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Research findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documents analysis</li> <li>▪ Meetings with UNDP, UNCDF, Project Team and project Partners</li> <li>▪ Interviews with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders</li> </ul>

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The limited incentives that exist to encourage local officials and decision makers to address climate related risks.</li> </ul>		
<i>How is the Project impacting the local environment?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the impacts or likely impacts of the project on? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local environment;</li> <li>○ Poverty; and,</li> <li>○ Other socio-economic issues.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide specific examples of impacts at those three levels, as relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents</li> <li>▪ Key Stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Research findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews with key stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Future directions for the Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How could the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data collected throughout evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation criteria: Sustainability - To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</b>				
<i>Are sustainability issues adequately integrated in Project design?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Were sustainability issues integrated into the formulation and implementation of the project?</li> <li>▪ Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems?</li> <li>▪ Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for project outcomes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evidence/Quality of sustainability strategy</li> <li>▪ Evidence/Quality of steps taken to address sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>▪ UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?</li> <li>▪ Are the recurrent costs after project completion sustainable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities after project end?</li> <li>▪ Evidence of commitments from international partners, governments or other stakeholders to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end</li> <li>▪ Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>▪ UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>Organizations arrangements and continuation of activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are results of efforts made during the project implementation period well assimilated by organizations and their internal systems and procedures?</li> <li>▪ Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support?</li> <li>▪ Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need to sell the project and buy support?</li> <li>▪ What degree is there of local ownership of initiatives and results?</li> <li>▪ Are appropriate 'champions' being identified and/or supported?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations</li> <li>▪ Level of financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities by in-country actors after project end</li> <li>▪ Number/quality of champions identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>▪ UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>Enabling Environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are laws, policies and frameworks addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Efforts to support the development of relevant laws and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project documents and evaluations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document analysis</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> </ul>

Evaluated component	Sub-Question	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the necessary related capacities for lawmaking and enforcement built?</li> <li>What is the level of political commitment to build on the results of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State of enforcement and law making capacity</li> <li>Evidence of commitment by the political class through speeches, enactment of laws and resource allocation to priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> <li>Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	
<i>Institutional and individual capacity building</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the capacity in place at the national, provincial and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elements in place in those different management functions, at appropriate levels (national, provincial and district/local) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, Project staff and project Partners</li> <li>Beneficiaries</li> <li>Capacity assessments available, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Documentation review</li> </ul>
<i>Social and political sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability?</li> <li>Did the project contribute to local Stakeholders' acceptance of the new practices?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example of contributions to sustainable political and social change with regard to climate change adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> <li>Beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Documentation review</li> </ul>
<i>Replication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were project activities and results replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up?</li> <li>What was the project contribution to replication or scaling up of innovative practices or mechanisms to improve adaptation to climate change?</li> <li>Does the project has a catalytic role?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number/quality of replicated initiatives</li> <li>Number/quality of replicated innovative initiatives</li> <li>Volume of additional investment leveraged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other donor programming documents</li> <li>Beneficiaries</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul>
<i>Challenges to sustainability of the Project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?</li> <li>Have any of these been addressed through project management?</li> <li>What could be the possible measures to further contribute to the sustainability of efforts achieved with the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges in view of building blocks of sustainability as presented above</li> <li>Recent changes which may present new challenges to the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and evaluations</li> <li>Beneficiaries</li> <li>UNDP, UNCDF, project staff and project Partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Future directions for the Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results?</li> <li>What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?</li> <li>How can the experience and good project practices influence the strategies for adaptation to climate change?</li> <li>Are national decision-making institutions (Parliament, Government etc.) in Lao PDR ready to improve their measures to improve adaptation to climate change?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected throughout evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data analysis</li> </ul>

## **Annex 5: List of Documents Reviewed**

- ADB, WREA, The World Bank, 2010, *Strategy on Climate Change of the Lao PDR*
- Environment Protection Fund Lao PDR, January 24, 2014, *Environmental and Social Safeguard Documents – Community Engagement Framework (CEF) – Protected Area and Wildlife Project (PAW)*
- GEF, GEFEO, May 2016, *Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (Agenda Item 07)*
- GEF, July 1, 2011, *Project Identification Form (PIF) - Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*
- GEF, September 6, 2011, *Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Full Size Project LDCF - Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*
- GEF, UNDP, 2014, *Project Implementation Review (PIR) - Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*
- GEFEO, May 2016, *Program Evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund – Full Report and Part 2 Annexes (Unedited)*
- Hendrik Visser, UNCDF, *Support Mission MONRE LDCF-2 Project and MOHA GPAR-DDF Project*
- Icem, May 31, 2016, *L-CRVA – Development of a Lao Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment for the Department of Disaster Management & Climate Change*
- Icem, MONRE, UNDP, *L-CRVA Baseline Reports for 13 sites*
- Icem, MONRE, UNDP, *L-CRVA Summary Reports for 11 sites*
- IIED, MONRE, November 2013, *A Framework for Mainstreaming Climate Resilience into Development Planning (Working Paper)*
- Lao People’s Democratic Republic, June 11, 2004, *National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and Action Plan to 2010*
- Lao People’s Democratic Republic, *National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES)*
- LDCF2, *LDCF2 AWP for 2016*
- LDCF2, *LDCF2 AWP for 2017*
- LDCF2, *LDCF2 Capacity Development Plan*
- LDCF2, October 2014, *Capacity Assessment of Provincial and District Officers*
- LDCF2, *Revised LDCF2 AWP 2014*
- LDCF2, *Revised LDCF2 AWP for 2015 Lao PDR*
- LDCF2, *Revised LDCF2 AWP for 2016*
- LDCF2, *Roadmap for EbA of Wetland and Forest Management*
- Lux Dev, *Bolikhamxay Provincial Planning and Investment Department, February 24, 2015, Village Development Funds – Approach and Experience in Bolikhamxay Province, Lao PDR*
- Lux Dev, *Bolikhamxay Provincial Planning and Investment Department, February 26, 2016, Village Development Funds – Approach and Experience in Bolikhamxay Province, Lao PDR (Update)*
- Lux Dev, *Lao/026 Technical Assistance to the Soum Son Seun Jai Programme – Direct Financing of Local Development*
- Ministry of Planning and Investment, June 15-24, 2011, *The Seven Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015)*
- Ministry of Planning and Investment, November 24, 2015, *Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan VIII (2016-2020) (draft)*
- MOHA, *District Development Fund (DDF) – Basic Block Grant – District Investment Planning Guidelines for Use of DDF BBG*

MOHA, *District Development Fund (DDF) – Basic Block Grant – Implementation Guidelines*

MOHA, *District Development Fund (DDF) – DDF Financial Management and Budget Execution Procedures*

MOHA, *GPAR/SCSD, Guidelines on the Allocation and Use of DDF-Basic Block Grants and Climate Resilience Grants*

MONRE, 2012, *Lao Environmental Outlook 2012*

MONRE, 2013, *Guidelines on Ecosystem-Based Adaptation Practices in Lao PDR*

MONRE, *Annex 1 – Summary of the Endorsement of DDF-Investment of Two Provinces, FY 2014-2015*

MONRE, *Annex 1 – Summary of the Endorsement of DDF-Investment of Two Provinces, FY 2015-2016*

MONRE, GEF, UNDP, December 24, 2015, *Minute of Annual Review Meeting and Project Board of LDCF2 Project*

MONRE, GEF, UNDP, December 2015, *Amendments to the Project Document of the LDCF2 Project “Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate” (GIDCC)*

MONRE, January 2, 2016, *Letter to UNDP Resident Representative – Subject: LDCF2/GIDCC Project Amendments*

MONRE, January 5, 2016, *Letter to UNDP Resident Representative – Subject: LDCF2/GIDCC Project Extension*

MONRE, March 2013, *Second National Communication on Climate Change of Lao PDR*

MONRE, May 13, 2015, *First Five Years Action Plan – 2016-2020 on Natural Resources and Environment Strategy 2025*

MONRE, May 15, 2015, *MONRE Vision toward 2030 – Natural Resources and Environment Strategy, 10 Years 2016-2025*

MONRE, November 2015, *Summary DDF-BBG-GEF Implementation Report – Fiscal Year 2014-2015*

MONRE, UNDP, January 16, 2015, *Minute of Joint Annual Review Meeting and Project Board of IDCRM and LDCF2 Project*

MONRE, UNDP, UNCDF, October 2014, *Inception Workshop Report – Reporting Period: May to December 2013*

NEXIA STT, *Audit Report of the LDCF2 Project*

UNDP, *Annex 3 – Terms of Reference for Institution/Consultancy Company - National Consultancy Company to develop and implement Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) for Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change (DDMCC) of Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE)*

UNDP, *Blending Climate Finance Through National Climate Funds – A Guidebook for the Design and Establishment of National Funds to Achieve Climate Change Priorities*

UNDP, *Combined Delivery Report (CDR) for 2013, 2014, 2015, and to June 2016*

UNDP, MONRE, 2014, *Annual Project Review Report 2014*

UNDP, MONRE, *1st Quarter 2015 Quarterly Project Progress Report - 8 April 2015*

UNDP, MONRE, *2nd Quarter 2015 Quarterly Project Progress Report - 8 July 2015*

UNDP, MONRE, *3rd Quarter 2015 Quarterly Project Progress Report – 30 September 2015*

UNDP, MONRE, GEF, *Project Document (1) and Annexes (2) Lao PDR*

UNDP, MONRE, January 2016, *Annual Progress Report 2015 (APR)*

UNDP, MONRE, March 31, 2016, *1st Quarter 2016 Quarterly Project Progress Report 31st March 2016*

UNDP, *Project Brief – Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate (LDCF2)*

UNDP, UNCDF, MONRE, July 2014, *Manual for the Assessment of Districts’ Performance under the SCSD Program*

UNDP, WREA, GEF, April 2009, *National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change*

\_\_\_\_\_, 2015, *Project Implementation Review (PIR) - Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*

\_\_\_\_\_, *A Partnership for Sustainable Development – Lao PDR-United Nations Partnership Framework – 2017-2021 (Final Draft)*

\_\_\_\_\_, August 20, July 2013, *DDF MOU Amendment No. 01 - Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the GPAR-Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery for Local Administrations Program (SCSD)*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Climate Change Adaptation – LDCF/SCCF – Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Ecosystem-Based Approaches to Address Climate Change Challenges in the Greater Mekong Subregion*

\_\_\_\_\_, *GEF Secretariat Review for Full/Medium Size Projects - Effective Governance for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a Changing Climate*

\_\_\_\_\_, July 22, 2015, *Meeting Minutes – Discussion Meeting Between DDF/NGPAR/MOHA/UNCDF and GIDCC/LDCF2/MONRE/UNDP on DDF Guidelines with Inclusion of CR*

\_\_\_\_\_, June 2012, *Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Options Report – Sekong and Saravane Provinces and Districts (Annex 8 of project document)*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), witnessed by Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*

\_\_\_\_\_, November 2014, *DDF MOU Amendment No. 02 - Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the GPAR-Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery for Local Administrations Program (SCSD)*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Operational Framework for Ecosystem-Based Adaptation - Implementing and Mainstreaming Ecosystem-based Adaptation Responses in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Terms of Reference – Department of Forest Resource Management*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Terms of Reference – Department of Land Planning and Development*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Terms of Reference – Department of Water Resources (DWR)*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Terms of Reference for Individual Contract – CCA Assessment and Planning Expert*

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Updated Status Action Plans for FY2014 Audit Observations and Recommendations*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Tracking Tool for Climate Change Adaptation Projects*

## Annex 6: Interview Guide

*Note: This is a guide for the Evaluation Team (a simplified version of the review matrix). Not all questions will be asked to each interviewee; it is a reminder for the interviewers about the type of information required to complete the review exercise and a guide to prepare the semi-structured interviews. Confidentiality will be guaranteed to the interviewees and the findings once “triangulated” will be incorporated in the report.*

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### **I. RELEVANCE** - *How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF-LDCF, UNDP, UNCDF and to the adaptation to climate change priorities at the local, provincial and national levels in Lao PDR?*

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- I.1. Is the Project relevant to GEF-LDCF objectives?
- I.2. Is the Project relevant to UNDP objectives?
- I.3. Is the Project relevant to Lao’s climate change adaptation and development objectives?
- I.4. Does the Project address the needs of target beneficiaries?
- I.5. Is the Project internally coherent in its design?
- I.6. How is the Project relevant in light of other donors?

#### ***Future directions for similar projects***

- I.7. What lessons have been learnt and what changes could have been made to the project in order to strengthen the alignment between the project and the Partners’ priorities and areas of focus?
- I.8. How could the project better target and address priorities and development challenges of targeted beneficiaries?

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### **II. EFFECTIVENESS** – *To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?*

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- II.1. How is the Project effective in achieving its expected outcomes?
  - o o Capacities provided for local administrative institutions to integrate climate risks into participatory planning and financing of small scale rural water infrastructure provision
  - o o Incentives in place for small-scale rural infrastructure to be protected and diversified against climate change induced risks (droughts, floods, erosion and landslides) benefitting at least 50,000 people in 12 districts of Sekong and Saravane provinces
  - o o Natural assets (such as wetlands, forests and other ecosystems in sub-catchments) are managed to ensure maintenance of critical ecosystem services, especially water provisioning, flood control and protection under increasing climate change induced stresses, in Sekong and Saravane provinces
- II.2. How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?

#### ***Future directions for similar projects***

- II.3. What lessons have been learnt for the project to achieve its outcomes?
- II.4. What changes could have been made (if any) to the formulation of the project in order to improve the achievement of project’s expected results?
- II.5. How could the project be more effective in achieving its results?

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### **III. EFFICIENCY** - *Was the project implemented efficiently, cost-effectively and in-line with international and national norms and standards?*

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- III.1. Is adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?
- III.2. Do the project *Result and Resources Framework* and work plans and any changes made to them used as management tools during implementation?
- III.3. Are accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
- III.4. How adequate is the M&E framework (indicators & targets)?
- III.5. Are progress reports produced accurately, timely and respond to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
- III.6. Is project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)
- III.7. Is the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happening as planned?
- III.8. Are financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?

- III.9. How is RBM used during project implementation?
- III.10. Are there an institutionalized or informal feedback or dissemination mechanism to ensure that findings, lessons learned and recommendations pertaining to project formulation and implementation effectiveness were shared among project stakeholders, UNDP and UNCDF Staff and other relevant organizations for ongoing project adjustment and improvement?
- III.11. Does the project mainstream gender considerations into its implementation?
- III.12. To what extent are partnerships/ linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported?
- III.13. Which partnerships/linkages are facilitated? Which one can be considered sustainable?
- III.14. What is the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements? (between local actors, UNDP, UNCDF and relevant government entities)
- III.15. Is an appropriate balance struck between utilization of international expertise as well as local capacity?
- III.16. Did the project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the project?

***Future directions for the project***

- III.17. What lessons can be learnt from the project on efficiency?
- III.18. How could the project have more efficiently addressed its key priorities (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements, etc., ...)?

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**IV. IMPACTS** - *Are there indications that the project has contributed to adaptation to climate change in Lao PDR?*

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- IV.1. Will the project achieve its objective that is local administrative systems affecting the provision and maintenance of small scale rural infrastructure will be improved through participatory decision making that reflects the genuine needs of communities and natural systems vulnerable to climate risk?

***Future directions for the project***

- IV.2. How could the project build on its successes and learn from its weaknesses in order to enhance the potential for impact of ongoing and future initiatives?

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**V. SUSTAINABILITY** - *To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?*

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- V.1. Were sustainability issues adequately integrated in project formulation?
- V.2. Does the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?
- V.3. Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support?
- V.4. Are laws, policies and frameworks being addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?
- V.5. Is the capacity in place at the national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of results achieved to date?
- V.6. Does the project contribute to key building blocks for social and political sustainability?
- V.7. Are project activities and results being replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up?
- V.8. What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?

***Future directions for the project***

- V.9. Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results?
- V.10. What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?

## Annex 7: Review Mission Agenda

### Mission Itinerary LDCF2 Project Mid-Term Review, June 5-16, 2016

#### Evaluation team

1. Mr. Jean-Joseph Bellamy (International consultant, Team leader)
2. Dr. Thongdeuane Nanthanavone (National consultant, team member)

#### Project Team (Persons in charge)

1. Mr. Vanxay Bouttanavong, Project Manager (PM)
2. Mr. Anders Poulsen, Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
3. Mr. Souksavanh Sisouvong, Assistant Project manager (APM)
4. Mr. Amphayvanh Oudomdeth, Assistant Project manager (APM)
5. Dr. Khosada Vongsana, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (M&ES)

Date	Time	Activity	Name, Organization	Location	Contact
Sunday June 5, 2016	pm	Arrival at Vientiane	JJ Bellamy (IC)	Vientiane	
Monday June 6, 2016	9:00-10:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Project Team at DDMCC-MONRE</li> <li>Project presentation by project team</li> </ul>	MTR team Project team, UNDP	Division of Climate change adaptation, DDMCC-MONRE Vientiane	Mr. Vanxay (PM) Tel: 020 9977 8883 Dr. Khosada (M&ES) Tel: 020 2826 2595
	10:30-11:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation and Documentation with project team</li> <li>Interview with Project's specialists</li> </ul>	MTR team Project team		
	pm <i>(to be confirmed by UNDP)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Meeting at UNDP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNDP RR</li> <li>- Dr. Margaret Jones William (Head of Environmental unit, UNDP)</li> <li>- Ms. Chitlatda Keomueangchanh (Programme specialist, UNDP)</li> <li>- Mr. Souksavanh Sisouvong (APM)</li> <li>- Mr. Anders Poulsen (CTA)</li> </ul>	UNDP House  Vientiane	Ms. Chitlatda Keomueangchanh tel: 020 5562 6162)
	pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team travels to Sekong</li> </ul>	PM and M&ES		
Tuesday June 7, 2016	6:00-7:30 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to Pakse by air</li> </ul>	MTR Team, CTA, UNDP	Wattay Airport (Domestic flight)	Departure time: 6:00 am <i>(to be confirmed)</i>
	8:00-10:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to Thateang district</li> </ul>	MTR Team, CTA, UNDP		By Sekong 'car

Date	Time	Activity	Name, Organization	Location	Contact
			Provincial Coordinator		Mr. Chanhao (PC) Tel: 020 5559 3053
	10:30-12:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation meeting with district teams</li> </ul>	MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP, DDSC (district vice governor), DDST (Agriculture office, Health office, and related office ), DONRE	Thateang district Sekong province	Mr. Chanhao (PC) Tel: 020 5559 3053
	1:30-3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet/Interview with community beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Head of village, Villagers MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP, Provincial Coordinator	Kamkok village Thateang district	
	3:00-5:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit to project site 1: Water supply system construction in KamKok village, and then visiting Ecosystem site in Phou tai yuen Protection Forest Ares</li> </ul>	Head of village, Villagers MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP, Provincial Coordinator	Kamkok village Thateang district	
	5:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to Lamam district, Sekong</li> </ul>	MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP, Provincial Coordinator	Lamam district Sekong province	
Wednesday June 8, 2016	9:00-10:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courtesy Meeting with Project Steering Committee</li> <li>Meeting with project coordination team</li> </ul>	- Mr. Bounlaiy Vouthi Director of PONRE, Project Steering committee - Mr. Chanhao Provincial Coordinator	PONRE Office Lamam district Sekong province	Mr. Chanhao (PC) Tel: 020 5559 3053
	10:00-12:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to Naveu village</li> </ul>	MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP, Provincial Coordinator	Lamam district Sekong province	
	1:00-2:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation meeting with district teams</li> </ul>	DDSC (district vice governor), DDST (Agriculture office, Health office, and related office ), DONRE		
	2:00-4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview/Meet with community beneficiaries</li> <li>Visit to project site 2: Reservoir construction for irrigation, Naveu village</li> </ul>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers.	Lamam district Sekong province	
	4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to Saravanh</li> </ul>	MTR Team, PM, CTA, M&E, UNDP	Saravanh province	By Sekong's car
Thursday June 9, 2016	8:30-9:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courtesy Meeting with Project Steering Committee</li> <li>Meeting with project coordination team</li> </ul>	- Mr. Ouhueane Lueasisamouth Director of PONRE, Project Steering committee - Mr. Somephone (PC)	PONRE office Saravanh district	Mr. Sangvienn Tidalak (020 2200 0033)
	9:30-10:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation meeting with</li> </ul>	DDSC (district vice governor), DDST	Saravanh district	

Date	Time	Activity	Name, Organization	Location	Contact
		district teams	(Agriculture office, and related office ), DONRE	Saravanh province	
	10:00-12:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meet with community beneficiaries</li> <li>▪ Visit to project site 1: Flood gate renovation construction in Nongdeng village</li> </ul>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers	Nongdeang village Saravane district	
	2:00-4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interview/Meet with community beneficiaries</li> <li>▪ Visit to project site 2: Irrigation improvement construction and Dyke Sa O Wetland construction in Hangheang village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Khamsouk (Vice-Governor, DDSC) - Mr. Hongthong (DONRE, DDST)</li> <li>- Agriculture and Forestry office (DDST)</li> <li>- Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and Villagers beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Hangheang Village Khongsedone district	
	4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel to Lakhonepheng</li> </ul>			
Friday June 10, 2016	8:30-9:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consultation meeting with district teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Thongsouk (district vice governor DDSC)</li> <li>- DONRE and Health office (DDST)</li> </ul>	Lakhonepheng district Saravanh province	
	9:30-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interview/Meet with community beneficiaries</li> <li>▪ Visit project site 3: Rainwater storage tank at household level in Naprabang village</li> </ul>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers	Naprabang Lakhonepheng district	
	1:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel to Pakse by car</li> </ul>	MTR Team, CTA, , UNDP		
	2:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel to Vientiane by car</li> </ul>	PM and M&E Specialist		
	4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel to Vientiane by air</li> </ul>	MTR Team, CTA, ME Specialist, UNDP	Pakse Airport	Departure at 7:00pm
Saturday June 11, 2016	am-pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing</li> </ul>	MTR Team	Vientiane	
Sunday June 12, 2016	am-pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing</li> </ul>	MTR Team	Vientiane	
Monday June 13, 2016	9:00-9:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A courtesy meeting with National Project manager (NPD)</li> </ul>	Mr. Phouvong Louangxaysana DG of DDMCC, NPD	MONRE (Prime's minister office) Vientiane	
	9:30-10:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consultation Meeting with GEF Focal Point</li> </ul>	Mr. Khampadith Khammounehueang DG of Department of Environmental promotion, National Coordinator of GEF	MONRE (Prime's minister office) Vientiane	

Date	Time	Activity	Name, Organization	Location	Contact
	10:45-11:45	▪ Consultation Meeting with GPAR	Mr. Gerry O'Driscoll Chief Technical advisor	MONRE (Prime's minister office)	Email: <a href="mailto:Gerry.odriscoll@undp.org">Gerry.odriscoll@undp.org</a>
	1:30-2:30pm	▪ Consultation meeting of Dept of water resources	Mr. Chanthaneth Bualapha DG of DWR, MONRE	MONRE (Prime's minister office)	
	2:45-3:45pm	▪ Consultation Meeting with UNCDF	Mr. Thilaphong Oudomsine Programme specialist, Governance Unit Email: <a href="mailto:thilaphong.oudomsine@uncdf.org">thilaphong.oudomsine@uncdf.org</a>	UNCDF UN House, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Vientiane	His contact: 020 5551 0588
Tuesday June 14, 2016	9:00-10:00am	▪ Consultation Meeting with Department of Planning and Cooperation, MOHA	Mr. Nisith Keopanya DG National Project Director of GPAR	MOHA (Prime's minister office) Vientiane	Email: <a href="mailto:nisith.keopanya@moha.la.org">nisith.keopanya@moha.la.org</a>
	10:15-11:15am	▪ Consultation Meeting with Department of Forest resource management	Mr. Vongdueane Vongsihalath DG	MONRE Vientiane	
	1:30-2:30pm	▪ Consultation meeting	Department of International cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Investment	Vientiane	
	3:00-4:00pm	▪ Consultation meeting	Department of Planning and Cooperation, MONRE	Vientiane	
Wednesday June 15, 2016	Am-pm	Writing	MTR Team	Vientiane	
Thursday June 16, 2016	10:00-12:00am	Presentation of preliminary findings of the MTR	MTR Team, UNDP, Project Team, Provincial Coordinators, stakeholder agencies	Vientiane	
	1:30-4:30pm	Close out the meeting	MTR Team, project team and UNDP	Vientiane	
	pm	Leaving for Airport	JJ Bellamy (IC)		

## Annex 8: List of People Interviewed

Name	Name, Organization
<b>National Level</b>	
Mr. Amphayvanh Oudomdeth	Assistant Project manager (APM)
Mr. Anders Poulsen	Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Mr. Atsavine Insixiangmai	Watershed Division, DWR, MONRE
Mr. Bouasone Souvanna	Technical Officer, DPC, MONRE
Mr. Chareun Bounithiphon	Local Planning and Budgeting Coordinator
Mr. Charles Chauvel	Country Director a.i, UNDP Lao PDR
Ms. Chitlatda Keomueangchanh	(Programme specialist, UNDP)
Mr. Gerry O'Driscoll	Chief Technical advisor, GPAR office
Mr. Houmphanh Souphasith	DDG, DIC, MPI
Ms. Kaarina Immonen	UNDP RR
Ms. Keodokmai Phouipaseuth	Head of Water Quality Division, DWR, MONRE
Mr. Khampadith Khammounehueang	DG of Department of Environmental promotion, NC of GEF
Mr. Khamphone Daophonechaleun	Technical Officer, DIC, MPI
Dr. Khosada Vongsana	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (M&ES)
Ms. Louly Xayasane	Technical Officer, DIC, MPI
Dr. Margaret Jones William	Head of Environmental unit, UNDP
Mr. Nongxay Douangnouluck	Deputy Director General, DWR, MONRE
Mr. Phouvong Louangxaysana	DG of DDMCC, NPD
Mr. Sakhone Xayasan	Watershed Division, DWR, MONRE
Mr. Saysamone Phothisat	DDG, Department of Forest Resource Management, MONRE
Mr. Souksavanh Sisouvong	Assistant Project manager (APM)
Mr. Thilaphong Oudomsine	Programme specialist, Governance Unit, UNCFD
Mr. Vanxay Bouttanavong	Project Manager (PM)
Mr. Virana Sonnasinh	Deputy Director General, DPC, MONRE
Ms. Vilaythone Sounthone Saymounkhoun	DDG, Department of Planning and Cooperation, MOHA Deputy Head of National GPAR Program
<b>Sekong Provincial Level</b>	
Mr. Bounlith Sakbouavone	Deputy Director of PONRE, Project Steering Committee
Mr. Bounlith Sombouavong	Technical officer, PONRE
Mr. Chanhao Xayathong	Project Coordinator, PONRE
Mr. Saysamone Phithaksin	Deputy Director, Provincial Department of Home Affairs
Mr. Sengphachan Khoksombath	Deputy Director, PONRE
<b>Thateang district, Sekong province</b>	
Mr. Khampheuy Tanavong	DDSC, Deputy Head, DONRE

<b>Name</b>	<b>Name, Organization</b>
Mr. Khamyad Keopaseuth	DDST, Finance Officer
Mr. Phosana Xaysena	DDSC, Deputy Head of DPWT
Mr. Saysana Chanthaphim	DDST, Head of Unit, DAFO
Mr. Sengathid Khinthavong	DDST, Water Supply Officer
Mr. Sengsouphan Saykan	DDSC, Head of Planning and Investment
Mr. Soukan Chaleunphon	DDSC, Deputy Head of Planning and Investment Office
Mr. Souksamay Vongsanouphit	DDSC, Head of Home Affairs
<b>Site visit and FGD at Ban Kamkok, Thateang district</b>	Head of village, Lao Women Union, Youth Union, and Villagers
<b>Lamam district, Sekong province</b>	
Mr. Bounnong Khamphoumy	DDSC, Head of Planning and Investment Office
Mr. Bounon Phommasay	DDSC, Head of DONRE
Ms. Khamseng Thoummavongsa	Vice Governor, DDSC
Mr. Latsamay Somsalot	DDST, Deputy Head of Planning and Investment Office
<b>Site visit and FGD at Naveu Village, Lamam District</b>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers.
<b>Saravanh Provincial Level</b>	
Mr. Chaleun Soulivong	DDST, Deputy Head of DONRE
Mr. Ouhueane Lueasisamouth	Director of PONRE, Project Steering Committee
Mr. Sakounsy Keophilavan	DDSC, Deputy Head of DAFO
Mr. Sanvien Thidaluck	Technical Officer, PONRE
Mr. Somephone Thongsoulchanh	Project Coordinator, PONRE
<b>Saravane District</b>	
Mr. Viengsamai Sengchanti	Vice-governor, DDSC
<b>Site visit only at Nongdeang village Saravane district</b>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers
<b>Khongsedone District</b>	
Mr. Bouasone Chandavong	DDST, Head of Irrigation Division, DAFO
Mr. Hongthong	DDST, Deputy Head of DONRE
Mr. Khamsouk Kongsedon	Vice-Governor, DDSC
<b>Site visit and FGD at Hangheang Village, Khongsedone district</b>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and Villagers beneficiaries
<b>Lakhonepheng District</b>	
Mr. Bounlan Sihaphom	Head of Planning and Statistics Office
Mr. Khamphoumy Kalavong	Deputy Head of DAFO
Mr. Noukai Sisomphone	Technical Officer, DONRE
Mr. Soumthone Khedsom	Deputy Head of DONRE

Name	Name, Organization
Mr. Souphy Bounsayalath	Head of Public Health Office
Mr. Thongkhoun Sounthala	Technical Officer, DAFO
Mr. Thongsouk Hatahao	Vice-Governor, DDSC
<b>Site visit and FGD at Naprabang Lakhonepheng district</b>	Head of village, LWU, Lao Front and villagers

*Met 58 people (7 women and 51 men) plus villagers at 5 site visits*

## Annex 9: Ministerial Agreement



Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

Ref. 4654/MoNRE  
Date 8 September 2016

### Ministerial Agreement

#### On the endorsement of the (amended) District Development Fund (DDF) Guidelines

- Pursuant to the Government Decree on the Establishment and Function of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, No. 435/PM, dated 28 November 2011;
- Pursuant to Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of The roles and responsibilities of UNCDF and the LDCF-2 project team towards the MoNRE LDCF-2 project, dated 01 July 2013;
- Pursuant to the Letter of Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change on the achievement of the revision the District Development Fund (DDF) guidelines with the integration of Climate Change and Resilient, No. 0479/MoNRE.DDMCC, dated 15 July 2016.

#### The Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment agrees:

##### Article 1.

To delegate the Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change (DDMCC) who is in charge of the implementation of the Effective Governance for small-scale rural infrastructure and disaster preparedness in a changing climate (GIDD/LDCF-2), to utilize the revised District Development Fund (DDF) guidelines with the integration of Climate Change and Resilience, consisting of the following five documents:

1. Performance Assessment Manual DDF-BBG and CR-Grants
2. DDF-BBG and CR-Grants Guidelines on Allocation and Use
3. DDF-BBG and CR-Grants Planning Guidelines
4. DDF-BBG and CR-Grants Financial Management
5. DDF-BBG and CR-Grants Implementation Guidelines

##### Article 2.

The revised District Development Fund (DDF) guidelines with the integration of Climate Change and Resilience are applied in the implementation of the Effective Governance for small-scale rural infrastructure and disaster preparedness in a changing climate (GIDD/LDCF-2), with the integration of climate resilient into the planning process of the construction investment, construction design and implementation to ensure climate resilience for small-scale rural infrastructure.

##### Article 3.

To delegate the Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change (DDMCC), relevant sectors including the contractor under the Effective Governance for small-scale rural infrastructure and disaster preparedness in a changing climate (GIDD/LDCF-2), to apply these revised DDF-CR guidelines as references for the effectiveness of the project implementation.

**Article 4.**

This Ministerial Agreement is effective upon the dated signing.

**Minister**

**(Signed and Stamp)**

**Mr. Bounmy Phouthavong  
Vice Minister of MoNRE**



**ສາທາລະນະລັດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ປະຊາຊົນລາວ**  
**ສັນຕິພາບ ເອກະລາດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ເອກະພາບ ວັດທະນາຖາວອນ**

ກະຊວງຊັບພະຍາກອນທຳມະຊາດ ແລະ ສິ່ງແວດລ້ອມ

14654---  
 ເລກທີ...../ກຊສ  
 ລົງວັນທີ...ເມສາ...ໂອກ...ໂອກ/໒.....

**ຂໍ້ຕົກລົງ**  
**ວ່າດ້ວຍ ການຮັບຮອງນຳໃຊ້ ຄຸ້ມຄົນພັດທະນາເມືອງ DDF**  
**(District Development Fund) ສະບັບປັບປຸງ**

- ອີງຕາມ ດຳລັດ ຂອງນາຍົກລັດຖະມົນຕີວ່າດ້ວຍການຈັດຕັ້ງ ແລະ ການເຄື່ອນໄຫວ ຂອງກະຊວງຊັບພະຍາກອນທຳມະຊາດ ແລະ ສິ່ງແວດລ້ອມ, ສະບັບເລກທີ 435/ນຍ, ລົງວັນທີ 28 ພະຈິກ 2011;
- ອີງຕາມ ບົດບັນທຶກຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈ (MoU) ລະຫວ່າງ ກະຊວງຊັບພະຍາກອນທຳມະຊາດ ແລະ ສິ່ງແວດລ້ອມ ແລະ ອົງການ ກອງທຶນເພື່ອການພັດທະນາຂອງສປຊ (UNCDF) ຄັ້ງວັນທີ 01 ກໍລະກົດ 2013 ວ່າດ້ວຍ ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ອົງການກອງທຶນເພື່ອການພັດທະນາຂອງສປຊ (UNCDF) ເຂົ້າໃນການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດ ວຽກງານອົງປະກອບທີ 2 ຂອງໂຄງການຄຸ້ມຄອງໂຄງລ່າງພື້ນຖານຊົນນະບົດຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ ຢ່າງມີປະສິດທິຜົນ ແລະ ກຽມພ້ອມປ້ອງກັນໄພພິບັດຈາກການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ (GIDCC/LDCF2) ແລະ ການເຫັນດີເອກະພາບນຳໃຊ້ ກົນໄກທຶນພັດທະນາເມືອງ (District Development Fund, DDF) ທີ່ ຫ້ອງການກອງເລຂາແຜນ ງານປັບປຸງບຸລະນະການປົກຄອງແຫ່ງຊາດ (NGPAR) ກະຊວງພາຍໃນ ແລະ ອົງການກອງທຶນເພື່ອການພັດທະນາຂອງສປຊ (UNCDF) ພ້ອມກັນ ພັດທະນາ;
- ອີງໃສ່ ໜັງສືສະເໜີຂອງກົມຄຸ້ມຄອງໄພພິບັດ ແລະ ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ ວ່າດ້ວຍຜົນສຳເລັດໃນການປັບປຸງຄຸ້ມຄອງການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດທຶນພັດທະນາເມືອງ ທີ່ເຊື່ອມສານວຽກງານການສ້າງຄວາມທົນທານ ຕໍ່ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ, ສະບັບເລກທີ 0479/ກຊສ. ກພປ, ລົງວັນທີ 15 ກໍລະກົດ 2016.

**ລັດຖະມົນຕີ ຕົກລົງ**

ມາດຕາ 1. ເຫັນດີໃຫ້ກົມຄຸ້ມຄອງໄພພິບັດ ແລະ ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ ໃນນາມຜູ້ຮັບຜິດຊອບຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດໂຄງການ ຄຸ້ມຄອງໂຄງລ່າງພື້ນຖານ ຊົນນະບົດຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ ຢ່າງມີປະສິດທິຜົນ ແລະ ກຽມພ້ອມປ້ອງກັນໄພພິບັດ ຈາກການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ (GIDCC/LDCF2) ນຳໃຊ້ ຄຸ້ມຄົນພັດທະນາເມືອງ (District Development Fund, DDF) ສະບັບປັບປຸງ ທີ່ລວມເອົາເງື່ອນໄຂການສ້າງຄວາມທົນທານຕໍ່ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ ຈຳນວນ 05 ສະບັບຄື:

1. ຄຸ້ມຄົນເນີນຜົນການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດຂອງເມືອງ;
2. ບົດແນະນຳກ່ຽວກັບການຈັດສັນ ແລະ ນຳໃຊ້ງົບປະມານຊ່ວຍເຫລືອລ້ຳຂຶ້ນພື້ນຖານ;
3. ຄຸ້ມຄົນວາງແຜນສຳລັບການລົງທຶນຢູ່ຂັ້ນເມືອງ ສຳລັບທຶນຊ່ວຍເຫລືອລ້ຳຂຶ້ນພື້ນຖານ;
4. ທຶນພັດທະນາເມືອງ ລະບຽບການຈັດຕັ້ງຄຸ້ມຄອງບໍລິຫານການເງິນຂອງທຶນພັດທະນາເມືອງ;
5. ບົດແນະນຳການຈັດຕັ້ງ.

ມາດຕາ 2. ຄຸ້ມຄົນພັດທະນາເມືອງ ຈຳນວນ 05 ສະບັບ ທີ່ໄດ້ປັບປຸງນີ້ ແມ່ນມີເປົ້າໝາຍນຳໃຊ້ ສະເພາະໃນການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດໂຄງການ ຄຸ້ມຄອງໂຄງລ່າງພື້ນຖານ ຊົນນະບົດຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ ຢ່າງມີປະສິດທິຜົນ ແລະ ກຽມພ້ອມປ້ອງກັນໄພພິບັດ ຈາກການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ (GIDCC/LDCF2) ໂດຍເຊື່ອມ

ສານໃສ່ເອົາວຽກງານ ການສ້າງຄວາມທົນທານຕໍ່ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ (Climate Resilience) ເຂົ້າໄປໃນຂະບວນການວາງແຜນໂຄງການກໍ່ສ້າງ, ການອອກແບບໂຄງການກໍ່ສ້າງ ແລະການກໍ່ສ້າງ ເພື່ອເຮັດແນວໃດ ໃຫ້ໂຄງການກໍ່ສ້າງພື້ນຖານໂຄງລ່າງ ມີຄວາມທົນທານ ຕໍ່ໄພພິບັດ ແລະ ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ.

ມາດຕາ 3. ໃຫ້ ກົມຄຸ້ມຄອງໄພພິບັດ ແລະ ການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ, ບັນດາຂະແໜງການກ່ຽວຂ້ອງ ແລະ ລວມທັງຜູ້ຮັບເໝົາກໍ່ສ້າງ ພາຍໃຕ້ໂຄງການ ຄຸ້ມຄອງໂຄງລ່າງພື້ນຖານ ຊືນນະບົດຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ ຢ່າງມີປະສິດທິຜົນ ແລະ ກຽມພ້ອມປ້ອງກັນໄພພິບັດ ຈາກການປ່ຽນແປງດິນຟ້າອາກາດ (GIDCC/LDCF2) ນໍາໃຊ້ ຄູ່ມືທຶນພັດທະນາເມືອງ (District Development Fund, DDF) ສະບັບບັບປຸງນີ້ເພື່ອເປັນບ່ອນອີງໃນການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດໃຫ້ມີປະສິດທິຜົນ.

ມາດຕາ 4. ຂໍ້ຕົກລົງສະບັບນີ້ ມີຜົນສັກສິດ ນັບແຕ່ມີລົງລາຍເຊັນເປັນຕົ້ນໄປ.

  
**໒ ສັດຖະມົນຕີ**  
  
  
**ບຸນມິ ພຸດທະວິງ**

## **Annex 10: Audit Trail**

The audit trail is presented in a separate file.

## Annex 11: Evaluation Report Clearance Form

### EVALUATION REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

for the Mid-Term Evaluation Report of the UNDP-GEF-LDCF-Government of Lao PDR Project:  
*“Effective Governance for Small-scale Rural Infrastructure and Disaster Preparedness in a  
Changing Climate”*  
(PIMS 4710)

*Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by*

#### ***UNDP Country Office***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***UNDP RTA***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_